

National Government Framework
to Improve Health and Wellbeing

Healthy Laois Plan 2018-2020



Healthy
Laois

CONTENTS



Foreword

Foreword by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, Chairperson, Laois LCDC 03

Foreword by Mr John Mulholland,
Chief Executive, Laois County Council 04

Section A: Our Healthy County

National Context 05

Key National Policies 07

Local Context 08

Section B: A profile of Laois at a glance

Laois County 11

2016 Statistics at a glance 12

Disadvantaged EDs in 2016 13

Section C: Vision

Consultation 14

Strategic Priorities 15

Key Objectives 16

Section D: Healthy Laois Plan 2018- 2020 Actions

Healthy Childhood 17

Teens Young Adults 20

Live Well, Age well 23

Community Engagement/Promotion and Awareness 27

Section E: Implementation & Monitoring

Implementation & Monitoring 29

Healthy Laois Team members' organisations 29

Appendices

Appendix 1 Key Local Policies and Plans 31

Appendix 2 Consultation feedback 32

FOREWORD FROM CHAIRPERSON



On behalf of Laois Local Community Development Committee, I am delighted to support the publication of the Healthy Laois Plan 2018-2020.

This Plan, the first of its kind in Laois, shows the co-operation and support of many partners, both LCDC and beyond and reflects a significant body of work produced in a short time frame. Healthy Ireland is based on the premise that health and well-being is affected by all aspects of a person's life including education, socio-economic status and physical environment. This plan aims to increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life, reduce health inequalities and protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing. The Plan aims to create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Laois. Recent health studies have shown the need for preventative action to begin now if we are to address areas of concern such as physical activity, mental health, healthy activity, sexual health and substance abuse.

This Plan seeks to embrace and recognise national policies and plans and their need to be integrated and implemented at local level, in particular in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). Laois LCDC, understanding local needs and issues, will work to promote and improve the health and wellbeing of all people living in Co. Laois.

We are focused on operating within existing structures by exploring how resources can be aligned and used with maximum efficiency and effectiveness. The Healthy Laois Implementation team will seek to enable the Healthy Laois Plan to achieve the greatest impact possible on the health and wellbeing of all in Laois in the future.

I congratulate all involved in the making of this Plan and I lend my commitment to that delivery of its objective to make Laois a healthier county going forward.

Cllr. Paschal McEvoy
Chairperson
Laois LCDC

FOREWORD FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE



I am delighted to endorse this 3-year Healthy Laois Plan developed by Laois Local Community Development Committee. The plan demonstrates our commitment in Laois to the vision of the Healthy Ireland Framework where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential and where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility.

Laois County Council, through our various local authority programmes, as well as through as our Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) and County Development Plan, is committed to working with our partners to shape the broad and sustainable development of the county. This includes physical and mental well being. We need to work together to build an environment that supports individuals, families and indeed communities to lead healthier lifestyles. The Healthy Laois Plan is a timely and welcome step towards achieving that goal. Evidence and experience from around the world shows it takes the involvement and participation of all sectors of the community and of society as a whole to create that positive change in health and wellbeing to which we all aspire.

I would like to thank the elected members of Laois County Council for their full support in this very important project and I extend my congratulations and thanks to my fellow members of Laois Community Development Committee for their input to the Plan. I am confident the Plan has the support and commitment of Laois County Council in its implementation and delivery for the citizens of Co. Laois.

John Mulholland
Chief Executive

SECTION A

OUR HEALTHY COUNTY – NATIONAL CONTEXT

The Healthy Laois Plan has been developed in the context of the Healthy Ireland Framework, which in turn is framed in the context of the European policy framework “WHO Europe Health 2020”, which focuses on improving health for all and reducing health inequalities, through improved leadership and governance for health.

The cross-governmental Healthy Ireland Framework underpins a movement that brings together people and organisations countrywide, to address the social, economic and environmental factors that contribute to the development of chronic disease and to address health inequalities. The Framework, led and endorsed by the highest level of government, sets out the economic and societal benefits of protecting and maintaining the health of our citizens, preventing illness and intervening early.

The Healthy Ireland Framework emphasises the need to empower communities and people to look after their own health and wellbeing. The Healthy Laois Plan supports the implementation of Healthy Ireland at local level, to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Laois.



The Healthy Ireland Framework introduces a vision:

“Where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone’s responsibility”.

The four interlinked goals of Healthy Ireland are:

- **Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life**

Aiming to improve levels of health and wellbeing at all stages of a person's life, decrease prevalence of unhealthy behaviours that contribute to chronic disease and increase the degree to which diseases/conditions are prevented or detected early for intervention.

- **Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities**

A focus on reducing the gaps between the various socio-economic groupings, and between the wealthiest and most deprived areas in order to reduce health inequalities.

- **Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing**

Ensuring that Ireland has effective and integrated strategies and interventions to protect the public from new and emerging threats to health and wellbeing.

- **Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland.**

Recognising the need for relationships to be established and fostered between sectors in addressing the determinants of health and wellbeing, and the need for partnerships to be developed between all sectors and the community.

We recognise that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and a requirement for sustainable development. In this way, we will support the implementation of the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development by assisting all local stakeholders to act in collaborative partnership.



KEY NATIONAL POLICIES

1. Tobacco Free Ireland (2013)

This policy seeks to de-normalise tobacco within Irish society, reduce initiation rates, assist smokers to quit and protect non-smokers, especially children, from the effects of smoking, by building a stable policy and legislative framework.

2. National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020

This strategy takes a life course implementation approach and acknowledges the importance of developing a healthy attitude to sexuality in young people and building on that foundation for positive sexual health and wellbeing into adulthood and older age.

3. Get Ireland Active / Get Ireland Walking – National Physical Activity Plan (2016)

This plan promotes the multiple benefits of physical activity to health and wellbeing. It promotes healthy growth and development in children and young people and recognises the importance for healthy ageing of maintaining good physical health.

4. A Healthy Weight for Ireland – Obesity Policy and Action Plan (2016)

This plan notes the rising levels of overweight and obesity are placing increasing burdens on individuals and

society and takes a 10-step approach to addressing the issue through health service models, promotion/education, prevention initiatives and acknowledgement of the key role of physical activity.

5. Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery – A Health led response to Drug and Alcohol use in Ireland (2017)

This strategy emphasises a health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland, based on providing person-centered services that promote rehabilitation and recovery. It aims to create a healthier and safer Ireland where substance misuse is reduced and every person affected by substance misuse is empowered to improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life.

6. Connecting for Life

An overall Government Strategy to reduce suicide in Ireland.

7. National Positive Ageing Strategy

This strategy seeks to change the mindset in how people view ageing and to promote positive ageing. It seeks to highlight ageing as not solely a health issue, but one that requires a whole government response.

This Plan seeks to embrace and recognise the above national policies and plans and their need to be integrated and implemented at local level. Laois LCDC, understanding local needs and issues, will work to promote and improve the health and wellbeing of all people living in Co. Laois.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023

The County Development Plan references sport, physical activity and recreation in the context of adequate and accessible provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities including swimming pools and public parks this is likely to become more important as densities in central areas increase. Open space policies will be considered in the context of these provisions.

There is specific reference within the plan to:

- Encouraging and supporting communities to develop sporting facilities;
- Cater for the sport and recreational needs of all sectors and ages of the community and promote the integration of those with special needs into that environment;
- The enhanced availability and use of the outdoors as a recreation and tourism space and the development of trails.
- Work in cooperation with Laois Sports Partnership to explore the potential for clustering facilities to provide a regional sports centre in a strategic location;
- The need to protect existing sports facilities.
- Requiring appropriate provision by developers of sport and recreation infrastructure in the case of large-scale residential developments.
- Recognise the role played by natural amenities and landscape, as part of our heritage and as a major resource for people;
- Develop the potential of Co. Laois as an Outdoor Activity Hub.

Laois Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021

The purpose of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, was to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.

The overall vision of the LECP is to focus on and support the needs of individuals in local society that might tend to face aspects of social exclusion.

Laois Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (LECP) is driven by the Local Community Development Committee and incorporates the Healthy Ireland themed actions to be delivered at local government level within the suite of 10 High Level Goals.

Of the ten goals set in the LECP, Goal 7 - "Cultivate a Strong County Identity and an Excellent Quality of Life" is a key goal to which this Plan aligns itself.

In general, Laois offers a good quality of life, though deficits in social infrastructure and social services exist in places and need attention. Raising quality of life by supporting a vibrant cultural sector, improving the quality of the public realm and built environment as well as providing opportunities for healthy lifestyles is also important.

Specific actions within the LECP have been devised to recognise particular themes of Healthy Ireland:

- Promote Vicarstown area and Portarlinton Leisure Centre as activity hubs along the Barrow Way;
- Organise the Annual Barrow Awards open to community groups and clubs, to raise the local profile of the Barrow River and Barrow Line as a natural heritage, recreational and tourism asset;
- Undertake the feasibility study of the potential to establish an Indoor Centre of Excellence for Disability Sports in Laois;
- Upskill volunteers engaged in sport, leisure and recreation sector e.g. Paws Programme (aquatic), Community Coaching Programme, Outdoor Recreation Leader Training Programme, Coach Education, Go for Life Programme, Child Protection Programme;
- Work in partnership with community groups to seek funding under the Sports Capital Grant/Rural Recreation Fund/other relevant funding streams to improve sporting and recreational facilities in Co. Laois;
- Inform and support older adult groups in making funding applications such as the 'Go For Life' Grant Scheme.

Specific actions within the LECP have been devised to target specific and diverse groups in the promotion of health and physical activity:

- Work with local communities and key service providers, agree and implement a 'Healthy Ireland' Strategy in Laois based on 'Healthy Ireland' thematic areas. This will include (but not limited to) a particular focus on mental health, both identifying and addressing needs of specific communities and groupings of interest e.g., socio economically disadvantaged, older people, young people, ethnic minority communities, Travelling community, men, women, etc;
- Deliver sporting initiatives in Laois targeted at specific groups e.g. young people at risk, traveller men, socially disadvantaged, substance abusers, and older people;
- Deliver safe outdoor teen spaces for physical activity;
- Roll out Go for Life Programme in Laois to involve a greater number of older people in sport and physical activity;
- Promote social inclusion through sports and physical activity initiatives e.g. Games on the Green, Teen Time;
- Work in collaboration with key agencies and organisations to identify and address the needs of the local Travelling Community.
- Run the Sports Inclusion Disability Programme promoting participation in sport and physical activity among people with disabilities;
- Provide drugs and alcohol abuse services, i.e. drugs and alcohol assessment treatment, rehabilitation and support services for adults and under 18 years old concerned with their own or another person's drug/alcohol use;
- Through community-led development, work with Laois Sports Partnership in devising and implementing a strategy for the use of sport in promoting inclusion targeting specific communities of interest such as older people, young people, ethnic minority communities, Travelling community, men, women: for example, Women in Sport, National Play Day, National Recreation Week, Active Parks, and Get Ireland Active.

Specific actions within the LECP have been devised to promote positive physical and mental health, wellbeing and physical activity:

- Provide accessible information on sports, clubs, activity courses and sporting events in Laois through social media and publications;
- Deliver 'Laois Connects' Positive Mental Health Event and investigate innovative and educational ways of engaging communities in activities to maximise the impact and scope of the event;
- Continue to maintain a high standard of service and facilities in Laois' public leisure centres, public playgrounds, outdoor gyms and multi-use game areas;
- Appoint Walking Facilitator to work with communities throughout Laois to form walking groups;
- Provide a comprehensive range of community health services.

The Healthy Laois Plan is designed to integrate fully with the Laois LECP. This document provides the strategic framework within which the Healthy Laois Plan has been constructed, ensuring that it is compatible with the whole of local government approach that underpins the statutory LECP.

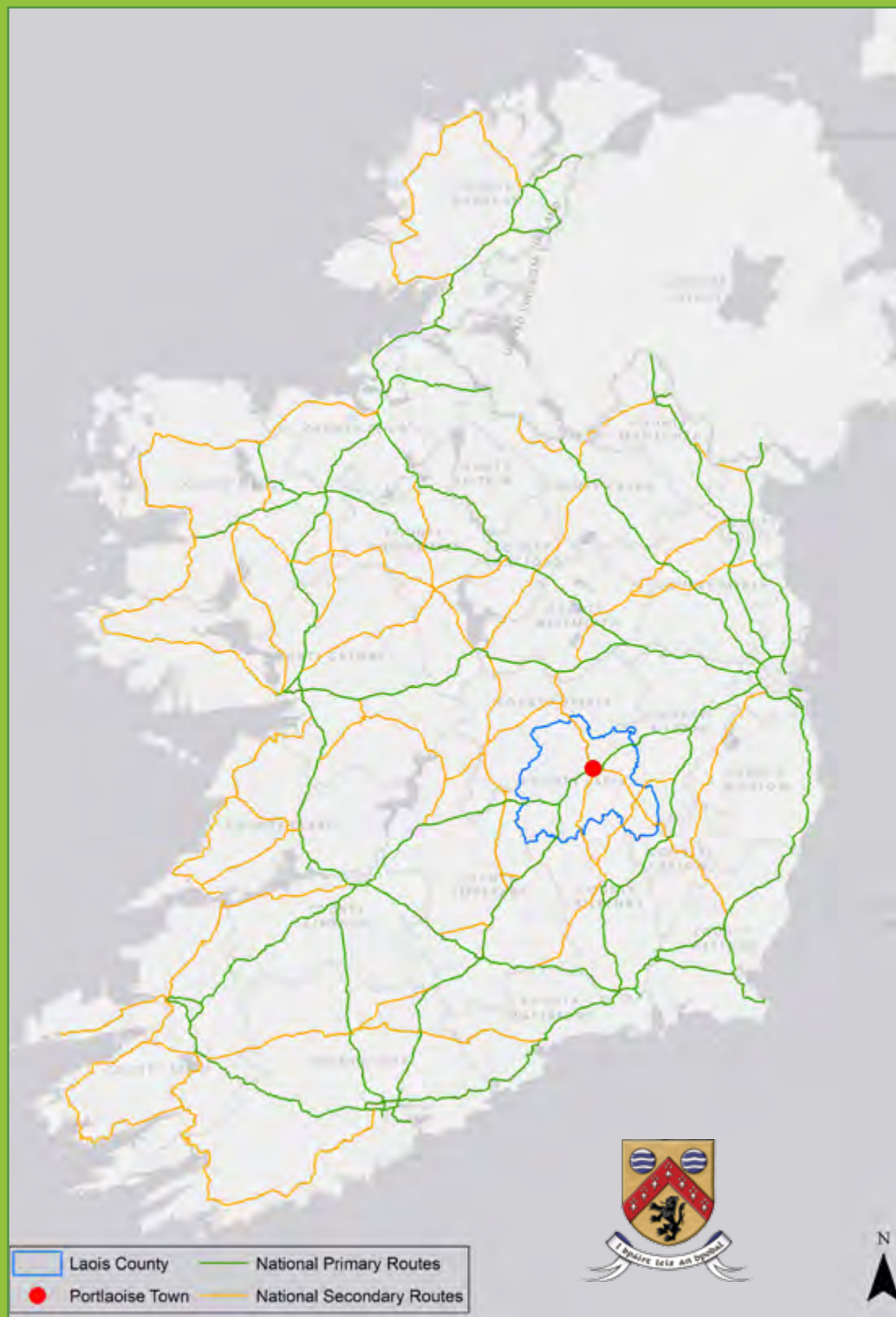
Key Local Policies and Initiatives

Other key local policies and initiatives are taken account of in the preparation of this Healthy Laois Plan. These policies are summarised in Appendix 1.



SECTION B

A PROFILE OF LAOIS AT A GLANCE



2016 STATISTICS AT A GLANCE



Healthy
Laois

2016 Statistics at a Glance

Total Population 2016

84,697

2011-2016 Population Increase



Co. Laois +5%
State +3.3%



49.5%
Females

50.5%
Males



YOUNG POPULATION

25% of the population of Co. Laois is aged under 15

21% of the State's population is aged under 15

Total Population
aged 15 and over
with a 3rd level
qualification



Laois (23%) State (27%)



5 DEIS Primary Schools
2 DEIS Post-Primary Schools

2016 Households =
28,997

10% Pre-School Families

14% Early School Families

13% Pre-Adolescent Families

13% Adolescent Families

121

Lone Father
Families
with
Children
under 15
Years of Age



1,402

Lone Mother
Families
with
Children
under 15
Years of Age

26% of the population
of Co. Laois live in
Portlaoise

Portlaoise is the
sixteenth largest
town in the Ireland

Portarlington is the
fifty eighth largest
town in the Ireland

DISADVANTAGED EDS IN 2016



Healthy
Laois

Disadvantaged ED's in 2016

Mountmellick Urban
Doonane
Rathdowney
Dangans

8% (6,611) of the total
population of Laois in 2016
lived in Disadvantaged ED's



11,393
Persons in
2016 with a
disability

Total Population
with a disability



Laois (13.5%)
State (13.5%)

5.7 per 1,000 of the
population in Laois
are registered with an
intellectual disability

National registration for
intellectual disability is 6.3 per
1,000 of the population



1,109 Births in 2016

656 Births within
Marriage
453 Births outside of
Marriage



32.1 Average Age of
Mother in Co. Laois

30.0 Average Age of
First Time Mother in
Co. Laois



1,451 Male Carers

2,130 Female Carers

SECTION C

VISION

All people of Laois will enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential. Through a series of partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation, health and wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility. Health and wellbeing for all will be improved and health inequalities reduced no matter what their age, gender, ability, geographic location or economic circumstances.

Laois Local Community Development Committee intends to realise the vision for the healthy county by inspiring and empowering the community at large to become healthier. We will work with families, and communities, and recognise the need to support both mind and body. The focus will be on improving health and wellness by promoting healthy lifestyles and building health-related community partnerships.



CONSULTATION

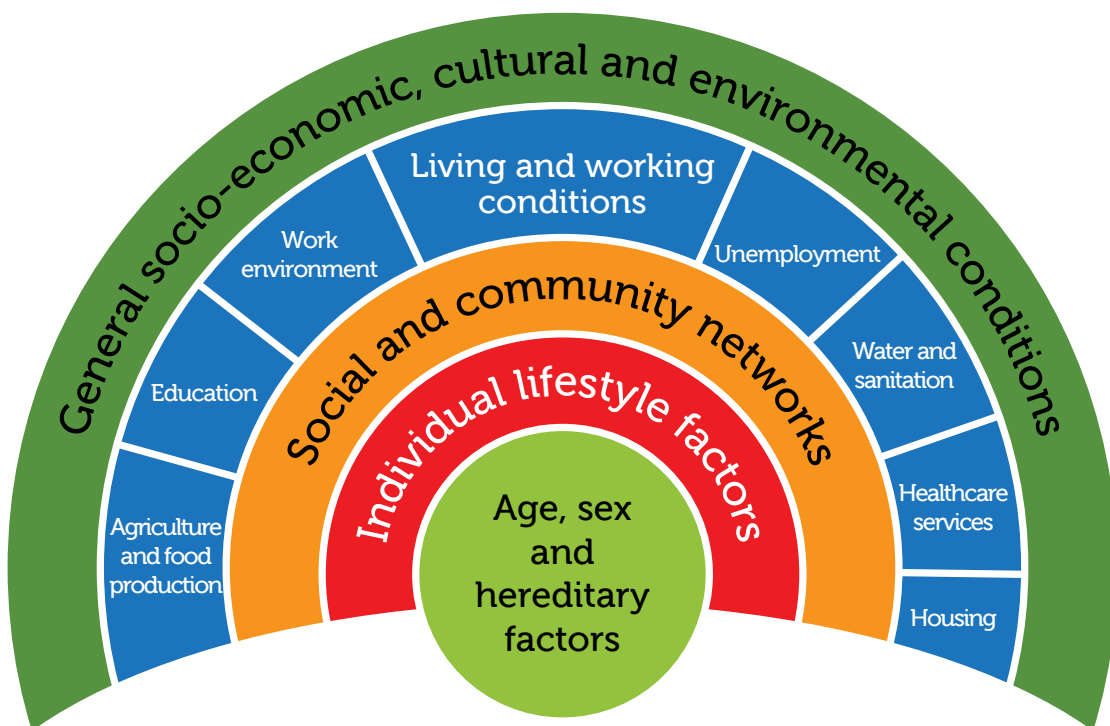
To gain an understanding of the wellbeing resources and related local issues, a public consultation process was embarked upon. Laois Public Participation Network held an event on 20th March 2018, at which one-to-one consultation was undertaken, together with the distribution of questionnaires. The research was designed to provide information on the community's physical/sporting and wellbeing activity, as well as our assets in terms of programmes, organisations and agencies that deliver initiatives and activities in this area. In addition to acknowledging the skills and capacities within the local community, it was undertaken to ascertain the capacity to deliver prospective Healthy Laois initiatives.

Feedback from the consultation process can be seen in Appendix 2.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Healthy Laois Plan has been developed with reference to a lifecycle approach. This approach cached under the general Healthy Ireland Framework themes, places objectives within the family envelope, e.g., Children and Youth, Teenagers and Young Adults, Ageing Well, thus recognising that maximum coherence across the age cohorts and differing communities that make up life in Co. Laois.

Health inequalities are the differences in health between sections of the population that can occur as a result of differences in social and educational opportunities, financial resources, housing conditions, nutrition, work patterns or conditions, and unequal access to health services. This means that the chances of a long and healthy life are not the same for everyone.



The headings under which the Healthy Ireland Framework is developed, e.g., Wellbeing and Mental Health, Sexual Health, Tobacco Free, Healthy Eating and Living, are those which the Healthy Laois Plan will use to draw its key objectives.

With those themes in mind, the vision that everyone in Co. Laois will be given the opportunity to enjoy a long and healthy life, underpins those key objectives.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- **Healthy Childhood:** That every child in Laois is nurtured and developed to be healthy in body and mind.
- **Teens/Young Adults:** That young people are supported to develop and maintain their mental and physical health.
- **Live Well, Age Well:** That we are all supported to maintain a healthy and happy lifestyle, regardless of age or ability.
- **Community Engagement/Promotion & Awareness:** That healthy living and well being in our community is promoted and prioritised.

The Healthy Laois Plan will seek to offer complimentary support to the range of supports already being implemented in Laois and will endeavour to increase collaboration of partners and eliminate duplication in that regard.



SECTION D

HEALTHY LAOIS PLAN 2018-2020 - ACTIONS

HEALTHY CHILDHOOD

Objective: That every child in Laois is nurtured and developed to be healthy in mind and body.

Generally.....

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the Forthcoming Laois CYPSC 3- year plan, and actions relating to Healthy Childhood	2018 - 2020	CYPSC CYPSC partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forthcoming Laois CYPSC plan Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children and young people 2014-2020
Provide opportunities to foster literacy and parent, guardian/ child interaction through early literacy programmes.	2018 - 2020	Laois Library Service Family Resource Centres HSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laois Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 National Library Strategy Laois Library Plan 2018 - 2022
Support the provision of Triple 'P' parenting programmes in County Laois for parents of children aged 2-15 years.	2018 - 2020	Midland Area Parenting Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laois Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2022
Support engagement in evidence based wellbeing programmes in schools, including SPHE, RSE, mental & sexual health promotion programmes and Wellbeing guidelines.	2018 - 2020	Primary and Secondary Schools HSE Health Promotion & Improvement Laois Education Centre Youthreach NEPS LCDC Parent organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Ireland National Framework Schools for Health in Ireland Framework (primary) Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework (post primary) Healthy Ireland Smart Start Safe food Start campaign Active School Flags National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020 Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 - 2020

Healthy Eating & Active Living (HEAL)

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the actions of Forthcoming Laois Recreation, Play & Sports Strategy 2018 -2022 in relation to play and recreation for children.	2020	Laois County Council Partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018 -2022 National Physical Activity Plan
Support the actions of the Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021.	2021	Laois Sports Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2021 National Physical Activity Plan A Healthy Weight for Ireland Obesity Policy & Action Plan 2016 – 2025
Support the actions of the Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021.	2020	HSE Lactation Consultant MRHP / DPHN La Leche League of Ireland Cuidiu HSE	Breastfeeding in a Healthy Ireland Action Plan 2016-2021
Involve children in GIY food growing initiatives in County Laois	2018 – 2020	Laois Partnership Local GIY groups LCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2022
Support the development of smarter travel initiatives, e.g., Walk on Wednesday (WOW), Cycle on Wednesday (COW), Active School Flag, the Walking Bus initiative, with regard to commuting to schools and support the development of infrastructure to support smarter travel inclusive of signage.	2018 – 2020	Laois Sports Partnership LCC Schools	Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021
Encourage use of parks, playgrounds and other play facilities and programmes as a means of getting children active in play.	2018 – 2020	Laois County Council Laois Sports Partnership Partner agencies Community organisations HSE Health Promotion & Improvement Active Schools Flag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018 -2022 National Physical Activity Plan
Ensure quality standards are maintained in our public parks by participation in the Green Flag Award. Support development of infrastructure to promote activity inclusive of signage.	Ongoing	Laois County Council Laois Sports Partnership Partner agencies Community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018 -2022 National Physical Activity Plan

Wellbeing & Mental Health

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support initiatives promoting positive infant mental health with local health care providers	2018-2020	HSE Nurture programme HSE PHN Service HSE Maternity Services	Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children and young people 2014-2020
Work with statutory and voluntary providers to promote child mental health and wellbeing	2018-2020	HSE TUSLA Mental Health Ireland Other relevant voluntary providers	Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children and young people 2014-2020
Support the delivery of Triple 'P' Fearless Programme for parent of children aged 6 to 14 years, which focuses on anxiety.	Ongoing	Midland Area Parenting Partnership	Healthy Ireland Framework

Tobacco Free

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the development of a Smoke Free park and playground initiative in Co. Laois.	2020	LCC HSE Health Promotion & Improvement	Tobacco Free Ireland (TFI) Policy 2013 – 2025

TEENS/YOUNG ADULTS

Objective: That young people are supported to develop and maintain their mental and physical health

Healthy Eating & Active Living (HEAL)

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the relevant actions of Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018-2022 and the Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2021 with regard to the development of young people's active and healthy lifestyle.	2020	Laois County Council Laois Sports Partnership Partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018-2022 • Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2021 • National Physical Activity Plan
Promote physical activity programmes, increase participation and sports leadership training for teenagers and young adults in schools and in the community.	2018-2020	HSE Physical Activity Co-ordinator Laois County Council Laois Sports Partnership Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 • Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018-2022 • Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2021 • National Physical Activity Plan Obesity Policy and Action Plan: A Healthy Weight for Ireland 2016-2025
Deliver, where required and appropriate, safe outdoor teen spaces for physical activity.	2020	Laois County Council Partner organisations Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 • Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018-2022 • Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2021 • National Physical Activity Plan Obesity Policy and Action Plan: A Healthy Weight for Ireland 2016-2025
Support the delivery of Food and Health Programmes in particular in relation to development of young people's skills in this area.	2018-2020	Laois Partnership Partner agencies HSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 • Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2022 • Obesity Policy and Action Plan: A Healthy Weight for Ireland 2016-2025

Wellbeing & Mental Health

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the development of an Integration Choir for young people in Co. Laois.	2019	Youth Work Ireland Laois Laois Partnership Community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Migrant Integration Strategy Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 Healthy Ireland Framework
Support the delivery of Positive Pathways in Co. Laois, a youth positive mental health bereavement support programme in Laois, to include both young people and their parent/guardians.	2018-2020	Youth Work Ireland Laois HSE Mental Health HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention MYDC	Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 - 2020
Support the delivery of the 'Introduction to Youth Mental Health' and 'Minding Youth Mental Health' workshops to adults who work or volunteer with young people between the ages of 12 and 25 years.	2018-2020	HSE Youth organisations	Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 - 2020
Support the delivery of Triple 'P' Fearless Programme for parents of children and young people aged 6 to 14 years, which focuses on anxiety.	Ongoing	Midland Area Parenting Partnership	Healthy Ireland Framework
Actively support primary and post primary schools to implement Anti-Bullying week in November each year.	2018-2020	HSE Health Promotion & Improvement Primary and Post Primary Schools	Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 - 2020
Investigate the possibility of developing a JIGSAW project in Laois	2020	Laois/Offaly Children & Young Persons Services Committee (CYPSC)	Forthcoming Laois/Offaly CYPSC 3 year Plan

Positive Ageing

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Investigate with local schools and youth services, the establishment of inter-generational projects where there are none.	2020	Laois Age Friendly Alliance Laois County Council Local schools Laois Older Persons Forum	Laois Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2021

Drugs & Alcohol

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the implementation of the Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan 2017-2019, in relation to preventative initiatives for young people.	2020	Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force HSE CADS (Community Alcohol & Drug Service) Extern MYDAS Project (Midland Youth Drug & Alcohol Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery. A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025 Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force Strategic Plan 2017-2019

Tobacco Free

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the provision of the X-HALE initiative in Co. Laois	2020	Irish Cancer Society HSE Health Promotion & Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irish Cancer Society Strategic Plan National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026

Sexual Health

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Work in partnership with partner agencies to promote attendance at the 10-day foundation programme in Sexual Health Promotion (FPSHP) with teachers/trainers/youth and community workers in an out-of-school setting in the county.	2018-2020	HSE Health Promotion & Improvement Youth and Community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020 Healthy Ireland Framework
Support the provision of training opportunities for staff working in the youth/adult sector to raise awareness of LGBTI+ issues.	2020	HSE Health Promotion & Improvement TENI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020 LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020
National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020 LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020	2020	Department of Children & Youth Affairs Schools Youth & Community Organisations Education Training Boards HSE	LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020

LIVE WELL, AGE WELL

Objective: That we are all supported to maintain a healthy and happy lifestyle, regardless of age or ability

Healthy Eating & Active Living (HEAL)

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Promote the Community Based Cooking Programme 'Healthy Food Made Easy' with a focus on provision among vulnerable population groups.	2018-2020	Laois Partnership HSE Community Nutrition	Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2022
Support the implementation of the Laois Sport Partnership Strategic Plan, particularly in relation to the development of infrastructure plan for Laois and the development of a Disability Action plan to ensure participation for all.	2020	Laois Sports Partnership Partner Agencies	Laois Sport Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2021
Support the creation and promotion of access to opportunities and programmes, across multiple settings, to help people of all ages and abilities to engage in regular physical activity as individuals, families and communities.	2018-2020	Laois County Council Laois Sports Partnership Partner agencies Community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 • Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018-2022 • Laois Sport Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2021 • National Physical Activity Plan • WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-2020
Support the development of walking and cycling trails in Co. Laois with an emphasis on greenway and blueway trails.	2020	Laois County Council Laois Partnership Partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 • Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018-2022 • Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. • National Physical Activity Plan
Support communities to develop Activity and Wellness Hubs in Co. Laois	2018-2020	Laois Sports Partnership Laois County Council Community organisations Partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 • Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018-2022 • LSP Strategic Plan 2017-2021

Healthy Eating & Active Living (HEAL)

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the further development of the Active Parks programme in Co. Laois	2018-2020	Laois County Council Partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 • Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018-2022 • National Physical Activity Plan
Support the implementation of the Urban Outdoor Adventure initiative.	2018-2020	Laois County Council Laois Sports Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 • Forthcoming Laois Recreation Play & Sports Strategy 2018-2022 • LSP Strategic Plan 2017-2021
Support the delivery of the Go for Life Programme in Laois to involve a greater number of older people in sport and physical activity.	2018-2020	Laois Sports Partnership Community Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSP Strategic Plan 2017-2021 • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-202
Support the implementation of the Laois Tourism Strategy 2018-2023 in relation to the development of an Accessible Outdoor Pursuits & Activity Base via providers.	2020	Laois Tourism Ltd Partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Tourism Strategy 2018-2023 • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021

Wellbeing & Mental Health

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support individuals experiencing educational disadvantage to participate in life-long learning opportunities. Initiatives will include ICT training, Social Media training, Food and Health Programmes and Triple 'P' Parenting Programmes.	2018-2020	Laois Partnership Partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 • Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2022
Support the implementation of the Connecting for Life Midlands Louth Meath 2018 – 2020 (Suicide Prevention Action Plan)	2020	MH HSE HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention Laois PPN Community organisations Statutory organisations Business sector	Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 – 2020
Support the delivery of a range of mental health promotion initiatives in community, health and education settings, with the aim of improving the wellbeing of the whole population and priority groups.	2018-2020	MH HSE HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention	Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 – 2020

Wellbeing & Mental Health

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the efforts of the Carers Association and Laois Branch of Alzheimer's Society to ensure the health and wellbeing of carers in Laois.	2020	Laois Age Friendly Alliance HSE Laois Carers' Association Laois Branch Alzheimer's Society Other support organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Ireland Framework • Laois Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2021
Support the delivery of training in suicide prevention skills through programmes including ASIST and Safetalk to community groups and other sectors, agencies and individuals.	2018-2020	HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention Community organisations Public sector organisations Business sector Laois PPN	Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 - 2020
Work with the relevant organisations to identify high risk locations within the county and to explore the resources required to introduce preventative measures and additional supports at these locations.	2020	Laois County Council Community organisations HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention	Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 - 2020
Support the provision of a holistic programme in Portlaoise, Mountrath and Rathdowney to support communities experiencing disadvantage. The programme will focus on building skills in mental and physical health awareness and wellbeing and developing skills in first aid/emergency response and self defence enabling the participants to respond positively to emergency and stressful situations.	2018-2019	Laois Partnership HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention Mental Health Ireland Community and youth organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Ireland Framework • Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2022

Positive Ageing

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the implementation of the Laois Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2021, particularly in relation to Outdoor Spaces & the Physical Environment, Social Participation, Respect & Social Inclusion	2020	Laois Age Friendly Alliance Laois County Council Laois Older Persons Forum Partner Agencies	Laois Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2021
Support the further development of rural transport to ensure the reduction in social isolation, particularly in rural areas.	2020	Laois/Offaly Local Link Laois Age Friendly Alliance	Laois Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2021

Positive Ageing

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the implementation of initiatives to promote positive mental health among older persons living in the community	2020	HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention Laois Age Friendly Alliance	Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 – 2020
Support the promotion and delivery of Phase 4 Cardiac Programme and further support the identification and provision of training to communities in respect of Defibrillators countywide.	2019–2020	Laois Sports Partnership Laois Age Friendly Alliance HSE Community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laois Age Friendly Strategy 2016–2021 LSP Strategic Plan 2017–2021

Drugs & Alcohol

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the delivery of sporting initiatives in Laois targeted at specific groups, e.g., young people at risk, traveller men, socially disadvantaged, substance abusers.	2018–2020	Laois Sports Partnership Laois Partnership	Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016–2021
Continue to support the provision of a Drugs and Alcohol Treatment and Rehabilitation Service, including the provision of drug and alcohol assessment, treatment, rehabilitation and support services to adults and under 18's concerned with their own and another person's drug and/or alcohol use.	2018 – 2020	HSE CADS (Community Alcohol & Drug Service)	Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery. A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017–2025

Tobacco Free

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Support the implementation of Tobacco free initiatives.	2020	HSE	Tobacco Free Ireland (TFI) Policy 2013 – 2025 Healthy Ireland Framework

Sexual Health

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Promote awareness and attendance with community organisations in the county and region about the 10-day Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion (FHSHP) with community/voluntary workers, allied healthcare professionals working with older adults in home, community and residential settings.	2019–2020	HSE Health Promotion & Improvement Youth and community organisations Partner agencies	National Sexual Health Strategy 2015–2020

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/PROMOTION & AWARENESS

Objective: That healthy living and well being in our community is promoted and prioritised.

Generally

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
Identify and develop a Network of key community champions within Laois to advocate for and promote a Healthy Laois programme.	2020	Laois PPN Community organisations	
Support Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018–2020 in the delivery of positive mental health campaigns and events including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laois Connects /Mental Health Awareness Week • Little Things campaign • Green Ribbon campaign 	2018–2020	HSE Community organisations Partner agencies	Connecting for Life Midlands, Louth, Meath 2018 – 2020
Support the delivery to all relevant public service staff members of anti-racism and cultural awareness training to ensure an ethos of openness and acceptance of all cultures and minority groups.	2019–2020	Dept. of Justice, Equality & Law Reform Irish Human Rights Commission Immigrant Council of Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy • LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018–2020
Support the development of community events to promote information on and awareness of positive mental health.	2018–2020	Laois PPN All HI partners	
Support the delivery of the “Engage” Men’s Health Training Programme in Co. Laois. Promote Men’s Health Week in Laois.	2018–2020	HSE Men’s Development Network	National Men’s Health Action Plan 2017–2021
Promote International Women’s Day with a health focus in Co. Laois.	2018–2020	HSE Voluntary Women’s organisations	National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017–2020

Drugs & Alcohol

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
<p>Support the implementation of the Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan 2017 –2019, particularly in relation to supporting communities in strengthening their response to misuse and preventing harm caused by misuse.</p> <p>This will include implementation of a community mobilisation process that promotes prevention and awareness initiatives associated with drug and/or alcohol misuse.</p>	2019	Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force Community, voluntary and statutory sectors in Laois.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery”- A health led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025. • Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force Strategic Plan 2017 –2019

Sexual Health

Action	Timeframe	Lead/Partner Agencies	Related Strategy / Plan
<p>Improve sexual health and wellbeing by actively publicising training opportunities through all stakeholder networks and facilitate relevant staff working with youth, adult, disability and minority groups in the community to attend FPSHP training.</p>	2020	HSE Health Promotion & Improvement All partner agencies Youth and Community organisations	National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020
<p>Work with community and statutory partners to promote awareness of and access to sexual health services in the county and regionally.</p>	2019	HSE Health Promotion & Improvement SATU MRHM STI Service MRHP Community & Youth organisations	National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020 Healthy Ireland National Framework.

SECTION E

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Laois Local Community Development (LCDC) is responsible for monitoring the delivery of the objectives in the Healthy Laois Plan and reporting this regard.

The LCDC will establish a Healthy Laois Team, which will comprise the LCDC Healthy Ireland subcommittee members and partners named in the delivery of this plan. This Team will drive and ensure delivery of the Plan objectives over the 3 year period.

The Healthy Laois Team will ensure periodic reporting in relation to the progress of the Plan and any funding opportunities that become available to realise the actions within.

HEALTHY LAOIS TEAM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS:

- Laois LCDC (Healthy Ireland Subcommittee members)
- Laois County Council
- Laois Public Participation Network
- HSE Health Promotion and Improvement
- HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention
- Laois Sports Partnership
- Youth Work Ireland Laois
- TUSLA Family Resource Centre
- Laois Partnership Company

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – LOCAL POLICIES

The following local policies, plans and programmes have informed the development of the Healthy Laois Plan in terms of ensuring non duplication and supporting the work already ongoing in this area.

- Laois Local Economic & Community Plan 2016 – 2021
<https://tinyurl.com/LECP2021>
- Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023
<https://tinyurl.com/LaoisCountyDevPlan2023>
- Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2023
<https://tinyurl.com/LaoisSportsStrat2021>
- Laois Age Friendly Strategy 2016 – 2021
<http://laois.ie/wp-content/uploads/Laois-Age-Friendly-Strategy-1.pdf>
- Laois Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2022
<http://laoispartnership.ie/social-inclusion-programme/>
- Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force Strategic Plan 2017-2019
<https://tinyurl.com/MidDrugAlcoholStratPlan2019>
- Connecting for Life – HSE Suicide Prevention Plan for the Midlands, Louth and Meath 2018-2020
<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/connecting-for-life/publications/connecting-for-life-midlands-louth-meath.pdf>

APPENDIX 2 – CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Consultation took place in a number of ways:

1. Public consultation at a Laois Public Participation Network (PPN) event on 20th March 2018.
2. Targeted consultation with representatives of key agencies and organisations in Laois.

Feedback from consultation process:

- Continue to invest in and support the community sports hub concept
- Invest in outdoor gym equipment in local playgrounds
- Provide more integrated cycle lanes
- Find more ways to involve young people in physical activity
- Offer more physical activity options at community level
- Increase education and awareness about mental health
- Those who want/need to have their say about mental health issues must be able to do so
- Recommend organisation of social events for people to meet
- Encourage a united approach to mental health and well being
- Invest in a “Drop in Centre” for young people suffering with mental health issues
- Families dealing with suicide need more assistance
- More visiting services for the elderly needed
- Provide audio recordings of local news
- Provide parenting courses and courses on basic cooking
- Promote the “Grow it Yourself” concept in schools
- Ensure support for carers
- Need programmes that will support both the individual and the family
- Provide relationship and sexual education for young adults with special needs
- Value Childcare practitioners and early educators
- Provide positive mental health programmes for younger children
- Support children and young people with special needs, with regard to physical and social activity
- PPN should play a leading role in enabling the voice of the disabled to be heard
- Provide support for families in crisis through substance abuse
- Enable more integration in our community

Other feedback was received in relation to healthcare services, which is beyond the scope of this consultation and plan parameters, but was forwarded for information purposes to the Health Services Executive.

Other comments referred to:

- Communication between existing services, in terms of reduction and prevention of addiction.
- Healthy weight concerns, in terms of lack of education in cooking skills and the need for further emphasis on home cooking and capacity building our young people in this regard.
- Concerns around social isolation, especially in our rural communities, and may be a contributing factor to poor mental health.
- The need for increased provision of services for young people experiencing anxiety and related mental health issues and the need to find preventative measures where possible in this regard.

NOTES



