



**Submission to An Garda Síochána Policing Plan 2020**

**By**

**County Wicklow Public Participation Network**

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## Introducing County Wicklow Public Participation Network

County Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN) was established in July 2014 under the directive of the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government and in accordance with legislation in the Local Government Reform Act 2014 (Section 46). Public Participation Networks were established to be an independent structure that would become the main link through which local authorities connect with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in a process to facilitate communities to articulate a diverse range of views and interests within the local government system.

Co Wicklow PPN has 290 diverse member groups, some of these groups are networks in their own right. PPN representatives serve as a voice for the community on structures including: the Local Community Development Committee; all of the Wicklow County Council Strategic Policy Committees; Wicklow County Childcare Committee; Co Wicklow Children & Young People's Services Committee; Co Wicklow Local Sports Partnership; Wicklow County Tourism Board; Co Wicklow Volunteer Centre, County Wicklow Partnership, and Co Wicklow Joint Policing Committee. PPN Representatives strive to ensure that the needs of the community sector are prioritised within local policy processes.

### Consultation with Communities

Co Wicklow PPN invited community groups and individuals to meetings entitled "Let's Talk About Policing, Safety & Security". These meetings took place on 14<sup>th</sup> October in Kilcoole Community Centre and on 15<sup>th</sup> October in Baltinglass Parish Centre. Co Wicklow PPN is grateful to Inspector Eoin Phibbs for his presentation at these meetings and his engagement with the participants. Following the presentation, participants were asked to consider two themes: Community Policing and Protecting People and invited to highlight issues along with possible solutions and benefits under these themes.



In 2018, Co Wicklow PPN consulted community groups across the 5 Municipal Districts of Co Wicklow, asking them "What is your vision for community wellbeing for this and future generations"? We asked them to consider this question under the following headings:

- Environment & Sustainability
- Health (physical & mental)
- Work, Economy, & Resources
- Social & Community Development
- Participation, Democracy & Good Governance
- Values, Culture & Meaning



The responses we received were documented and are available to download from our website: [www.countywicklowppn.ie](http://www.countywicklowppn.ie) . We ran 11 workshops, 5 online consultations and accepted 2 submissions in total. The consultations facilitated the development of an overarching vision for each Municipal District along with community visions and high-level goals under each heading. The county vision was developed in the same way.

This submission is based on both consultations

## **Our Vision for Community Wellbeing and the County Policing Plan**

As the Vision for Community Wellbeing relates to the Policing Plan the overwhelming vision of communities throughout the Municipal Districts is that:

***“the County be a place where all citizens feel safe and secure in their community”.***

The presence of more garda and a commitment to community policing were cited as factors that would contribute to a real sense of safety for people. The topic of safety/security came up under a number of the headings used in the development of our Vision for Community Wellbeing:

### Environment & Sustainability :

- All citizens are socially connected within a safe and secure community. (Greystones MD)

### Social & Community Development

- The needs, safety and security of all citizens, particularly the more marginalized are met (Arklow MD)
- Bray is a safe, inclusive nurturing community that promotes the potential of all its citizens.

### Values, Culture & Meaning

- All citizens feel safe and secure in their community (Greystones MD).

### Work, Economy& Resource

- Bray MD is a vibrant safe and environmentally sensitive place for business and people to thrive.

### Participation, Democracy & Good Governance

Across the Municipal Districts groups sought to have a county where:

- local governance structures and procedures allow all citizens to contribute to the development of a county that responds to their needs,
- the voice of the community is valued and supported in local decision making and
- local government and community services are easily accessible and engage meaningfully with the people.

## Community Policing and Protecting People

Issues	Solutions	Benefits
<p>Lack of Garda Presence in smaller local areas and communities. Relevant to all Districts</p> <p>Gardai on the Beat – not visible</p> <p>Garda station opening hours - will extra frontline Gardai result in longer opening hours</p>	<p>Extra Garda need to be deployed in West Wicklow at a local level in particular their presence to be seen and that they are trained to deal with all community situations</p> <p>More communication between Community and Gardai</p> <p>Motorbike Gardai to increase presence</p> <p>More Garda visibility in all communities</p>	<p>Sense of security.</p> <p>A stronger liaison with local Garda</p> <p>Better relationship with Gardai – community feels safer</p> <p>Deterrent value of greater visibility</p>
<p>Anti-Social Behaviour in local parks and community recreation areas</p> <p>Need action on Anti-Social Behaviour</p> <p>Garda need to engage directly with schools and teenagers causing trouble Catering for Youth at Risk of problem behaviour</p> <p>Boredom – nothing for young people to do. No facilities within the community to engage young people. No pride in their area and community</p>	<p>Parks to be properly secured i.e. Barriers, Gates to be locked at a certain time. Lighting and Security Cameras</p> <p>Gardai to call to schools to educate teens on drugs and alcohol abuse also involve ex-addicts to get involved in this education piece.</p> <p>Co-ordinated approach to deal with Anti-Social behaviour – ongoing Task Force involving Council, Gardai, Community and Youth Services</p> <p>Educational programme involves parents.</p> <p>Securing/Limiting access to the Public Park CCTV Cameras in the Parks/Problem areas</p>	<p>Improve the quality of life of local residents Reduce local crime</p> <p>More long-term/ongoing solutions to problem behaviour</p> <p>Added benefits to residents, near town park and near pubs</p>

<p>Large gatherings of teenagers in public places late in the evening/night with no adult supervision</p>	<p>More Garda presence and patrols on foot</p> <p>Education in Schools</p> <p>Community reporting of anti-social behaviour</p> <p>Community CCTV</p> <p>Neighbourhood watch patrols</p> <p>Impose a curfew on large teenage gatherings</p>	
<p>Visible or obvious drug dealing</p> <p>Drugs/drug dealing – huge problem in town, pubs</p>	<p>Police presence</p> <p>Plain clothes (undercover)</p> <p>Designated drugs Gardai</p> <p>Raid pubs at weekends</p> <p>Raid homes of known drug dealers</p> <p>Education in Schools</p>	<p>Less crime</p>
<p>Parking – issue in Baltinglass town and wider West Wicklow area. Not enough Garda to implement the laws</p> <p>Illegal parking and littering</p>	<p>Enforcement of by-laws.</p> <p>Proper marking of parking spaces</p> <p>Visual input by the Garda</p>	<p>Safety of Drivers and Pedestrians.</p>

	Allow CEW (Community Employment Workers) to issue tickets/fines	
<p>Issues of safety on N81: Hollywood cross Baltinglass</p> <p>Road Safety</p>	<p><u>Hollywood Cross</u> Investigate speed limit and implement it. Speed limit to be reduced to 80 from 100 at Hollywood crossroads Install 2 plinths for buses to stop at Cross <u>Baltinglass</u> Traffic lights/roundabout to be installed to relieve the traffic congestion in Baltinglass Query application of bylaws re parking and road behaviour in town Wider bridge in town</p> <p>Pedestrian crossing in Baltinglass town</p> <p>Pedestrian footbridge in Baltinglass</p>	<p>Reduction in Collisions and injuries/death.</p> <p>Reduce carbon imprint</p> <p>Facilitate students and workers with better access to public transport</p> <p>Reduced risk of injury</p>
<p>List of vulnerable people – more information needed on how to register, what is criteria?</p> <p>Vulnerable People's Register needs to be updated</p>	<p>This should be taken on by one person in new hub arrangement, also PPN list of community groups should be utilised</p>	
<p>Need to consult with Community Action Leaders about changes to Districts</p>	<p>Twice-yearly meeting with Community Action Leaders at District Level.</p>	

Target an increase level of responding to crime		
<p>Improve the Focus of information on Text Alert</p> <p>Text Alerts - should be expanded - some areas have had it cut back.</p>	<p>Targets for minimum quantity of Text messages More Gardai involved in sending messages</p> <p>Should look at newer technology such as WhatsApp (as no cost to send messages), also should be nationwide funding of text alerts, rather than on a community by community basis</p>	Greater feeling of safety
<p>Non reporting of crime/criminal behaviour</p> <p>Criminal intelligence – real fear of consequences of passing information to gardai</p> <p>Encouraging people to report crime, fear and feeling there is no point were identified as reasons why people don't</p> <p>Drugs offences are under reported</p>	<p>Communities feeling safe enough to facilitate more Community Reporting</p> <p>Higher visibility - important to reassure community, especially older people</p>	Trusting relationships between community & Gardaí
Gardai not know to local community	<p>Local Garda Facebook Page introducing Gardai More engagement with Community</p> <p>Calling into the new local community café's in Kiltegan Donard, Rathdangan and will be one in Stratford</p>	More feedback from locals in social settings

Muggings (2 recently)	More CCTV – application for Cameras through Community Group  Community Feedback	Safer Community
Bogus Callers: Both Door to Door, Phone and Cyber crime	Report suspicious vehicles to Gardai  Establish more community Alert Groups  Provide targeted support to vulnerable older people.  Work with the Community and other agencies	
Control of Stray animals within the Town limits and on the Hills, highways and Walking trails.  Only one Warden in Wicklow	One Warden for each Municipal District  Garda to respond quicker to instances relating to sheep kills etc.	People to take responsibility for their actions
Lack of quick response to Burglaries, Robberies and assault due to the lack of resources  Burglaries - Thefts from Community Buildings e.g. oil  Lack of awareness of local crime “spates” so people could take more precautions	Increase the Garda and resources  Neighbourhood watch  Text alerts  CCTV  Investigation & detection & crime prevention – communication to communities	Quick response which is reassuring to the public.  Reduction in crime at local level.



<p>Burglaries from cars at tourist venues particularly against foreign tourists and, and in remote locations further away from garda stations</p> <p>Crime in uplands – coming from Dublin – via Sally Gap etc.</p>	<p>Warning signs</p> <p>Education for communities</p> <p>More “tourist/community gardai” with a visible presence</p> <p>Gardai stationed in local communities, living within the community</p>	
<p>Lack of education in our schools and communities regarding drug awareness, road safety and civil and moral responsibility</p>	<p>Education by the local Garda through local engagement in schools and through community groups</p>	<p>To make a happier and secure community</p>
<p>Lack of awareness of what the Garda role is within the community and of the solutions they have to offer</p>	<p>Community Liaison to inform all of their resources</p>	<p>Confidence in the Gardai as a whole.</p>
<p>High concentration of armed/specialist gardai in “hot spots” in Dublin, may be pushing some of the activities associated with drug trade &amp; criminal gangs in to surrounding counties, particularly Wicklow</p> <p>Proximity to Dublin &amp; extensive coastline</p>	<p>Controlled drugs and organised crime</p> <p>CCTV in towns</p> <p>CCTV in vulnerable areas</p>	<p>Better crime detection</p> <p>Community safety</p>
<p>Lack of opportunities to engage with Gardai</p>	<p>Provide more representation on JPC from groups with a vested interest in crime prevention eg East</p>	<p>Broader community representation and better communication</p>

	Coast Regional Drugs Task Force , Wicklow Uplands Council	
Insufficient lighting in Arklow Town – particularly at the lower end of the town	Work with WCC and elected reps to increase lighting	
Dog fouling, urination and spitting in public	More bins for dog fouling More rubbish bins Enforcement of laws/ impose fines	

**Connecting the Local to the Global – The Sustainable Development Goals**



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES  
 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Co Wicklow PPN hopes that this submission is useful and that the issues raised and the possible solutions are considered in the new policing plan. A response to this submission can be Emailed to: [countywicklowppn@gmail.com](mailto:countywicklowppn@gmail.com) or posted to Co Wicklow PPN c/o CEART, Crinion Park, Wicklow Town.

Co Wicklow PPN looks forward to working with the Gardaí through our representatives on the Co Wicklow Joint Policing Committee.

## The Sustainable Development Goals

The Global Goals, also known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are a **universal plan of action for people and planet** to be achieved by the year 2030. These 17 goals aim to end poverty, combat climate change and ensure that we leave peaceful, just and equal societies for future generations.



These goals are **universal** in nature, applying to developed and developing countries alike, and place sustainable development at their core.