

***“ WATERFORD COUNTY -
A MONUMENT OF THE FUTURE”***

WATERFORD COUNTY STRATEGY

FOR

***ECONOMIC SOCIAL AND CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT***

2002 - 2012

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADG	Arts Development Group
BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara – The Irish Sea Fisheries Board
CDB	County Development Board
CEB	County Enterprise Board
CERT	The State Tourism Training Agency
CIC	Community Information Centres
CIS	Community Information Service
CWCBDI	County Waterford Community Based Drugs Initiative
DSCFA	Department of Social Community and Family Affairs
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EI	Enterprise Ireland
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
FÁS	Foras Áiseanna Saothar - The Training & Employment Agency
IAWG	Inter-Agency Working Group
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ICTU	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
IFA	Irish Farmers Association
INOUE	Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
NRA	National Roads Authority
REGSA	Regional Educational Guidance Service for Adults
RIAI	Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland
RNLI	Royal National Lifeboat Institution (Ireland)
SEHB	South-Eastern Health Board
SEISS	South East Information Society Strategy
SERA	South-East Regional Authority
SERTA	South-East Regional Tourism Authority
SIMWG	Social Inclusion Measures Working Group
SRFB	Southern Regional Fisheries Board
TI	Tipperary Institute
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
WCC	Waterford County Council
WIT	Waterford Institute of Technology
WLP	Waterford Leader Partnership
WRYS	Waterford Regional Youth Service
WSP	Waterford Sports Partnership

COUNTY WATERFORD

Located on the coast in the south-east of Ireland, County Waterford borders the counties of Cork, Tipperary, Kilkenny and Wexford, and Waterford City. Home to a vibrant community of people living and working in rural and urban environments, Waterford is a county of great natural beauty, fertile lands and unexplored opportunity.

County Waterford possesses a rich and varied natural & cultural heritage with sites of both national and international importance situated in coastal, mountainous, riverine and wetland areas. This 'undiscovered' county has a variety of landscapes including the impressive Comeragh and Knockmealdown mountain ranges, rolling hills, the rivers Suir, Blackwater Mahon, Bride and Colligan, natural harbours, coastal headlands and beaches; a good quality environment; a strong agricultural base; and a rich linguistic and cultural heritage.

It is important that the County's people have equality of opportunity, our natural and geographic assets are protected and enhanced, and that the county capitalises on all these strengths in developing Waterford into the future.

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

We all know the enormous changes that have come about in Ireland in the past few years. These changes have not left County Waterford untouched. We can also see clearly that this accelerating change will continue. The challenge, then, is to see how we can shape these changes to best suit us and our county, - to drive change, not be driven by it.

Public sector agencies have always co-operated well in County Waterford. To respond effectively to the changes that we know will come, we need to build on this co-operation, and focus it on our long-term future. The County Development Board was established by Government to provide leadership and co-ordination to all agencies and organisations working within, and for, our communities. For us, the publication of the 10 year Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development is an important first step in this task.

The Strategy is the result of over two years work and has been developed from an extensive process of consultation. The Board hosted over 250 meetings with communities, organisations and interested parties. The consultation process identified many hundreds of issues and ideas, and highlighted the key Strategic Themes in the document. An important factor in the success of this process has been the establishment and growth of the Waterford County Community Forum, fully supported by the Board and its member organisations, and bringing together the views and ideas of all communities and voluntary organisations in the County.

The involvement of individuals, communities and agencies, working together to plan for the future, has not been simple, but it has been productive. This is your strategy; it belongs to you; you helped to make it.

I congratulate my fellow Board members for their commitment and dedication to the completion of the Strategy. It sets a clear and simple Vision for our future. But that simple Vision does not presume a short or simple task. Our work is only beginning.

It will be a uniquely inspiring thing to look back, in ten years time, and see that we all made a difference; that we achieved our Vision; and that we did it ourselves.

DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

County Waterford is beautiful. It is a place rich because of its people, its heritage and environment. Its richness presents a great foundation for the future. But it also presents great responsibilities, to ensure that the county retains and builds on that richness in its future development.

Waterford has experienced its share of difficulties. Traditional industries have contracted; agriculture is changing and affects rural communities; new technologies impact on the way we work and live. Society is more diverse and equality and inclusion are more important now, in measuring quality of life. These can be cold facts. But by asking ourselves the right questions about how we see our future, these facts are turned to our advantage

There can be great confidence in the strengths and richness that this county has. Excellence in endeavour recurs throughout the county's history. It is seen still, and will be needed into the future. But I am struck by the ideas of Thomas McCarthy of Cappoquin. In his work for us during the preparation of the Strategy, he wrote about "*....High Standards. Not MORE of everything, but HIGH standards in everything*". Such a simple but powerful idea for our future - ***not more, just better***.

We cannot know the future, but we can imagine it. This Strategy sets out the Vision of a future which people said they wanted for County Waterford. It imagines the sort of place we want Waterford to be, - a good place to live and work, a place with a good quality of life, not just a high standard of living. It is a positive and optimistic picture of the future.

We will be doing what George Bernard Shaw wrote about - making a "*...country to live in where the facts were not brutal and the dreams not unreal*"

Many people are due thanks for their contributions, their commitment and their persistence in developing this strategy. I would like to thank the Board members for their commitment to me. I would also like to thank the Community Forum and its many groups and organisations throughout the county. Their enthusiasm for this process has been equal to their persistence, ingenuity, leadership within their communities.

I want to acknowledge the work of staff past and present – including my predecessor as Director, Mr Jim O'Donovan. In particular, I want to thank my staff in the Community and Enterprise Department, Waterford County Council, who have been unstinting in their support to me and to this process, well beyond any normal measure.

Our Commitment to Implementation

We, the members of Waterford County Development Board, commit ourselves and our organisations to the full implementation of the County Waterford Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2002-2012.

We commit to full co-operation between our agencies and organisations, and to co-ordinate our operational plans with regard to the county.

We will impress upon our staffs, and on the people of Waterford, the full implications of this strategy, and we will proof our organisational plans against the County Development Strategy

Signatures and title blocks here....

1 WORKING AS PARTNERS FOR THIS STRATEGY...

1.1 WATERFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Waterford County Development Board is a statutory body. It was established in February 2000 by Government in order to achieve a better integration of the actions of a range of public authorities, national and local agencies and community and voluntary organisations which work for the people of the county. Its purpose is to oversee the integration of local governance and local development.

We have all seen how the partnership between government, employers, unions and social partners has contributed to successful development at national level. The same thing can happen at local level. The Government has committed Ireland to implementing the principles of Local Agenda 21. An important element of this concept is the involvement of individuals and communities in the activities and decisions that affect their daily lives.

Achieving a good quality of life for people involves delivering on a range of elements. These include access to employment, training and education, recreation and cultural opportunities, health services, social services, infrastructure, and a good environment. Co-ordinating the delivery of these elements is not easy. There are so many private and public organisations involved in their delivery that the delivery of benefits with respect to one element can create unintended problems in another.

The Board was established to provide the framework and structure required to meet the challenge of integrating and co-ordinating local services in County Waterford. The membership of the Board is representative of community groups and voluntary organisations, local government, local development agencies and state and semi-state organisations operating in the County. We are partners in pursuing the successful delivery of this strategy on behalf of the people of County Waterford.

Our member organisations are:

- Waterford Local Authorities
- Waterford County Enterprise Board
- South Eastern Health Board
- Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Department of Social, Community & Family Affairs
- County Waterford VEC
- Enterprise Ireland
- IDA Ireland
- South East Regional Tourism Authority
- Teagasc
- FÁS
- An Garda Síochána
- Waterford Leader Partnership
- Local Elected Representatives
- Waterford County Community Forum
- Waterford County Social Partners (Chamber of Commerce, IFA, ICTU)

As a Board, we have four main functions. We want to:

- Continue to develop and oversee the implementation of this ten-year integrated plan for social, economic and cultural development in the County;
- provide the focus for ongoing co-operation at county level in the work of the various state agencies;
- promote co-ordination and avoid overlap of the provision of services at the local level;

and

- continue to build upon relationships and synergies between the member organisations and, via the Community Fora, extend our co-operation with the Voluntary and Community sector in the County.

1.2 WATERFORD COUNTY COUMMUNITY FORUM

The County Waterford Community Forum was established in January 2001. It has the purpose of ensuring that the voice of the Community and Voluntary Sector is adequately and effectively represented at local and county level. The Forum is made up of the many community and voluntary groups, as well as the non-government organisations and bodies, in County Waterford.

The Board believes that the Community Forum is an essential partner in meeting our commitment to achieving the goals of Local Agenda 21. The Forum provides access for communities to ‘participative democracy’. This refers to the mechanisms through which people and organisations can actively participate in making the decisions that affect their lives. Through its activities, the Forum must complement and strengthen the work of our elected representatives in putting forward the views of the community.

We are committed to supporting the growth and development of the Forum and its member organisations, and strengthening their capacity to use their influence to shape the future of County Waterford.

1.3 THE COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE SECTION

The work of the Board and the development of the Community Forum has been supported by the staff of the Community and Enterprise Section of Waterford County Council.

The staff of the section have committed much effort to consulting with communities and organisations, hearing and noting the ideas and suggestions that are important to Waterford, and assisting the Board to develop the strategy in a way which reflects these ideas. From the consultation process, key strategic issues were identified which required immediate attention. This has led, for example, to the successful establishment of the Waterford Sports Partnership, and our contribution to the establishment of the County Childcare Committee.

This document provides an *integrated strategy for the economic, social and cultural development of Waterford County*. It sets out our overall vision for the county, and what various agencies, organisations and community groups can do, in co-operation with each other, to achieve that vision.

The strategy provides:

- the overall framework for public service delivery in County Waterford over the next ten years.
- a mechanism through which community and voluntary organisations can participate in decisions regarding their local areas.

We all know that circumstances and priorities sometimes change. While the strategy looks forward ten years, it must be flexible to adapt to the changed circumstances which will occur. Our overall Vision of how we want our county to be in ten years time may not change. But the things we need to do, the actions we need to take, and the order in which we do them, may require to be altered to meet the new challenges.

2.1

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR ...

We see our strategy consisting of several parts. This document sets out our Vision, the Goals that have been set to give shape to this Vision, and the Objectives we have established to achieve our Goals. These will be achieved over the ten year life of the strategy, to 2012.

Achieving the objectives will need the completion of many specific and clearly defined actions. Over 550 ideas for suggested Actions have been identified in the course of the consultations with communities, organisations and agencies as we developed this strategy. Some are straight forward to implement. Some are already starting to take place. Some are more difficult to achieve, and will require a commitment to bring together our resources and efforts to deliver the objective. In other cases, the actions require us to find out why some things happen as they do, or why others don't happen as they should.

In this document, we have identified a limited number of key actions which will be critical to a successful start to our work of implementing the strategy. However, as we all know, unless somebody is made responsible for them, actions very often do not take place. We have identified '**Co-ordinating Partners**' from the members of our Board. These partners will bring together '**Supporting Partners**' from any sector, to successfully deliver the objective. The strategy has only identified key Supporting Partners, but does not exclude those who may have an appropriate contribution to make. Co-ordinating Partners will provide the leadership and direction to other organisations, so that all resources and efforts are coordinated to achieving the objective

In the Implementation document, - a second volume and integral part of this strategy, - we have identified those actions that will be essential to the ongoing success of the strategy, at least in its first five years. After this period, a significant 'mid-term' review will be required to assess how the social, cultural and economic environment has changed, to assess what progress has been made and what new or altered actions that will be required to continue progress into the future.

Going forward from here, the Board is sure of one thing. This is only the start of our work.

We will undertake and publish regular reviews, measuring how we are completing the actions, and how we are meeting our objectives. This ongoing review will be essential if we are to be sure we are still working towards the vision we have set ourselves and that a changing world is not overtaking us or throwing us off course.

2.2 HOW WE GOT TO THIS STAGE...

The process undertaken in preparing the strategy has been very important. Our aim has been to provide the opportunity for representatives of the whole community to contribute to the process, and to achieve co-operation among all of the people and agencies involved in providing and using services in the county. Sharing knowledge, building partnerships, and creating relationships have been of enormous benefit to all who participated. This experience will allow the continuing development of new initiatives within all communities of the county, to improve accessibility, equity, quality, innovation, inclusion and participation on an ongoing basis.

The strategy has been prepared over a two-year period in accordance with the requirements of the *National Guidelines for CDB Strategies for Economic, Social and Cultural Development*. The guidelines set out eight steps to be undertaken in preparing the strategy:

- Step 1:** Process Initiation
- Step 2:** Audit of Service Provision
- Step 3:** Analysis of Present Economic, Social & Cultural Situation
- Step 4:** Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats
- Step 5:** Development of Vision, Goals & Objectives
- Step 6:** Identification & Selection of Options and Development of Strategies
- Step 7:** Establishment of Targets & Responsible Agencies
- Step 8:** Setting a Monitoring, Feedback & Evaluation System

In carrying out each of these eight steps, the Board undertook extensive consultation, seeking the views and ideas of community groups and service providers, as well as taking account of a wide range of national and regional policies which affect the way we live. The strategy is the end result of a process that has considered and incorporated these views, ideas and policies.

2.3 TAKING ACCOUNT OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICIES.....

In preparing our strategy, we have taken account of a range of important national and regional policies that have relevance to County Waterford. Some of these key policies are listed at Annex A.

In the first instance, this strategy has been prepared under *Part 13, Section 129 of the Local Government Act, 2001*, which provides the statutory basis for the establishment, composition and functions of the County Development Board, and for the preparation of the strategy itself.

The Board took account of key policy initiatives in regard to national and regional development, sustainable development, equality, social inclusion, rural development and health. This includes the critical role of the Community and Voluntary sector, as a part of national policy. The Board is committed to monitoring the national and regional policy arena, and will seek to interpret and respond to emerging policies.

3.1 INSPIRATION...

The ideals of the Board are well reflected in the words of expressed by Her Excellency, President McAleese, when she asked...

“..... What story will the 21st century tell about us? Will it tell of a sophisticated and intuitive age... rooted in community...

Will it tell how we used our resources generously and well, sharing them equitably at home and abroad

...will it tell how we created a society that was all centre and no margins, where opportunity was a birthright? ...that we vindicated the rights of others to such a world?

Will it tell how a generation... galvanised its energy, talent and resources in a determined effort to make Ireland the best, most egalitarian, it has ever been.”¹

3.2 THIS IS WHAT WE BELIEVE...

These ideals reinforce the practical challenges which face us, Social Inclusion is a core component of our philosophy, and we believe that we need to ensure... *“...Empowerment and participation, to achieve full citizenship, equity and equality²...”* for all people living in Waterford.

Linked to this, is the desire of all people for a good Quality of Life for themselves and for their children. We believe that this should be achieved, , but also believe that *“...A high quality society...is only possible if the greatest number are among the included...”³*

By committing to the principle of involving local communities, the Government advocates that *“special interventions and arrangements will be necessary in communities with a high level of disadvantage⁴”*. But it is not just what we do for communities that is important. *“...It is also about how this is done i.e both the task and the process are important⁵”*. The process of involving communities demands a commitment from us to build their capacity to be involved and to speak for themselves. This is the Boards commitment to Community Development

¹ Presidential Address, Joint Houses of the Oireachtas, 16th December 1999

² NESF, Report No 12, Rural Renewal, Combating Social Exclusion

³ ESRI, Report No 27, 'Environmental and Social Indicators'

⁴ Task Force reports on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development, - 'A Shared Vision', DoELG 2000

⁵ Dept of Social Community and Family Affairs, The National Community Development Programme

All of us have principles and values which shape the way we think and act towards others in our lives. All the agencies and organisations represented on the Board have declared a clear set of values relating to our areas of work. This strategy has also been prepared in accordance with a set of guiding values that are important to us. They emerged in the course of our discussions and consultations with communities, and from the work of preparing this strategy. They are a set of tests against which, those things we do, and how we do them, can be judged. Adhering to these values will critically affect the success of the strategy.

- **Accessibility** - we want all people in Waterford to have full and equal access to a comprehensive range of user friendly, available, and affordable services, and to decision-making processes.
- **Equity** - we want all people living in Waterford, regardless of their social, cultural or economic position, to have a right and opportunity to equally benefit from all aspects of society.
- **Innovation** - we will seek out new ideas, and new and creative ways of giving life to those ideas. We want our county to be open to change, confident in adapting to it, and tolerant of the challenges and risks involved. We are committed to questioning, and being questioned, on the way we have usually done things. We are committed to facing change, even where it would be easier and more comfortable to avoid it.
- **Quality** - quality service provision is recognised by the benefits it provides to all people in the County. We also believe that quality goes beyond providing services. It includes a holistic view of 'quality of life', including the health and happiness of our communities, the environment in which we live, and the education and achievements of all the people living in the County. We believe that defining what quality means can only be achieved with the participation of all those who are affected.
- **Participation and Partnership** - we are committed to an inclusive society. We believe that all communities should participate and share in all stages of decision-making processes. This continuous participation in democratic activity strengthens the role of our elected politicians in representing us. It also strengthens the ability of communities to do things for themselves.

We believe that participation must be matched by a partnership between communities, and, just as important, between the agencies and organisations working with communities in Waterford. This partnership will best serve the county for our shared future.

- **Empowerment and opportunity** - We believe that all communities, and the individuals that form them, should have the resources necessary to share, as equal partners, in decisions relating to their daily lives and concerns.
- **Community** - we believe that a sense of 'community' is important to County Waterford. We believe that each of us needs a sense of belonging to, and pride in our communities, whether these communities are our local places or broader groupings to which we belong. But there are communities among us, who are not able to participate in, and to feel as valued as we all should. Our sense of 'community' or 'belonging', can not be

created by excluding people. We all have rights, and we have responsibilities within our communities.

The Board carried out a detailed analysis of the economic, social and cultural situation of the County in the preparation of the Strategy. In addition, an audit of service provision was undertaken, and the Board is committed to its publication. This work identifies the gaps in public service provision in the County. Both the Analysis and the Audit have helped to inform the Board in determining the most critical needs of the County. The Board has taken account of these findings, to ensure that the agencies responsible for providing public services focus on these needs in implementing the Strategy.

4.1 POPULATION TRENDS

In the period from 1991 to 1996, the population of County Waterford grew from 51,296 to 52,140. The majority of urban areas in the county experienced some population increases. These increases were substantially below the national average, and below those of other similar counties.

The immediate environs of Waterford City, and the southern and coastal regions of the county experienced considerable growth. In contrast, many rural areas experienced population decline. The rural areas to the west and north west of the county experienced the highest percentage decline.

In addition, the age profile of the County is changing significantly, with the population aging relatively rapidly. In 1986, people aged 65+ represented 11.7% of the population of the County. By 1996, this had risen to 12.8%, a figure which is larger than the national average of 11.4%. This trend is expected to accelerate over the life of the strategy.

4.2 EDUCATION & TRAINING

The County is reasonably well served by its education facilities. However, there are a number of school buildings which are not of adequate standard. The challenge of providing for an increasingly diverse school population, which has more complex expectations, must be addressed. Even lacking accurate data, we know that the issue of early school leaving is a growing problem.

In 1998, just over 41% of young people went on to third level education. This figure is lower than for any other County in Munster. Although the people of the County can avail of reasonable access to a range of third level education opportunities in adjacent areas, the County has no third level education establishment, or outreach campus. Other regions have shown that modern industry is closely aligned to the presence of third level institutions. Graduates who wish to remain, or to return to the county, do not have the advantage of local, high quality, employment opportunities.

Opportunities for adult learning, or life long learning, are poorly developed and will be a particular focus for the Board in order to assure the on-going development of the County. It is also clear that there are considerable gaps in certain aspects of the education sector in the County, with poor provision of psychological and counselling services, uneven distribution of support for disadvantaged schools, and little tracking of student progress through the education hierarchy. There are gaps in the educational opportunities for people with special needs, and these require priority

over the period of the strategy.

Training in the County is not well co-ordinated. Training opportunities for life skills and work need to be better developed and co-ordinated, to serve the needs of trainees and prospective employers.

4.3 HOUSING

The demand for housing in the County far outstrips supply. The projected housing requirement for the forthcoming period to 2006 is 5,334 units. The Housing Strategy of Waterford County Council indicates that there is sufficient zoned land within the County overall to accommodate this projected demand. However, there are serious deficiencies in water and sewerage infrastructure, to support the provision of Housing both throughout the county, in the smaller villages, and in the urban centres of Tramore and Dungarvan.

The Housing Strategy draws attention to the fact that planning permissions and house completions show a far higher proportion of new housing being developed in the main towns and urban settlements rather than in rural areas. That strategy proposes that a significant amount of future growth will be allocated to smaller settlements to provide for local rural needs. This will require that the distribution of zoned land in the county be reviewed. If this is successful, it will help to stabilise the populations in the smaller towns and villages, which in the past ten years have experienced significant population decline.

The Housing Strategy needs review, in order to provide more integrated social planning and the social and community infrastructure which supports the building of communities, as distinct from residential areas. The review will include research, and the development of data, on homelessness and its appropriate definition.

4.4 PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Transport: Waterford City is a significant transportation hub in the region. However, transportation services to and within the county are under-developed and uncoordinated. In areas of the county, public transport is scarce or non-existent.

Roads: While there are only two national routes in the county, the condition of the road network is generally good. National routes connecting the county to the Dublin region are seriously inadequate. They present a barrier to accessing good quality services, and are a significant impediment to development.

Water Services: Both water supply and sewage treatment infrastructure are seriously deficient across the county. These require urgent attention, if balanced social and economic development is to take place.

Waste Management: The absence of a sustainable integrated waste management infrastructure will be a significant inhibitor to development in the county. This is an urgent and critical issue, and needs urgent address

Energy: Electricity supply is relatively stable, but the development of the county is hampered by lack of access to clean efficient energy, such as natural gas. Alternative sources of energy are needed to attract new industry and as a visible commitment to sustainable development.

Ports and Harbours: Generally, these are not in good condition. Dunmore East is

considered the only safe harbour in winter storms, but it lacks facilities for further development and expansion

Telecommunications: While Dungarvan is relatively well served, ICT infrastructure throughout the county is inadequate. The lack of broadband infrastructure is limiting the ability of the county to attract new knowledge-based industry and services. Mobile phone coverage across the county is uneven.

4.5 *INDUSTRY & SERVICES*

Waterford has traditionally been perceived as a wealthy county, due to its large farms and employment in agricultural related industries. The decline in these industries has led to people seeking employment outside the county. Only 2,500 people are employed in IDA or Enterprise Ireland sponsored industries, and in relative terms, this is the smallest in the South East region. The Research and Development aspect of industry, a key component of high quality sustainable jobs is practically non-existent in the county.

4.6 *AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING & THE MARINE*

70% of the total land area of County Waterford is currently being farmed. Approximately 46% of farmers are engaged in dairy farming, and at a larger scale than most other counties. There is a significant decline in young people entering the industry. 13% of farmers are aged under 35 years, while 21% are aged over 65 years.

15.6% of the land area of the county is under commercial forestry, the second highest such land-use in the country. However, there are few local 'value added' timber industries.

Fishing and Aquaculture are significant economic activities for smaller communities in County Waterford. River fisheries present a significant economic resource. There is a need to seek out alternatives to traditional sea fishing activities which are under threat. There is substantial growth potential in aquaculture. However, there is a lack of integrated fisheries management across all sectors.

4.7 *TOURISM*

The county possesses a tremendous diversity of beautiful natural landscape. The county attracts more visitors than any other county in the south-east and is ranked eighth nationally for visitor numbers from overseas. However, the 'spend' for overseas tourists is one of the lowest in the country, reflecting the lack of an integrated and developed tourism 'product' and supporting service. There is a lack of awareness of County Waterford as a destination. There is substantial potential for growth in tourism as an all-year round business.

4.8 *THE ARTS*

While there is a high level of enthusiasm and commitment from people involved in the arts within the County, the evidence is of low participation rates from the general public of all ages. There is a need to carry out baseline research, to develop a range of indicators and to develop comparative studies with areas of similar profile.

Waterford County Council was the second Local Authority in the country to fully fund a county Arts Centre. However, the county suffers from a lack of strategic planning to support the Arts in its broadest sense.. In general, funding for the Arts has been carried by the local authority, with a general lack of partnership with

fundlers or other agencies that may be in a position to contribute to the development of the Arts. The role of the Arts in personal, social and community development is not fully realised.

County Waterford has a strong tradition in Gaelic arts, craft and culture. In particular this finds its strongest expression in our significant literary, music and linguistic heritage. This tradition has potential to be a catalyst for the cultural development and identity of the County.

4.9 ***HERITAGE***

County Waterford's heritage is one of the most important in the country and one to be very proud of. Some of the most important elements of our built heritage includes early-Norman and vernacular architecture, 18th and 19th century gardens and estates, early pre-Christian sites and the ecclesiastical centres of Ardmore and Lismore. Currently there are 33 sites in the county designated as areas of special environmental interest.

Generally speaking, there is a lack of awareness of our heritage resources, compounded, in many cases, by a lack of access, that contributes to its vulnerability. Waterford's heritage can be a major resource in developing the county's tourism potential

One of the most unique elements of our heritage is the Irish Language and, in particular, our Gaeltacht community. This is a major cultural resource for the County. However, with a population of only 1,297 (1996 census) it is the second smallest Gaeltacht in the country. Due to its size and isolation from other Gaeltachtaí, the vulnerability of this community needs to be recognised and significant measures need to be taken to strengthen and enhance it. The importance of the Irish language in areas of the county outside the Gaeltacht is not adequately acknowledged

4.10 ***SPORTS & RECREATION***

Organised sport is quite strong in County Waterford with over 260 sports clubs. Despite this strength, however, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed. Facilities for all sports are unevenly distributed, both in terms of their quality and their locations. There are limited opportunities to participate in non-competitive sports and physical recreation activities. There is evidence to suggest that participation rates among key social groups is quite low. Access to public swimming pools is limited. The reduction in the number of community volunteers is a constraint for sports development.

From a children's perspective, there is a significant shortage of playground facilities in the County.

4.11 ***EXPERIENCING POVERTY & SOCIAL EXCLUSION...***

Social exclusion has many different dimensions: social, cultural, political and economic. As well as a lack of income, it can be about isolation and remoteness, powerlessness, lack of worthwhile work, discrimination, poor access to basic public services such as health, education, housing, day-care, public transport, legal, recreational, arts and cultural activities. The National Economic and Social Forum describes Social Exclusion in terms of "...the

*structures and processes which exclude persons and groups from their full participation in society*⁴.

It is important to note that the level of information on the status of individuals, families and communities in the County, or their experience of poverty and exclusion, is not adequate. More co-ordinated research, and the sharing of information and data, is required to fill this serious information deficit. This shared data should provide the basis for collaboration between all agencies, contributing to a better integration of service delivery.

Many rural areas in the County have experienced significant population decline over recent years. They have high age-dependency ratios and many people experience isolation. Rural poverty and exclusion is a key concern for the county. We know that access to transport services in rural areas is not adequate. Services to rural Waterford, such as banking and postal services, are under threat.

There are also corresponding communities in urban areas and throughout the county which experience comparable levels of disadvantage.

4.11.1 *Communities are telling us...*

To tackle social exclusion effectively, we need to invest in community training and development. While there is a reasonable level of community activity throughout the county there is a notable absence of the necessary local structures and capacity that will enable community and voluntary groups in the County to take an equal place at the decision-making table. There is a distinct need to build the capacity of marginalised communities to engage fully in society in County Waterford, and to contribute to social change.

4.11.2 *Target Groups At Risk Of Experiencing Social Exclusion*

National policy clearly identifies a range of groups which are at a higher risk of experiencing social exclusion. From our consultation with communities in the county, we have identified the following groups which need targeted intervention.

Older People:

Between 1986 and 1996, the population in County Waterford aged between 45 and 64 years increased by 21%, as against a national decline of 7% . In 1996, 1,756 people aged over 65 years, lived alone. This trend has continued since then, and will impact on service provision for older people.

Older people across the county are not adequately served by day-care centres and support services, especially in the areas of the west and north of the county, where there is a greater percentage of older people. The potential for social isolation and subsequent vulnerability is greatest in areas where the population is sparse and the percentage of older persons is high. In parts of the county, this percentage is running at twice the national average. In addition to services not being accessible in these areas, the social and family networks upon which older people traditionally rely, are declining.

Young People:

In 1996 people under 25 years made up 40% of the county's population. Our consultation process engaged with this group, and they have identified a range of issues that confront them. This includes the disadvantage that arises from rural isolation, as well as from the lack of adequate access to social, cultural and community services and facilities. These inadequacies contribute to the lack of alternatives and opportunities for young people and often leads to

⁴ NESF Report No 12 – “Rural Renewal – Combating Social Exclusion”, p.12

early exposure to drug and alcohol abuse. There are few preventative services and supports available to young people at risk, and these are primarily confined to larger urban areas. In the county there are only two full time qualified community youth workers.

Children

In the decade between the census of 1986 and 1996, the population of children in the county, aged 14 years and younger, fell by 19%, to 12,667. In the same period, the population of children under 12 years declined by 22%, and that for children under 6 years of age declined by 27%.

Persons Parenting Alone:

In 1996, there were almost 400 families in Waterford, with children of 15 years or younger, headed by lone parents. Of these, over 84% were headed by women. Almost 3,000 children of all ages lived in lone-parent families. There is significant evidence that these figures have substantially increased since then. These families are at greater risk of poverty than two-parent families.

The opportunities for lone parent families to improve their life-chances are restricted by limited access to a range of key services. In County Waterford, these services include appropriate second-chance education, training and employment skills, family support and child-care services.

Women

In 1996, 49.15% of the population of County Waterford were women. Of those aged over 65 within the county, women comprised 54.5%. The rate of admission to higher education for women in Waterford lags significantly behind the rest of the country and is one of the lowest for all counties. There is a substantial lack of data on the status of women in the community, in employment and in education.

The County Development Board acknowledges the enormous commitment of women volunteers in the social and community life of the County. The essential role of women in sustaining rural farming is not sufficiently recognised or acknowledged. The more usual supports and community-based women's networks lag behind many other counties. They are under-resourced and significantly under-represented at decision making levels.

Travellers:

Nationally, one in four Traveller families are living on the roadside. In Waterford, one in three Traveller families are in this situation. Waterford County thus lags behind in provision of housing or alternative serviced accommodation to travelling families. The traveller accommodation program has not been fully implemented.

There were thirty seven Traveller families identified as living in County Waterford in 1999. There is a lack of accurate data, compounded by seasonal patterns of movement. There is inadequate provision of culturally appropriate services. In January 2001, only 41 children of traveller families were in education in the county. Of these, only five were attending secondary school.

Travellers have no forum in which to contribute to the decisions that effect their daily lives.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

There are increasing numbers of asylum seekers and refugees living in the County. Of these, there are approximately 150 asylum seekers living in 'emergency' accommodation. There are inadequate services to meet the diverse needs

of the many ethnic and national groups. In County Waterford, there is evidence that the 'Direct Provision' initiative is contributing to the continued marginalisation of these individuals, with increased child poverty.

There is inadequate practical response to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, in housing and accommodation, education and language skills, employment and vocational training, health and social services, and supporting their own cultural requirements.

People with Disability:

Despite an acknowledged lack of data in this area, there is significant evidence that over 10% of people in County Waterford suffer at least one disability, as defined by the Equal Status Act, 2000. A survey completed by the Waterford Network of the Irish Council for People with Disabilities concluded that this figure may be as high as 5,300 people, with as many as 2,000 of these being people over 60 years¹. Services and infrastructure are often provided without adequate recognition of the requirements of people with disabilities

The Unemployed

In November 2001 there were 1,825 people in County Waterford registered as unemployed compared with the 1996 figure of 2,970. This reduction in unemployment rates is very much in line with national trends. However, long-term unemployment continues to be a very significant issue. A recent survey conducted by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs established a substantial link in Waterford between long-term unemployment and education, literacy levels, age, location and previous employment history. Corresponding with increasing female participation in the labour force, a greater percentage of unemployed people are women. Employment rates in agriculture and manufacturing are much higher for County Waterford than the national average. These sectors are more vulnerable to changing market forces and consumer trends and are particularly vulnerable in times of economic downturn.

(1) ¹ A 'Strategy for Equality' Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities, October 1996

County Waterford is a key part of the South-East Region. Through the County Council, it plays a leading role in addressing regional issues with the South-East Regional Authority (SERA), in partnership with the County Councils of South Tipperary, Wexford, Carlow and Kilkenny, and with Waterford City Council. This role is particularly significant from the point of view of national spatial planning and the physical development of the State generally. The Board recognises the regional structure of many of its member organisations. In association with the other Boards of the South-East, we are committed to developing regional responses to common concerns.

5.1 WATERFORD - A CITY IN A COUNTY

The County and City of Waterford share a common heritage and many economic, social and cultural concerns. Recognising this close relationship, and the need to present a common perspective, particularly at international level, the Boards of the County and City will co-operate with each other in ensuring a common voice is recognised at both the national and international arena. Already, a model of good practice for collaboration exists with the development of Waterford Sports Partnership by both Boards.

A joint meeting of both Boards will take place each year to share information, explore collaborative actions, and develop common approaches to shared concerns.

5.2 CORK - OUR NEAR NEIGHBOUR

The Board recognises the long-standing connections with County Cork. Both counties share spectacular natural resources and landscapes. Our closeness to Cork City provides access to key services and infrastructure. The continuing co-operation between the local authorities in areas such as road development, serves local as well as national needs. The Board is committed to building on these relationships, and will co-operate with the Cork County Development Board in those areas which are identified as having mutual interest, locally and nationally. In particular, the Board is committed to strengthening linkages which benefit our respective Gaeltacht communities.

5.3 A REGIONAL VIEW

Traditionally, our system of local government and the organisation of our national sports have emphasised our sense of place in local terms, and have combined to make the county the focus of our attention. In such an environment, competition rather than co-operation between counties has been the norm. However, this is changing and must change. There are many issues that reach beyond county boundaries. These need to be addressed at a regional level to ensure a better outcome locally.

Table 5.1 compares a range of indicators at national, rural (outside Dublin) and regional level (South East region), and shows clearly the disadvantage which needs the strength of a regional response.

Table 5.1

Indicator	<i>National</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Regional</i>
Percentage with third-level education	19.0		14.7
Tourist Numbers per head of population		5.0	5.6
Tourist Expenditure relative to population		.84	.70
Unemployment (%)	3.9		4.9
Average Income Index (State = 100)	100	83	79
Vehicle Registrations per head of population	0.68		0.55
Population Dependency (Dependent age groups as ratio of active age groups)	0.70		0.76
Forecast Population Growth ¹	25.9		0.7

These figures show that the South East Region has not been performing in line with the ‘national average’, and even less well than comparable regions. There is a clear need for the counties and communities of the region to work together, to recognise and support each others strengths, and share our combined successes, to successfully address a range of issues.

5.4 ***THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION***

It is important that the highest quality third-level education is provided in a manner that will ensure the maximum participation in education by the people of the region and that the social, cultural and economic life of the region is enhanced to the greatest extent possible.

As an initial step, the Institutes involved in Education will be requested to participate in a forum to examine the needs of third-level education in the Region and the ways in which such education might be provided in a coherent and integrated way.

5.5 ***ENERGY PROVISION***

Energy is a fundamental part of a high quality of life, but simply producing energy without regard for the environment is not an option for either the County or the region. We need to move towards more sustainable solutions to our energy requirements. In particular

- The strategic energy needs of the region will be assessed.
- The Region’s renewable energy potential will be assessed
- Regional targets for local supply of energy will be identified
- The most suitable areas for the provision of renewable energy projects will be identified, and these will be promoted by the Regional and Local Authorities.
- A network of local energy agencies will be established

¹ Regional Population Projections to 2030, by the CSO. These projections are based on current trends assuming no intervention

- Co-operative projects in energy conservation will be developed and implemented with regional assistance

Prior to the establishment of the Energy Agencies it is proposed that an inter-county group be established to pursue the actions outlined above.

5.6 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The counties of the Region will cooperate to ensure the follow-through of the Regional Transportation Strategy–

- That all County Towns are directly linked through integrated rail and bus systems
- That all towns with a population of over 1000 should be linked through the bus system
- That all sea-ports are developed and provided with levels of access that will ensure their benefit to the region
- That an airport development plan is implemented to ensure the establishment of a viable airport that will enhance the economic and social life of the region

5.7 TOURISM

Tourism is of regional importance and as such all counties will support a regional tourism plan. This will focus on the development of facilities within the region. It will reflect the requirements of sustainable tourism, the use of the region's strengths and the distribution of tourism development throughout the region so that all areas benefit from tourism.

The commitment of each local authority to such a plan will extend to the implementation of a regional tourism marketing initiative, and also to the provision of resources to implement it under the guidance of the South-East Regional Tourism Authority.

5.8 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Information will be gathered to identify the needs of regional organisations, industries and services, and to identify any barriers to development that the existing network may present. The levels of service proposed by network providers in the region will be researched.

The project to facilitate the provision of a distribution system for broadband at a regional level will be supported by the Region as a whole.

A South East Information Society Strategy (SEISS) and Action Plan has been prepared. The local authorities will facilitate the implementation of this plan.

5.9 HEALTHCARE

In order to have a coherent Regional policy regarding healthcare provision, an inter-county task force will be established, with the co-operation of the South Eastern Health Board, to;

- Identify the range of services that are best supported at a regional level
- Identify the most appropriate location for regional level services and facilities
- Identify the range of major facilities that should be provided at a county level
- Identify an appropriate medical service that might have its national centre based in the region
- Identify an appropriate medical management service that might have its national centre based in the region
- Examine the possibility of the establishment of a teaching hospital in the region or the possibility of attaching a teaching function to an existing hospital.
- Support the establishment of a regional radiotherapy unit

5.10 *FISHERIES, LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL WATER QUALITY*

Marine and river-based fisheries support and sustain small coastal and rural communities across the south east region. Supporting an active and sustainable fisheries industry, and its attendant activities in tourism and leisure, needs a regional approach. Balanced development of resources in the region should involve the potentially competing requirements of sustaining communities which depend on fishing activities, against

- Requirements for continued Port and estuarine development,
- Conservation and protection of habitats, fish stocks and environmental water quality, and
- Development of alternative water-based leisure activities.

The Board is committed to collaborating with other City and County Development Boards, and relevant agencies and organisations to develop the integrated management of water resources, their fisheries and leisure potential

We believe that the establishment of a local Marine Institute is a necessary step in the development of a sustainable fishing and aquaculture industry. An integrated coastal zone management plan for the south east region is essential.

5.11 *MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER PROJECTS*

Where a proposal is being considered within any county, the Development Boards have agreed that –

- The regional implications of the proposal will be specifically considered as part of the project evaluation.
- The support of the other counties within the region will be sought for the proposal.
- Where such support is not available, a process will be put in place to evaluate the competing claims of different counties, and an attempt will be made to gaining consensus on the best way forward.
- Where agreement cannot be reached, only then will counties pursue their individual projects without the expectation of regional support.

OUR SHARED VISION FOR COUNTY WATERFORD

Throughout the strategy, we have referred to the importance of achieving our vision. Our vision is a simple and clear statement of what we want to achieve for County Waterford, as a place to live and work in, and enjoy with our families.

The vision of the Waterford County Development Board for County Waterford is:

'... A proactive, sustainable community, strong in its own identity, with a good quality of life for all...'

In achieving this vision we will need to:

- Foster and encourage **Initiative** in the County. We encourage the members of the Board and the wider population to establish, assert and set the framework for policies and decision-making in the county, so that it is open to all people and appropriate to their needs and perspective.
- Adhere to principles of **Sustainability**. To achieve this we must protect, develop and use our natural resources at a rate, and in a manner, that enables people to meet their needs now, yet which also provides that future generations can meet their own needs. **Sustainability** involves finding the balance between an economy and a way of life in which both people and nature flourish, and culture can develop and last. **Sustainable Development is about a more inclusive society**²
- Be clear on what we mean by **Community**. The County has many diverse communities of place and interest. The Board is committed to open interaction with each, as appropriate, through the Community Forum, and through other ways of communication and dialogue.
- Assert and be proud of our **Identity**. We have a beautiful county with a history of contribution by Waterford people to the development of the State and the creation of new ideas. We are open to the world and will build on this.
- Build a good **Quality of Life** for all. We have a great environment, one of the best in the world, but we want to keep it and open up its many advantages to all in our County, and not just a few.

6.1

STRATEGIC THEMES FOR THE COUNTY

In the course of preparing the strategy, our consultations with the communities of the county, and the working groups within the Board, both identified a range of ideas and initiatives across the Social, Cultural and Economic segments of the strategy. Many of these ideas and initiatives were repeated across all three segments. The importance of education, for example, occurred as an issue for good economic growth, for a good cultural identity, and as a key response to social needs.

(1) ² Consultation Paper for the national Spatial Strategy

We have chosen these common themes of strategic importance to the county as a basis for developing the strategy.

These themes are;

- **Citizens in Communities** - where the recurring issue of participation in community life was highlighted. This is particularly relevant for the most disadvantaged, emphasising the importance of Social Inclusion; citizenship, and what it means; and the need to develop the capacity of communities to participate and contribute.
- **Rural Communities** - where the historic vibrancy of our agricultural community is expanded, our rural communities sustained, and the threat of isolation is overcome, to create a sustainable rural society with a real future.
- **Enterprise** - where the entrepreneurial skills of the people of Waterford, in alliance with investors, make a successful business environment.
- **Infrastructure for living** - where high quality infrastructure sustains our communities, the environment and the development of industry and services of the highest quality.
- **Tourism** - where the full advantage of the magnificent landscape and character of the people is marketed and made available to our visitors
- **Quality of Life** - where the important issues which contribute to the way we live were identified. These are the issues which will determine if Waterford is an attractive place for living and working, now and into the future.
- **Gaeltacht** - where Irish remains a vibrant and spoken language, where our culture and heritage contribute to our sense of accomplishment and well-being, and are valued as a part of what we are.

The Board has committed itself to Social Inclusion as a core component of this strategy. It is at the centre of a sustainable, high quality, creative and productive society. Our priorities must include the elimination of Poverty as it appears in our communities. They must also include overcoming the cumulative marginalisation that some individuals and communities suffer – “*marginalisation from production (employment), from consumption (income poverty), from social networks (community, family and neighbours), from decision-making, and from an adequate quality of life*”³.

At the heart of Social Inclusion is our view of ourselves – as individuals, and as members of communities. Building a strong sense of belonging, a sense of citizenship, is based on being part of a community, and being able to bring influence to bear on the things that are done, and how they are done, in that community. We recognise that opportunities to participate fully in community life, and in the decision-making structures and processes that affect people’s lives is more open to some groups and individuals than others.

Community Development is about building people’s capacity, and developing their skills, knowledge and experience, to play a role in shaping the communities of which they are a part. It is about **building citizenship**, and **building an inclusive society**. We can achieve this in Waterford by working;

- To ensure all communities have the opportunity to participate and input into all developments locally, regionally and nationally.
- To ensure that the most socially excluded are involved in the development of the county.
- To ensure that economic development is carried out in consultation with communities and that community-based business is encouraged, valued and supported.

In our discussions with communities and with agencies, it was identified that to achieve Social Inclusion, certain groups and areas of the county require special and targeted supporting initiatives.

Goal 1: That people living in Waterford will be connected and committed to their communities through their active citizenship.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To increase participation of all people in the general life of their communities.	WCC	DSCFA Community Forum SEHB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a local Charter of Citizens Rights which all agencies and organisations implement • Research, and identify obstacles to participation and develop a programme for their elimination
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

(2) ³ Partnership 2000

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 2 To build and support community participation and active citizenship	WCC	Community Forum WLP DSCFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an action plan for the formation and support of Community Groups and Networks All decision making bodies to seek representation from the Community Forum.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To support and develop 'Volunteerism' in the county	FAS	WSP VEC Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish programs to develop leadership in communities. Establish a county-wide 'mentoring' service for volunteers.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To establish a comprehensive and integrated public information service throughout the county	WCC	Comhairle/ CICs SEHB DSCFA	Establish an Inter-Agency Working Group to examine requirements and develop an action plan
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 5 To involve all communities in planning for the facilities and services that sustain them.	CDB	WCC Údarás na Gaeltachta Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-Agency Working Group to develop a Code of Practice for Participatory Planning To develop and support models of community-based planning initiatives
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 2: That Social Exclusion for individuals and communities will be eliminated.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To develop an inter-agency programme for the identification and elimination of poverty and social exclusion.	DSCFA	SIMWG WCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research the levels and character of poverty and isolation in the county. Develop a Local Anti-Poverty Strategy.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 2 To build the capacity of disadvantaged groups to actively engage in the development of their communities	SIMWG	Community Forum	Develop a program for training and resourcing targeted groups and communities within the county.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To ensure that local public policies, plans and practices are 'proofed' against poverty, equality, sustainability	SIMWG	Public Service Providers	Develop models for assessing and evaluating the impact of local policies and programs on communities in the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To develop programmes which counter discriminatory attitudes and practices.	SIMWG	Public Service Providers	Develop and implement a Code of Practice for all public service providers
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Agriculture is very important to the economy of Co. Waterford and, in general, is well developed. A strong agriculture sector is vital to maintaining vibrant rural communities.

A key issue facing rural communities is that of maintaining a young population, as economic and other forces are causing young people to shy away from farming as a career. There is, and will be, for the foreseeable future, a large increase in farmers and their families seeking off-farm employment. It is important therefore that there are employment opportunities within commuting distance of the more remote rural areas and part-time farmers and spouses must be afforded the opportunity to develop off-farm skills.

The strong farming base in Co. Waterford must be reinforced, by encouraging farmers to develop their businesses into the future. This will be achieved by ensuring that their technical farming skills and their business skills are constantly upgraded and updated to meet the needs of the market place. Intensive farming can be and must be carried on without damage to the environment.

Waterford is very well placed to build upon its existing fishing sector in mariculture, sea fisheries and river based activity. An integrated management plan for the County must set the development framework if we are to have sustainable fishing communities in the County.

Goal 3: That County Waterford will have a vibrant, sustainable rural community

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To promote and develop integrated planning for rural communities	WCC	Teagasc WLP Community Forum	Establish an Inter-Agency Working Group to examine and develop an Integrated Framework Plan for Rural Communities in the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To ensure that transportation supports rural living	WCC	WLP Community Forum	'Pilot' and implement effective models of Rural Transportation
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To ensure that all local public policies are 'proofed' for their impact on Rural Communities	SIMWG	Public Authorities Service providers	Develop mechanisms and procedures for implementing rural 'proofing'.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 4 To secure the physical infrastructure to support the growth of rural communities	WCC	WLP Teagasc Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and publish an Annual Rural Infrastructure Audit. Develop a programme for alternative and innovative options for the provision of water and sewerage services.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 4: That Waterford will exploit the full potential of ICT to support its rural communities.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To assess and develop the full potential of ICT to reduce rural isolation in the County	VEC	SEISS WCC WLP	Research ICT opportunities for rural communities Pilot a Community based ICT project for older people
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To develop and implement an integrated training strategy for ICT in Waterford	FÁS	SEISS WLP Education Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a comprehensive training programme for the County Establish a project which develops the full potential of ICT for all rural women.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 5: That people living in rural communities will have access to quality economic opportunities

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To sustain the role of farming in the rural economy.	Teagasc	Farming Groups WLP TI	Establish a representative task group to review the role of agriculture in Waterford
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To eliminate the barriers to sustaining full-time farming	Teagasc	Farming Groups	Publish a comprehensive annual report on the state of farming in the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 3 To enable small-holders to have an improved standard of living	Teagasc	WLP DSCFA FÁS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement training and education programmes for small-holder families Recruit two rural development workers
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To provide a network of Enterprise Centres around the County	CEB	WCC WLP Community Forum	Facilitate the provision of two Enterprise 'starter units' per year
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 5 To generate part time work opportunities for rural families	WLP	CEB Údarás na Gaeltachta County Childcare Committee	Carry out an audit of current locally-based part-time employment opportunities throughout the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 6 To generate a strong, environmentally sustainable fishing and aquaculture industry	CDB	BIM SRFB Fishing Interest Groups Údarás na Gaeltachta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Task Group/Forum to coordinate the development and management of fishery resources in the county. Examine the feasibility of developing a local Marine Institute.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 7 To maximise the benefits to the county from its forestry resources	Teagasc	Enterprise Ireland Forest Service Coillte	Establish an IAWG to review the feasibility of added value timber processing and manufacturing industries in the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Waterford needs the on-going development of its infrastructure and support services if it is to compete successfully for the location of both Irish and international business. In addition it must maintain the living environment that is essential to keep and attract the type of employee now required for the type of enterprise needed in the County. In addition its service sector will be in need of constant improvement over time. This will require an integrated focus by all the development agencies in the County. It also means that the Board must monitor the international market environment and build on the international recognition that is associated with the name of the County.

Goal 6: That the County will support sustainable employment opportunities

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To promote and support a 'spirit of enterprise' throughout the county.	CEB	VEC WLP Enterprise Ireland	Establish a 'forum of excellence' for the development of a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To promote excellence in business management	Enterprise Ireland	CEB WLP WIT	Design and implement programs for business management training
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective3 To increase the number of women entrepreneurs in the County	CEB	WLP Chamber of Commerce Enterprise Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a start-up programme for women • Develop a support programme for women currently in business
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To increase the opportunities for employment of third-level graduates in the county	Enterprise Ireland	IDA 3 rd Level Colleges IBEC	Carry out an audit of current employment opportunities for graduates
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 5 Develop the capacity within the education sector to match training courses with skills based industry and service needs.	VEC	Education Working Group FÁS CERT	Complete and publish an annual needs assessment in the industry and services sector
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 6 To increase high quality employment opportunities in the county	IDA	Enterprise Ireland CEB WLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Enterprise Forum for the county Secure significant government decentralisation to Dungarvan
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 7 To expand the capacity for industry-based R&D in the County	Enterprise Ireland	IDA WIT IBEC	Establish an Inter-Agency Working Group to research the supports required for R&D
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 8 To increase the level of inward investment in County Waterford	IDA	Enterprise Ireland WCC	Research the barriers to investment in the County and develop a programme to counteract them
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 7: That the potential of ICT will be developed to support business and economic activity

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 Develop e-commerce opportunities throughout the county.	Enterprise Ireland	SEISS CEB WLP	Develop and implement an integrated ICT plan for the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To expand the capacity of industry in the county in the field of ICT	Enterprise Ireland	SEISS FÁS CEB	Develop a training programme in ICT potential for business management
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 3 To provide all parts of the County with appropriate ICT infrastructure.	WCC	SEISS WLP Private Telecoms Údarás na Gaeltahta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance the development of Broadband infrastructure throughout the County • Develop a network of distribution conduits that will improve quality internet access
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 8: That the County will be in a position to take advantage of domestic and foreign marketing opportunities

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To develop an integrated marketing strategy for Waterford	CDB	WCC Waterford Crystal Waterford City Council SERTA	Establish a Joint Marketing Board for Waterford City and County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To ensure that the County provides on-going support to start-up industries and services	Enterprise Ireland	IDA CEB IAWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Waterford industrial and commercial environment that makes it suitable as a location for investment • Develop a programme to attract back expatriates and entrepreneurs
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To facilitate indigenous industry to participate in export markets	CEB	IDA / EI IBEC Waterford Crystal	Develop training opportunities for business management in export marketing and product development
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

A growing population needs infrastructure that will provide a clean and plentiful supply of water. It also needs infrastructure that will treat and dispose of wastewaters, while protecting the environment and public health. To attract investment and grow a sound local economy base, we need high quality communications, and sources of clean and efficient energy. Communities and industry must be able to travel safely, comfortably and efficiently.

The Board assigns high priority to securing the infrastructure which is necessary to support communities, which protects the environment as a resource, and which connects communities. Good quality roads are a key element for Social Inclusion. They support the transportation links and services which connect individuals and communities with the services that sustain them.

The county has a greater dependence on road travel to reach principal urban and industrial centres. It is vital for economic growth that the county is served by high quality routes beyond its boundaries.

Goal 9: That the infrastructure for water supply and sewage disposal will match best practice

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To provide all households with access to safe drinking water which meets full compliance with regulations.	WCC	SEHB Group Water Schemes Community Forum	Develop a targeted programme for those households who are identified as having inadequate water supply
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To provide all households with adequate and sustainable sewage treatment capacity.	WCC	SEHB EPA Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Water Services Capital Programme for the County. Develop a programme of advanced planning in response to the Needs Assessment for the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 10: That people will be able to travel efficiently, in comfort and safety, into, through and out of the county.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To ensure the completion of the national road network into and through County Waterford	WCC	NRA SERA IDA /EI Waterford City Council	Establish a regional working group to promote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the early upgrading of N9/N10 routes north from Waterford City and the early completion of the second river crossing and by pass of Waterford City
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To maintain and manage the network of non-national roads in the county	WCC	Farming Groups Coillte Community Forum	Establish strategic priorities for the development of Regional and County Roads
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To develop an integrated and accessible transport service to and within the county	CDB	Community Forum Transport Service Providers	Establish a transport forum composed of all the key stakeholders
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To develop satisfactory access from the county to international and domestic air and sea transport services	WCC	EI / IDA Waterford Regional Airport Waterford Port Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a program to implement the recommendations of the South East Region Transport Strategy Establish a review group for transportation and landuse in adjacent areas of the County and City.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 5 To support the development of adequate international and domestic air services from Waterford Regional Airport	WCC	Waterford Regional Airport Waterford City Council SERA	Establish plans for the development of infrastructure serving Waterford Regional Airport
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 11: That adequate energy supplies will be available to industrial and domestic users within the county

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To provide adequate and consistent supplies of electricity	WCC	ESB Community Forum	Complete an energy needs assessment for the county, and identify deficits.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To support the extension of natural gas supplies to the town of Dungarvan	WCC	Bord Gáis Dungarvan Energy Company	Investigate the barriers to the provision of supplies of natural gas
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 12: County Waterford will have quality emergency services

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To maintain a capacity to respond to any emergency	SEHB	WCC An Garda Síochána Voluntary Agencies	Review and establish response times for emergency services throughout the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To provide safe access to the mountains and waters of the County	WCC	Air Corps Waterford Harbour Authority Voluntary Rescue Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a plan for the development of a high quality mountain rescue service • Advance the provision of an adequate air-sea rescue service in the area
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 13: That the Marine Infrastructure will complement our natural resources

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
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<p>Objective 1 To provide the infrastructure to support water-based industry and economic activity.</p>	<p>WCC</p>	<p>Fisheries Task Group Údarás na Gaeltachta SERTA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an integrated plan for the development of inland waterways and harbour facilities in the county • Develop a marina project in the county
<p>Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12</p>			
<p>Objective 2 To support the commercial sea fishing industry in the County</p>	<p>WCC</p>	<p>Fisheries Task Group Údarás na Gaeltachta Fishing Interest Groups</p>	<p>Establish a program for the development of Dunmore East and Helvick Harbours</p>
<p>Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12</p>			

Waterford is gifted with the many beautiful and unique features. Its pristine environment, its diversity of landscapes, rivers, and a range of important heritage sites provide a key resource. It is the foundation on which to build a strong tourist industry, set within an international framework that combines best sustainable practice and economic opportunity. The recent designation by UNESCO of the 'Copper Coast' of Waterford to the status of '**Geopark**', provides the County with instantly recognised importance in world-class amenities. Our high quality resources must be complemented by high quality facilities and a high quality of service. This can bring year-round benefit to the county. But development must not contribute to an erosion of resources or amenities. Our efforts must integrate sustainable development, and a Sustainable Tourism Strategy, into the Counties development generally. Given all these factors the Board has set the tourism sector as a strategic area of action in its own right, over the implementation period of the strategy, and will bring to bear all the experience of the Board members to a successful implementation of the strategy.

Goal 14 That the people of Waterford will gain maximum benefit from the sustainable development of its tourism potential.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To develop an integrated sustainable tourism strategy.	CDB	SERTA Community Forum WLP	Establish a county-wide cross-sectoral Tourism Forum
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To develop effective marketing structures	SERTA	Waterford Crystal County and City Development Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a coherent integrated marketing plan for the County and City • Provide a quality ICT-based accessible information and referral system for the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To develop an appropriate infrastructure to support tourism	WCC	SERTA Tourism Forum WLP	Design and implement a comprehensive and balanced Accommodation Plan
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

<p>Objective 4 To develop and maintain a high quality Tourism product</p>	<p>SERTA</p>	<p>WCC Tourism Forum WLP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop two flagship attractions – one for the West of the County and one for the mid-County area • Support the establishment of a range of water-based tourism activities
<p>Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12</p>			
<p>Objective 5 To enable Waterford to become the “Walking Capital” of Ireland</p>	<p>WCC</p>	<p>SERTA WLP Tourism Forum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Working Group of all key stakeholders and interested groups • Develop a program to expand the National ‘Waymarked Ways’ into the County
<p>Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12</p>			
<p>Objective 6 To ensure tourism service delivery is of the highest standard.</p>	<p>SERTA</p>	<p>CERT VEC Tourism Forum</p>	<p>Develop a locally-based accredited multi-level training programme</p>
<p>Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12</p>			
<p>Objective 7 To Provide facilities and infrastructure capable of hosting appropriate and targeted provincial, national and international events</p>	<p>SERTA</p>	<p>WCC WSP Tourism Forum</p>	<p>Identify two key projects in the County suitable for sustained development and investment</p>
<p>Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12</p>			

Everyone wants a good quality of life. The things which diminish a good quality of life can easily be identified – pollution and litter, a poor environment for living and working, a lack of a sense of security, poor education, poverty and a lack of employment. There are other important aspects, which reach beyond the more basic needs, but which are important - opportunities for positive leisure activity, and the important aspects of social interactions with family, friends and the wider community. All of these things contribute to the creativity and wellbeing of communities.

In its consultations, the Board identified a number of key themes which need priority in Waterford.

- Housing and Accommodation;
- Education;
- Health & Well-being;
- Environment and Sustainable Development;
- Unemployment;
- Arts
- Heritage;
- Sport & Recreation.

Housing and Accommodation

One of the most basic needs of human existence is proper shelter and, therefore, one of the most fundamental of human rights is access to adequate accommodation. It should always be the aspiration of County Waterford that no person should ever have to live in surroundings, which diminish human dignity. Whether it is permanent, temporary, private or public, owner-occupied or rented, our housing and accommodation should always be of the highest quality. Families who cannot afford their own homes need to be supported to live in quality housing environments. There will be no homelessness in the county.

Goal 15: That the housing and accommodation needs of people in Waterford are met in a vibrant local community setting

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To develop an integrated and comprehensive housing and accommodation strategy for the County, in partnership with all communities.	WCC	DSCFA SEHB Community Forum	Establish a Housing and Accommodation Forum to review all housing and accommodation policy, needs and responses for the county.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 2 To provide for the housing and accommodation needs of all people in County Waterford.	WCC	DSCFA SEHB Community Forum	Develop a program to eliminate homelessness in the county.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To put in place partnership arrangements between local authorities and the residents in their estates	WCC	County Accommodation Forum Community Forum Town Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Code of Tenants Rights • Establish at least two pilot estate management projects per year
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To ensure that housing developments and estates will offer attractive living spaces and vibrant communities.	WCC	County Accommodation Forum Community Forum	Develop estate design guidelines appropriate to meet the social needs of residents
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Education

It is only through the pursuit and provision of quality educational opportunities that all people can aspire to fulfilling and enjoying their full role as citizens. Education and training are pre-requisites for social equity and economic well-being. Traditional formal education alone cannot provide the answers – the concept of life-long learning has to be fully embraced. We want the County Waterford of the future to provide educational opportunities, which will:

- Encourage participation and retention
- Be fair to all, especially those who have special needs
- Be open to diversity
- Be of high quality
- Be cognisant of disadvantage
- Be accessible and integrated

Goal 16: That all people in County Waterford will participate in high quality facilities and opportunities for life-long learning

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partner	Key Actions
Objective 1 To develop an inter-agency programme for the integration of education and training in the county.	CDB	WLP VEC WIT / TI FÁS	Establish an Inter-Agency Working Group to research and review education and life long learning in the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 2 To identify and eliminate all barriers to education for people in Waterford.	VEC	IAWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Undertake local research and publish findings on the identification of barriers to education in County Waterford ◆ Implement national programmes aimed at countering educational disadvantage
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To promote the value of life long learning among all people in County Waterford.	VEC	IAWG WLP REGSA	Develop an integrated program of appropriate educational opportunities for all people in the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To develop high quality educational infrastructure	VEC	IAWG	Complete an Audit of Educational Infrastructure in the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 5 To eliminate early school leaving in the County	VEC	SEHB An Garda Síochána Community Forum	Develop and implement family support mechanisms to break the cycle of educational disadvantage.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 6 To provide access to training for employment for all	FÁS	Teagasc WLP Carriglea Training Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and review current training opportunities • Develop an integrated program of training for the whole county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 7 To eliminate illiteracy in the County	VEC	SIMWG National Adult Literacy Agency Community Forum	Develop and implement a Literacy Plan for the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 8 To increase the number of people in the County participating in, and completing, third level education.	VEC	IAWG 3rd Level Colleges Community Forum	Develop a schools-based programme to encourage participation in Third level Education
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 9 To provide locally based, University level infrastructure and opportunities, to all people in County Waterford.	VEC	IAWG 3 rd Level Colleges WCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and advance the establishment of a University in the South East region. • Support and advance the establishment of an Outreach Campus in West Waterford.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Health and Wellbeing

For quality of life, health is an absolute requirement. As new challenges for the quality of our health present themselves, we must constantly discover innovative approaches to counteracting them. Though some health issues are of national rather than local concern, and while recognising that the South Eastern Health Board is the major deliverer of health services in the region, there is much still which can be achieved on a local level. We can monitor our environments, increase our health awareness and healthy ways of living, reduce the use of drugs and alcohol, develop safety standards and safety awareness, and press for essential services to be available as locally as possible. We must be a County where the wellbeing of our most vulnerable is a priority. In particular, we must be a place where the health and wellbeing of our children and older people is paramount.

Goal 17: That the health and well-being of all people will be actively promoted.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To develop local programmes for healthy living	SEHB	SIMWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an audit of health promotion activities in the county. • Identify, and develop responses for those groups at most disadvantage from the lack of a healthy lifestyle
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To increase participation in physical exercise among the people of Waterford	SEHB	WSP	Develop programs to support the implementation of the County Sports Strategy
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To have an active anti-drug environment	SEHB	CWCBDI Education Working Group Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a schools-based anti-drugs educational program for the county. • Develop a program to extend locally-based anti-drugs initiatives to targeted communities in the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 4 To make our communities, - our homes, farms and workplaces, - safer and more healthy	SEHB	An Garda Síochána Community Forum County Childcare Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Develop an integrated register of recorded accidents, injuries and incidents of domestic violence in the County ◆ Develop programmes to respond to the issues identified by the research
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 5 That older people feel safe and secure in their homes/place of residence.	An Garda Síochána	SEHB Community Forum Older Peoples' Network	Develop and implement a program to increase the number and effectiveness of Community Alert schemes
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 18: That all people will have equal access to appropriate health services and facilities.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To identify and eliminate barriers to equal access to health services	SEHB	SIMWG Community Forum	Identify the type and distribution of health services provided throughout the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To identify the needs, and develop responses, for specific groups in need of targeted programmes.	SEHB	SIMWG Community Forum WCC	Establish a County Community Health Forum
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 19: That an integrated and comprehensive quality health and social support service will be provided to all people.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To provide the facilities to support the delivery of good quality county-based health and social support services.	SEHB	WCC Community Forum DSCFA	Publish a Health and Social Services Infrastructure Plan for the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 2 To develop a county-based, multi-agency health and family support service	SEHB	Community Forum DSCFA SIMWG	Develop a Dungarvan-based interdisciplinary family support and referral service
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To have equal access to quality family support services for all who need them.	SEHB	SIMWG Community Forum	Develop and 'pilot' a model of targeted and focussed interventions for families in need of support.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 20: That all children will receive quality supports and services

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 The County Child Care Strategy will be implemented in full.	County Child Care Committee	SIMWG	Develop an action plan for the full implementation of the Child Care Strategy
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Environment and Sustainable Development

“Sustainable development is not just about environmental protection; it is concerned with quality of life, the range and distribution of resources and benefits, the interactions between environment and development and the provision for the future”⁴

Waterford has a high quality environment, and it is an important contribution to the way of life enjoyed by our communities. The key issue for the future is maintaining that high quality, while steering the balanced development of the County, so that all people benefit, now and in the future.

Goal 21: That people in Waterford will continue to benefit from a high quality environment

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partner	Key Actions
Objective 1 To identify and raise awareness of the importance of a high quality environment	WCC	SEHB Teagasc	Publish a comprehensive annual report measuring the quality of the Environment in County Waterford.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To develop sustainable local communities within the county	WCC	SEHB Údarás na Gaeltachta Community Forum	Adopt a new County Development Plan that incorporates Sustainable Development for County Waterford and all its communities.

(3) ⁴ Economic and Social Research Institute - Paper No 27 March 1996 - "Formulating Environmental and Social Indicators for Sustainable Development"

Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To ensure the protection of environmental water quality.	WCC	SEHB EPA Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish the results of all routine monitoring and tests within 7 days Research and review the pressures on environmental water quality in the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To develop and maintain a 'litter free' status for the county.	WCC	Community Forum Education IAWG	Develop a program to implement and monitor a model of litter free communities in three localities each year
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 5 Achieve and maintain 'blue flag' status for all beaches in the county.	WCC	SEHB	Develop a program to expand the current number of beaches with blue flag status
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 6 To ensure that all development will be sensitive to our environment.	WCC	An Taisce Community Forum RIAI	Establish comprehensive Architectural Design standards for all developers, to protect the character of local communities.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 7 To develop land management systems and landscape uses which are sensitive to the good quality of the environment and its preservation.	WCC	Teagasc Dúchas Farming Groups	Complete a Landscape Character Assessment as part of the County Development Plan
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 8 To promote sustainable waste management practices	WCC	Social Partners Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an integrated and sustainable Waste management system, in partnership with communities of the County. Support the implementation of the South East Waste Management Plan
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 9 To promote sustainable and alternative energy.	WCC	Irish Energy Centre	Establish an Energy Agency to serve the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Unemployment

Though unemployment levels are lower now than they have been for many years, we must not assume that all employment is secure or that the social issues associated with unemployment are diminishing. The nature of long-term unemployment needs to be addressed in innovative ways. We need to develop mechanisms by which all those who wish to participate in the labour force may do so. This means developing options for employment that include flexible and part-time working. We must be conscious of exploitative and discriminatory practices and ensure that all people who work do so in jobs that are well-paid and fulfilling. Through constant education and upskilling, we need to develop a labour force capable of filling those high-skill jobs, which are less vulnerable to the effects of cheaper foreign labour markets.

Goal 22: To have full employment in County Waterford.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To reduce the levels of unemployment in the County.	DSCFA	WLP SIMWG FÁS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and review the effectiveness of current supports and programmes for the unemployed • Develop programmes to support the Social Economy
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To increase participation of marginalised groups in the labour force	DSCFA	SIMWG WLP Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the key obstacles to participation • Develop one rural and one urban pilot project per annum targeted at identified groups
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To identify and eliminate the barriers to the participation of women in gaining access to all levels of training and employment	FÁS	WLP County Childcare Committee Women's Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a program to promote family friendly policies in workplaces in the county • Research the need for, and impact of, the lack of part-time work and training opportunities for women
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To develop a co-ordinated inter-agency response to long-term unemployment	WLP	DSCFA SIMWG FÁS	Establish innovative pilot projects in the four communities of highest unemployment in the County

Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 5 Identify and address issues of under-employment	FÁS	WLP VEC Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identify areas of the County and key social groupings where underemployment is prevalent ◆ Develop a training and education programme specially designed to counter underemployment
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Arts

In the past, the Arts may not have been seen as being connected to a good quality of life. We now know that there is significant evidence that confirms the direct relationship between involvement in the Arts and other positive aspects of life like health, education and employment. We must develop co-operative ventures to ensure far greater participation of all people in the Arts, but especially of young people. There will be more planning for the Arts, in which everybody can participate and far more support for new art forms, while recognising the value and uniqueness of the traditional. The Arts will be a vehicle for creativity, innovation and enjoyment for everybody and a means by which the County will develop a sense of pride and of identity.

Goal 23: That County Waterford will be a place where the Arts will flourish.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To establish a comprehensive and co-ordinated Arts programme for the development of the Arts within the county, in partnership with all communities and agencies.	CDB	WCC Community Forum Údarás na Gaeltachta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a fully representative County Arts Development Group (ADG) • Develop a comprehensive Arts Strategy for the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To establish a range of educational opportunities to participate in the Arts	VEC	Education IAWG WCC ADG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the barriers to participation in arts education and develop a programme to counteract them
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 3 To develop the Arts as a source of inspiration, and expression of County Waterford's identity	WCC	Education IAWG WCC ADG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a series of Arts events which will showcase the cultural richness of County Waterford Organise a biennial seminar based on the theme of cultural identity
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To develop a good supporting infrastructure for the Arts in County Waterford.	WCC	CDB ADG Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a purpose built Theatre in Dungarvan. Complete an audit of existing facilities and public spaces, and assess their potential for use as Exhibition / Workshop / studio space
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 5 To develop the county as a place of support and creativity for artists	WCC	ADG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a creative retreat for artists Set up an annual artist in residence scheme Set up an international visiting scholars programme
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 6 To ensure that traditional art forms are revitalised and supported.	WCC	ADG Údarás na Gaeltachta Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and record traditional art forms Support educational opportunities to teach and learn traditional art and craft skills
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 7 To use the Arts to promote Social Inclusion.	WCC	ADG SIMWG Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a pilot project using the arts as a vehicle for community development Provide accessible amateur arts educational opportunities to voluntary and community groups in the county
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 8 To establish a co-ordinated arts development support service to voluntary and community groups.	WCC	ADG FÁS Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a social economy project to provide arts development workers at local level

Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 9 To explore the use of art as a therapeutic tool.	SEHB	ADG Waterford Healing Arts Trust Carriglea Training Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the Waterford Regional Hospital scheme to county institutions
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 10 To provide opportunities for the discovery of new talents	WCC	ADG VEC Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an annual awards scheme for aspiring artists Establish a County Scholarship Fund for the promotion of excellence in the Arts
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Heritage

County Waterford has a rich heritage resource. There are dangers that parts of this heritage may be lost. We must make sure that this does not happen. Programmes will be put in place to ensure that both the people living in the County, and the people visiting it, are aware of and value this resource. Our natural and built habitats can make a positive contribution to the lives of all people in the county. We must give people access to our physical and cultural heritage, for their enjoyment and benefit, where this can be achieved. Where difficulties of access to heritage sites exist, these difficulties will be addressed, where appropriate. Our succeeding generations will inherit a heritage resource richer than that which the previous generation inherited.

Goal 24: That County Waterford will protect and value its heritage.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To develop a comprehensive and co-ordinated heritage program for the county	WCC	Dúchas Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a heritage forum of all key stakeholders Employ a Heritage Officer for the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 2 To raise the awareness and appreciation of their heritage among the people of County Waterford	WCC	Heritage Forum Dúchas Education IAWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a curriculum-based County Waterford Heritage Programme suitable for primary and secondary schools Establish bye-laws to ensure that the names of all new building developments will reflect the culture and heritage of the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To make the heritage of County Waterford more accessible.	WCC	Heritage Forum Farming Groups WLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an access plan for heritage sites in the County Support local history research and publication
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Sport and Recreation

Many people's quality of life is enhanced significantly by involvement in sport and physical recreation. This is one clear way in which participation can be seen to build inclusiveness. There are many groups, however, whose levels of participation in sport are quite low. These low participation rates will be addressed through the work of the Waterford Sports Partnership. The value of sports as a vehicle of personal, social and community development will be enhanced. The needs within communities for the development of sports facilities and playgrounds will be addressed in a balanced fashion. While the value of physical exercise as a contributor to good health will be emphasised, sporting excellence will also be supported. There is also a need to develop responses to diminishing volunteerism, not alone in sport, but in all community activity.

Goal 25: Participation in sport at all levels by people in County Waterford will be facilitated.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To achieve a co-ordinated and balanced approach towards the delivery of sports services in Waterford.	WSP	Irish Sports Council WCC Waterford City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the establishment & operation of the Waterford Sports Partnership in co-ordinating sport and recreation services in the County and City. Develop a joint Sports strategy for the county and city
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 2 To identify and eliminate barriers to participation in sport for all people	WSP	Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a comprehensive Sports Needs Assessment in the County
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To develop a range of accessible quality sports and recreational facilities throughout the county.	WSP	WCC Education Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Sports Facilities Plan for the County Develop a programme to ensure that all communities have quality accessible playground facilities
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To identify, foster and support excellence and potential in sport in County Waterford.	WSP	Irish Sports Council Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a County Waterford Sports Scholarship Establish and operate a Sponsorship Fund for Waterford sportspersons operating in the international arena
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

The Gaeltacht in Waterford is a unique feature of the social, cultural and economic life of the County bringing its own identity and vitality to the overall socio-economic condition of Waterford. It provides a critical foundation to the on-going growth of the Irish language in the State and is increasingly seen internationally as a contributor to a multi-layered European cultural perspective. The area, while among the smaller of the State's Gaeltachtaí, plays a vital role in sustaining Irish as a spoken language and should be seen as the cornerstone to greater usage throughout the County, and across the Country.

Goal 26: That people in County Waterford will know, use and value the Irish language.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To provide a range of educational opportunities for learning Irish, and learning through Irish	VEC	Údarás na Gaeltachta Foras na Gaeilge Coláiste na Rinne Education IAWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop programmes to support the growth of Naíonraí and Gaelscoileanna Develop language programmes in Coláiste na Rinne for public service staffs.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To increase the number of people who regularly speak Irish	WCC	Údarás na Gaeltachta Foras na Gaeilge Public Service Providers	Develop a promotional programme to encourage communities to use Irish for their daily business.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To encourage the use of Irish in local business.	Chamber of Commerce	Gaeltacht Community Údarás na Gaeltachta WCC	Establish a Business Forum to promote the use of Irish
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Objective 4 To provide public services through Irish in the county.	WCC	Údarás na Gaeltachta Foras na Gaeilge Public Service Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public service providers to provide appropriate and targeted Irish language learning opportunities for all their staff. Provide key documents and application forms in Irish.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

Goal 27: That the Gaeltacht in County Waterford will be a live, vibrant sustainable community, which will shape the cultural development of the county.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions.
Objective 1 That the community of the Gaeltacht will be central to participative decision-making regarding its future development and expansion.	WCC	Údarás na Gaeltachta SEHB VEC Gaeltacht Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an integrated Local Plan, for development and service provision, which protects and enhances the linguistic and cultural nature of the community Provide a community development worker to support the Gaeltacht community
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 That there would be good employment opportunities available in the Gaeltacht.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	WCC SERTA FAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an integrated infrastructural programme for business in the Gaeltacht area Draw up a programme to support the development of cultural tourism in the Gaeltacht
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 3 To develop the Gaeltacht as a catalyst for the cultural growth of the county	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Coláiste na Rinne WCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Gaeltacht Cultural Centre Establish an 'Artist in Residence' scheme.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 4 To develop quality multi-level Irish language learning opportunities for all people living in the Gaeltacht	VEC	Gaeltacht Community Údarás na Gaeltachta	Develop language learning programmes to meet the needs of the community.
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

<p>Objective 5</p> <p>To advance the development of supporting networks for the Gaeltachtaí.</p>	<p>Údarás na Gaeltachta</p>	<p>VEC</p> <p>Gaeltacht Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to the establishment of a Dáil na Gaeltachta network • Develop partnerships with similar European minority-language communities
<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12</i></p>			

Goal 28: That County Waterford will be a place where Gaelic culture and traditions will thrive.

Objectives	Co-ordinating Partner	Supporting Partners	Key Actions
Objective 1 To ensure that native and traditional art forms and crafts are revived, supported and sustained for future generations	WCC	Regional Craft Granary Údarás na Gaeltachta Community Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a database and archive on traditional art and craft forms which are unique to County Waterford ◆ Explore the potential of developing a craft-based training/enterprise centre
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			
Objective 2 To make traditional Irish culture more popular and accessible.	WCC	Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann Féile na nDéise ADG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan to expand the potential of Féile na nDéise • Provide support to Festivals and Summer / Winter schools developed around cultural themes
Target Date 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12			

In addressing the County's future, the Board considers that the present range of challenges in the County must be addressed as well as the new challenges that will arise during the course of the Strategy. These may be caused by external factors such as increased international competition, changes in the regulatory framework, environmental concerns or by domestic or local factors such as new social issues which may arise from the changing nature of society in the County. While noting the range of issues that need to be addressed, we recognise that there are key needs that will set the strategic agenda for the County.

14.1 THE STRATEGIC QUESTIONS WE MUST ANSWER.

Our Board faces a challenge to deliver the comprehensive response that will help the County to meet the key needs which we have identified. The strategy provides the Board and its constituent organisations with the framework within which this challenge can be met. As it is implemented, the Board must monitor the delivery of the goals and objectives that it has set for itself. It can only do so by applying a consistent series of questions that will show whether the strategy is working. These strategic questions have been developed, following analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the County. The Board will consistently apply these questions to its on-going work.

- Is the policy making process of the County open to active participation by all sectors of the Community in Waterford ?
- Do we have a strong Community Forum, supported by a network of all local community and voluntary groups ?
- Do the towns, villages and rural areas of the County have infrastructure consistent with European standards ?
- Is the County's industry and services sector competitive ?
- Has the rural population of the County stabilised at 2002 levels ?
- Are the public services of the county achieving their strategic objectives as set out in their operational plans ?
- Do the children and youth of the County have access to proper educational and recreational facilities ?
- Is the use of the Irish Language throughout the County increasing ?
- Do we continue to have homeless people and unmet housing and accommodation needs?
- Is our environment and heritage as good as when we started the strategy?
- Is the County recognised internationally as a centre of excellence and quality?
- Have we built an inclusive society

And finally

- Are we making a difference?

In preparing the strategy, it was important that all aspects were examined - 'proofed' - against the likely effects which might occur for *rural issues, gender, equality and sustainability*. This is necessary to ensure that our Vision, Goals and Objectives, and the Implementation Plan we have set to achieve that Vision, are appropriate.

We must be sure that this important strategy respects the marginalized and disadvantaged, ensures sustainability and equality, and has regard for gender issues.

The process which we used has been undertaken in an informal but thorough manner. Those who represent, or who have a concern for, marginalised and disadvantaged communities or individuals, and those with a concern for sustainability or gender equality, were involved in all stages of the strategy preparation process. In addition, many sections of the strategy specifically address these issues, and set out actions that will positively address them.

In order to facilitate this proofing action at implementation stage, a proofing template and protocol have been developed by the Board and will be used by the implementation groups in order to ensure that a coherent and consistent approach to the proofing process is adopted.

15.1

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to reap the benefits of this strategy, the specific actions that have been set out to achieve our objectives and goals will need to be implemented. It will be essential that this document not 'sit on the shelf'. It must be a 'living' document, continuously evolving to meet our changing environment, and developing new responses and actions to meet this change. Successful implementation of these specific actions will require the following:

- commitment and co-operation of all those organisations whose involvement will be necessary for the action to take place;
- overall management of the implementation of each action by a designated and accepting lead partner/agency;
- regular review of the extent of integration between agencies and partners and implementation being achieved, and the amendment of the implementation programme where necessary; and
- efficient allocation of resources whether financial, personnel or otherwise to the implementation of the process.

The strategy has not identified which partners are necessary to which action and it is proposed that this will be identified at implementation stage.

The structure of implementation will be as follows –

The Board will oversee the implementation of the strategy in an overall way. It will assess the extent to which actions are being implemented, will review indicators, will identify barriers and will liaise with other boards and with the National Steering Group to address fundamental issues affecting implementation.

Implementation Groups will oversee the implementation of actions. It is proposed that there will be 4 such groups dealing with the following –

- Citizens in Communities and Rural Communities.
- Enterprise, Infrastructure and Tourism.
- Quality of Life.
- Culture and the living Gaeltacht.

Each of these groups will contain a representative of the key agencies operating in that field as well as representatives of interested community and voluntary groups. Each group will also contain at least two Board members one of whom will act as chair and as a link between the Board and the implementation group.

These groups will be responsible for –

- Developing annual programmes of actions based on the priorities set by the Board
- Proofing proposed actions
- Setting targets where appropriate
- Setting the criteria by which actions will be judged to have been implemented
- Identifying the organisations to be involved in each action
- Appointing a lead partner for each action
- Reviewing the progress in the implementation of actions.
- Recommending the amendment of actions
- Identifying barriers to action
- Making proposals for the removal of barriers

Some objectives have been assigned to the County Development Board as a whole. It will be the responsibility of all member organisations on the Board to contribute to the achievement of those objectives over the period of the strategy.

15.2

MONITORING

Monitoring will be carried out at a number of levels. These will be related to the structures for implementation outlined above. They will seek to ensure that the appropriate monitoring is carried out at all levels. Thus –

The Board will be responsible for developing and monitoring the goals of the strategy.

The Implementation Groups will be responsible for monitoring the indicators and for monitoring participation and inclusion. They will be chaired by a Board member and will report to the Board on a quarterly basis through the Chairman.

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A range of other documents, source data and research was accessed and contributed to the development of the Strategy, including publications from a range of other Government Departments, and the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF).