



Comhairle Contae
an Chabháin
Cavan
County Council

Chapter 4

Sustainable Communities



Vision

To develop and support vibrant sustainable communities in Cavan where people can live, work and enjoy access to a wide range of community, health and educational facilities and amenities, suitable for all ages and needs, in both urban and rural areas, thereby supporting a high quality of life for all to enjoy.

Sustainable Communities Policy

SCP 01 Develop safe, active and empowered communities; developing health and wellbeing; promoting social inclusion; and protecting natural resources which simultaneously promoting culturally rich communities. Emphasis will be places on achieving equality and inclusion and enhancing quality of life of all people living in County Cavan.

4.1 Introduction

Cavan County Council's mission statement is to be a "Council that leads and collaborates with all, to drive and shape a better future for our county", key to achieving this mission is to promote sustainable economic, social and community development which supports the emergence of sustainable communities. Sustainable communities are those that are economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient. Challenges are met through integrated solutions rather than through disjointed approaches. The Plan has a key role to play in boosting and developing the capacity of Cavan's communities without losing their distinctiveness. We need to ensure residents have access to a range of accommodation, facilities and an environment in which to enjoy their desired lifestyle. We strive to enable our communities to have suitable resources to support economic, social and environmental wellbeing, the innovation to thrive, and the power to be robust. This will in turn support the creation of a vibrant, sustainable, and competitive economy, based on shared goals and collaboration between statutory, community, voluntary, environmental and private sectors.

A priority of this plan is the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods which support thriving communities and provide for a wide range of household types, age groups and tenures with community facilities close by. Sustainable Communities and placemaking are key entities in creating attractive places for people to invest, live, work and visit.

Sustainable economic, social and community development is essential to support the emergence of sustainable neighbourhoods and communities throughout the County, especially in newly emerging or developing areas.

Sustainable development has three mutually interdependent elements:

1. **Environment:** This includes protection and enhancement of the natural, built and historic resources of the County, including making effective use of land, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change.

2. **Economic:** This includes building a strong and resilient economy by ensuring sufficient land is available in the right place and supporting growth and innovation and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
3. **Social:** This includes providing social infrastructure such as jobs, housing, education, medical care, open space areas and cultural opportunities to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and promoting well designed and safe environments.

Sustainable development requires all of the above elements to work in a coordinated manner to ensure the County is a place where people want to live, work and visit, now and into the future.

4.2 Policy

National publications also provide excellent guidance on how to deliver quality neighbourhoods, urban areas and sustainable communities. These include *Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities (2007)*, *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007)*, *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018) 2023*, *The Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future - A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020 (Department of Transport, 2009)*) ~~*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)*~~, ~~*Urban Design Manual A Best Practice Guide (2009)*~~, ~~*Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)*~~, ~~*National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)*~~, ~~*National Policy on Architecture (2022)*~~, ~~*Government Policy on Architecture (2009)*~~ and *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)*.

Actions plans including *Rebuilding Ireland - an Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness 2016* which supports the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods and maximising the contribution of the built environment to addressing climate change and *Realising our Rural Potential: Action Plan for Rural Development (DAHRRGA, 2017)* sets out the Government’s policy for the economic and social development of rural Ireland. The Action Plan sets targets for job creation, connectivity, culture, tourism, town and village improvements and identifies over 270 specific actions. Local Authorities are identified as key partners in the development and delivery of the Action Plan.

4.2.1 The National Planning Framework - Project Ireland 2040 (NPF)

There is now significant alignment between the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the National Planning Framework’s National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) in areas such as climate action, clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, economic growth, reduced inequalities and innovation and infrastructure, as well as education and health with a focus on compact, smart and sustainable development that have accessible services to all.

Chapter 6 “People, Homes and Communities” outlines how location, place and accessibility influence that quality of life that people enjoy. It also notes that as our society changes, so does our needs and preferences, particularly as we grow older. This is premiant in Cavan, taking into account the current aging population; as per the Census 2016, there are 10,464 people aged 65 and over.

4.2.2 Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032

The RSES seeks to promote healthy placemaking and promote people's quality of life through the creation of healthy and attractive places to live, work, visit and study in. It highlights the importance of the physical and social environment and places in which we live or work, and its impact on the health of people. The strategy aims to create a sustainable and competitive region that supports the health and well-being of our people and places, from urban to rural, and ensures access to affordable housing, travel and employment opportunities for all. The RSES acknowledges Cavan's strategic facilities such as Cavan General Hospital, Cavan Institute, Local Authority headquarters, Agricultural College, Cathedrals and Sports Stadium. It further notes that Cavan is in a healthy position to deliver and grow sustainable communities.

The following RPO's contained in the RSES are of relevance:

- RPO 7.1 Support the co-ordination of employment skills and support in the region through the alignment of needs as identified by the Regional Skills Fora to include facilities and opportunities for disadvantaged areas and groups in the community.
- RPO 7.2 Support disadvantaged communities facing particular barriers to employment, including actively marketing vacancies that are relevant to them.
- RPO 7.3 Through constituent LCDCs promote vocational and occupational programmes and pathways for progression to a career.
- RPO 7.4 Support the implementation of the STEM program in Irish Education out to 2026.
- RPO 7.5 Ensure that the requirements of emerging sectors are reflected in the regional skills needs and resourcing.
- RPO 7.7 Support the provision of third level education facilities in the Cavan/Monaghan subregion (where the lack of 3rd level education is most pronounced) and in Roscommon and Leitrim.
- RPO 7.9 Promote the provision of high-quality, accessible and suitably proportioned areas of public open spaces and promote linkages with social, cultural and heritage sites and buildings. In this process prioritise access for walking and cycling.
- RPO 7.10 Support the Health Service Executive and other statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers in the provision of healthcare facilities to all sections of the community, at appropriate locations, with good public transport links, parking and accessible facilities.
- RPO 7.11 Support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan and the National Obesity Plan through integration with planning policy.

- RPO 7.12 Ensure local planning, housing, transport/ accessibility and leisure policies are developed with a focus on meeting the needs and opportunities of an ageing population and people with disabilities and younger persons.
- RPO 7.13 Aim to make this region an Age Friendly one by working with constituent Planning Authorities and recognising the demographic challenges that face the region and ensure the provision of suitable facilities and services at appropriate locations.
- RPO 7.14 The Assembly supports the specific designation of lands in development plans for nursing homes and sheltered housing, whilst ensuring these facilities are integrated within the communities they serve.
- RPO 7.15 Encourage multi-agency approaches for delivering the health, social care, education and community services needed by growing, diverse or isolated communities.
- RPO 9.1 Build Inclusive and Compact Places by:
- (a) Planning for Inclusive Communities through regional cooperation and collaboration, to support the wider economic and social development agendas of the region and integrating health and wellbeing outcomes across all activities, ensuring that spaces are made available for community use;
 - (b) Accommodating Growth and Delivering Housing through compact growth where housing opportunities are close to schools, community facilities, health facilities, shopping, and employment; Prioritising the (re-)use of existing underutilised land and buildings, and other infill opportunities.
 - (c) Accessing Quality Services by maximising the use of transport and digital infrastructure to ensure people can access quality education and health services, building on the quality health and education infrastructure that exists on a cross-border basis and building more shared services and nurturing greater collaboration between actors and agencies in the codesign of new services.
 - (d) Valuing Cultural Heritage by creating appealing places through attractive and imaginative building design, street layout, civic space and public realm design; Developing new offerings in support of existing ventures in the tourism sector, such as greenways, walking trails and other inter-urban connections, based on the wealth of natural and cultural heritage assets and providing links to the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coast.
- RPO 9.7 The Assembly will work with Local Authorities, and other stakeholders in both jurisdictions to identify further potential projects which could benefit cross border communities, and in doing so create an inventory of priority projects to be advanced to feasibility studies, and beyond.

4.2.3 The Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021

The purpose of the LECP is to promote the local and community development of each local authority area. This is done through a coordinated approach to planning and service delivery. The Economic elements of the LECP are driven by the Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee of the Local Authority.

The LECP focuses on measures that will:

- Enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of communities, including measures aimed at tackling poverty, disadvantage and social inclusion
- Support training, upskilling and jobs creation
- Enable the provision of infrastructure and community facilities
- Support the capacity of local communities to improve their quality of life
- Develop sustainable solutions that make the best use of existing local assets, strengths and opportunities
- Support social enterprise, social capital, volunteering and active citizenship, and
- Foster community involvement in policy development and decision-making processes relating to planning, development and delivery of services.

This plan sets out the agenda, identifies objectives and implements actions to strengthen the economic and community development of the county for a six year period. A review of the Cavan Local Economic & Community Plan will commence in 2021, ultimately leading to the formation of a new Local Economic and Community Plan. Central to the formation of an LECP is the understanding that economic, local and community development is mutually supportive in building sustainable communities with strong local economies.

The Development Plan and the Local Economic and Community Plan effectively operate along parallel and support lines. The LECP provides a supportive structure for economic and local community development in Cavan, whereas the County Development Plan provides for an overarching strategy and statutory policy support for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County at spatial level. Subsequently, the statutory policies and objectives of the County Development Plan must be complementary to and consistent with the high level goals and objectives of the LECP.

The foregoing goals are reflected in the policies and objectives of this chapter. The LECP is now also required to be compliant with the adopted RSES.

The Department proposes to issue advice and guidance on the preparation of new LECPs in Q1 2021. In the interim they have indicated that local authorities can commence the process of preparing a new LECP. In Cavan this process has commenced.

4.3 Characteristics of an Effective and Successful Sustainable Community

Throughout the NPF and the RSES, there is a strong emphasis placed on achieving and maintaining sustainable communities that will contribute to a high quality of life and meet the diverse needs of the people within existing and future communities. Effective sustainable communities are interlinked with improving the quality of life for everyone within the community providing a vibrant economy, while preserving the environment. Figure 4.1 indicates the factors involved in providing sustainable communities and factors influencing quality of life.

4.4 Quality of Life

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), quality of life can be defined as “The individuals’ perception of their position in the life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals”. There are many factors that can influence quality of life, some of which are difficult to measure and dependent on the individual concerned and include factors such as social well-being, health, family, housing, education, income, employment, recreation, safety and the environment.

Quality of life factors and “place-making” are increasingly recognised as key to developing attractive places in which to invest, live, study, visit and work including access to amenities, facilities, arts, culture and heritage. This is also linked to “Functionality” in terms of provision of suitable sites and property solutions to meet enterprises and labour force expectations.

Figure 4.1 Elements Supporting Quality of Life

Figure 6.1 | Elements Supporting Quality of Life



Source: NPF, p.80

4.5 Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods

The creation of sustainable neighbourhoods play an important role in the quality of life factors and foster a wider sense of community. Creating sustainable urban neighbourhoods to support sustainable communities requires the efficient use of land and sustainable densities to enable viable provision of the necessary range of facilities, services and good public transport connections – all of which should be within walking distance of residents and workers and of a high-quality urban design to create places where people will want to live.

This development plan aims to ensure that all significant developments can only take place where sufficient schools, public transport, employment opportunities, parks, community facilities and resources are either in place or proposed. A good urban neighbourhood must also incorporate quality living spaces, amenity areas and green infrastructure, as well as fostering a distinctive sense of place and a safe environment. The creation of sustainable communities is based on the development of the following three pillars:

- Sustainable Economy
- Sustainable Housing
- Social Infrastructure

Sustainable Community Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

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|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SC 01 | Support sustainable transport infrastructure, by developing mixed use schemes, higher densities close to public transport hubs, safe walking routes in developments, promoting alternative modes of transport and reduce the need to travel. |
| SC 02 | Support and promote the development of socially inclusive, sustainable communities in the County and seek to ensure that all citizens enjoy optimal health and well-being along with associated mental health supports and youth services. |
| SC 03 | Encourage inclusive and active sustainable communities based around a strong network of community facilities. |

4.6 Sustainable Economy

Social and economic opportunities are identified as central determinants of health and well-being, with employment opportunities being closely related to education and skills. Building sustainable communities is difficult with the increase in mobility, with people leaving an area for employment creating a transient population in an area which makes it difficult to sustain a community. The provision of employment within the County and a robust social infrastructure is important in creating a 'sense of

place' and belonging to an area. Furthermore, access to employment in a community provides an opportunity to access housing, education and culture and promotes staying within a community.

Sustainable Economy Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

- SE 01** Enhance the well-being and quality of life of the people of Cavan through sustainable economic and community development.
- SE 02** Support the implementation of Local Authority Local Economic and Community Plans, in collaboration with Local and Economic Development Committees (LCDCs) and through the use of spatial planning policies, to seek to reduce the number of people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion in the County.

4.7 Sustainable Housing

One of the challenges facing Cavan is to successfully accommodate people at different stages in their lifecycle, having regard to emerging demographic trends. Sustainable future housing should be located where people have the best opportunities to access a high standard quality of life, close to jobs, important services such as education and healthcare, close to transport networks and sustainable physical infrastructure.

It is Council policy to prioritise the development of housing in existing towns and villages in the Settlement Hierarchy to help reduce the need to travel and reduce transport carbon emissions. Appropriate densities are outlined for each settlement to make more efficient use of land and energy resources, creating a consolidated urban form that supports the development of compact neighbourhoods which contribute to the viability of economic, social, and transport infrastructure. The Council will encourage and support varied housing typologies within neighbourhoods in order to encourage a diverse choice of housing options in terms of tenure, unit size, and building design in residential communities.

The promotion of quality design and energy efficient design will result in more attractive places to live, provide for greater connectivity and integration of new housing within the existing urban fabric, provide positive spaces and assist in developing community spirit. The NPF provides that 30% of future residential development should be accommodated within the built footprint of existing urban areas.

The NPF and RSES identifies 'Compact Growth' as the means to deliver sustainable growth in our urban settlements through consolidation, rather than the continued sprawl of urban development into the countryside, at the expense of town centres and smaller villages.

The Council is committed to delivering compact growth through active land management together with the positive regeneration of urban areas. To facilitate population growth, a significant proportion of urban development will be accommodated on infill/brownfield sites through the redevelopment and regeneration of underused, vacant or derelict town centre lands. It is an objective of the Council to

facilitate the continuous regeneration and redevelopment of existing built up areas, to create more desirable places in which people can live and work. Further, it is a priority of the Council to enable infill and appropriate brownfield redevelopment in order to maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services and promote a positive modal shift towards sustainable transport use.

Proposals for residential schemes shall have regard to the following statutory guidelines:

- [Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities \(2024\)](#).
- [National Policy on Architecture \(2022\)](#)
- [National Sustainable Mobility Policy \(2022\)](#)
- [Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines \(2018\)](#)
- Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005).
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities, DEHLG 2007.
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments ~~DEHLG (2018)~~ [\(2023\)](#).
- ~~Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG, 2009.~~
- ~~Urban Design Manual, A Best Practice Guide, A Companion Document to the Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG 2009.~~
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DECLG & DTTS ~~2013~~ [\(2013, updated in 2019\)](#)
- [Permeability Best Practice Guide \(2015\)](#)

Sustainable Housing Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

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| SH 01 | Secure the provision of social and affordable housing accommodation, to meet the needs of all households and the disadvantaged sectors in the County, including the elderly, first time buyers, single person households on modest incomes, people with disabilities, and special needs etc. |
| SH 02 | Achieve densities for new housing that respect the local character of surrounding areas whilst making efficient use of land. |
| SH 03 | Provide for housing that is accessible for older people, the very young and people with disabilities and that residential buildings together with non-residential buildings are accessible and usable by people with disabilities. |
| SH 04 | Ensure that new residential development in town and village cores provide for family type accommodation with a satisfactory level of residential amenity to create vibrant living centres and to address the issue of dereliction and vacancy in town and village centres. |

4.8 Lifetime Housing/Housing for Older People

As previously outlined, one of the challenges facing the County is to successfully accommodate people at different stages in their lifecycle, having regard to emerging demographic trends. The Census 2016 identified a decline in the average household size of 2.7 persons per household and saw an increase in the elderly, dependent and single parent household population. over.

With an increasingly older population within the County, it is likely that more people will spend more time in the area where they live, so local area aspects are likely to increase in importance for quality of life. A wide range of measures can contribute to facilitate longer and healthier lives in the community. A focus on building sustainable communities ensures better social integration which in turn enhances the vibrancy of communities.

Furthermore, the Plan encourages a model of inter-generational step-down residence incorporated into family homes. Any new homes will have to accommodate changing needs over its lifetime. A liveable and adaptable housing development or house is one that is able to respond effectively to these needs without requiring costly and energy intensive alterations. It also requires active management of land and sites in urban areas where consolidation of residential areas will be encouraged and supported close to community services and amenities.

Cavan Age Friendly County Initiative was launched in March 2012. The overall aim of the Cavan Age Friendly Programme is to make Cavan a great place for older people to live. To date the Age Friendly Alliance have successfully implemented two strategies to date 2013 to 2016 and 2017 to 2019. A third strategy will be produced to cover from 2020 to 2023 and will build on the work of the previous strategies in progressing to make County Cavan an Age Friendly County. Key focus areas for the new strategy will be on enabling older people to live independently within their homes and communities for longer and supporting a better quality of life in those senior years.

Lifetime Housing/Housing for Older People Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

- LH 01 Support the Cavan Age Friendly Programme and the Cavan Age Friendly Strategy 2020-2023 aimed at improving the quality of life of older people throughout the County
- LH 02 Deliver a sufficient supply of housing over the period of the Plan that is reflective of current and future demographic trends.

- LH 03 Ensure that a suitable variety and mix of dwelling types and sizes is provided in developments to meet different needs, having regard to demographic and social changes.
- LH 04 Ensure that suitable dwellings are provided in all housing developments to cater for people with disabilities and the elderly.
- LH 05 Ensure that all new housing developments represent 'Sustainable Neighbourhoods' which are inclusive and responsive to the physical or cultural needs of those who use them, are well located relative to the social, community, commercial and administrative services which sustain them and are integrated with the community within which it will be located.
- LH 06 Ensure all new residential schemes are designed so that units are easily adaptable in the future to accommodate housing for life.
- LH 07 Identify and encourage development of age friendly accommodation, including independent living accommodation within walking distance to existing town and village, and close to primary health care facilities.

4.9 Social Infrastructure

A significant contributor to sustainable communities is the provision and delivery of social infrastructure to support and achieve balanced communities. Facilities need to be inclusive so that communities in Cavan can integrate and socialise across different age, socio-economic and ethnic groups. Such social infrastructure plays an important role in developing strong and inclusive communities and includes facilities in relation to health, education, libraries, childcare, recreation, cultural facilities, burial grounds and emergency facilities. Social infrastructure should be easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. Shared use and co-location of facilities should be encouraged, in order to align service provision, use land more efficiently and facilitate opportunities for further inclusion and community participation.

Over the lifetime of the Development Plan population growth and changing demographics will require a policy response to ensure positive health outcomes for children, young people, older people, and families to support the population throughout life stage development. In catering for the provision of adequate social and community infrastructure, the County faces a number of challenges in terms of placemaking and its demographic components. Understanding the County's demographic structure is central to preparing a strategy which will address future community needs. The CSO figures highlight demographic pressures that will likely remain a feature in the County.

Social Infrastructure Development Objective

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

- SI 01** Work collaboratively with relevant service providers and stakeholders to facilitate the provision of community services and social infrastructure, where appropriate, in order to meet the needs of new and existing communities.

4.10 Demographic Profile

4.10.1 Growing Population

County Cavan has experienced significant population growth. The population of County Cavan increased by 4 per cent between 2011 and 2016. In 2011, the population was 73,183. By 2016 it had increased to 76,176. Taking account of the characteristics of the growth categories this has implications in terms of social infrastructure provision.

4.10.2 Growing Youth Cohort

According to Census 2016, County Cavan had 5,725 children aged 0-4 (comprising 7.52% of its population). The State average for this statistic was 6.96%. There were 21,999 young people aged 0-18 in the county (29% of the population). This generates requirements for provision of adequate childcare, educational facilities and other associated infrastructure provision.

4.10.3 Ageing Population

Older people aged 65 and over made up 13.73% of the population (10,464 people). This proportion of older people increased from 12.1% in 2011. Both nationally and internationally there is evidence of population ageing, meaning that the proportion of older people in the population is increasing over time. This presents issues for planning and delivery of service. 'Age Friendly' programmes seek to prepare society for population ageing.

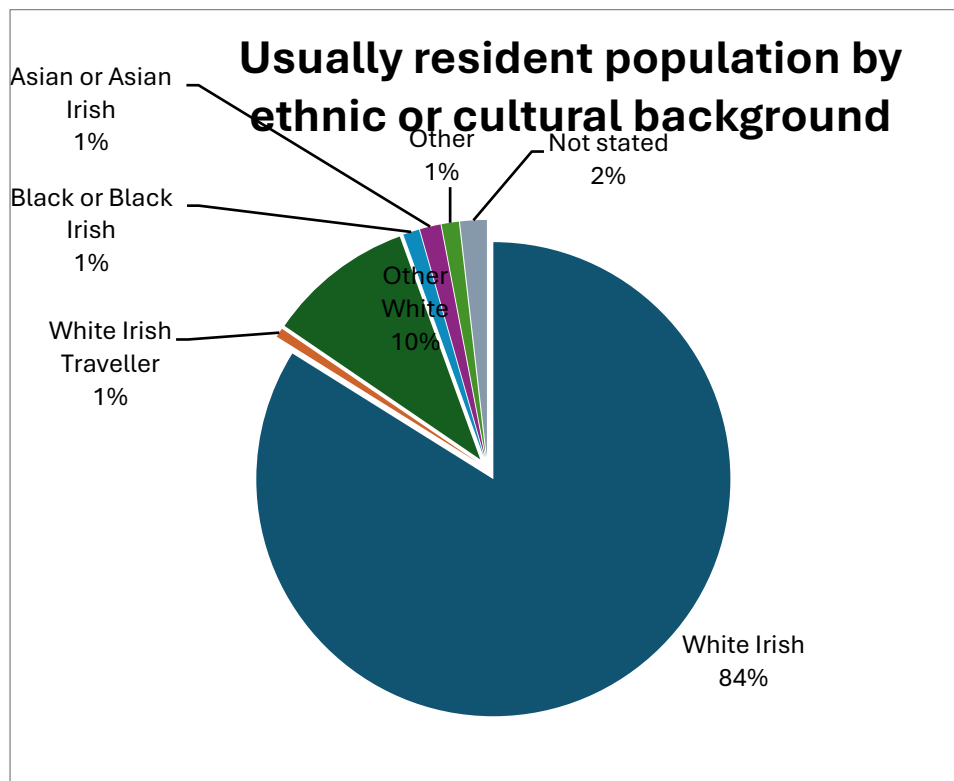
4.10.4 Disabled Population

There are 9,508 people with disability in County Cavan, 50.3 per cent female and 49.7 per cent male. This must be acknowledged in terms of the provision of healthy placemaking and adequate social infrastructure provision.

4.10.5 Ethnic Groups

According to the Census 2016, 87% of Cavan residents are of Irish nationality. It was also recorded that there are 2,189 Polish nationals and 1,433 Lithuanian nationals living in the county. In terms of ethnicity, the population is 83% White Irish; while 'Other White' people make up ten per cent of the population. There are 1,073 Asian/Asian Irish and 831 Black/Black Irish in Cavan.

Figure 4.2 Usually resident population by ethnic or cultural background



4.10.6 Traveller Community

Nationally the number of usual residents present in the State and enumerated as Irish Travellers in Census 2016 increased from 2011, by 5.1 per cent. The population of Travellers has not increased significantly in Cavan since 2011 when there were 452 Travellers in the county, however it is estimated that there is some underreporting among this community. Only 1% of Irish Travellers in County Cavan live in caravans or mobile homes. Also, the structure of the Irish Traveller population is very different to that of the general population, with a broad base at the younger ages and reducing sharply at higher ages. Nearly 58.1% Irish Travellers were under 25 years of age, compared to just over 33.4% in the general population. In terms of those aged 65; this is significantly lower than the general population.

4.11 Community Participation

The Development Plan aims to consider demographic trends and patterns in terms of the provision of social infrastructure. Also in accordance with the RSES, the quality of services and amenities for a diverse and multi-cultural society will be a key determinant in how successful and attractive the County is and will require a planning response to support the integration of traveller and migrant communities, to ensure that diverse needs are met now and over the lifetime of the Plan. Cavan County Council will pursue an integrated, cohesive and socially inclusive approach to community facilities which will help re-connect people with their neighbourhoods and to achieve a wider sense of community. The Council

will also encourage the maximum use of existing local assets through shared use and cost to ensure high-quality facilities are available to all. Proposals for large-scale residential and/or mixed-use schemes must demonstrate how the proposal will contribute to the range of supporting community infrastructure necessary for a sustainable community.

The Pride of Place Initiative is a good example of active community participation in the county whereby communities' work in partnership with the Council to encourage best practice, innovation and leadership in providing vibrant sustainable communities that improve the quality of life for all through environmental improvements to towns and villages.

Through the work of a Pride of Place liaison officer, Cavan County Council supports local groups taking part in initiatives like the IPB Pride of Place. Cavan entries have had some success, in 2017 Erica's Fairy Forest in Cootehill took home a special award at the event. In addition, each year the Cathaoirleachs Award competition is also rolled out. The award celebrates the work of volunteers who make a difference to their communities because of their exceptional achievement, effort or service in a voluntary or unpaid capacity in County Cavan. These awards show the value that Cavan County Council places on those volunteers and the importance of their work within the community.

Cavan County Council has a Joint Policing Committee (JPC). The purpose of the JPC is to provide a forum where a Local Authority and Garda Officers, with the participation of Oireachtas members and community interests, can consult, discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting policing within their jurisdiction. JPCs are a successful example of how a collaborative approach between the said sectors can support policing and enhance community safety.

Public Participation Networks (PPN) have been introduced throughout Ireland as part of Local Government Reform. This network provides an important link to which the council connects to and engages with the community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental sectors countywide, for consultation and information sharing. The PPN provides a structure framework for the public to take an active role in influencing plans and policies of the Council. Memberships of the PPN is open to all community and voluntary groups in the County. At present there are over 270 member groups from the community and voluntary, social inclusion and environmental sectors across the County.

The Cavan LECP, the NPF and RSES encourage community participation and strive to provide local communities with the required tools and resources to problem solve, overcome challenges and flourish.

Social Infrastructure Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

SI 01 Work collaboratively with relevant service providers and stakeholders to facilitate the provision of community services and social infrastructure, where appropriate, in order to meet the needs of new and existing communities.

SI 02	Support the relevant actions of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and the Cavan Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) to deliver social infrastructure needs and to reduce poverty and social exclusion.
SI 03	Support the planned provision of easily accessible social, community, cultural and recreational facilities and ensure all communities have access to a range of facilities that meet their needs easily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport.
SI 04	Encourage shared use and co-location of social and community facilities, in order to align service provision, use land more efficiently and facilitate opportunities for further inclusion and community participation.
SI 05	Ensure the integration of age friendly and family friendly strategies in all design proposals and that provision is made for flexible housing typologies, and that buildings and public spaces are designed for all, including older people, disabled people and people with young children.
SI 06	Support initiatives to increase social integration of minority groups, including non-Irish nationals and Travellers.
SI 07	Secure the implementation of the Council's Traveller Accommodation Programme and to review this programme, if required and/or deemed to be necessary, during the Plan period.

4.12 Healthcare and Well-being

The Census 2016 revealed 87.44% of the County's population in 2016 considered their general health to be very good/or good, which is equivalent to almost 9 out of 10 of the County's population and is consistent with national trends. Many of the factors which influence people's health, well-being and quality of life such as access to education, employment, housing, social infrastructure, safety, attractive open spaces are dependent on the location and development of land and buildings.

Cavan County Council have a significant role to play in the provision of healthcare facilities throughout the county by ensuring there is sufficient lands available to accommodate sufficient healthcare facilities. The Health Service Executive (HSE) is the primary body responsible for the provision of health care and social services in Ireland. While the residents of Cavan have access to the various hospitals located in the surrounding counties, Cavan General Hospital acts as the primary acute hospital for the surrounding region.

The Department of Health and Children published "*The Primary Care Strategy*" in 2001 which advocates a team based approach to service provision, designed to make available a fully integrated primary care service. This approach is acknowledged and support by Cavan County Council. The plan enables the location of such facilities, together with community support services, on suitably zoned lands in close proximity to new and existing residential areas. This approach will provide access to multi-disciplinary health care, mental health and wellbeing services in easily accessible locations throughout the County.

Cavan County Council is committed to working closely with the HSE regarding the provision of adequately zoned lands for health care facilities in accordance with best planning practice.

Cavan Local Community Development Committee is helping to create and sustain healthy places for people to be born, grow, live, work and age in. Cavan Local Community Development Committee aims to develop, co-ordinate and implement local and community development programmes. Working with a wide range of organisations including Children's Young People's Services Committees and other groups, Cavan Local Community Development Committee is ideally placed to support Healthy Ireland in response to local people's needs. Local Community Development Committees are key partners in realising a Healthy Ireland through developing the National Healthy Cities and Counties Network of Ireland. The Healthy Cavan committee is a working sub-committee of Cavan Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in Health and Wellbeing.

Healthcare and Well-being Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

HW 01 Support the provision of new health care facilities which are well located in terms of their accessibility in settlement centres serving a sufficient catchment population and are appropriately well served by public transport and accessible on foot/cycle and are consistent with the size, scale and character of the area.

HW 02 Support and promote the development of socially inclusive, sustainable communities in the County and seek to ensure that all citizens enjoy optimal health and well-being.

HW 03 Support the implementation of Healthy Cavan Programme.

HW 04 Work with the Health Service Executive, statutory and voluntary agencies and the private sector to enable the provision of health care facilities in appropriate locations subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the county.

HW 05 Ensure that adequate lands and services are available for the improvement, expansion and establishment of health services.

HW 06 Consider change of use applications from residential to health care facilities/practices only where the privacy and amenity of adjacent occupiers can be preserved and the proposal does not have a detrimental effect on local amenity. The full conversion of semi-detached or terraced type dwellings will not normally be permitted.

HW 07 Support the provision of primary health care centres and GP practices at locations with good accessibility to its users.

HW 08 Provide for new or extended health care facilities where new residential development is proposed.

HW 09 Support the provision of new health care facilities in towns, villages and local centres, with good accessibility, particularly for people with a disability.

HW 10	Support and promote the development of socially inclusive, sustainable communities
	in the County and seek to ensure that all citizens enjoy optimal health and well-being.

4.13 Community Facilities

The provision of community infrastructure is essential to the formation and delivery of sustainable balanced communities. Such facilities are required to be inclusive to allow communities in Cavan integrate and socialise across different age, socio-economic and ethnic groups. In order to build sustainable communities a range of community facilities as stated in the ~~Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)~~ [Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities \(2024\)](#) are required.

Cavan County Council will encourage the provision of community, commercial and local employment facilities including schools, childcare facilities, community centres, primary health care centres and local commercial service of a scale appropriate to serve the local community through land use and zoning objectives. Where possible accessibility for all abilities should be facilitated to ensure all levels of access and mobility are accommodated. In addition, the maximum use of community facilities will be promoted.

With regard to residential developments, proposals for large-scale residential and/or mixed use schemes must demonstrate how the proposal will contribute to the range of supporting community infrastructure necessary for a sustainable community.

Cavan County Council acknowledge the contribution of the community voluntary section in association with relevant statutory bodies in the provision of community facilities. Community facilities help foster a sense of community identity and wellbeing. It is essential that through the planning process adequate measures are taken to secure community services in order to improve the quality of life. A flexible and supportive approach will be adapted towards proposals for community facilities on suitable sites within other land use zoning categories where such a proposal is suitably located within the settlement boundary and is accessible for all sections of the community.

Sustainable neighbourhoods require a range of community facilities as stated in the ~~Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)~~ [Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities \(2024\)](#).

The Council will encourage the provision of community, commercial and local employment facilities such as schools, childcare facilities, community centres, primary health care centres and local commercial service of a scale appropriate to serve the local community through land use and zoning objectives. This grouping of services can facilitate viability where they are within walking distance of residents and can create a focal point for the neighbourhood. An amenity or service may be present (possibly at close distance) but make little contribution to quality of life if access is poor or perceived

quality is low. Where possible accessibility for all abilities should be facilitated to ensure all levels of access and mobility are accommodated.

County Cavan holds a strong sporting tradition. Sport and physical activity make a huge contribution not only to the physical, but social and mental health of all people within the county. Cavan gives home to many high quality natural amenities which in turn provide opportunity for physical recreation and social interaction. The strong tradition for Gaelic sports within the county continues to grow with the county training grounds at Breffni Park providing a central headquarters for all GAA activities in the County. Cavan Sports Partnership was established in 2008 through Cavan County Council as an initiative of Sport Ireland. Its main objective is to create opportunities for all people to participate in sport and physical activity, regardless of their ability. Cavan Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2021 vision is '*Sport and activity for life*', for all. The overall aim is to have an active county where sport and physical activity is an important part of daily life. Cavan Sports Partnership has a role across the sports landscape of County Cavan including: Supporting facilities, organisations and volunteers, enabling sports activities and providing access to information. Fundamental to the operation and success of Cavan Sports Partnership is ongoing collaboration with partners throughout the county and beyond.

In 2016, Cavan County Council completed a County Cavan Community and Sports Facility Survey. This survey identified a number of particular areas of concern; Kingscourt, Ballyjamesduff, Mullagh, Ballyconnell, Belturbet, Cootehill and Virginia. These areas have all experienced significant population growth over the past few years and are lagging behind in terms of having suitable community and sports facilities to meet their growing needs. According to the findings there is a deficit of sporting facilities available within the West Cavan area. In addition, there is a lack of facilities within Cavan Town to cater for the large number of sporting organisations operating there. It is recommended that intensive support is provided for community and sporting groups within these identified areas in particular to support them to tap into funding opportunities available under Sports Capital and the newly launched 'Realising Our Potential: An Action Plan for Rural Development'. The provision of community hubs/spaces and sporting facilities is also a priority of Cavan County Council. Please see Chapter 2 Settlement Strategy.

This audit also suggests there is a deficit of non GAA sporting facilities within County Cavan, specifically around sporting activities such as soccer and athletics. The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) identified that Cavan has a growing youth population which will result in increased pressure to provide an outlet for our young people through sport and the appropriate facilities. A specific action within the plan states that Cavan County Council is to 'Develop a multi-purpose sports facility for the county' and the findings from this report add weight for such a need. Following this, Cavan County Council commissioned a feasibility study for the development of a regional sports facility for the County, whereby Cavan Town was identified as the most appropriate location for a facility of regional significance for the County. Cavan County Council is committed to the delivery of this facility and this plan facilities this provision. Please refer to Chapter 2 Settlement Hierarchy (Cavan Town)

Community Facilities Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

CF 01 Maintain and, where possible, improve the provision of community facilities, including sports facility in the County to ensure that facilities are adequate to meet the needs of the communities they serve, are physically integrated with residential and employment areas and are provided concurrently with new residential development.

CF 02 Consider development proposals for new social and community infrastructure/service related development at:

- a. Locations within the settlement boundaries which are within walking distance of local services whereby social inclusion is promoted. An alternative location may be considered where it is clearly demonstrated that there are no suitable sites available within the settlement and strong justification is given to the development of such a particular site.
- b. In rural locations in close proximity to existing rural infrastructure (schools, sports facilities, churches etc.) where it is demonstrated that the development is intended to serve an exclusive rural need or where there is no site available which meet the locational criteria set out in (a) above.

CF 03 Consider cultural diversity and ethnic minorities in planning for the needs of communities and ensure community facilities and social services provided are accessible for all individuals, communities and sectors of society, including people with disabilities, people with special needs, elderly, youth, marginalized and disadvantaged groups.

CF 04 Consider proposals for primary Healthcare Facilities in association with the HSE's Programme for Delivery. The siting of these facilities in existing town centre and neighbourhood centres will be encouraged.

CF 05 Ensure that proposals for the change of use of residential accommodation for use by doctors, dentists and other medical practitioners does not negatively impact on residential amenity and is in keeping with the character of the area.

CF 06 Support and encourage the provision by voluntary and state agencies, of a wide range of appropriate community facilities and premises to meet the needs and demands of new and existing communities, especially in areas where there are deficiencies.

CF 07 Support and promote community groups with local projects, community development and any opportunities that may arise.

CF 08	Support and promote the development new and existing sports facilities within the County, subject to the normal planning criteria and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
CF 09	Support the provision of a Regional Sports Facility for the County.
CF 10	Support the work of Cavan Sports Partnership and the implementation of Cavan Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017-2021 and any other subsequent plan.
CF 11	Ensure that new leisure facilities, where possible, are located in proximity to public transportation routes and where they can best meet the needs of the community that the facilities are intended to serve.

4.14 Childcare and Youth Facilities

Access to affordable and high-quality childcare is an essential requirement for an equitable society, a thriving economy and sustainable communities and is a critical part of the County's infrastructure. Childcare is essential to enable parents to participate in the workforce and to obtain an income that provides an acceptable standard of living for both them and their children.

Cavan County Childcare Committee supports 63 Early Learning and Care services of which 24 are Community providers and 39 are Private providers. There are 4 School Age standalone services, 2 are community and 2 are private. The Childcare schemes offered in the county include the early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) and the National Childcare Scheme (NCS). As per the Census in 2016, County Cavan had 5,725 children aged 0-4 years (comprising 7.52% of its population. The State average for this statistic was 6.96%. Although the Council is not directly involved in the provision of childcare services, the Plan will seek to ensure sufficient facilities are provided in the areas required and in keeping with development. The Council will continue to be proactive in promoting and sustaining childcare facilities in the county. Detailed requirements and standards for childcare development projects are set out in Chapter 13 Development Management Standards.

Cavan Children and Young Peoples Service Committee (CYPSC), through the implementation of its Children and Young Peoples Plan aims to ensure effective interagency co-ordination and collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for all children and young people in its area. Cavan County Council also supports Cavan Comhairle na nOg as a youth voice within the County.

Children and Youth Facilities Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

CY 01	Promote childcare facilities in the County.
CY 02	Support Cavan and Young Peoples Service Committee and the implementation of its Children and Young Peoples Plan and any other subsequent plan.
CY 03	Support the Cavan Comhairle na nOg programme.

4.15 Schools and Educational Facilities

The provision of investment in education and training are central to reinforcing the delivery of sustainable communities, promoting inclusion and offering choice and accessibility to a high standard of education and employment. Education, training and life-long learning are key enablers, around which personal fulfilment, a fair society and a successful population revolve. All are central to sustaining economic success and building strong communities. The Development Plan seeks to prioritise the alignment of targeted and planned population and employment growth with educational investment, including the provision of new schools on well-located sites within or close to existing built-up areas that meet the diverse needs of local populations. The continued provision and enhancement of facilities and amenities for children and young people, such as childcare, schools, playgrounds, parks and sportsgrounds, is a priority and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. The Council will support the provision of high-quality education and training programmes and facilities, including the allocation of sufficient sites and the development of childcare facilities, schools, and colleges in appropriate locations to cater for population growth targets. This will aid the provision of greater educational choice to facilitate improvement in skills, and to assist in tackling disadvantage.

Car dependency is a significant mode of school transport in the County. In addition to factoring sustainable access as a condition for new schools and educational infrastructure, a programme of settlement retrofit will be encouraged to facilitate safe walking, cycling or ease of access to public transport alternatives. Optimally, schools need to be located along sustainable transport corridors (i.e. walking, cycling, public transport). Co-ordinated decision making on school locations with the Department of Education will be carried out, with a planned approach to education provision to locate new school facilities within access to public transport and active travel modes.

The provision of third level education facilities in County Cavan is critical to retaining the youth population, it also benefits local employers and industry by providing skilled graduates. The enhancement of third level facilities provides scope for effective engagement between institutions and employers through access to research, development and innovation.

Childcare and Educational Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

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| CE 01 | Encourage and support the provision of childcare facilities, with consideration to appropriate siting and design, in appropriate locations including residential areas, town and local centres, areas of employment, close to public transport throughout the County and in accordance with the needs identified by Cavan County Childcare Committee. |
| CE 02 | Support the provision of childcare facilities and new and refurbished schools on well located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, that meet the diverse needs of local populations. |

CE 03	Support play policies to address the play and recreation needs of children and young people and ensure the integration of play provision and child-friendly neighbourhoods.
CE 04	Ensure that appropriate and adequate lands are available in County Cavan for the provision, expansion and/or improvement of educational facilities and to prohibit development adjoining existing public educational facilities which could hinder the future development of such facilities and any associated ancillary infrastructure.
CE 05	Work collaboratively with the Department of Education to ensure a planned approach to education provision and to the location of school facilities with access to public transport and sustainable travel modes (i.e. walking, cycling).
CE 06	Ensure areas where significant new housing is proposed, an assessment of need regarding schools' provision is carried out in collaboration with the Department of Education.
CE 07	Develop a programme for existing schools to facilitate safe walking, cycling or ease of access to public transport alternatives.
CE 08	To facilitate the implementation of Department of Education programme of capital investment in schools in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and in compliance with the following, or any subsequent relation publications, in terms of location, siting and design:

- () The Provision of Schools and the Planning System – A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, July 2008.
- () Technical Guidance Document TGD20-TGD25 Department of Education and Skills 2007
- () ~~Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government May 2009 (and the accompanying Urban Design Manual)~~ [Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities \(2024\)](#)

CE 09	Reserve sites for educational use in those areas where the younger population has increased and there is a demographic demand for further school places.
CE 10	Ensure the needs of communities including education facilities are appropriately provided for in the County.
CE 11	Encourage the use of existing educational facilities and school playing fields for other community purposes.

CE 12	Reduce the need to travel by car to schools. Applications for extensions to an existing school or a new school must be accompanied by a sustainable travel plan. The plan should indicate how pupils will access the school and provide for sustainable modes of travel to school and encourage alternatives to the car and have regard to road safety, good design and efficiency in accordance with the Department of Environment's Code of Practice on the Provision of Schools and the Planning System July 2008.
CE 13	Support in conjunction with the relevant agencies, the provision of Third Level facilities, Youth Outreach, Adult and Further Education facilities within the County.
CE 14	Support the provision of community infrastructure and require that development proposals involving the loss or change of use of land or buildings for community purposes to demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There are adequate facilities in the vicinity to cater for the needs of the area. b. The use is no longer viable. c. Alternative community uses are being provided elsewhere, or as part of the development, in association with the proposal.
CE 15	Promote links between the educational /training sector and enterprise sector.
CE 16	Provide for the development of dedicated youth spaces in key urban areas and the development of multifunction spaces in smaller communities/rural areas.

4.16 Recreation, Amenity and Open Space

The Council recognises the role recreation, amenity and open space facilities can play in creating healthy environments and facilitating more active lifestyles to ensure the well-being and improved quality of life for communities. In this regard, high quality open spaces, green linkages, such as walks and trails, cycle ways, access to the lakes, sports and recreational facilities that are usable and accessible to all should be provided in tandem with development and changing community needs. The connectivity of open spaces between urban areas, urban fringe and rural areas allows for the interaction of people and wildlife and connects people with places of work and community facilities.

Public open space offers both passive and active recreation, contributing to the quality of life of residents and visitors alike. These amenities also offer environmental and ecological benefits and improve building energy performance. There are numerous health benefits for communities with access to open space both in a rural and urban setting. Parks and open spaces are important contributors to local distinctiveness, offering opportunities to reflect elements of the local landscape, culture and heritage through design concepts, materials, topography and planting. To achieve optimum accessibility and effective provision of open space and recreational facilities, they should be located and designed on a hierarchical basis according to the needs of a defined population. It is important that the County offers an adequate network of open spaces. The RSES supports the preparation of open space and parks

strategies by local authorities, and for enhanced cross boundary collaboration to provide for a hierarchy of open space provision including regional scale open space and recreational facilities. It is the policy of Cavan County Council to support the provision of public open space and parks as appropriate throughout the County. Con Smith Park in Cavan Town is an established town park which has been developed as a multi-generational park, with walks and an adult outdoor gym, children's playground, skate park and bandstand. The park comprises of an area of 14.42 acres, Cavan County Council now seek to develop the entire site into a quality public park.

A number of established walking and cycling routes, trails and greenways have been developed. Such routes can open up valuable amenity assets for local communities and visitors to enjoy and appreciate as well as providing opportunities for enhancement of quality of life and health together with providing important tourism assets and consequential benefits to the local economy. Many opportunities exist for creating new and improved linkages and facilities for walking and cycling so that the enjoyment of the wealth of natural heritage and amenity may be maximised and the potential to exploit these assets for the purposes of tourism can be realised. Cavan County Council prepared a Cycling and Walking Strategy for County Cavan in 2018. The aim objective for this strategy is the development of an action-focused document that will sustain an overall vision for walking and cycling in the County. It is the policy of this plan to support the provision of walking and cycling routes, trails and greenways within the County and the implementation of this strategy.

Cavan offers a wealth of natural and manmade resources making it an ideal location for outdoor sport and recreation. Such facilities need to be protected, maintained and promoted. Cavan County Council will oppose development on, or removal of, existing playing fields, pitches and any other designated area of public open space.

The Council recognises the importance of play in the development of children and continues to promote participation in sport and recreation through a range of measures. Communities also benefit from play because of the opportunities it offers for integration, enhancing community spirit and preventing anti social behaviour. Playground facilities should cater for defined age groups and provide a variety of facilities and play opportunities. The role of Cavan County Council in regard to play opportunities goes beyond the development of physical infrastructure specifically designated for play. Planning for play requires that we ensure that recognition of our children's right to play in safety is built into all aspects of both our natural and built environment. Cavan County Council are currently developing a new Playground Policy 2020-2025 which focuses on future playground development in County Cavan and the maintenance of existing playgrounds in a strategic manner. It is the policy of this plan to support the provision of MUGA facilities at appropriate locations throughout the County. The Council will support future initiatives, which raise awareness of the importance of play for the health, well-being and development of children, people with disabilities, travellers and ethnic minorities. Furthermore, the Council also support sports development programmes through the Ulster Council GAA, FAI and Ulster Rugby and Cavan Sports Partnership programmes.

Allotments are becoming increasingly popular and play an important function in serving communities. Private landowners have a role in providing this resource and service which promotes sustainable living.

Allotments should be located such that they do not have an adverse impact on the safety and capacity of the surrounding road network and designed and sited to have a minimal impact on the surrounding landscape.

Recreation, Amenity and Open Space Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

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| RAOS 01 | Ensure sufficient land is allocated to provide a variety of open spaces on a hierarchical basis throughout the County in order to achieve a choice of open space, recreational and amenity facilities. |
| RAOS 02 | Develop public open spaces that have good connectivity and are accessible by safe, secure walking and cycling routes. |
| RAOS 03 | Increase the use and potential of existing public open space, parks and recreational areas, both passive and active, allotments and community gardens, by integrating existing facilities with proposals for new development and by seeking to upgrade existing facilities where appropriate. |
| RAOS 04 | Support the development of appropriately located allotments, in areas which have good access to and are proximate to built-up and residential areas. |
| RAOS 05 | Facilitate and encourage open space to be planned for on a multi-functional basis incorporating ecosystem services, climate change measures, green infrastructure and key landscape features in their design. |
| RAOS 06 | Promote the value of the County's recreational and amenity resources as a key asset to the local economy and to the health and well-being of the community and continue to support the expansion of existing amenities. |
| RAOS 07 | Seek a greater variety of provision of recreation and amenity facilities to reflect the demands of an increasingly diverse population. |
| RAOS 08 | Support the development of regional scale Recreational Sports facility in Cavan Town. |
| RAOS 09 | Support the provision of MUGA facilities throughout the County. |
| RAOS 10 | Support the implementation of Cavan Playground Policy 2020-2025 and facilitate the provision of appropriately scaled children's playground facilities. |
| RAOS 11 | Support the provision of new and upgrade of existing walking and cycling routes, trails and greenways within the County. |
| RAOS 12 | Support the implementation of the Cycling and Walking Strategy for County Cavan. |

4.17 Libraries, Arts and Culture

Libraries, arts and cultural facilities not only contribute to the artistic, social and quality of life of communities, they also contribute to the economy by attracting visitors, investment and job creation. The arts sector in County Cavan is a vibrant one which encompasses a range of established heritage

groups, cultural festivals and activities operating throughout the County. There is a considerable pool of talent and enterprise in the county. The Arts sector is important for the identity of the County and its population and ensures this culture is protected and promoted. Cavan's reputation as quirky and alternative is due to its people, landscape, history and location. This is enhanced by a largely rural population and an increasingly diverse society, which cultivates a high level of individuality amongst its citizens. The proliferation of the arts in the county reflects the work of the artists, their publics, a wide range of partners and stakeholders and the local authority's investment in the arts and the wider cultural offer. Through the work of the Arts Office, the Council aim to cultivate an environment which allows the arts sector to flourish, while at the same time engaging and educating as many people as possible in and about the arts sector. The Arts Office continuously strives to support all facets of the arts and to instil a culture of participation, learning and critical thinking in relation to arts development. The arts office is currently guided by Inclusivity and Ambition – A Strategy for Cavan Arts 2018 – 2023.

The county towns cultural infrastructure is being renewed through investment in key growth sectors. Important investment at Townhall Cavan, the Abbeylands project, the County Museum and Cavan County Library buildings across the County, including the redevelopment of Belturbet Library and Civic Centre, the new library and theatre complex incorporating Ramor Theatre, Virginia and ongoing negotiations to provide a library and cultural amenity in Kingscourt are vital to the growth of a healthy environment for the arts to thrive. The ongoing work on developing a world class Storytelling Centre at Cavan County Museum will further enrich this dynamic cultural asset in the County.

The incorporation of public art in public spaces, civic buildings and town centre locations is also encouraged.

Cavan County Library Service currently comprises a network of three full-time and six part-time branch libraries supported by Library Headquarters in Cavan Town. It also provides a prison library service to Loughan House Open Centre. It provides an essential and fundamental quality of life service to many people in the County and wider area. Cavan County Council's Library Development Plan 2017-2021 charts the future direction of Cavan's library service through strategies which aim to meet the demands of the evolving economic and community profile of the county. The Council continues to encourage an integrated approach to the delivery of library, arts and other cultural activities and services, in line with the objectives of the Library Development Plan and subject to available finance. The library service plays an important role in connecting and empowering communities, with free membership ensuring that the library service is available to all. The provision of high-speed internet service across the branch network is a measure that supports a more inclusive society. The development of a state-of-the-art library facility as part of the new Civic Centre in Virginia is currently underway. The expansion of the service will continue, with a major capital development planned for Kingscourt Library, pending funding. The refurbishment of the existing library in Kingscourt is planned as an interim measure. Cavan County Council will build on technological and service innovations to improve access to, use and visibility of the public library service and to establish it as a leading provider of sustainable, integrated public services.

Cavan has a rich and living cultural heritage and a strong cultural identity, based on a wide range of activities and interests, including music, theatre, TV and film, visual arts, crafts, dance, literature,

architecture and sport. The Council supports major cultural events and have been involved in the hosting of a number of national cultural and music events. The Council recognises the importance of these events, activities and facilities which contribute towards the intellectual, artistic and social quality of life for people in the County and attracting other people from both within and outside the country to Cavan.

Libraries, Arts & Culture Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

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| LAC 01 | Support the development of the library service in County Cavan and the implementation of the actions set out in the Library Development Plan. |
| LAC 02 | Support and promote the provision of a Mobile Library Service with IT support to the towns, villages and communities in the County that have no library service. |
| LAC 03 | Facilitate and encourage the use of Public Spaces in Towns and villages for Art events, performances and festivals. |
| LAC 04 | Encourage the provision of new or improved arts, cultural and entertainment facilities, particularly in the parts of the County where there is a deficiency in such provision. |
| LAC 05 | Promote and support the development of the arts sector in County Cavan. |
| LAC 06 | Support and promote the arts sector in order to preserve Cavan's unique history, heritage and culture. |
| LAC 07 | Encourage and support the creation and display of works of art in public places, including streetscapes as appropriate, provided environmental, amenity, traffic or other constraints are carefully managed. |

4.18 Burial Grounds and Places of Worship

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide for burial facilities. The Council will support the development of additional burial grounds and extensions to existing facilities where appropriate. Changes in society have resulted in the needs to provide multi-denominational graveyards and memorial gardens. It is proposed to develop future sites in a sustainable, climate action friendly manner using natural products and low carbon construction and it is a goal to make the sites self-sufficient in energy needs. It is recognised that burial grounds also hold an amenity value, it is proposed that any extra land purchased for burial grounds can be used for tree planting and the creation of a bio-diversity areas. There is currently one crematorium in Cavan which serves the county and the surrounding area.

Cavan is now a county with a more diverse population hosting numerous faith and religious communities. This has given rise to demand for dedicated worship spaces. The Council will encourage appropriate, easily accessible locations which comply with the Council's standards with regard to design and environmental issues.

Burial Ground and Places of Worship Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

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| BGPW 01 | Support the provision of burial grounds (including multi-denominational burial grounds), together with necessary extensions to existing burial grounds. |
| BGPW 02 | Protect and maintain historic graveyards within the County and support the care, conservation and appropriate interpretation of historic burial grounds vested in the care of Cavan County Council. |
| BGPW 03 | Assist the development of places of worship in appropriate locations in urban centres and proximate to residential communities. |

4.19 Fire Service and Civil Defence

The Fire Service is a vital public safety service provided by the Council. There are stations located throughout the county. The responsibility for the protection and rescue of persons and property under the Fire Services Acts is discharged through the county fire service. The role of the fire service in the community involves promotion of fire safety, fire protection of the built environment, major emergency management and also the emergency response capability of the fire service.

The firefighting service has a complement of 93 retained firefighters based throughout the county and four officers with associated support staff based in Cavan Town. The retained firefighters operate from one of the ten stations in the county located at Cavan, Cootehill, Kingscourt, Bailieborough, Virginia, Ballyjamesduff, Ballyconnell, Belturbet, Killeshandra and Dowra. All firefighters are trained in dealing with structural and outdoor fires, road traffic accidents, chemical incidents, gas leaks etc. as well as other special rescue services.

The role and functions of the fire service are intertwined with other core services of the council such as planning, housing, water services and roads. Effective working relationships and co-operation between the fire service and other local authority services are essential in maintaining public safety for all the community in Co. Cavan. The fire service has a duty regarding fire safety activities in public and certain private buildings in the area of fire safety design, property improvement and change of use. Its functions include advising on planning applications, dangerous substances licensing, community fire safety initiatives and fire safety inspections of buildings.

In accordance with the Building Control Regulations, a Fire Safety Certificate is required before construction is commenced for particular building types.

Civil Defence is a voluntary organisation part funded by Local Authority and Department of Defence who provide an important frontline emergency services in dealing with severe weather, flooding, major accidents and searching for missing people. In addition, Civil Defence support community events throughout the year. In Cavan there is one fulltime paid Civil Defence Officer and at present one

temporary Assistant Civil Defence Officer. There are 209 Volunteers who actively give their time to ensure Civil Defence are able to attend the requests we receive from the Principal Response Agencies and the public.

Fire Service and Civil Defence Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

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| FSCD 01 | Continue to co-operate with the County Fire Service in the operation of its duties and in the design of new buildings. |
| FSCD 02 | Facilitate the accommodation of fire service facilities in suitable locations. |
| FSCD 03 | Facilitate the implementation of the “ <i>Fire Service Operations Plan 2015-2019</i> ” or as otherwise amended. |
| FSCD 04 | Support the Cavan Civil Defence Programme. |

4.20 Social Inclusion

The promotion of social inclusion is an overall aim of the plan. Social inclusion refers to the way all members of the community are integrated in an equal manner. Social inclusion aims to make participation in education, recreation, employment and health more accessible for all. It seeks to ensure that minority groups, people from different nationalities and cultural backgrounds, the travelling community, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, the elderly, children and young people are recognised as valued members of society. It is crucial that our living, working and leisure environments are designed and maintained in a manner that is accessible to all. The Council, through its Social Inclusion Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022 and considered policies, supports and proactively encourages a culture of social inclusion. The Development Plan policies and objectives facilitate the development of sustainable communities. Good quality public realm, access to housing, community facilities and public transport are central to the promotion of social inclusion. The Plan also seeks to foster equality of opportunity and protection of human rights enshrined in the UN charter. The Council is fully committed to developing a more socially inclusive society and promoting participation and access for all.

Through the Local Economic and Community Plan and the work of Cavan LCDC a key goal is to improve the access and quality of Cavan Local Authority Services for people from disadvantaged communities.

Sustainable Social Inclusion Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

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| SSI 01 | Support social inclusion measures including the revitalisation of areas by physical regeneration, planning, investment and community development and measures to |
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	improve educational attainment levels, upskilling in key competencies and skills acquisition.
SSI 02	Continue to provide accommodation for all households whose financial circumstances dictate that they cannot provide for their own housing needs, such as the elderly, lone parents, travellers, persons with disabilities.
SSI 03	Cooperate with Voluntary Housing Bodies and other providers of social housing in the provision of housing.
SSI 04	Promote Universal Design and Lifetime Housing in accordance with best practice and the policies and principles contained in <i>Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach</i> (National Disability Authority, 2012) and Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities and its companion document Urban Design Manual (DEHLG, 2008) Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)
SSI 05	Secure the implementation of the Council's Traveller Accommodation Programme and to review this programme if required and/or deemed to be necessary, during the Plan period.
SSI 06	Support a socially inclusive society, by providing for appropriate community infrastructure, located in local centres, easily accessible to communities and that are designed appropriately for accessibility and ease of use for all.
SSI 07	Use phasing arrangements to ensure that community facilities are provided in line with development.
SSI 08	Encourage and facilitate for places of worship/places of assembly in appropriate locations close to residential communities.

4.21 Sustainable Communities Climate Change Context and Development Objectives

In accordance with the format set out in Chapter 5: Climate Change of this Plan the following is an assessment of the content of this chapter in a Climate Context and associated development objectives.

Irrespective of its function, a sustainable community can refer to a group, a neighbourhood, a street, a village, a town, or even a county or region. Traditionally the formation of a sustainable community has associated itself with the physical, social, ecological, cultural and 'spiritual' qualities of an area. However, in an era of ever-increasing and more severe heat waves, precipitation, droughts, and floods, responding to the impacts of climate change has now firmly positioned itself alongside these considerations. Public spaces are where physical and social resilience meet and can now be considered a crucial tool in our arsenal to mitigate and adapt to rising temperatures and extreme weather conditions. Local Authorities are increasingly exploring the capacity of 'Greenery and Amenities' to

improve our thermal comfort, regulating air temperature, radiation, humidity and wind pattern, and subsequent use and amenity. Public spaces/community and social infrastructure should connect with nature and on a more practical level, encourage us to walk and cycle, while moving away from auto-centric design to place-led development. Mass transit and walkable, bike-friendly areas are among the best to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Our streets and facilities must be considered more as spaces and understood as a crucial tool towards improving our sustainable habits and supporting communities. Communities that are structurally sound, but also socially empowered and connected are more resilient to disaster. Climate Change will put increased pressure on economically constrained communities, many of which have limited resources to respond to the changing conditions. The most successful social/community initiatives have strong community-based participation at its centre, prioritising the assess of local community and their potential to create quality public spaces that contribute to people's health, happiness, and well-being.

Sustainable Communities Climate Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

SCCC 01 Prepare of an overarching landscaping plan for the towns and villages of Cavan, to identify pocket parks, vertical landscaping, and green roof opportunities, and micro-spaces in Council public ownership to be immediately exploited, alongside an ambition to improve connectivity between green spaces, and the implement of same with stakeholder approval.

SCCC 02 Prioritise the installation of soft-scaping within our towns and villages wherever possible, and ensure adequate understanding, adherence and address of the maintenance requirements of all existing and proposed surface treatments.

SCCC 03 Encourage all large-scale development proposals to actively assess and demonstrate, increased and/or improved quality social spaces, both externally and internally.

SCCC 04 Ensure the design of all open spaces are professionally and adequately designed and orientated at its most preferred location within a scheme and accompanied by a finishes schedule of highest quality and of sustainable materials.

SCCC 05 Encourage the installation of awnings and retention of tree canopy cover where practicable, within the commercial areas of the county towns and villages.

SCCC 06 Require all future residential developments over 10 no. or more units to submit a Social and Community Statement, setting out the measures to be implemented that will bring about improved social benefit and amenity to the area (e.g., multiple house typologies, accessible housing, social services community housing, creche and so forth).

SCCC 07 Support the introduction of car restriction zones in close proximity to urban schools to encourage active travel.

SCCC 08 Encourage local communities to develop their own renewable energy schemes.

SCCC 09 Develop future burial ground sites in a sustainable, climate action friendly manner using natural products and low carbon construction and it is a goal to make the sites self-sufficient in energy needs. It is recognised that burial grounds also hold an amenity value. It is proposed that any extra land purchased for burial grounds can be used for tree planting and the creation of a bio-diversity areas.

SCCC 10 Support the development of low carbon neighbourhood plans to mitigate against climate change and increase resilience to the impacts of climate change.