

Longford Local Development Strategy – A Summary

1. Contact Details

Local Action Group (LAG)

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Implementing Partner

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Financial Partner

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2. LAG composition

The membership of the Longford LCDC is outlined as follows:

Seamus Butler	Elected Representative
Colm Murray	Elected Representative (Chair)
Gerry Warnock	Elected Representative
Martin Mulleady	Elected Representative
Barbara Heslin	Director of Services, Longford County Council.
Michael Nevin	Head of Local Enterprise, Longford Local Enterprise Office.
Joe Whelan	Community Services Manager, HSE
Maria Fox	Youth Officer, Longford Westmeath Education Training Board.
Des Henry	Regional Manager, Department of Social Protection.

Non- Statutory Members of Longford Local Community Development Committee.

Fintan Mc Gill	Longford Chamber of Commerce
Seamus Orr	PPN – Social Inclusion
Louise Lovett	PPN – Social Inclusion
Ray Hogan	PPN – Environmental
Tess Murphy	PPN – Community & Voluntary
Joe Murphy	PPN – Community & Voluntary
Sean Hannon	Irish Farmers Association
Joe Flaherty	Longford Business Forum
Seadna Ryan	County Longford Tourism
Adrian Greene	Longford Community Resources CLG

3. LAG Area

For the purposes of this Local Development Strategy, all 54 Electoral Districts of County Longford are included in our proposed action plan for the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 and the analysis that underpins that plan.

County Longford is Ireland's fourth smallest county and is bordered by counties Westmeath, Leitrim, Roscommon and Cavan. The county covers a land mass of 1,091kms of which 71% is described as farmland. A naturally scenic county, it is dotted with un-spoilt waterways including the Royal Canal, Lough Ree and a ribbon lake pattern in the north of the county. Attractive forestry in both private and state ownership has enhanced the physical environment and an abundance of unique Heritage sites, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas also contribute to a unique and naturally attractive landscape.

The county has a population of 39,000 and a population density of 27.9 persons per sq.km. Gender wise, the county is more or less evenly divided with 19,649 males and 19,351 females (Census 2011). The principal towns are Longford Town, Edgeworthstown, Ballymahon, Lanesborough and Granard.

According to Trutz Haase, Longford continues to be the fourth most disadvantaged local authority area in Ireland and the most disadvantaged in the midlands region.

“Longford has massively been affected by the economic downturn after 2007, reflected in a drop in the absolute deprivation score from -4.9 in 2006 to -12.1 in 2011. This represents a drop of 7.2, compared to a nationwide drop of 6.5.” - Trutz Haase, 2011 Pobal HP Deprivation Index.

County Longford has three Municipal Districts and 54 Electoral Districts. The Municipal Districts are:

Longford Town Area which contains 6 Electoral Districts.

Granard Area which contains 30 Electoral Districts.

Ballymahon Area which contains 18 Electoral Districts.

4. Local Development Strategy Vision & available funding for Longford

The vision for this Local Development Strategy is to improve the quality of economic and social activity in County Longford. By 2020, we want to see the creation of a better environment for all forms of Enterprise to flourish; we want to ensure that there are targeted supports for disadvantaged communities that improve access to education, employment and family support; we want to protect the un-spoilt natural environment that the county enjoys while at the same time develop the latent tourism potential that the county has.

In order to achieve this vision, the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has made **funding of €7,597,623 available** to Longford LCDC for the implementation of the Local Development Strategy.

5. Summary of Key Local Objectives

Below is a table identifying the key local objectives, a summary of the strategic actions and the anticipated outputs and targets.

LOCAL OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC ACTION	ANTICIPATED OUTPUTS / TARGETS
<p>1 – Improve Quality of available Enterprise Space in County Longford in order to attract further enterprises to locate here.</p>	<p>1.1 – Provide a range of attractive Enterprise Space options in County Longford in urban and rural areas.</p>	<p>Number of enterprise funded – start-ups - 10 Number of enterprise funded – existing – 5 Number of jobs created – new - 15 Full Time and 8 Part time To see a reduction in the amount of vacant enterprise space in County Longford by attracting new and existing businesses to locate in the county. To stimulate certain business sectors by providing optimum location options and encouraging people to consider self-employment as a viable option.</p>
<p>2 - Supporting the Development of new & expanding enterprises in the micro, small and medium business sector that have job creation and growth potential.</p>	<p>2.1 – Financial Support Programme – Innovative Sectors of Business in Rural and Urban settings.</p>	<p>Number of enterprises funded – start-ups – 20 Number of enterprises funded – existing - 20 Number of Jobs Created - 20 Full Time & 20 Part Time Number of Jobs Sustained : 15 Full Time</p>
	<p>2.2 - Maximise the development of key enterprise sectors with potential to make significant contributions to local economy.</p>	<p>Number of Jobs Created - 6 Full Time & 4 Part Time Number of Jobs Sustained -40 Full Time 1 x Research Programme identifying sectors most likely to benefit from sectoral support. 2x Training Programmes supporting 20 people per programme, total of 40 businesses supported. 2x Marketing Programmes supporting 20 people per programme, total of 40 businesses supported.(30 New & 10 Existing)</p>
	<p>2.3 – Initiatives that support the promotion of local enterprises.</p>	<p>Number of Jobs Sustained : 100 Full Time 4 x Marketing Programmes approx. 25 business included in each, supporting total of 100 businesses.</p>
<p>3 –To reduce unemployment by providing a comprehensive suite of supports for hard to reach communities that will assist self-employment options.</p>	<p>3.1 - Initiatives that support hard to reach communities to consider self-employment as an option.</p>	<p>Number of Jobs Created - 40 Full Time Training of 160 people in Enterprise Creation and Development. 8 x Training Programmes 20 participants per course</p>
<p>4 –To increase the economic activity in County Longford by identifying innovative enterprise sectors that</p>	<p>4.1 - Establish a high-level working group of industry and environment leaders to examine the sectors of industry that County</p>	<p>Number of Animation Programmes - 1 Clear identification of new areas of opportunity that will lead to job creation with Enterprises supported across the various sectors</p>

Co. Longford can position itself to attract.	Longford should target to locate here.	
5 – To identify current employment trends and areas of opportunity in the region and ensure that there are clear pathways between unemployed people and available employment.	5.1 – To identify employment opportunities in the midlands region and provide training that may be required by unemployed people locally so that they increase their chances of accessing employment.	<p>Number of Jobs Created - 40 Full Time & 20 Part Time</p> <p>Number of Animation Programmes – 1</p> <p>Number of Training Programmes – 4</p> <p>4 x Pre-Development Training programmes with 25 participants per programme totalling 100 unemployed people.</p> <p>20 employers will have been supported to find suitable employees that are trained in specific areas to meet their employment needs, incorporating all sectors.</p>
6 – To create employment opportunities in County Longford by identifying, stimulating and supporting projects operating within the Social Economy that have job creation potential.	6.1 – To identify three new Social Economy Projects that have potential to create jobs and provide essential community services.	<p>Number of Animation Programmes – 1</p> <p>Identification of three new Social Economy Projects that will have the potential to provide employment for target group members</p>
	6.2 – To financially support the establishment and growth of Social Enterprises that have job creation potential.	<p>Number of Jobs Created - 9 Full Time & 14 Part Time</p> <p>Number of Jobs Sustained - 10 Full Time & 10 Part Time</p> <p>Number of enterprises funded with Capital, Training, Marketing & Animation -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Enterprise - 9 <p>The Research and animation programme will determine the sectors which the new Social Enterprises will be developed and the six existing include, White Goods Recycling, Catering, House Keeping, Community Heritage Project, Second Hand Clothes Store, with support provided in marketing, training and capital equipment</p>
7 – Revitalisation through integrated planning of Rural Towns and Villages in County Longford.	7.1 – Identify and develop initiatives that improve economic, social and cultural performance in rural towns and villages.	<p>Number of projects funded – 40</p> <p>Population in towns receiving funding – 30,000</p> <p>Number of projects funded by type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Streetscape enhancement - 10 ○ Tidy Towns - 8 ○ Upgrading of built environment in town - 6 ○ Development of recreation spaces - 10 ○ Development of markets - 2 ○ Development of festivals - 4 <p>Number of Animation Programmes – 3</p> <p>3 x Training Programmes Development Support delivered to 24 villages / towns. With a minimum of 20 people participating per course</p>

<p>8 – Development of initiatives that maximise the effectiveness of high speed internet access in rural areas.</p>	<p>8.1 - To identify methods of improving access to high speed internet access in rural areas that do not duplicate the planned programme of works under the National Broadband Plan.</p>	<p>Number of small scale equipment projects funded – 1 Population benefiting from enhanced broadband as a result of equipment funding – 7,500 Number of capacity building/training/information projects funded - 1 Number of individuals participating in capacity building/training/information activities in relation to broadband - 40</p>
<p>9 – To ensure that the output from investment in tourism in County Longford is maximised through the development of a coordinated approach to this sector and that decisions are made as to who is responsible for the delivery of key actions that are required to drive tourism forward within the county.</p>	<p>9.1 – Ensure a co-ordinated and strategically planned approach to tourism development is undertaken within County Longford.</p>	<p>Number of projects funded – 10 Number of Jobs Created – 10 Full Time Number of existing jobs sustained – 30 Full Time Delivery of 10 training workshops with each training programme delivered to thirty tourism businesses. This will result in a co-ordinated approach to tourism development in the County which will benefit tourism businesses and also increase their involvement in the development of the sector locally and optimising opportunities in the sector.</p>
	<p>9.2 – Ensure a co-ordinated and strategically planned approach with regard to the marketing of County Longford as a tourism destination.</p>	<p>Number of projects funded – 2 Number of jobs created new - 1 full time Number existing jobs sustained - 1 part time Number of Visitors – 5000</p>
<p>10 – To increase the visitor numbers coming to County Longford by offering a high level range of visitor attractions and by offering an excellent standard of accommodation across the county.</p>	<p>10.1 – To increase Tourism Accommodation in the county by providing financial support for capital works to developing or improving tourist accommodation.</p>	<p>Number of projects funded new – 4 Number of projects funded existing – 6 Number of jobs created new - 10 full time & 15 Seasonal Number existing jobs sustained - 6</p>
	<p>10.2 – To financially support capital works to develop/improve visitor attractions and amenities within County Longford.</p>	<p>Number of projects funded new – 6 Capital Number of projects funded existing – 6 Capital Number of jobs created new - 6 full time & 12 Part-time Number existing jobs sustained 6 Full time Number of visitors - 10,000 over 4 year period</p>
	<p>10.3 – Festival Support Programme.</p>	<p>Number of projects funded new – 3 Training Number of visitors - 5,000</p>

		3 x Training Programmes each benefitting 30 festival organisers. Total of 90 participants.
11 – To maximise the planned investment in tourism in County Longford by ensuring those operating a tourism business have the capacity to develop their business to its full potential.	11.1 - To increase the capacity of those involved in tourism development in County Longford.	Training Programmes – 2 (Delivered to 40 Businesses) Number of projects funded– 6 Number of jobs created new - 6 full time & 6 Part-time Number existing jobs sustained 40 Full time
12 – Through “Community Led Local Development (CLLD) model of engagement, hard to reach communities will receive interventions that will seek to remove barriers to engagement that communities are currently facing.	12.1 – Identification of community based initiatives that specifically address the factors that are causing social exclusion in areas of geographical disadvantage.	Number of service funded new – 4 animation & research Nature of Service to be provided <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide a service that isn’t there - 4 ○ To enhance participation /outcomes of a service (through tailored supports for marginalised groups) i.e. mentors for isolated men to support them to participate in an existing education action) – 4
	12.2 – Resourcing of infrastructural and employment initiatives that specifically address the factors that are causing social exclusion in areas and communities of disadvantage.	Number of services funded new – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8 Training programmes (20 participants per course) ○ 4 Marketing programmes ○ 20 small scale capital Nature of Service to be provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide a service that isn’t there - 12 ○ To enhance participation /outcomes of a service (through tailored supports for marginalised groups) i.e. mentors for isolated men to support them to participate in an existing education action) -8 Number of people availing of the service - 160 Training
13 – To increase the skill level within the wider community to address issues causing social exclusion and provide communities with management skills to undertake community projects.	13.1 - To deliver training to key personnel and communities within County Longford on the subjects of Community Development, Equality & Human Rights & Project Management.	Number of services funded new: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 6 Training programmes (20 participants per course) Number of services funded existing – 30 community services Nature of Service to be provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To enhance participation /outcomes of a service (through tailored supports for marginalised groups) i.e. mentors for isolated men to support them to participate in an existing education action) -6 Number of people availing of the service - 120
	13.2 – Innovation training for	Number of services funded new:

	those working directly with the unemployed in a community setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 6 Training Programme <p>Nature of Service to be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To enhance participation /outcomes of a service (through tailored supports for marginalised groups) i.e. mentors for isolated men to support them to participate in an existing education action) - 6 <p>Number of people availing of the service - 120</p>
14 – To ensure transport provision is not a barrier for unemployed people to access training or employment.	14.1 – To identify sustainable transport provision within County Longford that facilitates unemployment people to access training and employment opportunities.	<p>Number of services funded new:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 Research ○ 2 small pilot transport projects <p>Number of service funded new – 2</p> <p>Number of Jobs Created new – 2 Part Time</p> <p>Nature of Service to be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide a service that isn't there - 2 ○ To enhance access to a service that is not in the locality (through transport) - 3 ○ To enhance participation /outcomes of a service (through tailored supports for marginalised groups) i.e. mentors for isolated men to support them to participate in an existing education action) - 2
15 – By providing targeted supports to vulnerable young people to increase their chances of gaining employment and breaking a cycle of disadvantage.	15.1 - Delivery of Pilot Youth Employment Initiative.	<p>Number of projects funded – 1</p> <p>Number of projects funded by type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Youth Development - 1 <p>Nature of Service to be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide a service that isn't there - 1 ○ To enhance participation /outcomes of a service (through tailored supports to young people in disadvantaged areas to encourage their participation in particular activities /enhance outcomes in key areas (employment training for example)- 1 <p>Number of young people directly participating: 40</p>
16 – To encourage greater youth participation by ensuring that those providing positive youth services have access to good quality facilities and can offer young people a positive environment to	16.1 - Improvement in Youth Facilities in County Longford.	<p>Number of projects funded – 10 Capital</p> <p>Nature of Service to be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide a service that isn't there – 4 ○ To enhance participation /outcomes of a service (through tailored supports to young people in disadvantaged areas to encourage their participation in particular activities /enhance outcomes in key areas (employment training for example) - 6

spend time in.		
17 – To create a sense of opportunity within young people living in County Longford so that they can see a positive future that involves employment and personal fulfilment.	17.1 - Delivery of a series of measures that encourage young people to engage in career planning.	<p>Number of projects funded – 24</p> <p>Nature of Service to be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide a service that isn't there - 24 ○ To enhance participation /outcomes of a service (through tailored supports to young people in disadvantaged areas to encourage their participation in particular activities/enhance outcomes in key areas (employment training for example) - 24 <p>Number of young people directly participating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2,500 - Opportunity fairs ○ 225 participants - Youth development training programmes ○ 50 participants Youth Enterprise Programmes
	17.2 - Support the development of positive programmes for young people within County Longford.	<p>Number of projects funded – 20</p> <p>Nature of Service to be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide a service that isn't there - 6 ○ To enhance access to a service that is not in the locality (through transport) -7 ○ To enhance participation /outcomes of a service (through tailored supports to young people in disadvantaged areas to encourage their participation in particular activities/enhance outcomes in key areas (employment training for example) - 7 <p>Number of young people directly participating - 300</p>
18 – To resource an annual awareness and education programmes to local communities and individuals on the importance of protecting and sustaining our water resources.	18.1 - Delivery of Training Courses and Awareness Programmes on Relevant Topics of Protection and Sustainable Use of Water Resources.	<p>Number of projects funded new – 5 Training Programmes</p> <p>10 participants per training programmes, totalling 50 participants</p>
	18.2 - Identification and funding of small scale projects that are an example of good practice regarding protection and sustainable use of water resources.	<p>Number of projects funded – new 25</p> <p>Type of Project funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Energy other - 7 ○ Local co-ordination initiatives - 10 ○ Recycling – 8 <p>Capital Support to 25 projects providing high quality key environment projects that are examples of best practise in water conservation, protection and sustainable use will be undertaken</p>
19 – To provide annual awareness and education programmes to local	19.1 - Delivery of Training Courses and Awareness Programmes on the	<p>Number of projects funded new – 10 Training programmes</p> <p>Type of Project funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education and awareness programmes - 10

communities and individuals on the importance of our local biodiversity and what measures we can take to protect our environment.	protection and improvement of local biodiversity including Invasive Species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local co-ordination initiatives - 10 ○ Nature Conservation - 10
	19.2 - Identification and funding of small scale projects that are an example of good practice regarding protection of our local biodiversity.	<p>Number of projects funded new - 25</p> <p>Type of Project funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impact Assessments – 15 ○ Nature Conservation - 10 <p>Capital support to 25 high quality key environment projects that are examples of best practise will be undertaken.</p>
20 – To create a greater awareness of the benefits and advantages of using renewable energy and to encourage the identification of suitable projects within County Longford that will reduce conventional energy inputs and increase renewable energy production.	20.1 - Identification of renewable energy projects within County Longford that will reduce conventional energy inputs and increase the development of renewable energy initiatives.	<p>Number of projects funded new - 4 Animation research projects</p> <p>Type of Project funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wind energy - 4 ○ Solar Power - 4 ○ Energy other - 4 ○ Impact Assessment - 4 ○ Nature Conservation – 4 ○ Recycling – 4
	20.2 – To provide financial assistance to the community sector to improve the energy efficiency in their communities through the installation of renewable energy technologies.	<p>Number of projects funded new - 10</p> <p>Type of Project funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wind energy - 2 ○ Solar Power- 5 ○ Energy other - 3 <p>Capital support to 10high quality key environment projects that are examples of best practise will be undertaken.</p>
	20.3 – Exploitation of the employment potential of the Renewable Energy Sector within County Longford.	<p>Number of projects funded new- 2</p> <p>Number of Jobs Created – 4 Full time - 2 Part time</p> <p>Type of Project funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Energy other -1 ○ Technical /scientific cooperation -1

