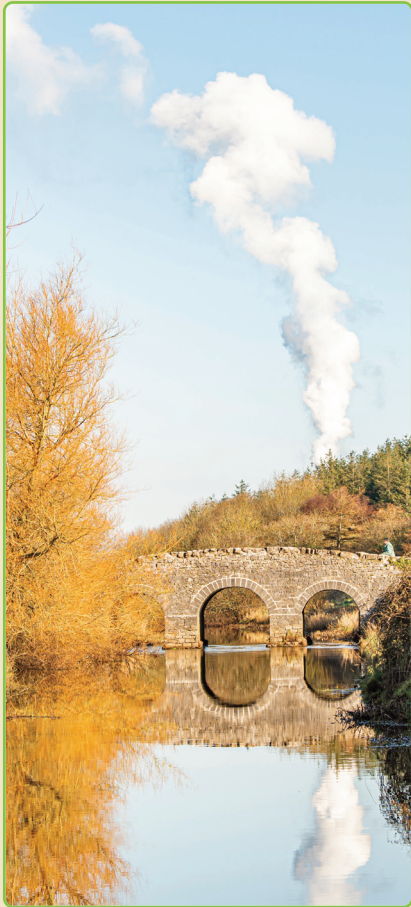


Clonbullogue Community Plan

A Strategy for Action
2022 - 2032

Developed by
the Clonbullogue
Community




Offaly Local Development Company

Bord na Móna
Clonreen Wind Farm

Facilitated by Offaly Local Development Company
Supported by Bord na Mona.

Offaly Local Development Company has over 30 years' experience of working directly with communities across County Offaly. Supporting the development of community-based responses to local need. Experience has shown us that once a community comes together and decides collectively that they want to do something it generally comes to pass. Now more than ever it is crucial that communities get strategic and plan! Community planning is a proactive response to the considerable change that is taking place around us, it is also a pragmatic response to the demands of community funding programmes that increasingly require communities to be strategic and have a plan.

The Clonbullogue plan is a testimony to the hard work and commitment of the local community. It is a comprehensive, realistic and informed response to change. The plan is a starting point for action that will no doubt evolve as the wider community engages with it. Offaly Local Development Company, looks forward to accompanying the Community of Clonbullogue on this journey.

Brendan O' Loughlin, CEO Offaly Local Development Company.

On behalf of Offaly Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), I am delighted to support the strategic community planning work undertaken by the Clonbullogue Community Planning Group. The plan reflects the opportunities and assets that the Clonbullogue community has at its disposal. Working collaboratively to identify key actions is significant, particularly when these actions take account of the wider policy context. The LCDC is currently planning the next Local Economic and Community Plan for Offaly and are greatly encouraged by this planning work at community level. I wish the group every success in achieving their objectives.

Ann Dillon, Chief Officer Offaly Local Development Committee (LCDC)

"Bord na Móna has been serving communities in the Midlands for over 90 years, always rising to meet the needs of the day. As an Irish, semi-state climate solutions company we are helping to lead Ireland towards a climate neutral future and security of energy supply. Ireland has committed to generating 80% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030, with the Cloncreen Wind Farm playing its part in helping Ireland reach its target.

Bord na Móna and the Cloncreen Wind Farm are proud to support the development of the Clonbullogue Community Plan. By developing this plan and identifying potential projects at this early stage the community are developing a strong position to maximise the impact of the Cloncreen Wind Farm community benefit fund. We look forward to supporting the community and the various projects identified in the Community Plan and ultimately working towards the delivery of the UN sustainable Development Goals".

Jeff McDonald, Energy & Planning Specialist, Bord na Móna

The community plan is the result of ongoing work and discussion across the community in Clonbullogue. The plan has been developed by the Clonbullogue Community Action Group which includes members of the community, the Clonbullogue Development Association, Clonbullogue GAA and St Broughan's Underage Club, St Broughan's Hall Committee, Senior Citizens Group and Clonbullogue past and present group. The objective of the group was to work together on a collaborative basis to develop a vision for the future of Clonbullogue. The planning process was facilitated by Offaly Local Development Company and supported by Bord na Móna.

The Clonbullogue Plan provides the framework for the community to be more inclusive, to improve and enhance community spaces, walking routes and recreational activities, to record and celebrate local history, to implement appropriate and community led responses to climate change.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the community for their participation in the planning process and to the various people who gave particular support and insight into the planning process including Niall & Mary Killeen, Ms Bennett St Patricks National School, Mary Byrne & Grainne Gallagher Ridgeway Clonbullogue Community Childcare, Rebekah Keaveny, Green Offaly, Jeff McDonald Bord na Móna, Stephen Gonoude, Cloncree Wind Farm, Laurence O'Reilly SEAI, and Offaly Local Development Company for facilitating the planning process.

We would also like to thank Johnny Gorry for allowing us the use of his photographic images of community life in Clonbullogue.

**Clonbullogue Community Action Group
January 2022.**



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1.1 Background

The village of Clonbullogue is located at the junction of the R401 and R442 routes, 7km south of Edenderry, 10 km north of Portarlinton, Clonbullogue lies on the border between Offaly and Kildare with Rathangan village to the north west.

Clonbullogue is a close-knit community, with strong community spirit and track record in community action. Clonbullogue has a Development Association that has achieved national success in both Tidy Towns and Pride of Place Awards, Clonbullogue GAA Club and St Broughan's underage club have had significant success this year winning the Leinster Club Championship, the Clonbullogue Senior Citizens and Parish Hall Committee are all active groups in the community.

In addition, the community is serviced by a pre-school providing early years' education to both local children and children from other communities. It has a national school that has managed to retain its 4-teacher status. Clonbullogue has a busy local shop and pub and the village boasts a Sli na Slainte walking route along the Figile River. The Irish Parachute Clubs skydiving activities are located at the Clonbullogue Airfield and attract visitors to the village. The Clonbullogue community is active in local development infrastructure through its representation on the Offaly Public Participation Networks secretariat.

1.2 Community Vision and Action

Clonbullogue Community Action Group came together in 2021 to develop a strategic plan for Clonbullogue. The plan incorporates the current activities of groups and organisations in the community and proposes a strategy for further action that responds to the issues and needs articulated by both the action group and most importantly the views and ideas of the broader community in the community survey undertaken as part of the planning process.

CLONBULLOGUE

**A vibrant,
inclusive, community
embracing change,
supporting sustainable
development**

This plan is defined by a strategic vision for Clonbullogue that is underpinned by a number of recurrent themes to emerge during the planning process. To maintain community spirit, to involve new people in the community, to develop, re use and regenerate existing community assets, to make connections and be involved in developments that can be beneficial to the community whether that be through Community Benefit Schemes, Town and Village Renewal, LEADER etc. To learn and innovate as a green village, to develop a sustainable energy master plan.

Key Themes

**Ongoing development of the villages
as an attractive and safe place to live**

**Development of a range of
recreational activities that make use of
communities natural - walking/cycling
routes planned at county level**

**Supporting opportunities for inclusion,
learning, health and wellbeing**

**Build on the interest in local history
and heritage and develop a series of
action that celebrate, recod and
document the rich social history of the
area**

**Clonbullogue as a sustainable village -
developing capacity to adapt and grow
as a zero carbon community, ensuring
community action is underpinned by
sustainable action**

Fig 1: Clonbullogue Vision & Themes for Action

2.1 Overview

This community plan is the first of its kind for Clonbullogue. It is a plan that seeks to match community assets and capacities with opportunities for the development of a vibrant village into the future. The plan is based on the needs of the local community and is consistent with a range of current policy objectives at local and national level.

Clonbullogue faces challenges similar to other small rural villages in Ireland: declining rural service provision, limited local employment and economic development opportunities, etc. In addition, Clonbullogue finds itself at the centre of the “transition” to a climate neutral society. With Government targets for zero carbon emissions by 2030, Clonbullogue is now on a trajectory of change. Change that will have an immediate impact on the local landscape, employment and energy use, as the surrounding peatlands are repurposed for renewable energy production, and enhanced bio diversity through the restoration and rehabilitation of the local bogs at Cloncreen (Derrygreenagh bog group) and Ballydermott.

This plan is Clonbullogue’ strategic response to change. The plan seeks to maximise the potential for social, economic and environmental sustainability and identifies the community as an active partner in this change process, community support and involvement will be crucial to the success of this plan.

2.2 Policy & Programme Context

The plan for Clonbullogue is developed in response to context and conditions and is also consistent with some of the main objectives of policy at local and national level. This section provides an overview of the most relevant policies and strategies.

2.2.1 Our Rural Future: published in 2021 envisions *“Our towns and villages to be vibrant lived-in places which capitalise on their local strengths and assets”* (pg. 18 *Our Rural Future, 2021*). This national

policy seeks to deliver on a range of objectives, those most relevant to Clonbullogue relate to: remote working, the revitalisation of towns and villages, enhancing rural living through the promotion of services and supports, improving public transport, ensuring economic, social and environmental sustainability of the agri- food sector and transitioning to a climate neutral economy by developing the green economy, supporting community energy and sustainable energy communities.

Developing *“an integrated place based approach to rural development to maximise investment and meet the long term needs of individual parishes, villages and towns by supporting rural communities to develop long term cohesive Master Plans for their areas”* (*Supporting communities to create their own future, Our Rural Future, Key Deliverables, Pg. 14, Rural Development Policy 2021 -2025*)

2.2.2 Project Ireland 2040: Is the governments long term strategy to make Ireland a better place and includes the specific objective of achieving “Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities” through developing the rural economy, tourism etc.

2.2.3 The Programme for Government: Focuses on building resilient rural communities through: town centre development, rural transport, supporting outdoor tourism, developing the circular economy, transition to a climate neutral economy, broad band rollout.

2.2.4 The Climate Action Plan: Is the Irish governments overarching plan to cut Ireland's carbon emissions in halve by 2030. The plan sets out how as a society we can engage with the process of transition to climate neutrality in a way that is "fair".

The plan acknowledges that certain sections and sectors will be more affected by the process of transition and in response identifies a range of actions to be taken across the electricity, business, agriculture, public, land use, built environment sectors.

2.2.5 Offaly County Development Plan 2021 -2027 - Clonbullogue Village Plan

Clonbullogue is identified as a village in the County Development Plan. The plan contains the following objectives as they relate to sustaining a vibrant and resilient community:

Housing and Sustainable Communities Objectives

- To ensure that future growth is balanced and sustainable and is appropriate to the scale, size and character of the existing village.
- To require new development to take cognisance of and to reinforce the existing rural character of the village in terms of scale, layout, detailed design and landscaping.
- To encourage the development of infill sites to create a compact, vibrant village.
- Constrained Land Use zoning shall be developed in accordance with Section 12.6, Objective LUZO-14 in Volume 1 of this County Development Plan.

Economic Development and Regeneration Objectives

- To facilitate the expansion of the employment and service base in the

village.

- To promote Clonbullogue as a destination on the proposed 'Landscapes of Power' cycling route contained in Figure 6.14 of Volume 1 of this County Development Plan and to encourage uses and development that achieve this objective.

Healthy Place Making and Infrastructure Objectives

- To seek improvements to the public realm including undergrounding of cables; upgrading of the existing footpath and public lighting network; and improvements to the village green.
- To improve pedestrian linkages in the village including investigating pedestrian linkages to Figile Manor and the Sli na Slainte walking route over the Figile River.
- To protect groundwater resources within the Source Protection Zone.

2.2.6 The County Development Plan for Tourism indicates how tourism and development of recreational activities at local level can act as key driver for rural communities: *"The Council recognises the importance of continuing to extend and link in the form of a network, greenways and peatways in the interests of*



Fig 2: Clonbullogue Sli na Slainte Listed as public Right of Way in County Development Plan 2021 – 2027

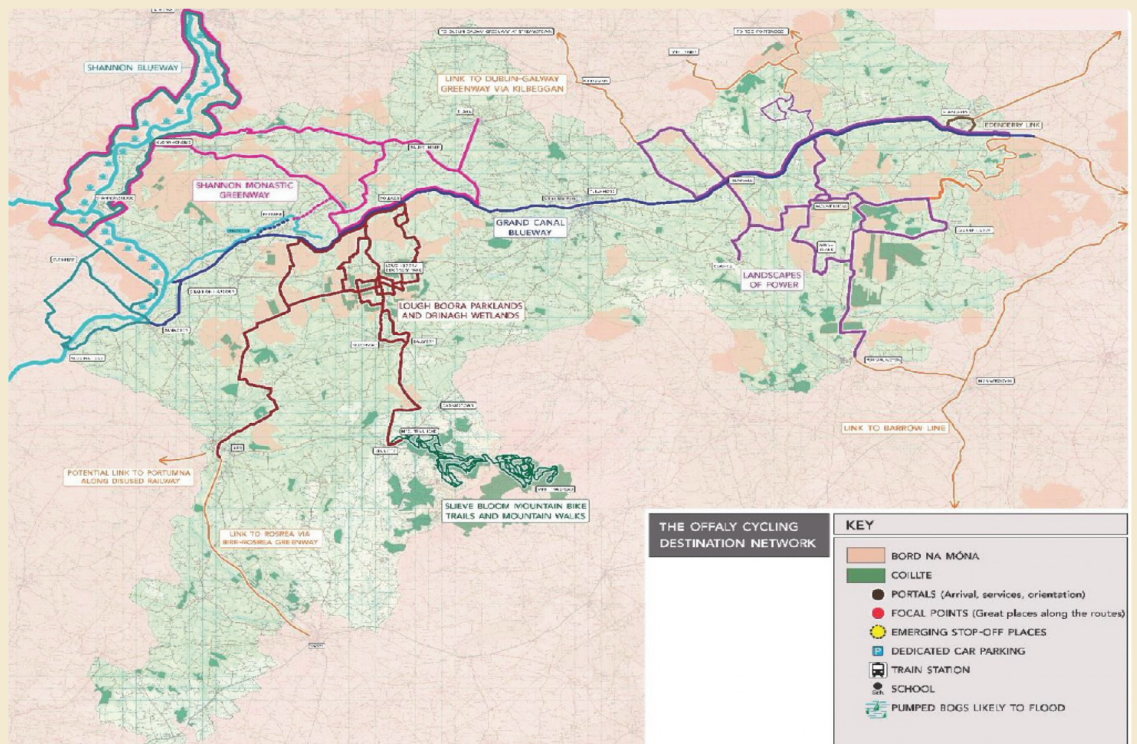


Fig 3: - Midland Cycling Destination, Offaly Network Map, CDP 2021, Chp 6 Tourism & Recreation, pg 161

sustainable mobility, activity tourism, transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society, enhancing amenities, strengthening rural economies and communities, health and wellbeing, job creation and settlement connectivity” (Chp 6 Tourism & Recreation Pg. 14). The plan proposes the development of a new cycle and walking routes to link with the existing green way blue way routes and makes specific reference to disused railway lines and peatlands. See below the Landscapes of Power Cycle Route.

2.2.7 The Offaly Local Economic & Community Plan 2016 - 2021

The current LECP sets out to promote and support economic and community development all across Offaly. The overarching vision for the LECP is based around Offaly’s finest attributes in terms of People (skills, work ethic and community spirit), Business (key sectors, diversity and innovation strengths) and Place (environment, communities and quality of life).

The current plan acknowledges the potential of local communities **“to contribute to physical, social and economic improvements in Offaly is never more evident and important than**

now. Local communities are the pulse of this county and need to be supported further to build on their contributions to date. To create a favourable economic environment for Offaly, it will take aligning business, physical, cultural and social environment to support innovation and growth. Local and community development are key to all these areas”. Offaly LECP, Community Goal 2: promoting a strong focus on local & Community Development to address specific needs of communities, Pg 83.

2.2.8 Just Transition

The process of transition to climate neutrality focuses on supporting economic, social and environmental sectors and activities that promote growth and competitiveness. At present the focus of "Just Transition" is on the peatland communities of the midlands region, as they move away from peat production to more sustainable forms of energy production. The National Just Transition Fund is one support that has been put in place to assist the midlands and will be augmented by an EU level Just Transition Territorial Plan which will see additional resources being provided to the region.



Fig 4: Derrygreenagh Bog Rail Network, RTE Archive

Clonbullogue is a peatland community and is immediately affected by this transition to renewable energy production with the development of a 21 turbine Wind Farm at Cloncreen and the potential development of a larger 50 turbine Wind Farm at Ballydermot. In addition a number of local bogs at Derrygreenagh (Cloncreen) and Ballydermot will be restored and rehabilitated by Bord na Mona as part of the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme.

This plan is the communities response to the process of transition. It illustrates how the Clonbullogue Community is a stakeholder in this process of change. The plan takes a "place - based" approach to local needs and concerns and outlines actions that will seek to promote future development in local amenities and recreational facilities, actions that seek to enhance biodiversity, sustainable energy use and create opportunities for learning and work.

3.1 Background

The community planning process in Clonbullogue, involved bringing together people and community organisers in the area. The initial discussions in the group focused on mapping existing community activity and community assets and then progressed to identifying and agreeing the framework of the community survey.

The community planning group have meet on an ongoing basis to progress and develop the community action plan. Planning meetings have predominantly taken place over Zoom, however with the easing of restrictions there has been a greater opportunity to meet in person.

3.2 Community Survey

The community survey was distributed by hand throughout the settlement area of Clonbullogue, reaching approximately 150 households and an online version of the survey was also made available. The Community Voting Booth located at Killeen's shop in the village facilitated the return of hard copy completed surveys and a very small proportion of the surveys were posted directly to Offaly Local Development Company.

The community survey and ongoing planning work has been actively promoted through existing community news channels, Clonbullogue GAA and the Development Association Facebook pages, parish notes in local newspapers, what's app groups. The Cloncreen Wind Farm newsletter also profiled the community planning & survey work.

The community was also provided with a social media updates on the findings of the community survey along with a Community Plan Update in December 2021.

3.3 Engaging Stakeholders

In addition to the community consultation the planning group has engaged with other relevant stakeholders to further develop and extend the scope of planned community action. Meeting with both the local pre-



Fig 5: Community Action Group

school and local national school, Green Offaly, representatives from Bord na Móna and other community representatives have added value to the planning process giving different perspective and insight.

Section

4

A Profile of Clonbullogue

4.1 Introduction

A socio-economic review was carried out as part of the planning process. This focused on the CSO 2016 small area statistics for Clonbullogue village settlement and its immediate hinterlands. These statistics indicate that the total population for the 2 small areas is approximately 772 people. The community survey was distributed to households both by hand and online, effectively reaching both the village settlement (population 439) and beyond. The survey asked the community some basic demographic questions along with questions relating to quality of life. The survey and responses gives a perspective on the population of Clonbullogue.

We want to know what you think



COMMUNITY SURVEY

4.2 People & Families

Table 1: Population Structure

The table shows the population for the area compared to national data, indicating that Clonbullogue has a higher percentage people in younger age groups and those in the 35 – 39, 40-44 age groups than the national average. The figures, particularly for those groups more economically active and those of child-bearing years are a positive for the community. Figures for older age groups specifically pre-retirement and retirement age are slightly higher than the national data.

Table 2: Family Type

When comparing CSO 2016 figures for Clonbullogue with national figures in relation to family, there appears to be less retired families and significantly more families with children in their early school and adolescence. However, pre-family and pre-school data for Clonbullogue are below the national average. Families in Clonbullogue who identify as adult or empty nesters are slightly higher than the national data. This has implications for both the pre-school and primary schools in area and

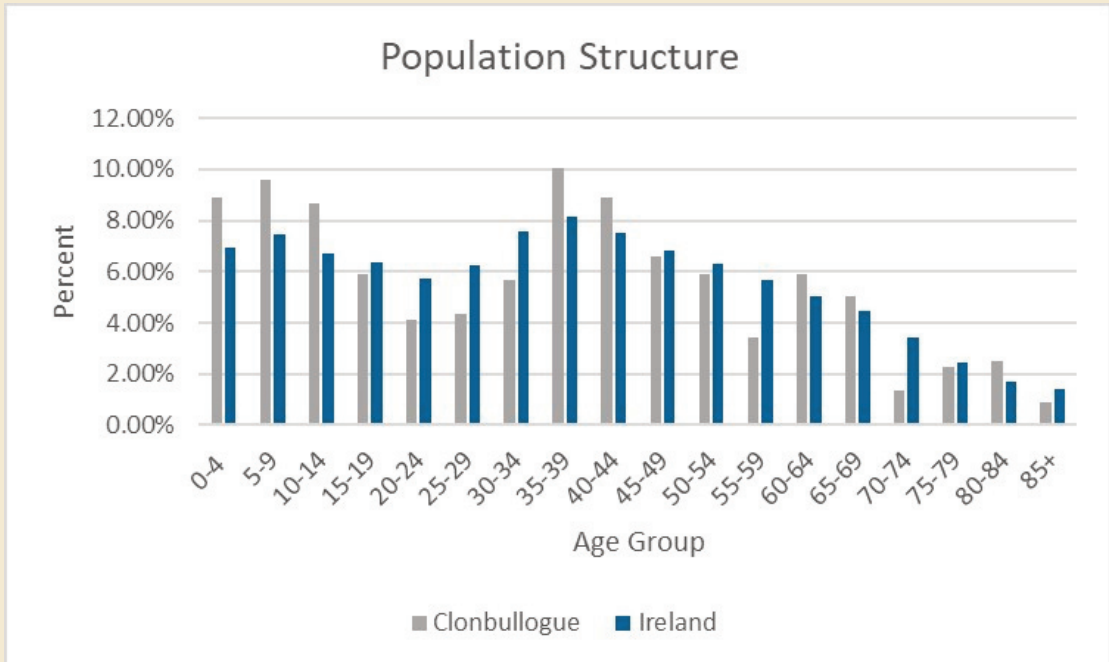


Table 1: Population Structure

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A Profile of Clonbullogue

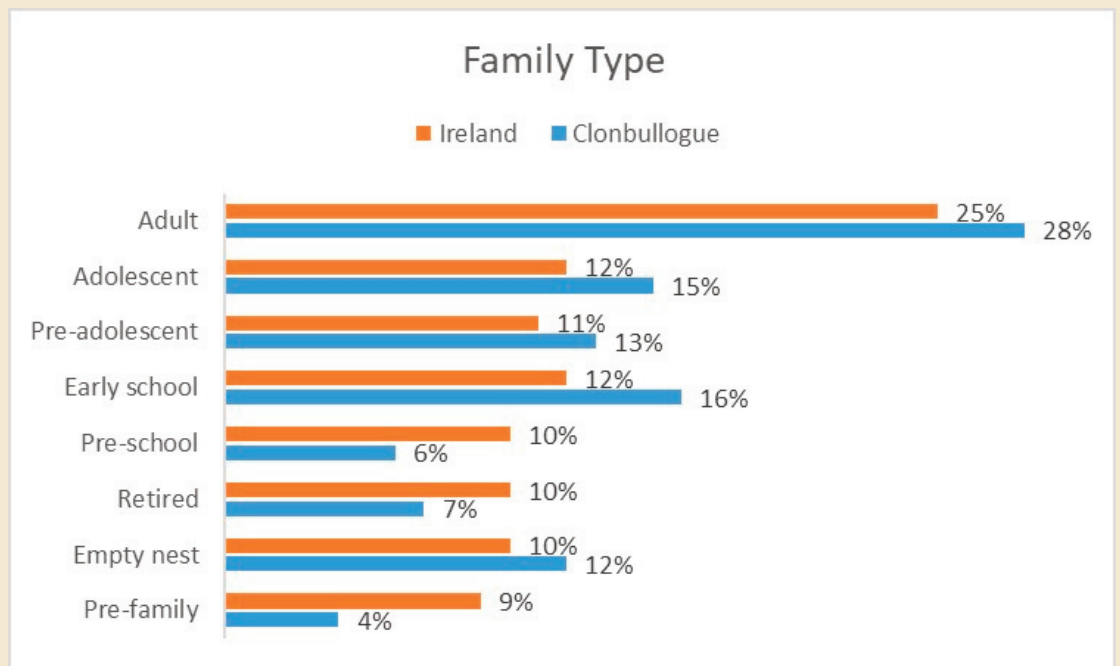


Table 2: Family Type

indicates a growing number of families with adult children who are older and have left for college/work. The challenge for Clonbullogue will be to maintain population structure into the future.

The population in Clonbullogue identifies itself as relatively homogenous white Irish, the population is also quite immobile with 96% of the population resident at the same address for 1 year or more. Most people 96.8% live in houses or bungalows.

4.3 Education

Looking at the highest level of educational attainment in the area the table below indicates that Clonbullogues' educational attainment levels are lower than the national average. With a higher proportion of the population in Clonbullogue leaving education at primary and lower secondary level. Clonbullogue does have a slightly higher proportion of the population completing leaving cert than the national data.

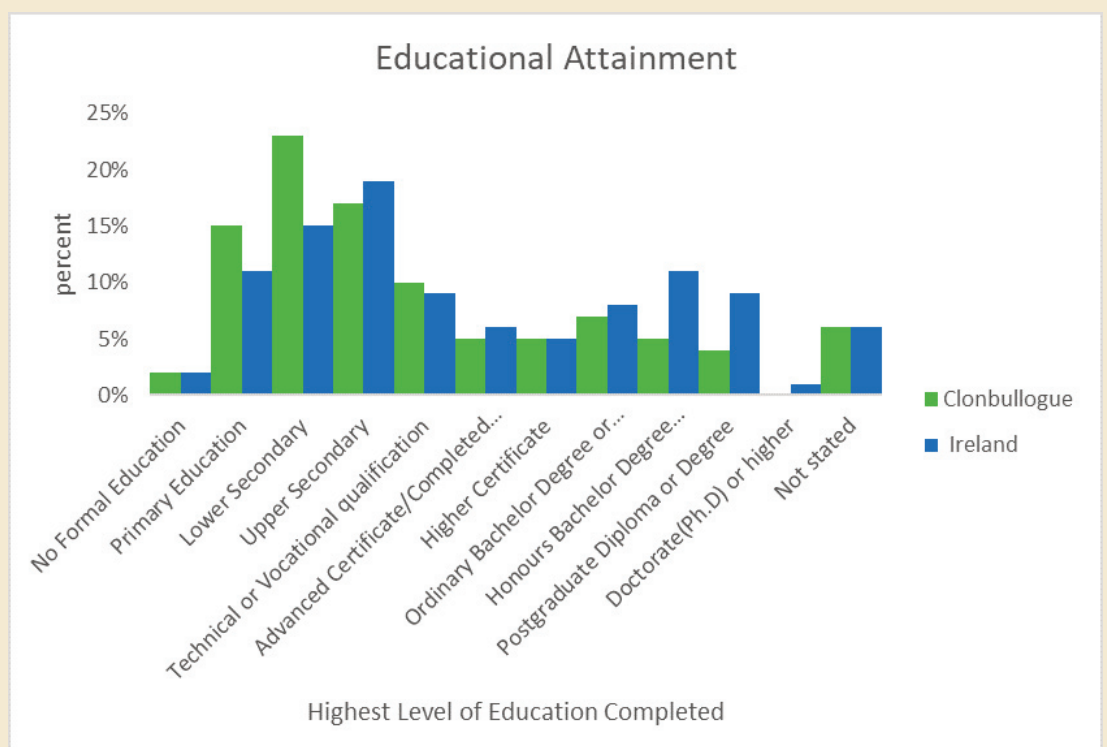


Table 3: Educational Attainment

Section

4

A Profile of Clonbullogue

The community survey conducted as part of the community planning process asked households to provide information in relation to the numbers of people currently in education and found that 56% of the households in the area have someone in education at present. There was a relatively even distribution of those participating in education at primary, secondary and 3rd level. A smaller proportion of households have children in pre-school and there are a small number of households engaged in part time adult education.

4.4 Employment

The employment status of those in Clonbullogue are relative to the national situation as illustrated in the table below. The most notable difference between the two sets of figures are the higher percentage of unemployed people in Clonbullogue, and the higher than average number of people particularly women looking after family/home. This highlights the need to provide opportunities for career development, support into employment and engagement in social or educational activities.

The community survey asked households about their employment status the figure returned in the community survey indicate similar figures for those in employment in the 2016 Census. However, **those looking for work and those looking after home/family were significantly under represented, whilst those identifying as students was significantly higher. In this respect we cannot say that that the survey responses were representative of the community, but it does provide an insight into two groups within the community who may need greater engagement and support.**

The CSO data in relation to occupation type indicates that there is a significantly higher proportion of skilled trades and processing/plant machine operatives in Clonbullogue than compared to national figures. There are also significantly fewer professional/ technical occupations. Interestingly amongst females the percentage in administrative, caring and leisure, sales and customer service is higher in Clonbullogue than the nationally.

POPULATION AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER BY PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC STATUS AND SEX						
ECONOMIC STATUS	CLONBULLOGUE			IRELAND		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
At work	63%	40%	51%	59%	49%	53%
Looking for first regular job	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Unemployed having lost or given up previous job	10%	9%	9%	8%	6%	7%
Student	8%	13%	10%	11%	11%	11%
Looking after home/family	0%	20%	10%	1%	15%	8%
Retired	13%	15%	14%	15%	14%	15%
Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	5%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Other	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4: Principal Economic Status & Sex

Section

4

A Profile of Clonbullogue

PERSONS AT WORK OR UNEMPLOYED BY OCCUPATION AND SEX						
Occupation	CLONBULLOGUE			IRELAND		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Managers Directors and Senior Officials	6%	3%	5%	9%	6%	7%
Professional Occupations	4%	14%	8%	14%	21%	17%
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	6%	6%	6%	12%	10%	11%
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	2%	21%	10%	4%	17%	10%
Skilled Trades Occupations	41%	2%	25%	23%	3%	14%
Caring Leisure and Other Service Occupations	1%	16%	8%	2%	13%	7%
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	3%	13%	8%	4%	10%	7%
Process Plant and Machine Operatives	14%	6%	11%	11%	3%	7%
Elementary Occupations	10%	2%	7%	10%	8%	9%
Not stated	11%	13%	12%	11%	10%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 5: Occupation

Table 6 above relates to the type of industries in which people are employed. It is notable that employment in agriculture, construction and manufacturing are considerably higher in Clonbullogue than the national average. With male participation rates in these sectors make up a higher proportion of those employed in these sectors. The percentage of females employed in commerce and trade, and professional services is significantly

higher than the national average. Employment in agriculture sector is unsurprisingly higher than national figures, however commerce and trade, manufacturing and construction make up a larger proportion of the industries that people from Clonbullogue are employed in.

Table 7 provides an insight into the high dependence rate of rural communities on private transport and shows that

PERSON AT WORK BY INDUSTRY AND SEX						
INDUSTRY	CLONBULLOGUE			IRELAND		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	24%	3%	15%	7%	1%	4%
Building and Construction	14%	2%	20%	9%	1%	5%
Manufacturing industries	21%	10%	17%	15%	7%	11%
Commerce and trade	15%	29%	21%	23%	25%	24%
Transport and communications	8%	7%	8%	12%	5%	9%
Public administration	2%	3%	3%	5%	5%	5%
Professional services	4%	30%	14%	12%	37%	24%
Other	12%	16%	13%	17%	19%	18%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 6: Employment by Industry & Sex

Section

4

A Profile of Clonbullogue

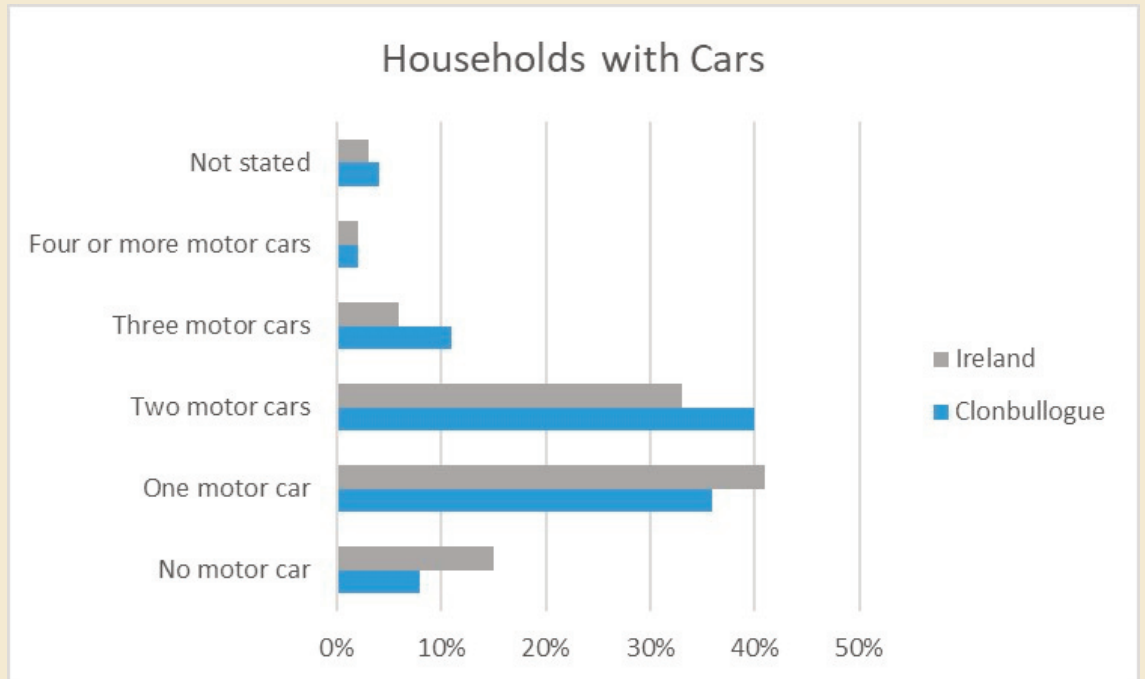


Table 7: Households with Cars

Clonbullogue has a higher proportion of two & three car households than nationally. The recent community survey indicated that 53% of the community used private transport to commute to work and or school, with no one using public transport. This has specific implications for the future in terms of reducing dependency on cars for transport. There is a lack in current alternative transport options for the community. **Although it should be**

noted that the recently published “Connecting Ireland – Rural Mobility Plan” November 2021 does propose a new Local Route the A31 that will link Portarlington with Mullingar which appear to pass through Clonbullogue village, with the minimum service frequency of 3 return trips per day this will be in addition to the current local link route Clonbullogue - Maynooth provided by South Kildare Rural Link.

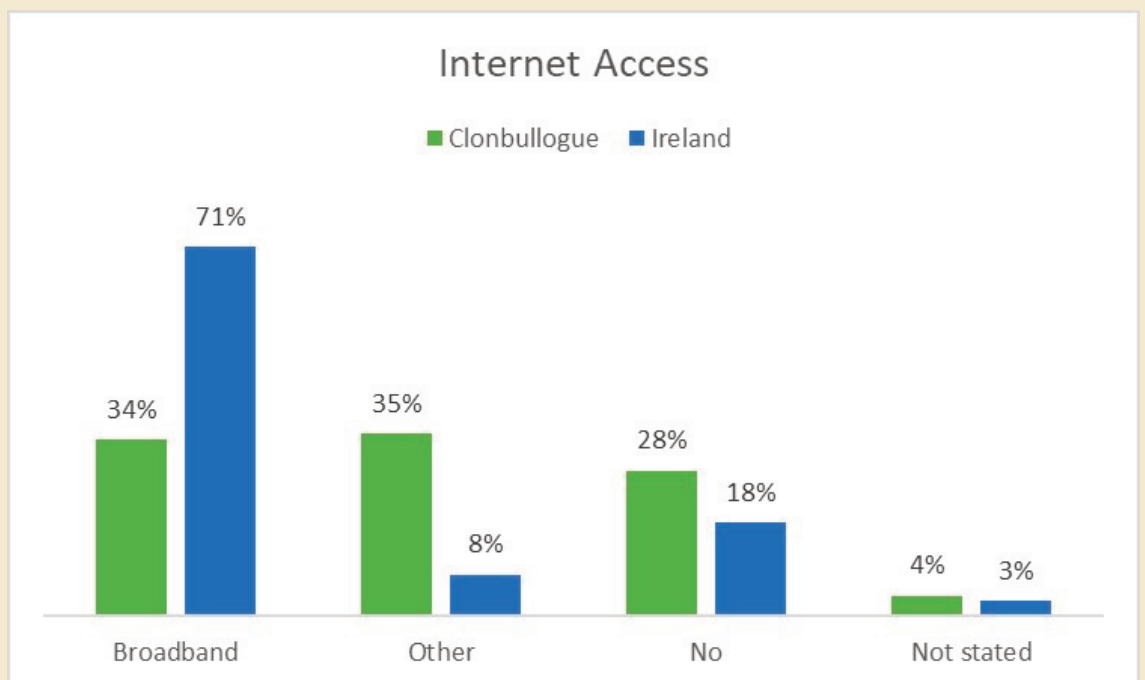


Table 8: Internet Access

Section

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A Profile of Clonbullogue

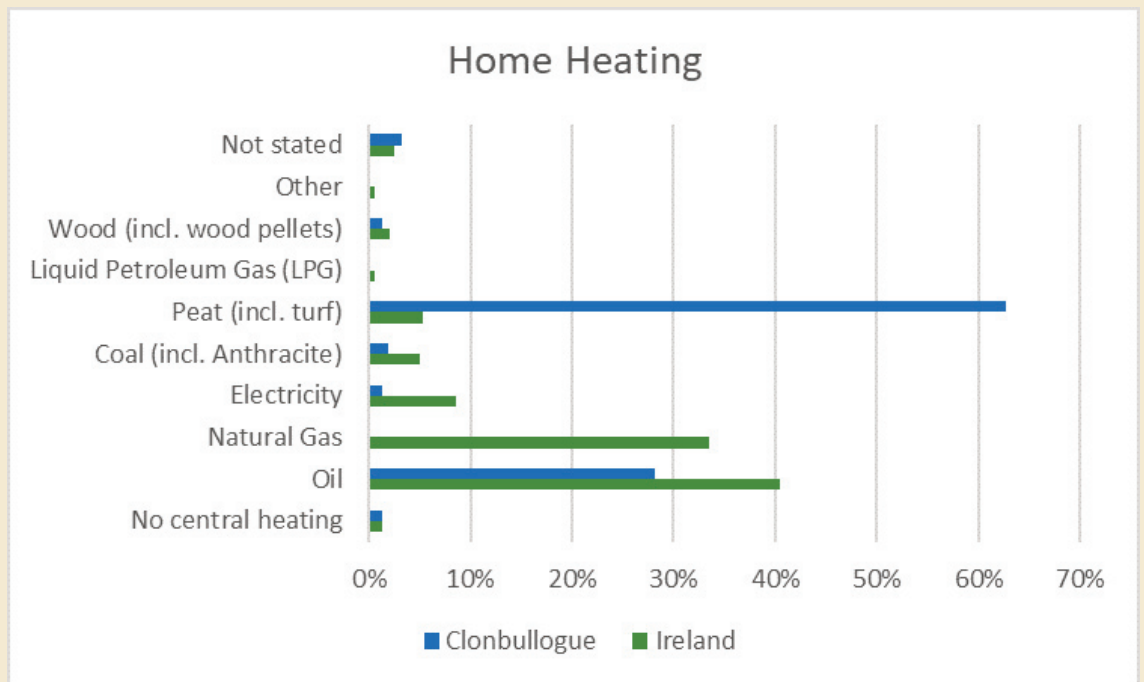


Table 9: Home Heating

Broadband access for the Clonbullogue community is significantly lower than the national figures provided in the census. The Community Survey 2021 asked people to comment on their level of skill, and IT needs and did not specifically ask a question in relation to access to broadband, **however the need for improved access to broadband was alluded to in survey responses.** Access to reliable high speed broadband and increased digital connectivity for rural communities are high level key deliverables outlined in Our Rural Future *“Rollout of the National Broadband Plan and explore how the project can be accelerated to deliver connectivity as soon as possible to rural areas... Invest significantly in remote working infrastructure to enable more people to live and work in rural communities”* (Our Rural Future, 2021, Key Deliverables, Pg. 10).

Looking at Table 9 it will be noted that over 60% of the households in Clonbullogue use peat and oil to fuel their homes. The recent community survey supports this finding, and it raises significant issues for the community in terms of moving towards carbon neutrality. This will be an important issue for the community in terms of supporting households to move to alternative fuel sources and retro fitting homes for increased energy efficiency.

Section

5

Community Needs & Views, Issues and Concerns

A PROFILE

74 Households would like to get more involved in community life

health & wellbeing

we look in on neighbours, we are members of sports and community group, we volunteer

1/2 of us would like to see more housing

we want better broadband

Over 54% of households use peat to fuel our homes

56% of households have someone in education

56% of households are at work

we have concerns about drug use & anti social behaviour

we want to see more age friendly activities developed for the people of clonbullogue

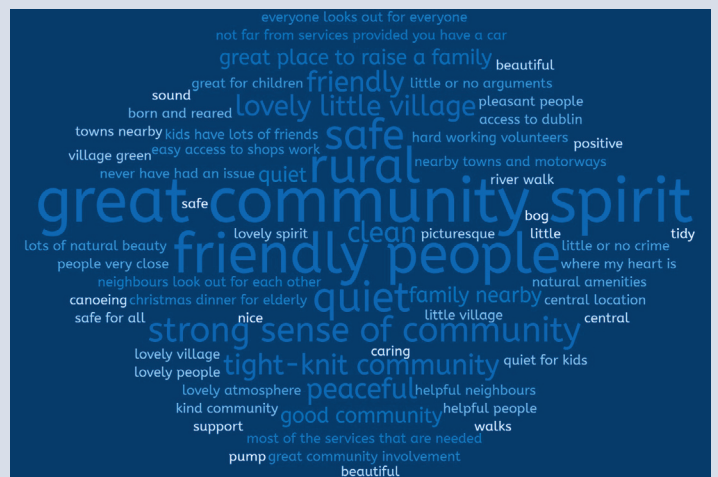
only a small proportion of us know some who might be interested in setting up a business

Fig 6: Clonbullogue - A Profile

This section of the report gives a flavour of the things that are important to the people of the Clonbullogue with comments and inputs from the community on various different aspects of community life. 81 households representing close to 300 people responded (36 online and 45 postal responses) to the voting booth) survey.

The survey sought to gather information in relation to how people live and work in Clonbullogue. It asked the community to give their views and opinions on the different elements of life in Clonbullogue, from the good things to those needing improvement. It asked how people participate in community life, heat their homes, their IT needs, whether or not Clonbullogue needed more housing. The survey also asked the community to outline the things that concerned them. To articulate their needs and to prioritise the type of community projects, supports and services they felt were needed locally.

The majority (88%) of households responding to the community survey stated that Clonbullogue is a good place to live. The profile below gives a snapshot of the community, a place where people work and go to school, who look in on their neighbours. A community who would like to see more activities for young and old, who have concerns about anti-social behaviour and a community who would like to see existing community resources and recreational facilities developed, maximising their full potential. For many people in Clonbullogue issues relating to improvements to the public realm



NEEDS & CONCERNS

Non Sports based activities for all

more local jobs

Improved road safety

better access to bus services

Supports for small enterprise

better broadband

maintain village

more parking

community centre for events, classes a central hub

footpaths extend beyond village

unblock the river, clean up and use the wheel

Improved public lighting

more walks and cycle routes

better road surfaces address potholes

tackle speeding in the village

Road Safety

make use of the community hall

Fig 7: Community Needs & Concerns

making the village a safer place to live are important along with the road conditions, road safety, speeding vehicles, footpath conditions, public lighting, safe walking routes and approaches to village were all sighted as concern.

How does the Clonbullogue Community Engage in Community Life?

Voting in elections, looking on elderly neighbours and membership of local clubs and interest groups, represented

the most frequent ways in which people felt they participated in community life. Membership on a community boards is lower at 26% and is possibly a more realistic expression of people's involvement in community life as it comes close to the national average of 28%. However, it does reflect a common challenge in terms of trying to secure involvement from community volunteers to initiate and drive local action.

Facts emerging from the Community Survey relating to IT, Housing, home heating.

- 90% of households who responded to this question 72/80 stated IT skill satisfactory;
- IT needs - broadband and training, 13 households stated that broadband was an issue for them (this is significant because it was not solicited in the survey i.e we didn't ask a direct question);
- 54% of respondent 42/78 said Clonbullogue needs more housing;
- Peat is the primary or most popular fuel for heating homes followed by oil. 54% of households 44/81, this is lower than the figure of 66% shown in census data for Clonbullogue and higher for County Offaly 39%;
- Closure of Peat Production by Bord na Mona – 68% (n=54) of the households that responded said that it had no affect on them;
- Loss of employment, access to fuel, general pessimism were detailed in 19 responses .

Fig 8: General facts emerging from the community survey

Section

5

Community Needs & Views, Issues and Concerns

Active Citizenship in Survey	# with Yes	n=	% Yes
Vote in local and general election	76	81	94%
Look in on elderly neighbours, help when needed	61	77	79%
Member of a local sport club, community group, special interest group	53	78	68%
Tidy my community when it needs to be done	51	77	66%
Attend community meetings	40	77	52%
Volunteer	32	75	43%
Member of a community board	20	76	26%

Fig 9: Active Citizenship

Support for Community Projects

The Community was asked to rank their support for a range of different community actions with significant support for the development of the river walk and the construction of a new pedestrian bridge over the Figile River.

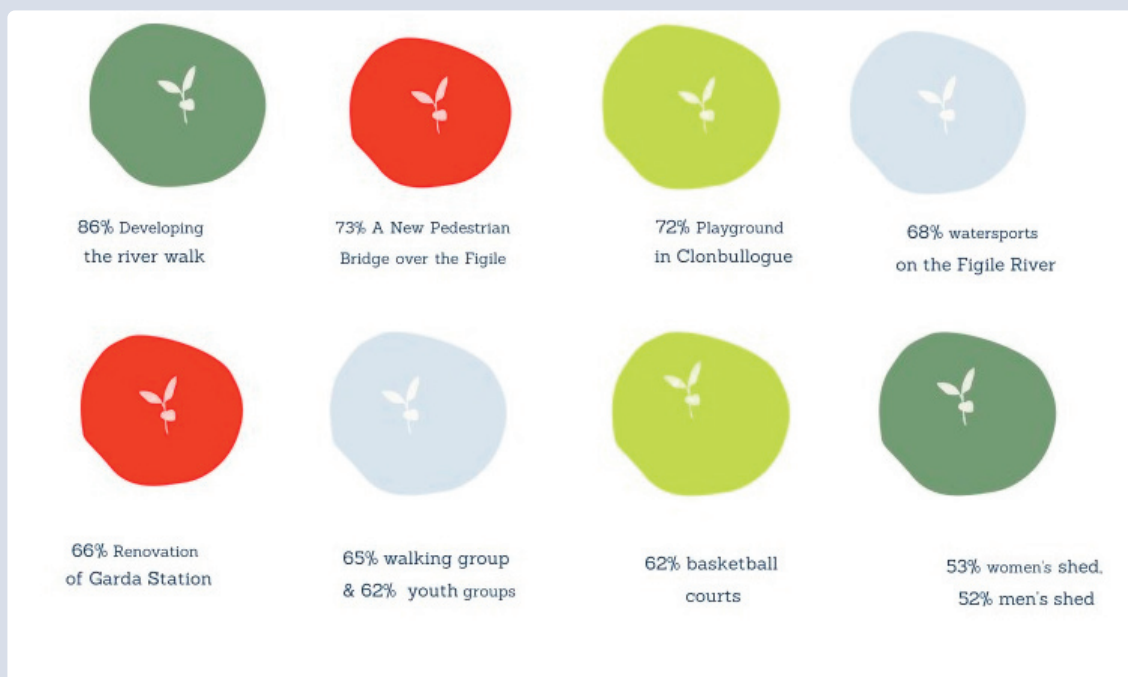


Fig 10: Community support for community projects

Section

5

Community Needs & Views, Issues and Concerns

For example the crossing at the bridge and heading out the Bracknagh road, **this is a busy and dangerous road with no lighting** that many vehicles travel at high speeds on yet there are **no appropriate road safety signs** to discourage this and many people use it for walking.

The river walk is a fantastic asset, it would be lovely to see it extended

Pathways on all roads need to be built as we have minimal pathways in the village centre.

An improvement/increase of safe walkways/cycle paths.

Particularly if there will be a walkway around the new Bord na Mona windfarm, then a safe path from the village to **connect up to the windfarm for cyclists and pedestrians** would be of benefit and increase the amount of people from our village and other areas **making use of the walkways** and coming to the village.

More green space for family use with suitable parking facilities. **Perhaps incorporate more wildlife infrastructures**

Community needs to be **encouraged to get more involved** in making the village a better place to live.

I think the village definitely **lacks activities for younger children**. The GAA is fantastic but not all the children are interested, maybe other activities could be looked into. Tennis, Badminton, Skate park, pitch & putt

Art Classes
Dance Classes
Photography
Gardening Classes
Craft Classes
Cookery Classes

Saturday Market

Be good to have a **safer walk/route over bridge to access the river walk**

Nature Group
Walking Group
History Group
Cycle Group

surrounding roads are a death trap, especially clonave road, dangerous to walk or cycle weeds not cut back and sides not properly repaired **so nowhere to go when traffic passing**

Clonbullogue - A vibrant, inclusive, community embracing change, supporting sustainable development.

This vision is based on the key themes to emerge both from the community survey and the ongoing discussions within the community planning group. The goals objectives and actions outlined in the table below represent a holistic response to the range of social, economic, cultural and environmental community level priorities.

The ongoing development of the villages as an attractive and safe place to live:

The community hopes to continue to build on its work through the Development Association to improve and maintain the physical appearance of the village, to lobby and promote with relevant stakeholders the need for better footpaths, public lighting, traffic calming solutions. The provision of safer walking routes and connections in the village will encourage people to walk and cycle, in turn reducing car use and improving health and wellbeing. Improvements to the public realm will include working to enhance and maintain all green spaces and habitats and work will be undertaken to look at how the community as a whole can enhance biodiversity. There will be lots of opportunity to learn new and innovative ways of doing things.

Amenity & Recreational Development:

The community in Clonbullogue has a wonderful walking route along the Figile River developed and maintained by the community, the survey has indicated that they would like to see this looped route extended. The outcome of the planning process suggests that the community should consider the possibility of creating a link with this walk and the proposed walking tracks developed at the Cloncreen Wind Farm. In addition, the community will look to develop realistic plans that

maximise Clonbullogue's links to the proposed Landscapes of Power Cycling routes and links to the ongoing development of County Offaly's green-way and blue-way walking and cycling infrastructure. The ambition is to position the villages as a place that encourages visitors to go off route and visit. This will involve developing a range of activities/ services and facilities for locals and tourists.

A Vibrant Social Community:

A consistent theme to emerge from the community survey was the needs to provide different opportunities for social engagement, learning, health and wellbeing. Central to this is the need to provide a physical space for this to happen. The proposed plan for the development of the Community Gym at the GAA facilities is a clear demonstration of this. Furthermore, the community action group has begun to look at how the existing community hall might be redeveloped for use to include a community/ digital hub. This is an ambitious project and will require the involvement of the community to see it to fruition.

People Place, Past and Present:

The link between people, place and past is strong in Clonbullogue, particularly given the rich history of this small community. The community action group identified a number of projects that will celebrate local heritage and history. There are a number of community events that will help provide a focus for this work particularly, the GAA's forthcoming centenary. There is a strong sense of urgency to collect, record and document the stories and remembrances of people old and young and their connection to the surrounding peatlands.

Section

6

Clonbullogue Community Vision and Action

A Sustainable Community: For the community in Clonbullogue there is a real and immediate need to consider how Clonbullogue can come a sustainable village. Particularly given the change in surrounding land use to focus on renewable energy production with the development of the two wind Farms at Cloncreen and Ballydermot. This change presents an opportunity to developing capacity to adapt and grow as a zero carbon community. As a starting point the community action group has prioritized signing up to

become a Sustainable Energy Community and proposes to secure funding to develop and Energy Master Plan. In tandem with this work will be the need to develop a group of local people to support and drive and local sustainability actions that might involve community, groups, business, school in the endeavor.

The table below sets out the range of actions proposed in the Clonbullogue Community Plan

Goal	Objective	Action	Partners	Outcomes
Clonbullogue will have new social activities and learning opportunities, enhancing the quality of life for the people of Clonbullogue	1.1 to improve access to community education programmes in Clonbullogue	Provide a range of adult and community based education opportunities to the community based on interest and need, art classes, digital literacy etc.;	Clonbullogue community, LOETB, OLDC	People engaged in further education opportunities for social connection, a springboard to further learning
	1.2 to create greater social engagement and community wellbeing	Support the development of community interest groups in response to community survey - Walking group, youth group, parent and toddler group, Men's shed, Women's shed, local heritage group;	Clonbullogue Community,	Greater community engagement
	1.4 to harness and develop existing community buildings to provide a viable community hub or central community hub for multi-purpose use	Undertake feasibility plan for renovation and development of Community Hall – establish the potential for a digital hub, community meeting space/coffee dock,	Clonbullogue Parish, community, OLDC, County Council	Multi- purpose Community facility
	1.5 enhance and foster pride of place	Community festival Seasonal fairs	Clonbullogue Community, OLDC, Offaly County Council	Enhanced wellbeing, pride of place
Clonbullogue will have services and infrastructure that will make it an attractive place to live,	2.1 to work in collaboration with the local authority to ensure necessary improvements in the condition of all approach roads in and out of the village	Submission to local authority detailing traffic flow, speeding, potential and actual incidents on road, Secure pedestrian bridge adjacent to St Patrick Bridge,	Clonbullogue Community, Offaly County Council	Improved road safety,
	2.2 to enhance and encourage more walking and cycling in the villages	Necessary improvements and extension of footpaths within the village, to include improvements in public lighting Extension of footpath on L1003 to link village to Cloncreen Wind Farm	Clonbullogue Community, Offaly County Council	Increase in walking and cycling in local area
	2.4 to improve access to high speed broadband	Investigate the potential for community hall to be used as a digital hub within the community, promoting digital inclusion, remote working and learning	Clonbullogue Community, Offaly County Council	Enhance digital connectivity
	2.5 to enhance mobility for people in the communities	To promote and lobby for improved public transport services for Clonbullogue	Clonbullogue Community, Offaly County Council, NTA, Offaly local Link	Increased alternative transport options for local people reducing dependency on private car use

Section

6

Clonbullogue Community Vision and Action

Goal	Objective	Action	Partners	Outcomes
The people of Clonbullogue & visitors will have a greater understanding and connection to the history and heritage of the area	3.1 To foster and develop an interest in local history	Establish local heritage group building on the success of the Clonbullogue past & present Facebook page	Clonbullogue Community	Local Interest group established
	3.2 To record and document the social and economic history of Clonbullogue	Develop local campaign to collect, digitise and preserve old photos of life in Clonbullogue; Recording stories and anecdotes of life and work in Clonbullogue specific reference to peatlands cultural heritage	Clonbullogue community, Heritage officer, Offaly History,	Unique stories and peatland heritage protected
	3.3 to celebrate people and place	Memorial Plaque to 1798 leaders Celebration event for the Centenary of Clonbullogue GAA 2023 Photographic Exhibition	Clonbullogue GAA, Clonbullogue Heritage group, OLDC	Pride of place
The community develop innovative recreational activities that harness natural assets, promote health and wellbeing, encourage new visitors	4.1 To develop recreational activities that harness the potential of the river, bog and land creating exciting and interesting activities with the potential for enterprise and employment	Ongoing maintenance of the existing walking route , enhance biodiversity Extend the existing Sli na Slainte river walk, linking this route via on road path to the proposed outer walking route in Cloncreen wind farm; development of interesting interpretation and signage Undertake feasibility study to establish how the Figle River could be developed for water sports and water based activities	Clonbullogue Development Association, Offaly County Council,	Clonbullogue a safer, healthier place to live and visit
	4.2 To provide recreation and sporting facilities that promote active, healthy, and wellbeing	Development of the GAA Gym Development of GAA Pitch & Floodlights Development of playground in Cloncreen	Clonbullogue GAA, local community, Offaly County Council	Accessible amenities for all
Clonbullogue will be at the forefront of sustainable change and the transition to zero carbon economy	5. To develop and Sustainable Energy Plan for Clonbullogue	To develop a local action plan for sustainable energy; To implement actions emerging from the master plan that support the development of energy efficiency e.g.; improving the energy efficiency of public buildings, private homes,	Clonbullogue Development Association, Clonbullogue GAA, St Patricks National School, Parish Hall Committee, Local Community, SEAI, Bord na Mona	Road map for future action in sustainable energy
	5.2 To develop greater awareness and understanding of what climate change, sustainability and the transitions to a zero carbon economy	Become a Green Offaly - Green Hive Engage and promote learning and understanding - practical things communities can do in respond to climate change	Clonbullogue Development Association,	Sustainable community

Moving Forward

The immediate focus for action will be:

- **Sustainable Energy
Community Development of
Energy Master Plan for
Clonbullogue**
- **Become a member of Green
Offaly**
- **Proposed mapping and
development of walking
Route**
- **Preparation for Centenary
Event**
- **Development of Community
Space/ Digital hub business
& facilities development plan.**

Conclusion

The community plan has attempted to plot a series of actions that can be developed by the community over the coming years. These actions respond to the needs articulated by the community through the community survey and also reflect the wider context that Clonbullogue finds itself in. In order for these actions to be successful, the community action group will need to

involve new people from the community to support the development of these actions. Getting people involved in community action is no easy task, but it is encouraging to see the level of interest that emerged from the community survey. This will be the starting point for the group to establish and nurture wider community interest in the implementation of the community plan.



Offaly Local Development Company

Bord na Móna
Cloncreen Wind Farm

Facilitated by Offaly Local Development Company
Supported by Bord na Mona.