



Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil
Phort Láirge
Waterford Local Community
Development Committee

Waterford
Local Community
Development
Committee



Healthy Waterford

Strategic
Plan

2018-2021



Foreword

Mayor of Waterford City & County Council

As Mayor of Waterford City & County Council, I commend the Waterford Local Community Development Committee and their Health & Wellbeing Sub-committee on the publication of the **Healthy Waterford Strategic Plan 2018-2021**. Strategic plans such as this can only come to fruition when local organisations and agencies come together with one vision which in this case is: **Waterford – a healthier place to live, work and play.**

On behalf of Waterford City & County Council I wish to thank all those involved in the development of this Plan and wish the Healthy Waterford Committee every success in implementing the plan



Cllr. Pat Nugent

Mayor of Waterford City & County Council
Chairperson, Waterford Local Community Development Committee



Healthy Waterford Chairperson

“Health and Wellbeing” is the foundation stone for everyone to live life to the fullest and avail of opportunities to create a better quality of life for ourselves, our families and communities. Health is everyone’s business and we all play a vital role in creating an environment where people can live, work and play to their full potential.

Within Waterford we are developing collaborations and actions to support our Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2015-2020. The **Healthy Waterford Strategic Plan 2018-2021** greatly facilitates achieving the goal of Stronger, Safer and Healthier Communities. The consultations conducted in the development of this plan along with those carried out in the context of the LECP help us to create a ‘One Waterford’ where we all can live, work, play and invest.

I wish to thank all members of the Healthy Waterford Committee who have given of their time in the development of this Strategic Plan and also in committing to achieving a healthier Waterford. Many of those on the Committee have been involved since we were established in 2008. Through a strong ethos of collaboration and leadership the committee will continue to progress their work, especially in achieving the goals set out within this Strategic Plan.

I particularly wish to thank Catherine Power, Waterford Area Partnership CLG - who coordinated the development of this plan - and Brianna Connaughton, Healthy Waterford Coordinator for their commitment to the development of this plan.


Joe Stokes - Chairperson

Healthy Waterford Committee
(Waterford LCDC Health
& Wellbeing Sub-committee)



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SECTION 1

What is Healthy Waterford



Healthy Waterford Vision: Waterford - a healthier place to live, work and play

Healthy Waterford aims to create a vibrant, healthy and sustainable city and county, which is crucial to enhancing the lives of all of those who live, work and play in Waterford. By all of us working together, we can help make this happen through involvement in our community, supporting a healthier work environment and respecting the places within our communities where people can gather and meet. Health is everyone's business with all having a role to play in creating healthier environments.

The Healthy Waterford Committee is an interagency group which supports Waterford LCDC in achieving this vision. As representatives from many sectors of Waterford life, our aim is to enhance the health and wellbeing of those who live here by availing of our beautiful county and assets which include our people, countryside, coast, green spaces, communities, tourist facilities and innovative nature – the list is positive and endless.

We know that health is not evenly distributed. People with higher socio-economic positions in society have better choices and opportunities to lead a more fulfilling life and tend to have better health (Department of Health, 2013). People in the most deprived areas experience poorer health and have shorter life expectancy. These inequalities in health arise because of inequality in society, in the environment in which people are born, grow, live and age. The unequal distribution of wealth and resources causes poverty and poverty results in health inequalities (Farrell, McAvoy, Wilde, and Combat Poverty Agency, 2008). Each individual has a basic human right to the highest attainable standard of health (World Health Organisation, 1946).

Healthy Waterford agrees with the holistic concept of health which involves different dimensions (Ewles and Simnett, 2003 and Schriener, 2010):

- *Physical Health - mechanistic functioning of the body.*
- *Mental Health - ability to think clearly and coherently.*
- *Emotional Health - ability to recognise and express emotions appropriately, coping with stress, tension etc.*
- *Social Health - ability to make and maintain relationships with others.*
- *Spiritual Health – can be about religious beliefs/practices, or principles of behaviour or “recognizing and celebrating that we are all inextricably connected to each otherand that our connectionis grounded in love and compassion. Practicing spirituality brings a sense of perspective, meaning, and purpose to our lives” (Brown, 2015, P10)*
- *Societal Health - health of an individual is inextricably related to everything around the individual e.g. where they live, work and play. The vision for a healthier Waterford must address these inequalities to ensure that all live life to their full potential and have equal opportunities and access. Action on health inequalities requires action across all the Social Determinants of Health.*

Social Determinants of Health

The Social Determinants of Health (Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991) reflects the environment and lifestyle that enhance individuals' quality of life. The World Health Organisation introduces the concept of Social Determinants as follows:

“Many factors combine together to affect the health of individuals and communities. Whether people are healthy or not, is determined by their circumstances and environment. To a large extent, factors such as where we live, the state of our environment, genetics, our income and education level, and our relationships with friends and family all have considerable impacts on health, whereas the more commonly considered factors such as access and use of health care services often have less of an impact” (World Health Organisation)

By using this framework of health (Diagram 1), we change our understanding of the definition of health from being wholly focused on traditional methods of healthcare i.e. medical interventions. It enables us to perceive health through a broadened lens and widens our focus on the powerful social determinants of health.

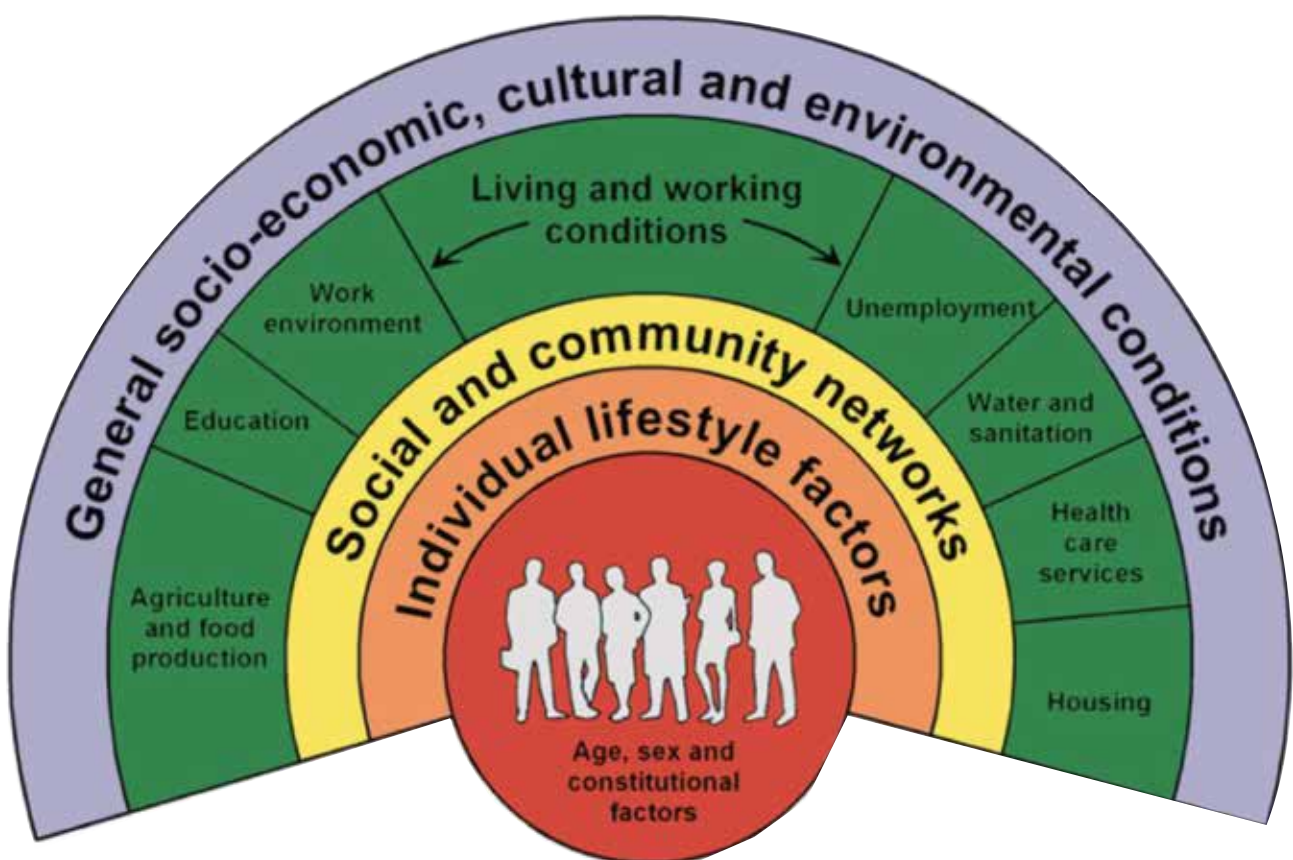


Diagram 1: Social Determinants of Health

Who We Are

Healthy Waterford Committee is a working sub-committee of Waterford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in Health & Wellbeing. In supporting the implementation of the Waterford Local Economic and Community Plan 2015-2020 we look at Waterford City and County as 'One Waterford' and through this **Healthy Waterford Strategic Plan** hope to 'change the dialogue' relating to health and wellbeing for all who live, work and play in our communities.

In aligning our work with the Social Determinants of Health, our Healthy Waterford members represent organisations and agencies who play a key role in the development and implementation of local policies e.g. Connecting For Life and national policies e.g. Healthy Ireland National Physical Activity Plan. The following are organisations represented on the Healthy Waterford Committee:

- Waterford City & County Council
- Waterford Local Community Development Committee
- Waterford Area Partnership
- HSE Health & Wellbeing
- HSE Primary Care
- Community Health Network
- Waterford Institute of Technology
- Waterford Childcare Committee
- Waterford Sports Partnership
- Waterford Children and Young People's Services Committee
- Waterford Age Friendly Alliance
- Waterford Public Participation Network
- Connecting for Life

The Committee was successful in gaining World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy City accreditation in 2010 (one of three in Ireland with Cork and Galway). As such, Waterford is a member of the European Network of Healthy Cities, creating annual actions and plans to meet WHO goals and objectives. We played a strong role in the establishment of the National Network of Healthy Cities and Counties of Ireland and attend quarterly meetings which include the Department of Health, Department of Rural and Community Development and Institute of Public Health.

In its ten years, Healthy Waterford has seen and proactively responded to many changes in the infrastructure of health and wellbeing within European, national and local policies and structures, which are now interdependent in responding to global policies. In responding to these policies and priorities, our work is strengthened in enhancing health and wellbeing. Waterford benefits from

strong collaborative practices, vibrant communities, volunteering and a growing infrastructure e.g. Kilbarry Nature Park and Waterford Greenway, all of which contribute a wealth of resources to support the health and wellbeing of those who live, work and play in Waterford.

Healthy Waterford Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and our annual implementation plans are linked to these policies in creating local responses to addressing health inequities. In aligning with the Social Determinants of Health , we cannot undermine any aspect as they create a holistic approach and response to meeting people’s primary needs in health and wellbeing.

Key Structures and Policies

Healthy Waterford’s Strategic Plan is strengthened by links with local, national, European and global policies and structures. Within this Strategic Plan we are actively responding at a grass roots, local level which embeds our work as we implement actions. An overview of these policies is provided on page 31.

The key structures and policies that inform this Plan are outlined as:



Diagram 2: Key Structures and Policies

Locally

- “One Waterford” approach i.e. both city and county
- Waterford Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2015-2020

Nationally

- Emergence of Healthy Ireland Framework 2013-2025 and relevant structures
- National Network of Healthy Cities and Counties of Ireland



Diagram 3:
Healthy Ireland Framework 6 Key Areas

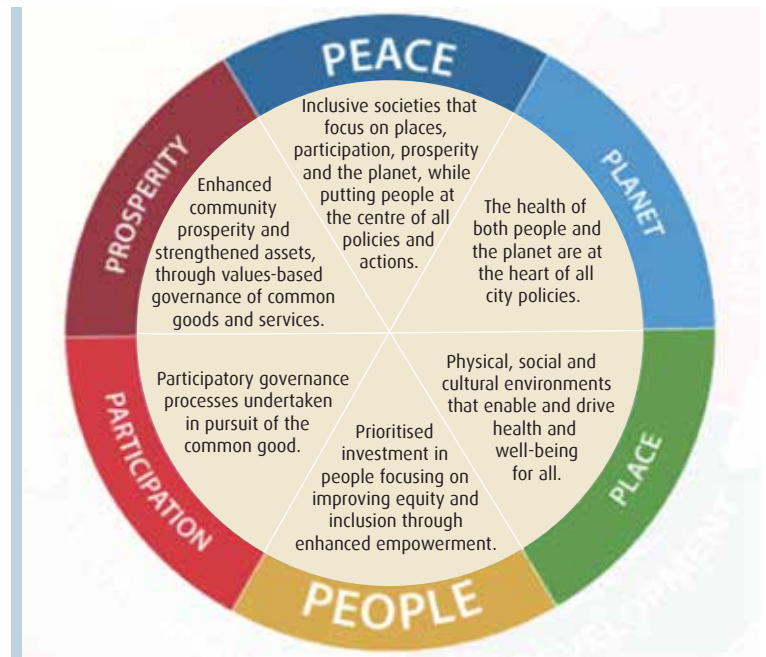


Diagram 4:
World Health Organisation: Healthy Cities Vision

European

- World Health Organisation Health 2020 European Policy
- World Health Organisation Healthy Cities Phase VI 2013 to 2018

Globally

- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030



Diagram 5:
Sustainable Development Goals 2030

What do these policies mean for a healthier Waterford?

The Healthy Ireland Framework [Diagram 3] illustrates six priority areas which will be addressed through the themes and implementation actions within this plan. These priorities do not occur in isolation and are relevant to a global framework e.g. Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and World Health Organisation objectives. Consistent within the goals of these Global, European and National policies is the improvement of health and quality of life for all by strengthening our communities and leadership. The consistent approach and linkages of local and national policies to European and global goals places Waterford in a strong position to respond proactively through the development of our **Healthy Waterford Strategic Plan 2018-2021**.

“One Waterford”

The Waterford Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) known as “One Waterford” outlines the goals and objectives of the Waterford Local Community Development Committee and Waterford City & County Council, in partnership with other agencies and organisations to implement actions which respond to identified local priorities. Waterford LECP acknowledges that the amalgamation of the local authorities has

“Created an opportunity to change the dialogue in Waterford and for Waterford to start working collaboratively to achieve the vision of One Waterford, which is a strong, sustainable and vibrant place to live, work and invest.” (Waterford City and County Council, 2015, P1)

Through an underlying principle of “*Changing the Dialogue*” the plan allows us to create stronger foundations in exploring ideas, projects, innovations etc. This further strengthens Healthy Waterford’s vision of Waterford being a healthier place to live, work and play. Our elected representatives can work to improve the health of those living in Waterford by taking a ‘Health in All Policies’ approach. This approach relates to all public policies across sectors and it considers the health implications of decisions and avoids harmful health impacts.

Throughout this plan we refer to “Waterford” - as one county, not as Waterford City or Waterford County.

Healthy Waterford and the World Health Organisation

Healthy Waterford is a grass roots, interagency approach to meeting the goals of WHO Health 2020 European Policy. Ireland is one of 53 countries who signed up to these goals and developed the Healthy Ireland Framework as a proactive response to meeting the goals. The framework is an historic one within Europe as it is an inter-departmental response to meeting the European policies which in turn links to the Social Determinants of Health.

The influence of Health 2020, WHO/Europe’s overarching policy framework, gained traction in the Healthy Cities movement (WHO). This gives priority to life course approaches in city policies and plans, with a focus on:

- Early child development;
- Ageing and vulnerability;
- Tackling major public health challenges such as physical inactivity, obesity, tobacco, alcohol and mental health difficulties;
- Strengthening people-centered health systems; and
- Fostering resilient communities

Along with WHO policies, the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (Diagram 5) aim to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Ireland is one of 152 countries who have signed this agreement to achieve the goals which have specific targets to achieve over the next 15 years (United Nations). Healthy Waterford will respond to these goals through our local actions for the people of Waterford.

Overview of European, National and Local Goals

World Health Organisation Health 2020 European Goals

- Improving health for all and reducing health inequalities
- Improving leadership and participatory governance for health

Work Health Organisation Health Cities Phase VI Goals

- Investing in health through a life-course and empowering people
- Tackling the European Region's major health challenges of infectious and non-communicable diseases
- Strengthening people-centred systems and public health capacity and emergency preparedness and surveillance; and
- Creating resilient communities and supportive environments

Healthy Ireland A Framework For Improved Health And Wellbeing 2013 – 2025

- Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life
- Reduce health inequalities
- Protect the public from threats to health and well being
- Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland

Waterford Local Economic & Community Plan 2015 – 2022

- Grow the local and regional economy by creating more and better quality jobs through inward investment and supporting indigenous enterprise.
- To ensure that everyone realises their potential and has the necessary skills and training to take up these jobs, particularly those experiencing unemployment.
- Ensure that our communities are strong, engaged and working together
- Ensure that all our people have an excellent quality of life and
- Strengthen Waterford's role as the regional leader of the South East.



SECTION 2

Waterford Statistics at a Glance



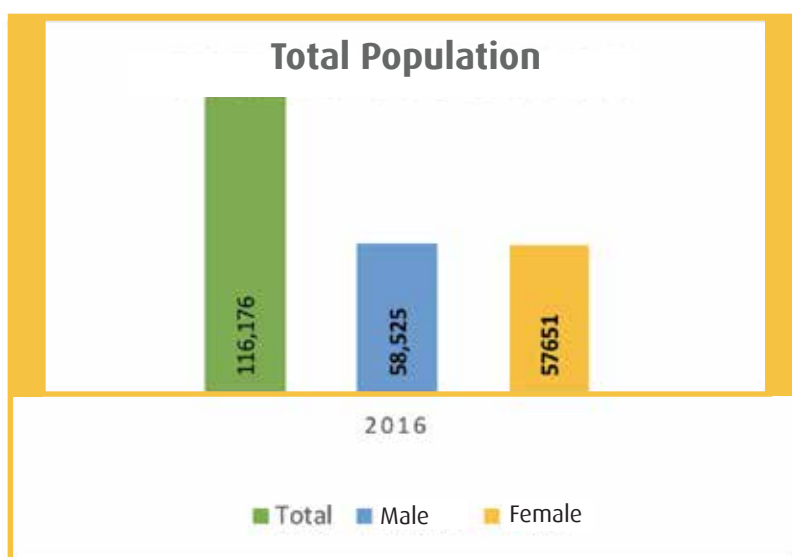
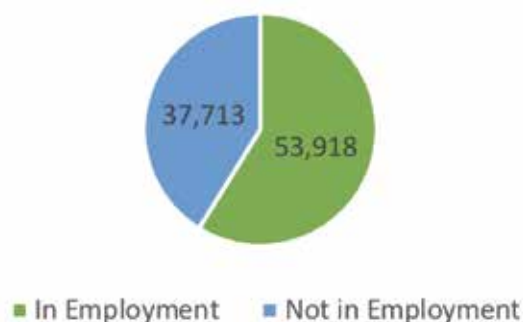
The following statistics are from Census 2016 and based on the key elements within the Social Determinants of Health. The **Healthy Waterford Healthy Profile 2018** has additional information and should be referred to in line with this Strategic Plan.

Average Age Of People In Waterford 37.8



Pre-schoolers: 7,614
 Primary School: 13,650
 Secondary School: 8,083
 Over 18: 86,826

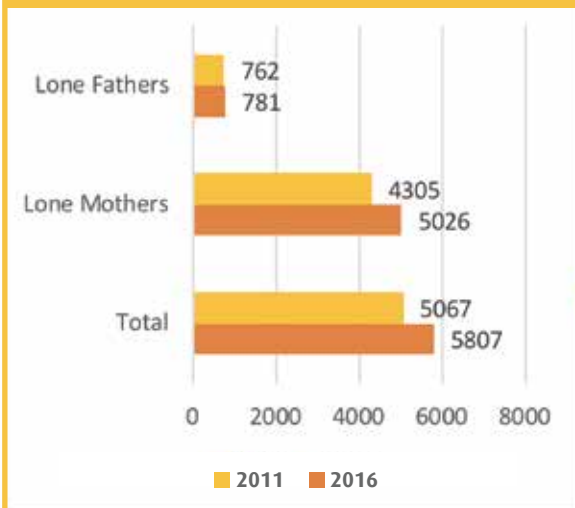
Labour Force - Waterford 2016



**Waterford Population
Increased By 2,381 People
Between 2011 and 2016
+2% Increase**



Lone Parents

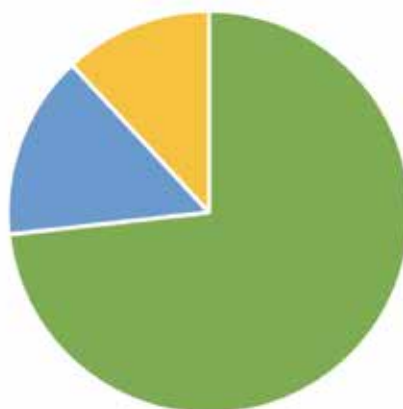


Education

13%
of Waterford
population have no
formal education or
only primary

18.6%
have a
third level
qualification
or higher

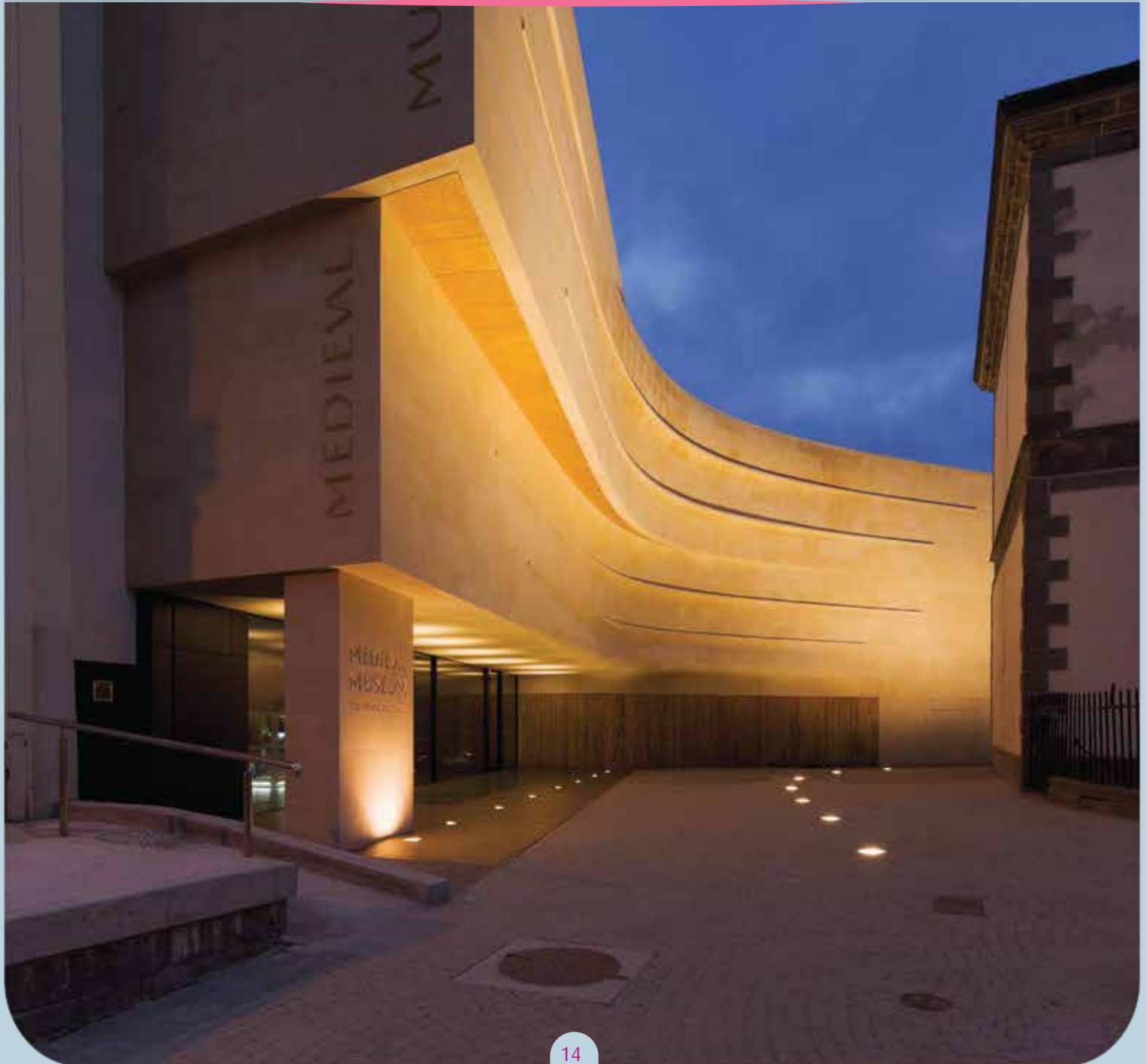
Housing



- Home Ownership
- Private Rented Accommodation
- Local Authority Rented Accommodation

SECTION 3

Methodology



What Healthy Waterford set out to do

- Gather information from stakeholders relating to their experience of what works and the challenges in terms of health and wellbeing in Waterford.
- To identify needs and gaps in relation to health and wellbeing in Waterford.

Data collection methods

- Consultation meetings with an open invitation to local community groups.
- One to one consultations with services and agencies.
- Desk research on local and national policies and plans
- Existing research and local knowledge.

The Rationale

- Draw on existing knowledge and experiences of stakeholders and people in the communities in informing the future work of the Healthy Waterford Committee.
- Ensure participation and the voice of local communities is heard.
- Draw on existing models, frameworks and research which lead to an evidence-based practice in delivering actions set out in the Healthy Waterford Strategic Plan.
- Ensure Healthy Waterford compliments and strengthens what is already in existence to avoid duplication of services.
- Ensure the Healthy Waterford Plan is closely aligned with existing local, national, European and global policies and plans.

Thematic Analysis - Themes

- Five key themes were identified from the consultation and research phase.
- These themes are specific to Waterford.
- National and local goals will be addressed through these five key themes.
- Key goals outlined respond to these themes and, in turn, will inform the annual implementation plans of Healthy Waterford.

As the themes emerged from our consultations and research, the Committee acknowledges that there is an overlap in some of the outcomes and goals. However, we believe this strengthens the focus of our work and goals in implementing actions that will have positive outcomes for health and wellbeing within Waterford and our communities.



SECTION 4

Themes



THEME 1: Connectedness

Healthy Waterford aims to enhance connectedness and belonging for all within our community

Connecting people and communities with each other, their spaces and places is paramount to addressing inequalities in health and improving wellbeing and happiness of all who live in Waterford. Social Connectedness is the experience of belonging and relatedness between people and places (Van Bel, et al., 2009) and positively impacts psychological wellbeing, builds social relations and encourages people towards public services that may benefit them as they feel ownership, belonging and connected to the services and amenities in their community (Oxford Poverty & Human Development Index, 2015).

Being connected is a personal need for each of us through our family, friends, religion, community, politics and work. Through our connections and relationships, we strengthen our quality of life, creating self-confidence in taking on new challenges and opportunities. For some this may be taking on a new hobby or education course, for others volunteering or involvement in mental wellbeing or physical activities – all based on personal interests. This theme aims to encourage and support people to access information and to make informed choices to be more involved in their community if they want to.

Conversations during the consultation process highlighted the lack of connectedness and the sense of loneliness many were experiencing within their communities. The discussions acknowledged how we had many well-developed, outdoor spaces such as the Greenway, Kilbarry Nature Park, Dunhill Eco Park, People's Park and other public parks, coastal walks and many trails including St. Declan's Way. However, many attendees spoke about not having access to these amenities or in some cases, were not aware of how open and available they are.

The participants who experienced these amenities spoke of how they offered safe, beautiful spaces for people to engage in physical activity and supported social connections. They offer opportunities for families and friends, social and activity groups to use these amenities.

Waterford is home to many food, music and arts festivals, which bring great energy and atmosphere with everyone having opportunities to connect with their culture, their social spaces and infrastructure and to meet with other people. Waterford has Purple Flag accreditation that recognises Waterford for being "a safe, welcoming and friendly destination to socialise, live and work in" (Waterford City and County Council, 2018).

A common thread within our consultation discussions related to people not feeling connected to places and spaces, to services or groups in their community, to other communities or a disconnect between City and County. The following were the most common identified gaps in this area:

Key Needs/ Identified Gaps from Consultations

- People reported feeling isolated or disconnected from their communities or others in their area. They at times felt lonely and they felt this affected their mental health and their overall wellbeing.
- Waterford has a huge range of outdoor free spaces that can be used for social connectedness and physical activity however there is a challenge in terms of informing people about what exactly is available.
- Being physically able to connect with these spaces was identified as a challenge. The barriers are sometimes caused by lack of transport, lack of finances to get there or in some cases by safety of the areas.
- Some people do not feel connected to services, groups or clubs in their area as they feel that they are “closed- shops”.
- People in West Waterford do not feel connected with other communities or neighbouring communities - both socially and physically.
- There was a noted disconnect between the City and County. Dungarvan/Lismore and the Comeragh areas often feel like they are disconnected from a lot of mainstream services which are concentrated in the Metropolitan Area of Waterford.

Many factors have the potential to build Social Connectedness in Waterford such as our physical and social environment, accessibility of services and opportunities, active participation and a culture of connectedness. These factors, along with local political engagement and support will improve Social Connectedness in Waterford.

See Appendix B for the local and national policies which inform the work of Healthy Waterford and the development of the Strategic Plan.





Case Study #kindwaterford

Healthy Waterford, following the launch of its #kindwaterford initiative in 2016, has continued to develop a collaborative model through its work to promote mental health and wellbeing awareness. The model is underpinned by relevant national and local policy documents including #littlethings which is led by the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention and other partners as a national mental health and wellbeing campaign.

#kindwaterford, through Healthy Waterford, is an initiative that uses the concept of kindness as a focal point to:

- Raise awareness of the protective factors for mental health and wellbeing
- Challenge the stigma associated with mental health issues
- Promote available community support
- Promote and encourage social connections between people

The current #kindwaterford Buddy Bench Programme for Early Years settings began in the autumn of 2017 and involves collaboration between statutory and non-statutory agencies. Approximately 600 pre-school children with their families and staff in nineteen early childhood settings in Waterford engaged in a programme of activities that included:

- Onsite mental health awareness training for children with Buddy benches
- Dissemination of #littlethings information to staff and families
- Emotional literacy and #littlethings Continuous Professional Development training for staff
- #littlethings family awareness events

#kindwaterford also continues to engage the larger public through its social media Facebook page where it promotes protective factors of mental health and wellbeing and works to reduce stigma around mental illness through sharing of resources, local events, links etc. By encouraging and supporting people to be more aware of their own, and others', mental health, and by noticing loneliness or when someone is not doing okay promotes social connectedness.

Key Goals of Healthy Waterford in Connectedness

- To address health inequities in the places where we live, work and play.
- To work across all sectors to create stronger partnerships within communities and enhance awareness and accessibility.
- To develop strategies to enhance Social Connectedness across the life course and to connect people most in need with resources and services in areas such as education and healthcare.

THEME 2: Information and Accessibility

Healthy Waterford aims to enhance health outcomes by strengthening access to services and amenities through information and awareness

Access to information relating to services, facilities, amenities and events and how to access them improves health and wellbeing. Through improving access to information and services we begin to remove barriers. Access to information is intrinsically linked to people's health and quality of life and understanding information is crucial to making informed decisions especially on health matters.

"Health Literacy is the ability to access, understand, evaluate, and communicate information as a way to promote, maintain and improve health and to make appropriate health decisions in a variety of settings across the life course" (Hoffman-Goetz et al, 2014, p 200).

Social and community networks are key in determining people's health and being part of these networks provides us with opportunities to engage in our communities and wider society, helps us to be more connected to what we need and in turn increases confidence and builds capacity to engage when needed. Improved health literacy, through access to information, leads to better engagement with health services. This in turn creates a greater awareness of health and has a positive impact on our overall health and wellbeing. Information and accessibility is a theme closely linked to social connectedness and it is safe to assume that by improving one the other is indirectly influenced in a positive manner.

Information and accessibility emerged as a theme during the consultation. One notable gap identified was the lack of available information on Waterford's amenities, tracks, trails and outdoor spaces. Barriers in accessing these amenities was also raised. Another gap highlighted was accessing information on local services to enhance people's access to health services, community supports and services such as housing and education.

Key Needs/ Identified Gaps from Consultations

- Access to information on what is available in terms of amenities, services, events and facilities.
- Health literacy not being acknowledged as a barrier
- Better public transport needed to improve accessibility.
- Information relating to existing public transport and access to local amenities and services needs to be stronger
- Knowing where to go for "signposting" or "supported access" to services.

Accessibility is a key challenge identified in many forums including the consultations for the **Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy** for the Southern Region (Southern Regional Assembly, 2018).



Case Study Social Prescribing

Social prescribing, sometimes referred to as community referral, is the linking of patients in primary care with sources of support within the community. This project provides a person-centred approach by expanding the range of options available to health professionals and patients in order to address needs that cannot be met by a health service response alone. Potential outcomes of social prescribing include: increased mental wellbeing, enhanced knowledge of what's available, and with support, the development of skills and motivation to access these resources. This leads to increased social inclusion and social networks.

For many of us the times we most need support are the times we find it particularly difficult to access it. There may be information and activities available that would be of benefit to people but finding our way to these, even with signposting, seems too difficult. Social prescribing offers supported access. The co-ordinator meets with the person and asks them about their strengths and interests. The co-ordinator then helps them to identify the resources that would suit their needs and to find ways to overcome the barriers, both internal (e.g. lack of confidence) and external (e.g. finance, transport), to accessing suitable resources.

Evidence shows that the benefits of social integration to wellbeing are comparable to quitting smoking and exceed many other well-known risk factors such as obesity. Social prescribing is one of the more direct ways that communities can respond to the increasing prevalence of loneliness, isolation, chronic diseases and depressive illness. Social prescribing contributes to the creation of supportive environments and social connectedness.

Mary's Experience:

A female 37-year-old single parent of two was referred by her GP to the Social Prescribing Service. She was referred because she was experiencing social anxiety, low mood and she had Type 2 Diabetes.

A holistic assessment of her strengths and needs was carried out by the Social Prescribing Coordinator. She had lost weight after her diagnosis of diabetes but now two years on it was starting to increase again and this was really affecting her mood and causing her anxiety about her health.

She was given information about various supports including: Community Gardens; "XPERT" – A 6 week HSE community education programme for people with diabetes; "Women on the Move" – Local Sports Partnership group activity programme. With the Coordinator's support she set goals that she felt were manageable given her limited resources of time, money and energy.

Her agreed actions were to use online resources to source new, interesting diabetes friendly diet suggestions, to walk to collect her children from school rather than drive, to attend a community garden one morning per week and to learn how to grow her own fruit and vegetables.

When the Social Prescribing Coordinator met her for her follow up sessions she had new healthy recipes for her and her family which she had sourced online and through the community garden. She was meeting people with similar interests to her and she was now using her car less and felt like she had a lot more energy. She reported her social anxiety had lessened and her mood had improved.

Key Goals of Healthy Waterford on Information and Accessibility

- To work collaboratively with services in developing effective communication to promote information and accessibility
- To encourage organisations, service providers and state agencies to include health and wellbeing within their planning to enhance access
- To signpost and, where possible, support access to places and spaces which support health and wellbeing

See Appendix B for the local and national policies which inform the work of Healthy Waterford and the development of the Strategic Plan.



THEME 3: Infrastructure & Environment

Healthy Waterford aims to work collaboratively with local policy makers and planners to ensure health is incorporated into all local development plans

When we speak of infrastructure we consider the impact that it has in relation to many different areas in our day to day lives and how it impacts our health and wellbeing. We consider infrastructure in the places we live in terms of walkability and access for example, is there adequate infrastructure for us to be able to walk or cycle to school, work, shops? We also consider the impact that our physical buildings i.e. sports centres, community centres, leisure areas (outdoor and indoor), walkways and treks and schools have on our health. How available and accessible are they, how connected we are (physically and emotionally) to them and how they can help us improve our overall health and wellbeing?

The third element in infrastructure is our roads, urban buildings, rail lines etc. These are the aspects of infrastructure that accommodate travel to work and strengthen links across our country, how we move between our communities to access services and supports. Services like Local Link are key in rural areas, however many may not be aware of such services.

In working collaboratively with local policy makers, planners and organisations, Healthy Waterford can ensure health is integrated into the fabric and infrastructure of our communities and services, locally and nationally.

Healthy Waterford identifies with the World Health Organisation's vision for Healthy Cities:

“Place

A healthy city creates an accessible social, physical and cultural environment that facilitates the pursuit of health and wellbeing. This includes:

- *shifting from a needs-based to an assets-based approach*
- *human-centred urban development and planning*
- *integrating health equity and sustainability into urban development and planning*
- *enhanced inclusiveness in the use and governance of common spaces.”*

Infrastructure was a common point for discussion at our consultation meetings. Many positive aspects relating to Waterford's infrastructure highlighted in the previous themes included a wide range of outdoor spaces, treks and trails and public and play parks. Waterford also has many high-quality gyms, leisure centres and sports pitches (indoor and outdoor) with some community-based centres and sports halls. In addition, areas of Waterford have made great use of their central town spaces e.g. Dungarvan town centre and pedestrianised areas in Waterford City.

A number of gaps or challenges were also identified especially the absence of, or abrupt discontinuation of cycle lanes, lack of purpose built, interactive and safe play spaces and green areas within communities. Improving these would encourage more engagement in physical activity and active travel.

Key Needs/ Identified Gaps from Consultations

- Lack of, or absence of, safe engaging play and recreation spaces in housing estates.
- Gaps in cycle lanes - not connected or non-existent.
- Lack of development of river walks which have the potential to be a huge asset to Waterford
- Limited public transport – no connections in some areas and especially in rural areas
- Some public spaces not safe or not fully utilised i.e. People's Park at night.
- Development of public health infrastructure.



Case Study Waterford Greenway

The Waterford Greenway is a newly developed infrastructure by Waterford City and County Council that is emerging as a central focal point in Waterford. The Greenway promotes health through physical activity and social connectedness, while promoting wellbeing and positive mental health by creating a sense of community for those who use and enjoy it and those who travel to experience. 94% of people who were surveyed say their overall perception of the Greenway was excellent or good. (Waterford Greenway Intercept Survey, 2017)

The Waterford Greenway is Ireland's longest off-road cycling and walking trail, stretching over 46km, from Waterford City to Dungarvan via Kilmacthomas. The trail runs along an old rail line and the beautiful journey along the Greenway takes you through urban and rural areas, across three tall viaducts from the river to the sea, through towns and farms in the sweeping green landscapes of Waterford City and County. This piece of infrastructure not only links city to county but encourages Waterford people to move out of their areas to "get on" the Greenway at a different point.

The Greenway is family friendly providing an opportunity for families to spend time together, engage in physical activity, explore Waterford and enjoy the beautiful views and wildlife along the way. Waterford Greenway was used by 247,545-105,639 on foot and 141,906 on bike - between March 2017 and December 2017. (O'Conghaile 2017)

In the Waterford Greenway Intercept Survey, carried out by Amárach Research and commissioned by Waterford City & County Council, we learn that 68% of people said the Waterford Greenway was the main motivator for their trip to Waterford. 41% of people spent money while they were

on the Greenway. This shows a clear economic value as well as a health, fitness and wellbeing value to the impressive trail. 23-28% of people travelled to the Greenway with children, 27% of the 1,177 people surveyed said they use the Greenway weekly. Additional statistics include 70% liked the scenery and nature along the way, 51% liked being away from traffic, 36% said it was peaceful and quiet, 21% were interested in features such as the viaducts and 18% said the friendliness of the people was the best quality. (Waterford Greenway Intercept Survey, 2017)

Key Goals of Healthy Waterford on Infrastructure and Environment

- To advocate for, and embed, Health in All Policies approach in all future planning, building and development within Waterford

See Appendix B for the local and National Policies which inform the work of Healthy Waterford and the development of the Strategic Plan.

THEME 4: Capacity Building and Collaboration

Healthy Waterford aims to strengthen leadership through capacity building and collaborative working to ensure 'health is everyone's business'

Strengthening our knowledge of health and wellbeing, health inequalities and our role in the national framework creates local expertise in effecting change in our planning and environment. By working together, we can effect change in a meaningful way and our leaders have a responsibility to ensure that our local infrastructure responds to local needs. In isolation, we achieve nothing.

Actions based on collaborations/partnerships with all stakeholders respond to inequalities which impact on people's quality of life. As representatives/leaders within Waterford, the Healthy Waterford Committee believes that partnership and collaborative approaches create a stronger impact, building a strong knowledge and expertise base locally. It is essential that we create a shared learning environment within Waterford, as there are many models of best practice in health and wellbeing already in existence. Health is everyone's business from the individual to the community organisations to the service providers to the state agencies as well as local government.

Waterford LECP identifies the importance of;

"local government, state agencies and the private and community and voluntary sectors all playing key and vital roles in supporting and delivering success through collaboration, engagement, support and leadership." (One Waterford: Local Economic & Community Plan 2015-2020, p. 1)

As a result of working collaboratively to build local capacity, changes can happen.

The World Health Organisation acknowledges that

"Capacity building has typically been defined as the development and strengthening of human and institutional resources. It is acknowledged that the process needs to go beyond the public sector, as it is also influenced by entities in the private sector including commercial enterprises and nongovernmental organisations." (http://www.who.int/healthy_settings/types/cities/en/)

A number of local and national plans, including Waterford LECP and those of the World Health Organisation, share an ethos in identifying the importance of working collaboratively, and capacity building as key requirements for the successful delivery of services and to meeting their core goals.

During the consultation meetings, some participants expressed limited knowledge about Healthy Waterford. They believed they did not know about what was going on in the wider community or outside their community in terms of health and wellbeing provided by services or groups.

Another common issue was a lack of awareness about health in the wider context especially those factors within the Social Determinants of Health. When discussing health, most people spoke only of their medical health, eating healthily or playing a sport but few considered aspects such as our environment, social connections, work place, education etc. A strong need to explore health in the broader context was acknowledged as a potential action especially in relation to linking with current projects and community activities.

Key Needs/ Identified Gaps from Consultations

- Need for a common understanding of Health and Wellbeing.
- A need to increase the awareness of what Healthy Waterford is and what it aims to do.
- A need for ongoing promotion of existing projects and activities related to health and wellbeing and how people can engage.
- A need to encourage everyone to engage with improving their own health and wellbeing and that of their families and communities - making health “everyone’s business”.
- A need for sign posting and supported access to services and groups that aid health and wellbeing.



Case Study Collaboration

Working collaboratively and capacity building have been central to the work of Healthy Waterford since its inception in 2010 and to date some key pieces of work have happened with an emphasis on these issues. In 2017 a capacity building seminar was delivered with a focus on health literacy. The purpose of this seminar was to explore the barriers and needs in terms of health literacy and to build capacity of local services and organisations, who can impact health literacy and address these barriers. To do this, services and organisations involved were required to work collaboratively and address the social determinants of health through a joint response. As a result of this process, pharmacies in Waterford engaged with creating health literacy friendly environments, services and organisations involved are beginning to engage in decision making structures - making “health everybody’s business” - and new Primary Care centres will be health literacy friendly places for all to visit.

Key Goal Of Healthy Waterford

- To create an understanding of “Health is everyone’s business” concept
- To build capacity in our leaders to ensure health inequities are addressed within local planning based on the Social Determinants of Health.
- To create a shared learning environment to promote projects and activities which enhance health and wellbeing in Waterford.

See Appendix B for the local and national policies which inform the work of Healthy Waterford and the development of the Strategic Plan.

THEME 5: Local Political Engagement and Support

Healthy Waterford, in its role as an advocate for policy makers in respect of health and wellbeing, will continue to support Waterford Council in promoting the Social Determinants of Health.

Having local councillors, TDs and Waterford LCDC actively engaged in Healthy Waterford strengthens political and leadership support for health and wellbeing which will help in achieving our goals. Local political engagement and support is essential for the development and implementation of local policies and legislation which impact positively on the Social Determinants of Health.

This places Healthy Waterford in a powerful position in terms of changing the culture and creating a holistic approach at local government level when planning for the future of Waterford. WHO states the need for political engagement and support as essential to implementing health policies and addressing health inequities at a local level.

Healthy Waterford identifies with the World Health Organisation's vision for Healthy Cities:

“Planet

A healthy city ensures that the health and wellbeing of both the people and the planet are at the heart of all the city's internal and external policies. This includes:

- *A whole-of-city approach to health and wellbeing*
- *Coherence across levels of governance in the approach to health and wellbeing*
- *Strengthened city health diplomacy.” (WHO: Healthy Cities Vision)*

Local political engagement and support not only meets a requirement outlined by WHO in relation to the Healthy Cities but it also aligns with local and national plans and policies.

This theme is the foundation of the **Healthy Waterford Strategic Plan** as political engagement is a core need for the progression and development of Waterford as a Healthy City and County. WHO places a significant emphasis on the importance of political engagement and support and the Healthy Ireland Framework mirrors this view. In order to build this connection Healthy Waterford aims to address the following gaps:

Key Needs/Identified Gaps from Consultation

- To increase the connections between Healthy Waterford and local politicians.
- To build engagement and relationships with local politicians and communities.
- To work with local politicians to adapt a Health in All Policies approach and incorporate it into all stages of growth and development in Waterford.
- A need for local politicians to strengthen the promotion of health and wellbeing in Waterford.

Clear, local political leadership will be critical to the success of the **Healthy Waterford Strategic Plan**. Elected representatives have first-hand knowledge of public health issues (and the Social Determinants of Health) and the impact of these on the population they serve. By working collaboratively with elected representatives we can build our knowledge and expertise in ensuring a Health in All Policies approach so that each decision seeks the most benefit for investment.



Case Study

Waterford City & County Council formed the Waterford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) with representation from local government, state agencies, service providers and the community sector.

Waterford LCDC oversees the development of the Waterford Local Economic and Community Plan with one of its key goals being a 'Stronger, Safer and Healthier Waterford'. In sustaining Waterford's designation as a World Health Organisation Healthy City and creating a 'One Waterford' approach to Health & Wellbeing, Waterford LCDC formally approved the Healthy Waterford Committee as the LCDC Health & Wellbeing Sub-committee. This ensures that actions undertaken enhance political commitment and collaborative approaches as part of local government strategies.

Within this strategic approach, Waterford LCDC designated responsibility to the Health & Wellbeing Sub-committee to submit applications under the Healthy Ireland Fund (September 2017 and May 2018) to develop this Strategic Plan and develop actions which actively respond to local and national priorities.

Our local political partnership and engagement is strengthened through this commitment and sustains the foundation for Health & Wellbeing within Waterford by creating a holistic local response to national, European and global frameworks.

Key Goals of Healthy Waterford on Local Political Engagement and Support

- To sustain the ongoing engagement of local government in reducing health inequities.
- To work with Waterford Council in adapting a Health in All Policies approach in terms of local and national policy making and local developments.

See Appendix B for the local and national policies which inform the work of Healthy Waterford and the development of the Strategic Plan.

Overview of Healthy Waterford Themes and Goals

Connectedness

- To address health inequities in the places that we live, work and play.
- To work across all sectors to create stronger partnerships within communities and enhance awareness and accessibility
- To develop strategies to enhance Social Connectedness across the life course and to connect people most in need of the resources, services, education and healthcare

Information and Accessibility

- To work collaboratively with services in developing effective communication to promote information and communication
- To encourage service providers to consider health and wellbeing in planning to enhance access
- To signpost and, where possible, support access to places and spaces which support health and wellbeing

Infrastructure

- To advocate for, and embed, the health and wellbeing agenda into all future planning, building and development in Waterford.

Capacity Building and Collaboration

- To create an understanding of the concept of “Health is everyone’s business”
- To build capacity in our leaders to ensure health inequities are addressed within local planning, based on the Social Determinants of Health.
- To create a shared learning environment to promote projects and activities which enhance health and wellbeing in Waterford

Local Government Engagement and Support

- To sustain the ongoing engagement of local government in reducing health inequities
- To work with Waterford Council in adapting a Health in All Policies approach in terms of local and national policy making and local developments

Strategic Plan Implementation and Review

It is intended that the Strategic Plan will be operationalised by way of annual action plans adopted by Waterford LCDC Health & Wellbeing Sub-committee i.e. The Healthy Waterford Committee. The Sub-committee will report regularly to the LCDC in relation to the progress and will give annual written reports to Waterford City & County Council which will also be available on the Healthy Waterford website.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A- Acronyms

- WHO: World Health Organisation
- LCDC: Local Community Development Committee
- LECP: Local Economic and Community Plan
- HIF: Healthy Ireland Framework
- HI: Healthy Ireland

Appendix B - Local and National Policies and Plans

Local and National Policies which inform the work of Healthy Waterford and the development of the Strategic Plan.

| Links to Local Plans and Policies | Links to National Plans and Policies |
|---|--|
| Waterford LECP “One Waterford” | Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures |
| Waterford Institute of Technology Strategic Plan 2018-2021 | National Physical Activity Plan |
| Waterford City and County Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2017-2020 | Healthy Ireland Framework |
| Waterford Children & Young People’s Services Committee Children’s and Young People’s Plan (2016-2021) | Connecting for Life: Ireland’s National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020 |
| Waterford Sports Partnership Strategy 2014-2017 | National Development Plan 2018-2027 |
| HSE Health and Wellbeing Strategy | World Health Organisation: Health 2020 |
| Waterford Age Friendly Alliance Strategy 2017-2022 | National Planning Framework (NPF - Project Ireland 2040) |
| | National Transport Authority Plans |

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Healthy Waterford Partners



Building a
Better Health
Service

Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt



Healthy
Waterford



Connecting for Life
Waterford



Building a Better Health Service

CARE COMPASSION TRUST LEARNING



Waterford Institute of Technology
INSTITIÚD TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LAIRGE



WATERFORD
Age Friendly Programme



Waterford
Public
Participation
Network



WATERFORD COMMUNITY
HEALTH NETWORK
Healthy, Respected and
Connected Communities

Healthy Waterford

Strategic
Plan
2018-2021

