Animating Smart Village Strategies in Ireland:

Opportunities and Outcomes

PRESCIENCE

KNOWLEDGE FORETOLD

Context

SMART VILLAGES
Pilot Project

SMART RURAL 21

PREPARATORY ACTION ON
Smart Rural Areas in the 21st Century

SMART RURAL 27

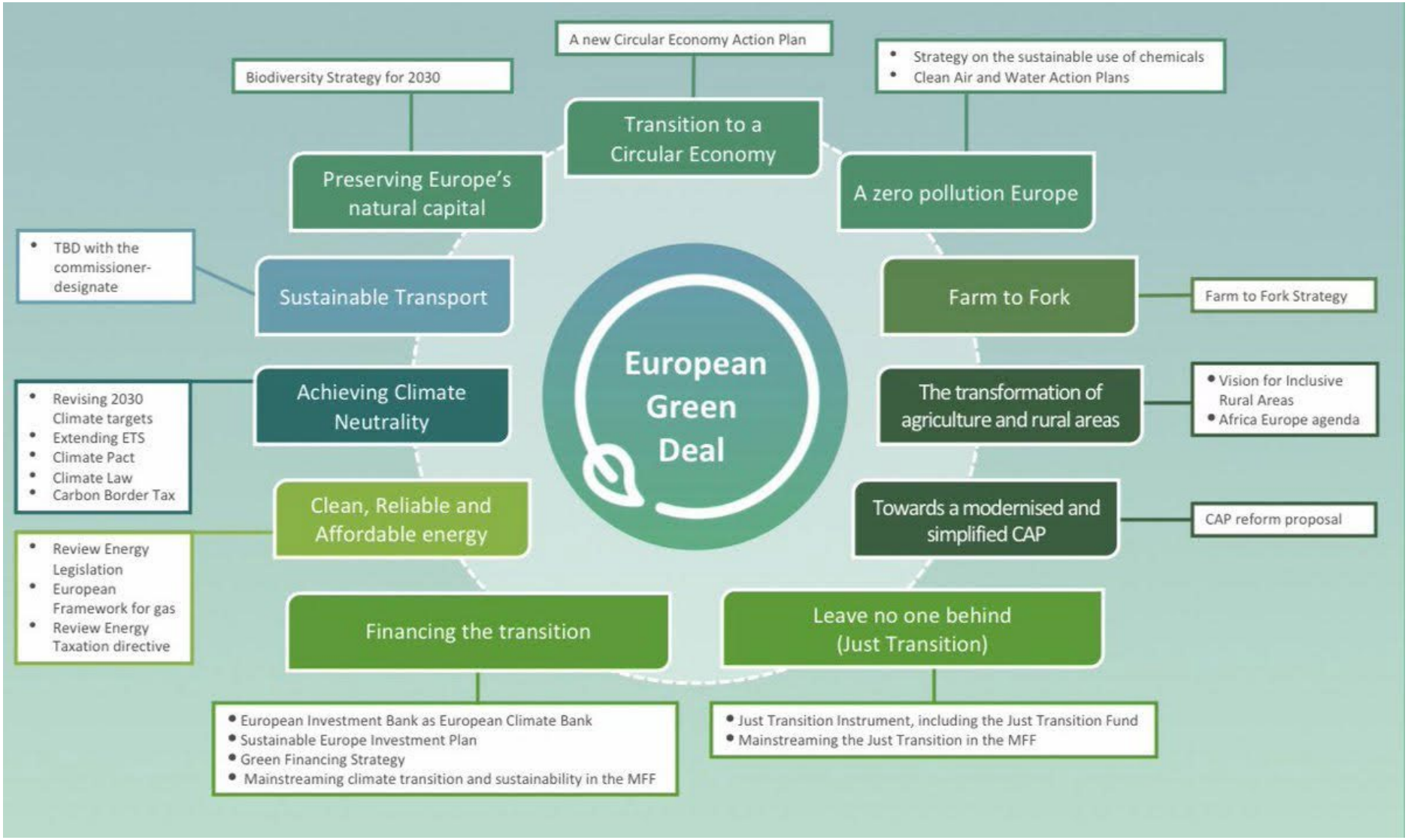
Long Term Vision for Rural Areas

Source: European Commission

Common Agricultural Policy

EU Green Deal

European Commission


European Green Deal
A new Circular Economy Action Plan
Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
Strategy on the sustainable use of chemicals
Clean Air and Water Action Plans
Transition to a Circular Economy
Preserving Europe's natural capital
A zero pollution Europe
TBD with the commissioner-designate
Sustainable Transport
Farm to Fork
Farm to Fork Strategy
Revising 2030 Climate targets
Extending ETS
Climate Pact
Climate Law
Carbon Border Tax
Achieving Climate Neutrality
The transformation of agriculture and rural areas
Vision for Inclusive Rural Areas
Africa Europe agenda
Clean, Reliable and Affordable energy
Towards a modernised and simplified CAP
CAP reform proposal
Review Energy Legislation
European Framework for gas
Review Energy Taxation directive
Financing the transition
Leave no one behind (Just Transition)
European Investment Bank as European Climate Bank
Sustainable Europe Investment Plan
Green Financing Strategy
Mainstreaming climate transition and sustainability in the MFF
Just Transition Instrument, including the Just Transition Fund
Mainstreaming the Just Transition in the MFF

Impetus

"… a requirement for the Smart Villages concept, climate change mitigation and adaptation and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be over-arching elements of LEADER Local Development Strategies/Interventions…

…the Smart Villages approach is closely aligned with that of the LEADER approach. Indeed, once all the LEADER principles are applied, it creates the conditions for the development of Smart Village initiatives…

…where Smart Village initiatives are identified as priorities in an LDS, LAGs will need to innovative and align with policies such as the EU's Long Term Vision for Rural Areas, as well as engaging with communities to progress and finance small-scale investments…"

Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan, 2022

Impetus

"…develop and implement Local Digital Strategies in each Local Authority area to maximise the potential of improved rural digital connectively for businesses and communities…"

…support the development of Smart Towns and Villages which use innovative solutions to improve resilience, build on local strengths and maximise opportunities to create desirable places for people to live and work…"

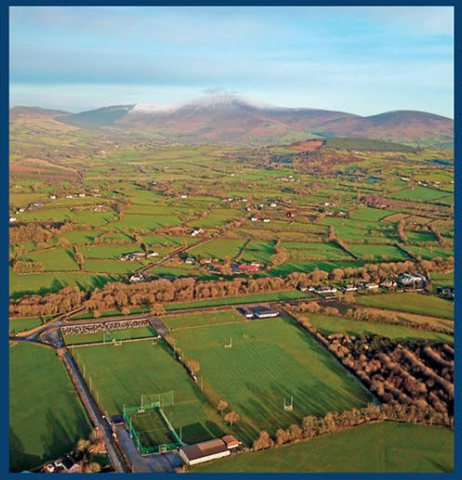
"…the LEADER Programme will be a key policy vehicle to support the development of Smart Towns and Villages in Ireland, particularly through its community-led approach to rural development…"

Our Rural Future : Ireland's Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

National Rural Network

NRN Newsletter
July 2022

Smart Villages and Rural Towns in Ireland



Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland | Ár dTodhchaí Tuaithe Our Rural Future

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas

Smart Villages: Bridging Practice, Research and Policy

Dr Oskar Wolski
Geographer, National Science Centre, Poland

iRoute 2 Conference and KITE Project

Declan Rice
CEO, Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (KLP)

Borris Smart Village Portal

Aoibheann Murphy
Committee Member, Borris Smart Village

Lusk for Life: Lusk Vision 2030

Miriam Delaney
Architect and Lecturer at the Dublin School of Architecture TU Dublin

Working Smart Together in Inishowen

Áine Mc Laughlin
Community Development Officer, Inishowen Development Partnership

Mountbellew - A Rural and Smart Future

Steve Dolan
CEO, Galway Rural Development

Urban Foresight Smart Towns and Villages for the SEUPB

Elliot Burns
Graduate Project Specialist, Urban Foresight

Broadband for the Community, by the Community

Vernon Buckley
PRO and Board Member of Broadband 4 Our Community (B4OC)

Donegal Digital: Leading The County's Digital Transformation

Dr Margaret Quinn
Donegal Digital Project Manager and ERNACT Programme Manager

Smart Villages Training Programme Rolled out Across Wexford

Mary Dunphy
LEADER Project Officer, Wexford Local Development

OÉ Gaillimh NUI Galway

NU Galway Rural Studies

NRN Smart Villages and Rural Towns Newsletter 2022

A Smart Strategy should …

- Provide direction for the community.
- Comprise a roadmap of objectives & actions.
- Identify outputs and impacts.
- Communicate to & align stakeholders.
- Allocate resources and tasks.
- Track progress.
- Improve performance.
- Reflect good governance.
- Be a competitive game plan.
- Be mandated by funders.

However…

A Smart Strategy is not a goal but a means to an "end".

Digital technology is simply a tool to optimise shared infrastructure, assets, resources, amenities and communications

A Smart Strategy also depends on …

1. ***Social Innovation*** *- innovations that are social both in its ends and its means… In other words, innovations that are both good for society and enhance societies capacity to act.*

2. *Understanding the value and effective use of* ***Data & Information***

The Vision becomes the "*End*", if…

- It highlights purpose, ambition & shared values.
- It inspires and align stakeholders & disparate interests.
- It identifies & communicates the change/outcome envisaged.
- It aligns multiple themes & perspectives.

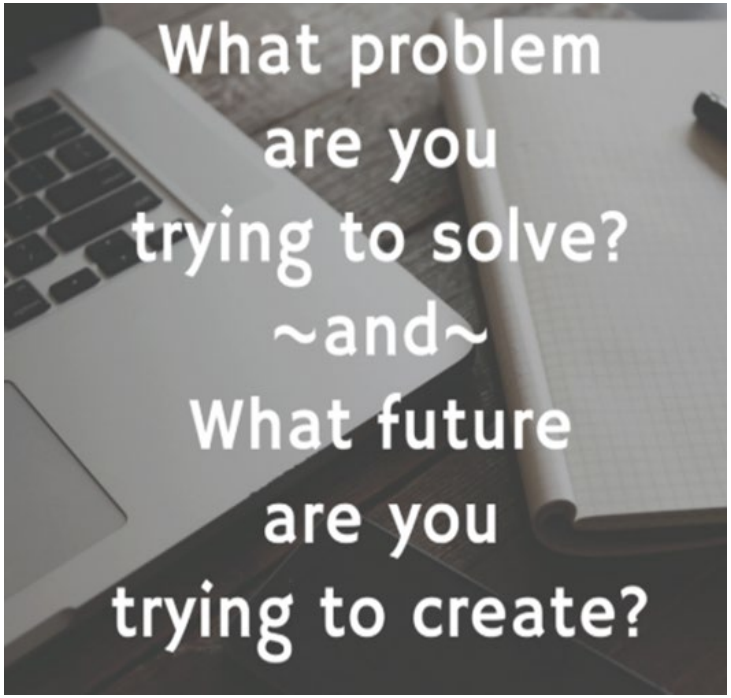
Programme Overview

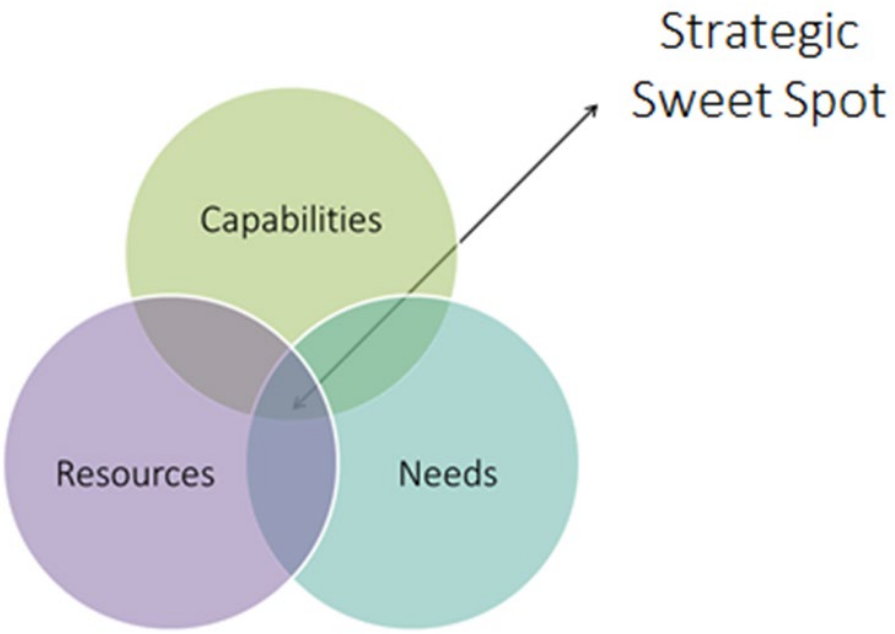
- Structured modular programme (onsite/offsite).
- Aligned with EU, national and regional policy.
- Bespoke and tailored to local specifics.
- Iterative and incremental.
- Establishes a shared vision and unity of purpose.
- Medium term outlook.
- Effective use of data, stakeholder engagement, communication and strategic planning tools.
- Vision, purpose, objectives, actions, enablers, KPI's combined within a single plan.

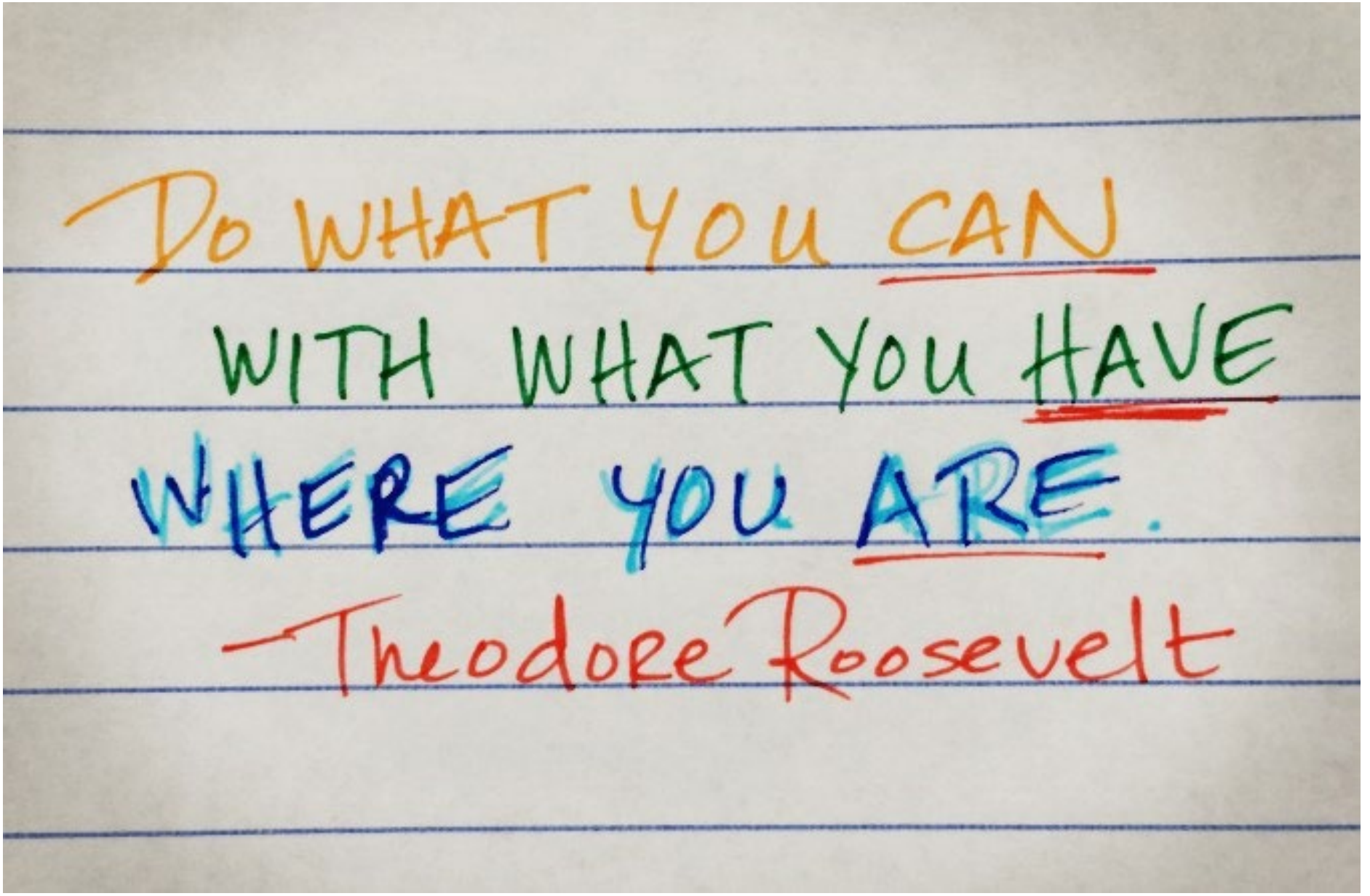
Programme Content

1. Definining the Concept
2. Examples of Smart Projects
3. Key Themes
4. Situation Analysis
5. Enablers
6. Strategic Planning
7. Pulling it all together

Consider…


What problem
are you
trying to solve?
~and~
What future
are you
trying to create?


Strategic
Sweet Spot
Capabilities
Resources
Needs


DO WHAT YOU CAN
WITH WHAT YOU HAVE
WHERE YOU ARE.
-Theodore Roosevelt

16 Key Questions…

Who are we?	What are our attributes? and skills?	What's the socio-economic context?	How might this change?
What's working & what's not?	What can we do better?	What resources do we need?	Who will provide the resources needed?
Have we a shared vision?	Are our objectives and goals defined?	What is our enabling stategy?	Are our resources aligned to this?
Who has an interest in our work?	With whom do we collaborate?	What will success look like?	How will we measure it?

Domains & Opportunities

Economic Development	Social Inclusion	Health & Wellbeing	Resilience	Energy & Utilities
Mobility & Accessibility	Placemaking & Public Realm	Digital Skills & Connectivity	Climate Action & Decarbonisation	Biodiversity
Environmental Management	Essential Services	Circular Economy	Just Transition	Wayfinding & Connectivity
Retail	Toursim, Sports & Recreation	Heritage & Folklore	Governance & Operations	Stakeholder Engagement
Data Management	Advocacy	Funding	Monitoring & Evaluation	Communications & Visualisation

The Outcome

Enablers

Align Strategic Actions to…

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Define a role for CLLD…

A Smart Village Strategy for XXX 2022-2027

Vision:	Purpose:

Pillar	Objective	Strategic Action	Key Enablers	When

Key Performance Indicators:
Notes & Abbreviations:

COURTOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

SMART VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

What is a Smart Village?

Smart Villages are **communities** that use **innovative solutions** to improve their **resilience**, building on **local strengths and opportunities**. CCC and RCC Trustees completed a **7-weeks long Smart Village course** together. The course was supported by Wexford Local Development and delivered by an **expert in Rural Development**, Ian Dempsey. We have begun **creating a Smart Village Strategic Plan (SVSP)** that involves the entire community, works **close to nature**, and follows Local, National, and EU Strategic Plans. We will welcome your valued input in 2022.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

YOUTH & ELDERLY SERVICES

ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

YOUTH & ELDERLY SERVICES

ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

Some Community Challenges

- Designated as a disadvantaged area
- Lack of infrastructure for the growing population
- Dereliction of town center
- Lack of communication between groups and Local Authority.
- Loss of beach, fluctuating water quality and constant sewerage discharge in Aughboy

Some Community Strengths

- Courtown NHA,
- Courtown has lots of Open Community Space
- Proximity to Windfarms
- Opportunities for Riverchapel Amenity Areas
- High seasonal tourism volumes
- Lots of caring, passionate individuals and groups

Courtown Clean Water Campaign

CCC have teamed up with Seal Rescue Ireland to regenerate clean water and restore degraded ecosystems throughout the Ounavarra and Aughboy Catchments. Working with locals, community groups and state bodies on beneficial projects from Oulart to Tara Hill and up beyond Gorey. Clean water is vital to all of our community's health and future resilience.

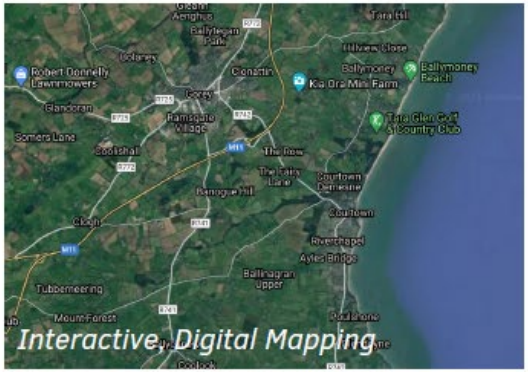
Riverchapel Community Complex

Riverchapel Communtiy Complex is working diligently to provide a multi-use community facility that is fit for the needs of our community, has a low environmental footprint, and is digitally advanced.

OUR STRATEGIC PROCESS

Polluted harbour after rain

AUDITING CURRENT RESOURCES & CHALLENGES



Interactive, Digital Mapping

DIGITAL MAPPING OF OPPORTUNITIES

Community Mural Projects

LOCAL CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT

Outcomes

- Shared vision is defined.
- Organisational purpose is clarified.
- Knowledge of policy & funding is improved.
- Shifts from *reactive* to *proactive* *(logic makes you think, emotion makes you act!!!)*
- Ongoing dialogue & active collaboration with enablers is established.
- Structured multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral & multi-annual strategy is created.

Outcomes

- Knowledge of *continuum* of development supports.
- Becomes an iterative, incremental and scalable process.
- Relationships and dependencies between projects are defined.
- Local stakeholders are engaged in a continuing development process.
- Scope of conventional CLLD activity is broadened.
- Transition from single to multi-project perspective.
- Project planning and development is improved.

Outcomes

- Scale and impact is enhanced.
- Better appreciation of data, KPI's and impact measurement.
- Capability to compete for scarce/reduced funding resources is enhanced.
- Development agencies provided with a medium term overview of planned development activity.
- CLLD predevelopment supports become stepping stone towards higher value grant support.
- Synergies & potential opportunities between stakeholders & partners are identified. *(opportunities for pathfinder, pilot, etc)*

Success Factors

- Focused & committed leadership.
- Organisational, governance & technical capacities.
- Decision-making & strategy shaped by data & enabled by ICT/social innovation.
- Cooperation & sharing of knowledge & resources.
- Ability to align stakeholder interests.
- Ability to identify innovative project ideas which address defined issues/problems.
- Capacity to develop multiple development themes & disciplines.
- Achieve scale & impact through networking & partnership.
- Stakeholder engagement and management capability.

Engagement is created through…

- Identification and targeting key stakeholders.
- Local talent, skills & informal networks.
- Alignment of vision, value & strategy.
- CSR, ESG & Philanthropy opportunities.
- Link to education & research.
- Support received for organisational governance & operations.
- Support received for project development & funding.
- Dialogue & representation through networks.
- Targeted communications & visualisation.

However, challenges remain…

- Governance, compliance and risk management requirements.
- Reliance on volunteers.
- Resource demands *(matching funding)*
- Operations, maintenance, insurance & viability.
- Stakeholder engagement & management.
- Technical knowledge *(energy, environment, biodiversity, ICT, etc)*
- Project management & procurement.
- Accountability, monitoring and reporting.
- Requirement for continuing CLLD support *(non financial/ financial)*

Q&A

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KNOWLEDGE FORETOLD