



## The Cappoquin, Lismore and Villierstown Sport and Physical Activity Hub

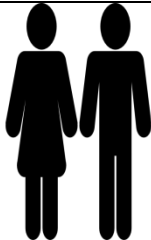

*A Summary of the Needs Analysis 2020*

# Introduction

Waterford Sports Partnership (WSP) has recently secured funding through Sport Ireland and the Dormant Accounts Fund for the development of a Community Sports & Physical Activity Hub in Cappoquin, Lismore and Villierstown, County Waterford. Sport Ireland defines a *Community Sports and Physical Activity Hub* as a collection of progressive sports clubs and other local organisations working together, under the auspices of the Local Sports Partnership, to improve the opportunities, infrastructure and participation rates for sport and physical activity within the community. Sport Ireland suggests that a hub has four specific aims integrated within an accepted framework model. These are **1)** the provision of *Pathways for Sport and Physical Activity*; **2)** *Well-trained people to develop the capacity of sport are produced*; **3)** *Strong organisations are created and sustained*; and **4)** *Quality facilities are provided*. The hub will help to increase the participation by local residents and specific target groups in a range of sporting and physical activities. It is intended that the hub will utilise and build on the existing infrastructural and community supports in the area to engage and support the local population to grow participation, promote community leadership and offer a range of sporting opportunities whilst bringing all key partners/groups/people together. This summary report is based on a comprehensive assessment and analysis of stakeholder views on existing service provision; new opportunities; barriers to participation and the development of infrastructure and facilities for sport and physical activity. This data, combined with a demographic profile of the area will be used by WSP to guide and help develop a schedule of relevant activities and interventions locally.

## Context

The study area comprised the settlements of *Lismore (1,374)*, *Cappoquin (699)* and *Villierstown (276)*; a total population of 2,349. An online survey of local stakeholders was circulated by WSP on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and closed on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Qualitative feedback was sourced from 283 respondents, with a survey completion rate of 100%. A summary of the respondents by gender and location is:

	Female 70% Male 30%		Cappoquin 41.5% Lismore 37.6% Villierstown 13.8%
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## Key Survey Findings

1. The link between health and exercise is positively affirmed by the 91% of survey respondents who claim to take regular or occasional exercise. 45% claim to exercise on a daily basis, with a further 31% doing so weekly. Less than 1% stated that they did not exercise at all. The survey findings accord broadly with those from other national and regional evaluations. The *Irish Sports Monitor*<sup>1</sup> provides recent data on the nature and frequency of participation in sport and physical activity in Ireland.
2. Nearly 50% stated that their exercise primarily consisted of individual/self exercise as distinct from organised team sports or physical activities. 31% stated a preference for informal exercise with 19.6% favouring self-exercise and 11.4% favouring group exercise. 21% stated that their exercise was a combination of individual and team sports/activities with 18.5% involved in organised team sports and 13.7% involved in individual organised sport. 9.6% engaged in coach or tutor-led individual self exercise. Membership of clubs/teams comprised a third of all respondents, irrespective of age.
3. 69% considered that the needs of other individuals or groups living locally could be better provided for. Specific responses included the needs of teenagers; older/retired people; alternatives to GAA; tennis in Lismore; better use of Lismore community hall; facilities and amenities located on public lands; inclusive open space; multi-use game areas (MUGA); cycling & mountain bike trails; swimming; walking, equestrian; and the need for a skate park. The survey revealed few, if any, substantive differences in need or opinion between each of the three settlements. Respondents, however, did take the opportunity to advocate for own interests and identify potential sport and physical activity improvements directly within their own communities or sphere of interest/influence.
4. Multiple factors limit local participation by residents in sport and physical activity locally. Weighted and ranked 1-5 in order, these are **1) Awareness of options; 2) Choice available; 3) Opportunity and scheduling; 4) Cost; and 5) Interest and motivation.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/document/2020-09/irish-sports-monitor-2019-report-lower-res.pdf>

5. 57% felt that opportunities, facilities and amenities for sport and physical activity could be improved. 16% felt that the currently available opportunities, facilities and amenities met their own needs. 14% considered that the existing opportunities, facilities and amenities did not reflect their own interests while 12% considered these opportunities, facilities and amenities inadequate. Only 6% viewed existing opportunities, facilities and amenities as suitable for all needs. Where respondents sought to elaborate on their opinion there was notable interest in opportunities, facilities and amenities which were independent of local GAA clubs/facilities. Principal amongst the ideas and suggestions offered were the development of facilities and opportunities including gyms, Multi-use Games Areas (MUGA), swimming and watersports, walking and cycling infrastructure.
6. Suggested improvements to increase participation by residents in sport and physical activity locally, ranked and weighted 1-5 were:

1.	<i>A wider range of activities</i>
=2.	<i>More family &amp; social activities Informal activities for individuals and groups</i>
=3.	<i>Development of new facilities Better scheduling of activities Development of all-weather activities Better use of existing facilities</i>
4.	<i>Development of natural amenities for active pursuits</i>
=5.	<i>Improved walking and cycling facilities Coaching and tuition</i>

The interest in and demand for other more general facilities and amenities complementary to those of sports and club facilities (amenity areas; parks; walks; ramps; parking; lighting cycle routes; river access, slips and storage, etc) is also strongly evident throughout the survey.

7. 70% believed that better provision could be made for the sport and physical activity needs of other individuals and groups in the community. 27% stated that they didn't know while 3% stated that they believed that there was adequate provision for all. Unmet needs within demographic groups include teenagers, young women, people with disabilities/special needs and older/retired people.

Unmet needs within specific sport and physical activity disciplines include exercise classes, watersports, swimming, tennis, mountain biking, walking, cycling, cricket and equestrian.

8. The sport and physical activity opportunities of most interest to survey respondents wishing to participate in new sports and physical activity were swimming (14%); tennis (10%); running (7%); cycling (6%); yoga (5%); walking (5%); pilates (5%); gym (5%) and basketball (5%).
9. 70% of survey respondents were not previously aware of plans by the WSP to develop a Sport and Physical Activity Hub in West Waterford. Aside from limited knowledge of the hub proposal, the need for improved communication, better promotion and improved community engagement was a consistent theme for survey respondents.
10. Opportunities identified where small scale infrastructural improvements and enhancements could be made to promote sport and physical activity include pavement & paths; street lighting; riverside amenities and walks; river access; improvements to hall and gym facilities in Lismore; outdoor amenities including MUGA; cycling infrastructure; modifications to community halls to enable sports and physical activities; a running track; re-surfacing of Lismore tennis courts playground enhancements; looped walks and trails; development of green areas in the village core to provide for active and passive amenity; pedestrian safety particularly where key facilities and amenities are located outside of village core such as Villierstown Quay and Glenshelane.

## SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

<i>A wide range and variety of enabling EU, national, regional and local development strategies and resources for sports, recreation, health and wellbeing.</i>	<i>Strong, active and engaged community with experience of and responsibility for the planning and development of numerous quality of life and quality of place initiatives.</i>
<i>The availability of development support, financial and network resources from development agency stakeholders with significant investment of Rural Regeneration and Development Funds to support multi-disciplinary socio-economic development.</i>	<i>Modern indoor, outdoor and all-weather facilities for sports and physical activities at Blackwater Community School with coaching and tuition for each age and gender (athletics, badminton, GAA and soccer)</i>
<i>Relatively good range and mix of indoor and outdoor sports, recreation and leisure disciplines, infrastructure and facilities throughout the study area.</i>	<i>Engagement by residents with the survey reflects the importance of and interest in sport, recreation, health and wellbeing activities locally.</i>
<i>Strong interest in the opportunity to participate in new activities and disciplines, particularly in social, casual and informal settings.</i>	<i>Proximity and access to exceptional natural, environmental assets and resources.</i>
<i>Waterside setting with land and water-based resources, facilities and amenities suitable for active or passive recreation.</i>	<i>A track record of proficiency and expertise in festival, activity and event planning/development.</i>

## Weaknesses

<i>Strong interest in self-exercise militates against organised/scheduled group activities.</i>	<i>Relatively low engagement with the survey and needs analysis by males within each age cohort</i>
<i>Minimal knowledge and understanding by survey respondents of hub concept.</i>	<i>Achieving balance between scheduled formal activities and the interest in casual, informal activities.</i>
<i>Difficulty in identifying and reaching specific target groups amongst the most marginalised within the community.</i>	<i>Assumption that the needs of those aged 18 years or younger and young adults are met by school sport and recreation activities.</i>
<i>Those most active in the community and those most engaged with the local development process – “the doers”- may be over-represented as a demographic group in the survey.</i>	<i>Local walking routes or other recreational trails are not well promoted by national authorities. There are No community, workplace or GAA Slí na Sláinte routes locally.</i>
<i>Information and communications on sport and physical activity resources, opportunities and schedules is fragmented.</i>	<i>COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings limited the opportunity to develop and expand upon themes and ideas identified in the survey.</i>

## Opportunities

<i>Potential to align the planning and development of the hub with regional and local rural regeneration initiatives, strategies and resources particularly in relation to infrastructure, amenity and recreation investment.</i>	<i>Promote sport and physical activity as a means to address anxiety, mental health, wellbeing and depression by targeting specific demographics (young people; males; retired/elderly; single occupant households, etc).</i>
<i>Potential to complement hub physical infrastructure and facility needs through complementary investments in village renewal; public realm; amenity enhancement; Blue and Greenway trail development; mobility/transport and infrastructure development.</i>	<i>Reimagine proposed new land and water trails as the backbone of and catalyst for a network of waymarked ways through which the three settlements are linked and connected onwards to other urban locations in Waterford and County Cork.</i>
<i>Align hub strategies, objectives and actions with regional and local development initiatives - the Local and Community Plan; Local Development Strategy; Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme and the Rural Waterford Visitor Experience Development Plans - to ensure collaboration and resource sharing.</i>	<i>Community engagement and participation in the planning and development of the proposed Glenshelane river walk; the Railway Bridge Loop; links to St Declan’s Way as well as to the 35.4km expansion and development of the Waterford Greenway from Dungarvan to Ballyduff Upper.</i>
<i>Prominent local sports figures and role models can act as ambassadors and advocates for the development of hub activities, events and infrastructure.</i>	<i>Promote use of digital technologies and wearable tech to monitor performance, health and fitness and use of digital media to communicate directly and effectively to stakeholders.</i>
<i>The strong interest in and engagement by females with the survey and needs analysis</i>	<i>Co-ordination of sport and physical activities with schools and sharing of school facilities and resources.</i>

## Threats

<i>Negative impact of COVID-19 and social distancing protocols on sporting activity, health and wellbeing.</i>	<i>Disruption to policy and funding supports arising from constraints on public funding due to, COVID-19, Brexit, recession, etc.</i>
<i>Failure by local stakeholders to marshal resources, collaborate, share knowledge, expertise and resources in order to achieve scale, critical mass and viability.</i>	<i>Public funding for the planning and development of community-led initiatives is generally made available on a highly competitive basis, often within narrow windows of opportunity.</i>
<i>Greater competition for limited resources and the potential failure by the hub stakeholders and supporters to harness the areas unique assets and opportunities for sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing.</i>	<i>Weak social capital; poor community engagement; loss of volunteerism and the growing governance and compliance burden for community and voluntary initiatives.</i>
<i>Poor alignment of local development objectives, actions and targets with national, regional and sectoral development strategies.</i>	<i>Ability to manage expectations and meet diverse stakeholder needs</i>

## You Said It...

*Might be idea to try and have a list of what is available locally*

*Wellness activities in nature/on the river*

*Water sport training/lessons/camps for kids 11-16 would be great*

*Activities to help the older person to be motivated to exercise more regularly and opportunities to aid mental health and wellness as people age*

*Better access points, slips & jetties to the river*

*Community halls could be used more for classes and a local playground would be amazing*

*A safe, off-road path for walkers and cyclists.  
Cycle lanes between towns would be a huge asset*

*Nowhere at all to walk on our narrow roads, also there are no street lights unless you're in the village street*

*An outdoor gym would be a great idea*

*Young people who do not enjoy team sports such as hurling etc should be catered for e.g. teen yoga, Pilates, etc*

*Women are forgotten, there have been 'men on the move' etc, very few sports or encouragement for women*

*We need more for kids*

*Activities for the elderly; Develop walks around rivers, encourage hiking and walking events*

*Sports hub to include club house promoting community setting for multi sports, social setting and improve exposure to different sports*

# The Hub Framework Model

## 1. Pathways for Sport & Physical Activity

- Align local activities and interventions to the targets set out in National Sports Policy 2018-2027.
- Agree and communicate vision, objectives and actions to ensure local ownership of hub.
- Introduce new activities and opportunities specific to local target group and need.
- Formal activities remain the prime responsibility of National Governing Bodies (NGB), Clubs and Private Sector.

## 2. Well-trained People

- Enhance volunteering within the community and engage local sports ambassadors and advocates
- Seek active support and engagement from sports clubs and community organisations.
- Improve standards through coaching pathways and qualifications.
- Ensure health, safety and security needs of participants are addressed.

## 3. Strong Organisations

- Embed the hub concept within the wider community.
- Promote shared ownership, responsibility and commitment between all stakeholders.
- Align and achieve mutual support between diverse multiple development strategies and resources.
- Support clubs and organisation's capacity building and training initiatives to develop leadership and capability at all levels.

## 4. Quality Facilities

- Ensure equality of access and opportunity for all.
- Align development of sport infrastructure and facilities with wider investment in public realm and amenity development.
- Promote sharing of facilities , skills and resources.
- Share resources to prioritise the development of infrastructure and facilities that meets most needs locally.