

CHAPTER 8. COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL

8.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at the role of the Planning Authority in the broader social, cultural and community landscape of the county and the linkages that it can make to assist the variety of stakeholders achieve their aims within each of their operational areas.

It is recognised that the Draft County Development Plan is but one part of the overall system that acts upon and determines the local social, economic, cultural and community landscape of the County. There are many operating in the county that impact on the physical development of the County. All of these stakeholders operate, in a co-operative manner under the umbrella of the County Development Board¹. All such stakeholders have signed up to the implementation of the South Tipperary County Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2000 – 2010. The work of the County Development Board is progressed through four Programme Management Groups, each of which are directed to undertake actions in key areas either singularly or in collaboration with other agencies.

CS 1: Interagency Cooperation and Collaboration

It is the policy of the Council to assist and support the implementation of the South Tipperary County Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2000 – 2010. The Council will proactively engage with all initiatives and all stakeholders operating in the community in order to ensure the achievement of the aims of this Plan.

8.1 Economic Programme Management Group

This group is made up of the key stakeholders who have a role to play in developing, supporting and growing business and employment opportunities in South Tipperary². The key aim of this group is to improve the competitiveness of the South Tipperary Economy in attracting investment, growing business, increasing employment in new business and sustaining existing industries. It also seeks to gain the best economic advantage for South Tipperary by linking the County's development potential to neighbouring counties; the South East Region, the Island of Ireland and the European Union. The Draft County Development Plan will complement and support the aims and objectives of this group through the implementation of its objectives as outlined in Chapter 5.

8.2 Social Inclusion Measures Group

This group is made up of the key stakeholders in the County who have a role to play in addressing the social inclusion challenges that face South Tipperary in a co-ordinated way. The key aim of this group is to seek to eliminate poverty and to create a secure and stable environment that will enable South Tipperary residents to enjoy a good quality of life by participating in economic, social and cultural activity. Equality of access by all sectors of society to services, facilities and decision making processes is a key objective of this grouping.

The Council is particularly eager to address issues around access for those with a disability. To this end, the Council is carrying out an Accessibility Audit of all public buildings and places. It is a key objective of the Council to implement the findings of this audit over a specified time period.

CS 2: Addressing Social Inclusion

The Council will actively use the tools available to it to ensure that all new development addresses issues of social inclusion.. The Council will also work with other key stakeholders to address issues of equality of access for all to services, facilities and decision making processes. In particular it will actively implement the findings of the Accessibility Audit.

¹ Members of the County Development Board include the County Enterprise Board; Enterprise Ireland; IDA; VEC; Tipperary Institute; FAS; Business Pillar; Farming Pillar; Trade Union Pillar; Community Pillar; Failte Ireland; Health Service Executive; County Council; Town and Borough Councils; LEADER Companies x 3 ; Partnership Company; DSCFA; DES' Garda Siochana; Teagasc (*it should be noted that the LEADER Companies and Partnership Company are being amalgamated into the South Tipperary Local Development Company Ltd*)

² Refer to the South Tipperary CDB website for details of programme management group membership.

8.3 Cultural Programme Management Group

This group is made up of the key stakeholders who are active in the cultural field in South Tipperary. Access to arts, heritage, sport and recreation impacts significantly on quality of life and exposure to a culture that supports creative development is an important indicator of a community's or county's well being. The key aim of the programme management group is to provide structures to allow the variety of players in this field to operate in a more professional manner, to increase participation, to source and develop volunteers, to develop facilities and to improve the range of cultural opportunities.

The Council has a key role to play in the cultural area. The development in the arts, cultural and entertainment field is a key area of activity and with the appointment of an Arts Officer in 2007; significant additional progress is expected in this area over the period of the Draft County Development Plan. The Arts strategy 2002 – 2005 (which is due for review) has identified the need for a designated Arts Space in Clonmel and the provision of artists' studios in Cahir. The Council will continue to support cultural facilities in Fethard (Abbey Mill Theatre), Cashel (Bru Boru), Carrick on Suir (Brewery Lane and Strand Theatre), Clonmel, (South Tipperary Arts centre) and Tipperary (Excel Centre).

CS 3: Arts and Culture

The Council will seek the provision of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities, new works of art and performing space in association with new development proposals, where appropriate and will seek to support the arts within overall public local services provision for the enhancement of South Tipperary as a place in which to live, work and invest.

8.4 Library Services

The County Tipperary Joint Libraries Committee is the authority responsible for providing and promoting an active public library service for the people of both North and South Tipperary. The service now operates a network of thirteen branches throughout the county from its headquarters at Tipperary Libraries, Castle Avenue, Thurles, with relevant branches located in at Cahir, Carrick on Suir, Cashel, Tipperary Town, Clonmel, Killenaule and Fethard. In addition, the Committee operates a schools library system that now extends to over 150 schools.



CS 4: Library and Information Access

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity access to a high quality library and information service that is responsive to the changing needs of the community and is fully supportive of the process of life-long learning. The Council will support the upgrading of existing facilities in Cahir and Fethard and the construction of new libraries in South Tipperary in accordance with the Programme for Library Development.

8.5 Community Amenity

The Council will ensure that adequate and safe amenity and recreational open space and facilities, including community facilities and centres, are available for all groups of the population at a convenient distance from their homes and places of work. In this regard the Council operates the amenity grants scheme (since 2003) in order to assist community based projects, which aim for the social, recreational, amenity and cultural betterment of their community. These grants vary from €10,000 to €100,000 and to date the scheme has allocated in excess of €7million. The priorities for the scheme change annually and in 2007 have concentrated on youth and community facilities, playgrounds etc, with funding being allocated to youth facilities in Tipperary, Cashel, Fethard and Killenaule, playgrounds in Donohill, Clerihan/Ballyclerihan and Annacarthy, and community facilities in locations experiencing unprecedented growth (Clerihan/Ballyclerihan and Kilsheelan) as well as many other projects.

South Tipperary County Council has also collaborated with other key stakeholders to set up the South Tipperary Sports Partnership with the key aim of developing sport and increasing physical activity in South Tipperary. The partnership has developed the Strategic Plan 2007 – 2010, which will guide the development of sport and recreation in South Tipperary. This identifies 3 strategic areas for development as follows: Active Living, Sports Development and Managing and Promoting the Partnership. The launch of the Strategic Plan is proposed for early 2008.

CS 5: Community Amenity

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that adequate and safe amenity and recreational open space and facilities, including community facilities and centres, are available for all groups of the population at a convenient distance from their homes and places of work.

8.6 Burial Grounds

The Council directly manages the provision of burial grounds at 19 different locations as illustrated in Table 8.1. As well as directly providing burial grounds and maintaining facilities that are currently in use, the Council also operates a scheme of grants to assist operative committees in the upkeep and maintenance of burial grounds that are at or near capacity. In 2007 this scheme provided a total of €41,600 to 111 committees for such purposes. For the life of this Draft County Development Plan, the Council will address areas of deficiencies (in line with the Programme for the provision and Management of Burial Grounds) and will provide for future needs in this area.

Table 8.1 South Tipperary County Council Operated Burial Ground Capacity			
Location	Total No. of Spaces	No. Vacant (%)	Anticipated Life (Yrs)
1. Ardfinnan	483	35 (7%)	7
2. Annacarty	384	194 (51%)	50+
3. Ballinacourty	1,054	840 (80%)	50+
4. Clonoulty	539	425 (79%)	50+
5. Cappawhite (Extn 2002)	949	924 (97%)	50+
6. Cloneen	776	519 (67%)	50+
7. Grange	551	438 (79%)	50+
8. Emly	641	482 (75%)	50+
9. Cahir (Extn 1998, 2003)	353	202 (57%)	20
10. Gortnahoe	1140	874 (77%)	100+
11. Hollyford	535	326 (61%)	50+
12. Killenaule	826	543 (66%)	50+
13. Newcastle	365	325 (89%)	50+
14. Shanrahan	378	1(-%)	nil
15. Mullinahone	673	368 (55%)	50+
16. Ballyclerahan	484	239 (49%)	20
17. Nine-Mile-House	744	712 (96%)	50+
18. Lattin	776	756 (97%)	50+
19. Ballingarry	501	498 (99%)	50+

CS 6: Provision of Burial Grounds

It is the policy of the Council to identify land for social and public use in settlements that will facilitate the provision and expansion of burial grounds.

8.7 Local Agenda 21 Programme Management Group

This group is made up of the key stakeholders who have a role to play in addressing the four strategic principles for governance in the 21st Century (later formalised as Agenda 21). The key aims of this Group is to promote sustainable development and plan a strategy that links facility development, infrastructure and provision of the requisite level of services at household, village, small town, county town and region. Of relevance to this Draft County Development Plan is the aim to ensure that the institutions include the community sector as an equal partner when developing public policies and responses.

CS 7: Community Involvement in Decision Making

It is the policy of the Council to work in partnership with community groups generally and the Community and Voluntary Forum in particular in progressing the vision of this Draft County Development Plan. It will particularly work on building and enhancing the participative role of community groups in the decision making process and to work collaboratively with the community in improving services and access to all sectors of the community.

8.8 Childcare Facilities

Under the auspices of the County Development Board, a County Childcare Committee was set up in order to ensure the provision of sustainable childcare facilities throughout the County while having regard to the National Childcare Investment Programme (NCIP), the key objectives of which are as follows:

- (i) Increase the supply and improve the quality of early childhood care and education services, part-time and full day care, school age childcare and childminding;
- (ii) Support families to break the cycle of poverty and disadvantage; and,
- (iii) Support a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of childcare that is centred on the needs of the child.

In seeking to implement the NCIP, the South Tipperary County Childcare Committee completed in 2007 the assessment and mapping of the current levels of childcare provision across the county, which has identified gaps in the nature of that provision. Based on the existing level of childcare places available and current demographic trends, Table 8.2 identifies that there is a need to increase the availability of such facilities far in excess of the general rate of anticipated population increase. On the basis for the requirement to increase the availability of different place types, Figure 8.1 identifies the spatial distribution of total number of preschool places required to meet anticipated demands for full day care and sessional care.

	Places 2006	Extra Places 2010	Total Places 2010	Increase % of Current Places
Pre-school childcare places	1424	499	1923	35%
Full day care	330	136	466	41%
Sessional care	1094	363	1457	33%
Montessori places	257	194	451	76%
After-school places	174	178	352	102%

Childcare is taken to mean full access to day care and sessional facilities for pre-school children and school going children out of hours. The Council, having regard to the National Policy on Childcare, will promote an increase in the number of childcare places and facilities available in the County and will seek to improve the quality of childcare services for the community. Appropriate locations for childcare facilities are:

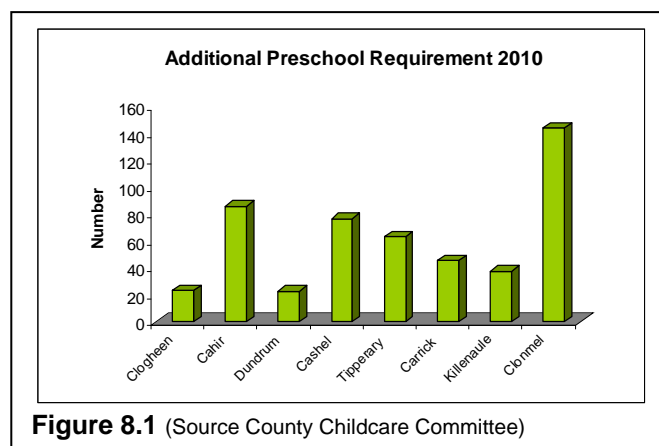


Figure 8.1 (Source County Childcare Committee)

- (i) On appropriately located sites in major new residential developments;
- (ii) Industrial estates and business parks and other locations where there are significant numbers employed;
- (iii) In the vicinity of schools;
- (iv) Neighbourhood and settlement centres; and,
- (v) Adjacent to public transport routes.

The Council will require that proposed developments accurately assess the needs for childcare facilities as part of a planning proposal and will require the provision of “pooled” purpose built facilities and expansion of existing facilities, whether community or private, where appropriate, thereby avoiding unnecessary duplication or overcrowding by ensuring collaboration between a number of separate developments. Developers of residential developments in excess of 74 dwelling units are required to consult with the South Tipperary County Childcare Committee regarding the appropriate provision of childcare places as part of the pre-planning process. Evidence of such consultation will be required at planning application stage.

CS 8: Childcare Facilities

The Council will require the provision of high quality, affordable childcare facilities at easily accessible central locations in association with housing and other development in compliance with the County Childcare Strategy and the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001(DEHLG) or any amendments thereto.

8.9 Conclusion

The Draft County Development Plan recognises that it will be responsible for the physical manifestation of the initiatives and programmes which the various stakeholders in the County operate. One of the key aims of the Draft County Development Plan is to promote an excellent quality of life. This will be achieved through;

- (i) Ensuring that facilities and services are rolled out in parallel with residential development;
- (ii) The provision of adequate recreational, cultural and community needs;
- (iii) Ensuring that the more marginalized in our society (either sectorally or geographically) will not be further excluded as a result of the policies and objectives of this Draft County Development Plan, and where possible, their inclusion enhanced and promoted;
- (iv) The preparation of this Draft County Development Plan will work closely with the Local Agenda 21 Programme Management Group and the Community and Voluntary Forum to ensure a real voice for the community in determining their own future; and,
- (v) The promotion of enterprise development by proactive policies and zonings.