

Wellbeing Workshop Feedback

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The workshop provided a brief history and context about where the work of developing wellbeing statements started and how it led to the development of a toolkit to support PPNs in doing this work.

The Co Wicklow PPN experience was shared informing the workshop attendees that Wicklow ran 11 workshops across five Municipal Districts as well as conducting five online consultations. More than one workshop was ran in each MD so as to ensure geographical coverage and social inclusion. Wicklow PPN also engaged with Wicklow Comhairle na Nog and Wicklow Dementia Support to include the voice of these groups.

The workshop highlighted that there was a double benefit in doing this work. The first benefit is in the process of facilitating the workshops to develop the vision statements. Bringing together as many community stakeholders as possible in the organising, facilitating and running of the workshops supports the development of respectful and trusting relationships that can be the catalyst for further community development. One of the Wicklow workshops resulted in local groups networking and collaborating to form a local community forum. One year later the group began to network with another local forum to collaborate on more regional work. The workshops also helped to raise the profile of the PPN and resulted in an increase of membership.

The second benefit of the work is having the vision statements. The workshop highlighted the usefulness of the statements in informing and directing the work of the PPN and its representatives. It also highlighted the versatility of the statements by showing how they influenced Wicklow submissions to the development of an integration strategy and to the Wicklow County Council Draft Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. Prior to the local elections, Co Wicklow PPN ran Meet the Candidate events in each of the Municipal Districts. Candidates were requested to become familiar with the vision statements for their MD and sign a promise to work towards realising the visions if they were successful. It was also pointed out that the statements will be of benefit in influencing submissions to future plans such as: the LECP (Local Economic & Community Plan), Local Area Plans, SICAP (Social Inclusion & Community Activation Plan) etc. Co Wicklow PPN also hope to use the statements to support the development of a Strategic Plan.

Workshop attendees rose concerns in relation to resourcing the work both financially and otherwise as well as concerns in relation to engaging with groups and encouraging them to attend the workshops. The following suggestions were in response:

- Time is the main resource needed for the work. Co Wicklow PPN prioritised the process and decided to put in the extra time to do two workshops in each MD to ensure that the data gathered represents a good cross section of Wicklow society.
- The Wellbeing Workshops could be ran in place of a usual PPN Municipal District Meeting rather than in addition to, thus saving time and resources.
- Engaging member groups to support the process e.g. using a community centre for the workshop venues and asking community centres and community forums to encourage their members to attend the workshops can pay dividends in community engagement as well as saving money.
- Using local vendors to provide refreshments. Community cafés, local Supervalus & Centras often provide sandwiches very reasonably for community work.

- The Wicklow experience highlighted the benefit of having refreshments at the workshop tables as chatting over the food was comfortable for communities and supported the flow of discussions.
- In Wicklow the local authority's planning sections supported the work by printing the large maps needed for the mapping exercise.

Co Wicklow PPN "What we heard" documents and Wellbeing Statements are available on their website: www.countywicklowppn.ie Contact Co Wicklow PPN Email: countywicklowppn@gmail.com
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