

O'Gonnelloe Community Development Plan (2021 – 2023)

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

DRAFT

9th November 2020





TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	O’Gonnelloe	4
3.	Demographics	5
4	O’Gonnelloe Community Development Planning Process	8
5.	Framework for O’Gonnelloe Community Development Plan	10
6.	Structure and Organisation	11
7.	Co-ordination and Implementation Groups	12
8.	Strands and Actions	12
	Strand 1: Community and Infrastructure	12
	Strand 2 Community and Public Services	13
	Strand 3: Business and Economy	14
	Strand 4: Communications	15
	Strand 5: Community Activities	16
	Strand 6: Organisation	17
9.	Conclusion	18



1. INTRODUCTION

This document comprises a Draft Community Development Plan for the community of O’Gonnelloe in County Clare and its immediate environment. 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:

- Fred Hannaford
- Anna McElhinney
- Elaine Mulcahy
- Michele Coleman
- Jim O’Brien
- Peadar Casey
- Ger O’Brien
- Donal Molloy
- Eugene Hogan
- Donal O’Connor
- Reggie Hart
- Helen O’Brien
- Michael McNamara

It is also important to note the contribution of other community members who participated for a period on the Planning Group. Other community members also participated in different planning meetings.

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

The planning group who worked together to create this plan see it as a flexible document and something that is evolving and not fixed. They are keen that more people in the community engage with the plan. To do this a launch is being planned that will aim to inform and engage the community as much as possible, to encourage participation and bring new people into the implementation of this exciting plan.



2. O'CONNELLOE

The parish of Ogonnelloe is picturesquely situated on the shores of Lough Derg. It adjoins the parish of Killaloe being about 4 km from the town of Killaloe. The greater part of the parish lies in a valley with a background of the Slieve Bernagh hills.

O'Gonnelloe is a largely rural and dispersed community. The parish of O'Gonnelloe is largely encapsulated in the O'Gonnelloe and Carrowbawn Electoral Division.

O'Gonnelloe has many strengths. Residents suggest that there is a good quality of life and community spirit in the area with a nice mix of locals and new arrivals into the community. They also say it is a great place to raise a family. They suggest the landscape around O'Gonnelloe is wonderful and nestles beautifully beside Lough Derg. The area is reasonably well served by local community and commercial facilities such as the local primary school, sporting associations and nice walks.

On the other hand, residents also point to what they perceive as inadequate as a lack of a social hub and centre with a shop, shared work space and meeting place. A lack of activities in the area; concerns about road safety and inadequate benefit from tourism; poor public transport and some challenges for those integrating into the community.

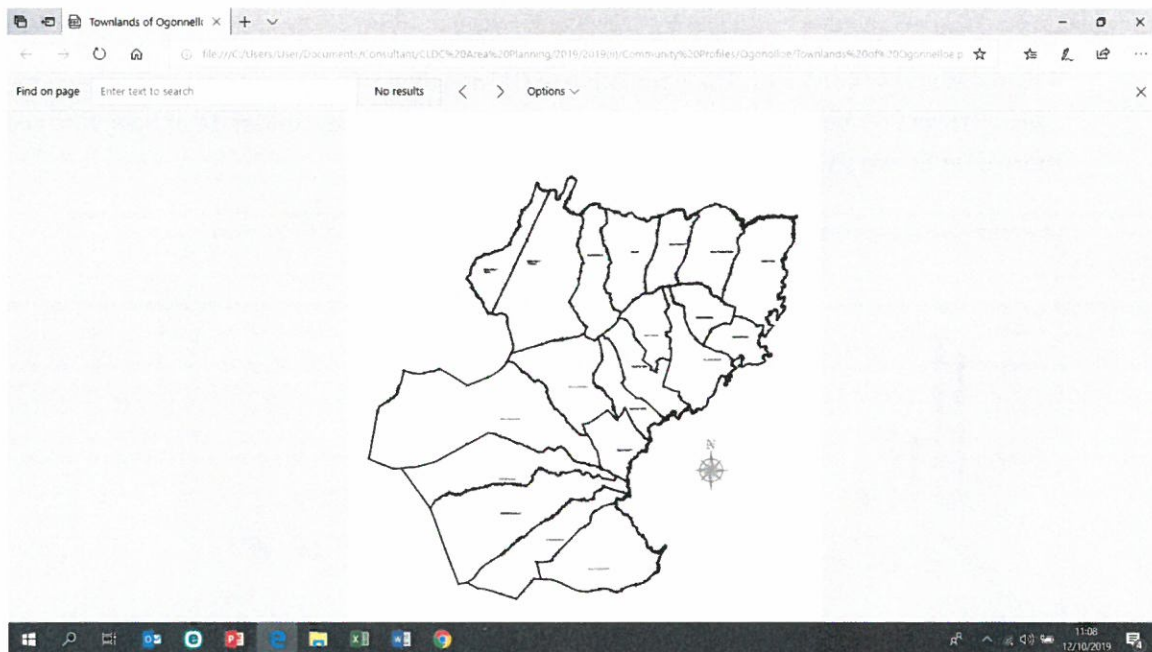
This plan therefore recognises that O'Gonnelloe is both a community of local residents and a destination that attracts visitors to the area. Activities within the plan seek to prioritise the needs of those living in the area while also ensuring the best possible experience for those who visit the area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



DEMOGRAPHICS

A profile was done of a short demographic analysis of O’Gonnelloe Parish in East Clare for the purposes of assisting the development of this area-based community development plan for O’Gonnelloe. These are the key findings.

O’Gonnelloe parish comprises 20 townlands as outlined in the following image:



The information presented below is drawn from Census Statistics 2016, the most recent Census undertaken in Ireland. Census data are collected at individual household level and are then presented according to small areas (approximately of 100 households) and regions known as Electoral Divisions (EDs).

The majority of townlands – and therefore the majority of O’Gonnelloe’s population – falls within the Electoral Division of O’Gonnelloe. The outstanding townlands in the parish, namely Carrowbaun, Carrownakilly, Lackabranner and Ballycuggaran, all fall within the Electoral Division of Carrowbawn.

The townlands of Coumnagun and Carrownagowan also fall within the Carrowbawn ED but are not part of O’Gonnelloe Parish. However, it is not possible to isolate these townlands from the Census data relating to the other townlands in the ED¹.

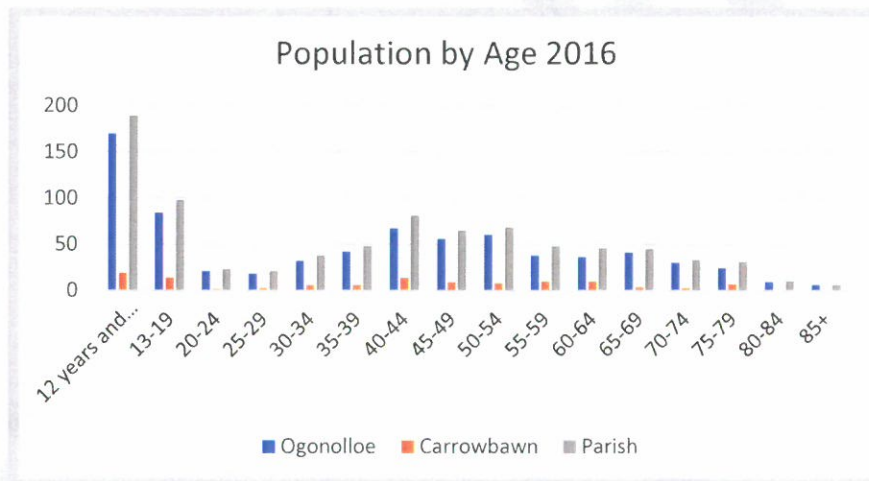
¹ I have tried to isolate Coumnagun and Carrownagowan from the other townlands by focusing on the next area of measurement down - Small Area (which covers areas of approximately 100 households). However the Small Area recorded



Therefore this demographic profile presents census statistics on the EDs of O’Gonnelloe and Carrowbawn, incorporating all the townlands of O’Gonnelloe parish and two additional townlands, namely Coumnagun and Carrownagowan. It is important to point out that the impact of including Coumnagun and Carrownagowan in the profile will be negligible and will not impact substantially on the accuracy of the profile presented.

Census 2016 indicates that:

- The overall population of O’Gonnelloe and Carrowbawn Electoral Division is 850 individuals: 426 males and 424 females. The population of O’Gonnelloe is fairly even spread between the ages of 15 and 65 but it shows a high percentage of young people under 14 at over 26% and those over 65 are 15%. Details are shown in the chart below.



- There is little cultural or ethnic diversity among residents of O’Gonnelloe with the population identifying itself as predominantly white Irish, at 86%.
- Private households by type showed a high percentage of married couples with children comprise 55% of all individuals living in private households as per Census 2016. Cohabiting couples with children comprise another 3% of residents.
- 43% of families are 2 person families.
- 7% of households in O’Gonnelloe are one person households. Lone parent households comprise 8% of households in the community.

is exactly the same as the Carrowbawn Electoral Division, mainly because we are talking about a population of 116 and a housing stock of 87.



- Out of 414 permanent dwellings, 72 % of households in O’Gonnelloe are owner occupied, 13% constituted unoccupied holiday homes, while a further (14%) were vacant dwellings.
- From a total of 627 individuals in O’Gonnelloe eligible to work, 341 which is 54.3% are in employment. 110 are retired which is 17.5%, while less than 7.1% are unemployed; 8.1% are looking after the home/family, while a further 2.7% are unable to work because of illness or disability.
- Census 2016 reveals that residents of O’Gonnelloe generally commute locally to school/work with heavy reliance on private cars for transport. 40% of residents take under 15 mins to commute and 22.8% under ¼ hr.
- 80 residents of O’Gonnelloe, which is 9.4 %, are described as having a disability.

Regarding the HP Deprivation Index O’Gonnelloe is Marginally Above Average, explained below.

HP Deprivation Index 2016

The Pobal HP Deprivation Index is the main index used in Ireland to identify levels of disadvantage and deprivation as well as identifying areas with the highest concentrations of disadvantage. It classifies areas according to levels of advantage or disadvantage on a scale of;

- Extremely disadvantaged
- Very disadvantaged;
- Disadvantaged;
- Marginally below average;
- Marginally above average;
- Affluent;
- Very affluent
- Extremely affluent.

Based on Census 2016 data, the HP Deprivation Index for this Community is

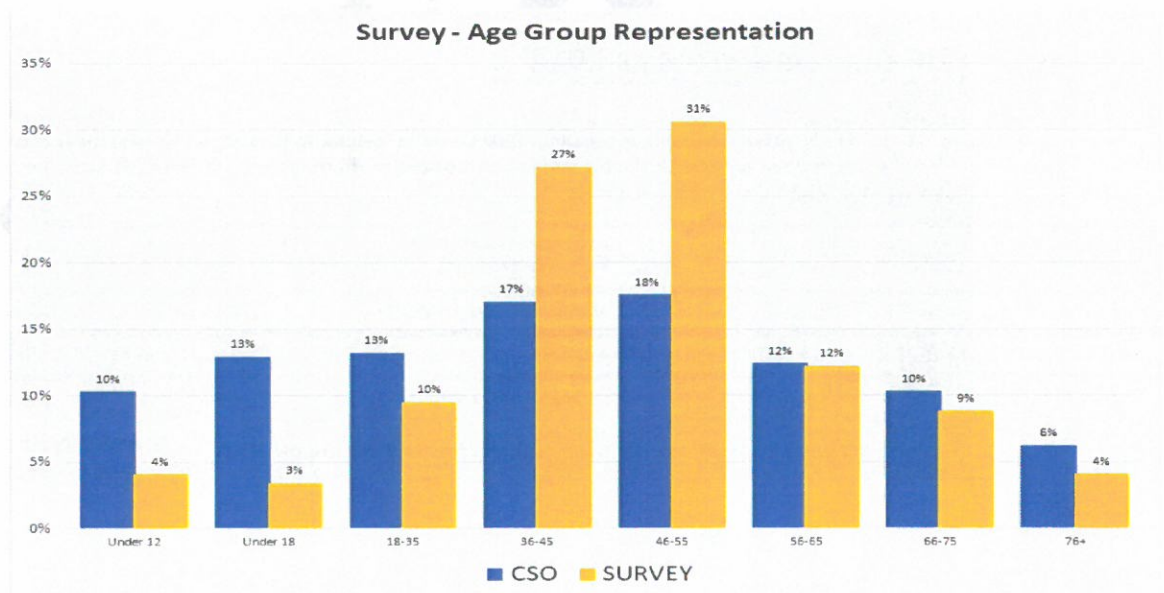
Marginally Above Average



3. O'CONNELLOE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS

Following an initial Expression of Interest by Donal O'Connor and Michael McNamara to the Clare LEADER programme on behalf of O'Connellloe, 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 O'Connellloe. 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 O'Connellloe - and to identify priority projects that should be addressed in the emerging community plan. A total of 146 individuals from across the life cycle responded to the survey as outlined in Figure 2 below:



- 3) *Analysis of Information and Action Planning Phase:* Phase 3 comprised the planning group and wider community of O'Connellloe examining a summary of the information gathered through the community consultation, identifying priority needs and selecting priority actions for inclusion in the O'Connellloe 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 O’Gonnelloe Community Development Plan.

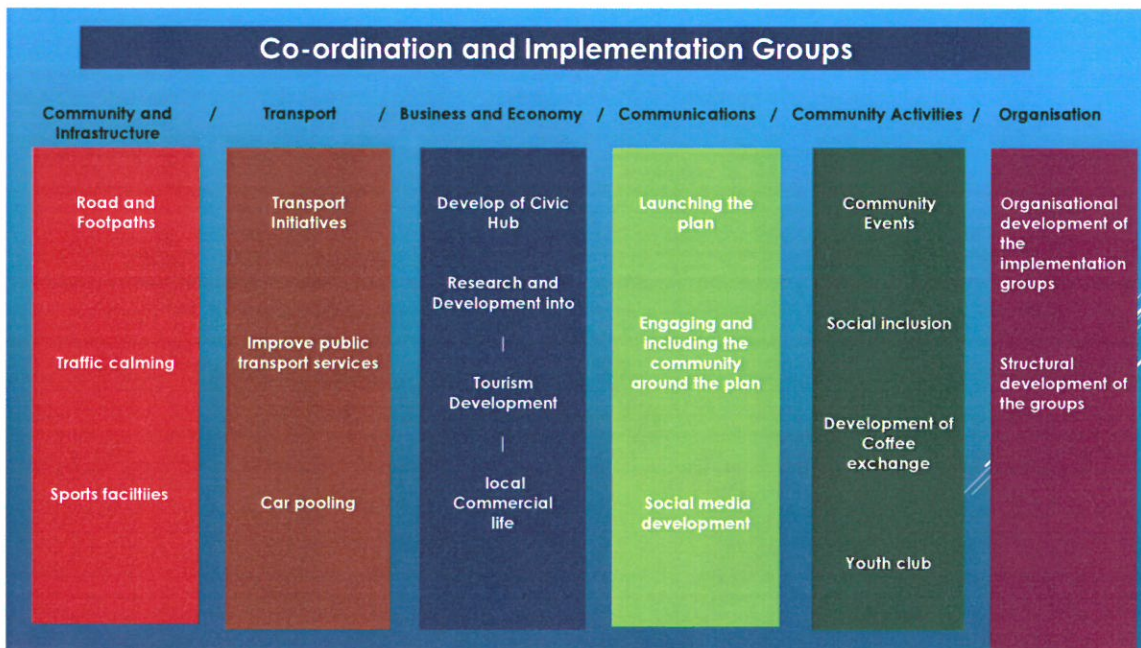
Draft



4. FRAMEWORK FOR O'CONNOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Figure 3 below presents a diagrammatic overview of the core elements of the O'Connell Community Development Plan, divided into 6 Strands. All actions within the plan are designed to contribute to improved life quality and community experience for those living in or visiting O'Connell.

Figure 3: Plan Framework



Enabled by available facilities, local volunteers and community co-operation



5. STRUCTURE AND ORGANSATION

The implementation of the O’Gonnelloe Community Development Plan will be enabled through:

The establishment of Co-ordination and Implementation Groups, one for each Strand. It is yet to be decided how each of these individual groups will operate and the structure, roles and responsibilities have all to be agreed upon. The Organisation Strand has been established to explore and create an agreed structure and approach that is balanced and prevents giving too much responsibility to too few volunteers. However, a leader for each group has been chosen and actions plans agreed upon.

Figure 4: Operational Structure delivery of O’Gonnelloe Community Development Plan



CO-ORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION GROUPS

Co-ordination and 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 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: COMMUNITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

This strand is to be led by Donal O'Connor

Action 1: Roads & footpaths:

- Liaise with Clare County Council and work directly on:
 - Traffic calming, lighting and signage;
 - Footpath - surface condition, safety of walkers, biodiversity and vegetation control;
 - General maintenance of footpath.

Action 2: Indoor sports facilities:

- Liaise with OHC in relation to supporting and accessing proposed indoor facilities.

Key Steps to be considered re implementation:

- Establish Implementation Sub-Group to implement all actions under this strand;
- Consider sources of income and operational costs;
- Work as closely as possible with the Co. Council to build strong relationship.

Prioritisation of priorities and actions over the next three years:

Timeframe	Priorities	Actions
Year 1	Footpath surface condition	Place new stone surface on the footpath
Year 2	Indoor sports facilities	Work with O'Gonnelloe Hurling club to support their proposed project
Year 3	Traffic calming	Work with Clare Co. Council on proposed Council traffic calming scheme



STRAND 2: TRANSPORT

This strand is to be led by Anna McElhinney and Michèle Coleman

Action: Transport

Liaise with 'Local Link Limerick Clare' (this is a not for profit rural transport company which has replaced the East Clare Accessible Transport service) in relation to bus timetables, pricing, services available and co-ordination of services with Bus Eireann or other public transport services from Killaloe, Scariff and Ennis

Make information available to the community in Ogonnelloe on local transport services through printed and digital media in coordination with the communications group.

Prioritisation of priorities and actions over the next three years

Timeframe	Priorities	Actions
Year 1	Gather information on public transport: choice, availability, cost and benefits.	Disseminate this information to the community
Year 2	Review community uptake of public transport and identify gaps	Lobby for additional transport needs where identified
Year 3	Investigate possibility of organised community lift sharing / car-pooling / helping people with transport where needed	Subject to public health advice these activities may be researched and introduced on a trial basis



STRAND 3: BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Lead by Peadar Casey

Action:

Develop day-time uses of O’Gonnelloe Exchange to (i) help the economic viability of the facility, (ii) meet the economic and social needs of the local community and (iii) support local businesses and tourism.

- Develop O’Gonnelloe Exchange as a Civic Hub which would host/facilitate researchers-in-residence linked with 3rd level education institutions (who would be working on rural-related research projects).
- Use the Civic Hub to interact with and support local businesses and the local economy.

Key Steps to be implemented:

- Two pilot projects are planned for October/December 2020 with 2 researchers, one working on a sustainable tourism system research project and the second working on a data science project.
- These two projects will provide valuable information on the adequacy of the accommodation and local services that are provided in O’Gonnelloe. These projects will also engage with local citizens and regional organisations interested in the areas of research.
- As part of these two pilots, local residents in O’Gonnelloe will be encouraged to engage with the projects, give their opinions and to help develop their own entrepreneurial ambitions.
- Feedback generated from the pilots will allow us plan relevant economic structures which can be accommodated through Ogonnelloe Exchange and its network of members.
- The pilots will also provide answers to questions around about the need for a coworking space, the needs of the tourism sector, natural resources and any other sectors that may be of interests to local residents and their respective entrepreneurial ambition.
- During October-December 2020 we will have engagement with Leader, the Local Enterprise Office, Clare County Council and other relevant agencies, in order to help local residents to develop their own businesses and as a result we will develop the local economy.
- The system will be refined and communicated on a digital platform from April 2021.

Prioritisation of priorities and actions over the next 12 months:

Timeframe	Priorities	Actions
Year 1	Early development of Civic Hub	Run pilot projects and assess results



STRAND 4: COMMUNICATIONS

Lead by Eugene Hogan

O’Gonnelloe Development Plan Communications

The following is an outline plan for a communications programme for the O’Gonnelloe Development Plan.

Step 1:

Develop communications team comprising Eugene Hogan, Jim O’Brien, Donal O’Connor, Michael McNamara, person in late teens, person in twenties and a recent new arrival in the community.

This team would develop a communication strategy as part of the overall Community Plan.

Step 2:

On finalisation of the Community Plan, it is recommended that it would be launched in the following way:

- Plan launch
 - Launch plan through traditional and new media
 - Materials
 - Press release
 - Video
 - Photo
 - Distribution
 - Traditional media – print and broadcast
 - Social media – Twitter, Facebook, Instagram (depending on resources)
- Other materials
 - Brochure that synopsis plan
- Additional launch activation options
 - House to house presentation
 - Presentation over a series of nights to socially distanced ‘townland’ pods at the O’Gonnelloe Exchange
 - Presentation at weekend Masses
 - Presentation to organisations in parish, including GAA, Operation Transformation, etc.
- Post launch
 - Communications committee to explore:
 - Ongoing communications to capture key milestones/developments
 - Resourcing of social media
 - Development of content for social media



STRAND 5: COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Lead by Helen O'Brien

Action:

Development of a range of possible community activities to include

- Development of a broader range of community events
- Activities to encourage social inclusion
- Continuation and development of the Coffee Exchange
- The organisation of activities and promoting greater use of the public walking and water-based facilities
- Creating opportunities for young people to gather – Youth Club
- Development a health and well-being initiative
- Cinema club

Key Steps to be implemented:

- 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 activity.



STRAND 6: ORGANISATION

Lead by Eleanor Skelly

Action:

This strand has been included as an opportunity to look at what type of structure is best suited for the implementation of this overall plan.

The role of the lead for this strand is to facilitate and develop an agreed structure and identify what type of supports are needed for those who are co-ordinating and implementing their projects be it training, sharing between projects around learnings and challenges within various roles, and aspects of implementation.

Key Steps to be implemented:

- Facilitate a workshop on organisational structures and individual responsibility (useful resource (“Reinventing Organisations” by Frederic Laloux) to bring about an agreed structure that best suits this community plan
- Identify learnings up to now in implementing projects in the community
- Utilise the learnings for planning ahead
- Look at how each group organises itself to progress the planned activities in terms of roles, responsibilities and a plan of action.
- The assigning of tasks to various sub-groups and the structure of these groups needs to be thought about.
- Communication, information sharing, and ways to encourage and develop individual’s initiative and to give them the opportunities and support to be creative.

This is a short term action plan that aims to have an agreed organisational structure within the first 6 months of the implementation of the Plan.



7. CONCLUSION

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

The plan reflects realistic, priority needs, interests and concerns of the community as identified by a significant community survey undertaken in October/ November 2019. 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.

It is important to note that due to Covid-19 the plans so far have been curtailed and it is a key factor moving forward. It is acknowledged the community actions planned within this document are likely to be impacted by Covid-19 although the extent of the impact is difficult to predict at this point.