Chief Executive's Two-Year Progress Report July 2025

Wexford County Development Plan 2022 - 2028



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Appendices

Appendix 1: Full Objective Progress List

Appendix 2: SEA Monitoring Report

Acronyms

BHIF CAP CCAP CDP CMF CPA CRF DECC DEDP DHLGH EERP EIA GBIS HSF HNDA HPBA LAP LAWPRO LCDC LECP LEO LTACC LTP MARA NBS NMPF NPF NPO NZEB OPW ORE ORIS RMP RRDF RESS RSES RZLT SC-DMAP SEA SETU SFRA SRA	Built Heritage Investment Scheme Climate Action Plan Community Climate Action Programme County Development Plan Community Monuments Fund Coastal Planning Authority Community Recognition Fund Department of Environment, Climate and Communications Destination Experience Development Plan Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme Environmental Impact Assessment Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Historic Structures Fund Housing Need Demand Assessment High Performance Building Alliance Local Area Plan Local Authorities Water Programme Local Community Development Committee Local Economic and Community Plan Local Enterprise Office Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee Local Traveller Accommodation S National Marine Planning Framework National Marine Planning Framework National Planning Framework National Planning Framework National Planning Framework Offshore Renewable Energy Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme Rainwater Management Plan Rural Regeneration Development Fund Renewable Electricity Support Scheme Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy Residential Zoned Land Tax South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment South East Technological University Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Souther Regional Assembly
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
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STVGP	Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme
SUDS	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
TAP	Traveller Accommodation Programme
TCF	Town Centre First
THRIVE	Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme

TVS	Town and Village Renewal Scheme
URDF	Urban Regeneration Development Fund
WCC	Wexford County Council
WWETB	Wexford Waterford Education Training Board
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

CHAPTER 1 Introduction



The Wexford County Development Plan 2022-2028 (the Plan) was adopted on 13th June 2022 and came into effect on 22nd July 2022. Section 15(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that a report on the progress in securing the objectives of the plan is given to the members not later than two years after the making of the plan.

Further detail on monitoring requirements is provided in Section 10.3 of the Development Plan Guidelines which states that in order to assess the success with which the development plan is being implemented, planning authorities will need to establish a frequent, reliable and ongoing monitoring system for their development plan as a permanent function. The guidelines state that the monitoring task of the planning authority for its development plan comprises of two strategic monitoring elements:

- a) Core Strategy Monitoring (Annual)
- b) Plan Objectives Monitoring (including SEA Monitoring)(Two-yearly)

This report summaries the progress towards achieving the objectives from the date the Plan came into effect up to 30th September 2024, unless otherwise stated in the report. These summaries have been informed directly by the full list of over 1,200 objectives which are documented in Appendix 1 of this report, as well as the annual Core Strategy Monitoring Reports prepared for Year 1 and 2 of the Plan, which are available to view on the Council's website.¹

It is acknowledged that not all objectives may be measured in easily identifiable quantitative values. Some objectives are:

- statements of policy and standards to guide development
- statements of support for types of development or infrastructure
- specify content of later local area plans
- give direction to the council's own work
- written to support applications for grant funding for appropriate developments by the local authority, other bodies and community groups.

Monitoring of Plan objectives and SEA monitoring may overlap with monitoring of actions in other plans of the Council including the Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2029 (LECP) and WCC Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 (CAP). These actions have been linked to the Plan objectives and SEA monitoring where appropriate to avoid duplication of monitoring across the organisation.

¹ <u>https://www.wexfordcoco.ie/planning/development-and-local-area-plans/current-plans/wexford-county-development-plan-2022-2028</u>

Updates in Legislation and Policy

Planning and Development Act 2024

This will replace the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) in its entirety. It is expected that the new Act will commence in stages over the next 18 months. The main changes from the perspective of the Development Plan are:

- **Duration of Plans** The duration of a Development Plan will be amended to 10 years, with an 'Interim Implementation Report' to be prepared after 4 years.
- Area Based Plans The automatic need to prepare Local Area Plans (LAPs) based on population size will be replaced by specific types of area-based plans to meet particular needs. These plans include Urban Area Plans for towns designated as 'regional growth centres' or 'key towns' in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, Priority Area Plans for a sub-part of an urban area and Joint Area Plans for an urban area that is in the administrative area of more than one Local Authority.
- **Urban Development Zones** This will empower local authorities to designate areas with significant potential for development, including housing, as Candidate Urban Development Zones and for the Government to designate such areas as Urban Development Zones. These areas will be a focus of State investment in key enabling infrastructure in order, to ensure the potential for development can be realised in a timely manner.

Revised National Planning Framework

The Government published a Draft First Revision of the National Planning Framework (NPF) in July 2024 and a draft schedule of amendments to the First Revision in November 2024. This followed a period of public consultation during which WCC made a comprehensive submission in September 2024. The Draft Revision focuses on the need to update the Framework to reflect changes to Government policy that have taken place since its publication in 2018, including climate transition, regional development, demographics, digitalisation, investment and prioritisation.

The Draft Revision retains the original NPF's focus on more balanced regional development and the original NPF commitment to targeting the five cities for 50% of overall national growth, with Ireland's large and smaller towns, villages and rural areas accommodating the other 50% of growth. The major policy emphasis on renewing and developing existing settlements established under the NPF 2018 will be continued. At least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements other than the five Cities and their suburbs are to be delivered within their existing built-up footprints (NPO9) with the Draft Revision also stating that planned growth at a settlement level shall be determined at the development plan-making stage (NPO11).

The Draft Revision also recognises the need to ensure, in the Southern Region, a balanced approach in activating and realising much underutilised potential in wider rural towns and dispersed communities. Regional opportunities to leverage growth include national and international connectivity, especially via ports proximate to continental Europe, such as Belview and Rosslare-Europort, strengthening Higher

Education Institutes and further balanced employment and housing development in key settlements and county towns. This must be based on infrastructure and quality of life, rather than long distance commuting to Dublin.

Once finalised, the Revised NPF will be incorporated into the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) and City and County Development Plans (CDP). Such revisions will include updated Housing Supply Targets which may need to be considered in the context of a variation to the existing CDP or to inform the preparation of the next Plan. The CDP will also be required to integrate renewable energy targets and include detailed objectives and locally devised approaches to manage the nearshore area (the sea area 5km or 3 nautical miles from shore) in accordance with the Revised NPF and RSES.

New Section 28 Guidelines

Residential Zoned Land Tax- Guidelines for Planning Authorities (June 2022)

The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) was introduced under the Finance Act 2021 to encourage the timely activation of zoned and serviced residential development land for housing and to ensure the regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations. The RZLT Guidelines outline the criteria for the inclusion of lands within the scope for the tax and the formal process which must be followed.

Local Authorities are required to undertake annual mapping exercises to identify the lands in scope for the tax in their respective functional areas. For 2025 this includes lands identified within existing statutory land use plans at Gorey, Courtown and Riverchapel, Bunclody and Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane. Owners of such land may make a request to Wexford County Council (WCC) to change the zoning of this land until 1 April 2025. If certain conditions are met, a landowner may be exempt from the 2025 liability on foot of such a request. This could require a variation to the Plan.

Development Plans- Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2022)

The new Development Plan Guidelines provide guidance to Local Authorities in relation to the preparation, process, content, implementation, monitoring and reporting for Development Plans.

Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (December 2022)

The overall aim of these guidelines is to achieve a balance between the provision of high-quality apartment development and the requirement to achieve increased apartment supply. The principal purpose of these Guidelines is to remove the planning requirement that 'Build to Rent' is identified as a separate development type, with specific design standards. These guidelines are implemented through the Planning Authority's Development Management function and do not affect the objectives of the Plan. However, the reference to SPPR's 7 and 8 in Section 4.7.5 of the Plan under the heading of 'Build to Rent Apartments' no longer applies.

Regulation of Commercial Institutional Investment in Housing- Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2023)

The guidelines aim to ensure that own-door housing units and duplex units in lower density housing developments are not bulk-purchased for market rental purposes by commercial institutional investors, in a manner that causes the displacement of individual purchasers and/or social and affordable housing, including cost rental housing. The guidelines set out planning conditions to which Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála must have regard in granting planning permission for new residential development, including houses and/or duplex units. These Guidelines are implemented through the Planning Authority's Development Management function and do not affect the objectives of the Plan.

Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements- Guidelines for Planning Authorities (January 2024)

These guidelines set out national planning policy and guidance in relation to the planning and development of urban and rural settlements, focusing on sustainable residential development and compact settlements. The guidelines expand on the higher-level policies of the NPF, setting policy and guidance in relation to the growth priorities for settlements, residential density, urban design and place making and introduce development standards for housing.

Density ranges set out in the guidelines respond to settlement size and contexts, recognizing the differences between cities, large and medium sized towns and smaller towns and villages.

These Guidelines will require a review of the density standards contained within the Plan to determine compliance. This work is ongoing and will inform the preparation of the Wexford Town Local Area Plan (LAP).

Format of Report

The format of this report generally follows the chapter headings of the Written Statement contained in Volume 1 of the Plan. A summary of progress on the objectives contained in Volume 3 Settlement Plans and Specific Objectives, Volume 8 Retail Strategy, Volume 9 Housing Strategy and Volume 10 Energy Strategy is set out in Chapters 16-19. Chapter 20 provides a conclusion. Appendix 1 details the progress achieved in implementing the full list of over 1,200 objectives from the Plan, Appendix 2 reports on the results of SEA monitoring.

CHAPTER 2 Climate Action





The Climate Action Chapter sets out a number of objectives for climate mitigation and adaptation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the vulnerability of people and property to climate change.

Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

Objective CA03 seeks to implement any adopted Climate Action Plan in future Local Area Plans (LAPs) and in the assessment of planning applications. The WCC Climate Action Plan (CAP) was prepared and adopted by WCC in February 2024. It incorporates mitigation and adaptation measures and includes the development of a Decarbonisation Zone in Enniscorthy. The Decarbonisation Zone is the focus for a range of climate mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity measures.

A dedicated Climate Action Team has been set up to deliver on the Plan. The Team includes a recently appointed Biodiversity Officer and an Energy Officer. A Climate Action Steering Group has also been set up which includes members from across the various sections of the organisation to ensure that climate considerations are integral to all the Council's activities. The Group is tasked with the implementation of the actions in the CAP and measures to adapt to and mitigate against Climate Change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Draft Wexford LAP which is currently being prepared will be consistent with this plan. The preparation of the Enniscorthy LAP will also align with this plan and in particular the actions relating the Enniscorthy Decarbonisation Zone.

Energy Efficiency

A number of objectives (CA14, CA15) support initiatives to improve energy efficiency and future proof the county's building stock. In this regard, the Housing Section reports that it has been meeting its target under the Energy Retrofitting Programme on WCC's Social Housing stock. 146 houses were upgraded last year and 150/160 are proposed for next year. In addition, Southend Family Resource Centre has been financially supported by WCC Climate Action Team, in promoting and aiding homeowners in the area to complete energy upgrade funding applications to SEAI. Wexford Town Sustainable Energy Community will be progressing this scheme to other areas.

Objective CA06 seeks to reduce the energy related CO₂ emissions of WCC, improve energy efficiencies and achieve the commitment under the European Climate Alliance to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 10% every five years. In April 2024, the carbon emissions (thermal, transport and electricity) were 4.90ktCO₂ which is a 10.6% reduction compared to 2022 and a 31.1% carbon emission reduction on 2016-2018. The energy efficiency improvement on 2009 was 42.1%; which is a 4.4% improvement on 2022. In addition, 11 Energy audits and 13 Display Energy Certificates (DECs) were completed on public buildings since 2022.

High Performance Building Alliance

Objective CA08 seeks to maximise the opportunities offered by the presence of the UN Centre of Excellence on Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) in Enniscorthy and to support the designation of this centre as the National Centre for Ireland. Objective CA14 also seeks to promote jobs and innovation in the green economy.

WWETB continues to run NZEB training courses at their training centre in Enniscorthy. These courses are targeted at people working in the construction sector to provide them with the skills necessary to develop low carbon buildings. The High Performance Building Alliance (HPBA) has also been established at Enniscorthy Technology Park and is an Irish Government and UN approved Centre of Excellence dedicated to reducing the effects of climate change by improving the built environment. It is dedicated to leading and championing high-performance buildings and nearly zero-energy buildings, both new and retrofit, while increasing knowledge, capacity, and demand for low-carbon emission buildings.²

In Q1 2025 WCC will open a new (Enterprise Ireland supported) Green Hub at the HPBA which will support SMEs in the South East Region and beyond. The HPBA Green Hub fitout is underway and follows the circular economy principle of design for disassembly and each element is procured with net zero in mind. The Green Hub is a showcase/demonstrator for innovative products and services within the Sustainable Built Environment and will provide an opportunity for biobased materials, digital innovation and circular design to be showcased. This is the first initiative of its kind in Ireland and internationally.

Adaptive Capacity and Awareness

Objective CA11 supports measures to build resilience to climate change including adaptive capacity and awareness. In this regard, a dedicated Climate Action webpage has been setup and is regularly updated.³ WCC held a Climate Action Awareness Event in June 2023 and the Climate Action Team held several events during Climate Action Week in May 2024 to support decarbonisation and energy efficiency. This included an Energy Clinic in Enniscorthy, Rosslare & The Faythe and a demonstration day in an NZEB social housing unit. Staff induction includes Climate Action Awareness training and HR have run a number of Climate Action Awareness courses. In addition, the Council has supported the establishment of approximately 38 Sustainable Energy Communities across the County, who are taking a lead on climate action at community level.

Community Action Fund

Objective CA09 is to utilise the Climate Action Fund to facilitate public and private climate mitigation and adaptation projects. The Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP) is funded by the Climate Action Fund established under the National Development Plan. To date WCC have received €669,000 under this

² <u>https://hpba.ie/about/our-mission/</u>

³ <u>https://www.wexfordcoco.ie/environment-and-climate-change/climate-action</u>

funding which has been allocated to 16 community groups in the five municipal districts to deliver local climate action projects.

Spatial Planning

A number of objectives (CA10, CA12, CA13) relate to spatial planning in terms of integrating land uses with transportation in local area plans, facilitating mixed use developments as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing adaptation to climate change having regard to the location, layout and design of new development. The Planning Authority continues to promote the successful integration of land uses to reduce the need for travel and promote the use of active travel and public transport in the preparation of land use plans and through the development management process.

The Wexford Town LAP is in development and climate considerations are integral to the plan's development. A number of new strategies have been introduced in recognition of the need to adapt to and mitigate climate change.

- A Rainwater Management Plan (RMP) incorporating nature-based solutions is being prepared (see Chapter 9 and 11). It will be one of the first such strategies prepared in the Country. The main aim of the RMP is to consider rainwater management and increased rainwater flood risk from climate change and to develop a spatial strategy prioritising the use of nature-based solutions to convey, reduce and slow down overland rainwater flow and manage and treat the flow to its end source.
- In recognition of the important role that green and blue infrastructure plays in climate adaptation and mitigation a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) is also being prepared (see Chapter 11). The GBIS will aim to protect and enhance the network of green and blue infrastructure in the town.
- Consultants have been appointed to prepare a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (see Chapter 9). Climate change is an integral part of the assessment. A precautionary approach will be adopted avoiding areas potentially prone to flooding under the future climate change scenarios, setting land aside that could be required for future flood management and setting specific development management standards to ensure climate change is considered.
- Consultants have been appointed to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). It will integrate climate change considerations and consider residual flood risk in accordance with the Section 28 Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

Renewable Energy

Objective CA04 seeks to implement the Energy Strategy contained in Volume 10 of the Plan to facilitate the transition to a low carbon county. The Council continues to implement the Energy Strategy and is committed to contributing to national renewable energy targets and the transition to a low carbon county. See Chapter 19 which details the progress on implementation of the Energy Strategy.

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

Objective CA14 includes incorporating biodiversity and green infrastructure planning into local authority own developments including residential schemes, public parks, open spaces, walking trails and greenways. There are several examples of local authority own developments which fulfil this objective including High Hill and Emigrant Parks in New Ross, the Trinity Wharf project in Wexford which includes SUDs and green roofs, and the delivery of 6km of greenway from Rosbercon-Glenmore. Biodiversity areas and features are also being designed and constructed in new and refurbished road projects.

Transport Sector

Objectives CA17 & CA18 support decarbonisation in the transport sector. WCC have increased their EV fleet to 13 electric vehicles and 2 electric forklifts and where appropriate e-vehicles will continue to replace petrol/diesel models. An increased number of e-chargers are being installed in public carparks during renovation works and in new developments. WCC have also agreed to be a member of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy for the South East.

The Climate Action Team have worked with the Roads department and the Fleet Manager in assessing the viability and costs required to move from fossil fuels to Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) for the HGV's within the Council's fleet. Plans are in place to introduce the use of HVO in the Council fleet with the installation of new fuel storage tanks in the Machinery Yard.

A transport mobility hub will be included in the design and consent application for the N11/N25 Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour Project and WCC supports this objective on the TEN-T route.

снартек з Core Strategy



Housing Delivery



New House Completions during the first two years

Settlement Level	Settlement	Core Strategy - Housing Units Allocated	House Completions
Key Town	Wexford	2,174	460
	Gorey	985	361
Large Town	Enniscorthy	888	220
	New Ross	289	34

Dwellings Granted Planning Permission during the first two years

Settlement Level	Settlement	Core Strategy - Housing Units Allocated	No. of dwellings granted
Key Town	Wexford	2,174	786
	Gorey	985	434
Large Town	Enniscorthy	888	192
	New Ross	289	124

Commercial Development

Planning permissions granted during the first 2 years

Use Category	Year 1 & 2 (sq.m.)
Office	4,895.79
Industrial	35,765.50
Retail	5,584.79
Warehousing/Logistics	19,331.31
Hospitality (including hotels, restaurants, cafés)	4,599.79
Total	70,177.18

Rural housing

586 dwellings granted

planning permission outside of CSO Settlements during the first two years of the plan



1,002 new dwellings completed

outside of CSO Settlements during the first two years of the plan



70,177sq.m. floorspace permitted

during the first two years of the plan



The Core Strategy sets out the development approach for the urban and rural areas of the county for the period of the plan and includes allocations for population, housing units and residential zoned land. An Annual Core Strategy Monitoring Report is prepared for each year of the plan setting out the progress towards achieving the allocations and identifying spatial development trends in accordance with the Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHLGH, 2022). Click here to view the Core Strategy Monitoring Reports for Years 1 and 2 Wexford County Development Plan 2022-2028 | Wexford County Council.

Population Growth

The Table below shows population growth in the Key Towns, Larger Towns and Level 3a Settlements based on the results of Census 2022 and compares it to the population allocation in the Core Strategy. The results show that the population growth in Gorey, Courtown and Riverchapel and Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane during the intercensal period was significantly higher than the population allocations for those settlements in the Core Strategy. Courtown and Riverchapel has already exceeded its total allocated population growth for the plan period while Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane is getting close to its total allocation. Wexford, Enniscorthy and Ferns had less growth than allocated with the latter growing by just six people between 2016 and 2022. The figures for Bunclody and New Ross include a portion of the settlements in counties Carlow and Kilkenny and no comparable figure is available at present.⁴

Settlement Level	Settlement	Census 2016	Core Strategy Allocation 2021	Census 2022	Core Strategy Allocation 2027
Key Towns	Wexford	20,188	22,849	22,417	26,043
	Gorey	9,822	11,027	11,593	12,474
Larger	Enniscorthy	11,381	12,467	12,366	13,771
Towns	New Ross	7,780	8,134	8,540	8,558
Level 3a	Bunclody Town	1,430	1,593	2,097	1,788
Settlements	Castlebridge	1,840	1,965	2,016	2,116
	Courtown and Riverchapel	3,591	3,673	4,365	3,771
	Ferns	1,415	1,511	1,421	1,627
	Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane	1,847	2,057	2,248	2,309
	Rosslare Strand	1,620	1,730	1,749	1,863

⁴ The figures were requested from CSO but were not provided.

Residential Growth

The Plan identifies a need for the delivery of 6,429 new homes in the county during the plan period or 1,072 homes per year. During the first two years of the plan (1st July 2022 to 30th June 2024) a total of 2,202 new dwellings (34.2% of units allocated for plan period) were completed and 2,336 dwellings (36.3% of units allocated for plan period) were granted planning permission. The Core Strategy Monitoring Report for Year 2 illustrates how the majority of housing growth which occurred in settlements is located within the built-up area, thus meeting the requirements of National Policy Objective (NPO) 3c objective to deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements within their existing built-up footprints, as well as meeting the Core Strategy objectives and contributing to compact growth. Table 2 provides a summary of house completions and permissions granted in the four main towns during the first two years of the Plan.

Settlement Level	Settlement	Core Strategy Housing Units Allocation	House Completions Whole Settlement	No. of Units Granted in Whole Settlement
Key Town	Wexford	2,174	460	786
	Gorey	985	361	434
Large	Enniscorthy	888	220	192
Town	New Ross	289	34	124

Table 2: Housing units completed and granted in the four main towns

In terms of rural housing, a total of 586 dwellings were granted outside of CSO Settlements during the first two years of the plan, with the majority of those (276) located in the 'Area under Strong Urban Influence'. A total of 1,002 new dwellings were completed outside of CSO Settlements with the majority of those (478) located in the 'Stronger Rural Area'. This shows continued demand for rural housing in these two rural area types.

Commercial Development

An additional 70,177sq.m. of commercial floorspace was permitted during the first two years of the plan in the retail, office, industry, manufacturing/logistics and hospitality sectors. Commercial development has continued to grow, in the Key Town of Wexford in particular. Further economic development will be required in Gorey to achieve the Core Strategy objectives for the town to become a Strategic Employment Location and in Enniscorthy and New Ross to address unemployment and deprivation legacies. There are also further opportunities for economic development in the Level 3a Service Settlements and Level 3b Strategic Settlements, particularly in Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane with industrial zoned lands optimally located adjacent to Rosslare Europort, and in Kilmore Quay which could benefit from opportunities presented by Offshore Renewable Energy. See Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy for further information on the progress in securing economic objectives.

Zoning and Serviced Land

A number of objectives seek to ensure that sufficient, serviced lands are available to accommodate the growth allocated to the settlements in the Core Strategy (CS01, CS03, CS22, ET07, GT06, WT08, WT09). Zoned land is currently available in Gorey Town, Courtown and Riverchapel, Bunclody and Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane. The latest Waste Water Treatment Capacity Registers and 10 Year Water Supply Capacity Registers received from Uisce Éireann (December 2024) show that water and wastewater treatment capacity is available or potentially available in the Key Towns, Larger Towns and Level 3a settlements.⁵ WCC continue to liaise with Uisce Éireann, TII, the Department of Education and other infrastructure providers and stakeholders to ensure the adequate provision of infrastructure and services to accommodate existing and future growth.

The Wexford LAP is prioritised for development in 2025 and an Infrastructural Assessment Report is being prepared to inform the land use zoning and to ensure that serviced lands are prioritised.

See Chapter 4 Sustainable Housing for information on serviced sites in villages and the "Ready to Build Scheme" (objective CS23).

Drivers of Growth and Regeneration

Objectives CS19 and CS20 seek to ensure that the four main towns continue to be drivers of growth. In this regard WCC has progressed a number of plans and projects to stimulate both economic and population growth and to develop centres of scale.

Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy discusses how WCC is optimising the strategic locational advantages of Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford Towns on the Eastern Economic Corridor together with planned property solutions including the Hatch Lab in Gorey, Enniscorthy Technology Park and Trinity Wharf and SETU campus in Wexford Town, as well as John Street Enterprise Hub in New Ross Town in a bid to generate economic growth.

Chapter 5 Design and Placemaking in Towns and Villages discusses how WCC have progressed and are progressing a number of significant key regeneration projects in the four towns including:

- Gorey Town Esmonde Street Public Realm Scheme, Market House Redevelopment and Gorey Town Park;
- Wexford Trinity Wharf Project, Monck Street Public Realm Project and Crescent Quay Public Realm Projects;

⁵ In the case of Rosslare Strand and Ferns the potential availability of wastewater capacity would be dependent on any additional load not resulting in a significant breach of the combined approach as set out in Regulation 43 of the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007. Additional analysis of Pre-connection Enquiries and Connection Applications will be undertaken on an individual basis considering any specific load requirements.

In terms of water supply some capacity constraints exist in Enniscorthy, New Ross, Bunclody, Castlebridge and Ferns. Additional analysis of Pre-connection Enquiries and Connection Applications will be undertaken on an individual basis considering their specific load requirements.

- Enniscorthy Town Enniscorthy Town Centre Project and former Murphy Floods site; and
- New Ross Town New Ross Tourism Project, High Hill Park, Emigrant Park, South East Greenway, Brennan's Lane/Shambles and Quay Street.

Town Centre First (TCF) Plans have been prepared and published for Enniscorthy and New Ross and Town Teams have been established to progress the actions contained in these plans. This includes exploring ways that digital improvements can enhance opportunities in these Towns. The Heritage-led Regeneration Plans for Wexford and Enniscorthy also include a number of actions to promote the regeneration and revitalisation of the town centres. See Chapter 5 for further details.

CHAPTER 4 Sustainable Housing





Gorey Town (Brownfield site)

Housing delivery and the creation of sustainable communities continues to be a key priority for WCC. WCC continues to ensure that high quality developments are delivered at appropriate locations and at an appropriate scale through the development management process and local authority own development.

In relation to housing and the housing strategy, the implementation phase necessitates proactive measures to be taken to enable the housing outlined in the core strategy to be realised and for it to align with policies such as the regeneration of towns and compact growth. Ensuring that infrastructural programmes are developed and progressed in tandem with state agencies and other infrastructure providers is also essential.

Location of Housing

Objective SH03 seeks to facilitate all households to access good quality housing appropriate to the household circumstances and in their particular community of choice. WCC's Housing Section are in continuous engagement with developers and Approved Housing Bodies to ensure that housing need is matched in terms of house type and location. Choice Based Letting was introduced in 2023 which is new way of allocating houses that gives the applicant more choice in the type and location they will be offered a house. In addition, the Housing Section attend all pre-planning meetings for large-scale housing developments that attract a Part V obligation to ensure that the Part V agreements meet the housing needs in the area of the proposed development.

Objective SH06 prioritises the provision of new housing in existing settlements at an appropriate scale and density relative to the location and SH08 ensures that 30% of all new homes targeted to settlements are delivered within the existing built-up footprint of those settlements. The Core Strategy Monitoring Report for Year 2 provides details on the quantum and location of new residential development, both in terms of new dwellings constructed and planning permissions granted, during the first two years of the Plan. The Report demonstrates the progress on implementing the requirement to construct at least 30% of new development within the existing built-up areas of settlements (refer to Core Strategy Chapter for further details).

WCC Housing Capital Section are also progressing a number of social housing developments on brownfield and underutilised sites to consolidate existing built-up settlements. Current projects and proposals include:

- Francis Street, Wexford 2 no. units, contractor to be appointed
- Grogan's Road, Wexford 4 no. units, funding application being prepared
- Adamstown Village 3no. units, funding application being prepared
- The Bullawn, New Ross 3 no. units, progressing to tender
- Wexford Street, Gorey 30 no. units under construction, due to complete in 2025
- Bride Street, Wexford Part 8 application being prepared for 3 no. units

Objectives SH11 and SH12 seek to zone land on a tiered and phased basis in accordance with the Core Strategy and to identify the priority of land for development in relevant local area plans. This is currently being considered as part of the preparation of the draft Wexford Town LAP. An Infrastructural Assessment Report is currently being prepared which will inform the tiered approach to land use zoning. Any future zoning of lands within the functional area of the Council will also apply the tiered approach methodology to ensure that serviced land is developed sequentially.

Housing Density and Mix

A number of objectives relate to housing density (SH06, SH15), building heights (SH17) and the provision of a mix of unit types (SH16, SH21). WCC continues to apply appropriate density and height standards in accordance with relevant planning guidelines. Consultants have been appointed to prepare an Urban Design Strategy as part of the preparation of the draft Wexford Town LAP. Appropriate sites will be identified for increased densities and building heights in the LAP as well as the promotion of a mix of house types. The Core Strategy Monitoring Report for Year 2 provides a breakdown in 1, 2, 3 and 4+ bedroom dwellings permitted in settlements during the first two years of the plan (refer to Core Strategy Chapter for further details).

Objective SH24 seeks to counteract undue segregation. In this regard it is noted that all WCC housing delivery proposals are brought through an Internal Housing Committee and Interdepartmental Committee for approval. As part of this process a brief on the proposals is completed and includes the mix of housing types in the area to ensure there is a good mix in line with Department Guidelines.

Social Housing

Objective SH09 seeks to address homelessness, accelerate social housing, improve the rental sector and utilise existing building stock while objectives SH31 to SH36 seek to deliver appropriate housing for groups with specific housing needs. WCC Housing Section have (in conjunction with Capital Construction) delivered over 50% of the Housing for All Targets to date. The proposals approved for the remainder of the plan period, subject to all being delivered, will result in WCC surpassing their target of 1,155 no. units.

For groups with specific housing needs, a committee has been established within WCC Housing Section to ensure that applicants with very specific housing needs are being designed into any schemes or other delivery streams available to the Council. Therefore, at an early stage of design specially adapted houses can be planned for.

WCC Housing Section have a target of offering at least 20% of allocations to persons with a Disability. This target is being met consistently and as noted previously, a committee is now in place (including capital delivery staff and allocations staff) to ensure that plans for specifically adapted houses are included in the early stage of designs or proposals.

WCC has a Homeless Services Supports Unit in place since 2019 which includes other agency staff i.e. Focus, HSE, and others. Our own team has also been

increased with three Social Care Workers allocated to Homeless Services. In line with the recent government circular on allocating a portion of new houses to Homeless applicants, WCC are doing this in all new schemes (10%).

WCC Housing Section also provides support through social housing and grants for older people. Social Workers also offer support and assistance in cases where housing needs are not straightforward. There are two Age Friendly Healthy Homes workers located in Housing Section who work with older people in the county in terms of ensuring they have all the supports they need to stay living at home and they co-work with Housing Section staff on some cases. Independent living accommodation, nursing homes, retirement villages and residential care facilities all continue to be facilitated at appropriate locations through the development management process.

Affordable Housing proposals are also being progressed to meet needs of people outside the parameters for Social Housing eligibility.

Traveller Accommodation Programme

WCC carried out a review of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 and increased the target from 100 no. units to 126 no. units to take into account an updated assessment of need. By the end of 2024 at least 92% will be delivered. Work is continuing on the design of a Group Housing Scheme in consultation with the families. The new Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025-2029 has been approved by Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) and the council to proceed to public consultation.

Active Land Management

Objective SH13 is to work with the Land Development Agency to co-ordinate appropriate State-owned land and the strategic assembly of public and private land to facilitate regeneration, housing and other developments. In this regard WCC Housing Section are currently liaising with the Housing Agency on the progress of housing proposals at Taghmon, Hewittsland, New Ross and Castlemoyle, New Ross on lands which were previously subject to the Land Aggregation Scheme.⁶

Objective SH14 is to undertake Active Land Management (including the use of CPO powers) to manage the supply of land for residential development and ensure suitable zoning is in place to achieve compact, smart, sustainable growth targets within existing urban footprints. Under WCC CPO Programme, 173 no. sites have been approved in the four main towns with funding provided under Call 3 of the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (UDRF), primarily to address dereliction. It is envisaged that some of these properties will be retained for local authority housing stock. However, WCC Housing Section, to date, have not pursued any of these of sites, as in most cases they require a large amount of repair or full construction and

⁶ LAG land is land that was taken back by the government under the Land Aggregation Scheme which was introduced in 2010 to alleviate the financial burden on Local authorities who were finding it difficult to repay the Housing Finance Agency for the purchase of land. This land has now been offered back to the LA to see if there is any opportunity to use it again.

the resources to review these properties are not currently in place nor exact funding stream identified to bring them back to a state of repair that is required under rental standards.

Objective SH20 is to promote and support the implementation of plans and projects to bring back to use vacant homes while objective SH27 supports initiatives to refurbish and retrofit both occupied and vacant residential buildings including smart technologies, energy efficiency and micro renewable systems. The Regeneration Unit held a series of Roadshows in April 2024 to raise awareness about various grants and programmes tailored to address vacant and derelict properties, ultimately contributing to the reduction of vacancy levels in Co Wexford. As at 31st August 2024, the Council has received 313 applications under the Croi Conaithe Fund and 189 of these have been approved.

WCC's Housing Section has been meeting its target under the Energy Retrofitting Programme (EERP) on Social Housing stock. The Housing Section have reintroduced a Planned Maintenance Programme since 2023 and, subject to budget, will continue to carry out work on stock under same. A stock condition survey is being introduced by the Department in the short term and the results of this survey will feed into any future planned maintenance programmes.

In accordance with Objective SH25 vacant site levies continue to be applied in accordance with the Urban Regeneration and Housing Supply Act 2015 (as amended) to incentivise the development of vacant sites in central urban areas for housing and regeneration purposes. As of September 2024, there were 3 no. sites included on the Vacant Sites Register (all located within Wexford Town area) and levies are applied to these properties at a rate of 7% of the market value annually.

The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) will replace the Vacant Sites Levy in 2025. This tax is aimed at increasing housing supply by activating zoned, serviced residential development lands (including mixed-use lands) for housing. It also aims to incentivise landowners to use existing planning permissions for housing. RZLT mapping has been completed identifying land within the scope of the tax for 2025, with lands identified in Gorey, Bunclody, Rosslare Harbour & Kilrane, Courtown & Riverchapel. RZLT will be applied annually at a rate of 3% of the market value.⁷ The maps will be updated annually for changes in the zoning and servicing status of land.

Serviced Sites

Objective SH07 is to consider the provision of serviced sites for residential development in villages subject to sustainable and appropriate water services solutions being put in place. WCC Water Services have made a submission on the Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme to prioritise infrastructure improvements in line with the CDP. Funding has been granted under Measure A8 (unsewered villages) to progress wastewater infrastructure in Ramsgrange Village. The Regeneration Unit have also been looking at potential suitable sites for the "Ready to build scheme" and hope to identify a site in 2024.

⁷ Certain properties are excluded from the tax such as existing residential properties liable for Local Property Tax (LPT).

Rural Housing

Objectives SH39 to SH49 relate to rural housing policy which the Planning Section continues to implement through the development management process. The Core Strategy Monitoring Report for Year 2 shows the number of rural houses completed and permitted during the first two years of the plan and a summary is provided in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 5

Design and Place-making in Towns and Villages



Town Centre First





Town Centre First Strategy being prepared for Worferd Jown and Jown

Town Centre First A Policy Approach for Irish Towns

> Wexford Town and Town Team established

Wexford Town TCF public consultation day, Feb 2025 Town Centre First Plans prepared and Town Teams

established in Enniscorthy and New Ross

€30,000 allocated for TCF Plan for Courtown/Riverchapel

E

€30,000 allocated for TCF Teams in

Bunclody, Castlebridge and Taghmon

Town and Village Renewal Scheme



Duncannon Fort \mathfrak{S}

- Enniscorthy Wellbeing and Activity Garden (St. John's) 🧭
 - Enniscorthy Streetscape Enhancement Measure 🧭
- Rosslare Community and Enterprise Resource Centre $\boldsymbol{\boldsymbol{arnothing}}$
 - Taghmon Castle 🥝
 - Brennan's Lane and Shambles, New Ross 🥝

Proposed Ennicorthy Town Cen **Public Realm Scheme**



1

High Hill Norman Park, New Ross

Cresent Quay/Oyster Lane Public Realm Works

Emmigrant Park, New Ross





Proposed Esmonde Street Scheme, Gorey

Delivering sustainable compact growth and the regeneration of our towns and villages is a key priority for the Council. This chapter sets out the design criteria for successful placemaking and includes objectives to deliver sustainable neighbourhoods which are well connected, inclusive and provide a high-quality design. WCC continues to leverage available funds including the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and other dedicated funding streams to tackle vacancy and dereliction, to revitalise our towns and villages and stimulate economic, social and cultural development.

Design

The design objectives in this chapter seek to improve the quality of our towns and villages and ensure that they are attractive and functional places where people want to live, work, access services and raise their families. Objectives TV13-TV32 require that the design of new buildings and places is of a high quality, responds to its context and adds to the sense of place and achieves optimum levels of connectivity and permeability. Objectives TV55-TV58 further require that our towns are vibrant and inclusive, resilient and adaptable. WCC continues to implement these design principles through the forward planning and development management processes and through local authority own development.

Compact Growth and Regeneration

Objectives TV33-54 promote the compact growth and regeneration of our towns and villages which is a key priority for the Council. WCC continues to apply the sequential approach and the prioritisation of brownfield and infill development to achieve compact settlements which are easy to navigate by walking, cycling and public transport. The Core Strategy Monitoring Report for Year 2 of the Plan demonstrates the progress in securing a minimum of 30% of new homes in the existing built-up area of settlements during the first two years of the Plan in line with NPO 3 (See Core Strategy Chapter for further detail).

The Wexford Town LAP, currently in preparation, will apply the Town Centre First (TCF) approach and the 10-minute Town concept to further support compact growth. Consultants have been appointed to prepare an Urban Design Strategy for Wexford Town as part of the preparation of the draft LAP which includes the Ballynagee Master Plan, the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy and the overall urban design strategy for the wider plan area. Any future local area plans prepared by the Council will also apply these concepts.

Objective TV37 undertakes to establish an inter-departmental rural regeneration team in the Council to co-ordinate active land management and assist with the implementation of projects and proposals that encourage, stimulate and support the regeneration and renewal of the county's rural towns and villages. Since the adoption of the Plan a Regeneration Unit has been set up in WCC and TCF Plans

have been adopted for Enniscorthy and New Ross. Town Teams have been established in the two towns and meet monthly to see how to best prioritise the actions within the TCF plans.

Courtown/Riverchapel has been selected as a Phase 2 TCF Town and €30,000 has been allocated to complete a TCF Plan. WCC have allocated an additional €30,000 from its own resources to complete this Plan. WCC was awarded a further €30,000 (€10,000 x3) to establish TCF Teams in Bunclody, Castlebridge and Taghmon which have now been established, as well as a Town Team for Wexford Town (as part of the preparation of the Wexford Town LAP).

Heritage-led Regeneration Plans have also been prepared for Wexford Town and Enniscorthy Town. These plans include a number of actions for regeneration of the town centres.

Ballynagee Masterplan

The Ballynagee Masterplan is being prepared alongside the Wexford Town Urban Area Plan and it will form part of that plan once adopted. It is comprised of 50ha of greenfield lands acquired by the Council for the delivery of critical education, recreation and housing development. The vision is for:

- a distinct, multi-functional mixed use and neighbourhood hub that is linked with surrounding existing development.
- A new educational ecosystem to include a mixed teaching and learning, research and innovation building for



SETU (first phase in the order of 10,000sqm.) with potential for student accommodation and primary and post-primary school infrastructure and facilities.

- New and enhanced recreation and amenity infrastructure and facilities including Wexford FC Arena (Pitch and stadium, 2 training pitches, car parking, access to new avenue), new changing rooms and a GAA pitch.
- Mixed housing typology and tenure, including Live-work capability in residential areas.
- Active and passive recreation and open space network and a nature-based approach to rainwater management in new local and strategic green and blue infrastructure.

Key Projects

Objectives TV18 and TV38 seek to implement environmental and public realm improvements in town and village centres and to prioritise projects and proposals which will result in social and economic rejuvenation and regeneration, while leveraging the variety of funds available. Since the adoption of the plan a number of public realm projects have been completed or are in progress leveraging funding streams including URDF, RRDF, THRIVE and the Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVS). Key WCC projects which have been completed or progressed since the adoption of the Plan include:

Wexford Town:

Trinity Wharf – Significant mixed used urban regeneration project. The Trinity Wharf site will facilitate a new sustainable urban guarter with a high-guality public realm, mix of modern office space, hotel accommodation, leisure and residential development, a landmark cultural and events building, 58 residential units and a multi-storey car park. The leisure and residential development includes the provision of a 64 berth marina, a new boardwalk linking Trinity Wharf with Paul Quay and the Crescent, new public realm spaces and an urban greenway. It will provide a location at the south end of Wexford town that can be adapted for use for outdoor events, performances and festivals. The development of Trinity Wharf will significantly enhance Wexford Town's profile as an attractive environment for international companies seeking to locate in the county, or for existing companies looking to expand, providing property solutions that will meet investors' expectations. Trinity Wharf will serve new businesses and the local community. It will create the capacity for people to live and work in a town centre area, supporting the local economy and making Wexford a viable location for FDI investment.

Status: Enabling works have been completed. Consultants have been appointed for the next phase of the project to include design services for site development and public infrastructure works. Approx. €21 million received in URDF funding.



• University Campus for SETU and Education Ecosystem (Ballynagee Lands) – See under 'Ballynagee Masterplan' above. WCC are currently liaising with a number of stakeholders with a view to developing this site.

WCC has acquired 55 acres and CPO has been confirmed for a further 50 acres. Consultants have been appointed to develop a Masterplan for the site.

- Georgia Southern University Accommodation Campus (Adoration Convent) - Part VIII is in place for this project to convert the old convent into accommodation for students of Georgia Southern University Wexford campus. Detailed design and associated survey works are now largely complete. It is intended to tender out these works in Q4 2024 with works planned to commence in Q1 2025.
- **Cresent Quay/Oyster Lane Site** Demolition of the Old Tesco site and replacement with public realm area. Works have been completed to clear the site and provide surfacing for temporary public realm and event space.
- Monck Street Public Realm Enhancement Project Completed in 2024 with Failte Ireland funding.



• Min Ryan Park – completed 2022.

• Wexford Arts Centre Extension – completed 2022.

Gorey Town:

- **Market House** Gorey Market House Regeneration applied for funding under THRIVE and was successfully awarded €7 million to progress the scheme. This funding has been accompanied by a commitment of c. €1.6 million funding from WCC own-resources to deliver this transformational project.
- Status: The next step will be the procurement of an architect led design team for detailed design, procurement and construction supervision services. It is anticipated this tender will be published in Q4 2024.
- **Gorey District Park** Gorey Town Park including café and changing places is completed and fully open to the public.

• Esmonde Street Public Realm Scheme – scheme is currently out for tender (August 2024) with works expected to start in January 2025.

Enniscorthy Town:

• Enniscorthy Town Centre and Tourism Project

The Enniscorthy TCF Plan was adopted by Enniscorthy Municipal District in December 2022. The Plan identifies a number of actions and plans for public realm improvements and regeneration works to the Market Square, Enniscorthy Castle Quarter and Templeshannon. The Part 8 process for the Market Square and Town Centre street enhancement was approved by Council on 8th September 2024 and this will form part of the application for the next call for URDF. Preliminary design work on the Enniscorthy Castle project has also commenced and it is intended to submit a Part 8 application in Q4 2024. Consultants have been appointed to undertake concept masterplanning design services for the Templeshannon Regeneration Project which is expected to be completed in time for the next call for URDF funding applications.

- **Murphy Floods Site** WCC has purchased this important town centre site and has carried out demolition works to prepare the site for development. Expressions of interest will be sought on the future development of the site.
- Enniscorthy Sports Hub A tender competition to procure a works contractor for the Sports Hub was advertised on eTenders on 18th June 2024. Tenders have been received and assessment is ongoing.
- Enniscorthy North Industrial Area (Old Dublin Road) Active travel and public realm improvements. Phase 1 works (enhancement of footpaths, gateways and pedestrian safety) were completed in 2022. No further funding was available for 2023/2024 but WCC will continue to pursue funding to carry out Phase 2.
- Bellefield GAA and Public Realm Improvements Public realm space including playground completed in 2024 and now fully open to the public.
- Enniscorthy Wellbeing and Activity Garden (St. John's) €234,000 was allocated under TVS and works commenced on site in September 2024.
- Enniscorthy Streetscape Enhancement Measure €100,000 was allocated and works completed in 2023.

New Ross:

• New Ross Tourism Project - Involves a series of projects in the centre of New Ross, including the interpretive fit-out of the Dunbrody Visitor Centre and the regeneration of the old Michael Murphy and Bank Buildings on the Quay to form a Norman Heritage Visitor Centre. Fitout of interpretive facilities in the
Dunbrody Visitor Centre is now complete. Funding has been obtained through RRDF in 2024 for an extension to the Dunbrody Visitor Centre to provide additional space and a Changing Places facility. Tenders for the Interpretive and exhibition design of the Norman Visitor Centre (Old Michael Murphy building on Quay) have been assessed and a consultant has been appointed for interpretive and architectural design services. RRDF funding of approx. €4 million received.

• Emigrant Park – Removal of oil tanks and the development of public realm works on the Quay completed in 2023. RRDF funding of €814,393 received.



- **High Hill Norman Park** completed with RRDF funding of €1.5 million received.
- Brennan's Lane and Shambles €500,000 allocated under TVS to renovate Brennan's Lane and the Shambles as a vibrant mulit-functional space.
- **Pedestrianisation of Quay Street** RRDF funding secured and initial design works to begin shortly and expected to be completed in 2025.
- John Street Grainstore A Part 8 process for the Grainstore and building extension elements was approved on 8th April 2024. An application for Category 1 funding, under the RRDF, was submitted on 8th February. A further development consent application will be made to An Bord Pleanála in the coming months for the public realm area to the rear of the property.
- South East Greenway (SEG)- Fully funded by TII. Phase 1 6km from New Ross to Glenmore was officially opened in July 2023. Phase 2 commenced on a 5.5 km section from Ferrybank to Curraghmore in November 2023 and is expected to be completed end 2024. Design consultants have been appointed to complete the greenway. Failte Ireland appointed Company to create an Interpretation and wayfinding plan for SEG.



Enhancements funded under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVS) in 2022 and 2023 include:

- Duncannon €0.5 million allocated to restore and develop the historic Duncannon Fort which will increase footfall in the village and surrounding area.
- Enniscorthy Wellbeing and Activity Garden (St. John's) €234,000 allocated
- Rosslare €250,000 to develop a Community and Enterprise Resource Centre/Hub
- Enniscorthy €100,000 under the Streetscape Enhancement Measure
- Taghmon €50,000 allocated to prepare plans to bring castle into use as a heritage tourism asset
- New Ross €500,000 allocated to renovate Brennan's Lane which is the main link from the town centre to the Library Park, and renovating the Shambles as a vibrant mulit-functional space

Housing Capital Section are also progressing a number of projects on brownfield sites in town and village centres contributing to regeneration and compact growth as detailed in Chapter 4.

Derelict and Vacant Sites

Objectives TV47 to TV49 seek to use powers under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015 and the Derelict Sites Act to address issues of vacancy and under-utilisation of lands in town and village centres.

At the end of September 2024, there were 3 no. sites included on the Vacant Sites Register (all located within Wexford Town area). The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) will replace the Vacant Sites Levy in 2025. RZLT mapping has been completed, with lands liable for the tax identified in Gorey, Bunclody, Rosslare Harbour & Kilrane, Courtown & Riverchapel.

At the end of September 2024, there were 107 no. sites included on the Derelict Sites Register, 50 of which were identified through the URDF Call 3 approved programme. Under this Programme, for which WCC was awarded €6.5 million, 173 no. sites were approved in the four main towns, primarily to address dereliction. A total of 56 properties are actively being managed by WCC Property Unit under this programme. Seven additional properties in rural areas which are outside the URDF Call 3 programme are also actively being dealt with under Derelict Sites legislation.

WCC Property Section has engaged with a number of property owners towards acquisition of properties required under the TCF Plan for Enniscorthy and continue to use CPO powers under Derelict Sites and Housing legislation as required to support specific urban regeneration and strategically important capital projects e.g. SETU Wexford Campus.

A number of vacant and/or derelict buildings have also been acquired by WCC under the Building Acquistion Measures Scheme including the Old Courthouse in New Ross, the Old Credit Union building in Gorey, the Old Bank building in Rosslare Harbour and the Old Post Office building in Ballyhogue. It is intended that new community uses will be accommodated in these buildings in the future utilising funds from the TVS.

The Regeneration Unit held a series of Roadshows in April 2024 to raise awareness about various grants and programmes tailored to address vacant and derelict properties, ultimately contributing to the reduction of Vacancy Levels in Co Wexford. As at 31st August 2024, the Council has received 313 applications under the Croi Conaithe Fund and 189 of these have been approved.

CHAPTER 6

Economic Development Strategy



New Jobs LEO Wexford in the top five LEOs nationally in terms of net new jobs







Supported over 234 small businesses

Employing 1,773 people

Total jobs created 330

Net job increase of 177 • • •

Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil Local Enterprise Office

Supported over 235 small businesses Employing 1,940 people Total jobs created 328 net job increase of 171 • • •



Offshore Renewable Energy

WCC are partner in South East Offshore Wind Partnership

which held their inaugural meeting in January 2024.

Property Solutions





Enterprise Hub, New Ross

NAMES OF A

Business Campus

Proposed Trinity Wharf, Wexford



High Performance Building Alliance at Enniscorthy Technology Park

Sustainable Construction



UN Centre of Excellence

for High Performance Building Alliance and WWETB Nearly Zero Energy Building Training Centre in Enniscorthy

This chapter contains 132 objectives to promote and facilitate economic development, including the implementation of the objectives and actions in the Local Economic and Community Development Plan (LECP) which was adopted by WCC in April 2024. WCC's Economic Development Unit, together with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO), continue to promote and facilitate the development of a strong economy supported by enterprise, innovation and skill. Key economic drivers which are emerging for the County include the High Performance Building Alliance (HPBA) and Green Hub, the opportunities presented by the Eastern Economic Corridor and Rosslare Europort, Offshore Renewable Energy and the South East Technical University (SETU).

Local Enterprise Office

Objective ED01 is to facilitate sustainable economic development and increase and improve job opportunities. Since the adoption of the Plan LEO Wexford has been in the top five LEOs nationally in terms of net new jobs. In 2022 LEO Wexford supported over 234 small businesses employing 1,773, creating 330 jobs with a net job increase of 177. In 2023 LEO Wexford financially supported 235 small businesses in their portfolio across the county, and these companies in turn employ 1,940 people – total jobs created 328 in 2023 and net job increase of 171.

In accordance with Objectives ED22 and ED23, LEO Wexford continues to deliver mentoring and supports for start-ups and small businesses as well as various other training programmes to increase capabilities and one to one mentoring to address individual business needs. The LEO Strategy places a strong focus on building capacity and efficiencies within businesses through various consultancy programmes e.g. LEAN and digitilisation programmes which helps businesses to build economic resilience and responsiveness to emerging challenges and potential future economic shocks (ED13).

Property Solutions and Zoned Land

Objectives ED36 to ED40 relate to the provision and investment in property solutions and ensuring the availability of adequate zoned land to facilitate economic development. Since the adoption of the Plan the following property solutions have been advanced:

Hatch Lab in	The Hatch Lab has been expanded to provide shared office
Gorey M11	space. WCC have taken a lease on 500sqm to operate an
Business	innovation and technology hub for start-ups, companies
Campus	relocating to the area and a hot-desk/co-working alternative
	space for commuters with additional mentoring and business
	support services for start-ups also available at the location.

Enniscorthy Technological Park	WCC acquired the lands and worked in collaboration to stimulate private investment. Planning permission was secured for two commercial office property solutions on the site. The first building is now complete and currently has 70% occupancy. WCC has sites available for inward investment and also signed an MOU with the IDA in Q1 2024 to collaboratively develop a property solution for an advanced factory. The next phase will see a tender for design of the advanced building solution in Q1 2025 and it is expected that a planning application will be submitted in Q3 2025. The UN Centre of Excellence for High Performance Buildings Alliance (HPBA) has been established at the site and in Q1 2025 WCC will open a Green Hub alongside the HPBA (See under 'Green Economy' below and Chapter 2 Climate Action for further detail on HPBA and Green Hub).
Trinity Wharf	Enabling works are completed and consultants have been appointed for the next phase of the project to include design services for site development and public infrastructure works as well as a marketing campaign to attract FDI. Following an e-tender process amongst providers on OGP Framework, Deloitte LLP have been appointed to provide financial advisory and project management services to the Trinity Wharf project.
New Ross Advance Factory	WCC invited 'Expressions of Interest' from interested parties for the design and construction of commercial/industrial property solutions on council owned lands at Butlersland, New Ross. Discussions are ongoing with interested parties.

The Economic Development Unit continues to monitor property solutions and sites within the county to be in a position to advise start-up companies and to attract inward investment.

The LAPs for Gorey and Courtown and Riverchapel, and the Settlement Plans for Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane and Bunclody identify locations for employment and include land use zoning objectives. The draft Wexford Town Local Area Plan, currently being prepared, will also identify suitable employment lands in Wexford Town which will be informed by an Infrastructural Assessment Report. WCC will continue to monitor the quantum of zoned land and liaise with infrastructure providers to ensure that sufficient and suitable serviced lands are available to serve existing and planned population and economic growth.

Regeneration

Objective ED42 is to promote the regeneration of obsolete and/or under-utilised buildings and lands that could yield economic benefits. Since the adoption of the

Plan WCC have progressed a number of projects involving the regeneration of Town Centre Sites which will revitalise these town centres and generate economic development. WCC Key Regeneration Projects include:

- Trinity Wharf, Wexford
- Market House, Gorey
- Enniscorthy Town Centre and Tourism Project
- New Ross Tourism Project
- John Street Enterprise Hub

See Chapter 5 Design and Placemaking in Town and Villages for progress on other WCC regeneration projects and public realm enhancement works which could yield further economic benefits and attract investment into our towns.

Eastern Economic Corridor

A number of objectives (ED05, ED55-ED56, ED60-ED63) seek to maximise the economic and transport development opportunities presented by the extended Eastern Economic Corridor, particularly in the settlements of Gorey, Enniscorthy, Wexford and Rosslare Harbour.

The Economic Strategy for WCC is aligning itself with connection of the motorway and has planned property solutions providing opportunities for clustering and the development of specialisms along the corridor e.g. Gorey M11 Business Campus and Enniscorthy Technology Park. The location of Wexford Town and Rosslare Harbour on the corridor, together with opportunities arising post-Brexit, has resulted in the development and expansion of a number of logistics companies in those areas. Rosslare Harbour is also targeted as an Economic Zone and the proposed Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Hub at Rosslare Europort (see under 'Blue Economy' below), if permitted, will create further economic opportunities on the Eastern Economic Corridor. The Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) is also considering economic opportunities along the Eastern Economic Corridor.

The Rosslare Port Access Road has been granted by An Bord Pleanála. The project is at design stage and WCC anticipates going to tender in Q4 2024 for construction. This will enhance connectivity to the Europort from the Eastern Economic Corridor and also the Southern Region linking into the Atlantic Economic Corridor. The N11/N25 Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour National Road Scheme, which is currently at design stage will also enhance connectivity.

Blue Economy

Objectives ED72 to ED80 support the development of the marine economy including at ports and harbours. Rosslare Europort continues to grow post Brexit with a number of additional routes and operators. Information received from larnród Éireann shows that continental volumes to/from Rosslare Europort in 2023 were 465% higher than in 2019. The Masterplan for the Port is currently being implemented to increase yard capacity and install new border inspection facilities.

2023 saw the commencement of the largest ever investment in the history of Rosslare Europort with a projected spend of more than €200M that will deliver a world class facility supporting both the region and the country's exporters, importers, tourism and supply chain industries. The port also commenced its digitisation journey to enable Rosslare to become one of Europe's smartest ports in 2024. WCC continues to advocate for and support the achievement of Tier 1 Port Status for Rosslare Europort.

Rosslare Europort is strategically positioned to support the ORE industry and accommodate numerous Wind Farm projects planned for the Irish and Celtic Seas (see under 'Green Economy' below). Irish Rail intend to submit a planning application to ABP in Q4 2024 for the development of an ORE Hub at the port. The proposed development would also support traditional port operations (e.g. RORO freight operations) during periods where there is no offshore renewable energy project demand. WCC made a submission in support of the proposal in June 2024 and have engaged with Irish Rail in relation to the proposed development.

WCC are a partner in the Ireland South East Offshore Wind Partnership which held their inaugural meeting in January 2024. The work of the partnership ensures that our local authorities, enterprise agencies and higher education stakeholders are working together to make offshore wind a priority sector for the region. The overarching objective of the partnership is to maximise the economic benefit to the South East in assisting Ireland and Europe achieve its ORE targets.

The Economic Development Unit have also had exploratory discussions with the Engineering Cluster/SETU around ORE opportunities, in particular in relation to developing innovation through Design Thinking in Q3 with a view to developing a programme for Q4 2024.

The Green Economy

Objectives ED85 to ED89 seek to develop the county as a leading innovator in the green economy in areas such as sustainable agriculture, sustainable construction, the production of renewable energy and the bio-economy.

In terms of sustainable construction, the HPBA has been established at Enniscorthy Technology Park and in Q1 2025 WCC will open a new (Enterprise Ireland supported) Green Hub to support SMEs in the South East Region and beyond. The HPBA Green Hub fitout is underway and follows the circular economy principle of design for disassembly with each element procured with net zero in mind. The Green Hub is a showcase / demonstrator for innovative products and services within the Sustainable Built Environment and will provide an opportunity for biobased materials, digital innovation and circular design to be showcased. This is the first initiative of its kind in Ireland and internationally.

WWETB run several NZEB training courses at their training centre in Enniscorthy. These courses are targeted at people working in the construction sector to provide them with the skills necessary to develop low carbon buildings. In partnership with WWETB, Expressions of Interest have been sought for the construction of a new purpose built Sustainable Construction Education Campus alongside the HPBA and Green Hub at Enniscorthy Technology Park which will replace the existing training centre.

In terms of Renewable Energy, the Plan sets an ambitious target for 100% of electricity consumption in the County to be from renewable energy sources by 2027 (based on population share). County Wexford is generally on trend to meet its onshore Renewable Energy target by 2027, if all permissions for solar farms are implemented and subject to continuation or repowering of existing wind farms (see Chapter 19 Energy Strategy for further details).

Separately work is progressing to develop offshore wind energy. WCC facilitated a number of presentations from the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) in relation to the Draft South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan (SC-DMAP) for Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE). WCC also facilitated a public event held by DECC at County Hall on 22nd May 2024 and the Chief Executive formed part of the discussion panel. WCC subsequently made a submission on the Draft SC-DMAP in June 2024. WCC also made a submission to Irish Rail in June 2024, in support of its proposals to develop an ORE Hub at Rosslare Europort (see under 'Blue Economy' section above).

Objective ED93 is to develop innovation hubs and centres of excellence, including for marine research, as local drivers for growth. WCC are looking at opportunities to develop a Marine Innovation Centre at Kilmore Quay and intend to submit an application for funding under the Smart Regions Scheme in Q1 2025. It is anticipated that the Marine Innovation Centre would provide commercial office space, innovative enterprise labs, research and development for the marine and ORE sectors enabling key infrastructure to establish a centre of excellence connecting the ecological, economic and societal dimensions of ORE implementation and building an ecosystem to support the transformative effort.

Rural Economy

Objectives ED89 to ED96 seek to develop our rural economy and support the diversification of the rural economy into new sectors addressing climate change and sustainability (ED90, ED95). WCC is supporting opportunities to diversify in the rural economy, particularly in the Sustainable Construction and Offshore Renewable Energy Sectors, as outlined above, and will continue to support rural diversification into other sectors where appropriate and in accordance with the objectives of the Plan.

Objective ED44 is to support the development of remote working hubs in settlements. Since the adoption of the plan, new Digital Hubs were completed at Ramsgrange, Craanford, Boolavogue and Blackwater and a tender is currently progressing for renovation/re-purposing of the Old Bank in Rosslare Harbour to a Ditigal Hub. WCC secured funding through the TVS 2022 for a comprehensive marketing campaign promoting remote working hubs in County Wexford. This initiative aligns with the National Remote Work Strategy, aiming to attract professionals and businesses to utilize local hubs. Promotional efforts spanned digital media, radio campaigns, print media, and outdoor advertising.

SETU and a Learning Region

Objective ED14 supports the establishment of the South-East Technological University (SETU) and facilitates the development of the Wexford Campus in Wexford Town. WCC have appointed consultants to prepare a Masterplan and are currently liaising with a number of stakeholders with a view to developing the Ballynagee site to accommodate a number of uses including a SETU campus, sporting and recreational facilities, primary and post primary schools and residential units for social, affordable and private housing. See Chapter 5 for further details.

A Part 8 application has also been approved to convert the old Adoration Convent into accommodation for students of Georgia Southern University Wexford campus. Detailed design and associated survey works are now largely completed and it is intended to tender out these works in Q4 2024 with works planned to commence in Q1 2025.

Objective ED13 supports the development a Learning Region and the strengthening of our higher and further education and training sector, while ED18 undertakes to identify specific opportunities for education development which serve the needs of existing employers, attract new employers and provide up-skilling including apprenticeship and third level facilities and development opportunities for the existing workforce. The development of the University Campus for SETU and the Georgia Southern University Accommodation Campus in Wexford Town, the opening of the Wexford College of Further Education and Training (FET) in Wexford Town in 2023 and the development of the HPBA and the UN Centre of Excellence for NZEB in Enniscorthy Town all support these objectives. WCC will continue to support the objectives for a Learning Region and are currently working SETU and WWETB in identifying industry and training needs.

CHAPTER 7 Tourism Development













Tourism is a key sector for economic development in County Wexford. WCC continues to promote the growth of this sector subject to the protection and management of the natural and built heritage, which is in itself part of the key tourism asset. Many of the objectives in this chapter are implemented through the development management process, for example objectives relating to provision of tourist accommodation.

Marketing

Objective TM04 is to implement the County Wexford Tourism Strategy 2019-2023 and TM06 is to engage with stakeholders to promote and maximise the tourism potential of the county. WCC supports VisitWexford in marketing tourism throughout the county and continues to engage with a range of stakeholders to promote and develop the tourism product. As reported by the Irish Hotel Federation County Wexford was in the top three counties for bed nights from 2021-2023. In terms of FAM trips (Familiarisation trips) a number of delegations visited from Italy and Germany in 2024 as well as a Travel Writer from the UK. Other initiatives included increasing the visibility of the tourism offering e.g. signage at Rosslare Europort.

Objective TM07 is to support the development and implementation of Destination Experience Development Plans (DEDP). A Draft DEDP was completed by Fáilte Ireland in 2024 and is expected to be finalised and launched in Q2 2025. WCC continue to collaborate with Failte Ireland and other stakeholders to develop and implement the Plan. Fáilte Ireland have also appointed consultants to develop a Food in Tourism Strategy for County Wexford which is expected to be completed in Q3 2024.

Tourism Cluster

Objective TM08 is to develop a tourism cluster in the South-East focused around key tourist sites and attractions in conjunction with key stakeholders. A National Tourism Officers Network was established across Ireland as a first step in the collaboration across Local Authorities in the development of Clusters.

Ireland's Ancient East

Objective TM09 seeks to deliver the Ireland's Ancient East Programme. WCC continue to liaise with Fáilte Ireland to deliver the IAE Programme. Since the adoption of the Plan Fáilte Ireland have issued Ireland's Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023 – 2027 and a Waterford Estuary Working Group has been set up to develop the tourism potential of the Estuary (see also objective ED95 in Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy).

WCC Key Tourism Projects

A number of objectives (TM05, TM15, TM18, TM30, TM41) support the development of new and existing tourism attractions. Since the adoption of the Plan the following WCC specific tourism projects have been progressed:

- New Norman experience at Dunbrody Visitor centre see objectives TV18 and TV38 in Chapter 5 Design and Placemaking in Towns and Villages for key regeneration projects including New Ross Tourism Project.
- New Viking village at INHP 'Vykingar' forms part of the 'Wexfordia' tourism project. RRDF funding was received to complete a feasibility study. Preliminary design is underway and it is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála in Q4 2025.
- Enhanced visitor experience at Hook Lighthouse centred on the 'Story of a Thousand Shipwrecks' and the location and geology of area – this also forms part of the 'Wexfordia' project. RRDF funding was received to do a feasibility study to develop this project and it is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála in Q4 2025.
- Enniscorthy Town Tourism Project/Town Centre Enhancement see objectives TV18 and TV38 in Chapter 5 Design and Placemaking in Towns and Villages for key regeneration projects including Enniscorthy Town Centre and Tourism Project.
- Wexford Arts Centre completed 2022
- Carrigfoyle Outdoor Activity Centre boathouse for WWETB to be constructed in Q2 2025
- **Greenways and Blueways** Phase 1 (6km) of the South East Greenway was completed from New Ross to Glenmore and Phase 2 (5.5km) from Ferrybank to Curraghmore is underway. The Wexford to Rosslare Greenway (including the section to Rosslare Harbour) is at route selection stage and it is anticipated the preferred route will be identified in Q1 2025. ORIS funding has been received to develop the Barrow Blueway which will be centred around New Ross and Southend, Wexford. This project is at design stage.
- Cultural and events centre and marina as part of Trinity Wharf see objectives TV18 and TV38 in Chapter 5 Design and Placemaking in Towns and Villages for key regeneration projects including Trinity Wharf Project.
- Public realm projects see objectives TV18 and TV38 in Chapter 5 Design and Placemaking in Towns and Villages for key regeneration projects including Emigrant Park and High Hill Park in New Ross (both completed), Enniscorthy Town Centre and Tourism Project (Consultants appointed to undertake concept masterplanning design services for the Templeshannon Regeneration Project), Crescent Quay and Monck Street in Wexford (both completed) and Esmonde Street Public Realm Scheme in Gorey (currently out to tender).
- **Duncannon Fort** A Strategic Masterplan was prepared to explore the future use of the historic Fort. The project aims to develop a unique and immersive tourism experience and cultural asset that harnesses the Fort's potential, revitalises the heritage buildings and features across the site, and delivers benefits for the local village and region. Phase 1 site wide infrastructure (installation of SuDS and foul drainage system), hard landscaping and archaeological monitoring is expected to completed in Q1 2025.

- Johnstown Castle iconic visitor experience is now fully opened with ongoing work on the gardens specifically addressing biodiversity and environmental factors.
- **Taghmon Castle** €50,000 was allocated to prepare plans to bring Taghmon Castle into use as a heritage tourism asset.
- Fethard, Mountgarrett and Tellarought Castles See objective BH02 in Chapter 13 Heritage and Conservation for completed heritage projects.
- **Beaches and Walking Trails** See Chapter 14 Recreation and Open Space Strategy for improved access to beaches and walking trails.

Festivals

Objective TM44 supports existing and new festivals and cultural events which appeal to a range of visitors and increase the profile of the county as a key tourism destination. WCC continues to promote and support Small Arts Festivals and Experimental Events, and the Failte Ireland Grant Schemes countywide, particularly those that attract international visitors to the county. Festivals are promoted through the VisitWexford platform.

The Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann was extremely successful in 2024 and had an estimated attendance of over 600,000. During this 7-day event the Wexford Food Producers network showcased the artisan food offering of the county and a number of fringe events were organised by WCC. The Fleadh has been secured in Wexford for 2025 and similar numbers are expected to attend.

CHAPTER 8

Transportation Strategy



Active Travel



eBike 120,000km travelled from May 2023 to September 2024

e-scooters

9,000km travelled in August and September 2024





Public Transport



Roads



In line with national and regional policy, the plan aims to promote a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport while ensuring the necessary further delivery and maintenance of the road network.

Land Use Planning

Objective TS02 seeks to minimise the generation of greenhouse gases by the transport sector using the avoid-shift-improve principle and by effectively integrating land use and transport planning. The successful integration of land use planning and transportation continues to be a key consideration for WCC. This is currently being considered as part of the preparation of the Wexford Town LAP which will prioritise the development of brownfield lands and the sequential development of greenfield lands while also using the '10 Minute Town Concept' to ensure that residents of the Town can access local services within a 10-minute walk, cycle or by public transport. This approach will reduce the need to travel, increase the use of sustainable transport and reduce carbon emissions in the Town, and will be applied in all future local area plans and/or settlement plans.

Active Travel

A number of objectives seek to achieve a modal shift from greenhouse gas generating vehicles and to prioritise sustainable modes (TS06-TS12, TS20, TS22-TS41). WCC continue to liaise with the NTA on the delivery and promotion of active travel provisions in conjunction with public transport operators. An Active Travel Office has been set up within the Roads Section of WCC and a number of projects have been progressed since the adoption of the Plan.

WCC is delivering on Pathfinders Schemes, subject to NTA funding allocations, with a total of 3 phases planned for Wexford Town area: Newtown Road (Phase 1), Beechlawn/Clonard (Phase 2) and Rocksborough (Phase 3). Phase 1 (Maldron-AppleGreen) was completed in 2024 and further sections are due for completion in 2025. Phase 2 and 3 will follow in 2025 & 2026 respectively, subject to NTA resource allocations.

Under the 'Safe Routes to School' Scheme three routes were completed in 2023 at Rosslare Strand, Adamstown and St. Aidan's Enniscorthy. The three routes for completion in 2024 include Ramsgrange, Gorey Central School and Crossabeg NS while three more routes are provisionally planned for 2025 at Kiltealy, Enniscorthy and Ballaghkeen.

All infrastructure provision through Active Travel Section is designed and built in accordance with the NTA's Cycle Design Manual to ensure accessibility and placing pedestrians, wheeled and vulnerable users as a priority at the top of the hierarchy of users.

Local Transport Plans (LTPs) are currently being prepared for Wexford Town and Enniscorthy and will inform the preparation of the LAPs for those towns. The LTPs

will seek to achieve a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport mode by developing suitable measures to improve the networks for each mode, ensuring that key trips generators and attractors are connected by sustainable modes and prioritising individual schemes or areas where investment is required.

Objectives TS21 and TS22 undertake to prepare countywide walking and cycling strategies to encourage more walking and cycling for everyday transport as well as for leisure purposes. While these strategies have not been prepared to date, the LTPs for Wexford and Enniscorthy will incorporate aspects of them.

In relation to greenways, Phase 1 (6km) of the South East Greenway was completed from New Ross to Glenmore and Phase 2 (5.5km) from Ferrybank to Curraghmore is underway. The Wexford to Rosslare Greenway (including the section to Rosslare Harbour) is at route selection stage and it is anticipated the preferred route will be identified in Q1 2025.

Climate Action

WCC continue to support the transition of all transport modes towards a low carbon future in accordance with Objective TS06. The Council continues to increase its EV fleet (now at 13 vehicles) and an increased number of e-chargers are also being installed in public carparks during renovation works and in new developments (Objectives TS48-TS49).

WCC is also currently investigating the transition to alternative fuel means for its fleet and will continue to support technological changes in transport including the provision of electric and other alternative fuels (Objectives TS18 and TS50). See Chapter 2 Climate Action for further information.

An e-bike scheme is operational in Wexford Town since May 2023, with c.120,000km travelled to September 2024, and will be extended to the other towns over the lifetime of the plan. An e-scooters pilot scheme (6-month trial) was rolled out in Wexford town in August 2024, with 9,000km travelled as of September 2024. Bolt (provider) are in the process of calculating credentials for the carbon-savings through use of shared mobility implements over the use of private vehicles.

Public Transport

Objectives TS31 to TS41 support the delivery of improved public transport services and associated infrastructure. WCC continues to liaise with transport providers to promote sustainable transport modes. In 2023 WCC made a submission on All Island Rail Review. Improved line and frequency of passenger services from Dublin to Rosslare Europort, reinstatement/new station to south of Wexford Hanrahan station and reinstating the Rosslare Europort to Waterford line were all considered as part of the Review, as well as further development of freight services to and from Rosslare Europort. The recommendations included in the Review support those issues raised in the submission.

Roads

Objectives TS42 to TS78 relate to the provision, maintenance, operation and safeguarding of the roads network. WCC continue to work with TII to improve the safety, capacity and efficiency of the existing national roads network. Since the adoption of the Plan National Road Pavement Scheme works were carried out on the N25, N30, N80 and former national roads R772 and R723.

The N25 Rosslare Europort Port Access Road was granted by An Bord Pleanála. The project is at design stage and WCC anticipates going to tender in Q4 2024 for construction. This will enhance connectivity to the Europort from the Eastern Economic Corridor and also the Southern Region linking into the Atlantic Economic Corridor.

The N11/N25 Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour National Road Scheme, which is currently at design stage will also enhance connectivity. The design of this development is being updated considering the revised TII Service Area Policy 2023 and Climate Action Plan 2023. Preparation of Environmental, Planning, Design and other reports are ongoing and Slaney Bridge Options Report is near completion.

The design and phased delivery of the Wexford Inner Relief Road, including active travel facilities, is being progressed, to promote the development of amenities, schools and housing and promote permeability and encourage active travel in Wexford Town.

Ports

Objectives TS85 to TS92 support the further development and expansion of the county's ports. 2023 saw the commencement of the largest ever investment in the history of Rosslare Europort with a projected spend of more than €200M that will deliver a world class facility and facilitate increased passengers and freight. WCC made a submission to Irish Rail in June 2024 in support of its plans to develop an ORE Hub at Rosslare Europort and have engaged with Irish Rail in relation to the proposed development which will allow larger ships to dock. See Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy for further information on Rosslare Europort.

CHAPTER 9 Infrastructure Strategy



Water Supply Infrastructure



Flood Risk Management

A Rainwater Management Plan and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is being prepared for Wexford Town

Flood Relief Schemes (FRS) are planned for Wexford Town and Enniscorthy



Wexford Town FRS currently at Stage I: Option Assessment, Scheme Development and Design.



Enniscorthy FRS. Phase 1 Baseline data gathering is complete and design options are currently being assessed. Consultation in Q1 2025. Estimated timeline to planning submission is Q4 2025.



Waste Water Supply Infrastructure



Water Treatment Plant at Ballyminaun

Waste Water Treatment Plants at Arthurstown

Chapter 9: Infrastructure Strategy

Ensuring that infrastructural programmes are developed and progressed in tandem with state agencies and other infrastructure providers is essential to meet current demand and accommodate future growth. Water supply, wastewater, waste management infrastructure, graveyards, telecommunications and information and communication technologies and flood risk management all fall within this chapter.

Water Supply

Objective IS01 seeks to ensure the efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure and this is supported by objectives WS01 to WS14 which also support the delivery of water services infrastructure.

WCC Water Services Section engaged with Uisce Éireann on the National Water Services Resource Plan (WSR) and WCC made a submission on the Draft Regional Water Services Resource Plan for the South East in October 2023. The submission requested that the WSR plan aligns with the Core Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy in the CDP, to ensure consistency and in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.

A €19 million upgrade of the Enniscorthy Regional Water Supply Scheme is currently underway to provide a more reliable water supply. This project is supported by ongoing work to upgrade aged areas of the water network including Pearse Road and St. Johns Villas.

The Gorey Regional Water Supply Contract 4 is complete and the new water treatment plant at Ballyminaun is operational. Work also continues on upgrading the Creagh Water Treatment Plant to benefit 7,000 customers in Gorey and on the Newtown Water Treatment Plant which is expected to be completed in 2025. Work on the Kilmallock Bridge Water Treatment Plant upgrade will be completed by the end of 2024. The Mayglass (Fardystown) raw water project will increase supply capacity for South Wexford.

The most recent capacity registers supplied by Uisce Éireann shows that there is spare capacity or potential capacity in all settlements with a public water supply within County Wexford.

In terms of water quality (Objective WS05) Clonroche was removed from the Remedial Action list (RAL) in Q1 2024. Enniscorthy and Wexford town remain on the RAL however upgrade projects are underway for both of these supplies.

In terms of water conservation (Objective WS12) a Targeted Water Conservation Campaign was carried out in Summer 2024 and leakage reduction projects were completed in Duncannon and Redmondstown.

Wastewater

Objective IS04 is to provide and upgrade wastewater treatment infrastructure to address environmental problems and protect water bodies. This is supported by

objectives WW01 to WW14 which also support the delivery of wastewater infrastructure.

In Enniscorthy the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) upgrade has been completed and foul drainage collection works have been completed at Mary Street. In Wexford Town the Distillery Road Pumping Station upgrade is at design stage.

New WWTPs have been provided at Kilmore Quay and at Arthurstown, Ballyhack and Duncannon to eliminate untreated discharges at these locations.

Funding has also been granted by the Department to WCC to provide wastewater infrastructure at Ramsgrange Village in partnership with Uisce Éireann.

Objective WW07 is to work with Uisce Éireann, other public infrastructure agencies and local communities to provide serviced sites to attract people to build their own homes in small towns and villages. In this regard WCC made a submission to Uisce Eireann under the Small Towns and Villages Growth programme (STVGP) for the provision of improved wastewater capacity at the following settlements: Ballycanew, Campile, Camolin, Oilgate, Adamstown, Fethard on Sea, Ballyhogue, Monamolin, Ballindaggin, Killinerin, Clongeen, Ballymurn, Ballaghkeen, Davidstown, Marshalstown, Boleyvogue and Bree. Tagoat and Wellingtonbridge are currently at design stage under the STVGP.

Waste Management

Objectives WM01 to WM16 relate to the provision of waste management infrastructure and the promotion of a circular economy. These objectives are mainly implemented through the development management process. WCC continues to implement the provisions of the Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 and the subsequent National Waste Management Plan 2024-2030 prioritising prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery.

Graveyards

Objective GC04 pledges to take actions to increase the biodiversity value in existing and proposed burial grounds in the county. WCC appointed a Biodiversity Officer in June 2024. One of the actions of the role will be to undertake awareness raising and training in relation to managing biodiversity in graveyards. Resources will be required to ensure appropriate management of Council-owned graveyards along with supports and training for community managed graveyards. See Chapter 13 for further details on historic graveyards.

Telecommunications and Information and Communications Technology

Objectives TC01 to TC15 support and facilitate, through the development management process, the delivery of high-quality telecommunications networks and ICT infrastructure. WCC continue to support this infrastructure at appropriate locations to optimise opportunities for enterprise, employment, education and innovation. Progress continues on the roll out of the National Broadband Plan and WCC continues to work with all operators to expedite delivery. A county-wide Digital Strategy is yet to be prepared. However, Digital Town Blueprints have been prepared for Enniscorthy and New Ross in conjunction with the preparation of their respective Town Centre First plans as a mechanism to measure digital readiness of the towns for business.

New Digital Hubs were completed at Ramsgrange, Craanford, Boolavogue and Blackwater and a tender is progressing for renovation/re-purposing of the Old Bank in Rosslare Harbour to a Ditigal Hub. See Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy for further information.

Flood Risk Management

Objectives FRM01 to FRM19 relate to flood risk management and many of these objectives are implemented through the development management process. The main aim is to ensure that future development avoids or minimises increases in flood risk.

Consultants have been appointed to prepare a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) as part of the Wexford Town LAP. The SFRA includes considerations of climate change which and the precautionary approach which includes avoiding areas potentially prone to flooding under the future climate change scenarios, setting land aside that could be required for future flood management, setting specific development management standards to ensure climate change is considered and setting out specific requirements such as finished floor levels for future development.

WCC is also preparing its first Rainwater Management Plan (RMP) incorporating nature-based solutions and a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) as part of the Wexford LAP. The Council will be one of the first planning authorities to apply a plan-led approach to rainwater management, and in doing so, will ensure that all future developments and urban intervention projects incorporate water-sensitive design and manage rainwater in a nature-based and sustainable manner. Similarly, a plan-led approach to green blue infrastructure planning will ensure that planning for biodiversity, natural heritage, landscape and green spaces are well-considered and integrated into the future growth and development of the town and deliver a spatially connected network of green blue elements.

The Council intends to apply a land use zoning approach to ensure that the right solutions and infrastructure are delivered at the right locations. The Council is committed to placing nature-based solutions and green blue infrastructure in a similar, if not higher position, to physical grey infrastructure in terms of investment, protection, and management and as an enabler of wider planning and environmental objectives including building resilience to climate change. This co-ordinated, whole of settlement approach is an ambitious project which the Council intends to be a best practice pilot that will inform the approach in the county's other settlements, and indeed that of other planning authorities.

Objective FRM11 is to facilitate new flood defences and WCC are progressing schemes in Wexford Town and Enniscorthy. The scheme in Wexford Town is currently at Stage I: Option Assessment, Scheme Development and Design. The scheme area includes approximately 10km of coastline and covers six watercourses with catchment areas less than 10 km2.

The Enniscorthy Flood Relief Scheme is proceeding on a phased basis. Phase 1 of the project includes the construction of the new River Slaney Bridge, the removal of the Seamus Rafter Bridge and the construction of a new pedestrian bridge in the town centre. Baseline data gathering for Phase 1 is now complete and design options are currently being assessed. Consultation is scheduled to take place in Q1 2025 and the estimated timeline to planning submission is Q4 2025. Work is progressing on updating ecological and project baseline data for Phase 2 which will consist of the flood relief works.

In conjunction with the OPW, feasibility studies have been carried out on Bridgetown flooding event and are currently being carried out for Rosslare Strand. Continued minor flood relief works are also being funded by OPW in Bridgetown and Rosslare.

CHAPTER 10

Environmental Management



The objectives in this chapter seek to protect the environment and take actions where necessary to maintain and restore good water quality and air quality status. Many of these objectives are secured through the forward planning and development management functions of the Planning Authority, as well as through the discharge licencing process and septic tank inspection programme carried out by WCC Environment Section.

Objectives EM01 to EM04 ensure that Environment Impact Assessments (EIA), Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) and Appropriate Assessments are carried out for plans and projects where required in accordance with the EIA, SEA and Habitats Directives.

Air Quality

The Plan contains a number of objectives to maintain air quality and limit emissions which could have a negative effect on the environment. Objective AQ03 seeks to manage development to provide the efficient use of land and infrastructure, thereby controlling and limiting air emissions, while objective AQ05 promotes a modal change from private car use to other types of travel and promotes the use of public transport as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Planning Authority continues to promote the integration of key land uses through its forward planning and development management functions to reduce the need to travel by private car. Promotion of modal change and public transport is currently being considered as part of the preparation of the Wexford and Enniscorthy Local Transport Plans (LTPs) as well as the preparation of the draft Wexford Town LAP. WCC is also delivering on a number of active travel programmes in the county including the Pathfinder Scheme in Wexford Town and Safe Routes to School Schemes (see transport chapter for further information on public transport and active travel).

The Council continues to increase its EV fleet with 13 EVs and 2 electric forklifts to date. Where appropriate e-vehicles will continue to replace petrol/diesel models. An increased number of e-chargers are being installed in public carparks during renovation works as well as in new developments. WCC is also investigating the transition to alternative fuel means for some of its fleet.

Objective AQ06 is to implement Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) standards and beyond to reduce the particulate matter generated by the combustion of fossil fuels. In this regard the Council continues to support the UN Centre of Excellence on High Performance Building Alliance (HPBA) and the UN Centre of Excellence for NZEB training centre in Enniscorthy to progress the transition to NZEB and ZEB (see Chapter 2 Climate Action and Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy for further information on HPBA and NZEB).

The Housing Section has been meeting its target under the Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme (EERP) on Social Housing stock. Up to September 2024 a total of 315 no. social housing units have been retrofitted to a minimum BER of B2 or higher. See Chapter 4 Sustainable Housing for further details on EERP.

WCC have also recently installed new equipment at four air monitoring stations across the county and continue to monitor particulate matter PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Monitoring results show that there has been an improvement in air quality in the County since the implementation of the Solid Fuel Regulations and Enniscorthy in particular, saw less incidents of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} exceedance in 2024 compared to previous years (see SEA monitoring report for further information).

Water Quality

WCC continues to comply with environmental legislation in relation to surface water and groundwater quality and seeks to maintain or improve water quality status where possible through the development management and discharge licencing processes and the National Septic Tank Inspection Programme. For discharge licences and farm inspections WCC seek to comply with water quality standards by 1) not reducing good status where it exists and 2) improving poor status.

WCC also continues to intensively monitor Bathing Waters to achieve the required bathing water standards and ensure that coastal areas and bathing waters are maintained to the highest levels (See Chapter 11 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning for further information on bathing water).

Objective WQ07 seeks to screen all planning applications according to their Water Framework status while WQ06 seeks to apply a catchment-based approach to the assessment of planning applications and ensure that development would not result in a reduction in the water quality status. In this regard all planning and discharge licence applications are currently screened on an individual basis to ensure compliance with relevant European regulations for groundwater and surface waters. The EPA are currently developing catchment modelling to assist local authorities in carrying out cumulative impact assessments. The majority of catchments cross over the functional area of multiple authorities and a multi-sectoral approach is required (e.g. agriculture, housing, public utilities).

Objectives WQ04 and WQ13 pledge to work with the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) and other relevant State agencies to implement the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 (RBMP), to achieve the objectives for the Areas for Action and to ensure that new developments do not result in a deterioration of water quality in these areas. Since the adoption of the Plan, the RBMP has been superseded with the new Water Action Plan: A River Basin Management Plan for Ireland. WCC Environment Section collaborated with LAWPRO and contributed to the preparation of the new RBMP. WCC Environment Section continue to work with LAWPRO as well as NPWS, OPW, Inland Fisheries, Bord Iascaigh Mhara and other state agencies in relation to the implementation of the RBMP and water quality.

Objective WQ17 promotes locally led community initiatives aimed at driving local water-quality improvements. WCC are supporting citizen science projects including the Duncannon EIP (European Innovation Partnership) project where WCC worked with local schools in Duncannon and Ramsgrange to promote water quality. WCC hope to roll this water quality awareness programme out to other schools and

communities across the county and continue to support local community initiatives aimed at improving water quality.

Objective WQ18 is to participate and support the farming community in the application of schemes such as the Duncannon Blue Flag Farming and Communities Scheme and LIFE programmes. As part of the Duncannon Blue Flag Farming and Communities Scheme WCC worked with local farmers on various measures to promote water quality improvements including the implementation of measures in addition to those specified as part of agri-environment schemes. WCC continues to participate and support the farming community in initiatives to improve and restore water quality.

CHAPTER 11

Landscape and Green Infrastructure



Gorey Town Park

P.E.F.

Proposed Wellbeing and Activity Garden (St. John's Enniscorthy)

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G See Laport Plan 1.150

Example of Nature Based Solution to Rainwater Management at Grogans Road, Wexford

South East Greenway

South East Greenway

The objectives in this chapter seek to sustain the natural and cultural heritage of our landscapes while recognising that they are living landscapes which evolve over time, and to protect the elements of our landscapes which perform important functions such as regulating floods, carbon sinks, green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Many of these objectives are secured through the development management functions of the Planning Authority.

Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

Objective GI02 is to identify, protect, enhance and manage Green Infrastructure in all Local Area Plans (LAPs) in an integrated and coherent manner while Objective GI08 promotes the appropriate retrofitting of streets and spaces in towns and villages with green infrastructure and nature-based Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) solutions.

As discussed in Chapter 9 Infrastructure Strategy, WCC is preparing its first Rainwater Management Plan (RMP) incorporating nature-based solutions and a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) as part of the Wexford Town LAP. The Council will be one of the first planning authorities to apply a plan-led approach to rainwater management, and in doing so, will ensure that all future developments and urban intervention projects incorporate water-sensitive design and manage rainwater in a nature-based and sustainable manner. Similarly, a plan-led approach to green blue infrastructure planning will ensure that planning for biodiversity, natural heritage, landscape and green spaces are well-considered and integrated into the future growth and development of the town and deliver a spatially connected network of green blue elements. The GBIS will plan a network of spaces for recreation, amenity and biodiversity projects.

The Council intends to apply a land use zoning approach to ensure that the right solutions and infrastructure are delivered at the right locations. The Council is committed to placing nature-based solutions and green blue infrastructure in a similar, if not higher position, to physical grey infrastructure in terms of investment, protection, and management and as an enabler of wider planning and environmental objectives including building resilience to climate change. This co-ordinated, whole of settlement approach is an ambitious project which the Council intends to be a best practice pilot that will inform the approach in the county's other settlements, and indeed that of other planning authorities.

Green Infrastructure

Objective GI03 supports investment in the maintenance and enhancement of existing green infrastructure and the provision of new public parks, green space corridors and other public open spaces in tandem with projected population growth to create green healthy settlements throughout the county. WCC continues to provide and maintain parks and green spaces in each of the Municipal Districts.
Of note, Min Ryan Park was completed in Wexford Town in 2022 and public realm works were carried out on Monck Street and Crescent Quay/Oyster Lane. Locations for new parks, open spaces and green corridors will be identified as part of the GBIS being prepared alongside the Wexford Town LAP.

Chapter 5 Design and Place Making in Towns and Villages highlights other WCC key projects including the completion of High Hill Park, Emigrant Park and the South East Greenway in New Ross Town, the completion of the Town Park in Gorey which includes a biodiversity pond, pocket forest and sensory garden, and Bellefield GAA public realm space and playground in Enniscorthy. Also in Enniscorthy works have commenced on a Wellbeing and Activity Garden at St. John's and a new All Weather Astro Pitch is at completion stage on Ross Road. A Part 8 application is being prepared for a new nature-based playground in Springvalley.

In Bunclody a site has been identified for the delivery of a Neighbourhood Park and planning permission was approved in Feb 2024. WCC Property Section is currently in discussion with the landowners with a view to progressing this project.

See Chapter 14 Recreation and Open Space for further information on open spaces, parks, greenways and trails.

CHAPTER 12

Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning



Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland

> South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan for Offshore Renewable Energy October 2024







Coastal Monitoring Programme

in place and targeted at coastal erosion risk zones

Coastal Protection Works

Courtown Coastal Protection & Beach Nourishment Scheme Rosslare Coastal Erosion and Flood Relief Scheme, Seaview, Kilmore

Rosslare Europort

€200m expansion underway Proposed ORE Hub



Access was improved and Universal Accessible Toilet installed at Ballymoney Beach

Curracloe Blue Flag Beach

15 100 - 13



Chapter 12: Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning

This chapter sets out the objectives to manage the future development of the county's coastal areas which are facing ever increasing pressures, as well as objectives to manage development in the maritime area and the interactions between land and sea. Many of the objectives are implemented through the development management process.

Maritime Area Planning Act, National Marine Planning Framework and Designated Maritime Area Plan for Offshore Renewable Energy

Objectives CZM06-CZM10 undertake to work alongside the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHLGH) with regard to the implementation of new maritime planning legislation and the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF). WCC continue to work with DHLGH, DECC, MARA and other relevant stakeholders to implement the new Maritime Area Planning Act and the NMPF in relation to its new functions in the nearshore area.

Objective CZM18 is to participate in the preparation of sectoral guidelines and plans by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. See Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy regarding WCC's submissions on the South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan (SC-DMAP) for Offshore Renewable Energy. WCC also facilitated a number of consultation meetings in relation to the SC-DMAP.

Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan and County Coastal Strategy

Objective CZM05 relates to the preparation of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan for the coastal and estuarine areas of the county and region while Objective CZM02 undertakes to prepare a County Coastal Strategy. Objective CZM26 also undertakes to work with the OPW to develop appropriate strategies for the management of identified coastal erosion, flood risk and associated risks.

Since the adoption of the Plan, a 'Report of the Inter-Departmental Group on National Coastal Change Management Strategy' was issued by the OPW (October 2023) and following on from this the OPW is in the process of preparing Coastal Change Management Plans under the three themes of Coastal Change, Coastal Monitoring and Coastal Projects. The preparation of the Coastal Change Management Plans will involve collaboration with a number of agencies including DHLGH, the Southern Regional Assembly, coastal local authorities, local communities and other relevant stakeholders. Therefore, it is prudent to await these plans before preparing a countywide Coastal Strategy. WCC will consult and work in conjunction with the OPW as part of the proposed coastal change process.

Coastal Protection Works

Objective CZM31 is to carry out coastal protection works where necessary subject to the works being appropriately designed. Since the adoption of the plan the following projects have progressed:

- Courtown Coastal Protection & Beach Nourishment Scheme RPS Ltd was appointed to undertake Preliminary Design and Statutory Consents Phase. Priority Geotechnical Ltd. was appointed to carry out marine and landbased surveys and boreholes and this site investigation work is complete. Marine profiling surveys will be carried out by Hydrographic Survey Limited. An application to the Marine Foreshore Dept. was submitted in December 2022 for permission to carry out benthic grab samples. This work will commence once approval is granted. It is planned to submit a planning application to An Bord Pleanála in Q2 2024.
- Rosslare Coastal Erosion and Flood Relief Scheme Nicholas O'Dwyer Ltd Consulting Engineers was appointed to progress the scheme. Key design parameters for the scheme are being finalised. The project website and project email are now live and can be accessed at <u>https://www.floodinfo.ie/rosslarefrs/</u>
- Seaview, Kilmore A Part 8 application was approved by WCC in April 2024 and part funding was approved by OPW. The construction contract went to public tender in June 2024.

Objective CZM39 is to establish a coastal monitoring programme. This programme is now in place and targeted at coastal erosion risk zones. Detailed monitoring (photo, drone, GPS surveying) of risk zones is carried out, particularly after severe weather events. This coastal monitoring programme will be supplemented by the OPW Coastal Monitoring Section which will carry out detailed surveys on extensive sections of coastline on a national scale.

Economic Development in the Maritime Area

A number of objectives support the sustainable development of the maritime economy (CZM03, CZM04, CZM11, CZM19). WCC continue to support the sustainable development of the maritime area and the maritime economy while fulfilling its duties under new Maritime Area Planning Act and NMPF. Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy provides further information in relation to submissions made by WCC on the SC-DMAP for Offshore Renewable Energy and the proposed Rosslare Europort Offshore Renewable Energy Hub, as well as information in relation to Ireland South East Offshore Wind Partnership and WCC's proposals to develop a Marine Innovation Centre at Kilmore Quay.

A major expansion is underway at Rosslare Europort and WCC continues to support the growth and economic opportunity that this development will facilitate. See Chapter 8 Transportation Strategy in relation to Rosslare Europort Access Road which will enhance regional connectivity to the Port. Chapter 7 also discusses Tourism Development in coastal areas.

Tourism and Recreation in the Coastal Zone

Objectives CZM66-CZM71 support the development of, and public access to, coastal walkways and cycle ways. WCC maintains trail access at a number of locations along the coast. Public access to beaches is monitored and reviewed at the start of each bathing season and upgrades are carried out as necessary. Since the adoption of the Plan the trail from Kilpatrick to Cronellard was re-waymarked, Ballymoney Beach access was improved and the boardwalk at Kilmore Quay was re-laid. Summer field carparks were leased at Cahore and Oldbawn and traffic management measures were implemented at Curracloe. Details on walking trails are available on https://wexfordwalkingtrail.ie/ The 'Visit Wexford' website also includes features on walking trails and coastal amenities in Co. Wexford. See also Chapter 14 Recreation and Open Space Strategy for further information on walking and cycling trails.

Objective CZM70 is to maintain and upgrade facilities in coastal areas. Facilities at beaches are monitored on a continuous basis to identify where future works are required. Four regular beach services were run by Wexford Local Link for Summer 2024 – Wexford to Curracloe, Enniscorthy to Curracloe, Gorey to Ballymoney, and Kilmuckridge to Morriscastle. A new universal accessible toilet was installed at Ballymoney, public toilets were installed at Cahore and car parking was extended and upgraded at Ballyhealy. There is year-round opening of existing facilities at Morriscastle from 2024. WCC is also working on progressing the provision of a public WC on Wexford Quayfront.

Bathing Waters

Objectives CZM73 and CZM74 seek to protect bathing waters and meet bathing water standards. In this regard, ongoing and intensive testing and monitoring is carried out by WCC Environment Section. 19 bathing areas were sampled during the bathing season 1st June to 15th September 2024. In addition, samples are taken of streams and rivers that flow out on and near bathing waters to identify and assess the risks to bathing water quality.

In 2022 there were 6 blue flag beaches and 9 green coast beaches and in 2023 Rosslare Harbour beach also gained green coast status. In 2024 there were 5 blue flag beaches and 10 green coast beaches with Ballymoney losing its blue flag. Extensive sampling of outfalls and follow on investigations are underway to determine the cause of the problem and it is anticipated (based on 2021 to 2024 results) that Ballymoney will regain its blue flag in 2025.

Objective CZM78 is to promote safe practices and the provision of information to the public in relation to safety in coastal zone areas. Water safety practices are reviewed and agreed by the Coastal Engineer and the Water Safety Development Officer.

Safe practices are promoted at the coastal areas through signage, beach lifeguards and notices in the local newspapers relating to safety around the water.

CHAPTER 13

Heritage and Conservation



A number of biodiversity projects were carried out in 2022 and 2023 utilising funds from the Local Biodiversity Action Fund including

- Wetlands Survey Phase 1 and Phase 2
- Tree and Hedgerow Policy
- Barnowl Survey and Booklet
- Dune Restoration Works
- Graveyard St. Johns Enniscorthy
- County tree/hedge cover digital survey by BlueSky
- County Hedgerow Survey 2023



Historic

Towns Initiative

Heritage -led Regeneration Plan

for Wexford Town &

Enniscorthy

USI

1

Historic Structures Fund allocation of £5,084 in 2023

Community Monuments Fund Projects funded include: Barrystown Mine Engine House Fethard Castle Moungarrett

Irish Walled Towns Network Grant New Ross Town Walls Project (William Street) Wexford Town Walls Project (Bride Street & Rope Walk Carpark)

> Bicentinial Works to 1798 Centre NMS Funds received for Enniscorthy and Boolavogue Fr. Murphy Centre

Audit of WCC historic church graveyard sites

Phase 1 completed in 2023

WHAT WAS, WHAT IS, WHAT IF...

A Heritage-led Regeneration Plan for Wexford Town

0

Nexford

World War II

defence

Heritage audit

completed in 2022

Conservation Repair Works

Improved access at Fethard Castle, Ballybrittas Portal Tomb and Ishartmon Church and an information panel at Kilmannan graveyard nairle Dictrieachta 💮

Wexford Historic Churches and Graveyards Audit (Phase 1) for Wedded County Council

> National Heritage Week

À Heritage C

This chapter sets out the objectives to ensure the protection, enhancement and restoration of our natural, built and cultural heritage. Many of the objectives are implemented through the development management process and some are intended to leverage grant funding. Objectives HT01 and NH15 undertake to prepare a County Heritage Plan and a Local Biodiversity Action Plan for the County, both of which will be prepared in 2025, subject to available resources and funding.

Natural Heritage

Objectives NH01 to NH28 seek to protect, enhance and restore our natural heritage. This includes designated and non-designated sites, county geological sites and ecological corridors such as traditional field boundaries, ponds or small woods and sites of local biodiversity value. A Biodiversity Officer was appointed to WCC in June 2024 and part of the role will be to raise awareness and provide training in relation to biodiversity of local sites.

Objective NH03 promotes the integration of green infrastructure and ecosystem services in the plan making and development management processes. In this regard a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) and Rainwater Management Plan (RMP) are currently being prepared as part of the Wexford Town LAP which will identify green corridors and Nature Based Solutions (NBS). A plan-led approach to green blue infrastructure planning will ensure that planning for biodiversity, natural heritage, landscape and green spaces are well-considered and integrated into the future growth and development of the town and deliver a spatially connected network of green blue elements (see Chapter 9 Infrastructure Strategy and Chapter 11 Landscape and Green Infrastructure for further details). Habitat assessment and Article 10⁸ assessment is being carried out as part of the GBIS.

A number of biodiversity projects were carried out in 2022 and 2023 utilising funds from the Local Biodiversity Action Fund including:

- Wetlands Survey Phase 1 and Phase 2
- Tree and Hedgerow Policy
- Barnowl Survey and Booklet
- Dune Restoration Works at Curracloe and Kilmuckridge
- Graveyard St. Johns Enniscorthy
- County tree/hedge cover digital survey by BlueSky
- County Hedgerow Survey 2023

⁸ Article 10 of the Habitats Directive states that Member States shall endeavour, where they consider it necessary, in their land-use planning and development policies and, in particular, with a view to improving the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network, to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora. Such features are those which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure (such as rivers with their banks or the traditional systems for marking field boundaries) or their function as stepping stones (such as ponds or small woods), are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.

WCC continue to support LAWPRO and other agencies in improving and restoring the three coastal lagoons in the county: Tacumshin Lake, Our Lady's Island and Ballyteige Bay (NH17). WCC also continues to provide support for NGOs, Government bodies and community groups in the application of EU funded programmes which aim to achieve the objectives of the Habitats and Birds Directives (NH18).

Objectives NH22–NH27 seek to raise awareness and promote best practice in the control of invasive species and to support measures for their prevention and/or eradication. As well as implementing through the development management process (e.g. through the requirement for Invasive Species Management Plans) WCC crews continue to identify, mark and treat invasive alien species on road verges. The role of the Biodiversity Officer will include raising awareness and promoting best practice in relation to the control of invasive species, both for WCC staff and the public.

Objective NH28 seeks to manage our parks, open spaces, roadside verges and all vegetation in a way that provides more opportunities for biodiversity. This is ongoing through Parks Management in each of the Municipal Districts. Biodiversity measures are being incorporated into WCC projects where appropriate e.g. Min Ryan Park in Wexford, High Hill Park and Emigrant Park in New Ross, Enniscorthy Wellbeing and Activity Garden, and Gorey Town Park which includes a biodiversity pond, pocket forest and sensory garden. WCC Roads Section also continue to partner with other council departments to promote initiatives in public areas.

Archaeological Heritage

Objectives AH01 to AH13 seek to conserve and protect archaeological monuments, sites and objects and secure public access and the provision of signage and interpretation panels at appropriate sites in the county. Since the adoption of the Plan, conservation repair works have been carried out to facilitate improved access at Fethard Castle, Ballybrittas Portal Tomb and Ishartmon Church and an information panel has been erected at Kilmannan graveyard.

An Audit of Historic Churches and Graveyards was carried out in 2023 to assess the current condition of sites and to inform future works. Phase 1 of the Audit was carried out in 2023 and this included an assessment of 59 graveyards. Grant assistance has now been sought to carry out a Phase 2 Audit in 2025 which will include a review of an additional 30 graveyards. The Phase 1 Audit informed maintenance works at Killag graveyard and Clonmines graveyard. Maintenance works were also carried out at St. John's graveyard, Enniscorthy. WCC will continue to carry out works at suitable sites where appropriate and subject to funding and resources.

Built Heritage

Objectives BH01-BH18 and ACA01-ACA08 seek to protect the built heritage, prevent dereliction and support appropriate adaption and re-use. WCC continues to protect

the built heritage through the allocation of funds to assist owners to maintain properties. In 2022 and 2023 a total of €222,203.93 was allocated under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and a further €5,084 was allocated under the Historic Structures Fund. A number of other projects were supported under the Community Monuments Fund (see BH02 in Appendix 1 for full details).

Objective BH03 promotes the development of heritage-led regeneration and undertakes to engage in and promote initiatives to revitalise the historic cores of towns and villages together with local communities, heritage property owners and other stakeholders. In this regard WCC sought and received funding from the Heritage Council under the Historic Towns Initiative to prepare Heritage-led Regeneration Plans for Wexford and Enniscorthy Towns. The Plans contain a number of actions for regeneration of the town centres and will inform the preparation of the LAPs.

Objective BH04 is to consider, in the preparation of future local area plans, a *Town first* approach to the revitalisation of historic urban centres, which focuses on the repair and upgrade of existing historic buildings and their adaptation to new uses. In this regard, consultants have been appointed and are currently preparing a Town centre First Strategy as part of the Wexford Town LAP.

WCC continues to pursue all available funding avenues to support the protection of the built heritage and it is anticipated that a Conservation Officer will appointed in 2025 to assist in this process.

Graveyards

Objectives G01 to G04 seek to preserve and enhance graveyards through improved management, access and community stewardship and education and training on appropriate care and maintenance. WCC Community Section continue to manage graveyards with assistance provided by the Heritage and Biodiversity Officers where appropriate. Grants have been received under the Community Monuments Fund to prepare Conservation Management Plans for Toome Church and Graveyard, St. Senan's Church and Graveyard and St. Nichlas Church and Graveyard, Clonmines. Applications for funding have also been submitted for Ballyvaldon Church and Graveyard and Carnagh Church and Graveyard.

Cultural Heritage

Objectives CH01 to CH05 seek to promote and safeguard the cultural heritage of the county and facilitate expansion and development of accessible facilities. Chapter 15 Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure Strategy provides further information on cultural facilities including the adoption of a Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027.

CHAPTER 14

Recreation and Open Space Strategy





Sensory Gardens at Enniscorthy Community Allotments.

New Skate Park and MUGA at Min Ryan Park, Wexford This Chapter contains objectives to guide the spatial development of open space and recreation facilities, to ensure that residents have access to a range of open space and sporting facilities and to increase quality of life to attract people and employment to locate in the county. WCC continues to implement these objectives through the development management process, where appropriate, to ensure that new development is accompanied by high quality, useable open spaces that serve a range of needs and promote active and passive recreation.

Open Space

Objective ROS03 is to ensure urban and rural communities have access to a range of high-quality open space which is supported by objectives ROS08-ROS20. Since the adoption of the Plan two new district level parks have been completed at Min Ryan Park in Wexford and Gorey Town Park. In New Ross completed amenities include High Hill Park, Emigrant Park and Phase 1 of the South East Greenway, with Phase 2 now underway.

In Enniscorthy, completed projects include Bellefield Public Realm and Playground, an all-weather astroturf pitch on Ross Road and Sensory Gardens at Enniscorthy Community Allotments. A Wellbeing and Activity Garden is currently under construction at St. John's Hospital and a Part 8 application is being prepared for a new playground in Springvalley. Enniscorthy Sports Hub, which will include changing place facilities, is currently at tender assessment stage.

In Bunclody planning was approved by ABP in February 2024 to develop a Neighbourhood Park and WCC Property Section are currently in discussions with landowners to acquire the land.

WCC continues to maintain parks, playgrounds (61), beaches and trails throughout the county. Biodiversity features are being incorporated into the design of new open spaces where possible e.g. South East Greenway, St. Waleran's Sports Hub and the proposed new nature-based playground in Springvalley, Enniscorthy.

Consultants have been appointed to prepare a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) as part of the preparation of the Wexford Town LAP and locations for new parks, open spaces and green corridors for the Town will be identified in the plan, together with land use zoning objectives and public open space requirements for new developments.

Objective ROS18 supports the development of skate parks and outdoor gyms at appropriate locations. Facilities are currently installed and maintained at Min Ryan Park, Gorey District Park and the Avenue, and New Ross Town Park. A Part 8 application has been lodged for a Skate Park in New Ross on the site of the Old Railway Yard and appropriate sites are being pursued for the provision of a skate park in Enniscorthy Town.

Play Facilities

Objective ROS21 seeks to ensure that a range of play opportunities are available for all children, particularly those who are marginalised, disadvantaged or who have special needs. WCC continue to maintain a high number of parks and playgrounds throughout the county. A new playground was delivered in Oylegate in 2023 which is fully accessible and includes a number of sensory pieces of play equipment including a disability access carousel. The Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme commits to providing 1 no. accessible playground (or upgrades to existing) per Municipal District. In 2024, TVS funding was announced for a new playground, sensory garden, pocket woodland and picnic area in Carrig-on-Bannow and Community Recognition Fund (CRF) funding was announced for a new Multi Games user Area in Rosslare Harbour Community Playground. Healthy Wexford also continue to support playful spaces within communities through collaborations with the Municipal Districts.

Sports and Leisure Facilities

Objectives ROS25-ROS34 support the development of a vibrant and active sports sector with increased participation levels and appropriately located facilities. WCC continues to support the development of inclusive and accessible facilities through the work of Sports Active Wexford and support for applications for Sports Capital funding. A County Sports Plan and Outdoor Recreation Plan are currently in preparation and are expected to be completed in 2025.

In 2024 WCC signed three separate Service Level Agreements with major sporting organisations: the FAI, Leinster Rugby and Wexford GAA. The agreements, through collaboration with these organisations, will strengthen the council's commitment to support social inclusion and a Healthy Wexford where each person can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential.

In Gorey Town a Part 8 application was approved for St. Waleran's Sports and Recreation Complex which will provide high-quality sport and recreational facilities for the community, with a particular focus on minority sports and targeting inclusiveness in sporting activities. A funding application has been made under the LSSIF scheme.

In Wexford Town, the Ballynagee Masterplan includes enhanced recreation and amenity infrastructure and facilities including Wexford FC Arena (pitch and stadium, 2 training pitches, car parking, access to new avenue), new changing rooms and a GAA pitch. It includes active and passive recreation and an open space network.

Other projects being progressed by WCC include a Water Sports Activity Facility at Curracloe and a gym at Ferndale in Wexford Town, both expected to commence in Q3 2025. Carrigfoyle boathouse is expected to begin construction in Q2 2025.

In accordance with Objective ROS28, WCC continues to support the clustering of facilities with other community facilities where possible to create multi-user community hubs and to ensure that sufficient land is zoned in local area plans to facilitate sports clubs and community organisations. Public open space requirements

and land use zoning objectives are currently being considered as part of the preparation of the draft Wexford Town LAP.

Walking and Cycling Routes

Objectives ROS35 to ROS47 promote the development of accessible walking and cycling trails throughout the county. Objectives ROS35 and ROS36, in particular, undertake to prepare Walking and Cycling Strategies for the County. While such Strategies have not been prepared to date elements are being integrated into the LTPs for Wexford Town & Enniscorthy (See chapter 8 Transportation Strategy for further details). Numerous trails have also been completed or are progressing under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) including:

- Ferns Heritage Trail Waymarking Project (under construction)
- Cahore Step Improvements and Cahore Point Trail Resurface Link (tender)
- Upgrade River Slaney Banks Trail (complete)
- Extend the Enniscorthy Riverside Walk -Project Development Grant (design)
- Re-route Section of Curragh Trail (construction)
- Re-route Section of Forge Trail, Carrigbyrne (design)
- Ballyhack to Duncannon -Phase 1 (complete) and Phase 2 (Planning)
- Our Lady's Island Phase 1 (complete) and Phase 2 (complete)
- Kellywood Link (tender)
- Forth Mt. Equestrian Trail (complete)
- Ballybrittas Tomb Trail, Bree (complete)
- Kilmore Quay Recreation Trail (design)
- Other works around carparks, signage and accessibility including seating.
- Blackstairs Mountain Trail 13km upland trail
- Improved trail access from Fisherman's Way, Tara Hill to Ballymoney (funding received)
- Improved trail drainage at Cullentra Trail, Kiltealy (funding received)

In terms of greenways, Phase 1 (6km) of the South East Greenway was completed from New Ross to Glenmore and Phase 2 (5.5km) from Ferrybank to Curraghmore is underway. The Wexford to Rosslare Greenway (including the section to Rosslare Harbour) is at route selection stage and it is anticipated the preferred route will be identified in Q1 2025. WCC continues to support trails and greenways through the Wexford Walking Trails Brand and the VisitWexford platform. See Chapter 7 Tourism Development, Chapter 8 Transportation Strategy and Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management for further Information on greenways and walking and cycling trails.

Public Rights of Way

Objectives ROS48 and ROS49 undertake to preserve public rights of way and to identify such routes and vary the Plan as necessary to include a map and list of such routes. While no progress has been made on this to date, WCC continues to ensure that development does not impinge on public rights of way in accordance with Objective ROS50.

CHAPTER 15

Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure Strategy





Changing Places Facilities

Completed at Min Ryan Park, the Heritage Park and Gorey Town Park. Others are planned for Dunbrody Centre in New Ross, Gorey Market House and Enniscorthy Sports Hub.







Propsed Gorey Market House Redevelopment (awarded funding of €7m through Thrive Scheme).



Extension was completed in 2022

Artist's Hub was opened in Westgate

Chapter 15: Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure Strategy

This Chapter supports the delivery of healthy sustainable and inclusive communities. Many of the objectives are implemented through the development management system e.g. universal design objectives and the facilitation of childcare and healthcare facilities. However WCC, through the Community Section and Programmes such as Slainte Care, Age Friendly and Healthy Wexford, also play a key role through targeted investment programmes and community initiatives.

Social Inclusion

Objectives SC01 to SC15 promote social inclusion and the development of healthy sustainable communities where people have access to a wide range of community facilities. The LECP was adopted by WCC in 2024 and includes a number of objectives and actions to support the delivery of accessible and inclusive amenities, arts and cultural opportunities to support physical and mental wellbeing. WCC continues to support Wexford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in implementing the community elements of the LECP and in managing the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2024-2028 which provides funding to tackle poverty and social exclusion at a local level through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies.

Slaintecare Healthy Communities is providing programmes to target improvements in health and wellbeing in more deprived areas. The Slaintecare Healthy Communities Officer is running health and wellbeing programmes and projects in Taghmon, Edermine, Enniscorthy and Wexford (areas within programme remit). The Enniscorthy Interagency Community Team was set up in October 2023. The Team initially focused on community development initiatives in two housing estates, Forgelands and Gimont Avenue, however the team's remit has since expanded to include initiatives for the wider town area. The group meet quarterly to progress the community initiatives.

In accordance with the Age Friendly Strategy 2022-2026, WCC are providing Age Friendly programmes in conjunction with Pobal. An Older Person's Council has been set up to focus on delivery of specific actions within the strategy and quarterly meetings are held in alliance with other strategic partners, e.g. HSE, Local Link. There are Age Friendly Ambassadors in each of the five Wexford Libraries. An AgeWell Expo was held in September 2024 which included 36 no. exhibitors with supports for inclusivity. A number of walkability audits have also been conducted by the Age Friendly unit to feed into future policy and projects to create safe and barrier free environments.

Sports Active Wexford continue to engage with the public to encourage and support participation in sport and physical activity – see Chapter 14 Recreation and Open Space Strategy for further information.

Objective SC12 facilitates the provision of community facilities for people with specific planning and design needs, such as family resource centres, Traveller resource centres, youth centres and youth cáfes. A Family Resource Centre has been delivered within Gorey Town and a working group has been established to focus on the provision of a Family Resource Centre in Enniscorthy. WCC also continue to facilitate the provision of a unit within the Drumgoold area in Enniscorthy for FDYS Traveller worker.

Objective SC15 requires 'Changing Places facilities' to be provided in any large building development where the public have access in numbers, and/or where the public might be expected to spend longer periods of time. Changing Places Facilities are currently available at Min Ryan Park, the Heritage Park and Gorey Town Park. Others are planned for inclusion in upcoming projects including the Dunbrody Centre in New Ross, Gorey Market House and Enniscorthy Sports Hub.

Educational facilities

Objectives SC18 to SC30 relate to the provision of educational facilities and support the development of a Learning Region. WCC continue to liaise with relevant stakeholders regarding the provision of educational facilities and in the identification of suitable sites for schools. The development of the University Campus for SETU and the Georgia Southern University Accommodation Campus in Wexford Town, the opening of the Wexford College of Further Education and Training (FET) in Wexford Town in 2023 and the development of the HPBA and the UN Centre of Excellence for NZEB in Enniscorthy Town all support the objectives for third level facilities and further education. WCC will continue to support the objectives for a Learning Region and are currently working SETU and WWETB in identifying industry and training needs. See Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy for further details.

Community Facilities

Objectives SC34 to SC37 support the development of community facilities at appropriate locations and to consult with local community groups and key stakeholders during the preparation of local area plans to determine existing deficiencies. Examples of community facilities delivered since the adoption of the Plan include the renovation of Craanford Parish hall for the provision of a community shop and digital hub and a community space facilitated in the Gorey Family Resource Centre. Funding was approved for a new community centre at Riverchapel Community Sports Complex.

A number of buildings were acquired under TVS including the Old Courthouse in New Ross, the Old Credit Union building in Gorey, the Old Bank building in Rosslare Harbour and the Old Post Office building in Ballyhogue. It is intended that new community uses will be accommodated in these buildings in the future utilising funds from the TVS.

Arts, Culture and Library Services

Objective SC38 facilitates the development of the county's arts services, library services and cultural facilities. A new Arts Plan 2023-2027 and a Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 were launched in 2023 and are now being implemented by WCC. A new Artist's Hub was opened in Westgate, Wexford and funding was received for an extension and complete refurbishment of New Ross Library, which is expected to proceed in 2025. WCC continue to support SCREEN WEXFORD, an initiative to support the development of the film / screen industry in Wexford, and CREATIVE PLACES ENNISCORTHY, a 3-year Arts Council funded initiative in partnership with Wexford Arts Centre, Wexford Arts Office and Enniscorthy Municipal District seeking to embed creativity into Enniscorthy.

Objective SC39 is to take a lead role in the development of cultural facilities e.g. the redevelopment of Gorey Market House and Wexford Arts Centre. The Wexford Arts Centre Extension was completed in 2022. A Part 8 application was approved for the redevelopment of Gorey Market House in 2024 and funding of €7 million was awarded through THRIVE scheme to develop the Market House as an events and cultural space.

See Chapter 7 Tourism Development for Festivals.



CHAPTER 16

Settlement Plans and Specific Objectives

Volume 3 contains 'Settlement Plans' (including land use zoning objectives) for Bunclody and Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane and 'Specific Objectives' (no land use zoning) for Castlebridge and Rosslare Strand. Many of the objectives relate to the design and layout of new developments and WCC continues to implement these objectives through the development management process and local authority own development. The information below shows the progress on securing objectives which are more 'action' specific.

Bunclody Settlement Plan

The following objectives have been delivered/progressed since the adoption of the Plan:

- Public Realm (B11) WCC acquired a piece of land adjacent to the school for a public realm area. Consultation is ongoing with community re development. A Street Audit WAS carried out and report compiled. Works will be carried out subject to funding.
- Regeneration (B17) Under the 2024 Town Centre First suite of supports Bunclody was successful in receiving €10,000 from DRCD to establish a Town Centre First Team. This Town Team has been established in early Q3 2024.
- Vacant Sites (B18) Lands have been identified and included on the mapping for Residential Zoned Land Tax which will apply to vacant sites zoned for residential uses in attempts to activate such sites.
- Pedestrian and Cycling Facilities (B35) Feasibility study ongoing for junction improvement in Bunclody on N80/R746 and bus stops on N80. Active Travel funding to be sought for upgrades also.
- Open Space (B45) Location identified for a Neighbourhood Park and application approved by ABP with in February 2024. WCC Property Section is currently in discussion with the landowners with a view to acquiring the land.
- Sports (B48) Bunclody Adventure Hub is up and running with WWETB courses and new club developed.
- Community Centre (B52) Aidan's Hall Bunclody received €30,000 for improvements to community centre under the Community Recognition Fund.
- Library (B54) Full programme of cultural and children's events established in Bunclody Library from 2022 post-COVID. Support being provided from Arts & Libraries for ongoing development.

The following objectives have n ot been progressed to date/will be progressed during the remainder of the Plan:

- Develop an integrated and branded signage approach (B13)
- Provide off-street car and bus parking for schools (B33)
- Identify lands for long term off-street parking (B34)
- Provide a segregated cycle route and from Bunclody to Clohamon (B36)

- Work with TII and other stakeholders in the development and assessment of options for link road and/or by-pass (B40)
- Support the development of all-weather sports and recreational facility (B43)
- Investigate feasibility of developing river walk/linear park along the Slaney River and Clody Rivers (B44)
- Provide area for allotments (B47)

The Core Strategy Monitoring Report for Year 2 shows minimal residential development in Bunclody during the first two years of the Plan with just 5 new houses completed (3.8% of its Core Strategy allocation) and 10 housing units granted (7.5% of its Core Strategy allocation). This shows that there is currently sufficient residential zoned lands.

Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane Settlement Plan

The Rosslare Municipal District Strategic Plan 2024-2030 was launched in 2024 and includes a number of initiatives to support the future development and growth of the district and deliver positive growth of the settlements in the area leveraging a range of funding streams.

The following objectives in the CDP have been delivered/progressed since the adoption of the Plan:

- Vacant sites (RHK14) Lands have been identified and included on the mapping for Residential Zoned Land Tax which will apply to vacant sites zoned for residential uses in attempts to activate such sites.
- Pedestrian and cycle facilities (RHK21, RHK26, RHK55) Improved footpath and cycle route completed from Kilrane School to Rosslare Harbour. A limited cycle facility has been provided along the west side of N25. The Wexford to Rosslare Greenway (including the section to Rosslare Harbour) is at route selection stage and it is anticipated the preferred route will be identified in Q1 2025. WCC continues to liaise with the NTA on the delivery and promotion of active travel provisions in conjunction with public transport operators.
- TEN-T network (RHK29-RHK31, RHK36, RHK43) The N25 Rosslare Europort Access Road is at design stage and WCC anticipates going to tender for construction in Q4 2024. The N11/N25 Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour Route is currently at design stage; The design of the development is being updated considering the revised TII Service Area Policy 2023 and Climate Action Plan 2023. Preparation of Environmental, Planning, Design and other reports are ongoing. Slaney Bridge Options Report is near completion. In 2023 WCC made a submission on All Island Rail Review (further details in Chapter 8 Transportation Strategy).
- Rosslare Europort (RHK40-RHK52) Transformational project now underway at the port in accordance with Rosslare Europort Masterplan. WCC made a submission in support of Rosslare Proposed ORE hub in 2024 and continue to engage with Irish Rail in relation to the development of the Port. See Chapter 6 Economic Development Strategy for further details.

- Greenway (RHK55) The Wexford to Rosslare Greenway (including the section to Rosslare Harbour) is at route selection stage and it is anticipated the preferred route will be identified in Q1 2025.
- Community Building (RHK63) WCC acquired the Old Bank Building in Rosslare Harbour which is currently being re-purposed for community use.

The following objectives have not been progressed to date/will be progressed during the remainder of the Plan:

- Improve the public realm particularly in the village centre and along the approach roads to Rosslare Harbour (RHK07)
- Develop an integrated and branded signage approach (RHK09)
- Work with the Southern Regional Assembly and other identified stakeholders to prepare and implement a Regional Freight Strategy (RHK37)
- Examine the feasibility of reopening the disused Rosslare Europort to Waterford Railway as a sustainable transport corridor (RHK57)
- Support the extension of the existing community centre in Kilrane (RHK63)

The Core Strategy Monitoring Report for Year 2 shows significant residential development in Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane during the first two years of the Plan with 14 new houses completed (8.1% of its Core Strategy allocation) and 83 housing units granted (48.3% of its Core Strategy allocation) on lands zoned for village centre and lands zoned for residential development. A recent review of residential zoned lands has been carried out and as development has not, to date, been forthcoming on any of the sites identified as Phase 1 lands (6.9ha.), the lands in Phase 2 will be considered for development from July 2025.

Rosslare Strand Specific Objectives

The Rosslare Municipal District Strategic Plan 2024-2030 was launched in 2024 and includes a number of initiatives to support the future development and growth of the district and deliver positive growth of the settlements in the area leveraging a range of funding streams.

The following objectives in the CDP have been delivered/progressed since the adoption of the Plan:

- Rosslare Municipal District Strategic Plan 2024-2030ian and cycle facilities (RS23) - Safe Routes to School Scheme complete at St Mary's national school. Footpath improvements ongoing on a phased basis. The Wexford to Rosslare Greenway (including the section to Rosslare Harbour) is at route selection stage and it is anticipated the preferred route will be identified in Q1 2025.
- Pedestrian and cycle facilities (RS23) Safe Routes to School Scheme complete at St Mary's national school. Footpath improvements ongoing on a phased basis.

- Greenway (RS25) The Wexford to Rosslare Greenway (including the section to Rosslare Harbour) is at route selection stage and it is anticipated the preferred route will be identified in Q1 2025
- Coastal Erosion (RS44) A coastal monitoring programme is in place and targeted at coastal erosion risk zones. See Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management for further details including Rosslare Coastal Erosion and Flood Relief Scheme.

The following objectives have not been progressed to date/will be progressed during the remainder of the Plan:

- Improve the public realm particularly in the village centre and along the approach roads to Rosslare Strand (RS10)
- Develop an integrated and branded signage approach (RS11)
- Provide accessible footpaths where indicated on Map 5 (RS26)
- Investigate the feasibility of a local traffic management system with measures to prioritise pedestrian, cyclist and public transport movements throughout the settlement and to facilitate the complementary use of private car (RS28)
- Work with Fáilte Ireland to encourage and facilitate tourist development that will improve the area's tourist facilities and attractions, such as an appropriately located wildlife sanctuary (RS32)
- Support the development of new festivals and events (RS35)
- Support the development of a weekly artisan food and craft market at a suitable location (RS36)
- Examine the feasibility of reopening the disused Rosslare Europort to Waterford Railway as a sustainable transport corridor (RS39)
- Promote the development of allotments/community gardens on suitable sites (RS41)
- Support the development of an outdoor recreation centre (RS42)
- Enhance animation and interpretation at key heritage sites (in particular for Rosslare Fort site at tip of Burrow) and augment existing networks and trails with additional sites and material to create new visitor experiences (RS45)
- Support the continued development, maintenance and upgrading of the community and sports centre (R48)

Castlebridge Specific Objectives

The following objectives have been delivered/progressed since the adoption of the Plan:

- Public Realm (CB08) A Town Centre First Team was established in September 2024.
- Pedestrian and cycling facilities (CB19, CB21-CB24) Design and consultations are progressing with the local community to improve the quality and accessibility of footpaths. A pedestrian crossing has been installed and works have been carried out to improve the footpaths surrounding the new crossing.

A process of narrowing the roadways to slow traffic down has been devised. This should make the area safer for pedestrians. WCC also hope to secure funding through Active Travel for provision of cycle infrastructure from Wexford Bridge to Castlebridge.

The following objectives have not been progressed to date/will be progressed during the remainder of the Plan:

- Support the preparation of a Village Design Statement (CB02)
- Examine the feasibility of potential relief works as part of OPW Minor Works funding (CB27)



CHAPTER 17

Retail Strategy

The Retail Strategy aligns with the Settlement Hierarchy and includes objectives to ensure that new retail development is appropriate to the scale and function of each settlement. This is mostly implemented through the development management process. Specific objectives are also included for each of the four main towns to improve the public realm, appearance and accessibility of the retail core areas to create more attractive, desirable places that people want to live and spend time in, for work, shopping or recreational purposes. This is being progressed through a number of WCC key regeneration projects which are outlined in Chapter 5 Design and Placemaking in Towns and Villages.

Town Centre First (TCF) Plans have been published for Enniscorthy and New Ross and Town Teams established who meet monthly to prioritise the actions in the plans. A TCF Strategy is currently being prepared for Wexford Town and will feed into the Local Area Plan. Heritage-led Regeneration Plans have also been prepared for Wexford and Enniscorthy. These plans contain a number of actions designed to regenerate and revitalise the town centres.

Chapter 4 Sustainable Housing and Chapter 5 Design and Placemaking in Towns and Villages provide details on vacant and derelict sites, Croí Conaithe and the Ready to Build Schemes which aim to encourage the reuse of vacant and derelict buildings and underutilised town centre sites.

Objective WXC14 is to introduce measures to improve the accessibility of town centres by developing a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment. Such measures have been introduced in Wexford Town through the e-bike scheme which was introduced in May 2023. An e-scooters pilot scheme (6-month trial) was also rolled out in in August 2024 and pathfinder schemes are ongoing in Wexford Town.

Local Transport Plans (LTPs) are being prepared for Wexford Town and Enniscorthy Town which will target accessibility improvements to include prioritising walking, wheeling and cycling. The Enniscorthy TCF Plan also identifies key projects to improve accessibility. Walkability audits were carried out which are feeding into the preparation of the LTP.

In Gorey Town protective safety bollards were installed at Paul Funge Boulevard cycle lane while new cycle lane infrastructure is being incorporated into the Esmonde Street Public Realm Project. In New Ross multiple projects are progressing including the Pedestrianisation of Quay Street, the completion of South East Greenway and linking it with the town centre.

Shopfront Improvement Schemes (WX09, EN07, GY06, NR10) have been implemented in the four main towns at various stages to improve the design and quality of shop signage. WCC also continues to improve directional signage and underground wires, where feasible, as part of public realm projects.



CHAPTER 18

Housing Strategy

Housing delivery continues to be a key priority for WCC. WCC continues to ensure that high quality developments are delivered at appropriate locations and at an appropriate scale and mix of tenure in accordance with the objectives of the Plan. Chapter 4 Sustainable Housing outlines WCC's progress in delivering housing units, implementing Part V requirements for social and affordable housing, providing housing for persons with specific housing needs and engaging in active land management measures including the activation of vacant and derelict sites.

WCC Housing Section (in conjunction with Housing Capital Construction) have delivered over 50% of the Housing for All targets (as at July 2024). The proposals approved for the remainder of the plan, if all delivered, will result in WCC Housing surpassing their target of 1,155 no. units.

The Housing Strategy contained in the CDP identifies housing need during the period of the plan based on a combination of the 'Louth Model' and a 'Housing Need Demand Assessment' (HNDA). Following the adoption of the CDP, KPMG Future Analytics (KPMG-FA) were commissioned to provide an overview of the operation of the HNDA Toolkit for County Wexford. This included modelling of the five recommended scenarios (i.e., Convergence, Baseline, 50:50 City, High Migration, and Low Migration). A custom Wexford scenario based on the inclusion of the Housing Supply Targets for County Wexford calculated as part of the Wexford CDP was also prepared and a further refined scenario to account for contemporary local conditions, such as 2022 prices and Wexford-specific projections for purchase and rental price changes.

Although the HNDA did not show a gap in affordability, WCC engaged KPMG to carry out a county-wide survey, which identified a 13.3% affordability gap locally. This gap has been used to obtain approval for an Affordable Housing Scheme in Gorey which is progressing. WCC will continue to make business cases for other schemes where the need is demonstrated.

WCC carried out a review of the Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2019-2024 and increased the target from 100 no. units to 126 no. units to take into account an updated assessment of need. By the end of 2024 at least 92% will be delivered. The new TAP 2025-2029 has been approved by the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) and Full Council to proceed to public consultation.



CHAPTER 19

Energy Strategy

The Energy Strategy recognises the opportunity for County Wexford to become a national leader in sustainable renewable energy generation. The Strategy sets an ambitious target of 100% of electricity consumption in the County (based on population share) to be from renewable energy sources by 2027 to be met from a combination of renewable energy sources including wind and solar.

Progress on Renewable Energy Target

At the time of writing the Energy Strategy, the installed wind energy capacity in County Wexford was 182 MW and installed solar energy was 2.51 MW. The Energy Balance provided by the 3 Counties Energy Agency (now known as South-East Energy Agency) showed that an additional 62 MW of onshore wind energy and 203 MW of solar energy would be required to meet the County's share of the then national target of 70% RES-E, as well as 111 MW of offshore wind energy.⁹ The Energy Strategy went a step further and set a target of 100% of electricity consumption in the County to be provided from a combination of renewable energy sources by 2027 (based on population share) and objective ES08 aims to achieve this target.

The objectives in the Strategy facilitate the development of solar PV and onshore wind energy developments at appropriate scales and locations in the county subject to certain criteria being met (ES01, ES07, ES09, ES10). In addition, objectives ES03 and ES14 seek to facilitate appropriate small scale solar and wind energy developments in urban areas, industrial estates, business parks and small community-based proposals. Objective ES15 considers re-powering and extension of existing wind farms.

There is currently 182.7 MW of wind energy connected to the grid.¹⁰ There have been no applications to develop new wind farms in the county since the adoption of the Plan, however one application has been received and approved for an extension of time to an existing wind farm at Carnsore Point. It is expected that further applications for extensions of time /repowering will be received in the coming years as planning permissions reach their maturity.

As at end June 2024, there were a total of 45 permissions granted for ground mounted solar farms in County Wexford with an estimated output of 693 MW and covering an area of 1,328.41 hectares. The latest EirGrid and ESB energised and contracted generator lists¹¹ show 177.82 MW of solar connected to the grid and a

¹¹ <u>https://www.eirgrid.ie/industry/customer-information/connected-and-contracted-generators</u> and <u>https://www.esbnetworks.ie/new-connections/generator-connections-group/generator-statistics</u> [accessed 8/10/24]

⁹ At the time of preparing the Plan, the national RE target was 70% from renewables by 2030. The current target is 80% under the Climate Action Plan 2024 and includes ambitious targets of deploying 9 GW of onshore wind, 8 GW of solar power, and at least 5 GW from offshore wind projects by 2030. ¹⁰ https://www.seai.ie/data-and-insights/seai-statistics/la-cap-dashboard/ [accessed 9/9/24]

further 297.55 MW of solar contracted to the grid (seven solar farms including one community solar farm) in County Wexford.¹²

This shows that County Wexford is generally on trend to meet its Renewable Energy target by 2027, if all permissions are implemented and connected to the grid and subject to continuation or repowering of existing wind farms.

Offshore Renewable Energy

Objective ES24 supports the development of offshore renewable energy in accordance with national plans and policy. Offshore wind farms are unlikely to be operational during this plan period and will not contribute to Wexford's Renewable Energy target for 2027 but will have implications for future development plans.

In 2023 and 2024, WCC facilitated a number of presentations from the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) on the Draft South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan (DMAP) for Offshore Renewable Energy. WCC also facilitated a public event held by DECC at County Hall in May 2024 and the Chief Executive formed part of the discussion panel. WCC subsequently made a submission on the Draft SC-DMAP in June 2024 and fully supports a plan led approach to the development of offshore renewable energy which seeks to maximise co-existence with other maritime users including fishermen and coastal communities.

Objectives ES25, ES26 and ES36 seek to pursue opportunities to service the marine renewable energy sector at existing ports, to facilitate the growth of new ports and the provision of additional quayside harbour working areas to further enhance their attractiveness to marine renewable industry developers.

WCC made a submission to Irish Rail in June 2024 in support of its proposals to develop an Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Hub at Rosslare Europort. The proposed development includes the reclamation of c. 21 hectares to facilitate an ORE facility which will enable construction and installation of new offshore windfarms as well as providing operation and maintenance facilities. Irish Rail expect to submit a planning application to An Bord Pleanála in Q4 of 2024.

WCC acknowledges that such developments bring opportunities for associated economic development in terms of new local industry, supply chain developments, job creation and reskilling opportunities.

In accordance with objectives ES25, ES26 and ES36 WCC are also looking at opportunities to develop a Marine Innovation Centre at Kilmore Quay and KPMG have been engaged to prepare an application for funding under the Smart Regions Scheme's with a view to developing this Centre. It is anticipated that the Marine Innovation Centre would provide commercial office space, innovative enterprise labs, research and development for the marine and ORE sectors enabling key infrastructure to establish a centre of excellence connecting the ecological, economic and societal dimensions of ORE implementation and building an ecosystem to support the transformative effort.

¹² One of these solar farms (Tullabeg Phase 2) was successful at the most recent RESS 4 auction (105MW).

WCC are also building strategic partnerships with Enterprise Ireland, SETU, Georgia Southern University, Tradebridge and the South East Offshore Wind Partnership to position the County and the region as leaders in energy security, coastal sustainability and supporting job creation opportunities. See Economic Section for further detail on this.

Coastal Planning Authority

WCC has new responsibilities as a Coastal Planning Authority (CPA) under the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021, including the assessment of proposed developments that are located wholly in the nearshore area or partly in the nearshore area and partly on land.

An Bord Pleanála is responsible for:

- Development that is exclusively in the Maritime Area,
- Developments that overlap the "maritime" and "nearshore" areas of one or more than one PA,
- Development partially in the outer maritime area and partially on land,
- Development wholly in the nearshore area of more than one coastal PA
- Local authority decisions in maritime area that are the subject of appeal,
- Development of a class prescribed in Schedule to the Act (Schedule 10 inserts new Schedule 8 into PDA).

The CPA also has a significant role in planning applications for developments in the maritime area which are submitted to An Bord Pleanala, in terms of preparing reports setting out the views of the CPA in relation to the proposed development, recommending a schedule of conditions as well as being responsible for post decision compliance with conditions imposed by ABP and enforcement. WCC will have regard to the objectives of the CDP when carrying out this role.

Land-Sea Connections

Objective ES16 facilitates onshore support infrastructure including landing locations for land-sea connections for appropriate offshore development.

The Greenlink Interconnector is currently under construction and will connect the electricity grids in Ireland and Wales. The subsea cable comes ashore at Baginbun Beach and the onshore underground cable (circa 22km) will connect into the existing 220kV substation, via a new HVDC converter station, at Great Island.

As part of the draft South Coast DMAPs, Great Island is also indicated as one of two locations along the south coast for grid connection for future offshore wind farms. Any future review of the CDP will require the integration of Renewable Energy targets and detailed objectives and locally devised approaches to manage the nearshore area (the sea area 5km or 3 nautical miles from shore) in accordance with the Revised NPF and any updated RSES.

Community Projects

Objective ES02 supports renewable energy proposals that bring about a direct socioeconomic benefit to the local community and encourages developers to work with local communities to identify how they can invest in/gain from significant renewable energy development.

WCC continues to ensure that appropriate community consultation is carried out through the development management process.

As part of the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) all renewable electricity generation projects must establish a Community Benefit Fund based on the megawatt hours of electricity generated by the project (currently €2 per MWh). The Fund is used to support sustainable community initiatives and to improve the wider economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being of the local community. All RESS and ORESS projects must register themselves and their corresponding Community Benefit Funds on the SEAI Community Benefit Fund National Register.¹³

Micro-renewables and Energy Efficiency

Objectives ES30 to ES34 promote micro-renewables and energy efficiency measures in new and existing developments. WCC continues to facilitate the development of a range of renewable energy technologies through the development management process and encourages the application of micro-renewables and energy efficiency measures in the design of all new and retrofitting of existing developments. Further information on energy efficiency measures in public buildings in contained in Chapter 2 Climate Action.

¹³ https://www.seai.ie/grants/community-grants/community-benefit-funds?gad_source=1



CHAPTER 20 Conclusion

This report provides commentary on the progress made in achieving the key objectives of the CDP during the first two years of its implementation and following extensive engagement with all Directorates of the Local Authority. The report demonstrates that overall, significant progress has been made in the implementation of the Development Plan thus far.

Chapter 2 outlines the various initiatives and measures taken in relation to Climate Action including measures to improve energy efficiency in social housing and public buildings, transitioning the Council fleet to Electric Vehicles and raising awareness and capacity building. In terms of spatial planning, it includes the integration of key land uses to reduce the need to travel, as well as implementing appropriate flood risk management strategies and promoting biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure in new developments. The WCC Climate Action Plan was adopted in February 2024. Its implementation includes buy in from all sections of the Council and it is a good example of cross departmental collaboration within the Local Authority.

Chapter 3 Core Strategy, together with the annual Core Strategy Monitoring Reports prepared for Years 1 and 2 of the Plan, shows that new residential development is generally taking place in accordance with the Core Strategy housing allocations to settlements and significant progress is being made in delivering compact growth. Annual monitoring of development activity commenced in 2023 as part of the annual Core Strategy requirements however it is very resource intensive in its current format. It is the intention of the Planning Authority to establish a more robust monitoring tracker system which would streamline this process going forward.

Chapters 4 and 18 detail the progress made in the delivery of social and affordable housing. WCC Housing Section have delivered over 50% of the Housing for All Targets to date and the proposals for the remainder of the plan period, if delivered, will result in WCC surpassing their target of 1,155 no. units. The Council will continue to work with all stakeholders and infrastructure providers to deliver housing units across the County and will actively seek a more co-ordinated government / stakeholder response to addressing the wide range of issues impacting on housing delivery, which remains a key focus for WCC.

Significant progress has been made in relation to the development of a strong economy as outlined in Chapters 6, 7 and 17, with particular respect to investment in enterprise, jobs growth and tourism. WCC have/are delivering property solutions in the four main towns and continue to maximise opportunities in the Sustainable Construction sector in particular, as well opportunities presented by the proposed SETU Campus in Wexford Town and in the Marine Innovation and Offshore Renewable Energy sectors. WCC will continue to work with all stakeholders to promote Wexford as a location of choice for economic development and support enterprise and job creation in appropriate locations.

WCC has initiated an ambitious programme of investments in the public realm, as detailed in Chapter 5, and will continue to seek funding opportunities to implement additional projects to support the appropriate regeneration and rejuvenation of towns and villages across the county to make them an attractive location for people to live, visit and operate a business.

Chapter 8 outlines the progress made on the delivery of key transport infrastructure including the N11/N25 Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour Scheme and Rosslare Europort Access Road which will enhance connectivity in the region, in particular to/from the Port. It also details the progress in delivering active travel infrastructure to reduce dependency on the private car and secure a shift towards sustainable modes of transport. WCC will continue to work with transport providers and seek funding to ensure the delivery of public transport, active travel modes and roads projects throughout the County.

Chapter 9 reports on the significant investment in water and wastewater infrastructure, waste management facilities and flood relief schemes, as well as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), Rainwater Management Plan (RMP) and Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) being prepared as part of the Wexford Town Local Area Plan (LAP). Chapter 10 outlines the progress on implementing environmental management objectives including those relating to air and water quality and Chapter 11 discusses the progress on landscape and green infrastructure objectives.

Chapter 12 outlines the progress made in securing objectives for Coastal Zone Management, including coastal protection works and monitoring of coastal erosion risk zones, as well as objectives relating to beaches, bathing waters, walking trails and the maritime economy. WCC will continue to work with DHLGH, DECC, MARA and other relevant stakeholders to implement the new Maritime Area Planning Act and the National Marine Planning Framework in relation to its new functions in the nearshore area.

In relation to Heritage and Conservation, Chapter 13 highlights a number of projects carried out utilising funds under the Local Biodiversity Action Fund, Community Monuments Fund and Built Heritage Investment Schemes. WCC intend to prepare a County Heritage Plan and a Local Biodiversity Action Plan in 2025 and will continue to engage with and support communities in implementing heritage and biodiversity projects as resources and funding allows. WCC will also continue to promote and facilitate heritage-led regeneration in towns and villages across the county.

Chapters 14 and 15 outline the progress made in the delivery of accessible and inclusive social and community facilities and the provision of outdoor recreation amenities throughout the county. WCC continue to invest in community infrastructure and to implement the actions contained in the Local Economic and Community Plan. WCC also continue to liaise with the Department of Education and Skills to ensure that the requisite school facilities are provided in a timely manner to meet the requirements of the existing and future population.

Chapter 16 details the progress on specific objectives relating to the Level 3a Settlements of Bunclody, Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane, Rosslare Strand and Castlebridge.

Finally, Chapter 19 reports on the progress made towards achieving the Renewable Energy target for the County to 2027 and discusses WCC's participation in support of offshore renewable energy plans including submissions made on the South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan (SC-DMAP) and the proposed Rosslare Harbour Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Hub which would create significant economic opportunities for the County, in addition to supporting climate action objectives. The Planning Department will utilise this review and issues and trends emerging to inform the next review of the County Development Plan which will commence in 2026.

SEA Monitoring Results

Appendix 2 reports on SEA Monitoring since the Plan came into effect. SEA Monitoring results to date do not show that significant environmental impacts have arisen as a result of implementing the Plan and no remedial action/variation is required at this time. SEA monitoring will continue for the duration of the Plan and will inform the baseline review of the CDP.

Appendices