

Waterford LEADER Partnership Clg

Annual Report 2020



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Executive Summary

Waterford LEADER Partnership CLG. (WLP) was formed in 1991 as one of the four rural-based Partnership companies under the national Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP). WLP offers economic, social and cultural services to small businesses, community groups and individuals. The Board of WLP is made up of voluntary members from community and voluntary sector, social partners, environmental interests, local government and state bodies.

Vision

Our vision is to help create Communities that are economically, socially, culturally and environmentally sustainable in which all people can reach their full potential.

Objectives

- The development of infrastructure necessary for employment and sustainable living in Rural Waterford.
- To promote Business and Tourism through investment.
- To establish viable enterprises that utilize both the natural resources of the area and or embrace new technology that are wealth and job creating.
- To promote and source funding towards Culture/Language, Heritage, and Training that promotes local talent and new thinking to deal with contract working.
- To work contractually with Statutory and other investors to establish a variety of investment sources.

Goals

- *To identify and compete for sources of funding which help to achieve the company objectives.*
- *To develop a solid linkage with the Credit Union movement and other potential lenders in terms of matched finance and investment in sustainable projects.*
- *Vibrant Villages: A programme to facilitate the growth of 15 sustainable villages within the county*
- *Engines of Growth: The development of a focused strategy for the economic development of selected areas (e.g., Blackwater Valley) where communities and local business work together on an integrated plan to create new wealth, making the rural area a more attractive place to visit or live in.*
- *Sectoral initiatives: Through Community Training, Facilitation and Scenario Planning, set up county wide organisations /structures that are ready and willing to work quickly at community level with national programmes so that the communities have action ready strategies ready to avail of State and EU Funding opportunities as they arise.*

Contracts

WLP is contracted in the main by the Departments of State to operate and implement programmes on their behalf. We continue to receive Philanthropic Support from the Tomar Trust.

The main funders are:

- Dept. Rural and Community Development
- Dept. of Employment and Social Protection
- Dept. of Agriculture/SOFI
- Tomar Trust
- Waterford City & County Council
- Dept. of Justice

WLP operates the following programmes on contract.

- The LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020
- The Local Employment Service

- Tus
- Rural Social Scheme
- Social Farming
- Community Sponsorship Programme

E.U. Programme Development

W.L.P. in preparing its Vision, Objectives and Goals set as one of its principal goals the identification, competing for and sourcing of both E.U., and Philanthropic funds to underpin the company's primary objectives to action activities to sustain rural Waterford.

As outlined in 2019, WLP CLG committed to completing the Stage 11 Rural Regeneration Project on the Blackwater Economic Development Zone. Having reviewed the situation, with the substantial assistance of Philanthropic Funding, the project was able to proceed in part. As a result of the Philanthropic assistance, Lismore, Tallow, Cappoquin and Villierstown were able to proceed. 75% funding has been secured for the four builds which will be completed in late 2021.

As indicated in 2019, the Blackwater Valley is now on the journey to becoming a sustainable energy community.

Ancillary Activities

The Company's effort to attract Philanthropic investment in Community Projects matching LEADER investment is progressing in a positive fashion. Over the last year €1,000,000 has been committed by Philanthropy to Co. Waterford (Not WLP CLG).

Governance

The Board of WLP has reviewed and maintained their compliance with the Governance Code in 2020. The company is fully compliant with the Governance Code. The Company's Annual Accounts are posted on the Website and are SORP Compliant.

The Board are now preparing for the updated Governance Code required for larger Charities in 2021.

The Board follows good practice in terms of Board Rotation, and openness and transparency at Board and company level.

Chairman's Report



As Chairman of Waterford LEADER Partnership Clg., my focus over the last year has been to ensure stability and continued delivery of our main programmes such as LEADER, Tus, LES, Community Sponsorship, Social Farming, and our ancillary activities in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic that has upended and challenged in so many ways what normal life to many of us is.

Many of our citizens have suffered ill health, adversity and unfortunately death due to the virus. In reflecting on 2020, it would be remiss of me not to empathise with those most affected.

Despite the challenging times, I and my fellow Directors have worked and supported our staff in their work to exercise their duties to our clients in a professional and thoughtful manner, while maintaining our agreements with our various stakeholders.

As the Country hopefully edges back towards some form of hoped for normality in 2021, I would like to wish all our clients and stakeholders a healthy and more certain 2021.

Our mission as WLP is to build on our expertise as champions & facilitators of Rural Development and I with our Board intend to deliver this.

Micheál Cosgrove, Chairman,

Waterford Leader Partnership C L G.

C.E.O.'s Report

2020 has been a difficult year due to COVID-19. When COVID-19 really struck home in March, the Company took the decision to go online and operate the programmes remotely from late March 2020. For the remainder of the year, all meetings were held through teams and on other online mediums. While there was progression in each area of the Company, the pandemic did slow down project approvals and placements in the various programmes.

WLP, fortunately was able to resource everyone with the necessary online facilities to complete their jobs and both at Board and Staff level the company continued to deliver positive results in each operational programme area, providing services, advice and accessing investment for Communities and Businesses in County Waterford by implementing the WLP Strategy approved by the Board that is focused on programmes that fund Rural Development Activities.

2020, just like 2019 has seen an increased focus on collaboration with Philanthropy, particularly Tomar Trust, Waterford City and County Council, DRCD, DEASP, the HSE, Dept. of Justice and the Gardai in ensuring investment in Rural Regeneration initiatives.

Tomar Trust has continued to be a very important support to Communities trying to access matched monies for larger scale LEADER Projects. The Trust has shown tremendous support to projects right across the County from West Waterford to the City.

LEADER saw the allocation of €1.5m to Rural Projects on behalf of the LCDC. Tus has assisted 116 unemployed people and supported over 89 Community Organisations acting as placement providers. The Local Employment Service had a placement rate of 20%. Social Farming had its contract renewed in 2020. The big challenge remains in 2021 to glean/gain proper contracts through the Health Providers/HSE.

WLP CLG were also involved with Dept of Justice in the Community Sponsorship Programme where a Canadian model for integrating refugees into local communities whereby the Community becomes a sponsor for the Family rather than the current Direct Provision system. The involvement related to two villages in West Waterford.

The Board had taken the decision to continue the focus on Rural Regeneration in 2020, with the Copper Coast been the next area of development. Due to COVID-19 this action was not pursued.

The Board will review its policies & procedures in 2022 in order to ensure continued full compliance with the upgraded Governance Code for 2022.

The Audit Committee and the Financial Controller have continued to strengthen the Company's financial position over the last year. While the Company is far from independent financially, the focus on Strategy and Governance and the consequent shift in Culture has put the company on a platform from which it can build for the future to serve the people of Waterford and other areas that we cover in a more comprehensive manner.

Jimmy Taaffe

LEADER

Waterford Local Community Development Committee is the LAG for the new LEADER Programme and has engaged WLP as the Implementing Partner. Waterford City & County Council are the Financial Partner for the Programme. By the end of 2020, WLP Clg had assisted the LCDC to allocate €5.5m or over 90% of the project funds through a targeted call process. Most of the allocated monies will be paid out by January 2022.

The Programme

The Local Development Strategy (LDS) which covers rural Co. Waterford, but excludes the area covered by the original Waterford City boundary is available to view on WLP's website.

Update on the Actions taken to address the Conclusions of Review on Progress to Date

In February 2019, a report which was a rapid, high-level, early-cycle evaluation of the WLDS was completed.

The nature and timing of this evaluation must be borne in mind. It was not an audit; it did not seek to carry out a full review of all files and processes of the WLP and the LCDC. Its review was of the principal features of the process and included interviews with a sample of project promoters.

Overall, the evaluation has found that the implementation of the WLDS is being carried out in a satisfactory manner; the approach to project identification and selection is appropriate and the WLP and the LCDC are both carrying out their roles appropriately. The numbers of projects coming forward is giving rise to a significant number of eligible projects under most headings, though some headings do give rise to some concern. The overall profile of projects is acceptable with the exception of their geographic distribution which appears to be somewhat excessively concentrated in one Municipal District.

The levels of drawdown appear to be satisfactory when account is taken of the date of approval and the need to provide time to project promoters to bring implementation to a point where drawdown is appropriate.

Action on Recommendations

1. The potential difficulties for project promoters, particularly those from the private sector, in providing evidence of co-funding in advance of approval should be highlighted and reported to the Department. - **Done**
2. The next round of EoI calls should emphasise
 - a. That this is the last round of calls under this programme - **Done**
 - b. That not all eligible applications may receive funding - **Done**
 - c. That the rate of funding may not be the maximum possible - **Done**
3. Particular attempts should be made to promote the programme and the next call in the Comeragh and Waterford Metropolitan districts and emphasise that smaller as well as larger project proposals are welcome. - **Done**
4. Consideration should be given to providing some geographic weighting for projects arising from the Comeragh and Waterford Metropolitan districts. – **Done. Additional animation in the East despite COVID-19 addressed the matter.**
5. Consideration should be given to running specific workshops in procurement for applicants who have been deemed eligible under the EoI process to assist them in finalising their projects in a timely manner – **Online Mentoring provided.**
6. Consideration should be given locally and nationally as to how the application process can be made simpler and less challenging for community and voluntary organisations and small businesses while retaining its robustness and transparency and/or Consideration should be given to ways in which additional supports can be given to organisations from these sectors to negotiate the application process – **Done through Philanthropy**
7. The fact that an independent architect will be appointed by the funder and paid for by the promoter to certify draw-down claims should be highlighted early in the implementation process - **Done**
8. Applicants under SA 5.1. should be asked to indicate how their proposed development will contribute to social inclusion and the actions which they will take in that regard. - **Done**
9. The likelihood of the take-up of all funding allocated to the Rural Tourism Local Objectives should be considered and re-allocations made if a significant lack of take-up is anticipated - **Done**
10. The proposed re-allocations of funding should be proceeded with as should the minor re-wordings proposed and the new SA 7.2. - **Done**
11. All project files should be checked and any required documentation which is missing from any file should be provided for the record - **Done**

12. In the light of the concerns expressed regarding the difficulties perceived by communities and smaller enterprises in completing the process and the possible barriers which this perception places in the way of applications being made by such bodies, consideration should be given to commissioning a piece of independent research to identify in more detail the nature of these perceptions, their sources and causes and ways in which the process might be modified to address the perceived difficulties while retaining its rigour and transparency. – **Done by Providing Funded Trainers to Groups.**

LEADER Animation 2020

Animation in 2020 was heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Restrictions on contact and movement kicked in late March 2020. Prior to the restrictions, WLP, the implementer had conducted two targeted Calls which were very successful. These were in January 2020, and March 2020.

There were no further calls due to Covid-19 between March and September. This severely impacted on New Project development. A virtual targeted call was conducted in September. It was very well attended online.

While the online call was well attended and imparted the same information as the face-to-face targeted calls, the actual outputs from the Virtual Targeted Call as distinct from a Corporeal Targeted Call were well down in terms of timely applications.

As outlined above, the Virtual Targeted Call was really well attended, but the actual follows through in terms of actual applications was as low as 25% on both fronts.

The quality of the Submissions was also lower due to lack of face-to-face interaction. Teams, WebEx and Zoom allow participants to be present but not necessarily engaged and invested in the process.

One of the key successes of 2020 was the fact that all the projects approved prior to 2020, and those approved during 2020 have proceeded as planned.

This is due in the main obviously to good promoters, be they Community or Private applicants. However, the Targeted Call Process with the Face-to-Face meetings has ensured that the quality of applicant and the preparedness of the application due to this process has ensured a commitment to implementing the project in full and as per contract.

The Effect of COVID-19 on LEADER

Covid-19 has obviously created a lot of uncertainty, and this has increased with each lockdown particularly for Community led organisations who depend on halls and Gyms operating to bring in rental income. The better organised will withstand the hiatus. Those who are poorly organised will need working capital. The number in need should not be that great in number.

Well, run commercial businesses have done well, particularly those in sub supply chains to multinationals.

The Tourism Sector boomed in June, July, and August. The professional operators as a result have a bit of leeway until May/June 2021. The smaller fewer commercial operators, like the less organised Community Groups are enduring a very lean period.

For LEADER, Animation is severely disrupted during Covid-19, and while virtual meetings are in place, development tends to come from direct human interaction.

In terms of animation, virtual meetings are the norm. However, it would be rash to say that virtual meetings will displace direct contact for development work.

It is vital to have access to technology and have the capacity to utilise technology to maintain services and actions.

Technology will assist in maintaining what has been developed, and already operational.

Priorities for LEADER in 2021

By the 31st of March 2021, have the 1420RDP Programme fully allocated.

By December 2021, have 90% of the 1420RDP fully paid out.

Have commenced the Transitional Programme by April 2021.

50% of the Transitional Programme will follow 1420 RDP LDS

50% of the Transitional Budget will follow a Transitional LDS to be agreed in March/April by the LCDC focusing on Biodiversity/Climate Change, Green Engineering, Green Enterprise, and Eco Tourism and youth training.

Subject to agreed budget, the engagement on a fixed term basis of two young experts in Biodiversity/Climate Change and Green Enterprise to help devise the basis of the next LDS and assist in early animation projects.

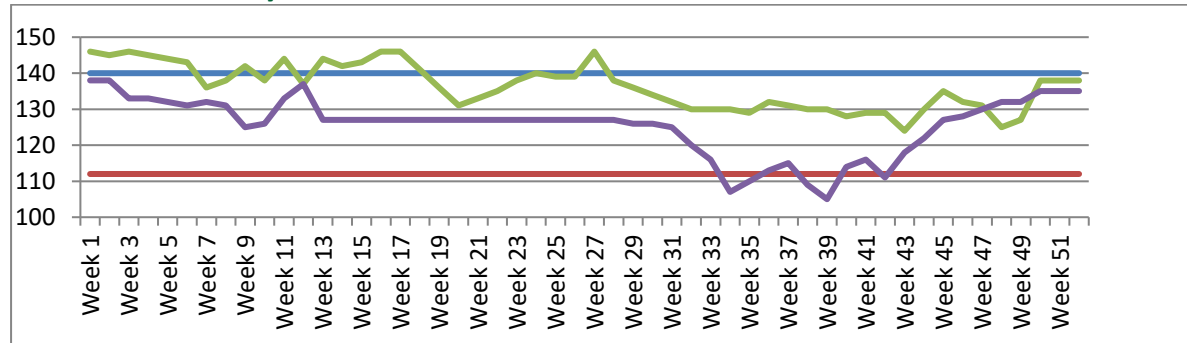
Tús 2020 Activity Report

Participant Activity 2020

Tús is operated in county Waterford on behalf of the Department of Social Protection by Waterford LEADER Partnership (WLP) CLG. WLP currently have an allocation of 140 placements on the programme with 6 Supervisors. These placements are to afford those who are currently long-term unemployed the opportunity to gain suitable work experience. It also enables community organisations the opportunity to avail of skills and expertise to assist them in the delivery of their services at a local level.

Table (Fig.1) shows WLP's monthly activity and numbers of participants placed from January to December 2020 v 2019

Placement Activity 2020 v 2019



Blue Line: Allocation

Red Line: Min. Requirement (80%)

Green Line: 2019

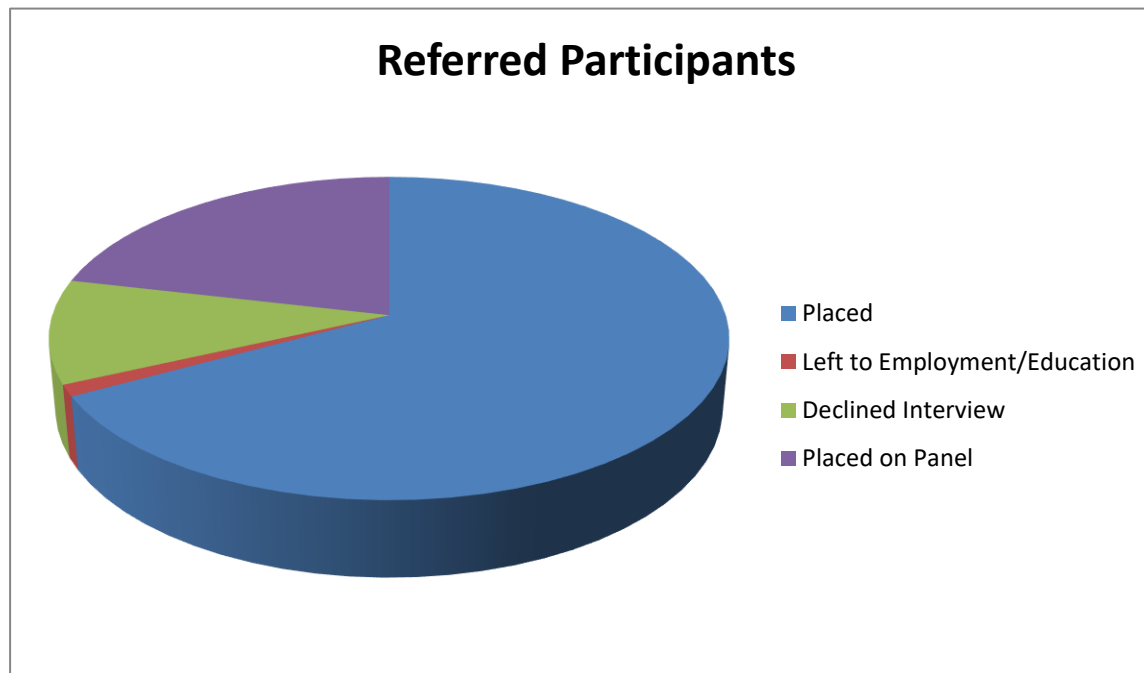
Purple Line: 2020

(Fig. 1 – Placement Activity)

A total of 171 new clients were referred by DEASP in 2020, many these were afforded the opportunity to avail of positions on the scheme, along with those from the previous year's panel. The remainder were placed on the panel to fill vacancies as they will arise. Of the 171 referred, 18 (10.5%) declined to be interviewed for various reasons, e.g., no longer in receipt of Jobseekers, moved to an alternative DSP payment, returned to employment or education.

A total of 116 new contracts were issued during the year, with 2 participants leaving the scheme early to take up employment (1) or to return to Education (1).

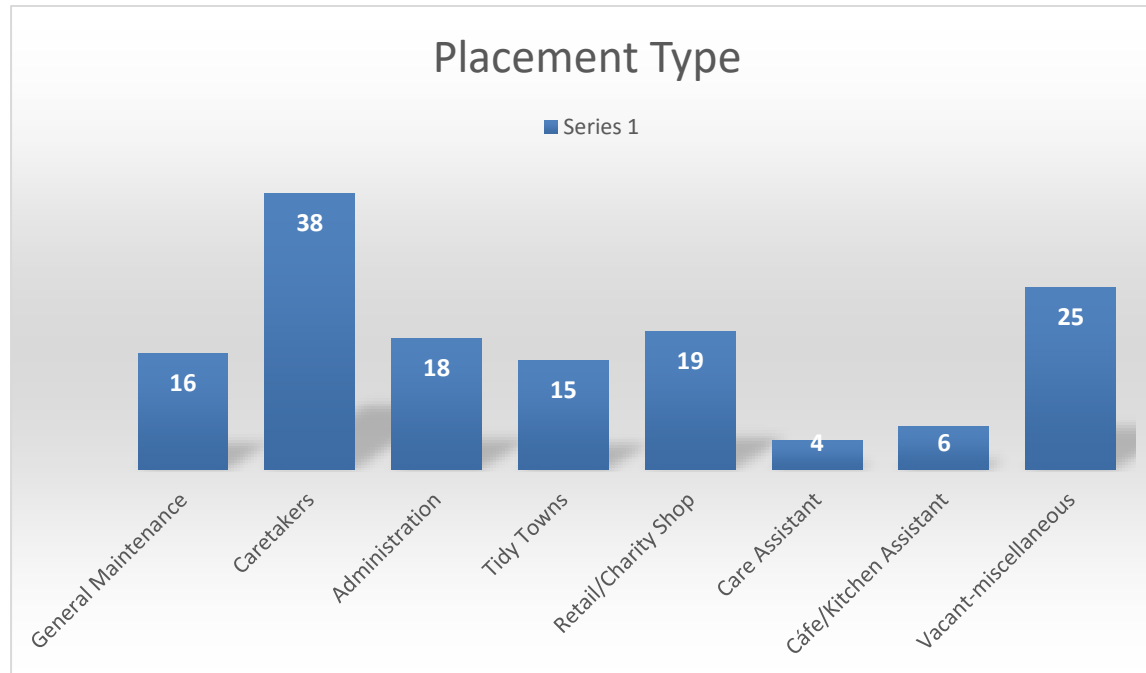
(Fig.2 – Participant Activity2020)



Placement Providers

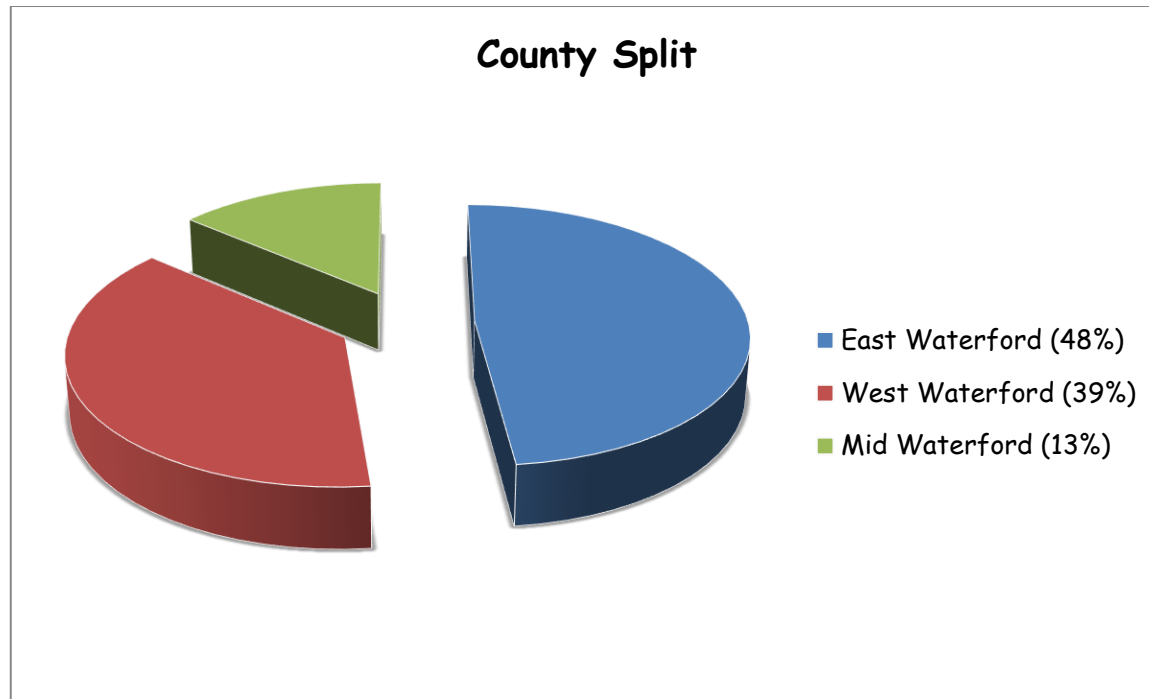
In all there are 89 community organisations registered with WLP as host organisations for the Tús programme. WLP currently facilitates 64+ Placement Providers with a total of 135 active participants. There are a further 25 vacancies which cannot be filled currently due to lack of suitable participants in more remote areas of the county. Roles vary as can be seen in (Fig.3) below.

All Placement Providers are supported by the programme Supervisors throughout the year and advised on areas such as health & safety, work scheduling and project planning. There was a total of 42 organisations supported financially with the purchase of tools and equipment throughout the year, with a total spend of €6,600.

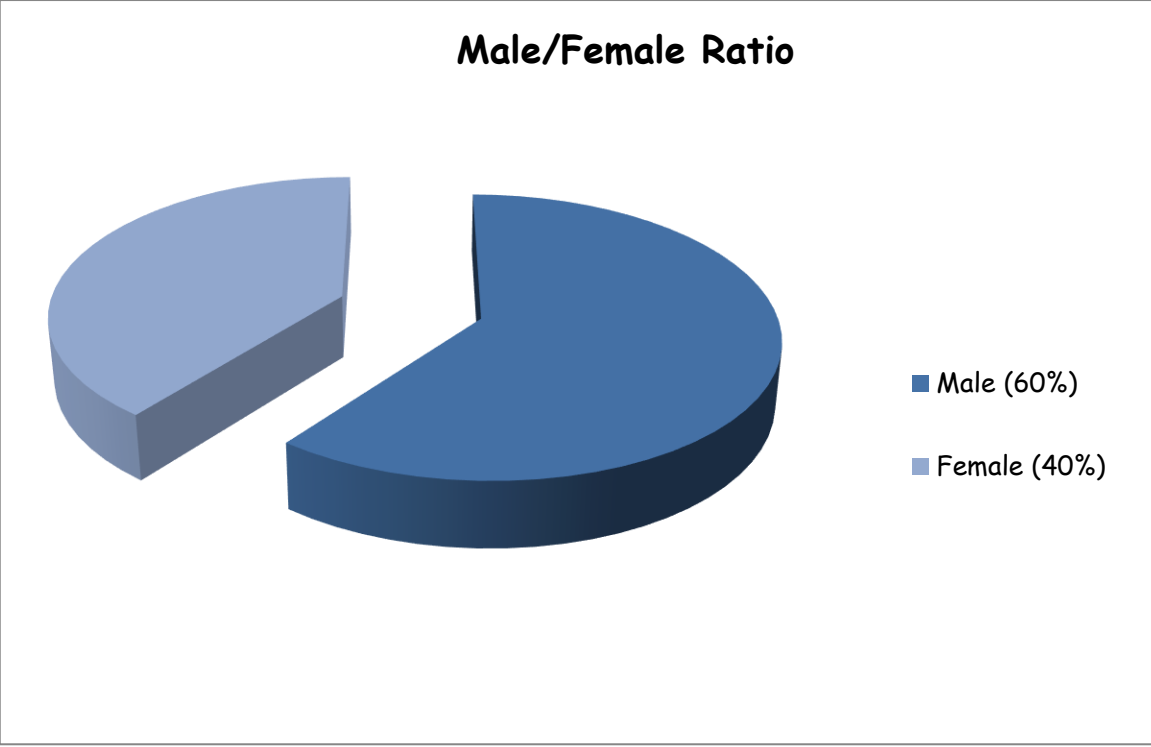


(Fig.3 – Placement Type)

Tús is delivered throughout the county and (Fig.4) & (Fig.5) overleaf details the county split and the male / female ratio of participants currently on the scheme.



(Fig. 4 – Placements – County Split)

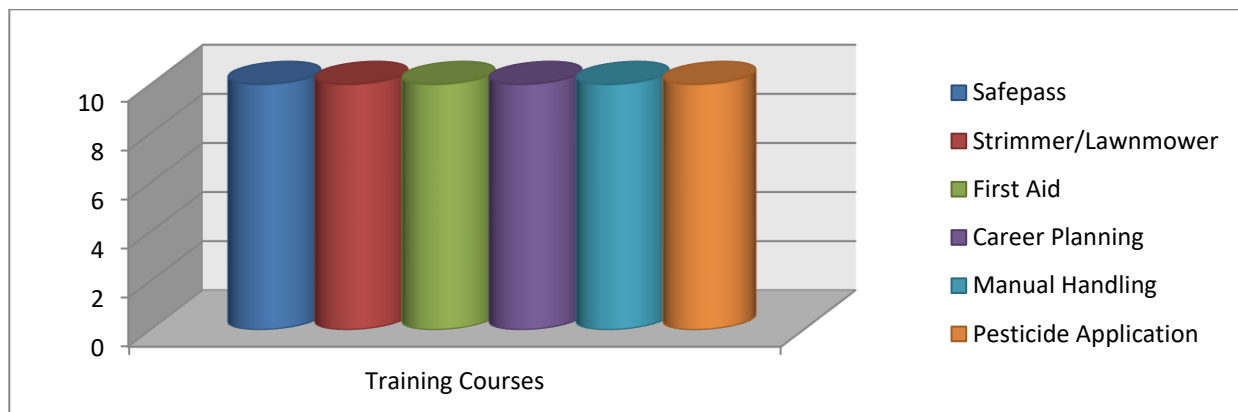


(Fig.5 – Placements – Male/Female Ratio)

Training Courses 2020

Participant Training:

Alongside meaningful work experience WLP continues to deliver excellent training opportunities for those who participate on the Tús Programme. Training is offered with respect to the specific needs of the various roles within the scheme. Throughout 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, it was not possible to run training programmes for scheme participants. A total budget of €16,000 was budgeted for training based on previous years training expenditure, however, this funding was not used, and the underspend will be reported to the Department. Typically, training for participants included Safepass, Strimmer/Lawnmower Courses, First Aid/Defibrillator, Career Planning, Handheld Pesticide Application and Manual Handling as detailed in (Fig.6) below.



(Fig.6 – Training Courses)

Supervisors Training:

All Supervisors continue to actively participate in training and continuous professional development. During 2020 all Supervisors participated in and completed a Level 8 Human Resource Management Course in Waterford Institute of Technology. They also upskilled in areas such as Health and Safety training particularly around the awareness of Covid-19 precautions and were trained as COVID Compliance Officers, enabling them to assist our Community Organisations with reopening following various periods of Government lockdowns & Restrictions.

LES Programme Achievements & Highlights, 2020

	31 December, 2020	31 December, 2019
TOTAL NEW CLIENT REGISTRATIONS @ <u>31 December 2020</u>:	242	418
- DSP Activation Referral (PTW)	229	365
-		
- Other Client Groups (WALK-INS)	13	55
<i>(DSP agree Capacity @ 120 Pathways to Work / Activation clients per Employment Guidance Officer / 22 Walk-in clients per Officer to be registered in 2020)</i>		
TOTAL NUMBER OF CLIENTS ON LES CASELOAD @ <u>31 December</u>:	178	236
- DSP Activation Referral (PTW)	168	207
-		
- Other Client Groups (WALK-INS)	10	29
<i>(DSP agree Capacity @ 120 Pathways to Work / Activation clients per Employment Guidance Officer / 22 Walk-in clients per Officer to be registered in 2020)</i>		
LES JOB PLACEMENT RESULTS: (Jobs: 30+ hrs & Self-Employment <u>only</u>): <i>Calculated on the Activation Caseload Management (ACM) System:</i>		
- Number of <u>DSP Activation (PTW) Clients</u> who were "Case-closed"		
- Number of DSP Activation (PTW) Clients Job-Placed (30+ hours per wk)	253	370
- % DSP Activation (PTW) Clients Job-Placed (30+ hrs per week)	56	103
- NOTE: DSP Activation (PTW) Clients as a % of TOTAL CASELOAD	22%	28%
	94%	88%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Other Client Groups (Walk-in) Clients who were "Case-closed" - Number of Other Client Groups (Walk-in) Clients Job-Placed (30+ hrs pw) -% Other Client Groups (Walk-in) Clients Job-Placed (30+ hrs pw) - NOTE: Number of Walk-in's as a % of TOTAL CASELOAD <p>COMBINED LES JOB PLACEMENT (PTW & Walk-in) %:</p> <p>LES PROGRESSION (SCHEMES; EDUCATION & TRAINING) @ 31 December:</p> <p>Number of clients progressed onto Part-time jobs; CE; TUS:</p> <p>Number of clients progressed onto Training programmes (Mediator Fund; ETB; SICAP; E-college; WIT; UCC):</p> <p>TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRESSIONS (Schemes; Education & Training)</p> <p>TOTAL NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS (JOBS) & PROGRESSIONS (Schemes; Education & Training)</p> <p><i>*As a result of COVID-19 many scheduled training programmes were delayed and had to be rescheduled and were moved to an online platform (does not suit every client)</i></p>	<p>37</p> <p>2</p> <p>5%</p> <p>6%</p> <p>20%</p> <p>80</p> <p>73</p> <p>153</p> <p>211</p>	<p>43</p> <p>5</p> <p>12%</p> <p>12%</p> <p>26%</p> <p>134</p> <p>342</p> <p>476</p> <p>584</p>
<p>TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVATION REVIEW MEETINGS (ARMs) @ 31 December:</p> <p><i>*No ACM remote access from 16th March – 24th April / LES Administrators no ACM remote access in 2020 (no IT equipment)</i></p> <p><i>**DSP issued "Revised Process for ARMs during Covid Pandemic" on 24th June</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scheduled: - Number Attended: - Number of "Did-not-attend" DNA - Number of Cancelled - Number of DNA & Cancelled 	<p>1,366</p> <p>957</p> <p>275 (20%)</p> <p>131 (10%)</p>	<p>2,441</p> <p>1,723</p> <p>504 (21%)</p> <p>207 (8%)</p>

<p>TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS (NEW REGISTRATION MEETINGS & ARMs <u>ATTENDED</u>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Per month - - Per week (DSP stipulate a 50-week operation) 	<p>30%</p> <p>1,608</p> <p>134</p> <p>32</p>	<p>29%</p> <p>2,141</p> <p>179</p> <p>42</p>
<p>LES CLIENT MEDIATOR TRAINING FUNDING @ 31 December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approved & Paid - Number of applications approved and paid - % of Mediator Fund Budget approved and paid - Average payment made on behalf of client training - Courses approved include: Safepass / Safepass and Manual Handling; Forklift; First Aid Responder; Special Needs Assistant; Healthcare Support; HGV Driving; Chainsaw, MEWP & Abrasive Wheels) - Training Evaluations ongoing -Ongoing referral to ETB / SOLAS programmes / Training requests made *As a result of COVID-19 many scheduled training programmes were delayed and had to be rescheduled and were moved to an online platform (does not suit every client) 	<p>€5,910</p> <p>22</p> <p>39%</p> <p>€267</p>	<p>€10,564</p> <p>54</p> <p>64%</p> <p>€196</p>
<p>TOTAL NUMBER OF OFFICE ENQUIRIES / VISITS @ 31 December:</p> <p>*2020: Offices closed to the public since March 13th, due to COVID-19 so enquiries databases not maintained from mid-March-September but was then reinstated to take account of email/telephone enquiries in particular and recommencement of DSP referrals (new clients) / <u>data based on 6 full months of recording</u></p>	<p>1,818</p>	<p>4,423</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Per month</i> - - <i>Per week</i> 	<p>303</p> <p>76</p>	<p>368</p> <p>88</p>
<p>WLP CLG WEBSITE / LES PAGE VISITS (WWW.WLP.ie)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Average Number of visits to "Local Job Adverts" per month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>total number of visits to page in 2020 was 33,235 visits</i> - <i>Almost a 34% increase (extra 8,400 visits) in average number of monthly visits compared with 2019</i> 	<p>2,770</p>	<p>2,070</p>
<p>Also, in 2020.....:</p>		
<p>Co Waterford LES Facebook page is being managed by LES Admin team with updates on vacancies, training opportunities, Social Welfare information</p>		
<p>LES Jobs packs being posted on a weekly basis to LES clients who have no internet access</p>		
<p>Last Customer Survey completed as part of national LES Customer Survey was completed in 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 26 Surveys contributed to national survey - 10 Questions - Some comments: <i>“Positive and helpful”; “all positive and encouraging”; “it’s a great experience and channel for training, no matter what age, thank you”</i> - - <i>Ongoing client feedback via emails of thanks to LES team for support and guidance</i> 		

LES CONTRACT 2021 OVERVIEW

BUDGET	€
- includes MEDIATOR FUND	€30,000
- includes provision for cost of operating LES in Carrick on Suir (2 staff); Dungarvan (1.8 staff) & Lismore (1 staff, appointments provided to jobseekers from Dungarvan office) -provision made by DSP to WLP for 2021 to recruit an additional Mediator / Employment Guidance Officer on a short-term (6-9 mths), fixed term contract to assist DSP with providing services to jobseekers in West Waterford (on Point 1 of 2008 FAS Scale)	
- no funding provision for LES Staff Increments (National DSP decision): last full increment was awarded to LES Staff in 2012 ; 50% increment awarded in 2016 - increments for LES staff have been requested from DSP since 2012. - no WLP CLG Management Fee provided (National DSP decision; 2017 was the last year this was awarded) -€3,228 provided for Capital – to provide laptops to staff working remotely (replacement of 1 LES laptop, used by LES since 2012 for DSP Group Information Sessions)	
TARGET: Activation Clients (was 120 per Mediator – increased to 150 Pathways to Work / Activation Clients per Mediator / Employment Guidance Officer) <i>*Will increase if new Mediator (Short-term contract) is recruited</i>	300 *
TARGET: "Other / Walk-in" Clients (8 per Mediator / was 11 per Mediator in 2020)	16
TARGET: Placement Target (Case-closed): Employment/Self-Employment of 30+ hours per week	30%
Progression is defined as "a client progressing into a training or education intervention or employment of less than 30 hours per week"	
ROLE OF THE LES INCLUDES:	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>An active placement and recruitment service</i> - <i>Career guidance/counselling and mediation (one-to-one meetings; agree. Prepare, implement and monitor Personal Progression Plans, PPP's)</i> - <i>Employer liaison</i> - <i>Referral to training, education, work experience and employment programmes</i> 	
<p>* New DSP referrals regularly requested from DSP – national embargo on referrals due to COVID-19 Level 5 restrictions resulting in no referrals currently being made to Carrick on Suir; Dungarvan and Lismore.</p>	
<p>* DSP focus on employment outcomes</p>	

LES CONTRACT 2022

<p>Overview:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Review of Contracted Public Employment Services, 2018-2019</i> - <i>DSP engaged the expertise of external consultants to assist in developing a contracted services model for 2021 - process postponed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and was expected then to be rolled out for 2022 - DSP indicate they will continue to develop this model, but ILDN understands that, due to current DSP commitments, this will be further delayed and /or may not happen</i> - <i>DSP: Stakeholder Engagement – visits by senior DEASP officials to the LES on December 10th, 2019; invitations to Development Company CEO's to meeting with Consultants (Institute of Employment Studies, IES)</i> - <i>Consultant's Report was expected by DSP in Q2, 2020 (recommendations on what and how to procure) - no update due to impact of C-19 and re-prioritisation of DSP work commitments</i> - <i>Political change in early 2020 and the COVID-19 Pandemic delayed the DEASP intention to have a public competition in 2020 for contracts to operate future local employment services from January 2021 - DEASP indicated to the ILDN that it still intends to “go to the market” in 2021 to contract-out the operation of employment services for 2022</i>

The Rural Social Scheme in County Waterford is small in comparison to those in the West of Ireland. WLP now has 15 places available on the RSS scheme. 12 places were filled for the year. COVID-19 has affected attempts at filling the remaining 3 places.

The focus of the scheme is focused on farmers or fishermen who are on Farm or Fish Assist, and who wish to contribute to their local community. It also gives the participant an opportunity to participate in the local community, as both these occupations involve a fair degree of social isolation.

The scheme is linked to Community Sponsors who take the participants in to work on the project the Community is implementing at that time. The projects vary from Community to Community, and the participants are matched to activities that they themselves would enjoy doing.

Currently the placements are located in the following areas:

Placement	Location	Type of Work
Waterford & Suir Valley Railway	Kilmeaden	Track Maintenance
Cunnigar Pitch & Putt	Dungarvan	Pitch & Facility Maintenance
Stradbally GAA	Stradbally	Pitch & Facility Maintenance
Cappoquin Rowing Club	Cappoquin	Facility Maintenance
Ballysaggart Community Development	Ballysaggart	Hall & Village Maintenance
Respond Childcare	Clashmore	Childcare
Ballyduff Upper GAA	Ballyduff Upper	Pitch & Facility Maintenance
Cappoquin Community Development Co.	Cappoquin	Hall Maintenance & Bookings
Church of Ireland	Lismore	Grounds Maintenance
Ardmore Tidy Towns	Ardmore	Village Maintenance
Lismore Golf Club	Lismore	Grounds Maintenance
CFnDeise	Ring, Dungarvan	Grounds Maintenance

Social Farming

WLP secured a contract with Leitrim Development Company (LDC) to develop a Social Farming Network & run a Social Farming Programme in the South East which commenced in 2017. This contract has been renewed in 2020 for a four-year period. Social Farming is the practice of offering activity on family farms as a form of social support service. In Social Farming the farm remains a working farm at its core but invites people to participate in the day-to-day activities of the farm.

Social Farming provides people who use services with the opportunity for improved social inclusion, increased self-esteem and improved health and well-being.

From the Farmers perspective, it provides an opportunity for income diversification and multi functionality on the farm. It also creates the opportunity to reconnect farmers with their local communities through the opening up of their farms as part of the social support system of the community.

The farm is not a specialised treatment farm; rather it remains a typical working farm where people in need of support can benefit from participation in farm activities in a non- clinical environment.

We aim to support the development of Social Farming in the South East of Ireland including the areas of Carlow, East Cork, Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford and South Tipperary.

This programme is financed by funding from LDC and the TOMAR Trust.

In 2020, the Company did not achieve its placement targets due to COVID-19. Just over 200 placement days were achieved. In 2021 the target will be 1400 placement days subject to COVID-19 concerns abating somewhat.

Community Sponsorship

WLP is also involved in contract work for the Dept. of Justice on the Refugee Integration Programme which replicates the Canadian Model where a Local Community adopts a refugee family into their community and supports the new family's integration into the Community.

WLP Clg has continued to work with an excellent group in Lismore who have helped a young Syrian Family to relocate. WLP is also working with a very good Group in Tallow who are preparing to replicate the actions of the Lismore Group.

Rural Regeneration Fund

While WLP did not attain Stage 1 success in the application for the Blackwater Economic Development Zone, it has progressed the project using Philanthropic and other funds. Implementation commenced 2020, with late 2021 or early 2022 as the date for the completion of the four builds.

Tomar Projects

WLP CLG is still implementing a number of youth focused projects in East Waterford on behalf of the Tomar Trust. In the West and East of the County, Tomar has invest significantly in a number of Community based projects.

Finances

WLP employs a fully qualified accountant as Financial Controller. The Audited Accounts are posted on the Company's Website, www.wlp.ie under the Governance section of the site, once they have been approved by the Board

WLP has re-appointed after a tender process independent auditors JBW Consultants to prepare and audit the financial statements and prepare & file the annual company's return for the CRO.

WLP's income is classified under two headings in the financial statements.

- Restricted Funding, which is funds provided to WLP that are designated for specific purposes & cannot be allocated for any other use. Ex. RDP project funds can only be used to pay claims received from promoters for specific projects.
- Un-restricted funding amounts which are expendable at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of the objectives of WLP. Ex. Rental income received.

WLP has an active Audit Committee who met three times during 2020. Their main objectives in 2020 were;

- To review the annual financial statements, with the auditors and make a recommendation to the Board for their approval.
- To oversee all aspects of financial planning, management, assess internal financial controls and monitor risk management.
- To ensure that the Company attained break even position.
- Oversee the implementation of the Governance Code.

Outcome re. Plans for 2020

- Complete Call Process for LEADER Projects - 90% Complete
- Attain 100% Allocation of the LEADER Funds by the end of 2020 – 90% Complete
- Ensure the successful commencement of the Blackwater Economic Development Zone – Underway with 4 Projects
- Attain mainstream funding for the Social Farming initiative – Not attained
- Retain the LES Contract for Rural Waterford – Awaiting RFT
- Complete Transnational Projects- Underway
- Two more Community Sponsorship Placements – One attained
- Initiate a substantial Bio-diversity Initiative – Not attained
- Completion of St. Declan’s Way with NTO Approval – Not attained
- Apply for and attain the walks Scheme – Not attained
- Continue to operate the existing initiatives professionally and effectively – Continuous Improvement

Plans for 2021

- Complete RDP1420 Allocations by March 2021
- 90% Payments to be made on RDP1420 by December 2021
- Commence LEADER Transitional Programme April 2021
- Complete 4 Projects on the BEDZ

- Attain Mainstream Funding for Social Farming
- Retain LES Contract
- Initiate Biodiversity and Circular Economy Posts and Actions
- Completion of St Declan's Way and NTO Approval
- Attain Walks Scheme for St Declan's Way and the Ann Valley
- Apply for a Rural Recreation Officer
- Continue to improve at all levels through training and endeavour

Structure, Governance and Management

See Website. www.wlp.ie

Reference and Administrative Details

Mr. Jimmy Taaffe, C.E.O.

Ms. Angeline Drennan, C.F.O. and Ass. C.E.O.

Banks: A.I.B. Plc. And Bank of Ireland Plc., both of Grattan Square, Dungarvan

Accountants: John White, Church Street, Dungarvan

Solicitors: Joseph P. Gordon, The Burgery, Co. Waterford.