

Local Development Strategy

County Roscommon Sub-Regional Area

2023-2027

Local Action Group – Roscommon LCDC

Implementation Partner – Roscommon LEADER Partnership

Financial Partner – Roscommon County Council



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



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



Comhairle Contae
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council

Funded by the Department of Rural
& Community Development

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Appendices attached as separate documents:

- Appendix 1 LEADER 2023-2027 - Co Roscommon SLA
- Appendix 2 List of RLP Operational and Procedural policies
- Appendix 3 EDs in Co Roscommon
- Appendix 4 Service Providers and Consultations Undertaken
- Appendix 5 Evaluation Committee Scoring Record 1
- Appendix 6 LDS Financial Plan RLP
- Appendix 7 Strategic Integration

1.0 THE LOCAL ACTION GROUP

1. The agreed Local Action Group (LAG) for the delivery of the LEADER Programme 2023–2027 in Co. Roscommon is Roscommon Local Development Committee (LCDC), with Roscommon LEADER Partnership designated by Roscommon LCDC as the Implementing Partner and Roscommon County Council as Financial Partner. To this end, a Service Level Agreement between the LAG and Roscommon LEADER Partnership is in place (see Appendix 1) subject to the approval by the DECLG of this Local Development Strategy.
2. The County Roscommon Local Community Development Committee was established in 2014 in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and Statutory Instrument No. 234 of 2014 with the purpose of developing, coordinating, and implementing a cogent and integrated approach to local and community development.
3. The LEADER Programme 2014-2023 resulted in a positive impact on the local economy and the quality of life of the people in the area. The programme resulted in the creation of new jobs and improved access to services and amenities for the local community. It also increased the engagement and involvement of local people in decision-making processes.
4. The composition of the LAG, as well as the operational structures, in particular for the delivery of LEADER, is presented in this section, in order to give a better understanding of the management, fiscal, and organisational capacity of the LAG in managing and implementing the Local Development Strategy. This will also allow for a better coordination with the local stakeholders to ensure that the different actors are working together in order to achieve the objectives of the Local Development Strategy. Furthermore, this will ensure that the LAG has the necessary resources to ensure the successful implementation of the strategy.

1.1 Organisation details

Organisation Details	
Legal Name of LAG	Roscommon Local Community Development Committee
Business Name	Roscommon LCDC
Postal Address	Roscommon County Council, Aras an Chontae, Roscommon Town, Co. Roscommon
Telephone No.	090 663 2543 / 087 9196692
Email Address	UNiChuinn@roscommoncoco.ie
Website	www.roscommoncoco.ie

1.2 Primary contact for LEADER

Primary Contact for LEADER	
Contact Person	Úna Ní Chuinn
Position	Chief Officer, Roscommon LCDC
Postal Address	Roscommon County Council, Aras an Chontae, Roscommon Town, Co. Roscommon
Telephone No.	090 663 2543 / 087 9196692
Email Address	UNiChuinn@roscommoncoco.ie

1.3 Legal description of LAG

Legal Description of LAG	
Date established	April 2014
CRO No.	Not registered with CRO

TCC Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Legal Structure	The County Roscommon Local Community Development Committee was established pursuant to Section 36 (1) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and in line with Statutory Instrument No. 234 of 2014. for the purpose of developing, co-ordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. Standing Orders set out the Committees policies and practices on those issues which it has power to determine. Should there be any doubt in interpretation of the Standing Orders, the Instruments and Articles of Government will take precedence as the legal document. These Standing Orders are available on request.
Operational Ethos:	The work of Roscommon LCDC is guided by the following general principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A developmental 'bottom-up' approach is a key feature of local and community development – meaningful community participation in identifying priorities and solutions, shaping local initiatives and a vision for those communities is important and, therefore, participation of the community sector should be facilitated and supported; • The democratic mandate of the local elected members on the LCDC, or on any LCDC sub-structures, should be recognised and respected;

1.4 LAG composition & decision making

5. Co. Roscommon LCDC will be composed of public and private socioeconomic partners from Roscommon County Council's administrative area. The membership of the LCDC shall be chosen in a way that promotes a good balance between the many entities operating in the area and ensures a proper representation of both public and private interests. Furthermore, every effort will be made to keep the gender distribution of LCDC members equitable.
6. LCDC Roscommon will continue to solicit nominations for female representatives from nominating bodies who are members of Roscommon LCDC. Increasing women's participation in local decision-making is one of the goals of the Roscommon LCDC. As part of its commitment to promoting gender equality, Roscommon LCDC ensures that female representatives have the same opportunities as the male representatives.
7. Roscommon LCDC is considering inviting Macra na Feirme to nominate one of their Executive members to join Roscommon LCDC. Macra na Feirme represents 10,000 young people in rural Ireland. This will provide a valuable opportunity to increase engagement with young people. Macra na Feirme will provide a unique perspective on the needs of young people in the County and Region, creating a stronger link between young people and Roscommon LCDC. The agencies that represent young people in Roscommon are represented on the LCDC.
8. The Roscommon Local Community Development Committee Standing Orders provides details on the committee's governance.

List of current LAG members	
Name	Shane Tiernan Chief Executive, Roscommon County Council
Organisation	Roscommon County Council (Local Authority Official)
Area of Expertise	Senior Manager for over 25 years in private and public sector organisations. Managing teams and resources in complex environments. As Chief Executive of the local authority, Shane has the lead role in developing and

	overseeing the organisational structures and resources needed to deliver an extensive range of services to the public
Name	Cllr Nigel Dineen
Organisation	Roscommon County Council (Local Government)
Area of Expertise	Nigel Dineen has served as an elected member of Roscommon County Council representing the Castlerea area. Nigel is a businessman running his own Auctioneering company.
Name	Cllr Pascal Fitzmaurice
Organisation	Roscommon County Council (Local Government)
Area of Expertise	Pascal Fitzmaurice is an elected member of Roscommon County Council and owner of Market Fresh shop in Castlerea.
Name	Cllr Laurence Fallon
Organisation	Roscommon County Council (Local Government)
Area of Expertise	Former National president Macra Na Feirme, former president of European Council of Young Farmers and elected member of Roscommon County Council-
Name	Patricia Gilbride
Organisation	Dept. Social Protection (State Agency)
Area of Expertise	Social Welfare, Intreo Schemes (JA, JB, OFP)
Name	Louise Ward
Organisation	Roscommon Local Enterprise Office (Local Authority Official)
Area of Expertise	Head of Enterprise with Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, Roscommon County Council, representing the LEO and Roscommon County Council on Roscommon LCDC.
Name	Lynne Keery
Organisation	Galway & Roscommon Education & Training Board (State Agency)
Area of Expertise	Lynne Keery works as Adult Education Officer with GRETB.
Name	Eamon Hannan
Organisation	HSE (State Agency)
Area of Expertise	Business Manager, Galway Roscommon Mental Health Service. Member of LCDC. Chair of LCDC's Health & Wellbeing Subcommittee, Member of Roscommon CYPSPSC.
Name	Tom Kellegher
Organisation	Teagasc (State Agency)
Area of Expertise	Regional Manager with Teagasc covering Roscommon and Longford. Tom has an interest in all aspects of the farming sector.
Name	Carina Lennon
Organisation	Roscommon LEADER Partnership (Local & Community Development)
Area of Expertise	An honours' Degree in Information Systems Management & Qualified Accountant Technician with track record in taking responsibilities for key tasks and their successful completion.
Name	Faye Hayden
Organisation	Roscommon Public Participation Network (Social Inclusion)
Area of Expertise	Youth, Justice, Education, Disabilities, Restorative Practice, MA in Social Justice and Public Policy
Name	Kevin Conry
Organisation	Roscommon Public Participation Network (Community)
Area of Expertise	Kevin is a farmer and also is a member of the Secretariat of Roscommon Public Participation Network.
Name	Vincent Moran
Organisation	Roscommon Public Participation Network (Community & Voluntary)

Area of Expertise	Vincent was a carpenter by trade before becoming a Rural Social Scheme Supervisor – now retired and is a member of the Secretariat of Roscommon Public Participation Network.
Name	Ger Fallon
Organisation	Roscommon Public Participation Network (Community & Voluntary)
Area of Expertise	Ger is a farmer with huge experience in local community development and a former Rural Social Scheme Supervisor.
Name	Michael Ewing
Organisation	Roscommon Public Participation Network (Environment)
Area of Expertise	Michael is an environmental scientist, facilitator and life-long activist. From 2008-2019, he was Coordinator of the Environmental Pillar and of the Irish Environmental, Network.
Name	Jim O'Connor
Organisation	Irish Farmers Association (Farming)
Area of Expertise	Jim O'Connor is a former Chair of Roscommon IFA and currently sits on the IFA Environment Committee as the Rep from Roscommon.
Name	Gareth Scahill
Organisation	Chambers Ireland (Business)
Area of Expertise	Gareth Scahill runs a established retail outlet in Castlerea. He has vast experience in both business and community/voluntary sectors.
Name	Pat Compton
Organisation	Irish Congress of Trade Unions (Trade Union)
Area of Expertise	Pat Compton co-founded the Strokestown International Poetry Festival in 1999. He is deeply committed to furthering the social and economic status of the region.
Name	Helen Hunt
Organisation	Disability Sector (Brothers of Chairty)
Area of Expertise	Supporting Disability Service Provision in conjunction with capacity building. Area Manager with BOCSI for Mid South Roscommon, services from Roscommon town and Athlone.

Membership and selection of new lag members

9. Section four of the Roscommon LCDC Standing Orders, which reads as follows, governs Co. Roscommon Local Community Development Committee's membership:

10. A variety of public and private socioeconomic partners from the Roscommon County Council administrative region make up the Roscommon LCDC. The LCDC membership is chosen in a way that facilitates an adequate mix among the wide range of players operating within the area and ensures an appropriate representative balance between public and private interests. Additionally, every effort should be taken to maintain a fair gender distribution among LCDC members.

11. Members of the Co. Roscommon LCDC include the following:

Sector	Number	Members	Selection Procedure
Local Authority Elected Members	3	Elected Members	Roscommon County Council
Local Authority Officials	2	Chief Executive, Head of Local Enterprise Office	Prescribed
Public Authorities (including state agencies)	4	Dept. of Employment Affairs and Social Protection; Education & Training Board;	Nominations sought by Chief Officer in consultation with CPG

		Teagasc; HSE	
Public Sector Total	9		
Local and community development bodies	1	Roscommon Integrated Development Company Ltd.	Nominated through agreed local arrangements
Community & Voluntary	5	Community & Voluntary (2) Social Inclusion (2) Environment (1)	Nominated through Public Participation Network.
Other civic society or 'local community interests'	4	Employers/Business; Agriculture & Farming; Trade Unions; Brothers of Charity	Nominations sought by Chief Officer in consultation with CPG
Private Sector Total	10		
Total Membership	19		

Based on a 19 person LCDC:

- The maximum number of public sector representatives will be nine: and
- The minimum number of private sector representatives will be ten.

Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

12. From among the LCDC members, a chairperson and vice-chairperson shall be chosen. The chairperson may serve for a maximum of three years before stepping down from the position. A person cannot hold the position of chairperson for two terms in a row and is not eligible to be reappointed for three years following the conclusion of their most recent term in office. The vice-chairperson will be chosen in the same way and will have a three-year maximum term.

Duration of membership

13. At least every three years, or as directed by the Minister, the Chief Officer will assess the composition of the Committee in conjunction with the Corporate Policy Group of Roscommon County Council and the Chairperson. The Chief Officer shall, in consultation with the Corporate Policy Group, agree arrangements with the relevant nominating bodies and structures for the rotation of members representing—

- a. Community and voluntary interests;
- b. Social inclusion interests;
- c. Environmental interests; and
- d. Local community interests and social partners.

New Appointments

14. When a member of the LCDC retires, someone from that sector should replace that person. The Chief Executive will make the required arrangements for that member's replacement, as may be appropriate for the sector represented, if a member retires and is not eligible for reappointment. Throughout the replacement/rotation process, the representational balance will where possible be maintained.

Review of Membership

15. There will be a regular review of the membership to account for the changing LCDC objectives – provision will be made for the 'standing-down' of members, where this is appropriate e.g. where the strategic need for members has been satisfied or new members are required to meet a specific strategic need or members are not attending on a regular basis.

Responsibilities of Members

16. Members of Co. Roscommon LCDC will be expected to:

- Attend and participate in LCDC Meetings.
- Act bona fide in the interests of the LCDC.
- Take decisions jointly with the other LCDC members.
- Work with other LCDC members, in a spirit of constructive co-operation and trust.
- Report to their organisation or sector regarding LCDC activities.
- Articulate the views of their nominating organisation at LCDC level or at sub-structure level.
- Share information and organisational resources with the LCDC.
- Participate in sub-structures established by the LCDC to examine and report on particular policy areas or issues. This may involve chairing and resourcing such sub-structures.

Description of decision making structures and procedures

17. As the Local Action Group, Roscommon LCDC is the decision-making authority in relation to the operation and delivery of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 in the Co. Roscommon Sub Regional Area.

1.5 LAG roles & responsibilities

18. The roles and responsibilities of LAG members relating to the delivery of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 have been outlined in the Service Level Agreement (Appendix 1).

19. As necessary, Roscommon LCDC will establish subgroups for specific purposes, i.e. strategic or special interest, to facilitate the effective operation and delivery of the LEADER Programme, where necessary. These committees will have no legal authority and will refer all decisions and recommendations to Roscommon LCDC. Terms of reference will be agreed for any sub group that may be established.

20. The Roscommon LCDC will form an Independent Project Evaluation Committee, made up of "subject matter experts," to assess project submissions and advise the Roscommon LCDC on funding levels and thresholds. In accordance with the LEADER Programme 2023–2027, members will be selected from a diverse range of all interested industries. These industries will cover business, the environment, community, tourism, etc. To ensure that the Evaluation Committee has a unified and coordinated approach to project evaluation and recommendations to Roscommon LCDC, training will be given as needed to the Evaluation Committee members. Roscommon LCDC will ensure that members of its own organisation and its Project Evaluation Committee are subject to the segregation of duties.

21. Roscommon LCDC and the Implementing Partner RLP on a quarterly basis, with an annual evaluation, will frequently monitor the LEADER Program's overall success. An annual report will be created using the findings of this evaluation. The overall aims and indicators of the LEADER Programme will be reviewed by RLP, and Roscommon LCDC will be given a report on the implementation variance. The outcomes will be delivered to the Department and/or its representatives after the Roscommon LCDC has accepted the report.

1.6 Governance and conflict of Interest

Financial management

22. RLP as Implementing Partner will carry out the financial controls and management procedures as per the SLA in accordance with RLP's procedure manual and the final operating rules. Roscommon LCDC will adhere to the Procedures Manual Template to be issued by the Department and will utilise RLP's current procedures manual to enhance these procedures as required. A list of RLP's existing operational procedures is available in Appendix 2 and will be defined after receipt of operating rules for the programme.

23. All LAG Partners shall adhere to the requirements of the GDPR and Data Protection Act as per the requirements of the Operating Rules of the LEADER Programme 2023 – 2027.
24. Every month, LEADER employees will submit all expense reports via the Department's computerised reporting tool. Subject to the final LEADER Programme Operating Rules, Roscommon County Council will report on the financial and project spend in relation to the LEADER Programme at each meeting of Roscommon LCDC.
25. The Implementing Partner will receive funding for advance administration and animation from Roscommon County Council, which is also the LAG's financial partner. Roscommon County Council will also approve the issuance of contracts following Article 28 administrative checks, pay promoters on behalf of the LAG, and request quarterly withdrawals from the Department. For the management of LEADER Funds, Roscommon County Council will use the Agresso system and will abide by the programme guidelines.

Roscommon LEADER Partnership

26. Roscommon LEADER Partnership produces annual reports on its activities, which are presented to the Board. It also produces audited annual accounts, produced by James Gilheaney and Company, public auditors and detailed financial statements are reviewed and monitored by the Management sub board on a monthly basis.
27. There are distinct systems in place for ordering, approving, and processing orders and payments. These systems follow a triple-approval process: the project officer requests the order or purchase, the administrator reviews it, and the financial officer gives the final approval. All payments to award recipients are made in accordance with Department and EU procurement standards, as are the company's procurement procedures. The Financial Procedures Policy of RLP has more detailed procedures and copies of same are available on request.

Monitoring of Controls

28. All payments are inputted into SAGE Accounting software using individual department codes for the various programmes run by the company which aids the monitoring of budgets, expenditure, cash flow and fixed assets held by the company. In addition, reports to track supplier payments that are close to 10K is utilised to ensure tax affairs are in order before payment is released.
29. The following is an extract from the Management letter sent by the auditor after their most recent audit of RLP. The whole report is available on request.

There are no weaknesses in the company's accounting practices and financial reporting that we need to bring to your attention.

Public Procurement

30. The RLP staff have a wealth of knowledge on the guidelines and procedures relating to public procurement. To improve the processing of applications and guarantee that projects are compliant with procurement regulations, all LEADER personnel have received procurement training from a procurement specialist.

Performance Management

31. Performance management is of primary importance to the Board of directors of Roscommon LEADER Partnership and translates across all programmes, staff and actions in order to ensure that performance management processes are functioning properly to forge a strong bond between strategic objectives and programme actions. Roscommon LEADER Partnership operates a company strategy, which ensures accurate and effective

goal setting, includes timelines, combined with a process of tracking progress, all of which contribute to successful results and accurate and effective performance management. The strategy in place for Performance Management over the lifetime of LEADER includes on-going reviews by the CEO who reports to the Board of RLP.

Standards and Codes of Practice which will underpin LEADER under RLP

32. Roscommon LEADER Partnership, through its Board of Directors, management sub board and staff have an outstanding record of accomplishment in the area of governance and corporate responsibility. In accordance with the Guidelines on the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary, and Charitable Organisations in Ireland, Roscommon LEADER Partnership is compliant with corporate governance.
33. Roscommon LEADER Partnership conforms to the Ethics in Public Office Act, and a list of our main policies are available on request.
34. Responsible fiscal management, transparency, and accountability underpin all of the Roscommon LEADER Partnership's financial operations.

Risk Management

35. Risk management is an ongoing process with risk assessments carried out at regular intervals and the company sees it as particularly important as part of the planning/budgeting process. The Board has approved a Risk Register for the organisation, which details risks under the clusters of Financial, Legal, Technology, Operational and Staff.

Human Resources

36. RLP enjoys full Human Resource Management outsourcing from external HR experts Peninsula underpinned with full and comprehensive legal insurance coverage. HR Locker, which records contracts, training, and ensures RLP complies with the Working Time Act, was introduced in 2022. This robust HR documentation system ensures full compliance with the law and provides a secure platform for the business to develop.

Effective Communication and People Involvement:

37. RLP recognises the value of effective communication to its performance and works to have a plan in place as well as promote a culture where workers feel comfortable sharing their perspectives.

Governance

38. The Board of directors, who monitors the company's strategic direction and overseas operations. Every member on the board, including the Chairperson, donates their time, skills, and abilities to help achieve these objectives. RLP ensured that in 2021 all rules for charities published by the Charities Regulator were strictly adhered to and that it acquired the status of full compliance.
39. The public can access RLP audited accounts on the company website. Every year, the Charities Compliance Record Form is examined, and that the necessary steps are taken to adhere to compliance legalisation. The majority of company policies, which are examined yearly by the Management Sub-board and Board, are covered in Appendix 2
40. The Management Sub-Board, made up of five Board Members are delegated responsibility by the board for the following areas and meet monthly with the CEO and the CFO. The decisions of the Management Sub-Committee are presented to the board.
 - Human Resource Management
 - Finance
 - Policy

- Internal control and risk management and Audit
- Governance

Conflict of Interest

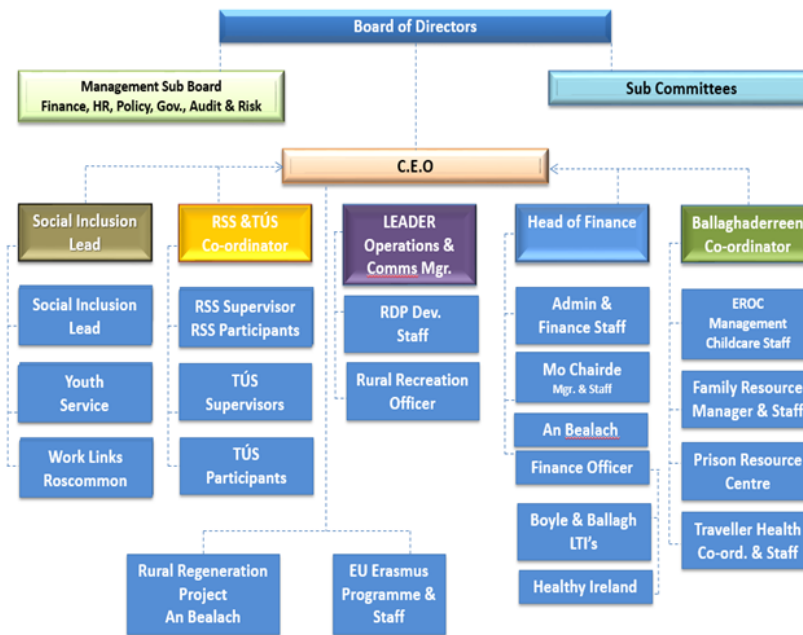
41. An annual conflict of interest statement and a register of interest's declaration will be completed by LAG members, LAG evaluation committee members, and LEADER personnel, and they will both be directly fed into the LCDC Conflict of Interest Database. Roscommon LCDC will maintain and monitor this database.
42. The Development Officers evaluating projects will use it to conduct a database search using the promoter's name to look for any potential conflicts. The LAG members/LAG Evaluation committee member and LEADER staff will be alerted during their meetings when the project in question is being considered for approval/evaluation, and these conflicts will be indicated in the assessment report. The Evaluation Committee meetings will have a conflict of interest section on the agenda, and the chairperson will ask any attendees if they have any interest in any of the projects that will be discussed there. If so, they will be asked to declare their interest and leave the meeting while decisions are being made regarding the project, they have declared an interest in.
43. Conflict of interest will be included in the agenda for LAG meetings and the Chairperson will request each LAG member to declare the nature of his or her interests if any in:
- any application to the LAG for financial or other support; or
 - any initiative taken by the LAG; or
 - any contract, actual or proposed, with the LAG in which a member of the LAG, or a person associated with a member of the LAG as defined above, is directly or indirectly involved; or any situation in which a member of the LAG, or a person associated with a member of the LAG as defined above, may stand to gain, directly or indirectly, from his or her membership in the LAG or from the LAG's operation.

LEADER staffing

LAG

44. Roscommon LCDC is the Local Action Group, a separate division of Roscommon County Council that receives support from the council's executive. The RLP staff has extensive experience collaborating with numerous stakeholders at the local, regional, and national levels as well as supporting coordinated initiatives for social inclusion. RLP is renowned for its very effective and innovative training methodologies. RLP Staff members receive the right amount of training, which ensures accountability for the calibre of their work and ongoing professional development.
- Proposed number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) in the **in RLP can be found in the Financial Plan (Appendix 6)**
 - Proposed salary for each staff posts and basis for salary calculation (e.g. professional qualifications and years of experience) **in RLP can be found in the Financial Plan(Appendix 6)**
 - Organisational chart illustrating the proposed management & staffing structure of the LAG, Implementing Partner(s) and Animating Partner (if applicable) below.
45. The organisation chart for Roscommon LEADER Partnership shows the strong organisation structure of the company:

Figure 1: Management and Operational Structure of Implementing Partner (RLP)



- Job descriptions, competencies, professional qualifications and skills to generate and manage LAG/project development processes on a local level for each role in RLP can be found in the Financial Plan (**Appendix 6**).
- Qualifications of staff assigned to animate and capacity build and manage climate, environment and biodiversity projects. As part of their LEADER mandate, every employee is extremely knowledgeable about environmental issues, climate change, and biodiversity, as a result of training and experiential and the job learning. In order to give Tidy Towns Groups, Graveyard Committees, other pertinent community groups, individuals, businesses, community volunteers, scheme supervisors, and scheme workers information on practical actions they can carry out in their own community and business to help develop and future-proof climate, a number of capacity building training projects in the areas of environment, biodiversity, and climate were launched as part of the LEADER 2014-2020 Programme. For a variety of entities, including organisations, businesses, committees, and individuals, individual action plans were developed. It is hoped that the LEADER 2020–2027 would see these initiatives through to completion.
- Roscommon LEADER Partnership LEADER team members have assisted the following number of green businesses in accessing funding under the LEADER 2007-2013, 2014-22 programmes, as well as animating and designing a comprehensive programme relating to community energy audits, which benefited 16 communities in Co. Roscommon under the 2014-22 programme. Under the last LEADER programme the LEADER team developed the Biodiversity Training for Community Groups in Co. Roscommon project which resulted in 15 groups developing Biodiversity plans.
- Martina Earley, CEO of Roscommon LEADER Partnership is Secretary and founding Director of Midland Warmer Homes CLG incorporated in July 2015. Prior to this, we carried out energy installation works under Roscommon LEADER Partnership since 2008. Midlands Warmer Homes is funded by the Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE), which is administered by Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to deliver the Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme (BEWHS) to qualifying householders free of charge. This is a free home installation service to qualifying households – mainly to those on low income. The scheme is delivered throughout the country by both private contractors and other Community

Based Organisations (CBOs). Midland Warmer Homes also receives funding from the Community Services Programme (CSP) through POBAL. The scheme further expanded to include the installation of ventilation including roof/soffit ventilation for attic insulation, and also background, permanent and mechanical ventilation for cavity wall insulation.

- We plan to keep LEADER's team's climate action skillset current in the LEADER 2023-2027 programme by having them complete the following training.

Overview of the Course Content for Climate Action 101

<p>Online Module 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An introduction to climate science - Ice ages - Ireland's land use - Our bogs - Pollution 	<p>Online Module 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The link between biodiversity & climate - Benefits of trees - Grasslands & meadows - Importance of insects - Invasive species 	<p>Online Module 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scarcity of freshwater - Water, carbon & climate - Ireland's water quality - Water conservation - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
<p>Online Module 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is Ireland doing to fight climate change? - Waste and the circular economy - Calculating your carbon footprint 	<p>Online Module 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practical actions to support our climate, biodiversity & water quality - Creating an action plan 	<p>Field Sessions with Ecologist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practical discussions of actions that can be undertaken in the learner's own workplace or home to support climate, biodiversity and water quality - Identification of species and habitats - Demonstration of simple method to assess stream water quality - Where practical, implementation/ demonstration of actions

Recently a consortium consisting of the ILDN, 4 member LDCs, PlanEnergy and ATU Sligo successfully tendered for funding under the Pobal programme: **Community Climate Action Programme: Climate Education, Capacity Building and Learning by Doing (Strand 2).**

This programme strives to facilitate eligible organisations to collaboratively develop supports, tools, know-how and approaches to assist local communities take climate action. The strand focus is on climate education, capacity building and learning by doing – moving beyond 'raising awareness' to build the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to respond to the challenges of climate change at a community level. Projects will demonstrate inclusivity in design and practice, so that no one is left behind. Roscommon LEADER Partnership has just hired one of the community retrofit champions previously employed under the programme with a strong skillset in Climate Action.

The LEADER Team as part of the remit to animate the climate and environment sector are hosting a number of roadshow events in the Quarter 4 2023 to build capacity for individuals and communities within Co. Roscommon.

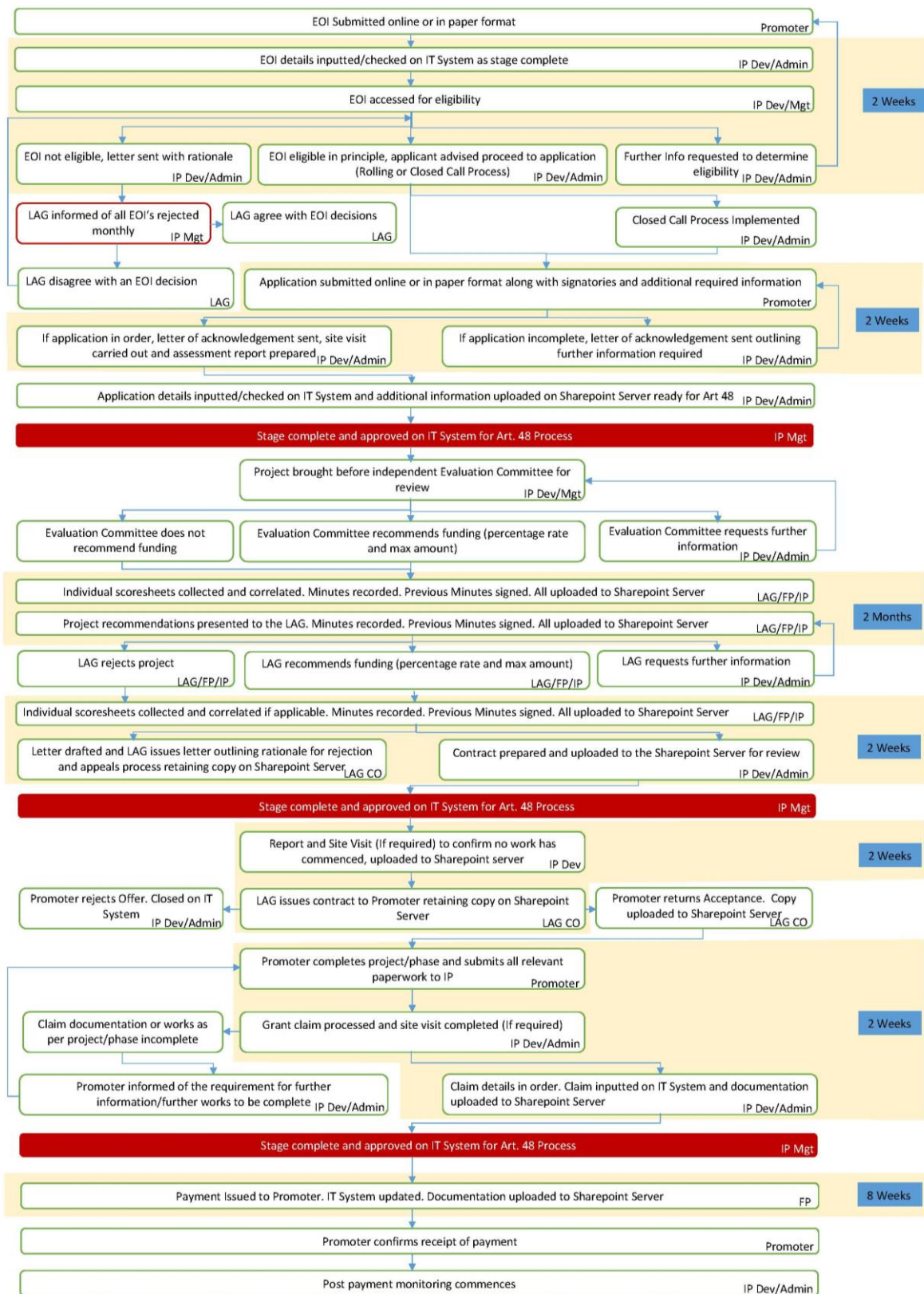
- As mentioned earlier, the staff of RLP have extensive experience of rules and recommendations of public procurement. All LEADER staff have completed recent procurement training from a procurement consultant to enhance the processing of applications to ensure projects are in line with procurement regulations. LEADER staff also reviews each application to ensure that all relevant requirements are met before submitting for approval. To ensure LEADER budgets are maximised and the best prices are achieved LEADER staff support beneficiaries to ensure that the following factors are considered:
 - Effective planning and budgeting: Careful planning and budgeting help allocate resources efficiently and effectively. This involves identifying project goals, estimating costs, and determining the optimal allocation of funds to different activities.
 - Competitive procurement: Implementing a competitive procurement process in line with public procurement guidelines ensures that the prices for goods, services, or works needed for LEADER projects are achieved. By soliciting bids or proposals from multiple suppliers or contractors, it increases the chances of obtaining competitive prices and value for money.
 - Cost monitoring and control: regular monitoring of project costs and expenses is crucial to ensure that budgets are not exceeded. By tracking expenditures, project managers can identify cost overruns early on and take corrective actions to stay within budget.
 - Continuous evaluation and adjustment: Regular evaluation of project performance allows for adjustments and optimizations to maximise the use of budgets ensuring that the allocated LEADER budget can be utilised effectively.
- Each role identified and how it contributes specifically in the administration of the LEADER programme can be found in the Financial Plan.

Project selection procedures for LEADER

46. Roscommon LCDC as the LAG is the decision-making authority in relation to the LEADER Programme 2023-2027.
47. As per the Service Level Agreement in Appendix 1, RLP will implement the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 on behalf of Roscommon LCDC through a Service Level Agreement. RLP will be fully accountable to Roscommon LCDC in this regard. This role will include, but will not be limited to –
- animation work as required in preparation for calls for project proposals,
 - developing and issuing calls for proposals,
 - managing call for proposals processes,
 - managing open-call project application processes,
 - implementing, managing and coordinating animation activity in the LAG area,
 - developing funding proposals with project promoters,
 - receiving and processing funding applications,
 - preparing and collating documentation for Article 48 checks,
 - submitting files for Article 48 checks and following up on issues identified through Article 48 checks, if required.
 - project development, management and monitoring work with project promoters,
 - developing and implementing LDC-led projects,
 - submission of projects to the LAG evaluation committee,
 - preparing and issuing contracts with project promoters on behalf of the LAG,
 - quarterly report of activity to LAG, and
 - general file management, audit compliance and administration related to the above actions.

48. Project applications will be assessed, including checking compatibility and eligibility with the LDS and the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 Operating Rules, as well as other relevant national, regional and local policies. In accordance with the Operating Rules, Roscommon LCDC will develop the necessary tools and structures to implement the programme, including evaluation and score sheets. Strict project evaluation criteria will be put in place to ensure that only eligible projects which contribute to the overall objectives of the LDS will be funded. Sustainability and viability will also be key considerations, where appropriate.
49. Training will be undertaken within the LAG, Implementing Partner and Financial Partner as necessary to ensure clear understanding of the various roles and responsibilities and the requirements for each.
50. Roscommon LCDC will ensure that project selection is carried out in a robust and transparent manner. Project selection criteria will be set out in advance, with a requirement for clear rationale for all decisions and recommendations made.
51. The project selection process, from initial Expression of Interest to completion of project and final payment, is illustrated below:

Figure 2: Project Appraisal and Selection Process



Project Selection Criteria and Scoring Framework

52. Roscommon LCDC will ensure that project selection criteria and scoring framework are put in place. The development of these structures will be guided by the Local Development Strategy and the LEADER Programme Operating Rules in the first instance. Other relevant criteria will be included as necessary, based on specific objectives of various project calls. A detailed rationale will be recorded for each decision reached by the Evaluation Committee. A draft scoring sheet is attached in Appendix 5. The final scoring sheet will take cognisance of the final operating rules.
53. All projects will be assessed using a scoring mechanism which will be retained on the relevant project files.
54. Training and capacity building will be provided to promoters who do not have sufficient capacity to complete the application process. Where either the Independent Evaluation Committee and/or Roscommon LCDC have identified inadequacies in a project application, Roscommon LCDC may recommend or refer a project promoter for more comprehensive mentoring and/or business/strategic advice. This mentoring/advice will be accepted as the subject of a funding application to Roscommon LCDC under the LEADER Programme 2023-2027.

Relevant Experience

55. Experience across all partners, particularly the Implementing Partner, is extensive in relation to the LEADER Programme rolling it out of many years. The SLA (Appendix 1) sets out the roles and responsibilities of each of the three partners, for the implementation of the LDS/LEADER Programme 2023-2027.
56. The LAG, and in particular its Implementing Partner, Roscommon LEADER Partnership and Financial Partner, Roscommon County Council, has the required experience to deliver the LEADER Programme 2023-2027, including experience in:
- Developing an area-based approach to economic development in rural areas;
 - Delivering interventions that support social inclusion and poverty reduction, in particular those that target 'hard to reach' communities;
 - Capacity Building with business and communities with solutions to help enhance our Environment;
 - Management of relevant EU and Exchequer funding;

Developing an area-based approach to economic development in rural areas

57. Roscommon County Council, Roscommon LCDC, and Roscommon LEADER Partnership worked together to develop this local development strategy for the county. The combined expertise of the three groups has been used to establish an area-based economic development strategy for County Roscommon. The LDS was developed taking into account the Area SWOT Analysis, the socioeconomic context of the County, and consultations held.
58. Community-led local development (CLLD) with the community and stakeholders, integral to the LEADER Programme, has been the basis for the approach taken when developing this Local Development Strategy. The structure of Roscommon LCDC incorporates the principles of CLLD and the consultation process, which afforded all stakeholders an opportunity to contribute to the LDS, also adheres to CLLD. In order to improve and grow complementarily and the added value of the LEADER Programme in the county, links with and talks with local and regional agencies have also helped to compile the LDS. Additionally, it helps to prevent funding or service duplication.

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

59. The consultation process and resultant SWOT Analysis have identified areas of need and gaps in services within County Roscommon. With its extensive history in the area of social inclusion, in particular Roscommon LEADER Partnership, which has managed the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme, Traveller Health Programme, Ability Programmes and others. In order to ensure that hard-to-reach communities have the capacity to compete for LEADER funding and to undertake initiatives that would best benefit their regions and communities, targeted interventions under the LDS will be identified and created.

Capacity Building with business and communities with solutions to help enhance our Environment

60. For the LEADER Programme 2023–2027, climate change mitigation and adaptation have been named as crosscutting issues. Appropriate Capacity Building to develop awareness and involvement across all sectors and themes at local level will be identified and actioned. In respect to climate change mitigation, the SWOT Analysis has also suggested specific actions and areas that need to be investigated and developed. When necessary, outside expertise will be sourced, especially for rapidly evolving technologies related to climate change as well as knowledge of biodiversity and water preservation.

61. All staff have a good knowledge and experience in climate action, environment and biodiversity as part of their LEADER remit. As part of LEADER 2014-2020 Programme, a number of capacity building training projects were delivered in the areas of climate, environment and biodiversity. With the aim of providing Tidy Towns Groups, Graveyard Committees, other relevant community groups, individuals, businesses, community volunteers, scheme supervisors and scheme workers with information on practical actions they can carry out in their own community and business to help develop and future proof climate, environment and biodiversity within their community or business. Individual action plans were developed for groups, businesses, committees, individuals, etc. and it is expected the LEADER 2020-2027 will bring a number of this proposed innovative actions to fruition.

62. The criteria for funding projects will incorporate for promoting the SDGs and overseeing their coherent implementation across the LEADER Programme 2023–2027

Management of relevant EU and Exchequer funding

63. Roscommon County Council were Financial Partners for the delivery of the LEADER Programme 2014-2020 in County Roscommon. RCC were also responsible for carrying out Article 48 Administrative Checks on project applications and project claims (except In-house projects) during the same period. RCC also processes and oversees the LAG Monthly Administrative returns. Roscommon County Council utilises the Agresso System for the management of LEADER funds. Management of individual project finances will be the responsibility of Roscommon LEADER Partnership as Implementing Partner.

64. In accordance with the LEADER Programme 2023–2027 Operating Rules, the Service Level Agreement will specify all financial roles, responsibilities, and controls. The LEADER ICT System will be used for financial reporting. The management and execution of projects and initiatives financed by the Exchequer and the EU have been successfully managed and carried out by Roscommon County Council and Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

Local Action Group – Roscommon Local Development Committee:

65. Roscommon LCDC, as LAG, had overall responsibility for the delivery of the LEADER Programme 2014-2020 (extended to 2022) within County Roscommon. The individual members of Roscommon LCDC bring a wealth of collective experience to the committee,

across a range of subjects and practices. As well as the LEADER Programmes 2014-2022 and 2023- 2027, Roscommon LCDC is also responsible for the administration and decision making of a number of other programmes and schemes within County Roscommon, including SICAP, Community Enhancement Programme and Ukrainian Recognition Fund, as well as the development of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the county.

Implementing Partner – Roscommon LEADER Partnership

66. The mission of Roscommon LEADER Partnership is to promote, support, assist and engage in:

- Social development;
- Enterprise development to facilitate rural and urban regeneration; and/or
- Community development, designed to benefit and promote the welfare of local communities or deal with the causes and consequences of social and economic disadvantage or poverty.

67. Roscommon Integrated Development Company Ltd. t/a Roscommon LEADER Partnership (RLP) brings together key development projects including rural enterprise, development and social inclusion that work for the betterment of the people of Co. Roscommon. RLP and its predecessors have supported and assisted enterprise and individuals in Co. Roscommon under a wide range of programmes and supports since 1991.

68. Delivering the LEADER Programme 2014-2020 in County Roscommon is one of RLP's current responsibilities. Other initiatives and programmes, including SICAP, RSS, TUS, the Traveller Health Programme, and a variety of EU Erasmus Projects, are also provided by the organisation and are supported by various Irish and EU government departments, agencies, and bodies. The Roscommon LEADER Partnership's scope of work is very broad; just a few instances embrace tourism, business, the environment, recreation, social inclusion, and support for the unemployed.

69. RLP LEADER Programme staff have a wealth of experience, gained from working on various LEADER and other Programmes over the past 25+ years, of developing and managing LEADER grant aid through both time limited and rolling calls for proposals. RLP LEADER staff will use their experience to deliver the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 in line with the LDS, Programme Operating Rules and Procedures Manual. Further Financial Management support and controls are in place through the RLP CFO and Administration Staff.

Financial Partner – Roscommon County Council

70. Roscommon County Council (RCC) is the authority responsible for Local Government in County Roscommon. As a County Council, it is governed by the Local Government Act 2001. Roscommon County Council is responsible for housing and community, roads and transportation, urban planning and development, amenity and culture, and environment. The council has 18 elected members and a range of experienced staff. Roscommon County Council provide administrative support to Roscommon LCDC.

71. Roscommon County Council has a Financial Management System (Agresso) in place and a Procurement Plan. Roscommon County Council is also subject to annual audit by the Local Government Audit Service and has an Audit Committee in place to monitor and advice on financial activities. Roscommon County Council will manage all grant monies paid to Roscommon LCDC. Roscommon County Council will make all project payments to project promoters.

Monitoring and Evaluation

72. Monitoring of projects and evaluation of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 will be carried out in partnership by Roscommon LCDC (LAG), Roscommon LEADER Partnership (IP) and Roscommon County Council (FP). An Annual Progress Report will detail the key activities, achievements and challenges during the previous year, with the Implementation Plan setting out the planned actions and activities for the following 12 months. Additional to the APR, the LAG will provide additional information on the LEADER Programme to DRCD and the EU, and will co-operate with any external Auditors appointed. Common performance indicators to be measured will include:

- output indicators
- result indicators

73. The Added Value of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 in County Roscommon will also be measured and recorded. This will include:

- improved social capital
- improved governance of promoters
- enhanced results and impacts of programme/strategy implementation
- Additionality

74. Roscommon LCDC will be responsible for overseeing the two levels at which programme monitoring will be carried out, as follows:

1. Project Level Monitoring.
2. Monitoring of Roscommon LEADER Partnership's performance as Implementing Partner.

Project Level Monitoring:

75. Project monitoring will record data at both application and project completion stages. This will include both quantitative and qualitative data, providing information on project progress, achievements and key learnings.

76. Reporting on the progress/outputs of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 will be facilitated by a defined set of information that will be captured on every funded project, allowing ready access to information with which to provide analysis and respond to queries. Information at project level will be captured at the following junctures, in compliance with the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 Operating Rules:

- Application Stage
- LAG Assessment of Application
- Reporting on outputs/outcomes
- Detailed Project / Case Studies

77. Reporting will also contain a qualitative element, in which projects will briefly describe the progress/achievements and highlight any key learning. Roscommon LCDC will make it a condition of grant aid that project promoters provide the data needed to comply with the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 reporting requirements and will ensure that the data is quality checked.

78. Roscommon LCDC and the Implementing Partner, Roscommon LEADER Partnership, will work with and support the Department and/or its agents in the collation of data collected from funded projects and provide analysis on the progress and outputs/outcomes achieved with the LEADER funding.

79. LAG monitoring will include collated data from projects as well as programme implementation data, particularly against the relevant Implementation Plan and the LDS. Details of animation activities will also be recorded and reported. Individual Project Case Studies will form part of the Annual Report.

Monitoring of Roscommon LEADER Partnership's performance as Implementing Partner

80. As defined under the proposed Service Level Agreement between Roscommon LCDC, Roscommon LEADER Partnership and Roscommon County Council, Roscommon LEADER Partnership is responsible for the quarterly reporting of LEADER Programme activity including financial performance to Roscommon LCDC.

Evaluation of the Local Development Strategy

81. As well as the Annual Progress Report, 2 reviews/evaluations of the Local Development strategy for County Roscommon will be carried out, as follows:
- Mid-term review
 - End of Programme review
82. A Terms of Reference will be developed for both evaluations. It is anticipated that an external body will carry out the Evaluation of the LDS, subject to budget availability.
83. In addition, the LAG will contribute to any national programme-level evaluation of LEADER and/or Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan, which is undertaken by Government or the EU.

Risk management procedures.

84. Roscommon LCDC will implement internal monitoring systems to address two primary levels of risk associated with the delivery of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027. These risk assessments will be designed to offset potential difficulties that may occur at Programme level and at project level. Issues that have been identified at programme level, including those gained from previous experience, include:
- Slow start to allocating funding coupled with high animation costs;
 - Lost ground (to other programmes and schemes) due to change over of programmes;
 - Actual drawdown of funds (claims) may not start until year 3 of programme (2025);
 - Time required for training up of new LCDC members, Evaluation Committee members and possible new staff;
 - Timeline and processing of applications and claims.
85. At project level, there remains the need for constant vigilance surrounding the eligibility of projects, the accuracy of information provided and the need to ensure that value-for-money is obtained by project promoters.

2.0 AREA PROFILE

2.1 Area Selection

86. The geographic area to be covered by this Local Development Strategy is the county of Roscommon, excluding the ED of Athlone West Urban and the east urban area of Ballinasloe, i.e. the area covered by this strategy equates to the administrative area of Roscommon County Council, which comprises of the Municipal Areas of Athlone, Boyle and Roscommon. It consists of 112 electoral areas (See Appendix 3). The majority of these are below the national average in terms of disadvantage and relative deprivation indices.

87. Roscommon is a land of lakes and rivers, gently rolling hills, bogland and picturesque mountains. Framed to the east and west by Lough Ree and the Rivers Shannon and Suck, Roscommon is bordered by Sligo and Leitrim to the north, Galway and Mayo to the west, Offaly to the south and Westmeath and Longford to the east. It is the only inland county in the West region, and is therefore more centrally located, having much in common with other inland counties in the midlands in terms of geography, population trends and economic development.

2.2 Overview

88. According to the preliminary Census 2022 results, the total population of Roscommon was 69,995 people. This population was distributed across the municipal districts of Athlone (21,120), Boyle (24,264) and Roscommon (24,611). Spread over an area of 2,547km², Roscommon is the 9th largest county with 1.4% of the national population, illustrating its predominantly rural nature, with the third lowest population density in the State.

89. Between 2016 and 2022, the population of Roscommon grew (8.4%), a faster growth rate than both the Northern and Western Region and the State. As of the 2022 census, there were 32,265 total dwellings across County Roscommon, 8,196 dwellings in Athlone MD, 12,623 in Boyle MD, and 11,446 in Roscommon MD.

Figure 3: County Roscommon Municipal Districts

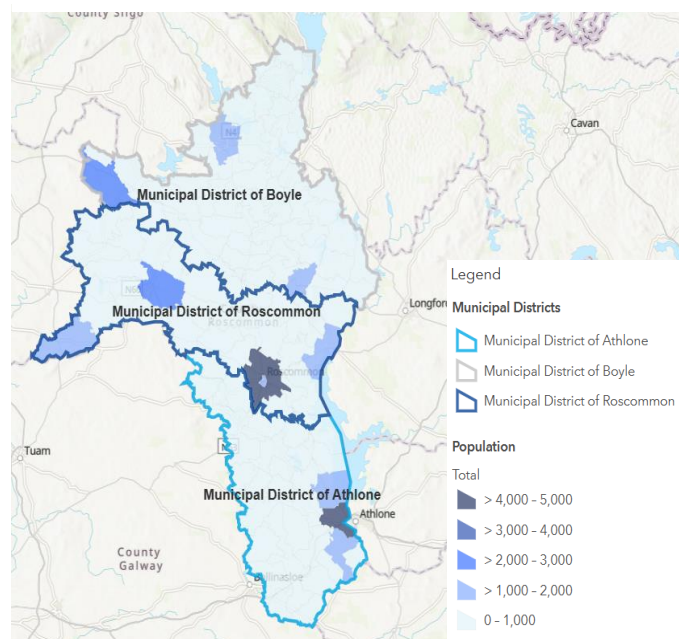
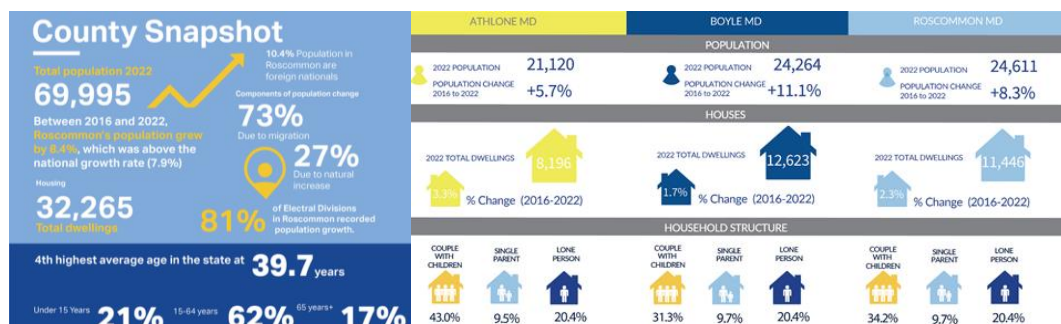


Figure 4: Snapshot of Population Statistics for County Roscommon



2.3 Economic Development and Job Creation

Traditional employment sectors

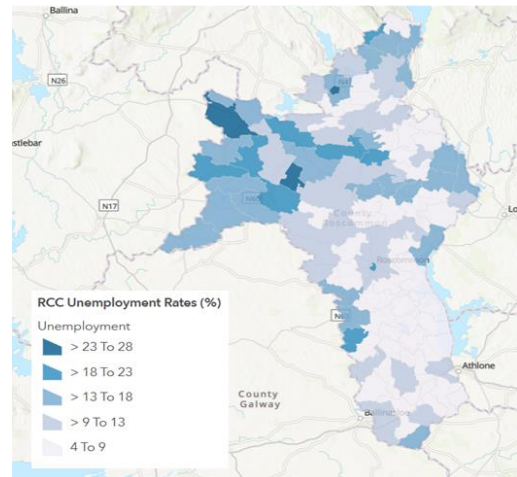
90. The top three employment industries in Roscommon in 2016 were:

- Wholesale and retail trade (3,585 employees) 17%
- Health and social work (3,343 employees) 16%
- Manufacturing industries (2,803 employees) 13%

Decreasing but uneven unemployment rate

91. The County's unemployment rate (13%) is slightly higher than the State figure (12.9%). Figure 5 shows that unemployment is particularly high in the north and west of the County.

Figure 5: Geographic distribution of unemployment



Relatively high deprivation rates

92. The household median gross income of County Roscommon (€39,006) was in the below average category, and 13.8% lower than the State median. At a county level, Roscommon scores marginally below average according to the HP Pobal Deprivation Index, indicating the County has marginally more deprivation relative to other counties.

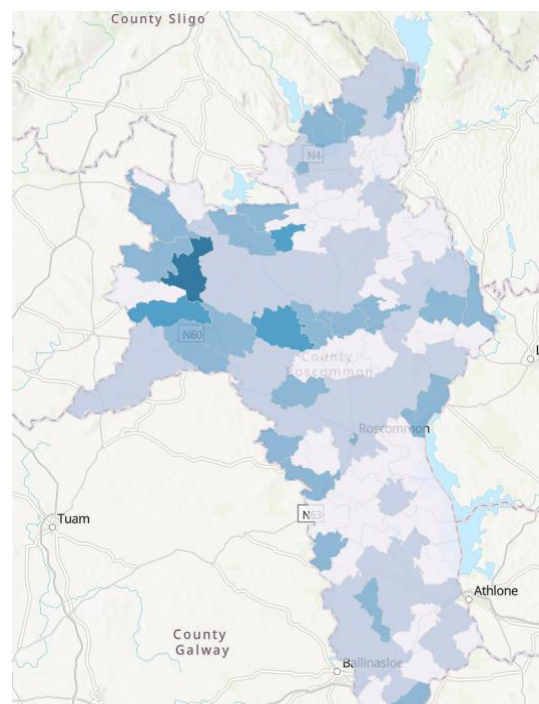
Low but increasing education rates

93. In 2016, there were lower overall educational attainment rates in Roscommon than in the Northern and Western Region and the State.

94. Comparison of the levels of education in Roscommon, the Northern and Western Region, and the State reveal that the proportion of people that achieved:

- **Low educational attainment rates (no formal/primary only) was lower** in Roscommon (15.5%) than the Northern and Western Region (16.6%)
- **A secondary education was higher** in Roscommon (21.9%) than the Northern and Western Region (19.7%);
- **Bachelor's degree qualifications was lower** in Roscommon (16.7%) than the Northern and Western Region (17.7%);
- **Postgraduate, PhD or higher qualifications was lower** in Roscommon (7.0%) than the Northern and Western Region (17.9%).

Figure 6: EDs by the percentage of the population in unskilled labour types in 2016



High proportions farmers and beef farms

95. All three municipal districts of County Roscommon had a significantly greater proportion of the population working as farmers than the State average of 5.8% (Athlone MD 11.6%, Boyle MD 13.1% and Roscommon MD 12.2%).

96. The opposite is true of people working in the employers and manager's category. Athlone (15.6%), Boyle (13.7%) and Roscommon (12.8%) each had a lower proportion of the population in this category than the State (17.3%).

Emerging tourism industry

97. Irish residents took 13.3 million domestic trips in 2022, spending a total of €2.9 billion. They stayed an average of 3.0 nights per trip, a total 34.2 million nights. Below are the headline figures for the Roscommon area pooled with Longford:

Figure 7: Fáilte Ireland - Irish Resident Trips and Spend 2022

Roscommon & Longford		
Trips	000s	373
Nights	000s	1,178
Average Length of Stay	Nights	3.2
Spend	€mn	97

98. In 2016, 52,000 people from overseas visited County Roscommon, which generated approximately €20 million. Roscommon is located within Fáilte Ireland's Hidden Heartland tourism region, and is home to a range of attractions including but not limited to:

- Arigna Mining Experience
- Roscommon Castle
- Lake O'Flynn
- Donamon Castle
- Castlerea Demesne
- Beara Breifne Way, specifically the Suck Valley Way, the Lung Lough Gara Way and the Miners Way & Historical Trail
- The Irish National Famine Museum (Strokestown)
- Roscommon County Museum
- Lough Key Forest & Activity Park (200k visitors annually)
- The only Boda Borg Quest facility in the country
- Ireland's largest inflatable Waterpark (Athlone)
- Glendeer Pet Farm
- Trinity Arts Centre
- Tullyboy Farm
- Roscommon Arts Centre
- Knockvicar Alpacas
- Boyle Abbey (which had 8,325 visitors in 2021)
- Rathcroghan Complex and Visitor Centre
- Clonalis House
- Roscommon Race Course.

Indigenous enterprise in new industry sectors

99. In 2021, a total of 1,684 jobs were supported by Enterprise Ireland client companies that were located in Roscommon and 888 people were employed in client companies supported by the Roscommon Local Enterprise Office in 2020.

100. As of 2020, there were 3,167 active enterprises in Roscommon. Of these, the vast majority (3,013) were micro-enterprises (employing under 10 people) and 300 Ha of land in Roscommon is prioritised for industry and enterprise development. Key enterprise sectors of the Northern and Western Region include:

- Tourism
- Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Economy
- Marine and Blue Economy
- ICT and Life Sciences
- Agri-Tech and Agri-Food
- Retail
- Advance Manufacturing and Engineering

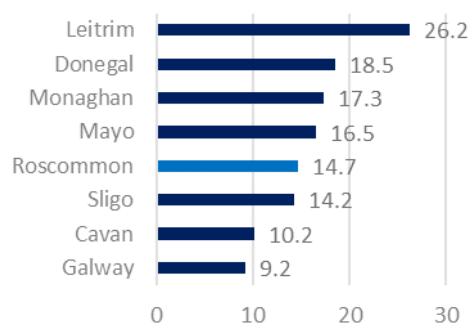
101. Key sectors associated with settlement centres in Roscommon include:

- Innovation & ICT (Roscommon Town)
- Life Sciences (Monksland)
- Tourism & Arts (Boyle)
- Agri-food (Castlerea)
- Creative Industries (Ballaghaderreen)
- Culture & Heritage (Strokestown)

Strong social enterprise network

102. According to a 2023 Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland (SERI) report¹, Roscommon has the fifth-highest ratio of social enterprises per 10k population in the State (14.7). The Northern and Western Region contains all of the top-five counties, meaning that Roscommon also has the fifth-highest ratio in the region.

Figure 8: No. of Social Enterprises per 10k population



Engagement of Foreign Direct Investment

103. Roscommon is engaged with IDA Ireland, working to attract and retain foreign direct investment in the County. There are 10 Industrial Development Agency (IDA) supported companies in County Roscommon (considered the West Region by the IDA) employing 1,473 in total with net job growth every year since 2017.

104. IDA Ireland own approximately 6 Ha acres of marketable land in Roscommon, upon which they are actively encouraging investors to locate, whether through marketing potential investment sites outside of the main cities or working to develop recognised industry clusters. (As of 2023, 2 sites have been sold and there is now approximately 1Ha remaining).

¹ Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland (2023). Social Enterprises in Ireland: A Baseline Data Collection Exercise. https://www.socialenterprise.ie/files/uqgd00fc11_2da8f1b579bd4866baf45581e2c65e30.pdf

2.4 Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion

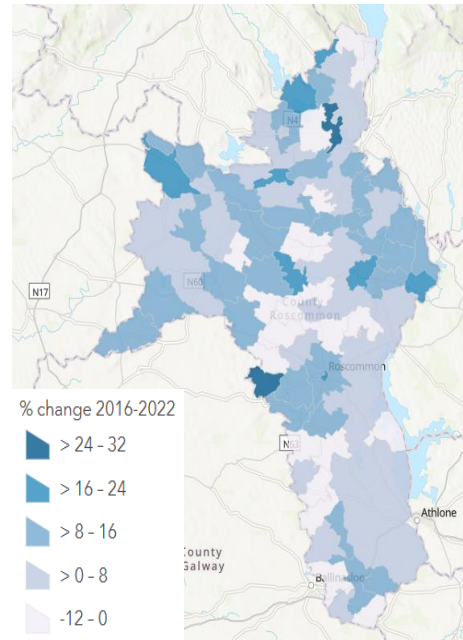
Rapidly Growing Population

105. Between 2016 and 2022, the population of Roscommon increased by 8.4% or 5,451 people, which was a higher rate of growth than the Northern and Western Region and the State. This was the second highest proportional growth rate in the Northern and Western region.

Figure 9: EDs by population change between 2016 and 2022

106. During the period from 2016 to 2022, there were noticeable population dynamics in the 110 EDs located in Roscommon. Among them, 89 EDs recorded population growth, while 21 EDs either experienced a decline or showed no change in population.

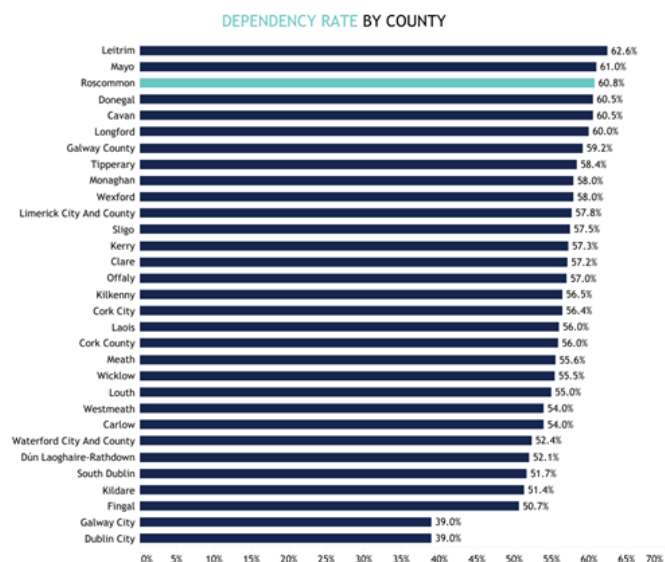
107. The vast majority of the population increase (75.2%) was due to net migration, while approximately a quarter (24.8%) was due to natural increase (births in the County). In 2016 (the most recently available data), 72.9% of the population lived in areas designated as rural, with 26.9% of the population living in highly rural/remote areas.



Older age profile and high proportions of dependents

108. Dependents are defined for statistical purposes as people outside the traditional working age of 15-64. Between 2011 and 2016, the total dependency ratio increased by 8.7% in Roscommon, resulting in the County having the third-highest total dependency ratio in the State. Roscommon had the second-highest old-age dependency ratio (proportion of those age 65+ as a percentage of the working-age population) in the Northern and Western Region (26.8% and 23.9%, respectively).

Figure 10: Breakdown of dependency ratio by County



109. In 2016, Roscommon had the 4th highest average age in the State and the highest proportion of people aged 85+ (2.1%). Between 2011 and 2016. The young workforce age cohort (age 25 to 34) showed the most significant decrease in Roscommon and in the Northern and Western Region (falling -2.4% and -2.7% respectively). While empty nesters and retiree's cohort (age 60 to 69) experienced the most significant increase in Roscommon and in the Northern and Western Region (increasing 1.4% and 1.3% respectively).

Centrally located and well connected
Vibrant and engaged community

110. According to the 2022 Census, a higher proportion of Roscommon's population volunteered than the State rate (16.5% and 13.8% respectively). Roscommon is home to:

- 51 youth groups
- 41 Community Centres
- 98 Sports Facilities
- 4 Art Facilities
- 270 members of Roscommon Public Participation Network
- Award-winning Tidy County
- 285 community and sports groups

111. Family and youth services in Roscommon include:

- 59 Pre-school Services
- 50 Afterschool Services
- 15 Parent and Toddler Groups
- 9 Primary Care Networks
- 4 Family Resource Centres: Castlerea, Ballaghaderreen, Roscommon/South, and Boyle

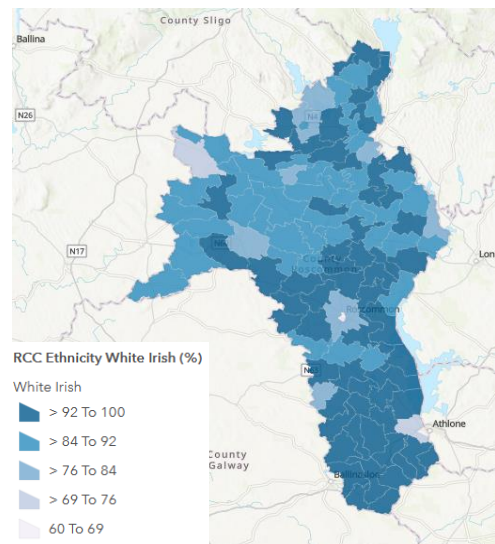
Relatively high National and Ethnic diversity compared to the Region

112. In 2016, 13% of the County's population was an ethnicity other than White Irish, making Roscommon the third-most ethnically diverse county in the Northern and Western Region.

113. Roscommon had a higher rate of Irish Travellers in Roscommon, accounting for 11.5% of all travellers across Roscommon, Galway and Mayo with the majority of travellers residing in Roscommon Town and Ballaghaderreen.

114. As shown in Figure 11, ethnic diversity varies across Roscommon. The proportion of people with White Irish is high across the south of the County with the exception of the areas around Athlone and Roscommon towns which are the most diverse areas in the county. The north of the county is more consistently ethnically diverse, particularly in Ballaghaderreen and the areas surrounding Boyle Town.

Figure 11: EDs by the proportion of people of White Irish ethnicity in Roscommon



New refugee communities

115. As of 12 February 2023, 793 Ukrainian refugees had registered a postal address in the County, with 58% (460) of registrations in Boyle MD, 39% (311) in Roscommon MD and 3% (22) in Athlone MD.

High health needs but good access to healthcare services

116. The majority (88.4%) of Roscommon's population reported being in good or very good health, however, this was slightly lower than the State figure (90.0%). 14.5% of the population had a disability, which was higher than the Northern and Western Region (13.4%) and the State (13.5%).

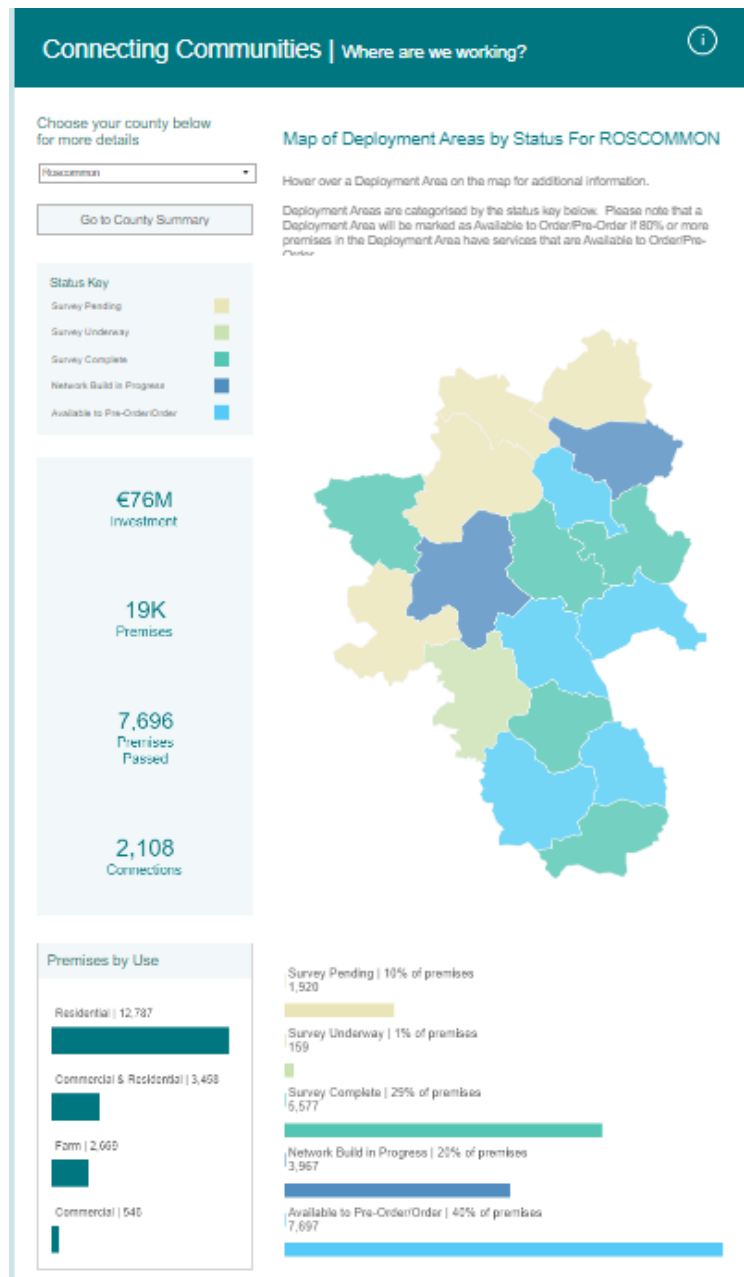
Significant regeneration investment

117. As of July 2022, County Roscommon has been granted €14.3 million from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF). The LDS has the capacity to build on this significant government grant aid.

Growing telecoms infrastructure

118. Below shows a map of the current status of National Broadband plan in Roscommon.

Figure 12: NBI - Deployment Areas by Status for County Roscommon



119. National Broadband Ireland has established 1,381 connections in Roscommon covering 19k premises in the County. The proportion of **households with internet access in Roscommon grew from 71.3% in 2016 to 80.0% in 2022**. This was slightly lower than the State proportion (83.4%), though the rate of growth was higher in Roscommon (8.7%) than the State (5%). Between 2011 and 2016 those without internet access decreased

in Athlone MD (from 30.4% to 23.4%), Boyle MD (from 36.5% to 28.8%), and Roscommon MD (from 36.4% to 28.4%).

Transport and Access

120. Roscommon’s transport infrastructure is illustrated in Figure 13. This infrastructure is limited beyond the primary roads of the County and leaves many rural areas isolated.

Figure 13: Public transport in Roscommon



121. **Roads:** Co. Roscommon is serviced by the M6 Motorway and the N4 and N5 National Primary Routes, providing access to major urban centres to the east, west and north-west. However, local feedback from the consultation process identified some issues in terms of transport and road networks within the county itself, e.g. considerable journey times from north to south in the county and limited public transport services within the county.

122. **Rail:** Three rail lines traverse the county, linking Dublin in the East with Galway, Westport/Ballina and Sligo to the west and north-west.

123. **Bus:** Bus transport is mainly provided by Bus Eireann Regional Services that traverse the county. Rural transport routes, managed by Local Link, operate in some parts of the county. There are limited private bus services whilst there is no scheduled service directly from Ireland West (Knock) Airport into Roscommon.

124. **Air:** Improved road network has reduced journey times to Dublin as the main international airport. However, the location of Ireland West/Knock Airport in close proximity to the county also offers potential if it can be tapped sufficiently for tourism and business. Transport links have been identified during consultation as a weakness to be addressed, as well as further promotion of the county.

2.5 Sustainable Development and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Significant natural and ancient, built heritage

125. Roscommon is home to Rathcroghan, one of the two UNESCO World Heritage Shortlist sites in Ireland.

126. Roscommon also has 300+ archaeological sites of interest and the Irish National Registry Office for Births, Deaths and Marriages.

127. The County is rich in natural resources, which include:

- Longest shoreline of River Shannon 140km (Invest Roscommon Strategy).
- 29 County Geological Sites, including three quarries and eight inland waterways.
- Wetlands that cover 580km², or approximately 22% of the County.

128. Preservation and conservation areas and efforts include:

- 38 Natura 2000 sites, including Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation
- 11 designated Natural Heritage Areas, with several more proposed
- Ten bog sites entirely located within are designated as Raised Bed Special Areas of Conservation, with a further five bog sites partially located within the County

Growing renewable energy infrastructure

129. Roscommon is included in the region identified by Ireland's first Territorial Just Transition Plan (Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, 2022-2027), which provides for the allocation of approximately €169 million of investments to address the development needs resulting from the ending of peat extraction for energy production. The Roscommon LDS can complement this investment by adding value to much needed investment in protecting our rich environment and addressing climate change.

High car dependence and poor energy efficiency

130. A higher proportion of households in Roscommon (89.4%) reported owning at least one car than the Northern and Western Region (86.9%) or the State (84.4%). Roscommon had the second-lowest proportion of households with no motor car in the Northern and Western region, and the sixth-lowest in the State.

131. The most common mode of travel to work in Roscommon was by personal vehicle (motorcycle or scooter, car driver, car passenger, van) with 86.0%. This was the highest proportion of people traveling to work by personal vehicle in the State. As shown in Figure 14, there is a pattern for high car reliance in the areas outside but near to the major settlements of Athlone MD, Roscommon MD and Boyle MD.

132. 22% of total CO₂ emissions in Co. Roscommon are from transport. How people travel is one of the main areas where behaviour change can have a rapid and real impact on achieving climate goals. However, there are real alternatives emerging.

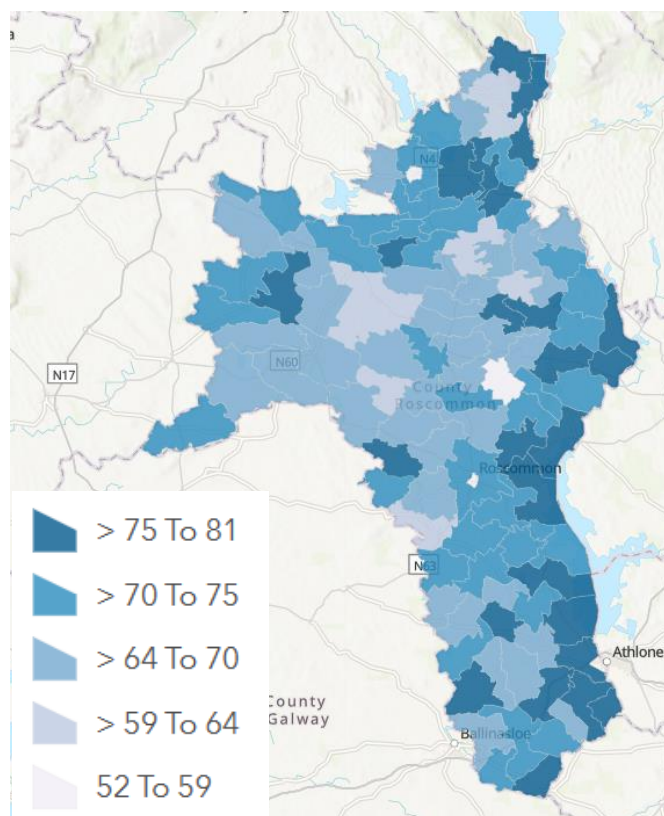
133. The proportion of Total CO₂ emissions from County Roscommon Residential is 13%. How homes are powered and heated has significant impact on annual emissions. By taking proactive steps this impact can be greatly reduced.

134. Consumption has a major contribution to emissions in terms of how things are made, transported, used, reused and recycled. Ireland is moving towards creating a circular economy, making products that last longer, can be repurposed, reused and eventually recycled more easily. Consumers have the power to influence how products are made and to look for sustainable options. People are changing their shopping habits by buying products that last longer or repurposing clothing or furniture.

135. The Roscommon LDS will play a key role in rolling out some of the initiatives linked with the new climate office coordinated by Roscommon County Council.

136. The sales of Electrical Vehicles in Roscommon accounted for 3.7% of all new and second-hand private cars licensed for the first time between January and June 2022, which was below the State average of 9.9%. Roscommon LDS will support the provision of charging points around the county in line with Government strategy.

Figure 14: EDs by the percentage of people travelling to work by car



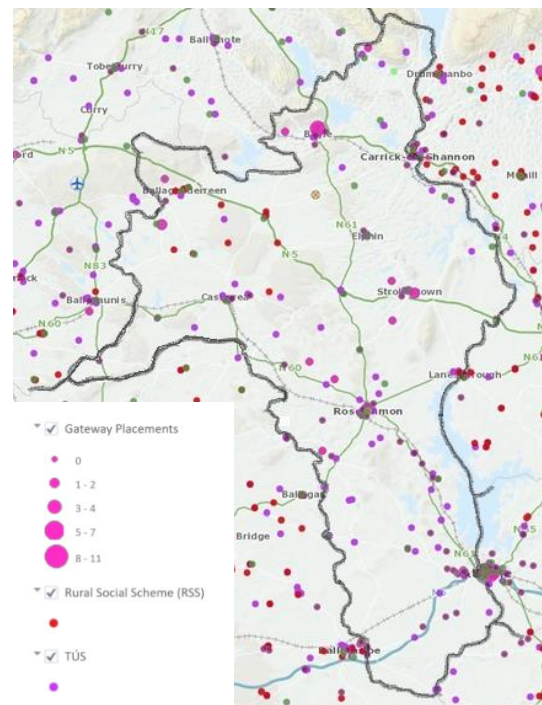
137. The Building Energy Rating (BER) is audited across Ireland. Between 2009 and 2022, 12% of residences in County Roscommon recorded a BER between A and B. This was significantly lower than the State average of 21% across the same period. The same trend was seen in the non-residential building, with County Roscommon achieving
138. 1111% graded between A and B compared to the State proportion of 15%. This suggests that buildings in County Roscommon are less energy efficient than the State's. The Local Development Strategy interventions will target community and business non-residential buildings to increase the efficiency of premises.

2.6 Existing social infrastructure

139. Appendix 4 contains a summary of the key service providers in Co. Roscommon and regionally/nationally that impact on the county. For the development of this LDS, all these providers have been consulted, either through direct communication or through a review of their strategies and plans, to ensure that the LDS does not duplicate their services and that it adheres to the principle of Additionality, thus making best use of the funding available under the LEADER Programme 2023-2027. During programme implementation, direct consultation with these agencies, as appropriate, will form part of the assessment of each project proposal to further ensure complementarity and best use of resources.

140. In addition to the services above, there are a number of Pobal-funded services throughout Roscommon (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: Pobal Programmes and Services

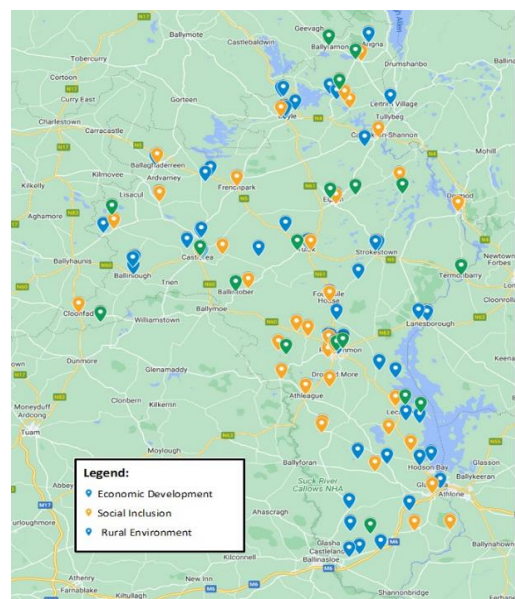


2.7 LEADER funding to-date

141. The LAG acknowledges the importance of ensuring that the LDS endeavours to allocate funding on a needs-led basis. It is also recognised that future funding must be prioritised for target groups and geographic locations that have not received past funding under any previous LDS while also supporting those who continue to need assistance. To support this, analysis was undertaken of previous funding.

142. Figure 16 visualises the geographic distribution of previous LEADER funding in Roscommon. Clusters of funding can be seen both towards the north western part and the central part of the County, and comparison of the Pobal Deprivation Index map shows strong overlap between funding locations and areas ranked as having more deprivation. The legend shows projects funded under the 3 LEADER Themes. The map demonstrates the high level of geographic cover of projects funded under LEADER 2014-2022.

Figure 16: LEADER Programme 2014-2022 Funding



143. The evaluation of the LEADER Programme 2014-2022 has identified the groups and organisations which applied for funding and/or received training and other soft support. This information will be used to identify gaps and potential target groups who would benefit from LEADER Programme support.

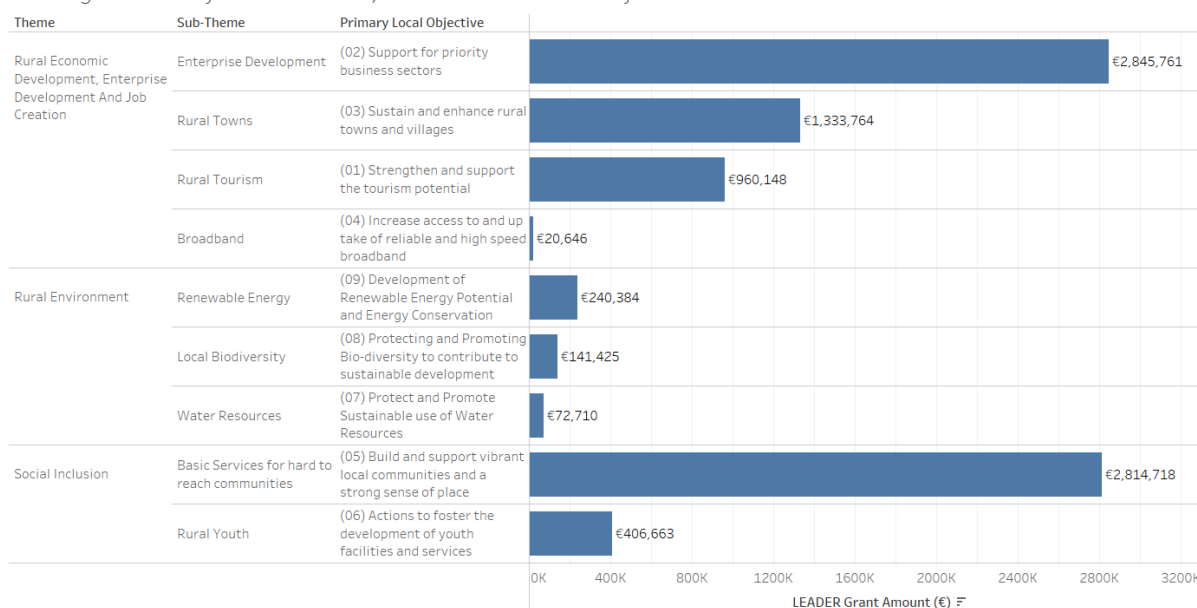
144. Roscommon LEADER Partnership has more than 25 years of community and local development experience. RLP Staff work directly with individuals and

voluntary/community groups and organisations across the county, including with disadvantaged community and sectoral groups.

145. As a result of this expertise and experience, the organisation has developed methods for interacting with groups and individuals as well as creating meaningful working relationships with the local community. RLP has developed a good reputation across the county for this work.
146. Through years of engagement with the community and voluntary sector, RLP LEADER Staff have built strong working relationships with individuals, community groups, social entrepreneurs, networks, and support organisations. As a result of our presence in these areas, we have a significant advantage when it comes to delivering the LEADER Programme 2023-2027.
- RLP has 4 offices across County Roscommon with a further presence at 4 outreach centres, including Monksland and Boyle. Having a physical presence in areas of disadvantage allows us to engage with people more meaningfully. Over the years, RLP has developed trust and relationships with individuals and groups in these areas;
 - RLP has supported a wide number of Social Enterprises across County Roscommon. These are representative of people with learning difficulties, disadvantaged communities and people with physical impairments;
 - RLP has a long history of working with and assisting groups representing older persons, Travellers, households without jobs, and long-term unemployed individuals. These will continue to be focus groups for the company, including the LEADER Programme;
 - Family Resource Centres, the Traveller Health Initiative, Foroige and other similar organisations will be utilised to provide information and support to niche groups and individuals;
 - RLP will identify gaps across target communities - People living in Disadvantaged Communities - through local consultations, needs analyses, and local focus groups. Specific actions and targets will be developed for these groups and the most appropriate supports, interventions and funding will be identified from across the programmes delivered by RLP, including the LEADER Programme 2023-2027;
147. RLP is confident that the proposed methodology, techniques, strategies and approaches outlined have been tried and tested and will yield maximum engagement as we have a proven track record working the community and voluntary sector, including Hard to Reach Communities.
148. The chart below illustrates previous LEADER funding by LEADER theme, sub-theme and Local Objective. In total, €8,836,219 has been allocated to-date. Rural Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation accounted for the largest share of funding (58.4% or €5,160,310), followed by Social Inclusion (36.5% or €3,221,381). Rural Environment accounted for the smallest proportion of total funding (5.1% or €454,519).
149. This LDS acknowledges the importance of continuing to invest in areas with an evidence-based indication of community need. However, it is also recognised that LEADER funding and interventions will be accessible to all areas of the County. Future efforts will take proactive steps to ensure that community groups and agencies who have not applied for funding in the past are aware of the LEADER programme and are provided with necessary support to apply.

Figure 17: LEADER Programme 2014-2020 – Allocations by Theme, Sub Theme and Local Objective for Co. Roscommon

Funding awarded by LEADER theme, sub-theme and Local Objective



2.8 Area Needs Analysis

150. The following section provides a needs analysis informed by the preceding socio-economic and demographic profile. The area profile was developed using the most current datasets available.

151. Pobal HP Deprivation Index measures factors such as population growth or decline, unemployment and educational attainment in a community to determine affluence or disadvantage. Due to the pending release of the full set of data from this census, the RFT response used data from the 2016 census for Pobal HP Deprivation.

152. HP Deprivation Index is based on Small Areas (SA), the new census geography developed jointly by the OSI and CSO for Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) 2011.

153. At a county level, Roscommon scores marginally below average according to the HP Pobal Deprivation Index, indicating the County has marginally more deprivation relative to other counties.

154. A more detailed investigation reveals areas of greater deprivation in the vicinity of Castlerea, Ballaghaderreen, and Boyle as well as areas of lower deprivation and relative affluence, particularly in the southeast of the County. According to the 2022, Census, Co. Roscommon has a vibrant and engaged community infrastructure. More people in Roscommon County volunteered than in the State as a whole (16.5% vs. 13.8%, respectively). In addition to being an award-winning Tidy County, Roscommon is home to 51 youth groups, 41 community centres, 98 sports facilities, 4 art facilities, 270 members of the Roscommon Public Participation Network, 285 community groups receiving support through the RSS and TUS schemes, and approximately 100 sports groups.

Reaching Local Priority Target Groups

155. RLP's promotional material will be tailored to effectively reach each of our Local Priority Target Groups: People living in Disadvantaged Communities, with a particular focus on

Ballaghaderreen, Boyle, Strokestown, Roscommon Town, Monksland and Castlerea/Ballinlough.

156. This will be accomplished by:

- Making sure that all of our content, including translations, is completely accessible and available to everyone.
- Using targeted advertising to get in touch with residents of important underserved communities, such as posting on social media with specific audiences in mind or distributing fliers through the local Roscommon publications to certain estates or Direct Provision facilities in the County.

Accessibility

157. Promotional materials will be made as accessible as possible to ensure we reach each of our Local Priority Target Groups. Publicity and information materials as well as service delivery relating to the LEADER programme delivery will adhere to Universal Design (UD) principles. Universal Design aims to create services that are accessible and usable by as many people as possible, regardless of their age, abilities, or disabilities.

158. By implementing UD principles, RLP is striving to ensure that its communication materials and services are inclusive and accessible to a diverse range of individuals. This approach will enhance the overall LEADER promoters experience, promote equality, and contribute to a more inclusive and accommodating society. Incorporating NALA's Plain English guidelines, RLP will make information accessible in the following ways:

- Using a variety of means to share messages and information: videos, pictures, stories, written word etc.
- Providing information in a clear and consistent manner.
- Using clear and simple language and avoiding technical jargon and explaining abbreviations.
- Using a standard size font.
- Ensuring clear, shine-free signage in buildings.
- Providing reading glasses at reception of main office and outreach offices.
- Adding image descriptions for people with visual impairments.
- Adding Irish Sign Language signing to online videos.
- Providing training to staff on Irish Sign Language.
- Adding captions to videos.
- Offering translated versions of materials

Working in Roscommon

159. Roscommon is centrally located and well connected to other counties. Athlone has been designated as a Regional Growth Centre within the Northern and Western Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 and the National Planning Framework, and has the potential to be a driver of social, economic and environmental development across the County.

160. At the County-level, Roscommon's unemployment rate is roughly the same as the State. However, a finer-grain analysis shows pockets of higher unemployment rates, and an unemployment blackspot in Boyle MD. The unemployment rate has decreased between 2011 and 2016, though at a slower rate than the State. There is a smaller proportion of the population active in the labour force compared to the State, due in part to a high proportion of the population in Roscommon who are looking after their home/family. The household median gross income in the County was 13.8% lower than the State median, and at the county-level, Roscommon scored marginally below average according to the HP Pobal Deprivation Index, indicating the County has marginally more deprivation relative to other counties.

161. While Roscommon's workforce has marginally lower educational attainment compared to the State, there is an increasing proportion of the population graduating from higher education institutes. There is also a slightly higher proportion of people obtaining a technical or vocational qualification in Roscommon than at the State level.
162. Agriculture's share of employment in Roscommon was close to double the national average, and 71.7% of the farms in Roscommon specialise in beef production, the third-largest proportion in the State.
163. The County's Economic Development Plan has prioritised six key sectors for growth and investment in specific settlement centres in Roscommon, which include:
- Innovation & ICT (Roscommon Town)
 - Life Sciences (Monksland)
 - Tourism & Arts (Boyle)
 - Agri-food (Castlerea)
 - Creative Industries (Ballaghaderreen)
 - Culture & Heritage (Strokestown)

Living in Roscommon

164. The demographic analysis highlighted the growth of new communities in Roscommon, with in-migration accounting for approximately three quarters of the population growth between 2011 and 2016. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, there has also been a growing population of Ukrainian refugees in the County, particularly in Boyle MD and Roscommon MD. There is also a high proportion of Irish Travellers, and growing ethnic diversity across the County.
165. Roscommon's Public Participation Network (PPN) currently has 270 member organisations, and a relatively high proportion of the population engage in volunteer activities.
166. Digital connectivity has improved, with substantial investment and infrastructure development by National Broadband Ireland. Between 2016 and 2022, the proportion of households with internet access in Roscommon grew by 8.7%, with 80% of households in the County now reporting to have internet access.
167. The County is rich in natural heritage and resources, and includes a number of preservation and conservation sites. Roscommon has seen growth in the renewable energy sector, both in terms of production and uptake. Roscommon is home to 15 Sustainable Energy Communities recognised by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) across the County.

2.8.1 Key points and considerations for future opportunities

168. The following section highlights key facts and figures that are useful in informing the LDS. Consideration is given to particular areas and communities where possible, and the information is organised under the LDS sub-themes to provide a meaningful framework.

The Green Economy

- The green economy sector is emerging in Roscommon but still needs development as the County moves away from less sustainable employment such as peat cutting.

Agricultural Diversification

- Agriculture in Roscommon supports thousands of jobs in the rural economy, both directly in food & drink processing and also in the wider agri-industry, including input

suppliers, agricultural contractors, jobs in auctioneering, transport and engineering and in accountancy, legal, veterinary and other advisory services.

- The county's farming sector needs to develop and modernise to ensure that it can remain competitive and sustainable both economically and environmentally. Diversification of Agriculture can help to address this.

Rural Tourism and Recreation

- There is opportunity to build on Roscommon's current tourism offerings, focusing on those unique to the County
- Both natural heritage and purpose-built recreation centres offer future tourism opportunities

Enterprise Development

- Unemployment and deprivation still remain high in certain areas particularly in the north and west of the County.
- Indigenous enterprise should continue to be fostered in Roscommon, particularly in emerging sectors of biotechnology, renewable energy and tourism. As well as to continue to provide supporting infrastructure that attracts National and Foreign Direct Investment.

Rural Food Production

- Agriculture's share of employment in Roscommon was close to double the national average.
- The number of food and drink processing jobs supported by agricultural has an opportunity to grow.

Social, Community and Cooperative Enterprises

- Roscommon has the fifth-highest ratio of social enterprises per 10k population in the State, indicating that there is an appetite for social enterprises in the County, and potential to build on the existing network of social, community and cooperative enterprises.

Rural Infrastructure

- Over a quarter of Roscommon's population (2016) lived in areas designated as highly rural/remote. Limited infrastructure in parts of the County leaves some areas well connected while others are very isolated without relying on private vehicles. This may indicate future opportunities providing/raising awareness of outreach services or community hubs in more remote locations.

Accessible Services

- Roscommon has one of the oldest populations in the State, this will require development of infrastructure and services to ensure that they remain accessible to older communities.
- Three quarters of the population growth was due to net migration, accounting for approximately 4,300 new residents in the County. This suggests that there are new communities moving to the area that may benefit from services and community cohesion efforts.
- 3rd highest proportion of widowers in the State in 2022, which may contribute to increased rural isolation and represent an emerging needs group.
- A higher rate of disability in Roscommon than State, a role can be played to developed facilities and services for this cohort.

Optimising Digital Connectivity

- Telecommunications infrastructure needs to continue to develop, particularly in the more rural areas, with a focus on providing individuals and businesses with high-speed broadband internet access.
- Faster rate of growth in households with internet access in Roscommon compared to the State, and with a significant growth in the information and communications sector, opportunities to grow digital skills and literacy may be particularly relevant.

Rural Youth (15-35 years)

- Youth (15-24 years) comprised 8.8% of the volunteers in Roscommon (slightly lower than State rate of 10.4%), indicating that there may be potential to target this group for involvement in volunteering opportunities that provide work experience, leadership training, or other skills.
- The unemployment rate for youth (15-34) was higher in Roscommon than the State, while the labour force participation rate was lower in the County than the State. This suggests it may be beneficial to provide targeted employment supports for this cohort.

Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment

- There are currently a number of protected areas, including national heritage sites, Special Areas of Conservation, and Special Protection Areas. These point to the prioritisation of the environment in land use, and can be used to guide further development in a sustainable way.

Climate Change Capacity Building

- With a number of members registered in the Environmental College of the Roscommon PPN, and a higher than average volunteer rate in the County, there seems to be potential to capitalise on the existing social infrastructure and capital to build capacity and increase community involvement in climate action.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

- Roscommon has seen significant development in the capacity for renewable energy generation, this will need to continue to develop as the County moves away from peat sourced energy.
- Buildings across Roscommon have low rates of energy efficiency compared to the State. Retrofitting and renewing opportunities could increase the effective employment of energy across the County.
- The natural resources of Roscommon, such as the inland waterways, bog- and peatlands, need to be conserved in the rural development of the County.

3.0 COMMUNITY-LED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT (CLLD) AND PARTICIPATIVE PLANNING

3.1 The Consultation Methodology

169. The development and implementation of the public consultation process was informed by best practice at both the EU and National levels². In particular, care was taken to ensure that the public consultation process was accessible to a wide range of participants, including sectoral representatives and members of the community.

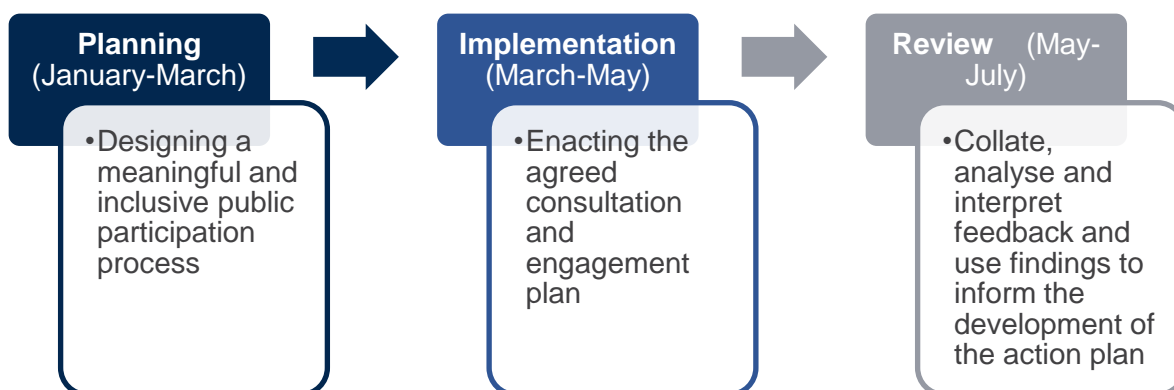
170. The LDS consultation process aimed to be inclusive, open and meaningful. The consultation resulted in active participation, with more than 750 community members, statutory and sectoral bodies engaging. The feedback from consultation participants supported the identification of strengths, challenges and opportunities across Roscommon.

171. The consultation process for the LDS has involved three key consultation phases. These included:

Figure 18: DRCD - A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making



Figure 19: UN-Habitat (2023) Enabling Meaningful Public Participation in Spatial Planning Processes



3.2 Planning

Collaborative approach

172. From the beginning, an innovative and collaborative approach was adopted for the public consultation process of the LDS. The development of the LDS coincided with the development of two important related plans: The Roscommon Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2023-2029, and the Roscommon Public Participation Network's (PPN) Wellbeing Statement. Because of the inherently related nature of these documents, a collaborative, joined-up approach to the consultation components of all three was designed.

² Department of Rural and Community Development (2022) Values and Principles for Collaboration and Partnership Working with the Community and Voluntary Sector

173. This allowed for the documents to be fully consolidative and complementary, and avoided duplication of facilitation resources.

174. The purpose of the consultation was to promote inclusive participation of the local community in identifying the challenges and opportunities for the local area, and to capture local knowledge, expertise and lived experience around the themes and subthemes of the 2023-2027 LEADER programme. It was recognised the consultation process must contribute to the Common Agricultural Plans (CAP), and particularly the specific objective set out in Article 6(1)(h) EU Regulation 2021/2115³ for the future of food and farming.

Figure 20: Advert for LDS Public Consultation Events

Planning County Roscommon Together

21st-30th of March

Share your thoughts on Roscommon's strengths, challenges, and help us create a vision for the future.

Your vision and feedback will inform the development of Roscommon's:

- Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029
- PPN Community Wellbeing Vision Statement
- LEADER Local Development Strategy 2023-2029.

These interactive workshops are drop-in style so, come any time and stay as long as you'd like during the session!

We are coming to you!

21 Roscommon - Tuesday, March 21st, 6-8pm County Library, Abbey Street	22 Castlerea - Wednesday, March 22nd, 7-9pm Trinity Arts Centre	23 Ballaghaderreen - Thursday, March 23rd, 7-9pm CDP Offices 'The Shambles'
28 Athlone/Monksland - Tuesday, March 28th, 7pm-9pm Athlone Springs Hotel	29 Boyle - Wednesday, March 29th, 7- 9pm King House Boyle	30 Strokestown - Thursday, March 30th, 7-9pm Percy French Hotel

175. Emphasis was placed on ensuring the inclusion of marginalised and/or disadvantaged groups in the consultation process.

Inclusive consultation design

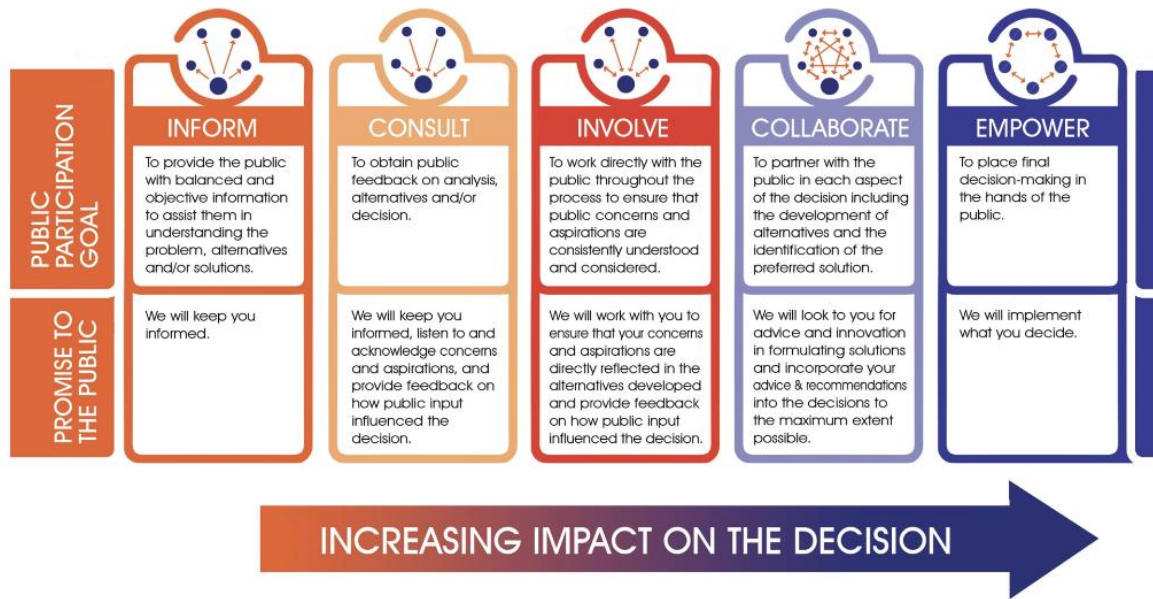
176. The public consultation process designed by the LAG drew from best practice in community engagement, at the international and national level. The IAP2 spectrum of public participation⁴ guided the design and delivery of the public consultation process.

177. Agreement was made to ensure that the consultation process would engage key stakeholders, and empower disadvantaged communities and individuals to play a greater role in addressing social exclusion and equality issues within their area. There was a concerted effort to identify those groups that had not received LEADER funding in the past, and marginalised groups who may, for a range of reasons, be less likely to participate in the consultative process.

³ https://www.eumonitor.eu/9353000/1/j4nvk6yhcbpeywk_j9vvik7m1c3gyxp/vlok8fwdhhzj

⁴ Department of Rural and Community Development (2023) A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making

Figure 21: IAPT2 Spectrum of Public Participation

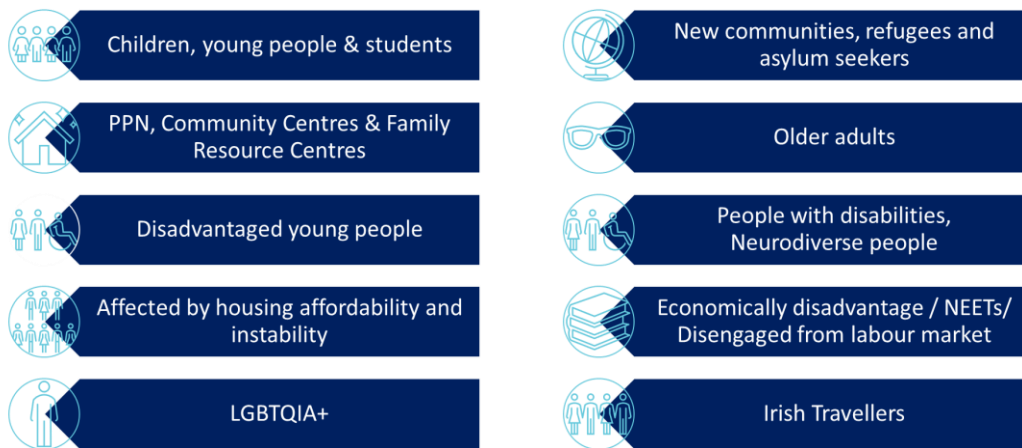


Identification of target groups and key stakeholder mapping

178. Preliminary target groups were identified through the consideration of the Roscommon Socio-Economic LDS profile (see Chapter 2.0 above), Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018 – 2023 target groups, and the disadvantaged groups as set out under the EU Charter for Fundamental Rights.

179. The identified target groups are identified in the image below.

Figure 22: Identified target groups from the marginalised community groups, disadvantaged groups as set out under the EU Charter for Fundamental Rights and other key focus groups identified during the socio-economic research



Relationship building consultation tools and techniques selected

180. A wide variety of consultation tools and methodologies were selected these included; focus groups, roundtable discussions, 1:1 meetings, written submissions, drop-in interactive sessions, in-person and online surveys and workshops.

181. Proactive steps were taken to encourage engagement with representatives from the target groups enumerated above. To this effect, groups were contacted directly by phone

and by email and invited to participate in the consultation process (see Appendix 4 for a full list of participating groups).

182. Potential participants were provided with multiple engagement options and had the opportunity to select the engagement style that suited them best. The aim of offering multiple engagement methods and opportunities was to support good relationships, create trust and inspire more constructive engagement. A detailed overview of consultation methods is provided in Table No 1 overleaf. The resulting public consultation process empowered participants to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in their areas, which fed into the collaborative SWOT analysis (see section 3.4), and informed the subsequent identification of priority areas, Local Objectives, and Strategic Actions (see section 3.5, and Local Objective rationales for further detail on how the consultation outcomes were incorporated into the LDS).

Table 1: Public Consultation methodology

Cohort	Methodology	Primary Aim/ Explanation	Numbers	Participation Spectrum Level
Sector Interests	Tailored community and stakeholder surveys	GOAL: To capture community feedback and input on the Socio-economic statement and High-Level Goals	500+ community members across the study area	Inform, Consult
		These interactive online surveys are designed to be engaging and allow the opportunity for community members to provide meaningful feedback and input on the LDS. Surveys include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public Survey • Youth Public Survey • Targeted Sector Surveys: Business, Environment, Health • LEADER promoters 		
	Public information and feedback evenings	GOAL: To provide a public information session on the LDS, and to capture public feedback and input	150+ community members across the three Municipal Districts	Inform, Consult, Engage
		Members of the public were guided through a set of interactive stations with activities designed to capture feedback on strengths and challenges in the County, suggestions for future actions, and opinions/preferences around resource allocation.		
Statutory Interests	Key stakeholder interviews/focus groups (In person and online)	GOAL: To capture feedback and input from target community groups and key sector representatives	LDS, external stakeholders	Inform, Consult, Engage
		Interviews included representatives both from target community groups (informed by the SICAP 2018-2022 Target Groups), and from key stakeholder agencies and organisations across Roscommon (including but not limited to representatives from neurodiversity communities, disability groups, Irish Travellers, older adults, young people, those underemployed and in long term unemployment)		
Statutory Interests	Implementation Plan presentation/ workshop	GOAL: To present the key findings from the research and consultation phases, and develop an Action Plan These included representatives from business and enterprise, health and safety, environmental and climate change, education, and community development, etc.)	LDS, internal stakeholders	Inform, Consult, Engage, Collaborate, Empower

Barriers to participation and mitigation

183. In order to maximise access to the consultation process, careful consideration was given to potential barriers to participation. Mitigation measures were identified and implemented for each barrier as possible.

Table 2: Potential barriers to consultation participation and mitigation measures

Barrier	Mitigation
Timing	Consultation was available at a wide variety of timings, morning, afternoon, evening and night.
Limited awareness of LDS	Leaders of local community groups and stakeholders were contacted directly and given the opportunity to ask questions about the LDS, in addition to arranging to attend a consultation event.
Limited awareness of consultation opportunities	This was advertised both online, posters in local focal points. through the media and via individual phone calls.
Limited internet access	Multiple in-person consultation events were held, including focus groups and public information and feedback sessions.
Transport or mobility limitations	Options to participate either online or by phone were offered.

3.3 Implementation and participation

184. The invitation to participate in the public consultation process for the Roscommon LDS was extended from March-April 2023.

Figure 23: Total number of engagements and participants



Locations

185. In order to ensure a diverse representation of rural and urban communities, areas of social and economic disadvantage and other specialist groups, a selection of 6 venues were chosen throughout County Roscommon with a wide geographical distribution, including:

- Roscommon
- Castlerea
- Ballaghaderreen
- Athlone/Monksland
- Boyle

- Strokestown

Participating community, key stakeholder and sectoral groups

186. As outlined in section 3.2 above, significant effort was made to ensure gender balance, diversity in ages, locations, ethnicity and socio-economic background. There was a strong focus on proactively engaging with marginalised and socially excluded groups.

187. The public consultation process facilitated engagement from a broad range of representation from key stakeholder groups that include statutory agencies and sectoral interest groups such as agriculture, food, crafts, rural tourism, local services; local community groups; local statutory, community & voluntary and private sector organisations; area-based and interest groups; and social partners.

3.4 Key Consultation Findings

188. The public consultation process aimed to capture feedback across each of the three LEADER themes, as well as community perceptions of strengths and weaknesses, and key priority areas. The following section presents the consultation findings from both the online and in-person engagements, including the survey, any written submissions, and insights from the public information and feedback evenings.

3.4.1 General observations

189. Breakdown of survey participants

Figure 24: Gender balance of survey respondents

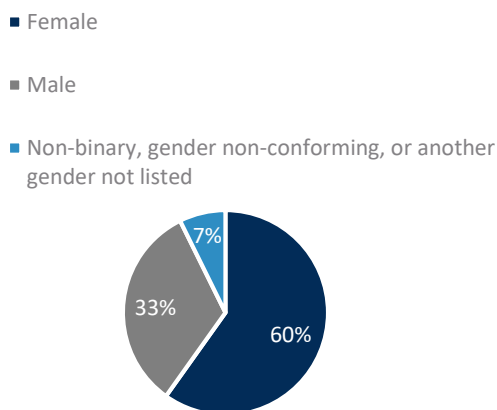


Figure 25: Age balance of survey respondents

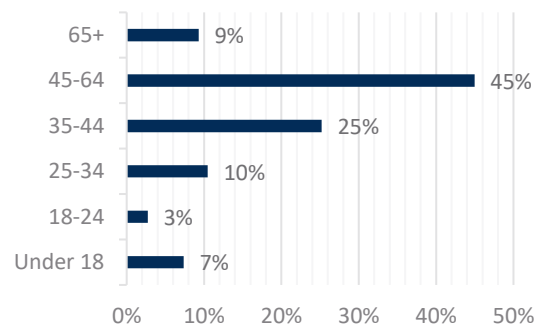
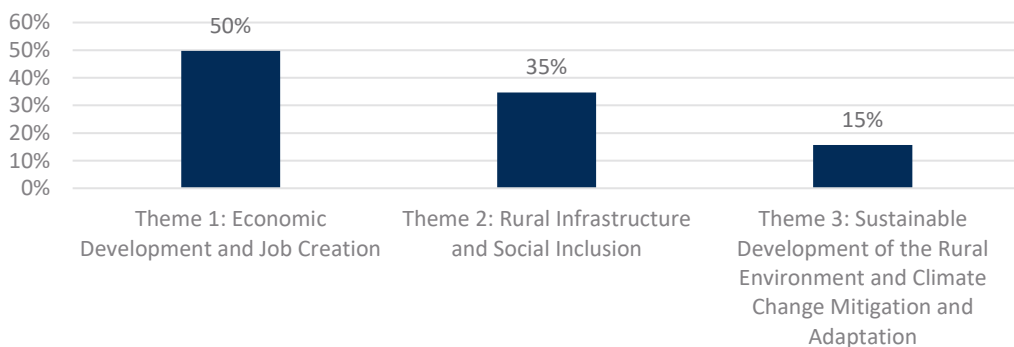


Figure 26: Proportion of weighted score totals for perceived importance of LEADER themes at Consultations



190. Participants identified several strengths and areas for improvement within Roscommon. Of the top five strengths identified, three were under LEADER Theme 2 (broadband/digital technology, gyms/leisure centres/recreation and water infrastructure). Of the top five areas for improvement, three were under LEADER Theme 1 (transport, housing and financial supports). Connectivity infrastructure was noted as particularly important, with transportation, public transportation and an active travel network all identified as areas for improvement.

3.4.2 Theme 1: Economic Development and Job Creation

Quick facts

191. **49%** of survey respondents selected this as the most important theme and **54%** of survey respondents selected this as the second most important theme. Survey respondents identified the top three elements working well within Theme 1 as:

- education and training
- an available workforce
- tourism, arts & the creative industries

Findings by sub-theme

Education and Training

- Successful work done in this area needs to be built on.
- Funding to train new employees in key industries is needed
- Education and training supports in the County are needed.

Enterprise Development

Job creation and employment was a consistent theme throughout the consultation process.

- Local job creation was identified as a high priority for participants,
- Additional supports needed for small local businesses.
- Initiatives to facilitate remote working to repopulate rural areas
- Work on attracting larger businesses and companies to Roscommon, to increase employment opportunities
- Potential for expansion of the agrifood sector in Roscommon.

The Green Economy Opportunities

- pursue the renewable energy sector as a source of employment in Roscommon.
- re-skill the workforce for jobs in the renewable energy sector.

Rural Tourism and Recreation

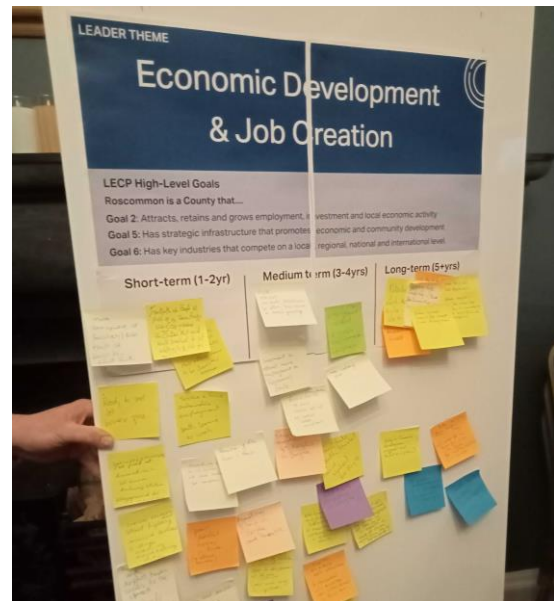
Tourism is an area with the potential for economic growth in the County.

- Build on Roscommon's strategic geographical location by developing new and sustainable transport infrastructure.
- Restore the tourism network to better market Roscommon as a destination,
- Promoting historical attractions within the county as being just as important as more well-known attractions.

Social, Community & Cooperative Enterprises

- social and community enterprises are highly valued.
- increased supports for existing social enterprises will be welcomed

Picture 1: Public Consultations – Suggested Actions under Theme 1

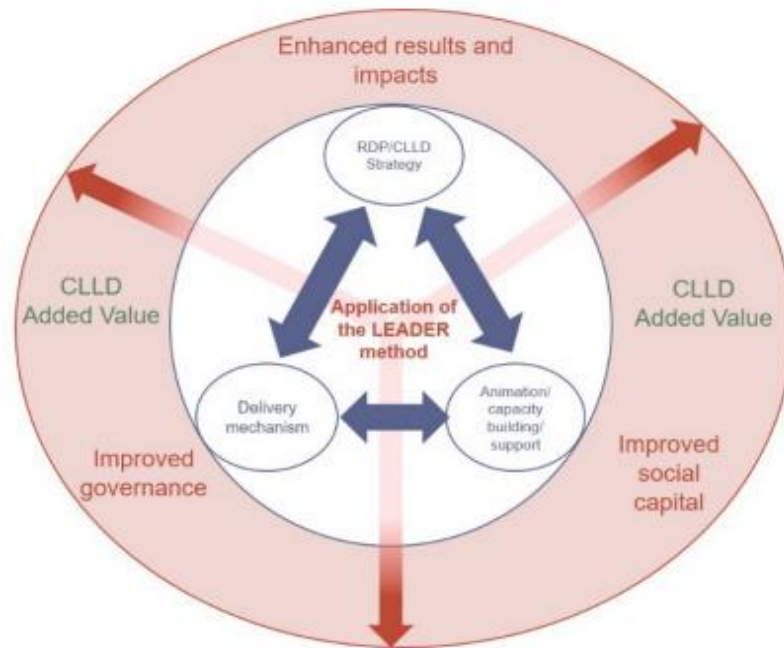


- Higher rates of aid
- Establishment of new social enterprises.
- Preference for cooperative and collaborative approach to community development and information sharing.

Limitations on the potential for economic development

- The County's transportation infrastructure has an impact on job creation.
- Concern about the shortages of labour

Figure 27: ENRD Added Value of LEADER/CLLD



3.4.3 Theme 2: Rural Infrastructure & Social Inclusion

Quick facts

192. **36%** of survey respondents selected this as the most important theme and **30%** of survey respondents selected this as the second most important theme. Survey respondents identified the top three elements working well within Theme 2 as:

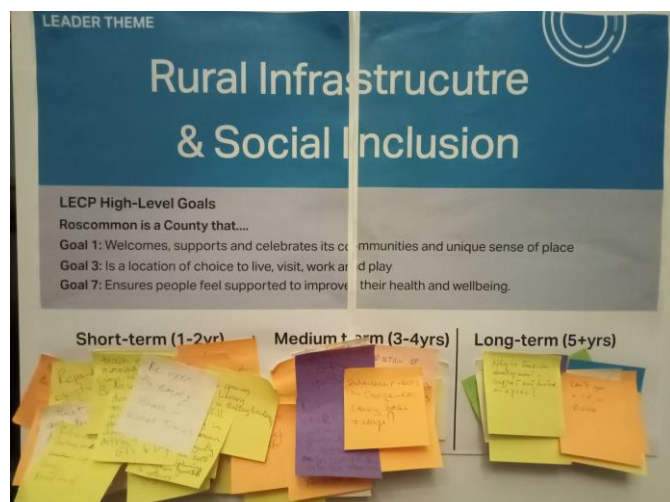
- broadband & digital technology
- gyms, leisure centres & recreation
- water infrastructure

Findings by sub-theme

Rural Infrastructure

- Lack of public transportation affected access to supports and services
- Accessibility of services needs improvement.

Picture 2: Public Consultations – Suggested Actions under Theme 2



Accessible Services

- Additional support needed for community activities
- Access to Health Services needs improvement
- Opportunity for increased social inclusion services
- Need for support for minority communities
- Well run sports and recreation sector but needs continued supports
- Libraries and cultural facilities are a strength of the county

Optimising Digital Connectivity

- Improved internet connections required in rural areas
- Broadband is integral to support of business sector
- Need for digital training for the rural population, particularly older persons

Rural Youth

- Need for increased youth programming and facilities
- Youth-focused infrastructure required

3.4.4 Theme 3: Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Quick facts

193. **15%** of survey respondents selected this as the most important theme and **16%** of survey respondents selected this as the second most important theme. Survey respondents identified the top three areas in need of improvement within Theme 3 as:

- Green initiatives
- natural & environmental resources
- conservation and preservation efforts

Findings by sub-theme

Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment

- Potential for increasing sustainable development practices.
- Improvement and monitoring of water quality
- Support for transition to renewable energy sources
- Rewilding and regeneration of peat and bogland was seen as an opportunity

Climate Change Capacity Building

- Capacity Building for climate change is required.
- Awareness raising for climate change actions
- Sustainability training for the rural community
- Need for water management training

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

- Progress towards a climate-just future was an important priority
- Retrofitting of buildings was identified as a need
- Potential for using wetlands as carbon sinks

Picture 3: Public Consultations – Suggested Actions under Theme 3



3.5 SWOT Analysis

194. As part of the consultation process, all participants including those who completed the surveys, attended in-person sessions (including public feedback sessions and targeted focus groups), and those that engaged in an individual interview were asked to contribute to a community SWOT analysis. The SWOT below summarises the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified, informed by feedback received by participants (see Table 3).

3.6 Setting the LDS priorities

195. In order to agree the LDS priorities, a Priority and Action Planning Workshop was held with stakeholders. The workshop included the review of the strengths, challenges and opportunities for each of the three LEADER themes, informed by the key findings of Needs Analysis and the public consultation.

196. Following the review of the SWOT analyses, the LAG and implementing bodies discussed the emerging priority areas and themes. Key priorities were identified around promoting climate action, social inclusion, and ensuring the overall economic progress and sustainable development of rural Roscommon.

197. It was agreed by the LAG and implementing bodies that it was necessary to include each of the LEADER sub-themes in the LDS Action Plan, and that each sub-theme would be limited to one local objective, based on the capacity to effectively deliver on the associated actions. Cross-cutting themes identified during this workshop discussion included: Sustainability, Inclusion, and Innovation.

198. Below is some of the work that was completed with formalising the selection of priorities and objectives for the LDS.



199. Cross-cutting themes identified during this workshop discussion included: Sustainability, Inclusion, and Innovation (see section 5.0 for more detail).

Table 3: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrally located County with access to Dublin, Galway and Northern Ireland • Recent reduction in unemployment • Strong engagement of local enterprise with IDA Ireland schemes • Strong tourism potential from ancient heritage sites • Strong agricultural industry with high levels of education in this sector • Significant investment in the County from the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Funds • Significant developments in communications infrastructure has increased access to broadband internet • Competitively priced options for rental accommodation • Growth in technological, life science and tourism sectors • A proud and engaged community • Good open spaces, parks and land based natural resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven levels of deprivation across the municipal districts • High unemployment in the north and west of the county • An aging population and a diminishing young workforce • Reliance on travel outside of the County for work • Growth in population is outpacing the growth in dwelling stock • Overreliance on traditional sectors for employment within the County • Lack of public transport infrastructure and high dependency of private vehicles for public transport • Low rates of energy efficiency amongst the building of County Roscommon • Lack of access to nearby emergency medical facilities and services • Low rates of high-level education within the workforce • High rates of vacancy and dereliction amongst Roscommon's built environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the capacity of the County for renewable energy production • Support efforts for innovation within the traditional industries of Roscommon • Foster and support indigenous entrepreneurship within the County • Maximise the sustainable and profitable use of Roscommon's natural resources • Address educational and skill gaps in adaptation to a more technological and ecological economy • Recycle and repurpose the vacant and derelict buildings of the County • Promote the nearby third-level education centres in the upskilling of Roscommon's workforce • Engage with community development and social inclusion programs to build resilient communities • Youth employment and entrepreneurship supports could reduce outmigration in the young workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The traditional industries of Roscommon are experiencing employment loss across the State • Economic growth in neighbouring regions may continue the drain on the young workforce • National focus on transferring away from peat energy towards green energy • Continued national trend of population ageing resulting in increasing old-age dependency ratios

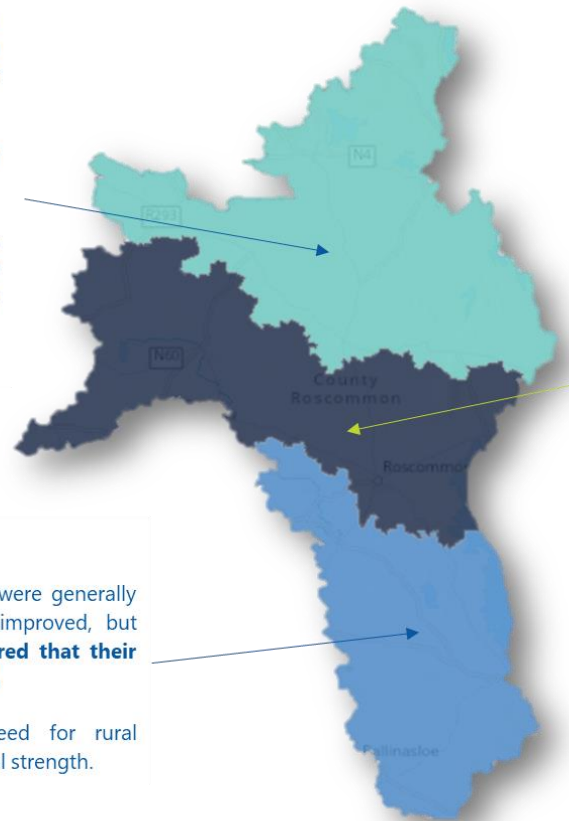
Figure 27: Highlights from SWOT Analysis

Boyle MD:

- While broadband/digital technology was largely recognised as a strength across the County, consultation in **Ballaghaderreen** suggested that there are local challenges with internet connectivity.
- Participants from **Ballaghaderreen** in particular shared their perception that their local agri-food industry was working well.
- While participants across the County identified access to hospitals and emergency services as a challenge, participants from **Boyle** in particular noted that even access to local health providers proved difficult.

Athlone MD:

- Consultation found that Town Centres and Villages were generally perceived by participants as areas that could be improved, but participants from **Castlerea and Athlone** both shared that their local Town Centres and Villages were working well.
- Public consultation highlighted the increased need for rural employment, despite Monksland perceiving this a local strength.



Roscommon MD:

- Participants from **Roscommon** highlighted that they felt there was limited local access to mental health and therapeutic supports. Further education and training was noted as a strength across the County, and especially by participants in Roscommon.
- The presence of an available workforce was noted as a strength by participants from **Strokestown**, while at the same time employment and financial supports were perceived as a challenge in the area.
- Participants in **Strokestown** noted that employment and financial supports in their local area could be improved, while participants from **Athlone** reported these supports as working well.

4.0 STRATEGIC INTEGRATION

4.1 Cross-cutting themes

200. Cross-cutting themes underpinning this LDS were identified during the LAG Priority and Action Planning Workshop discussion (see section 3.5 above), and include Sustainability, Inclusion, and Innovation.

Sustainability

201. Climate change poses a global threat, supported by compelling evidence indicating significant ecological and societal repercussions unless there is concerted cooperative effort. Promoting responsible guardianship and fostering imaginative and forward-thinking leadership at the grassroots level are essential to transforming perspectives and behaviours regarding climate change initiatives. International and national policies and strategies have been developed in order to guide the uptake of sustainable practices across sectors, particularly the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Climate Action Plan 2023. At the local level, sustainability is supported by policies and actions in both the County Development Plan and the Draft LECP 2023-2029.

202. Sustainable development of the rural environment must recognise the importance of healthy ecosystems, including good water quality, and diverse native flora and fauna. Particularly in Roscommon where there has been a long history of economic reliance on the land, including agriculture, farming and extractive industries, it is imperative to support a just transition to environmentally sustainable practices. All activities supported under this LDS will be required to show how they consider climate change.

203. This LDS recognises climate action as a cross-cutting priority, as improvements in both the environmental and climate change sectors may result in opportunities for growth and jobs, as well as innovative solutions to improve the quality of life for those that live in Roscommon. In order to support sustainability through climate action in the LDS, the LAG will take steps to:

- Adopt new and innovative practices within the LAG that can reduce our carbon footprint and increase our sustainability
- Support initiatives that aim to transition towards a more resource efficient economy, including projects that promote resource efficiency, resource sharing and circular economies
- Support actions in this plan that promote and pilot eco innovation in the fields of smart energy use, enhancement of community biodiversity and adoption of new technologies that improve the relationship between the environment and human habitation

Inclusion

204. Inclusion is recognised in this LDS as a critical cross-cutting theme. Increased social inclusion is supported at the National level through plans and programmes including (but not limited to): Social Inclusion Strategy, National Action Plan Against Racism, Age-Friendly Ireland, National Disability Inclusion Strategy, Migrant Integration Strategy, and National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy. Existing action around social inclusion includes the provision of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is co-funded by the Irish Government, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the European Social Fund Plus under the Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training (EIST) Programme 2021-2027. The Roscommon LEADER Partnership (the LAG of this LDS) is responsible for the delivery of SICAP in Roscommon.

205. As the contract holder over SICAP and RLP as implementers, the LAG and RLP are in a position to have a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the ongoing social inclusion efforts already in progress in Roscommon. This in turn makes the LAG ideally

placed to identify new social inclusion initiatives and projects that would complement current efforts without duplication.

206. This LDS recognises the need for strong social inclusion support in Roscommon. The LAG is particularly mindful of the feedback received through the public consultation process, indicating that participants perceived social inclusion as a necessary component across all three LEADER themes and the associated sub-themes. Inclusive public consultation and community co-creation was fundamental to the development of this document, and helps to ensure that community-led local development is not just an output of the initiatives and projects that will receive LDS funding, but a core tenant of the LDS planning process itself.

207. In order to support inclusion through the LDS, the LAG will take steps to:

- Proactively engage with target groups and communities, including minority groups and groups/communities that have not received prior LEADER funding, to ensure they are aware of the LEADER funding available and have the appropriate support in order to apply.
- Support initiatives and projects that integrate social inclusion across all of the LEADER sub-themes
- Support initiatives and projects that complement, enhance, and/or strengthen ongoing social inclusion efforts in the County.

Innovation

208. Roscommon has a history of supporting innovation. Per the Roscommon Innovation Strategy, innovation can be understood to be not only relating to new technology and research and development (R&D) but is concerned with imparting knowledge so that business activities can be undertaken better, quicker and in a more cost effective manner. Innovation in this context is also concerned with improving the interaction between the main actors in the innovation system (e.g. universities, research centres, agencies and firms) to enhance knowledge diffusion, and establishing the right incentives for private sector innovation to transform knowledge into economic output and commercial success.

209. One key component of innovation that this LDS aims to support is the Smart Village Approach. Smart Villages are rural communities that build on their strengths and assets, while also developing new opportunities. Underpinning this approach is enhancing both traditional and new networks and services through digital, telecommunication technologies, innovations and better use of knowledge. The implementation of the EU Action for Smart Villages Initiative which aims to develop the potential offered by improved rural connectivity and digitisation is key to this. This initiative will build on local enterprise and infrastructure assets to drive innovations around energy, transport, agri-food, tourism, e-services, and remote working. Smart Villages can enhance their existing strengths and assets through creative thinking and by embracing innovation to create desirable places for rural people to live and work.

210. In order to support innovation through the LDS, the LAG will take steps to:

- Support initiatives and concepts that contribute creatively to current enterprise or social services or networks
- Support projects that include a Smart Village Approach
- Promote information and resource sharing, both internally and within LAG networks, and among applicants for LEADER 2023-2027 funding.

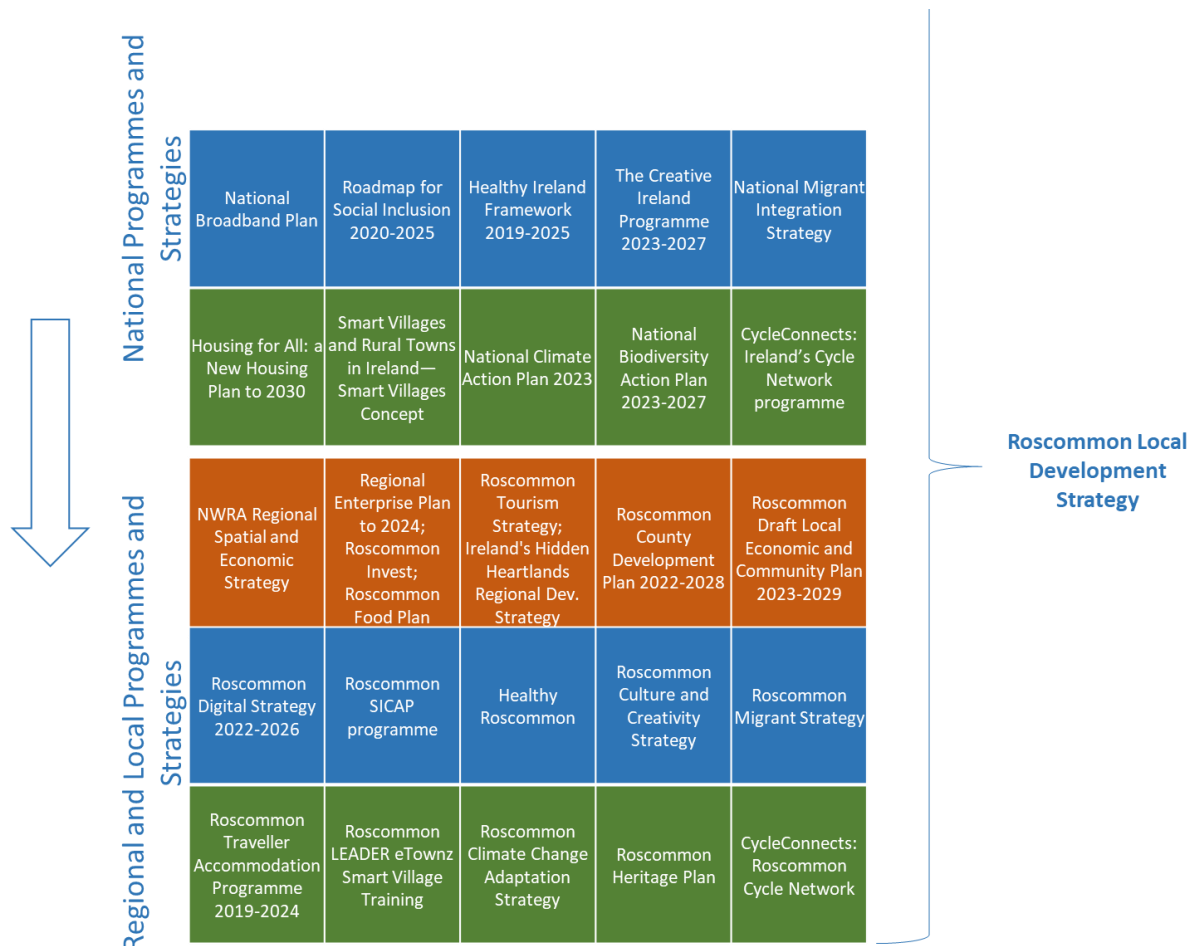
4.2 Broader Policy Context

211. The Roscommon LDS provides the framework for the implementation of an EU-funded LEADER Programme 2023-2027 at the local level. To achieve coordinated development,

it is critical that this document supports, complements, and aligns with other national, regional and local policies. The figure below illustrates an indicative selection of policies, plans and strategies the Roscommon LDS considers.

212. Brief descriptions are provided for those strategies that particularly informed the development of the 2023-2027 Roscommon LDS.

Table 4: Strategies informing the development of the LDS



**International
EU Common Agriculture Policy**

213. The CAP 2023-27 entered into force on 1 January 2023. Support for farmers and rural stakeholders across the 27 EU countries is based on the CAP 2023-2027 legal framework and the choices detailed in the CAP Strategic Plans, approved by the Commission. The approved Plans are designed to make a significant contribution to the ambitions of the European Green Deal, Farm to Fork Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy.

214. The CAP takes action with the following measures:

- income support through direct payments ensures income stability, and remunerates farmers for environmentally friendly farming and delivering public services not normally paid for by the markets, such as taking care of the countryside;
- market measures to deal with difficult market situations such as a sudden drop in demand due to a health scare, or a fall in prices as a result of a temporary oversupply on the market;

- rural development measures with national and regional programmes to address the specific needs and challenges facing rural areas.

215. LEADER will also continue to be an effective tool for supporting the economic and social development of rural communities, and for strengthening the socio-economic fabric of rural areas, by providing the resources necessary for communities to support their own sustainable development.

216. Food Vision 2030, which recognises the important contribution of women to the sector's long-term sustainability and includes a number of actions to promote and improve gender balance at all levels. One of the barriers identified as limiting young farmers' ability to enter the agricultural sector, or to expand their venture, is the high cost associated with capital investment. Roscommon's LDS will focus on support to female farmers and young farmers interested in diversifying in line with CAP.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

217. The UN have set 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the aim of ensuring a just future for all. Since 2015, Ireland has been a signatory to the UN SDGs, and this framework informs national agendas and policies to 2030. The SDG framework recognises that ending poverty and deprivation requires a holistic suite of strategies that improve health, education, reduce inequality and support economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve natural resources. At a local level, the Roscommon Local Economic and Community Plan is the primary mechanism for delivering actions that support progress towards the SDGs. Each of the High-Level Goals within the draft LECP are aligned to a number of the SDGs, and in turn, this LDS is closely aligned with the draft LECP (see 4.1.3 for further information about the LDS alignment with the LECP).

The European Green Deal

218. Climate change and environmental degradation are an existential threat to Europe and the world. To overcome these challenges, the European Green Deal aims to transform the EU into a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy, ensuring:

- no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050
- economic growth decoupled from resource use
- no person and no place left behind

219. Key goals of the EU Green Deal include Europe as the first climate-neutral continent by 2050; at least 55% less net greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, compared to 1990 levels; and three billion additional trees to be planted in the EU by 2030.

220. The priorities of the EU Green Deal are reflected in National and Regional policy and strategy. At the local level, the Roscommon County Development Plan and the Draft Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) both contain goals, objectives and actions that are informed by these priority areas. The LDS was informed by these local level documents, and endeavours to support progress the key goals of the EU Green Deal through the identified Local Objectives and Strategic Actions.

Figure 28: 10 priority areas of the EU Green Deal



EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

221. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union brings together the most important personal freedoms and rights enjoyed by citizens of the EU into one legally binding document. The Charter was declared in 2000, and came into force in December 2009 along with the Treaty of Lisbon. There are six main chapters in the Charter, each with several associated articles detailing specific rights. The six chapters are: Dignity, Freedoms, Equality, Solidarity, Citizen Rights and Justice.

222. While the LDS considers these topics to be cross-cutting and endeavours to embed them across all objectives and actions, the strategic direction of the LDS was particularly informed by Chapter Three: Equality (This is particularly reflected in the Local Objectives and actions under LEADER Theme 2, but is also evident in Theme 1. Article 37 (within the Solidarity chapter) states that there is a fundamental right to Environmental Protection, which is reflected in the Local Objectives and actions in Theme 3.

EU Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas

223. In 2021, the European Commission put forward a long-term vision for the EU's rural areas, identifying the challenges and concerns that they are facing, as well as highlighting some of the most promising opportunities that are available to these regions. Based on foresight and wide consultations with citizens and other actors in rural areas, today's Vision proposes a Rural Pact and a Rural Action Plan. Roscommon's LDS will align to this policy.

National

Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

224. This national policy for all of rural Ireland focusing on the importance of thriving rural areas and their importance to national economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing. Focal areas of this plan include; stimulating entrepreneurship and employment, regeneration and modernisation of towns and villages, fostering inclusive and resilient communities, and promoting sustainable and climate-just agricultural and forestry practices.

225. Since Local Development Companies have been identified as stakeholders, the following policy measures specified in the plan will be given priority for the implementation as part of delivering the Local Development Strategy:

- Deliver a suite of new measures to support the development of Social Enterprises in rural areas to increase their social, economic and environmental impact and contribute to job creation locally. (number 30);
- Invest in greenways, blue ways, walking trails and other outdoor recreation infrastructure to support the growth in outdoor recreational tourism (number 36);
- 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 (number 68);
- Provide additional supports to assist community and voluntary groups to develop projects and access available funds – including by streamlining of grant applications. (number 75);
- Support rural communities to develop long-term cohesive Master Plans for their areas, to support an integrated place-based approach to rural development (aligned with the RSEs, County Development Plans, Local Development Plans and relevant national, regional and local policy objectives), (number 147).

Climate Action Plan 2023

226. Climate Action Plan 2023 is the second annual update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2019. The plan implements the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and sets a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050.

227. The Just Transition Implementation Plan for the Midlands Region continues to support the transition to a decarbonised economy. Current and future actions include:

- 56 National Just Transition Fund Projects will continue delivery until 2024
- The EU Just Transition Fund Programme will deliver an additional €169 million in investment to the region to 2030
- The EU Just Transition Fund will support implementation of Regional Enterprise Plans and Local Economic and Community Plans
- Low-carbon investments will be made in intra-regional public and private transport networks
- Rehabilitation of peatlands and development of amenity and tourism opportunities will continue
- There will be support for bioeconomy value chain opportunities

228. It is expected that these actions will result in a strengthened resilience of the regional economy of the Midlands in line with national climate objectives. Chapter 8, Delivering a Just Transition in the Midlands Region, is particularly relevant to Roscommon's LDS.

Smart Villages Concept

229. 'Smart Villages' is the sub-theme of the broader ENRD thematic work on 'Smart and Competitive Rural Areas'.

230. Ideas and initiatives around revitalising rural services through digital and social innovation have been explored through this concept. It looked at how rural services – such as health, social services, education, energy, transport, retail – can be improved and made more sustainable through the deployment of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools and through community-led actions and projects.

231. This delivery model focuses on innovation and collaboration between local communities and agencies to deliver policy actions in the most effective and efficient way. The Roscommon LDS has looked to this model to develop the delivery strategies for the actions of this plan.

National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy

232. The Government’s vision for the bioeconomy is to grow Ireland’s ambition to be a global leader for the bioeconomy through a co-ordinated approach that harnesses Ireland’s natural resources and competitive advantage and that fully exploits the opportunities available while monitoring and avoiding unintended consequences. An important objective of the bioeconomy is to move Ireland beyond simply a target compliance and carbon mitigation focus to integrating sustainable economic development into the economic model during the transition to a low carbon and circular economy.
233. Roscommon’s LDS with green economy in scope has the potential to strategise and stimulate bottom up activity including collaboration, networking, innovation and cooperation between local development actors for bioeconomy development.

Figure 29: DAFM – National Bioeconomy Action Plan 2023-2025



West Regional Enterprise Plan

234. This new Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 for the West is future-focused and centred around a number of strategic objectives and actions including:
1. Advancing the development of the regional entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem.
 2. Strengthen and harness the cultural and creative sector to attract new investment, commercialisation and collaboration opportunities
 3. Realise the Atlantic West jobs potential for enterprise and job creation in the renewable energy sector
 4. Drive the global competitiveness of the Life-Sciences sector underpinned by an expanded regional footprint and coordination
 5. Grow the AgTech and Food sector in the West, underpinned by an integrated innovation network, facilitating the transition towards a sustainable Bioeconomy
 6. Expand prospects for sustainable entrepreneurship, employment and upskilling in Tourism
 7. Facilitate an equitable digital and green transformation in the West.
235. The following strategic actions listed in the plan will be given priority for implementation in the Local Development Strategy as Local Development Companies have been named as action partners:
- Action 1.6: Continue to champion gender equality, inclusivity, and diversity in innovation and entrepreneurship
 - Under action 2.1: Build-up and scale the activities of CREW REDF project, to act as hub and spoke across the region, developing creative centres of excellence

- Action 2.2: Develop clustering of the Creative and Cultural Sector, by creating new linkages and new collaborative opportunities and expand creative assets (e.g., film studio, production facilities) and capitalise on emerging development in immersive technology and animation
- Action 5.3: Expand the innovation, educational and entrepreneurial opportunities for AgTech.
- Action 7.4: Develop the region as a ‘Living Lab’ to help address challenges associated with the Digital and Green Transformation.
- Action 7.5: Develop a shared regional enterprise strategy to harness the potential of Decarbonising Zones.

Local

Draft Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029 (LECP)

236. The Roscommon LECP is a six-year plan for the economic and social development of County Roscommon. The LECP centres on seven high level goals (see below). The LDS is closely aligned with these goals, and the LAG anticipates being instrumental in the delivery of a number of strategic actions within the LECP. This will help to ensure complementarity of the LDS with the LECP, and reduce the risk of duplication (Appendix 7).

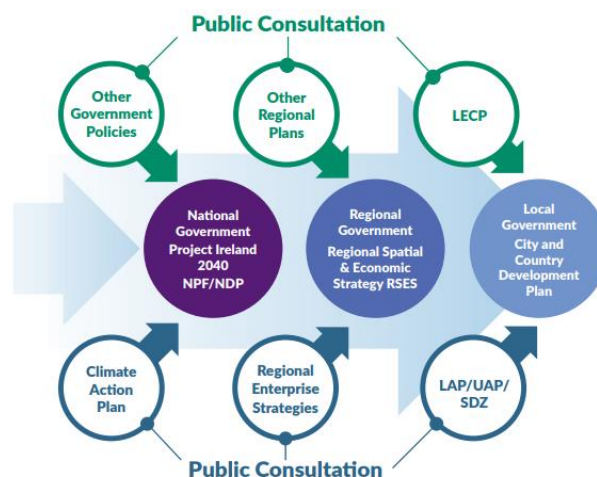
- GOAL 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place
- GOAL 2: A County that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employment and economic growth
- GOAL 3: A healthy, thriving County
- GOAL 4: A vibrant County that values its cultural, arts and heritage
- GOAL 5: A collaborative County
- GOAL 6: A healthy County where people are able to learn and grow
- GOAL 7: An environmentally-conscious and resilient County that prioritises sustainability

Additional policies of note

237. In addition to the policies enumerated above, consideration was given to the following policies, plans and strategies during the development of this LDS:

- Pathways to Work 2021-2025
- Northern and Western Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020-2032
- Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028

Figure 30: LECP linkage to regulatory frameworks



4.3 Networking

238. Local Community Development Committee members and management and staff of the Implementing Partner, Roscommon LEADER Partnership, are well networked across relevant stakeholder organisations. They will continue to engage and participate in networking actions and events on a local, regional, national and international basis, based on the objectives of good / best practice, learning opportunities, innovation and information dissemination.
239. Networking activities will be based on the general principles and activities of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 as well as on strategic issues central to the Local Development Strategy for Co. Roscommon.
240. These will include subjects such as Women, Youth, and Enterprise Development as well as actions to address issues such as critical mass for training programmes or where actions are required on a cross-agency or cross-county basis.
241. The LAG and its Implementing Partner, Roscommon LEADER Partnership, have been and will continue to be involved in a range of networking organisations of relevance to the Programme.
242. These include:
- Irish Local Development Network (ILDN), the representative body of Local Development Companies (LDCs) in Ireland. Their mission is to promote and support the work of members in the areas of social inclusion and local and rural development).
 - ILDN Working Groups, e.g. LEADER Programme Operating Rules Working Group, Fisheries Working Group, Rural Tourism Working Group, CnaT Working Group
 - Irish Rural Link
 - Other LAGs and Local Development Companies, especially those with whom RLDC shares a common border
 - The County and City Management Association (CCMA), through the membership of the Chief Executive of Roscommon County Council
 - Community Workers' Co-operative
 - The Wheel
 - Active Link
 - Chambers of Commerce (local and national)

Local, Regional and National Linkages

243. Roscommon LCDC and its Implementing Partner, Roscommon LEADER Partnership, will continue to maintain and, where necessary, seek to form new linkages with various government departments, agencies and bodies whose remit covers the areas of activity of the organisation. These organisations are listed in Table 5 below.
244. Where Roscommon LCDC identifies that the establishment of a strategic network would be beneficial to the delivery of actions under the LEADER Programme 2023-2027, it will work with agencies and groups to develop such a network in Co. Roscommon with linkages on a local, regional or national basis as deemed most appropriate.
245. Roscommon LEADER Partnership will ensure that linkages are created and information is shared between the various other programmes and schemes it operates and the LEADER Programme 2023-2027. This will ensure the avoidance of duplication of services and ensure that opportunities to assist are maximised, especially for disadvantaged groups and hard to reach communities.

Table 5: Networking and Linkages for delivery of Roscommon Local Development Strategy

National	Regional	Local
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment Department of Environment, Climate and Communications Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Department of Rural and Community Development Department of Social Protection Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media Department of Transport Heritage Council Arts Council Bord Bia National Parks and Wildlife Service Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland Waterways Ireland Office of Public Works Coillte Dormant Accounts Fund TFI Local Link National Learning Network Bord Na Mona ESB Inland Fisheries Ireland Irish Water Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) National Council for the Blind Transport for Ireland	Fáilte Ireland Solas Western Development Commission Enterprise Ireland North & Western Regional Assembly National and Regional Associations of Community Enterprise Centres TUS Athlone TUS Sligo ATU Galway-Mayo I.T. Western Regional Drugs Task Force HSE TUSLA WestBIC	Roscommon County Council Roscommon Local Enterprise Office Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board Teagasc Roscommon Public Participation Network RTN - Roscommon Tourism Network Town Teams Committees Foróige County Roscommon Disability Support Group Roscommon EmployAbility Brothers of Charity Roscommon Age Friendly Alliance and Older Peoples Network Citizens Information Centre Roscommon Sports Partnership Mayo Roscommon Local Area Employment Service Chambers of Commerce and Enterprise Forums Roscommon Children and Young People's Services Committee Irish Farmers Association Local Community Services Providers Environmental Pillar Local Schools Local Sports Organisations

4.4 Cooperation

246. All co-operation and/or transnational projects considered for funding under the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 by Roscommon LCDC will take cognisance of its relevance to the vision for County Roscommon as set out in this LDS. All actions carried out by Roscommon LCDC will be complimentary to the actions as outlined in Section 4 of this LDS.

247. The proposed co-operation activity outlined above fits into the LDS vision as the projects have the potential to:

- Stimulate and develop entrepreneurship; particularly in sectors such as rural tourism, craft, food, environment and green economy.
- Promote and grow SMEs and indigenous enterprise by encouraging, networking opportunities, new learning and innovative approaches.
- Encourage communities and particular groups within communities (e.g. youth, unemployed, small holders) to become more resilient and take responsibility by providing them with opportunities for networking, learning, skills development, and capacity building.
- Improve the quality of life for the people that work in, live in and enjoy Roscommon

248. A perfect example is Reboot, developed as a cooperation project under the Rural Development (LEADER) Programme 2014 – 2020 commissioned by the Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo Local Action Groups (LAGs)/Local Development Companies in close collaboration with Local Enterprise Offices.

249. Reboot was an initiative aimed at businesses/social enterprises in Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo. The aim of Reboot was to assist the recovery of rural businesses and social enterprises from the impacts of Covid -19, Brexit and associated economic disruption by providing FREE training and upskilling, 1:1s with business specialists and opportunities to network with business peers.

4.5 Additional policies of note

250. In addition to the policies enumerated above, consideration was given to the following policies, plans and strategies during the development of this LDS:

- Pathways to Work 2021-2025
- Northern and Western Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020-2032
- Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028

4.6 Networking

251. The LAG will participate in national, regional and local structures in order to facilitate shared learning, innovation and good practice arising out of the LDS and successful local LEADER Rural Development Programme projects.

4.7 Cooperation

252. The proposed co-operation activity outlined above fits into the LDS vision as the projects have the potential to:

- Stimulate and develop entrepreneurship; particularly in sectors such as rural tourism, craft, food, environment and green energy.
- Promote and grow SMEs and indigenous enterprise by encouraging, networking opportunities, new learning and innovative approaches.
- Encourage communities and particular groups within communities (e.g. youth, unemployed, small holders) to become more resilient and take responsibility by providing them with opportunities for networking, learning, skills development, and capacity building

5.0 LDS ACTION PLAN

5.1 Vision

Vision Statement for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 in Co. Roscommon

Through a series of wide-ranging and considered Local Objectives and Strategic Actions, the Local Development Strategy and The LEADER Programme 2023-2027 for County Roscommon will improve the quality of life, making County Roscommon a good place to live, work and enjoy.

5.2 Strategic Approach

253. Espousing the principles of Community Led Local Development, the Local Development Strategy 2023-2027 for County Roscommon aims to engage and utilise the energy, knowledge and resources of people and organisations within County Roscommon as development actors rather than beneficiaries, empowering them to contribute to the future development of their rural areas. The LDS builds on the vision of 'Our Rural Future' and other strategic EU, National, Regional and County-based strategies and policies.
254. The consultative process utilised for the development of the LDS has identified the actions and strategies contained herein. The 'bottom up' approach empowers the all sectors across Co. Roscommon to take ownership of both the process.
255. Roscommon LEADER Partnership will implement the Community Development Principles of Social Inclusion, Collective Action, Empowerment, Equality, Social Justice, Participation, and Representation as its framework and will be based on the four horizontal themes. Roscommon LEADER Partnership uses both needs-driven and asset-based approaches to community development. LEADER staff investigates what community resources are available to work on and support the promoters in finding solutions.
256. It is crucial to engage potential LEADER clients and deliver services to them well to ensure the success of LEADER. Keeping potential promoters engaged and promoting their advancements requires targeted approaches.
257. Roscommon LEADER Partnership has more than 25 years of community and local development experience. We work directly with individuals and groups, as well as with disadvantaged community groups. As a result of this expertise, the organisation has developed methods for interacting with groups and individuals as well as creating meaningful working relationships with the local community. Having a good reputation in the county, through years of engagement in these areas, LEADER staff have built strong working relationships with individuals, community groups, social entrepreneurs, networks, and support organisations. As a result of our presence in these areas, we have a significant advantage when it comes to delivering in the LEADER programme 2023 -2027.
258. Whether they be individuals, networks, social enterprises, or groups, our engagement **strategies and techniques will be based on the good practice, targeting and proactive outreach activities as defined in the Programme Framework will include:**
- Meeting, Engaging and Interacting with people in their areas by visiting our offices or other local locations including our outreach offices.
 - Targeting LEADER information distribution through other RLP initiatives such as the LAES, TUS, and RSS schemes, Roscommon Youth Service, Traveller Health

Initiative, Growing Tree Childcare Service, SICAP events as well as HSE-funded Social Inclusion Initiatives, Family Resource Centres, the Traveller Health Initiative, Roscommon County Childcare Committee and IPA's accommodation centres.

- Referrals to and from our local partners IFA, Teagasc, Chambers of Commerce, LEO, FRCs, PPN and Irish Social Enterprise Network.
- We will also continue to strengthen, grow, and enhance the partnerships RLP currently has with local and regional organisations that represent potential LEADER promoters.
- RLP will also continue to develop, expand, and consolidate the current partnerships we have with local organisations representing LEADER clients to co-design targeting strategies and collaboratively deliver targeted interventions, working closely with LEO for example of enterprise supports.
- Producing and disseminating publicity and programme information materials that are inclusive, accessible, non-discriminatory, and tailored to specific target group audiences widely throughout the County through existing RLP networks, databases, RLP newsletter, online via our media channels and website and those of our collaborators, and more.
- Assisting individuals of certain promoters who have benefited from programme supports to act as "champions" to promote the participation and engagement of others. To spread the word about the benefits of the programme through case studies, testimonials, newspaper articles, social media, websites, and radio, RLP will also enlist the support of current champions in our local community groups, social enterprises, and networks.
- Through profiling those who have benefited from LEADER and are currently working for RLP, serving on boards, or acting as advocates of their local communities, we will spread awareness of the benefits and work of LEADER.

259. Rationale

260. We are confident that the proposed methodology, techniques, strategies and approaches outlined have been tried and tested and will yield maximum engagement as we have a proven track record working in disadvantaged areas like Ballaghaderreen, Boyle, Strokestown, Roscommon Town, Monksland and Castlerea/Ballinlough.

261. Engagement with IPAs, TUS, and courses such as Healthy Food Made Easy, Digital Skills, and can all be built upon for the next programme.

5.3 Aims of The Local Development Strategy and the LEADER Programme 2023-2027

262. The overall aim of the Local Development Strategy is to build on the progress made to date under previous programmes, supporting individuals, businesses and community organisations to create a society that makes living and working a rewarding experience.

263. This will be achieved by:

- Working with the community and voluntary groups and organisations to achieve their objectives for the improvement of their local area and/or sector;
- Supporting local and indigenous enterprises and entrepreneurs to create an economic climate that contributes to local job creation and sustainable employment;
- Providing support, advice and assistance to emerging and existing farm diversification projects, thus helping to sustain farm holdings and supporting farm families;
- Increasing the potential, capability and competence of the hard-to-reach community and voluntary sector through a range of capacity building and training initiatives;
- Conducting awareness raising and funding a range of initiatives which promote and support Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation measures;

- Developing an environment and culture which supports actions led by and for Women and Youth;
- Utilising the Smart Villages principles and approach to improve economic, social, cultural and environment conditions of towns and villages in County Roscommon;
- Harnessing technology and encouraging the development of new technologies and approaches to tackle a wide range of existing and emerging threats and constraints to rural living;
- Liaising and co-operating with other agencies and bodies, national, regional and/or local, to create critical mass and a shared approach to issues through a range of symbiotic actions.

5.4 Proposed Actions

264. Through the Local Development Strategy, the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 will provide support for local actions which will contribute to the development and growth of County Roscommon, making it a better place to live, work and enjoy. These include social inclusion actions and job creation measures, contributing to the economic progression of the area. LEADER Grant Aid will be focused on projects and actions which will best contribute to the actions and outcomes of the Local Development Strategy.

265. The Area Profile and SWOT Analysis sections of this LDS have identified the main strengths and weaknesses of the county. The LEADER Programme 2023-2027 in County Roscommon will contribute to addressing these shortcomings, along with a range of other schemes and programmes delivered by other agencies. The Local Objectives and Strategic Actions identified in this LDS are reflective of the priorities identified in the consultation process. They are also in line with and complimentary to the high level goals as set out in the Draft County Roscommon LECP.

266. The Local Objectives and Strategic Actions of this LDS are complimentary to and follow from the LEADER Themes and Sub Themes as set out below:

Figure 31: LEADER High Level Relationship Diagram

LEADER Theme	Economic Development and Job Creation	Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion	Sustainable Development and Climate Mitigation and Adaptation
LEADER Sub-Themes	<p>The Green Economy</p> <p>Agricultural Diversification</p> <p>Rural Tourism & Recreation</p> <p>Enterprise Development</p> <p>Rural Food Production</p> <p>Social, Community & Co-operative Enterprises</p>	<p>Rural Infrastructure</p> <p>Accessible Services</p> <p>Optimising Digital Connectivity</p> <p>Rural Youth</p>	<p>Sustainable Development of Rural Environment</p> <p>Climate Change Capacity Building</p> <p>Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation</p>

267. Having determined the priorities of the LDS and analysing the targets and outcomes (performance indicators) from the previous LEADER programming period, targets,

outcomes and outputs were set for this LDS. These will be monitored, collated and reported in line with the programme monitoring requirements. Budget allocations for each Local Objective were established following a similar process.

Overview of Local Objectives and Strategic Actions

Local Objective 1 (LO1) To support the sustainable growth of the green economy	
Strategic Action 1	To support research, development and implementation of green economy initiatives
Local Objective 2 (LO2) To support the resilience and enhance the sustainability and economic viability of off-farming operations	
Strategic Action 1	Support agricultural diversification development
Local Objective 3 (LO3) To promote and support the continued development of Roscommon's distinctive tourism offerings for the advancement of rural communities	
Strategic Action 1	Support tourism product & infrastructure development, marketing and promotion
Local Objective 4 (LO4) To encourage and foster entrepreneurship at all stages of enterprise development	
Strategic Action 1	Support for new and traditional business sectors with growth potential in Co. Roscommon
Local Objective 5 (LO5) To support the development and expansion of the food sector in Roscommon	
Strategic Action 1	Support the growth of food production through research and skills development, networking, marketing and capital supports
Local Objective 6 (LO6) To support the development of new and existing social, community and cooperative enterprises across the County	
Strategic Action 1	Support the development, training and capacity building for rural social, community and cooperative enterprises
Local Objective 7 (LO7) To support a needs-led approach to the sustainable development of rural infrastructure	
Strategic Action 1	Enhancement/regeneration programmes for rural towns, villages and their hinterlands including unused buildings – development programmes
Strategic Action 2	Develop Community Facilities and actions to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of the communities of Co. Roscommon
Local Objective 8 (LO8) To enhance social inclusion by supporting the provision of accessible services that support all communities and a strong sense of place in Co. Roscommon	
Strategic Action 1	Develop social, cultural and recreational actions and programmes to improve the quality of life and well-being of communities in Co. Roscommon
Local Objective 9 (LO9) To increase access to and uptake of reliable and high-speed broadband and reduce digital poverty in Co. Roscommon	
Strategic Action 1	Support the development of digital skills and digital literacy
Strategic Action 2	Promote and facilitate digital connectivity
Local Objective 10 (LO10) To foster the development of youth facilities and services in the county with the aim of creating an increased quality of life and opportunities for our youth	
Strategic Action 1	Support for rural youth in Co. Roscommon including social infrastructure, skills development, entrepreneurship support and employment

Local Objective 11 (LO11)	To support and promote actions that enhance the environment in Co. Roscommon
Strategic Action 1	Support projects and initiatives that encourage the sustainable use of water and protection and improvement of local biodiversity
Strategic Action 2	Support sustainable energy initiatives

Local Objective 12 (LO12)	To facilitate increased awareness and involvement in climate action across Co. Roscommon
Strategic Action 1	Enable and empower the exchange of knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned to enhance collective understanding and implementation of climate change solutions

Local Objective 13 (LO13)	To support climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts in Co. Roscommon
Strategic Action 1	Support the development of renewable energy potential and energy conservation, and green transitions for communities, agencies and businesses

268. A more detailed description of each Local Objective and the Strategic Actions are set out over the following pages.

5.1 Theme 1: Economic Development and Job Creation

5.1.1 SUB-THEME 1: THE GREEN ECONOMY

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 1

To support the sustainable growth of the green economy

Financial Allocation	€200,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>Desktop research indicated that Roscommon has historically had a very strong local employment in farming and agriculture. The County is experiencing a shift in these activities as new international, and national climate policies come into effect. There is the potential for retraining and reskilling the comparatively high proportion of the County's local workforce engaged in traditional sectors in order to align skillsets with opportunities in the green economy.</p> <p>Consultation indicated that participants perceive there to be an opportunity and benefit around growing the green economy in Roscommon. Many noted the opportunity to pursue the renewable energy sector as a source of employment in Roscommon. Additionally, participants suggested the potential to re-skill the workforce for jobs in the renewable energy sector. Key identified opportunities to support this growth include investment in research and innovation, while supporting capacity building to ensure the development, and implementation of existing and future green economy initiatives.</p> <p>The LEADER 2023-2027 programme will aim to support the transition to a more circular economy and bio-economy, as prioritised by the CDP.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	The Green Economy

Strategic Action 1.1
To support research, development and implementation of green economy initiatives

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulation programmes to encourage the adoption of new and emerging business patterns, such as the trends towards collaboration, green economy, operating in the sharing and circular economies, etc. • Support for awareness initiatives focussed on the potential for rural enterprises to participate in the green economy • Growing the Green economy through innovative programmes to stimulate innovation and enterprise start up and development in green business with a focus on: Clean and Green Construction –utilise construction waste and recycling, sustainable methods, Small Renewable energy generation and energy conservation, waste management and mitigation and retrofit • Additional supports such as relevant training, networking events, analysis and development, animation and marketing 												
Primary Target Group	Rural enterprises and employers, particularly those in extractive, agricultural and farming industries												
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon												
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC												
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon County Council, Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, Teagasc, GRETB, Fáilte Ireland, Bord Bia, Enterprise Ireland, Relevant Third Level Institutes and Development Centres, SEAI, Farming Organisations, Western Development Commission, DAFM, DRCD, PPN, State and National Organisations, Bord Na Mona, ESB, Environmental Pillar, LAWPRO, Waterways Ireland, NPWS.												
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027												
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1373 1246 1411">Number of enterprises funded – start-ups</td> <td data-bbox="1246 1373 1402 1411">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1411 1246 1480">Number of enterprises funded – existing (and when founded)</td> <td data-bbox="1246 1411 1402 1480">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1480 1246 1518">Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td data-bbox="1246 1480 1402 1518">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1518 1246 1588">Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td data-bbox="1246 1518 1402 1588">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1588 1246 1657">Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded</td> <td data-bbox="1246 1588 1402 1657">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1657 1246 1756">Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities in relation to green economy</td> <td data-bbox="1246 1657 1402 1756">20</td> </tr> </table>	Number of enterprises funded – start-ups	1	Number of enterprises funded – existing (and when founded)	1	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	8	Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	2	Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities in relation to green economy	20
Number of enterprises funded – start-ups	1												
Number of enterprises funded – existing (and when founded)	1												
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2												
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	8												
Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	2												
Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities in relation to green economy	20												

5.1.2SUB-THEME 2: AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 2 To support the resilience and enhance the sustainability and economic viability of off-farming operations	
Financial Allocation	€200,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>At the last Agricultural Census (2020), Roscommon had a total of 6,089 farms. Desktop research indicated that the proportion of the population employed as farmers in Roscommon was double the State rate. (12.3% and 5.8% respectively). As the requirements and approaches to agriculture and farming shift to new models to align with international and national climate action policy, there is a growing need for the diversification of agricultural enterprises in order to remain economically viable. This is particularly aligned with the CAP Strategic plan, which has specific focus on diversification opportunities for farm families.</p> <p>Public consultation highlighted the appetite for incentives and supports to engage with schemes towards agricultural diversification. People suggested innovation and development support for farms transitioning to develop additional revenue and a wider variety of land use.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Agricultural Diversification

Strategic Action 2.1
Support agricultural diversification development

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for new and/or innovative projects which positively exploit rural/agri-tourism as a supplementary income for rural dwellers and inside the farm gate. • Support for projects to encourage on-farm diversification to stimulate enterprise and secure farm incomes. • Bespoke or alternative tourism accommodation. • Farm shops and retail outlets. 											
Primary Target Group	Farmers and those employed in agriculture											
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon											
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC											
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, Teagasc, GRET, Bord Bia, Enterprise Ireland, Relevant Third Level Institutes and Development Centres, Farming Organisations, DAFM, State and National Organisations, Rural Food Skillnet, Food Academy Programme											
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027											
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of projects funded – new</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of projects funded – existing</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </table>		Number of projects funded – new	2	Number of projects funded – existing	2	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	5	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	5	Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	2
Number of projects funded – new	2											
Number of projects funded – existing	2											
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	5											
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	5											
Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	2											

5.1.3 SUB-THEME 3: RURAL TOURISM

**Local Objective 3:
To promote and support the continued development of Roscommon’s distinctive tourism offerings for the advancement of rural communities**

Financial Allocation	€520,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>Both the findings of the area profile/socio economic analysis and the public consultations highlighted the tourism sector as an area that could be developed to maximise economic benefit for the county. In particular, building on the some well-established tourism offerings and natural assets/scenery such as Boyle National Park and Rathcroghan.</p> <p>Consultation identified that rural communities rely on their culture and cultural symbols, including music, folklore, architecture, heritage and geographic landscapes, as a focal feature for tourism development. This objective will significantly contribute to the development of strong local economies and an enhanced quality of life in the county.</p> <p>The LDS will support the implementation of the of the County Tourism Strategy, and ensure projects are supported that develop the county tourism product and brand, collective marketing, product bundling and innovative online and physical promotional tools.</p> <p>The focus for product development will be aimed at capitalising on our key strengths, such as delivering a multi-activity tourism offering incorporating waterways, walking, cycling and water-based activities including angling/fishing and leisure pursuits and support for heritage tourism and tourism infrastructure including festivals and events.</p> <p>The LEADER Programme 2023-2027 will provide targeted assistance to new and existing enterprises in order to maximise tourism development and overcome identified potential barriers to tourism.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Rural Tourism

Strategic Action 3.1

Support tourism product & infrastructure development, marketing and promotion

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for projects which sustainably maximise Roscommon’s natural and cultural heritage. • Support for festivals and events which celebrate Roscommon’s unique heritage and culture. • Support for promotion and marketing activities for rural/agri tourism. • Support culture and slow tourism initiatives. • Support for secondary or ancillary tourism initiatives. • Support for community flagship tourism initiatives or projects • Collaborative marketing approaches and other eligible actions to promote tourism and attract additional visitors. • Initiatives involving the packaging and bundling of tourism offers • Collaborative projects with neighbouring regions that can add to the marketing and promotion of rural tourism. • Additional supports such as relevant training, networking events, analysis and development, animation and marketing will be developed to maximise the impact of the LEADER programme in this sector. 											
Primary Target Group	Rural communities											
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon											
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC											
Collaborating Organisation	State and national orgs, regional and local groups including Fáilte Ireland, Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, Western Development Commission, Roscommon County Council, Roscommon Tourism Network, PPN, Waterways Ireland, LAWPRO, Coillte, Bord Na Mona, Heritage Council, Arts Council, Irish Heritage Trust, NPWS.											
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027											
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of projects funded – new</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of projects funded – existing</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Visitors</td> <td>100,000</td> </tr> </table>		Number of projects funded – new	5	Number of projects funded – existing	10	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	10	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	20	Number of Visitors	100,000
Number of projects funded – new	5											
Number of projects funded – existing	10											
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	10											
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	20											
Number of Visitors	100,000											

5.1.4SUB-THEME 4: ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 4	
To encourage and foster entrepreneurship at all stages of enterprise development	
Financial Allocation	€1,240,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>The socio-economic analysis for Roscommon reveals a relatively high dependence on agriculture, traditional sectors, retail and public services to support the local economy. The analysis also identified a growth in knowledge-intensive industries. The consultation processes highlighted the need to focus on priority business sectors which could be further developed to maximise job creation and economic benefit for the county, as well as an appetite for increased training opportunities to ensure a skilled workforce with the capacity to find and sustain employment.</p> <p>The Roscommon Economic Development Plan identifies the following key sectors for growth in particular locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Innovation & ICT (Roscommon Town) ▪ Life Sciences (Monksland) ▪ Tourism & Arts (Boyle) ▪ Agri-food (Castlerea) ▪ Creative Industries (Ballaghaderreen) ▪ Culture & Heritage (Strokestown) <p>LEADER funding will be targeted at these priority sectors, innovation and traditional employment areas to assist with job creation, alignment of local workforce expertise and skillsets, and overall economic growth.</p> <p>The LEADER Programme 2023-2027 will seek to realise Roscommon's economic potential and will contribute, where possible, to the achievement of targets outlined in the Economic Development Plan and the Draft LECP. It is also acknowledged that as some sectors are under-developed in the county, these may require more resources to create an impact, which should be evaluated over the longer term.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Enterprise Development

Strategic Action 4.1**Support for new and traditional business sectors with growth potential in Co. Roscommon**

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animation, Capacity building, training and Information events to support Pre-start-up, Start-up, and expanding enterprises to generate ideas, explore markets, assist in business planning, governance, and other development issues • Capacity building and training in accessing finance with an emphasis on new opportunities through technology, accessing crowd funding, government grants, and diaspora investment • Mentoring to offer bespoke assistance to Rural SMEs • Capacity and facilitation support to sectoral business networks to support them to reach critical mass and sustainability. 									
Primary Target Group	Those disengaged from the labour market									
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon									
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC									
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, Enterprise Ireland, Design and Craft Council of Ireland, Western Dev. Commission, SEAI, Third Level Institutes, PPN, State and National Orgs, Mayo Roscommon LEAS, The Cube Flexi space, GRETB, Chambers of Commerce & Enterprise Forums									
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027									
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of enterprises funded – start-ups</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of enterprises funded – existing (when founded)</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>20</td> </tr> </table>		Number of enterprises funded – start-ups	5	Number of enterprises funded – existing (when founded)	21	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	14	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	20
Number of enterprises funded – start-ups	5									
Number of enterprises funded – existing (when founded)	21									
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	14									
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	20									

5.1.5SUB-THEME 5: RURAL FOOD PRODUCTION

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 5

To support the development and expansion of the food sector in Roscommon

Financial Allocation	€200,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>The socio-economic analysis indicated that Roscommon has over 6,000 farms (CSO, 2020) of which the largest proportion comprised of specialist livestock farms (beef and sheep). Public consultation highlighted an appetite for the support of existing food production and opportunities around strengthening connections between food production and complementary enterprises, such as the craft sector, to expand the food sector in Roscommon. Opportunities were identified around research and development, networking, marketing and capital supports.</p> <p>In addition to larger-scale food production, several small artisan businesses in the food, craft, creative and tourism sectors have been established throughout Roscommon in recent years, with many people returning from overseas availing of supports provided by the Local Enterprise Office (Roscommon Bound, 2023).</p> <p>The LEADER Programme 2023-2027 will aim to support the growth and resilience of food production in Roscommon in order to drive further economic growth in the County. The LDS acknowledges that there are opportunities to support both existing and new food production enterprises and operations.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Rural Food Production

Strategic Action 5.1
Support the growth of food production through research and skills development, networking, marketing and capital supports

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animation and entrepreneurship programmes, including adding value to food, and agri-technologies. • Management development training and capacity building programmes for existing companies with growth potential. • Collaborative approaches with neighbouring regions to develop, grow and market food. • Identify and implement greater links with related sectors (e.g. tourism and food), including trails, display opportunities and other complimentary activities. • Additional supports such as relevant training, networking events, analysis and development, animation and marketing. 									
Primary Target Group	<p>Enterprise owners Those engaged in food production</p>									
Geographic Area	<p>Co. Roscommon</p>									
Lead Organisation	<p>Roscommon LCDC</p>									
Collaborating Organisation	<p>Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, Teagasc, GRETB, Bord Bia, Enterprise Ireland, Relevant Third Level Institutes and Development Centres, Farming Organisations, DAFM, State and National Organisations, Rural Food Skillnet, Food Academy Programme</p>									
Timeframe for Delivery	<p>Q3/2023 – Q4/2027</p>									
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of enterprises funded – start-ups</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of enterprises funded – existing (and when founded)</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>2.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>10</td> </tr> </table>		Number of enterprises funded – start-ups	1	Number of enterprises funded – existing (and when founded)	4	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2.5	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	10
Number of enterprises funded – start-ups	1									
Number of enterprises funded – existing (and when founded)	4									
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2.5									
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	10									

5.1.6 SUB-THEME 6: SOCIAL, COMMUNITY AND COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISES

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 6	
To support the development of new and existing social, community and cooperative enterprises across the County	
Financial Allocation	€240,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>According to the demographic analysis, Roscommon has a strong social enterprise foundation, and is in the top 5 counties for social enterprises per 10k population in the State. Analysis suggests that there is an opportunity to build on the strength of existing social enterprise in the County to ensure that Roscommon is competitive within the Northern and Western Region with regard to social, community and cooperative enterprises. Public consultation indicated that social enterprises are valued by the community for their contributions both socially and economically.</p> <p>The Western Development Commission set out the following goals for social enterprise in the region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote social enterprise across the region and work with others to build capacity and strengthen the ecosystem ▪ Support companies to identify services and skills and support innovation projects that deliver a real Social Impact ▪ Capitalise on the natural resources, communities and skills to position the WDC region as a testbed for new social innovation ▪ Establish the WDC region as a Social Innovation Region to attract new investment and create new highly skilled jobs <p>The 2023-2027 LEADER programme will support progress towards these goals within Roscommon. As noted in the CDP, Smart Villages can enhance their existing strengths and assets through creative thinking and by embracing innovation to create desirable places for rural people to live and work. It is recognised that this LDS will support the application of a Smart Village approach to enhance the social and economic sustainability of social, community and cooperative enterprises.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Social, community and cooperative enterprises

Strategic Action 6.1

Support the development, training and capacity building for rural social, community and cooperative enterprises

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for ongoing training, mentoring, and development services for new and existing social, community and cooperative enterprises. • Support for networking among new and existing social, community and cooperative enterprises Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include: • Support for Rural and Social Enterprises through a suite of tools including Mentoring, Training, Capital, Equipment, R&D, Feasibility, Marketing etc. • Support for collective hubs which utilise existing rural enterprise space, other community spaces or derelict/void spaces. • Support for initiatives which assist rural and social enterprises to avail of opportunities arising from public funding. • Support initiatives that promote training opportunities for businesses in integrating the Smart Village approach. • Facilitating the adoption of a Smart Village approach among SMEs. • Promoting initiatives that support the integration of the Smart Village concept during the start-up stages of enterprise development. 								
Primary Target Group	Rural communities, especially entrepreneurs from minority backgrounds								
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon								
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC								
Collaborating Organisation	Town Team Committees, Chambers of Commerce, GRETB, Pobal, Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, PPN, National & Regional Ass of Community Enterprise Centres, State and National Organisations, Roscommon Tourism Network, CIC, The Cube Flexi Space HSE, Solas,								
Timeframe for Delivery	Q1/2025 – Q4/2027								
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="478 1518 1171 1588">Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded</td> <td data-bbox="1171 1518 1324 1588">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="478 1588 1171 1657">Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities</td> <td data-bbox="1171 1588 1324 1657">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="478 1657 1171 1693">Number of new jobs created (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td data-bbox="1171 1657 1324 1693">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="478 1693 1171 1762">Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td data-bbox="1171 1693 1324 1762">2</td> </tr> </table>	Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	2	Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities	10	Number of new jobs created (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	0	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2
Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	2								
Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities	10								
Number of new jobs created (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	0								
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2								

5.2 Theme 2: Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion
5.2.1SUB-THEME 7: RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 7 To support a needs-led approach to the sustainable development of rural infrastructure	
Financial Allocation	€975,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	2
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>The socio-demographic analysis found that the majority of the population in Roscommon are living in an area designated as rural. Indeed, the County is characterised by a very large number of rural towns and villages, which are the backbone of the rural community. Public consultation indicated that there is public preference for the regeneration and revitalisation of existing infrastructure over the development of new infrastructure. It is acknowledged that consultation also highlighted the perception of limited transportation within the County, indicating the potential to raise awareness around alternative transport options.</p> <p>Each of the main settlement centres in Roscommon (Roscommon Town; Boyle; Castlerea; Ballaghaderreen; Strokestown and Monksland) has a Town Team, which brings together people from community, business and statutory sectors to promote the various opportunities to live in, do business or and enjoy their towns. In smaller towns and villages, a number of community organisations such as Tidy Towns work to enhance public spaces. The aim is to foster economic development, create jobs, facilitate start-up businesses and above all to re-instil the pride in the towns and villages of Roscommon as focal points of economic, culture and social activity.</p> <p>A number of national schemes have been developed to support the regeneration and revitalisation of towns and villages, many focused on bringing derelict buildings back into use. Additionally, the Town Centre First policy aims to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community. In 2018, Boyle took part in the Town Centre Living. The aim of the initiative was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ explore how to encourage increased residential occupancy in rural towns and villages ▪ address the issue of vacant properties <p>The LEADER 2023-2027 seeks to support the enhancement of rural infrastructure for the benefit of rural communities, with the aim of improving quality of life and wellbeing for everyone who lives in, works in or visits Roscommon.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Rural Infrastructure

Strategic Action 7.1

Enhancement/regeneration programmes for rural towns, villages and their hinterlands including unused buildings – development programmes

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of supports to refurbish or change the use of existing community spaces to encourage additional or new use. • Smart Villages that create innovative solutions to improve their resilience, building on local strengths and opportunities. • Programme of Supports to refurbish or change the use of derelict or void spaces to encourage new use- • Support initiatives in rural towns which future proof the age friendliness of the town. • Additional supports such as relevant training, networking events, analysis and development, animation and marketing will be developed to maximise the impact of the LEADER programme to sustain and enhance rural towns and hinterlands. 								
Primary Target Group	Rural communities								
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon								
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC								
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon County Council, Town Team Committees, HSE, Solas, Sports Organisations, PPN, State and National Organisations, Community Response Forum, Heritage Council, CYPSE, Older Persons Network, Healthy Ireland								
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027								
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="550 1205 1241 1240">Number of projects funded</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1205 1409 1240">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="550 1240 1241 1276">Population in towns receiving funding</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1240 1409 1276">69,995</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="550 1276 1241 1312">Number of services funded – new</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1276 1409 1312">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="550 1312 1241 1379">Number of services funded – existing (and when founded)</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1312 1409 1379">7</td> </tr> </table>	Number of projects funded	10	Population in towns receiving funding	69,995	Number of services funded – new	3	Number of services funded – existing (and when founded)	7
Number of projects funded	10								
Population in towns receiving funding	69,995								
Number of services funded – new	3								
Number of services funded – existing (and when founded)	7								

Strategic Action 7.2**Develop Community Facilities and actions to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of the communities of Co. Roscommon**

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for appropriate community infrastructure, including community halls, hubs, centres and other suitable facilities to meet the needs of local communities and target groups. ▪ Additional supports such as relevant training, networking events, analysis and development, animation and marketing, particularly aimed at Hard-to-Reach communities. ▪ Smart Villages that create innovative solutions to improve their resilience, building on local strengths and opportunities. 									
Primary Target Group	Rural communities									
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon									
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC									
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon County Council, Town Team Committees, HSE, Solas, Sports Organisations, PPN, State and National Organisations, Community Response Forum, Heritage Council, CYPSE, Older Persons Network, Healthy Ireland									
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2024									
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of projects funded</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Population in towns receiving funding</td> <td>69,995</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of services funded – new</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of services funded – existing (and when founded)</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </table>		Number of projects funded	10	Population in towns receiving funding	69,995	Number of services funded – new	4	Number of services funded – existing (and when founded)	6
Number of projects funded	10									
Population in towns receiving funding	69,995									
Number of services funded – new	4									
Number of services funded – existing (and when founded)	6									

5.2.2SUB-THEME 8: ACCESSIBLE SERVICES

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 8

To enhance social inclusion by supporting the provision of accessible services that support all communities and a strong sense of place in Co. Roscommon.

Financial Allocation	€360,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>Co. Roscommon is a very rural county, with a high number of very small settlements. The socio-demographic analysis indicated that just over a quarter of residents in the County are living in an area designated as highly rural/remote, with longer travel times to everyday services. Strong communities require equitable access to local level services and facilities to address issues of isolation and rural deprivation and promote positive community engagement and access to services.</p> <p>Funding will be targeted at the development of community facilities and services with particular emphasis on areas where gaps are identified. Animation and capacity building support will be targeted at Hard to Reach Communities so that they can fully participate with and benefit from the Local Development Strategy.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Accessible Services

Strategic Action 8.1
Develop social, cultural and recreational actions and programmes to improve the quality of life and well-being of communities in Co. Roscommon

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for actions which facilitate community groups to develop skills and create sustainable models of operation and delivery. • Support for initiatives aimed at socially excluded groups and areas that promote: more effective engagement with service providers and funding agencies; the ability to advocate for their communities; and awareness of and access to funding and development opportunities. • Support for actions which encourage increased collaboration and networking between community groups or priority groups. • Support for cultural activities, arts and heritage facilities, general community and recreational infrastructure. • Animation and capacity building support will be targeted at Hard to Reach Communities to ensure they can fully participate and benefit from the LDS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional supports such as relevant training, networking events, analysis and development, animation and marketing. 								
Primary Target Group	Rural communities, particularly hard to reach communities								
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon								
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC								
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon County Council, Town Team Committees, HSE, Solas, Sports Organisations, PPN, State and National Organisations, Community Response Forum, Heritage Council, CYPSE, Older Persons Network, Roscommon Disability Support Group, Brothers of Charity, Work Links Roscommon, Healthy Ireland								
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027								
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="549 1406 1241 1444">Number of services funded – new</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1406 1406 1444">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="549 1444 1241 1512">Number of services funded – existing (and when founded)</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1444 1406 1512">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="549 1512 1241 1550">Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1512 1406 1550">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="549 1550 1241 1617">Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1550 1406 1617">5</td> </tr> </table>	Number of services funded – new	5	Number of services funded – existing (and when founded)	10	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	5
Number of services funded – new	5								
Number of services funded – existing (and when founded)	10								
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2								
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	5								

5.2.3SUB-THEME 9: OPTIMISING DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 9

To increase access to and uptake of reliable and high-speed broadband and reduce digital poverty in Co. Roscommon.

Financial Allocation €200,000

No. of associated Strategic Actions 2

Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)

Historically, broadband internet connection has been a challenge across the County, with Roscommon having one of the lowest broadband penetration rates in the country during the development of the last LDS. However, since then there has been significant investment in broadband infrastructure, and at the latest census (2022), three-quarters of private households had broadband internet connection. Public consultation identified that reliable internet access was vital, particularly for the health of local businesses and enterprises. Participants also noted that internet access provides a mechanism for socialisation and information sharing, and identified the opportunity for increasing access to broadband even further through the provision of community hubs.

The rapid increase of internet access and the rise of employment in the communications and tech industry indicate the potential need for digital upskilling and training opportunities. Notably, Covid-19 resulted in a substantial shift from on-site to remote work. This has in-turn resulted in a new urban-to-rural migration pattern, with many people relocating to more rural areas to enjoy the quality of life outside of city centres. It also has the potential for decreasing out-migration, as it becomes less necessary to live in an urban setting for employment.

The LEADER Programme 2023-2027 will assist communities in addressing digital poverty and literacy challenges in the County through animation, capacity building and, where appropriate, analysis and development, and basic ICT training to priority groups, for example, to enable older people and young people to stay connected.

Other activities may centre on skills development for installing broadband, feasibility studies in relation to community broadband and funding for small scale infrastructure and equipment, such as boosters and hotspots for local communities and businesses.

Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme

Optimising Digital Connectivity

Strategic Action 9.1
Support the development of digital skills and digital literacy

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for basic technology usage (i.e. maximise use of mobile and internet-based communication, social media etc.) for target groups and individuals who are suffering digital exclusion ensuring they have the abilities to actively contribute to the development of their communities. ▪ Support for specific digital skills training to facilitate those in the workforce or those disengaged from the labour market to find employment in knowledge-intensive or technical sectors. 							
Primary Target Group	Rural communities, particularly those with low internet access Older adults							
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon							
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC							
Collaborating Organisation	Town Team Committees, Chambers of Commerce, Dept. Communications, Farming Organisations, Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, PPN, State and National Organisations, Older Persons Network, Grow Remote, Western Development Commission, DRCD, Roscommon County Council							
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027							
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Population benefiting from enhanced broadband as a result of equipment funding</td> <td>69,995</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities in relation to broadband</td> <td>60</td> </tr> </table>		Population benefiting from enhanced broadband as a result of equipment funding	69,995	Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	4	Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities in relation to broadband	60
Population benefiting from enhanced broadband as a result of equipment funding	69,995							
Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	4							
Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities in relation to broadband	60							

Strategic Action 9.2
Promote and facilitate digital connectivity

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eligible small scale equipment, such as boosters and broadband enabled desk space/facilities and broadband hotspots for communities and local businesses where demand is identified, in areas not covered through any other funding scheme/initiative. ▪ Support for businesses looking to transition to a remote or hybrid working model. ▪ Innovative solutions to improve broadband/fibre access for businesses and the community. 									
Primary Target Group	<p>Rural enterprises, including social, community or cooperative enterprises Community organisations and hubs Rural communities</p>									
Geographic Area	<p>Co. Roscommon</p>									
Lead Organisation	<p>Roscommon LCDC</p>									
Collaborating Organisation	<p>Town Team Committees, Chambers of Commerce, Dept. Communications, Farming Organisations, Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, PPN, State and National Organisations, Older Persons Network, Grow Remote, Western Development Commission, DRCD, Roscommon County Council</p>									
Timeframe for Delivery	<p>Q3/2023 – Q4/2027</p>									
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of small scale equipment projects funded</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Population benefiting from enhanced broadband as a result of equipment funding</td> <td>69,995</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of new jobs created (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </table>		Number of small scale equipment projects funded	2	Population benefiting from enhanced broadband as a result of equipment funding	69,995	Number of new jobs created (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	0	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	5
Number of small scale equipment projects funded	2									
Population benefiting from enhanced broadband as a result of equipment funding	69,995									
Number of new jobs created (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	0									
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	5									

5.2.4 SUB-THEME 10: RURAL YOUTH

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 10

To foster the development of youth facilities and services in the county with the aim of creating an increased quality of life and opportunities for our youth

Financial Allocation	€200,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>Desk study of the youth cohort in Roscommon identified patterns of young people leaving the county for higher education and employment. This was an opportunity for employment supports to increase labour force participation and to combat outmigration of talented and qualified young people. It also revealed the opportunity to increase youth engagement in volunteering activities across Roscommon. Throughout public consultation, community members suggested opportunities for youth targeted facilities and programming.</p> <p>The Children and Young People’s Plan for Roscommon 2022-2024 outlines the key areas of physical and mental wellbeing, learning and development, safety and protection, economic security and opportunity and connected and respected.</p> <p>The LEADER 2023-2027 programme will seek to nurture the youth population of Roscommon. Actions will be undertaken to promote an active and engaged rural youth that is fully realising the it’s education and employment potential. Specialist training and infrastructure will be provided facilitate these actions.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Rural Youth

Strategic Action 10.1

Support for rural youth in Co. Roscommon including social infrastructure, skills development, entrepreneurship support and employment

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for initiatives promoting progression to post-secondary education or training programmes. ▪ Support for young entrepreneurs, including initiatives targeting the retention of graduates in the County ▪ Additional supports such as relevant training, networking events, jobs fairs, analysis and development, animation and marketing. ▪ Support to youth clubs/cafes, improved social facilities including recreation, arts and culture. ▪ Innovative activities in local communities such as social and information networks, peer support groups etc. ▪ The provision of training/capacity building to improve youth skills not covered by other mainstream educational programmes will also be considered ▪ Additional supports such as relevant training, networking events, analysis and development, animation and marketing. ▪ Support for initiatives and projects co-designed with youth that foster cultural or social exchange. ▪ Support for initiatives and projects facilitating rural and urban youth socialisation, cooperation and/or collaboration. ▪ Ongoing mentoring and training initiatives for adults working with young people, supporting the growth of skillsets needed to develop and implement projects that improve community cohesion. 								
Primary Target Group	Rural Youth								
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon								
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC								
Collaborating Organisation	Youth Organisations Third level institutes, Roscommon Local Enterprise Office, PPN, Roscommon County Council, GRETB, Schools, State and National Organisations, Foroige, LGBTQI+, DCEDIY, Sports partnership, CYPSE								
Timeframe for Delivery	Q1/2025 – Q4/2027								
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1536 1244 1603">Number of projects funded</td> <td data-bbox="1244 1536 1414 1603">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1603 1244 1641">Number of young people directly participating</td> <td data-bbox="1244 1603 1414 1641">1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1641 1244 1680">Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td data-bbox="1244 1641 1414 1680">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1680 1244 1747">Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td data-bbox="1244 1680 1414 1747">3</td> </tr> </table>	Number of projects funded	5	Number of young people directly participating	1,000	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	1	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	3
Number of projects funded	5								
Number of young people directly participating	1,000								
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	1								
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	3								

5.3 Theme 3: Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation

5.3.1 SUB-THEME 11: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 11	
To support and promote actions that enhance the environment in Co. Roscommon	
Financial Allocation	€120,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	2
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>Local natural resources in Roscommon include Natura 2000 sites, Natural Heritage Areas and Raised Bed Special Conservation Areas. These resources provide Roscommon with the opportunity to lead in protecting important species, habitats and landscapes. Public consultation showed that the built environment has huge potential for modernising and retrofitting to increase sustainability. Community members also saw the opportunity to utilize smart transport infrastructure to reduce private, fossil-fuelled vehicle reliance.</p> <p>The Roscommon County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 outlines particular strategies for conserving the biodiversity, woodlands, wetlands and peatlands that Roscommon supports. Through the sustainable management of these and other strategies, the CDP seeks a wide range of socioeconomic benefits for protecting environmental quality and biodiversity. The CDP also has a consistent sustainability focus across the strategies for Towns and Villages, Rural Development and Infrastructure.</p> <p>The LEADER programme 2023-2027 will complement and add to these strategies to promote sustainable rural development in Roscommon. The programme will seek to undertake actions to protect and restore local natural resources, while proactively contributing to the County’s sustainable development.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment

Strategic Action 11.1

Support projects and initiatives that encourage the sustainable use of water and protection and improvement of local biodiversity

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for innovative initiatives to promote the development of rural towns and villages that align with sustainable design principals. ▪ Support for awareness building initiatives ▪ Development and upgrading of facilities and features and development of suitable amenity areas, forests/parks, peatlands and other areas across the county. ▪ Support for feasibility studies and action plans which will promote local biodiversity. ▪ Additional supports such as relevant capital, training, networking events, analysis and development, animation and marketing 													
Primary Target Group	Rural communities													
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon													
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC													
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon County Council, SEAI, Waterways Ireland, IFI, PPN, OPW, NPWS, Irish Water, ESB, State and National Organisations, Environmental Pillar, Bord Na Mona, Coillte, Farming Organisations, LAWPRO, DTCAGSM													
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027													
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of projects funded – new</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of projects funded – existing (and when founded)</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities</td> <td>15</td> </tr> </table>		Number of projects funded – new	1	Number of projects funded – existing (and when founded)	2	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	1	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2	Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	1	Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities	15
Number of projects funded – new	1													
Number of projects funded – existing (and when founded)	2													
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	1													
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2													
Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	1													
Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities	15													

Strategic Action 11.2
Support sustainable energy initiatives

Description	Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for community energy projects. ▪ Support initiatives that aim to raise awareness of available renewable energy sources. ▪ Promote initiatives that support residents to apply for available energy schemes, such as retrofitting, windows, renewable energy, electric car, bike-to-work etc. 													
Primary Target Group	Rural communities													
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon													
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC													
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon County Council, SEAI, Waterways Ireland, IFI, PPN, OPW, NPWS, Irish Water, ESB, State and National Organisations, Environmental Pillar, Bord Na Mona, Coillte, Farming Organisations, LAWPRO, DTCAGSM													
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q2/2027													
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of projects funded – new</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of projects funded – existing (and when founded)</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities</td> <td>15</td> </tr> </table>		Number of projects funded – new	1	Number of projects funded – existing (and when founded)	2	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	1	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2	Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	1	Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities	15
Number of projects funded – new	1													
Number of projects funded – existing (and when founded)	2													
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	1													
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	2													
Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	1													
Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities	15													

5.3.2SUB-THEME 12: CLIMATE CHANGE CAPACITY BUILDING

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 12

To facilitate increased awareness and involvement in climate action across Co. Roscommon

Financial Allocation	€120,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>Desktop research indicates uptake of capacity-building initiatives in the Roscommon. There is already a higher proportion of the population availing of technical and vocational training in Roscommon, and the GRET B provides continuing education opportunities across the County. There are several environmental community groups registered as members of the PPN, and community groups like Tidy Towns are also activated and undertaking climate and environment-focussed activities. Roscommon has a dedicated volunteer centre, and a relatively high proportion of the population engaged in volunteering activities.</p> <p>Public consultation indicated a strong appetite for being involved in climate action through knowledge sharing and strong, cohesive leadership in this area, as they acknowledged that they wanted to see and participate in both individual and larger-scale climate actions and solutions.</p> <p>The 2023-2027 LEADER programme will aim to support increased public awareness and capacity of all communities to support positive climate action.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Climate Change Capacity Building

Strategic Action 12.1**Enable and empower the exchange of knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned to enhance collective understanding and implementation of climate change solutions**

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for awareness raising projects highlighting climate change, climate action, protecting and improving local biodiversity, etc., including events, workshops etc. • Support for animation events, training and awareness raising literature for farmers, tidy towns committees, and community groups/organisations. • Design and delivery of relevant training programmes to build communities capacity to develop climate action projects. • Support for communities in climate action strategic planning. • Support for training for local community groups, tidy towns committees etc. to ensure that biodiversity and climate action are priorities within community planning. 							
Primary Target Group	Rural communities, especially children and young people, ethnic minorities, older adults and other hard to reach communities							
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon							
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC							
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon County Council, SEAI, Waterways Ireland, IFI, PPN, NPWS, State and National Organisations, Environmental Pillar, Farming Organisations, LAWPRO							
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027							
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Population benefiting from enhanced capacity building</td> <td>69,995</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities</td> <td>60</td> </tr> </table>		Population benefiting from enhanced capacity building	69,995	Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	5	Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities	60
Population benefiting from enhanced capacity building	69,995							
Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded	5							
Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities	60							

5.3.4SUB-THEME 13: CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

LOCAL OBJECTIVE 13	
To support climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts in Co. Roscommon	
Financial Allocation	€525,000
No. of associated Strategic Actions	1
Rationale for Local Objective (250 words max)	<p>Roscommon has a growing renewable energy infrastructure, however, there has been a particular uptake in wind power. There is also an uptake of solar energy solutions being installed on private housing (5.7%). The allocation of the Territorial Just Transition Plan represents a huge opportunity for Roscommon to improve its energy efficiency and generate cleaner energy. Our community consultation showed a desire for increased focus on sustainable practices across sectors and greater integration of renewable energy in Roscommon.</p> <p>As part of the Roscommon County Development Plan, Roscommon developed a Renewable Energy Strategy. The strategy seeks to support transitions to suitable energy use across residential, agricultural, industrial, commercial and transport sectors. The Strategy also aims to promote Sustainable Energy Communities across the County to increase the active engagement of communities in maximising their energy efficiency. The LDS will undertake actions that complement this Strategy and ensure efforts are collaborative but not repeating.</p> <p>The LEADER programme 2023-2027 seeks to enable communities and businesses to increase the responsible generation and use of energy.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-Theme	Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Strategic Action 13.1**Support the development of renewable energy potential and energy conservation, and green transitions for communities, agencies and businesses**

Description	<p>Examples of initiatives and projects within this action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for accreditation or eco label for LEADER-eligible businesses who adopt sustainable practices. • Support for Energy Audits detailing the cost saving measures which they could implement.. • Support for a Renewable Energy Grant Scheme for rural businesses interested in installing renewable technologies but who have been unable to source the full capital costs of their project. This project will pay due regard to state aid and other funding available for installation. • Support training opportunities for future employment in the renewable energy sector. • Support for emission reduction initiatives. 									
Primary Target Group	Rural communities									
Geographic Area	Co. Roscommon									
Lead Organisation	Roscommon LCDC									
Collaborating Organisation	Roscommon County Council, SEAI, Waterways Ireland, IFI, PPN, OPW, NPWS, ESB, State and National Organisations, Environmental Pillar, Bord Na Mona, Coillte, Farming Organisations, LAWPRO, DTCAGSM, Western Development Commission, Third Level Institutes									
Timeframe for Delivery	Q3/2023 – Q4/2027									
Anticipated Outputs/ Indicators and Targets	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of enterprises funded – start-ups</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of enterprises funded – existing (and when founded)</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)</td> <td>15</td> </tr> </table>		Number of enterprises funded – start-ups	5	Number of enterprises funded – existing (and when founded)	10	Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	10	Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	15
Number of enterprises funded – start-ups	5									
Number of enterprises funded – existing (and when founded)	10									
Number of jobs created – new (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	10									
Number of existing jobs sustained (FT/ PT/ Seasonal)	15									

Table 6: Financial Plan

Implementation of the CLLD Strategy

	2023 (€)	2024 (€)	2025 (€)	2026 (€)	2027 (€)	Total €
Theme 1: Economic Development and Job Creation - Non-Island Communities						
Sub-theme 1a. The Green Economy		€50,000	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000	€200,000
Sub-theme 1b. Agricultural Diversification		€80,000	€60,000	€60,000		€200,000
Sub-theme 1c. Rural Tourism & Recreation		€150,000	€150,000	€120,000	€100,000	€520,000
Sub-theme 1d. Enterprise Development	€50,000	€350,000	€350,000	€350,000	€140,000	€1,240,000
Sub-theme 1e. Rural Food Production		€50,000	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000	€200,000
Sub-theme 1f. Social, Community & Cooperative Enterprises		€70,000	€60,000	€60,000	€50,000	€240,000
Sub-Total	€50,000	€750,000	€720,000	€690,000	€390,000	€2,600,000
Total Theme 1: Economic Development and Job Creation - Non-island and Island Communities	€50,000	€750,000	€720,000	€690,000	€390,000	€2,600,000
Theme 2: Rural Infrastructure & Social Inclusion - Non-Island Communities						
Sub-theme 2a. Rural Infrastructure		€250,000	€250,000	€250,000	€225,000	€975,000
Sub-theme 2b. Accessible Services		€100,000	€100,000	€100,000	€60,000	€360,000
Sub-theme 2c. Optimising Digital Connectivity		€50,000	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000	€200,000
Sub-theme 2d. Rural Youth		€50,000	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000	€200,000
Sub-Total	€0	€450,000	€450,000	€450,000	€385,000	€1,735,000
Total Theme 2: Rural Infrastructure & Social Inclusion - Non-island and Island Communities	€0	€450,000	€450,000	€450,000	€385,000	€1,735,000
Theme 3: Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation - Non-Island Communities						
Sub-theme 3a. Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment		€30,000	€30,000	€30,000	€30,000	€120,000
Sub-theme 3b. Climate Change Capacity Building:		€30,000	€30,000	€30,000	€30,000	€120,000
Sub-theme 3c. Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	€50,000	€125,000	€125,000	€125,000	€100,000	€525,000
Sub-Total	€50,000	€185,000	€185,000	€185,000	€160,000	€765,000
Total Theme 3: Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation - Non-island and Island Communities	€50,000	€185,000	€185,000	€185,000	€160,000	€765,000
Total Budget Cost	€100,000	€1,385,000	€1,355,000	€1,325,000	€935,000	€5,100,000