

# Your Meath

# Your Voice

Meath County Consultation Paper – DRAFT  
Statement and High Level Goals





# About this report

**The Local Economic and Community Plan will influence the economic, local and community development of County Meath, and we want to know your vision for the County.**

This report is intended to encourage conversation on key topics that affect everyone who lives in, works in and visits County Meath. We want to promote and support your involvement in the early stages of the LECP development, and ensure the final plan reflects your priorities.

This document will:

- Explain what an LECP is and how it affects your day-to-day life in Meath
- Describe how the LECP will be developed and delivered
- Clarify how this LECP is different from the previous plan
- Provide a snapshot of economic and community statistics in Meath
- Present six proposed High-Level Goals for you to review
- Ask for your input on how you want to see Meath grow over the lifetime of the LECP, and tell you how you can get involved.

After the public consultation period has ended, we will review all your input and feedback, and update this document to reflect community priorities. Your submissions will also help us to decide on specific actions to take over the course of the plan to ensure that we are actively working towards achieving the goals identified in the LECP.



**We would like to hear your ideas and priorities on economic and community issues in County Meath.**



## It's your County, we need Your input!

It is essential that the LECP reflects the needs and ambitions of all communities in County Meath. As such, we want to encourage you to have your say right from the start. We really want to know what you think the main issues facing the County of Meath in the future. How can we improve your quality of life?

If you wish to provide feedback on this paper, submissions can be made on our consultation portal at [www.meath.ie/consultations](http://www.meath.ie/consultations). Or by posting your submission/observation to Meath County Council, Buvinda House, Dublin Road, Navan, Co. Meath C15 Y291. The closing date for receipt of submissions/observations is December 19th.

There are several other ways for you to be part of the LECP planning process. Follow, #MeathCountyLECP on social media or email [info@hubplanning.ie](mailto:info@hubplanning.ie).

# F.A.Q.

## What is a Local Economic and Community Plan?

Meath Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), will set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of County Meath. LECPs are the main tool for delivering actions from national and regional strategies at the local level.

## How does it affect you?

The goals, objectives, and actions in the LECP have a direct impact on services, supports, and amenities in Meath. You can read more about what was accomplished as a result of the 2016-2021 LECP in the following sections.

## Who will deliver the LECP?

The County Meath LECP is multi-agency plan, which means that actions will be delivered by a wide range of service providers. Service providers include Meath County Council, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.



## The Meath LECP 2023-2029 will be...

- Informed by the knowledge and input of community members and stakeholders across Meath
- Outcomes-led: the High-Level Goals should provide direction for the objectives and actions in the LECP
- Ambitious, achievable, and realistic.

## How is the plan developed?

There are six stages involved in the preparation of a LECP. The 2023-2029 LECP is currently at Stage 2: Public Consultation. We have created this present report, called the Socio-economic Statement, and want your feedback. During this and the next stages outlined below, Meath County Council will provide a variety of ways to get involved in the preparation of the new LECP.

### The six main stages involved in the development of the LECP include:





# LECP Key Features

## What's in the LECP?

The LECP plans for both the economic and the community development of Meath. These two components are interrelated, or dependent on each other, so you'll see some overlap between them in the High-Level Goals, objectives, and actions.

### High-Level Goals

The overall direction of the LECP is guided by High-Level Goals. These goals provide the core aims of the LECP and represent how Meath should grow over the lifetime of the plan,

#### GOALS

#### OBJECTIVES

#### OBJECTIVES

#### ACTIONS

#### ACTIONS

#### ACTIONS

### Objectives

Each High-Level Goal will have several related objectives. Objectives are key priority areas within each High-Level Goal, and they start to narrow the plan down from aspirational to practical. Objectives provide an indication of how actions might be grouped in order to work toward achieving the High-Level Goals.

### Actions

Actions are the specific projects or initiatives identified to fulfil the objectives and contribute to accomplishing the High-Level Goals. Actions are designed within the SMART framework, which means they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. Actions make the LECP operational and are designed to respond to community input and need,

## **Cross-cutting priorities**

The LECP must consider how it might impact several cross-cutting priorities. Cross-cutting priorities are topics that are identified as important and that affect, or cut across, most or all aspects of development.

These topics will be considered throughout all the stages of the LECP, and will inform the development of High-Level Goals, objectives, and actions:

- Age
- Disability
- Equality
- Poverty
- Rurality
- Sustainability including Climate Change

In line with the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, Meath County Council is committed to promoting equality, preventing discrimination, and protecting the human rights of employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans.

## **What was in County Meath's first LECP (2016-2021)?**

County Meath's first LECP was launched in 2016. The LECP contained a range of objectives and actions all aimed at achieving the following five High-Level Goals:

- Goal 1: Promote and secure wellbeing of all people and communities in the County
- Goal 2: Stimulate and support a dynamic economy to best meet the needs and aspirations of the people and communities in the County
- Goal 3: Build and enable the resilience of all people and communities in the County
- Goal 4: Stimulate and empower a flourishing for all people and communities in the County
- Goal 5: Develop and implement ongoing renewal in public sector bodies, the way they fulfil their mandates and the way they work with others.

Over the lifetime of the LECP (2016-2021), substantial progress was made towards these High-Level Goals, through a coordinated effort between Meath County Council and several other local agencies and organisations.

## **It is now time to develop County Meath's second LECP, to cover the years 2023-2029!**







## What's different about this LECP (2023-2029)?

The proposed High-Level Goals for 2023-2029 build on the foundation that was set by the first LECP and include new components to ensure Meath keeps progressing and growing toward the vision set out in the Meath County Development Plan: "To improve the quality of life of all citizens in Meath by creating an environment that supports a vibrant growing economy and a well-connected place to live, learn and do business."

The six proposed High-Level Goals have been informed by a range of international, national, regional, and local policies, in addition to an extensive social and economic analysis. The next step is to get your feedback on the goals!

The six proposed High-Level Goals are:

- GOAL 1: A healthy and resilient County
- GOAL 2: A dynamic economy that supports and meets the needs of its businesses and people
- GOAL 3: Empowered, inclusive, and equitable communities
- GOAL 4: Safe, accessible, and enriching places
- GOAL 5: A County that works together
- GOAL 6: A sustainable and eco-friendly County.

## Sustainable Development

An important element of the 2023-2029 LECP is the increased focus on sustainability. Look for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) icon in the introduction to each of the High-Level Goal sections to see how Meath's LECP aligns with the 17 SDGs.

### We want to know!

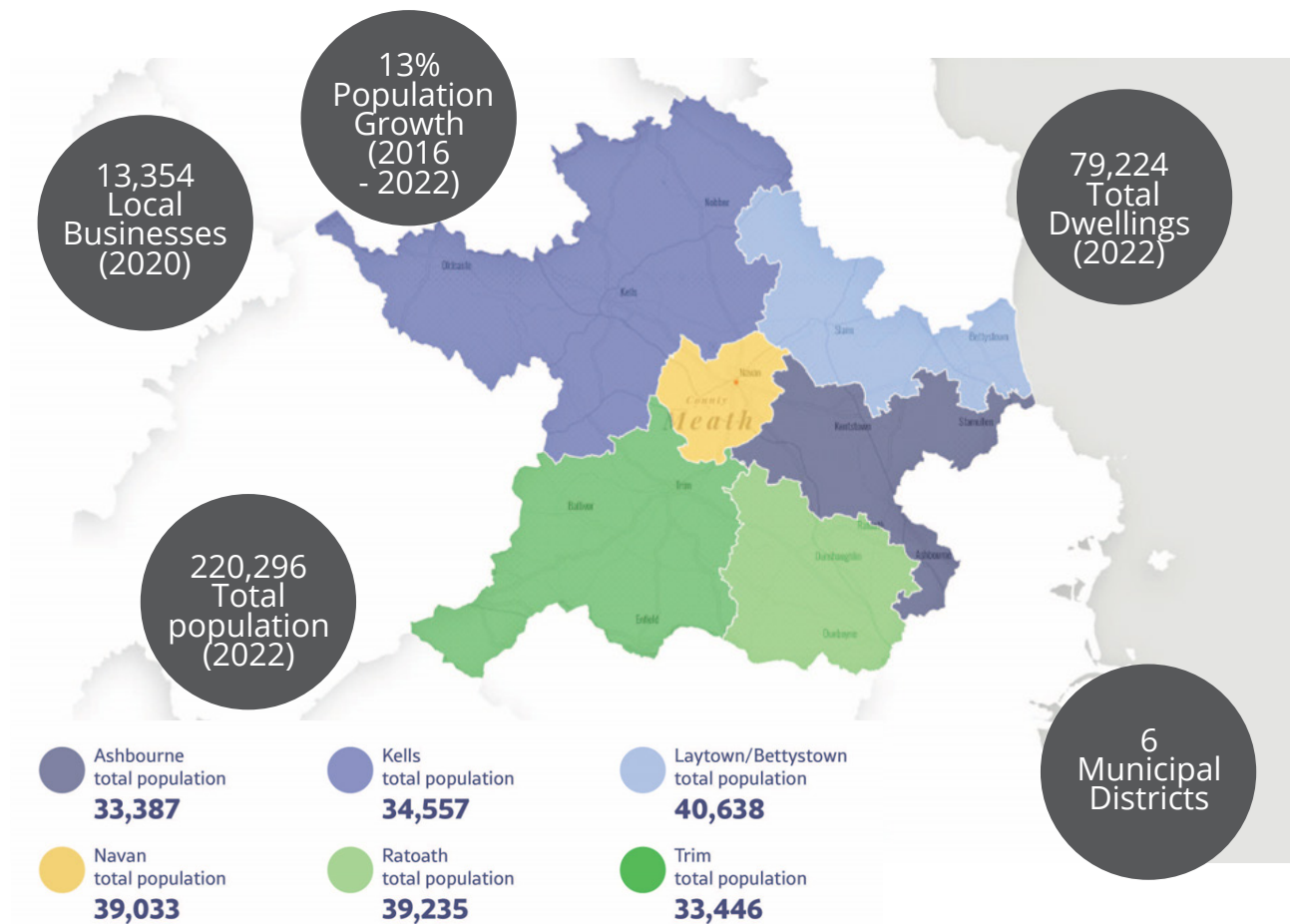
Do these goals accurately reflect your priorities for the development of County Meath?





# County Meath Snapshot

This section provides a summary of key facts and figures about the economy and communities of County Meath. This snapshot is based on the most current figures available at the time of analysis (September 2022). Over the course of the LECP 2023-2029, Meath County Council will monitor these statistics and update the LECP actions to respond to new data, trends and changes. This snapshot has helped to inform the development of the draft high-level goals as outlined later in this statement.



Source: Preliminary Census 2022

## We want to know!

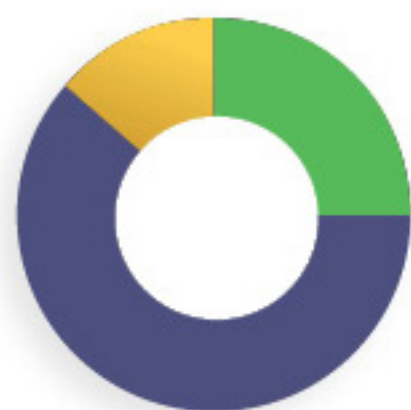
- Are there any statistics that surprise you?
- Which statistics represent you or people you know?
- In what ways would you like to see some of these statistics change over the next six years?
- Is there any statistic missing?

# Meath at a glance

**Population 2022:** 220,296

**Projected population by 2030:** 225,500-231,500

**Area:** 94.47/km<sup>2</sup>

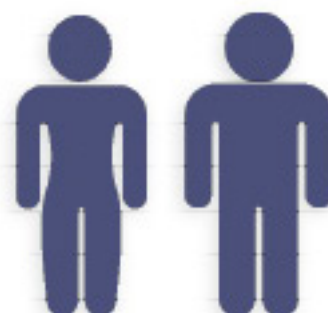


**25%**  
Under 15 years

**64%**  
15-64 years

**11%**  
65 years & older

**50.3%** Female  
**49.6%** Male



**3.05 people**  
household size (average)



**59%**  
Urban



**44.4%**  
Couple family with children



**Dwellings**



**Urban & rural split**



**35.2 years**  
Average age



**79,224**  
Dwellings

**94.47/km<sup>2</sup>**  
Population density

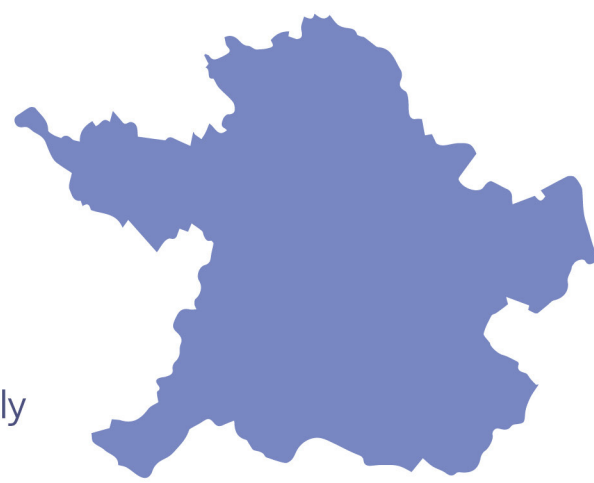
**41%**  
Rural



**59%**  
population increase  
between 2016-2022

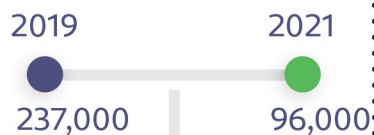


# Meath's Economy



**Labour force participation:** 3rd highest nationally

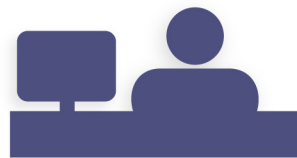
## Tourism



**-59%**  
% Change 2021 v 2019

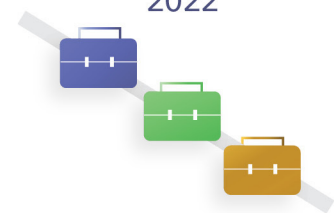
## 100,716

Persons at work



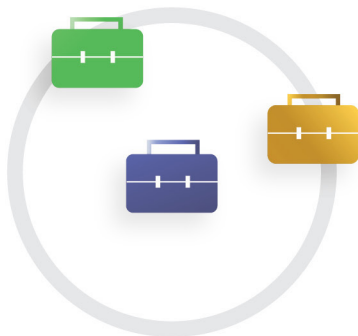
## 3,911

Average number of people on Live register in Meath from September 2021 to September 2022



## 13,354

Local businesses



## TOP 3 industries

for employment

1. Retail and trade/ auto repair
2. Health and social work
3. Manufacturing, education and construction

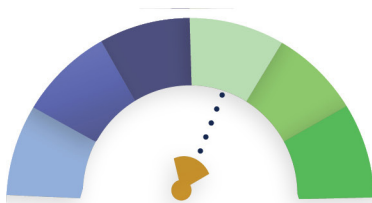
## €47,583.76

Average annual household gross income



## 64.2%

Labour force participation rate \*2016 Census Data



## 88.8%

Labour force at work \*2016 Census Data



## 82,605

Resident workers





# Meath's Community



**Population:** 2nd fastest growing population in the Country

**Age profile:** Meath has the highest proportion of the population aged 14 years (39%) or younger in the Country (32.3%)

**3**

Confirmed and 28 proposed  
Natural Heritage Areas



**13**

Special Areas of  
Conservation and 4 Special  
Protection Areas

**13**

Libraries



**102**

Outdoor activities/sports  
facilities



**23**

Art, culture and media  
centres



**140**

Primary and secondary  
schools



**Gaeltacht**

Meath is the only County in  
Leinster to have Gaeltacht  
regions



**3,000**

Monuments and heritage  
sites in Meath



**Top 5 languages spoke other than English/Irish**

Polish, Lithuanian, Romanian, French, Russian

# The High Level-Goals

## Outcomes based planning

The following sections of this document explore each High-Level Goal in more detail. The sections explain the purpose of the High-Level Goal, describe the projects, programmes and initiatives delivered under the goal by the last LECP, and outline related strengths, challenges, opportunities, and new priority areas for the next six years.

We would really appreciate your input and feedback on these sections! We want to make sure that the High-Level Goals represent what you think is important about the economic and community development in County Meath. We also hope to get a sense of what types of actions you would like to see as the LECP progresses.



### As you read, here are a few questions to think about:

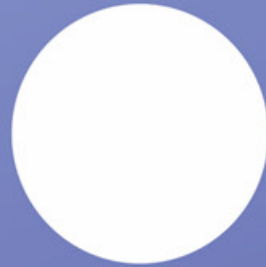
- What programmes or projects were delivered as part of the last LECP that should be continued?
- Are there any strengths, challenges or opportunities that we missed?
- What are the most important economic and community priority areas for you over the next six years?





## **GOAL 1**

A healthy  
and resilient  
County



# GOAL 1



The first goal set out by the 2016-2021 LECP was focused on ensuring good health and wellbeing for the people and communities across Meath. Goal 1 in the 2023-2029 LECP mirrors this, with the aim to facilitate good physical and mental health for all communities and to reduce health inequalities, now and into the future.

## The Facts and Figures ✓

### Relatively good health

- 65% of people in Meath reported they were in very good health in 2016, approximately 2% higher than the State proportion (CSO, Census 2016)
- 11.1% of people in Meath had a disability in 2016, lower than the State rate (13.5%) (CSO, Census 2016)
- 5.8 persons per 100k people died by suicide in Meath between 2016 and 2018, lower than the national rate of 8.2 persons per 100k people (13.5%) (CSO, Census 2016)
- Meath recorded a suicide rate of 5.8 per 100,000 population in the 2016–2018 period, slightly lower than the national rate at 8.2 per 100,000 population. (Healthy Meath Plan 2019–2021)



### Additional needs

- 426 Children with an intellectual disability (12th highest in the State) (State of the Nation's Children report 2016)
- 597 children registered with a physical/sensory disability in Meath which was the third highest registration rate in the state. (State of the Nation's Children report 2016 )

### A young population

- 29.3% of Meath's population was under the age of 18 in 2016, the 6th highest in Ireland (CSO, Census 2016)
- 194 childcare services in Meath (170 private and 24 community) (Pobal 2020/2021)
- 191.52 was the average weekly cost of childcare in 2021 (Pobal 2020/2021)

### Good proximity to health care

On average, people in Meath live..

- 2.7km from a pharmacy
- 3.2km from a general practitioner
- 14.1km from an emergency department
- 25.3km from an HSE Maternity Hospital.





## What was accomplished during the last LECP?

A wide variety of actions and initiatives were implemented during the 2016-2021 LECP within the remit of Goal 1. Some key outcomes from the LECP so far have been:

- The Meath Local Sports Partnership facilitated several community physical activities, including walking groups, Women in Sports, Meath Running Group, Men on the Move, an Older Adults Project, and the Be Active After School Programme. They also delivered Community Coaching Programme targeted at groups and individuals with traditionally low participation rates and high sedentary levels.
- The HSE provided several health initiatives, including one-to-one dietetic services, infant nutrition training, structured patient education programmes for diabetes, and training and support for carers.
- The “Not Around Us” campaign was launched in May 2021, to discourage smoking and vaping around children and young people in Meath.
- Mental health projects and initiatives included general and targeted support. Some of these include the infant mental health promotion campaign, engagement with young people by Jigsaw, and training for primary and secondary school teachers to support good mental health.
- The Louth Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) distributed approximately 400 mental health packs to young people during the Covid 19 pandemic.
- Community outreach office was established in Oaklawns Navan, which delivers a variety of programming and supports to Local Community Groups.
- New health and well-being facilities were developed, including the Meath Wellness HUB and a Primary Care Centre in Kells.
- A range of plans and policies to support health throughout the whole of life was developed and implemented, including the Age Friendly Strategy, the Healthy Meath Strategy, and the Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with Disabilities.



## Key priorities for the future, could include:

- ✓ A healthy and resilient County
- ✓ Maintaining and encouraging healthy life choices
- ✓ Promoting and supporting positive mental health and well-being
- ✓ Facilitating the delivery of community-based mental health supports and services
- ✓ Providing a range of accessible options to get involved in physical activities
- ✓ Ensuring projects and initiatives are data-driven, and consider both current and future needs



### We want to know!

- What type of mental health and well-being supports are the most important for our communities?
- How can we encourage our communities to improve their nutrition and engage in physical activity?
- What are the easiest physical and mental health supports to access? What are the most difficult?
- What are the emerging health issues in the community?



## GOAL 2

A dynamic economy that supports and meets the need of its businesses and people



# GOAL 2



In the 2016-2021 LECP, the second High-Level Goal centred on supporting the growth of a competitive economy in Meath. For the 2023-2029 LECP, this goal will aim to foster Meath's unique economic characteristics and strengthen local employment and enterprise, while ensuring the community have financial stability and wellbeing.

## The Facts and Figures ✓

### High employment

- 88.8% of respondents were employed in 2016, which accounted for a Labour Force Participation Rate of 64.2% (CSO, Census 2016).
- 82,605 resident workers in the County in 2016 (CSO, Census 2016)
- As of 2020, there were roughly 13,354 local businesses in Meath
- 40,000 jobs located within Meath
- Between september 2021-2022 there was an average of 3,911 people on the live register (CSO, Live Register 2022).
- The Kells Urban Electoral Division is classified as an Unemployment Blackspot, the only one in the County.

### Distinctive industries and employment profile

- There was a higher proportion of households in Meath reporting the following employment types than at the State level: employers and managers; manual skilled; own account workers; and agricultural workers

- As of 2019, the majority of enterprises in Meath (92.7%) were small (under 10 employees). This was slightly higher than the regional and State levels (91.4% and 92.1% respectively). Meath had a low proportion (0.1%) of large businesses (over 250 employees) compared to the region (0.4%) and the State (0.3%).
- Major employment industries include: Agri-food and forestry, Mining, quarrying and turf production, Manufacturing, and Transportation, storage, and communications

### Longer commuting times than other Counties

- 59%, of commuters travel outside the county to work, with 4 in 5 (80%) travelling by car, and 13% by train or bus (Meath Commuter Survey)
- Navan has the largest number of worker residents, and Ratoath/Ashbourne has the highest number commuting outside of the county to work (Meath Commuter Survey)

- 25,377 workers travel to work within the county and 36,460 commute to work outside the county (Census 2016)
- Dublin City registered the highest number of commuters at 13,362 while 10,133 Meath residents travel to Fingal for work.
- Within the county, Navan is the most commuted to destination for work followed by Trim

### High car-dependency

- More than half the population (64%) of Meath travelled to work by car either as a driver or a passenger in 2016
- The highest proportion of commute times (32.9%) are under 15 minutes, with 25.4% of commute times lasting between 15-30 minutes. However, 11.6% of people commute for between 60-90 minute

### A growing food industry

- Meath took home the gold, silver and bronze awards from the Blas na hÉireann finals (the Irish food awards) in 2022.
- Meade Farm, a family agribusiness in Lobinstown Co. Meath won a gold medal at the Irish Quality Food Awards 2022; the Best Supply Chain Team of the Year award at the National Procurement Awards; the Circular Economy Leadership Award and the overall Grand Prix Award at the IMR Irish Manufacturing and Supply Chain Awards



### Meath is home to...

- Global Top 10 ICT Company
- EU HQ Bioscience Centre for World's Top Bio-Pharma Company
- Facebook
- Ireland's largest Avoca store
- Boyne Valley food a national food destination
- UNESCO World Heritage Site



### Low deprivation rates

- At the County level, Meath is classified as marginally above average on the Pobal Deprivation Index.
- In 2016, the median annual household gross income in Meath was €52,156, higher than the State (€45,256)

### Unique housing needs

- According to preliminary Census 2022 results, there are approximately 79,224 dwellings in Meath
- The vacancy rate dropped from 6.6% in 2016 to 5.5% in 2022. This is lower than the State vacancy rate of 7.8%. The vacancy rate is highest in Kells (8.3%).
- As of 2021, there were 1,589 households in Meath that qualified for social housing support.
- Meath has the highest proportion of caravans/mobile homes in the region (0.6%), higher than the State proportion of the same (0.3%)
- As of July 2022, there were 199 homeless adults in Meath



## What was accomplished during the last LECP?

A wide variety of actions and initiatives were implemented during the 2016-2021 LECP within the remit of Goal 2. Some key outcomes from the LECP so far have been:

- Meath's Local Enterprise Office (LEO) ranked second in the country for job creation in 2021, creating 421 jobs and financially supporting 277 small businesses. The LEO also provided ongoing training and development, mentoring and facilitated several business start-up and development programmes.
- The Student Enterprise programme continued operation in which 1,010 students from 14 schools participated.
- In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Department of Social Protection (DSP) provided a range of responsive financial supports.
- More than 100 information sessions were facilitated by the Intreo Centre, with 1,700+ attendees.
- The SICAP Team continues to offer support services through the Meath Employment Service, Youth Employability Initiative and the Information and Advocacy Service
- The Teach Mná programme, first developed and implemented in 2018, continues to run and address the needs of disadvantaged women in Ashbourne, Athboy and Navan.
- As of 2020, three Housing First tenancies were established in Meath.
- During the lifetime of the rebuilding Ireland Programme from 2018 – 2021, Meath County Council has delivered 1190 houses versus a target of 725.
- Meath County Council has developed the Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026 in line with targets set under Housing For All. There has been a continued rollout of Housing First in Meath, with 13 housing first tenancies secured during 2021.

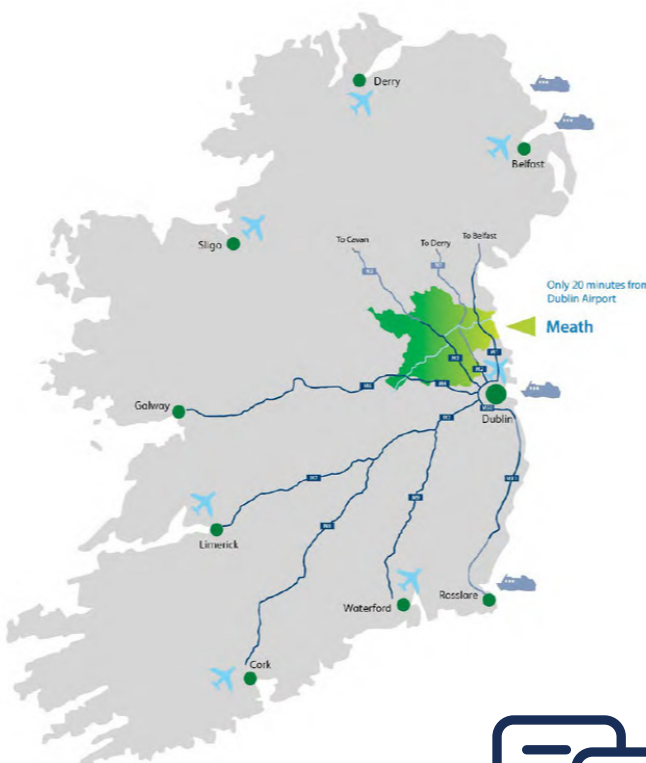




- Regional Homelessness Action Plan 2021 – 2023 was prepared by the local authorities of Kildare, Meath, and Wicklow and the HSE.
- Meath County Council actively promoted key towns and strategic employment sites as the economic drivers for employment in Meath while acknowledging the role of the rural economy.
- To stimulate and grow economic development Meath County Council undertook extensive engagement with State Agencies, Regional Agencies, Higher Education Institutions and Local Enterprise Agencies in Meath while investing in infrastructure and services that enabled and delivered economic development.

### Key priorities for the future, could include:

- ✓ Encouraging local innovation and entrepreneurship
- ✓ Supporting access to a range of employment opportunities
- ✓ Facilitating the growth of key economic sectors in Meath, such as agrifood or tourism
- ✓ Supporting social enterprises
- ✓ Ensuring growth towards a green economy



### We want to know!

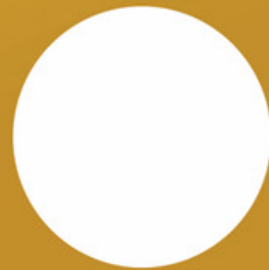
- How can we make the most of the unique economic characteristics of Meath, like agrifood and tourism?
- How can we make sure that we are facilitating innovation in Meath?
- How can we ensure our community is financially secure?
- What are the most important ways we can support local business and enterprise?





## GOAL 3

Empowered,  
inclusive and  
equitable  
communities





# GOAL 3



High-Level Goal 3 in the 2016-2021 LECP aimed to build and enable the resilience of all people and communities in the County. Goal 3 will continue to support resilience by ensuring all community members in Meath can participate in all aspects of society.

## The Facts and Figures ✓

### A growing population

- According to the preliminary Census 2022 results, Meath's population is 220,296. This is projected to increase to between 225,500-231,500 by 2030
- Between 2016-2022 population in Meath increased by 12.9%, the second highest increase in the region and the State (following Longford, up 14.1%)
- A relatively high proportion of the population in Meath availed of tertiary education outside of university, with 16.6% completing an apprenticeship or vocational certificate compared to 13.7% at the regional level and 14.7% at the State level
- In 2016, the most common qualification among men was engineering, manufacturing, and construction (37.8%), and among women it was social sciences, business, and law (35.0%). With the recent emerging fields of technology and construction in Meath, there is an under representation of women with relevant qualifications (with, 2.9% of women attaining a qualification in engineering, manufacturing, and construction). However, 22.9% of women are qualified in health and welfare.

### More Urban than Rural

- 59% of Meath's population lived in an urban setting, and 41% lived rurally (CSO, Census 2016)
- the average population density in Meath is approximately 94.1/km<sup>2</sup>, compared to the State average of approximately 72/km<sup>2</sup> (CSO, Census 2022)

### Highly educated

- In 2016, 48.5% of the population in Meath reported an education level above upper secondary school. This was slightly higher than the State figure (48.1%).
- In 2021, 43.4% of Leaving Cert students in Meath progressed to university, similar to the region (43.3%) and slightly higher than the State rate (42.7%) (HEA, 2021)

- The Dunboyne College of Further Education and the Louth Meath Education and Training Board provide third-level education within the County

### Low proportion of single parents

- Of households in across Meath, 9.7% were single parent households, the second lowest proportion of single parent households in the region.

### Relatively low rates of diversity

- 14% of the population reported being an ethnicity other than White Irish, a lower rate than the State (15.6%), and the second lowest rate in the region (CSO, Census 2016)
- 10.2% of the population reported their nationality as non-Irish, the third-lowest rate of non-Irish nationals in the region, and lower than the State (11.6%)
- There were 5 Irish Travellers per 1,000 total population in Meath, slightly less than the State (6.6 Irish Travellers per 1,000 total population) (CSO, Census 2016)
- The majority of Travellers in County Meath lived in Navan town (664 in total or 2.2% of the population), which was higher than both the county proportion (0.7%) and the State proportion (0.5%) (CSO, Census 2016)
- There are pockets of high ethnic and national diversity. In Navan Urban,

38.5% of the population reported being an ethnicity other than White Irish, and 31.1% of the population reported being a nationality other than Irish. (CSO, Census 2016)



### Home to a new community

- As of July 10, 2022, approximately 1,042 Ukrainian refugees had been issued a PPSN, and listed a local post office address in Co. Meath. The highest proportion of Ukrainian refugees in Meath reported their local post office address in Ashbourne MD. (CSO)





## What was accomplished during the last LECP?

A wide variety of actions and initiatives were implemented during the 2016-2021 LECP within the remit of Goal 3. Some key outcomes from the LECP so far have been:

- MLMETB provided tuition to community groups across the county, and progression to higher education from further education has increased due to the partnerships between those in the tertiary education sector. The LMETB also established a Youth Work Committee, fostered links to Traveller organisations, and facilitated connections with Mosney Detention Centre.
- Cultúr also supported Migrant Forum, Migrant groups, and individuals, and the Meath Partnership provided one-to-one mentoring to local community groups. The Meath Partnership and Cultúr also collaborated to facilitate several programmes, which engaged with 103 migrant jobseekers.
- Meath County Council supports the Yellow Flag Initiative in schools across Meath, encouraging social inclusion.
- Youthreach centres engage with Show Racism the Red Card competition every year, highlighting the needs of minority ethnic groups.
- The Meath Local Sports Partnership offered multiple physical activity programmes through Sports Inclusion Disability Programmes, the Disadvantaged Communities Programme, and targeted services for older adults.
- An Older Person's Council was established to give older people a voice on issues that matter to them.
- The Tiny Talks Programme was rolled out. This a collaborative project between Meath Partnership, the Speech and Language Department of the HSE and Meath County Childcare Committee, that aims to improve the language and learning skills of children aged 3 to 6.
- SICAP provides ongoing one-to-one support to lone parents.
- The Make Way Day campaign highlights the needs of people with disabilities.
- Meath library promotes the STEM programme to young people through Science Week and the STEM backpack loan service. It facilitates several social inclusion initiatives such as "Knitters and Knatters", Right to Read programme, Healthy Ireland programme, children's book festival and the "Magic Table" for people with the on-set of dementia and children with sensory needs.
- LEADER Grant Aid (roughly €6.6million) was allocated to support the upgrade of community facilities and to invest in community projects, including: outdoor amenities, community facility refurbishment, new facility construction, community development and feasibility



studies.

- The LMETB was awarded a budget for a greenfield site to provide a Youth Employability Initiative with Meath Partnership.
- Several policies, plans and other initiatives were launched that aimed to support social inclusion and participation, including the joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Strategy, The Age-Friendly Business and Age Friendly Homes programmes, and the LMETB Work Plan.

### **Key priorities for the future, could include:**

- ✓ Continuing work to decrease poverty and deprivation
- ✓ Developing initiatives that aim to promote inclusion and diversity
- ✓ Delivering projects to increase accessibility to opportunities
- ✓ Increasing the participation of individuals and communities in services and activities.



### **We want to know!**

- How can we encourage people to use and enjoy Meath's natural heritage areas?
- What sorts of arts and culture programmes would you be interested in seeing or participating in?
- How can we help everyone to feel safe and welcome to participate in our communities?
- What do you think would make Meath a more attractive place to live, work or visit?



## **GOAL 4**

Safe,  
accessible  
and enriching  
places

# GOAL 4



High-Level Goal number four in the 2016-2021 LECP aimed to facilitate the flourishing of people, places and communities across Meath. In the 2023-2039 LECP, this goal focuses on safeguarding Meath's rich cultural and natural heritage while promoting and enhancing the County's towns, and villages as attractive places to live, work and visit.

## The Facts and Figures ✓

### Rich in culture and heritage

- Meath is the only County in Leinster to have Gaeltacht regions.
- There are 23 Arts and Culture Groups registered with Meath's Public Participation Network.
- There are over 3,000 monuments and heritage sites in Meath (National Monuments Service).
- There are 102 sports facilities, 23 arts and culture venues and 12 libraries in Meath.
- There are three confirmed and 28 proposed Natural Heritage Areas in Meath.
- There are also four Special Areas of Protection, and one Special Areas of Conservation.

### Crime is relatively low and decreasing

- In 2021, the Meath Garda divisions recorded 4,908 crime offences. Meath was ranked 14th out of 28 Garda divisions for the total number of criminal offences recorded.
- The number of recorded criminal offences has fallen between 2019 (5,737) and 2021 (4,908).

- There are 16 Garda stations in Meath. Of these, Navan reported the highest number of criminal offences in 2021 (1,439), followed by Ashbourne (703), and Laytown (582). Offending is decreasing under the various categories of crime related to Assault Causing Harm, Minor Assaults, Theft (other), Theft from vehicle, property crime, crime against the person and criminal damage (Crime Trends 2020).
- In 2019 Meath had the third lowest prison re-offending rate in the Country at 35%, significantly lower than the State (44.6%).

### Access in and out of the County

- The motorways and national roads traversing County Meath (M1, M2/N2, M3/N3 and M4/ N4) and connections with the M50 Dublin orbital route offer ease of access to national and international markets.
- Significant investment in rail infrastructure with new train stations and rail services to Dublin City Centre.
- Close proximity to Dublin Airport and Dublin Port.





## What was accomplished during the last LECP?

A wide variety of actions and initiatives were implemented during the 2016-2021 LECP within the remit of Goal 4. Some key outcomes from the LECP so far have been:

- Meath County Council Arts department has secured funding for various projects, including Printworks studios development, Creative Hub strategy development and Hub development.
- Kells selected for Irish Architecture Foundation's "Reimagine" project. Business plans for 3 cultural spaces in Kells are complete to scope this pilot project.
- Meath County Council Heritage department worked on Passage tombs project; surveyed Meath's industrial heritage; 3 National Monument Services projects; Conservation at Skryne graveyard; supported a landscape masterplan for Blackfriary Community Heritage and Archaeology Project.
- Meath County Council launched the Boyne Blueway Trim in Trim and facilitated the development of the Kells Creative Hub.
- WiFi for EU is now widely set up throughout Co. Meath, and Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) have been set up to support National Broadband Plan.
- Several policies, plans and other initiatives were developed and implemented, including the Culture and Creativity Strategy for County Meath 2018-2019, the

Boyne Valley Destination Development Strategy, the Joint Policing Strategic Plan, the Boyne Valley Tourism Strategy, a Language Plan for the Meath Gaeltacht, the County Heritage Plan Project 2019, and the Meath Digital Strategy—A Connected County in 2020.

### Key priorities for the future, could include:

- ✓ Ensuring the protection and promotion of Meath's Gaeltachts
- ✓ Continuing to build and promote Meath's role in Ireland's Ancient East
- ✓ Raising awareness of Meath's unique cultural and heritage attributes
- ✓ To increase accessibility to Meath and its public spaces
- ✓ Reducing crime and improving the sense of safety

### We want to know!

- How can we encourage people to use and enjoy Meath's natural heritage areas?
- What sorts of arts and culture programmes would you be interested in seeing or participating in?
- How can we help everyone to feel safe and welcome to participate?
- Are supports and services in Meath accessible to most, or is there a section of society that is missing out because they can't get to them?





## GOAL 5

A County that  
works together





# GOAL 5



In the 2016-2021 LECP, the fifth High-Level Goal focused on the relationship between public sector bodies, and the way they fulfil their duties. The aim of this goal for the 2023-2029 LECP is to establish and build on strong working partnerships between agencies to facilitate balanced community development. It is important that supports and services across Meath meets the needs individuals and communities.

## The Facts and Figures ✓

### Robust networks and partnerships

- There are 40 elected members of Meath County Council.
- Based on a 40 Local Authority Membership, 19 people sit on the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) for Meath. Membership is 51% Non-Statutory and 49% Statutory.
- Meath Children and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC) bring together the main statutory, community and voluntary providers of services to children and young people in the County.
- Meath County Council has several Strategic Development Committees (SDCs), including the Environment and Emergency Services, the Housing, Community and Cultural Development SDC, the Planning Economic Development and Enterprise SDC, and the Transportation SDC.
- Meath's Public Participation Network has 485 member groups from the Community & Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environment sectors.



### What was accomplished during the last LECP?

A wide variety of actions and initiatives were implemented during the 2016-2021 LECP within the remit of Goal 5. Some key outcomes from the LECP so far have been:

- A Community Response Forum was set up during the Covid-19 pandemic and re-established during the arrival of the Ukrainian refugees. During both instances, agencies came together to ensure that the public's needs were met.
- The Meath Resettlement Interagency Working Group was set up to assist in the resettlement of Syrian refugees. Agencies, including the HSE, LMETB, Meath Community Childcare and Education Welfare Services, met to

ensure the arrival of the Syrians went as seamless as possible and to assist in their integration into their local communities.

- Meath County Council Housing department has engaged in ongoing collaboration with the Approved Housing Bodies to assist in delivering houses in Co. Meath.
- Meath Joint Policing Strategy, 2015-2020, was developed in consultation with the relevant agencies and authorities
- There has been a collaboration between local authorities and agencies on the Regional Homeless Forum.
- Setting up of the Drogheda Implementation Board (DIB) following the Geiran Report. The DIB was established following the levels of crime in Drogheda and spilled over into East Meath. Agencies are working together in collaboration to help deliver on the recommendations set out in the Geiran Report.
- Development and implementation of Meath County Council's Public Sector Duty Framework.

### **Key priorities for the future, could include:**

- ✓ Continuing to provide infrastructure to connect rural areas to necessary supports and services
- ✓ Partnering with regional and national bodies to address large-scale challenges
- ✓ Ensuring that a collaborative approach is taken across all aspects of Meath's development
- ✓ Exploring potential partnerships that promote creative solutions for the benefit of the whole county.

### **We want to know!**

- How can we be more responsive to community needs?
- How can we ensure that the community has the information they need to engage with key agencies?
- How can we partner with people in the community to support community development on the ground?





## GOAL 6

A sustainable  
and eco-friendly  
County



# GOAL 6



The sixth draft High-Level Goal was informed by the strong emphasis international, and national policy has placed on addressing environmental and climate concerns in recent years. The high-level goal aims to engage communities, businesses, and organisations in protecting and enhancing Meath's biodiversity and unique landscape. To do this sustainability and environmentally conscious practices must be factored into all areas of life in the County.

## The Facts and Figures ✓

### High numbers of cars per household

- Meath reported the lowest proportion of households with no car in the Region and the State and the highest proportion of households with two cars (44.3%), three cars (7.5%) and four cars or more (2.7%) in the Region and the State.

### A focus on preservation and conservation

- Meath has a Climate Action Strategy, and a Climate Action Team.
- Seven towns/villages have developed Community Biodiversity Action Plans, including Julianstown, Kells, Longwood, Ráth Chairn, Ratoath, Slane and Dunshaughlin
- In 2021, Meath reported 44 total hectares of afforestation (13ha of broad leaf and 31 ha of conifer). This was the 12th lowest afforestation rate in the State.
- Mornington beach was awarded a

Green Coast award in 2022, indicating excellent water quality and sustainable management by Meath County Council and the Mornington Beach Management Committee.

### Eco-friendly waste management

- Co. Meath has the third highest percentage of recycling bin collection services in the country.
- In 2019, Meath recorded 8.7% of waste to be brown bin organic waste. This means Meath was ranked 15th out of 30 counties/settlements that reported their waste figures.
- In 2019, Meath recorded 49.7% of waste to be black bin waste, higher than both the region and State figures (38.9% and 41.6% respectively). Meath recorded 12.4% of waste to be recyclables, the fifth lowest in the State.



## What was accomplished during the last LECP?

A wide variety of actions and initiatives were implemented since 2016 that fit within the remit of Goal 6. Some key outcomes so far have been:

- Meath County Council Housing department completed all Phase 1 Energy Upgrade works on all housing stock of Meath County Council.
- Projects and programmes to raise awareness and support biodiversity included the County Swift Survey, online pollinator workshops, a radio biodiversity campaign, and short films produced by three NGOs to encourage people to engage with nature.
- Meath County Council Environment department facilitated school programmes including: Green Schools; Really Rubbish Film Festival, Workshops and Awards; and various Environmental Campaigns, including the Anti-litter league.
- Community projects included Clean up Navan, the Gum Litter task force, Dog Awareness events, the Repair Directory, and an Anti-dumping Initiative.
- In 2021, the launch of the Green Kilometer Scheme proved to be a successful initiative in the fight against litter in the county.
- The National Transport Authority in partnership with Meath County Council Transport, completed several road, cycle and footpath developments. Additional

### Water infrastructure

- In 2016, the highest proportion of households reported Public Main as their water supply, and 19% reported getting water from another, private source.
- Average water consumption in litres per meter per day: 37.

### Energy consumption

- In 2021, Meath was the 6th highest consumer of residential metered electricity in the State, with 375 gigawatt hours recorded. Meath was the 11th highest consumer of non-residential metered electricity, recording 346 gigawatt hours (CSO, Electricity Consumption).
- In 2016, Meath the highest proportion of houses in Meath (48.7%) were heated with oil. This was high compared to the State level (40.4%).

### Uptake of residential recycling could improve

- In 2019, Meath recorded 49.7% of waste to be black bin waste, higher than both the region and State figures (38.9% and 41.6% respectively). Meath recorded 12.4% of waste to be recyclables, the fifth lowest in the State.





work included the installation of new bus shelters, bus stop reconstruction, increased Navan Bus Service infrastructure, and asset renewal of Laytown Park and Ride

- Several sustainable energy communities are set up in Meath, and Trim has been designated a Decarbonising Zone.
- Meath County Council Climate Action Strategy was adopted on 2nd September 2019, and SDGS were incorporated into the Corporate Plan.

### Key priorities for the future, could include:

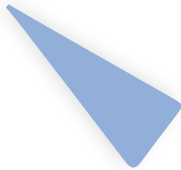
- ✓ Supporting individual, community, economic and statutory participation in environmental projects and initiatives
- ✓ Exploring and facilitating sustainable farming projects
- ✓ Protecting and expanding Meath's environmental conservation and preservation sites
- ✓ Increasing the local production and use of renewable energy
- ✓ Enabling and an enhancing non-car transportation option, like cycling and public transport
- ✓ Encouraging production of food for local consumption.



### We want to know!

- What's stopping you from reducing the amount of stuff in your waste and recycling bins?
- How could you reduce the number of car journeys each week?
- How can you improve the efficiency of your home when it comes to heating and electricity use?
- Apart from money are there any other barriers preventing you from making your home more energy efficient?
- What sorts of environment and climate initiatives would you be interested in participating in?





## We need your feedback!

We invite you to have your say on the future economic, social and community development of County Meath.

This document has summarised the key challenges and opportunities for the social and economic development of County Meath and identifies several high-level goals. We now need your feedback. Public Consultation is an important part of the process and the Pre-Draft Plan consultation phase has commenced and will run for a 10-week period from October 17th 2022.

Your views will help to shape the direction the next Local Economic & Community Plan will take. Your submissions will be reviewed and summarised, and recommendations will be made in response to them.

