

Submission No. 088

**Subject:** FW: Development Plan Review  
**Attachments:** FINAL VERSION - Carron Community Development Plan (2021 - 2024).pdf

**From:** Tim Madden  
**Sent:** 13 November 2020 11:26  
**To:** Helen Quinn  
**Subject:** Development Plan Review



Hi Helen, good morning and hoping this finds you well in these challenging times. I understand that the Clare County Development plan review deadline is this Monday 16th November at 4 pm. I am forwarding this email on behalf of the Michael Cusack Centre and the new Carron Community Development Plan 2021-2024 is attached, which will be published tomorrow and has 4 Key Strands. Some key initiatives proposed in Carron and at the Michael Cusack Centre which should be included in the review include:

- Opening of “**DigiClare – Connecting Communities**” Cusack Hub at the Michael Cusack Centre from December 2020 with Clare County Council support to create and sustain local employment, which is a key enabler of rural development in Co. Clare.
- Roll out of the GAA’s **Schools “Going WeLL” Programme** ([www.goingwell.ie](http://www.goingwell.ie)) which has been successfully delivered to secondary schools in Leinster in 2019 and planned for delivery to schools in Counties Clare and Limerick from early 2021. The GAA, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Clare County Council and the Michael Cusack Centre are partnering on this transformative project.
- Pioneering new initiative entitled “**Communities Going WeLL**” has been developed in Clare. This new initiative broadens the original scope of Going WeLL in schools by offering the opportunity to also include a cluster of communities for a pilot in County Clare. Proposed that the programme would be coordinated and project managed from the Michael Cusack Centre.
- Better **Travel Connectivity** into and from Carron and electric charging facilities and improved **Community and Tourism Development**, more walking tours, improved signage etc.
- These projects align with the Clare Rural Development Strategy 2026, the Clare Tourism Strategy 2020 and the new Carron Community Development Plan 2021-2024.

Any queries please let me know.

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Madden

Interim Project Coordinator - Going WeLL Programme at the Michael Cusack Centre, Carron, Co. Clare.



# Carron Community Development Plan (2021 – 2024)

Prepared on behalf of the Community by a voluntary  
Community Planning Group

14<sup>th</sup> November 2020





---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Carron	4
	Demographics	4
3.	Carron Community Development Planning Process	6
4.	Framework for Carron Community Development Plan	7
5.	Structure	8
	Oversight Group	8
	Implementation Groups	9
6.	Strands and Actions	10
	Strand 1: Broadband Based Services	10
	Strand 2: Going Well Program	11
	Strand 3: Travel Connectivity	12
	Strand 4: Community & Tourism Development	14
7.	Conclusion	14



## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document comprises a Community Development Plan for the community of Carron in County Clare and its immediate environs. It has been developed through a facilitated, consultative process in which the actions proposed have been informed by the needs, interests, and concerns of those living and accessing services - in the area.

The process of developing the plan was led by a group of local volunteers who worked closely with a facilitator whose role was to guide and mentor the planning process. The members of the planning group were as follows:

- Donal O hAinifein
- Michael Davoren
- Flan Garvey
- Mark Nestor
- Karen Connole
- Tim Madden
- Agnes O'Loughlin

The process was enabled by the Clare LEADER Programme under the management of Clare Local Development Company.



## 2. CARRON

Carron is a tiny rural village in the heart of the Burren in north county Clare Ireland. Carron is the only village in the Burren uplands – offering spectacular views over the Burren landscape, from grey Karst limestone pavement for which the Burren is famous to arable green fields cultivated by local farmers over the centuries. The area is a walker’s paradise, with three nationally recognised walking trails, and a choice of accommodation. The ‘turlough’ (disappearing lake) in the valley below the village is the second largest and most famous in the world because of its rich diversity of flora and fauna. Carron is also well-known as the birthplace of Michael Cusack, founder of the GAA. His original homestead has been fully restored and a contemporary visitor centre that is open to the public has been developed in its place. The community of Carron is largely encapsulated in the 4 Electoral Divisions known as Carran, Castletown, Noughaval and Oughtmama.

Carron has many strengths. Residents suggest that there is a very close-knit community with a great community spirit. They consider Carron as a great place to live and site the location and being surrounded by nature. Also, the outstanding beauty of the Burren landscape. People in the area are very friendly and supportive of each other. There is a great school and an excellent GAA club. Another major asset to the area is the Michael Cusack exhibition centre founded in memory of the legendary Irishman Michael Cusack.

On the other hand, residents also point to what they perceive as the lack of facilities and amenities such as shops restaurants and a post office. Other key concerns were the lack of public transport services and poor broadband in the area. Some also expressed concerns about loneliness and isolation, which might benefit from more community events and activities.

This plan therefore recognises that Carron is both a community of local residents and a destination that attracts visitors to the area. Activities within the plan seek to prioritise the needs of those living in the area while also ensuring the best possible experience for those who visit the area year-round.

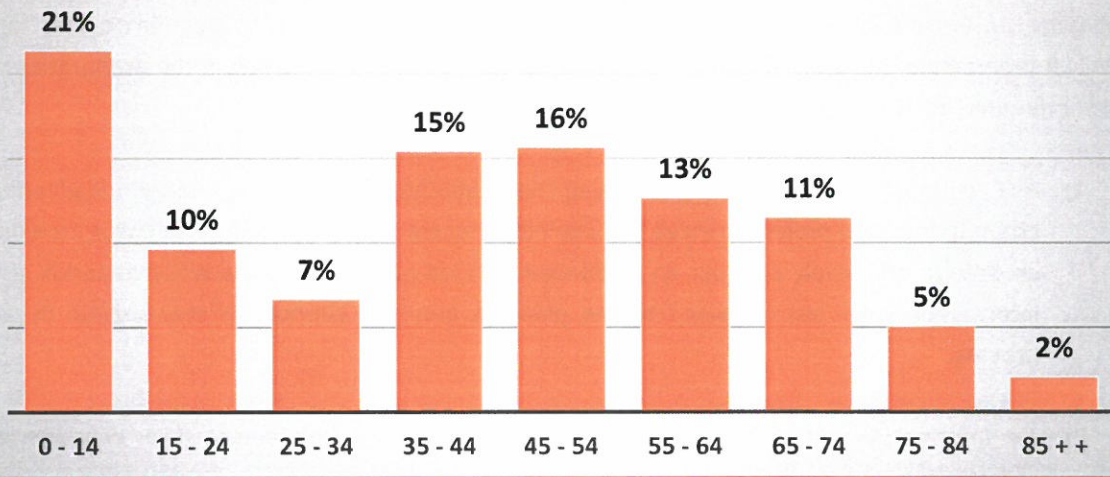
### DEMOGRAPHICS

---

Census 2016 indicates that:

- The overall population of Carron Electoral Division is 435: 213 males and 222 females. The population of Carron is relatively evenly spread across age the groups, though people aged 80+ years account for just 5% of the population. See Figure 1 below.
- There is little cultural or ethnic diversity among residents of Carron, with the population identifying itself as predominantly ‘White Irish’ or ‘Other White’, with less than 1% identifying differently.

**Figure 1 - Population By Age 2016**



- A total of 372 individuals are living in families in the area, with a total of 108 families recorded in the Census, 21% of which are two person families.
- 30% of households in Carron are one person households. Lone parent households comprise 7% of households in the community.
- 92% of households in Carron are in owner occupied accommodation, while 6% of households are in rented accommodation. There is a substantial amount of unoccupied holiday homes in the Carron, comprising 25% of the properties in the area.
- From a total of 342 individuals in Carron eligible to work, 56% are in employment. 15% are retired, while less than 5% are unemployed; 12% are looking after the home/family, while a further 3% is unable to work because of illness or disability.
- The residents of Carron report that they are largely healthy with 1.1% describing themselves as having bad health in Census 2016. 12% is described as having a disability.



### 3. CARRON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS

Following an initial Expression of Interest by Michael Davoren and Karen O'Loughlin to the Clare LEADER programme on behalf of Carron, a four-phase process was undertaken in the preparation of this Community Plan as follows:

- 1) *An Orientation Phase:* This phase involved the establishment of the aforementioned planning group to lead and project-manage the planning process in Carron. Orientation was provided on how to effectively conduct an evidence-informed planning process while materials and information were also provided to the planning group to support its stewardship of the process.
- 2) *An Information Gathering Phase:* The planning group implemented a broad-based consultation process during Phase 2 to enable community residents (full and part-time) and local users of services to identify strengths, needs, interests and concerns from their respective experiences of Carron - and to identify priority projects that should be addressed in the emerging community plan. A total of 74 individuals from across the life cycle responded to the survey as outlined in Figure 2 below:

AGE PROFILE - Please select your age group:

74 responses



- 3) *Analysis of Information and Action Planning Phase:* Phase 3 comprised the planning group and wider community of Carron examining a summary of the information gathered through the community consultation, identifying priority needs and selecting priority actions for inclusion in the Carron Community Plan – as well as identifying resources and supports needed to facilitate implementation.
- 4) *Writing Phase:* Phase 4 involved the preparation, agreement, and finalisation of this document as the core output of the planning process: the Carron Community Development Plan.

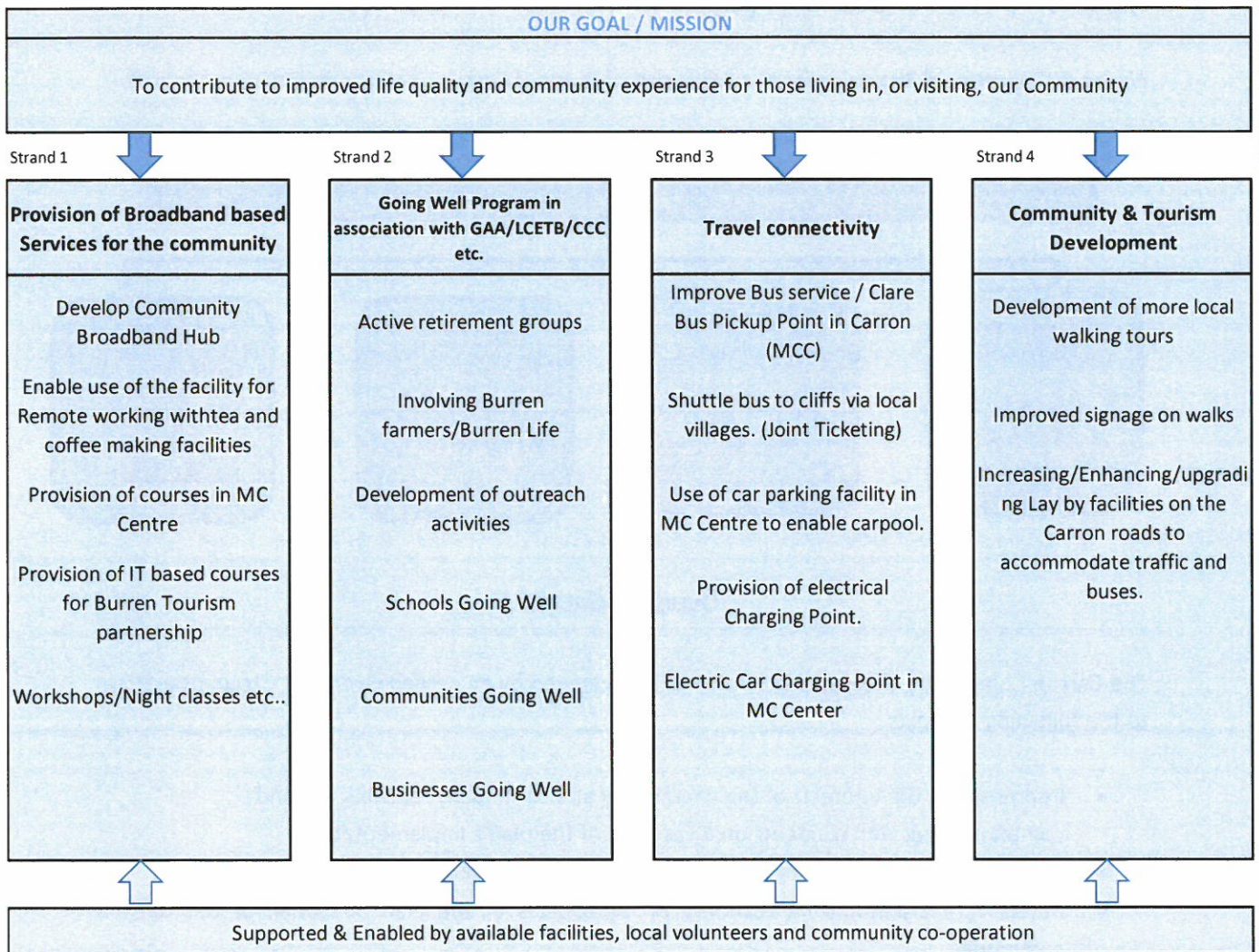




## 4. FRAMEWORK FOR CARRON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Figure 3 below presents a diagrammatic overview of the core elements of the Carron Community Development Plan. All actions within the plan are designed to contribute to *improved life quality and community experience for those living in, or visiting, Carron.*

**Figure 3: Plan Framework**



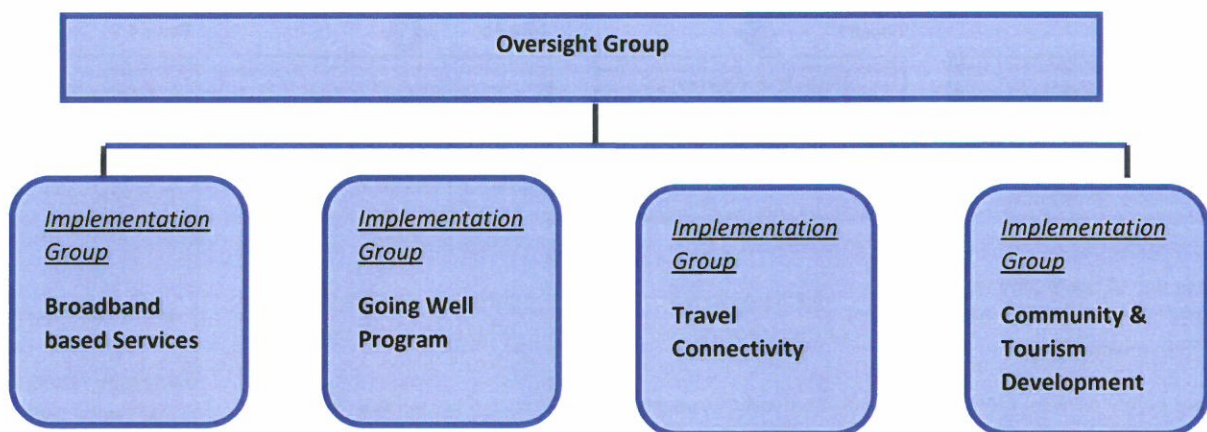
## 5. STRUCTURE

The implementation of the Carron Community Development Plan will be enabled through:

- a) The establishment of an Oversight Group; and
- b) The establishment of Implementation Sub-Groups.

This structure is illustrated below in Figure 4:

**Figure 4: Operational Structure for oversight and delivery of Carron Community Development Plan**



### OVERSIGHT GROUP

The Carron Community Development Plan will be overseen by an agreed Oversight Group operating to the following purpose:

- Representing the interests of the community and continually reaching out and communicating with residents on all aspects of the plan's implementation.
- Accessing and administering funding to resource the implementation of the plan.
- Retaining decision-making authority on all aspects of the plan on behalf of the Carron community.

The Oversight Group will involve a mix of residents that have i) participated in the aforementioned Planning Group and/or that have ii) volunteered – through a call for volunteers – to participate in overseeing the delivery of the Carron Community Plan.



It is proposed that the Oversight Group would be embedded in a legal structure within the Community, possibly Carron Development Company Limited. Steps will be taken between members of the Planning Group and the Management Group of Carron Development to facilitate a transition of authority for the plan from the Planning Group to the Oversight Group. This transition will facilitate all funding applications for the implementation of the Carron plan.

### **IMPLEMENTATION GROUPS**

---

Implementation groups will comprise community residents that have volunteered, following a community call for volunteers, to participate in the implementation of specific projects. These groups will be convened immediately to begin to action their respective projects. Membership of the sub-groups is open to any individual in the community interested in contributing to the delivery of any of the named projects.



## 6. STRANDS AND ACTIONS

### STRAND 1: PROVISION OF BROADBAND BASED SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY

---

***Action 1: Enable use of the facility for Remote working with tea and coffee making facilities***

***Action 2: Provision of courses in MC Centre***

***Action 3: Provision of IT based courses for Burren Tourism partnership***

***Action 4: Workshops/Night classes etc..***

#### Recommended Steps to Implementation:

- Establish an Implementation Sub-Group
- Scope demand for activities locally
- Identify specific nature of activities sought
- Identify and seek out facilities and locations for delivery within the community
- Develop action plans and agree responsibilities and timelines for delivery
- Identify resource requirements and seek out resources as required
- Establish and deliver activities



## STRAND 2: GOING WELL PROGRAM IN ASSOCIATION WITH GAA/LCETB/CCC ETC.

---

***Action 1: Active retirement groups***

***Action 2: Involving Burren farmers/Burren Life***

***Action 3: Development of outreach activities***

***Action 4: Schools Going Well***

***Action 5: Communities Going Well***

***Action 6: Businesses Going Well***

### Recommended Steps to Implementation:

- Establish an Implementation Sub-Group
- Scope demand for activities locally
- Identify specific nature of activities sought
- Identify and seek out facilities and locations for delivery within the community
- Develop action plans and agree responsibilities and timelines for delivery
- Identify resource requirements and seek out resources as required
- Establish and deliver activities



### STRAND 3: TRAVEL CONNECTIVITY

---

***Action 1: Improve Bus service / Clare Bus Pickup Point in Carron (MCC)***

***Action 2: Shuttle bus to cliffs via local villages. (Joint Ticketing)***

***Action 3: Use of car parking facility in MC Centre to enable carpool.***

***Action 4: Provision of electrical Charging Point.***

***Action 5: Electric Car Charging Point in MC Centre***

#### **Recommended Steps to Implementation:**

- Establish an Implementation Sub-Group
- Scope demand for activities locally
- Identify specific nature of activities sought
- Identify and seek out facilities and locations for delivery within the community
- Develop action plans and agree responsibilities and timelines for delivery
- Identify resource requirements and seek out resources as required
- Establish and deliver activities



## STRAND 4: COMMUNITY & TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

---

***Action 1: Development of more local walking tours***

***Action 2: Improved signage on walks***

***Action 3: Increasing/Enhancing/upgrading Lay by facilities on the Carron roads to accommodate traffic and buses.***

### Recommended Steps to Implementation:

- Establish an Implementation Sub-Group
- Scope demand for activities locally
- Identify specific nature of activities sought
- Identify and seek out facilities and locations for delivery within the community
- Develop action plans and agree responsibilities and timelines for delivery
- Identify resource requirements and seek out resources as required
- Establish and deliver activities



## 7. CONCLUSION

It is important to note this document as a framework plan that outlines broad priority actions to be implemented throughout Carron over the next three years to improve *life quality and community experience for those living in, or visiting, Carron.*

The plan reflects realistic, priority needs, interests and concerns of the community as identified by a significant community survey undertaken in Summer 2020. It is now important that the plan moves to full implementation.

The Planning Group which has led this planning process wants to advance the development of the proposals in this document, but *nothing can happen without community volunteers willing to lead and support particular activities.* This plan is not simply a list of projected activities, it is also a call to action.