

LCDC Community Progress Report and Updates – September 2026

1. Community Integration Forum/LAIT update for LCDC – Noeleen Osborne

Community Integration Forum (CIFO):

Waterford Council's Ukrainian Team working with arrivals to the Designated Accommodation Centre (DAC) has now concluded and the building has been returned to owners. New pledge properties are now offered to the other DACs and the team will work with DAC staff to ensure occupancy of properties and management of the licenses going forward. The team continues to support those in pledged accommodation and are still seeking pledge properties (vacant and shared) and can be contacted at 058/22059 or offerahome@waterfordcouncil.ie

LAIT Update

The Local Authority Integration Team continue to work with the 7 IPAS centres for IPAs/ for BOTPs in Waterford in all types of accommodation- currently there are 7 state contracted accommodation centres. We also facilitate queries from other residents in Waterford who require integration support.

As of 27th August, there are 2,841 BOTPS in Waterford (increase of 23 on last month)

As of 26th August, there are 600 IPAs (138 children) in the 7 IPAS centres. There are 127 TwS.

The Local Authority Integration Team continues to support International Protection Applicants The Local Authority Integration Team carried out 62 clinic appointments in July with 237 attendees. There were 45 non clinic enquiries. Up to 28th August the Team carried out 41 clinic appointments with 188 attendees. There were 22 non clinic enquiries.

Topics re 1:1 Clinics:

Accommodation queries/ Relocations by IPAS/ Renting in Ireland/Options to move from IPAS accommodation/ Changes to BOTP accommodation/ Employment/English Language/Further Education/Volunteering/Summer Camps

Information Sessions:

Content created & presented by LAIT in various locations:

- Welcome to Waterford Presentation & Booklet – now available online <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/LAITWelcometoWaterfordBooklet.html>
- Changes to BOTP accommodation and self-declaration process delivered with translator to all residents of the 7 remaining commercial properties in Waterford in advance of portal closing date of 11th September. The team continue to support BOTPs in their application.

Ongoing Activities

- Engagement with residents of accommodation centres re supports and activities
- Swimming lessons commenced 09/07/2026, for women in Birchwood House (pool with option to extend classes to open water) and Atlantic View House for men, (open-water

swimming lessons to commence 31st August for 6 weeks, funded through Sports Partnership, organised by LAIT & TUSLA

- Machine Sewing Lessons commenced in Lismore – 5 week programme funded by Buíon, hosted by Foroige, organised by LAIT
- Collaboration with Regional LAITS re Women’s Collective Voices Exhibition – suitable dates being explored

Summer Camps – LAIT have partnered with Buíon & TUSLA to provide access to free summer camps for children (age 5 – 15) living in IPAS accommodation centres in Waterford City & County.

Summer Camps and access for newly arrived children continues throughout August. Figures will be provided in September report.

Collaboration Partners:

Buíon, Waterford Sports Partnership (WSP), TUSLA, HSE, Waterford Libraries, WWETB Adult Education Guidance

Planned Activities

- Engagement /consultations with residents of accommodation centres re supports and activities
- Art Therapy in Lismore to commence 04/09/2026 -organised by LAIT. Funded by Buíon, hosted by Foroige
- Sewing Lessons Ocean View Tramore – consultation stage – LAIT/Buíon & TUSLA
- Sewing Lessons ROC Clonea Strand – planning stage - LAIT/Buíon & TUSLA
- Library Outreach & organised Dungarvan Library Visit ROC Clonea Strand -LAIT, TUSLA & WCCC Library Services
- Collaboration with Regional LAITS re Women’s Collective Voices Exhibition – planning stages re Carlow Library, Wexford & Gorey Library & Kilkenny
- Swimming lessons for Portree & Viking House – exploration stage

IRPP Update

As of 2nd July all 92 refugees are resettled in 31 properties under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP). They are supported by Support Worker and Community Worker.

2. Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) – Ger Mulhall

Work is ongoing with Buíon Phort Láirge (formerly Waterford Area Partnership), who continue to implement SICAP on behalf of the Waterford LCDC. The budget allocation for SICAP for Waterford City and County (Lot 24-1) for 2026 is €1,497,267. The budget allocation for ‘New Arrivals’ for 2026 is €246,807.

The SICAP Mid-Year Review was completed and approved by the LCDC in July and KPI’s are on target to be achieved by year end:

	Actual	Target	%
--	--------	--------	---

KPI 1 (Community Groups)	62	72	86%
KPI 2 (Individuals)	817	949	86%
% of Supported Individuals who fall into the local priority target groups: - Disabled People / People with Disabilities - People living in disadvantaged communities - People living in households that are jobless or are in low-paid and/or precarious employment	76%	88%	-

3. Local Economic and Community Plan – Anita Maher

4. Community Grants Update:

Supporting Waterford Communities Fund 2026 – Ger Mulhall

Grants totalling €240,258 were approved by the elected members at the Plenary Meeting on 12th March 2026. Community groups are continuing to submit their receipts for funds received, ahead of the November deadline.

Local Enhancement Programme (LEP) Grants 2026 – Ger Mulhall

The Local Enhancement Programme (LEP) is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht and administered by the Waterford LCDC through Waterford City and County Council. In Waterford, the total fund for allocation in 2026 was €248,286.26.

The Ministers announced the successful projects under the Local Enhancement Programme 2026 in July. The Community Grants Team contacted all applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, and have commenced payments to the groups that have submitted their receipts.

5. Waterford Local Sports & Physical Activity Plan – Ger Mulhall

The Community Department, in collaboration with Waterford Sports Partnership (WSP), continues to progress the development of the Waterford Sports and Physical Activity Plan. The purpose of the plan is to increase participation in sport and physical activity across Waterford.

6. Reports from Sub-Committees:

(i) Skills / Training – Johnny Codd

The skills Enhancement Subgroup meeting was held on the 22nd July 2026. Below is a brief synopsis of the meeting content:

Health & Wellbeing: A regional Health and Wellbeing Cluster is being developed by Santegic, with potential links to Healthy Waterford and Sláintecare. Future funding may support regional clusters.

Lifelong Learning: Waterford's UNESCO City of Learning initiative is progressing, with strong cross-sector participation in the Lifelong Learning Festival. There is an opportunity to develop an **AI-supported map of lifelong learning opportunities and skills provision**.

Skills & Training Provision: The West Waterford Fab Lab is being reviewed to better align facilities and courses with industry needs. Skillnet programmes are also evolving, with **AI and sustainability** identified as key priorities.

Youth Employment: Young people aged 15–24 currently account for approximately **20% of BUION's caseload**, highlighting continued demand for youth training and employment supports.

New Arrivals & English Language: Demand for English-language classes remains high, with approximately **200 people participating in Fáilte Isteach through BUION**. Funding reductions and the relocation of classes from Tycor are concerns. English proficiency requirements may also affect access to apprenticeships.

Information & Collaboration: A library representative has joined the committee to improve communication and dissemination. A subgroup will develop an **infographic roadmap of courses and training providers**, making skills opportunities easier to navigate.

Regional Engagement: Breakfast briefings have taken place across Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Tipperary and Kilkenny. Members are also encouraged to contribute relevant resources and videos to the skills portal.

Skills Shortages: A request will be made to obtain more detailed information on company profiles and skills shortages in the Southeast. This evidence will help shape future education and training provision.

Offshore Wind: Offshore wind is emerging as a significant regional employment and skills opportunity. A West Waterford Chamber conference is planned, while WWETB is already offering Level 5 wind-energy micro-qualifications in collaboration with SETU.

Artificial Intelligence: AI is increasingly affecting recruitment, with more AI-generated job applications being seen. New AI courses are planned through SETU and WWETB, with substantial funding available. While AI is **not currently expected to cause wholesale job losses**, some disruption is anticipated, increasing the importance of interpersonal and human skills.

(ii) Health, Wellbeing & Sports – Eoin Morrissey

Activity across the Health and Wellbeing programme continues to progress positively, with a continued focus on community engagement, supporting local wellbeing initiatives, and planning for the next phase of Healthy Ireland-funded activity.

Following Waterford's successful WHO Healthy Cities and Counties Accreditation, work continues to build on this achievement through ongoing collaboration with community and statutory partners to advance local health and wellbeing priorities.

The Farmers Wellbeing Programme is commencing in September, providing targeted support to the farming community and promoting positive mental health, wellbeing, and social connection. The programme will provide an important opportunity to engage directly with farmers and respond to the specific wellbeing needs of rural communities.

The Community Wellbeing Visits continue throughout the county, supporting community groups and local organisations to identify health and wellbeing needs, connect with relevant supports, and strengthen local networks. These visits continue to provide valuable opportunities for engagement at community level and to promote the range of health and wellbeing supports available across Waterford.

Planning is also commencing for the implementation of Healthy Ireland funding in 2027, building on the learning and successes of the current programme. This work will include engagement with relevant partners and consideration of priority areas where future funding can have the greatest impact on health, inclusion and wellbeing within communities.

A further Health and Wellbeing Practitioners Forum will take place during September, bringing together practitioners and stakeholders to share information, strengthen collaboration, identify emerging issues, and support a coordinated approach to health and wellbeing across Waterford.

The Community Department, in collaboration with Waterford Sports Partnership (WSP), also continues to progress the development of the Waterford Sports and Physical Activity Plan, with the overall aim of increasing participation in sport and physical activity across the county. Work is also progressing on a feasibility study for the golf course and is suspected to finish by October.

(iii) Sláintecare Healthy Communities Update – Nicola Spendlove

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme continues to progress strongly across Waterford, with several major initiatives moving from development and planning into active delivery during September. The programme remains focused on addressing health inequalities through community-led, preventative interventions, delivered in partnership with voluntary, community and statutory stakeholders.

Men's Health and Community Engagement

Development of the Buíon Men's Health Programme has advanced significantly, with delivery partners finalising an innovative community engagement campaign in Lisduggan Shopping Centre. The initiative will utilise immersive public performance and non-traditional outreach approaches to engage men who may not routinely access health, wellbeing or community support services.

The objective is to create meaningful engagement opportunities with individuals who are often disconnected from formal service provision and to establish pathways into wider community, health and social supports. This approach represents a novel model of engagement within the Healthy Communities framework and seeks to remove barriers associated with traditional programme delivery.

Social Supermarket Development

Preparations for the Social Supermarket initiative have now reached an advanced stage, with autumn community engagement programmes ready for delivery.

The project will contribute to Positive Ageing Week through participation in the *Seasons of Change* programme, promoting an intergenerational food education initiative for grandparents and grandchildren. The programme aims to support healthy eating, improve food literacy, strengthen family connections and encourage positive engagement across generations.

Alongside addressing food poverty, the Social Supermarket will continue to develop as a platform for social inclusion, skills development and connection to wider supports and services.

Mincéirí Place Standard Programme

A significant milestone has been reached with the completion of the Mincéirí Place Standard Report. The report captures the perspectives and experiences of members of the Traveller community and provides an evidence base to inform future planning, advocacy and service development.

The findings will support ongoing efforts to improve health outcomes, social inclusion and community participation through locally informed and culturally appropriate interventions.

Trauma-Informed Practice Project

The Trauma-Informed Practice Project formally commences in September following positive engagement and groundwork undertaken during the summer period.

Strong collaboration has emerged between Learning and Development Officers and newly appointed Home School Community Liaison Coordinators (HSCLs), creating a solid foundation for programme implementation. The project aims to strengthen trauma-informed approaches across services and enhance the capacity of frontline staff working with children, young people and families.

Social Prescribing and Community Connections

The Healthy Communities Programme continues to expand its social prescribing offer through the introduction of *Chat and Chew*, a new social dining initiative for older adults who regularly eat alone.

Participants are referred through social prescribing pathways and provided with opportunities for social connection, community participation and access to additional supports. The initiative also creates a valuable referral and signposting route into the Social Supermarket and other community-based services, contributing to a more integrated model of preventative support.

Looking Ahead

The focus for the coming period will be on:

- Delivering and evaluating the men's health engagement activation in Lisduggan/Larchville.
- Launching autumn Social Supermarket programmes and intergenerational food initiatives.
- Progressing implementation of the Trauma-Informed Practice Project.
- Disseminating and responding to findings from the Mincéirí Place Standard Report.
- Expanding participation in Chat and Chew and strengthening referral pathways through Social Prescribing.
- Continuing to develop integrated, partnership-led responses to health inequalities across Waterford's Healthy Communities areas.

(iv) SICAP Sub-Committee – Ger Mulhall

The SICAP Sub-Committee did not meet in August.

A review of the Sub-Committees Terms of Reference and membership is currently underway.