WEST KERRY COMMUNITY
SMART RURAL
POBAL CORCA DHUIBHNE

SMART VILLAGE STRATEGY OF DINGLE (IRELAND)

JUNE 2020

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Foreword: Smart Rural Dingle / Daingean Uí Chúis

Dingle / Daingean Uí Chúis is the main coastal settlement on the Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne Peninsula, one of Europe's most westerly peninsulas. Our peninsula has a population of 12,500, of which 3,500 live in Dingle village.

Our peninsula's stunning landscapes, calendar of festivals, strong cultural heritage and distinctive identity, combined with our internationally renowned reputation as a place of welcome and hospitality have been drawing visitors to the area for generations. Tourism is thus the mainstay of our local economy, with agriculture and the marine also playing important roles in our area's economic, social and cultural lives. Most of our peninsula is also a designated Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking area). Dingle / Daingean Uí Chúis is the main service centre for our peninsula's many rural communities, all of which have their own local identities and dynamics.

The Dingle Peninsula has long grappled with the effects of peripherality, isolation and the out-migration of our young people. Challenges persist, but communities across our peninsula are at the forefront of innovation. Social capital is strong, and our citizens are effectively combining local knowledge and skills with technical know-how and creative technologies. We are fostering new economic opportunities, and are working to make our peninsula energy independent and resilient.

Led by our Local Development Company - North East and West Kerry Development (NEWKD), communities on our peninsula have pursued a strong evidence-based approach to *Smart Villages*, and emphasise inter-community collaboration and strong local governance. This proposal encompasses bottom-up and top-down approaches, and it reflects the principles and methods associated with community-led local development (CLLD) and smart villages. The proposal is driven from the bottom-up; the needs, ideas and proposals were identified by a network of civil society organisations (namely the Local Area Advisory Council) and by the many participants who attended a series of fifteen consultation meetings that took place across the Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne Peninsula. These community representatives had undertaken consultations locally in their own neighbourhoods, and the LAAC and community meetings provided a platform to enable them to articulate community needs and to put forward the proposals that are presented here. Several other laudable proposals emerged from the various consultations, but these are currently beyond the scope of a Smart Villages' project; some require further elaboration, while others will require further engagements with policy-makers and statutory bodies. The proposals that are presented here are not a wish-list of project proposals, but are strongly underpinned by robust and objective data. The relevant data were collated, analysed and disseminated by Dr Breandán Ó Caoimh – a human geographer and social scientist – a senior research associate of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development. His research provided a statistical profile of all communities on the Peninsula, and along with NEWKD directors and staff, Breandán

co-facilitated a process whereby community leaders / representatives parsed the data for their communities and reconciled the statistics with local anecdotes. This mix of qualitative and quantitative data and stakeholder engagement served to enable a distillation of the main priorities and most achievable deliverables across the entire Peninsula.

In addition to reflecting bottom-up analysis and stakeholder engagement, the proposals presented here relate to the delivery of public policy in several realms. The EU vision *Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030* represents an operationalisation of the United Nations (UN) sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and it outlines strategic approaches at all tiers from the global to civil society. Civil society, local, regional and national authorities have a demonstrable capacity and responsibility to deliver all SDGs. Our proposals in respect of housing, care of older persons and the embrace of ICT for community and environmental gain contribute to the attainment of the SDGs. They also contribute to the delivery of national policy. Indeed, the aforementioned EU policy document references Rebuilding Ireland (page 100) as an initiative that is promoting greater access to social housing and is tackling homelessness and social exclusion, particularly among vulnerable cohorts and young people. Ireland's National Development Plan (NDP) (Ireland 2040) dovetails with Rebuilding Ireland. The NDP objectives in respect of the green economy, reducing Ireland's carbon footprint and promoting the development of rural communities – particularly small towns and villages. The NDP specifically references the types of projects presented in this proposal. It states, for example, "In providing a more seamless and appropriate continuum of housing choices with appropriate supports for older people and a built environment that is attractive, accessible and safe, older people will be supported and motivated to enjoy more active, healthy and connected lives and to age confidently and comfortably in their community" (page 86). Our proposals in respect of housing options for older people reflect national policy, and bring add value by way of our embrace and application of digital technologies – to include smart house design and e-health. In addition to reflecting and giving effect to endogenous and exogenous visions and priorities, this set of proposals is influenced by peer-reviewed international / academic research, some of which is reference (albeit in passing) in this document. We take cognisance of academics' recommendations, and rather than seeking to impose digital solutions (as advised by Philip and Williams, 2019 [1]), we integrate smart technologies and community development, so that they are mutually re-enforcing.

The strategy was developed in the framework of the 'Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21st century' project supported by the European Commission and coordinated by E40 Group.

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[1] Philip, L. and Williams, F. (2019) 'Healthy ageing in smart villages? Observations from the field. *European Countryside*, 11(4): 616-633.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1   Local governance in Ireland

Local government in Ireland operates at the county tier. Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne belongs to **County Kerry**, which has a population of almost 148,000. Since the second last round of local government elections (in 2014), the members of **Kerry County Council** have been elected through **sub-county municipal districts,** of which there are five in County Kerry.

Dingle belongs to the Castleisland and Corca Dhuibhne Municipal District, which has seven councillors, representing a population of approximately 30,000. Three of the councillors are from the Dingle area, and all participated in the planning process. In Ireland, local government is responsible for infrastructure, including roads, lighting, and footpaths, and it delivers a range of services including libraries, waste management, and environmental protection. There are thirty-one local authorities in Ireland, and their functions complement those of the local development sector – to which NEWKD belongs. In some parts of Ireland (mainly in the east), local government boundaries correspond with those of the local development sector. However, as Kerry is a large county (the fifth-largest in Ireland) and as it has a very variable topography, local development operates at a sub-county scale. There are three local development companies in Kerry namely North East and West Kerry Development, South Kerry Development Partnership and IRD Duhallow (which also has part of its catchment area in County Cork). Local development and local government in Kerry have always engaged collaboratively with one another, and have pursued several collaborative initiatives, including in areas such as tourism product development, social inclusion, integration of newcomers, village renewal and place-based marketing. While local development companies are autonomous entities, they are obliged, by statute, to have local authority (county council) representation on their Boards of Directors. Kerry County Council will be an important strategic partner in the delivery of the strategic actions presented in this proposal, and the Council has conveyed its support for them.

[North East and West Kerry Development](#) (NEWKD) NEWKD is a local development company based in North, East & West Kerry. It is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors, with representatives from civil society, local government, statutory bodies and the social partners (farmers, trade unions and business). Thus, this structure is based on a partnership mode of governance – with stakeholders working collaboratively to deliver a range of local development objectives. NEWKD is one of thirty-five local development companies that implements LEADER in Ireland. It is affiliated to, and an active member of the [Irish Local Development Network](#) (ILDN). In line with the LEADER specificities (specific features), NEWKD pursues an area-based approach, and delivers a range of complementary programmes in an integrated manner. These include LEADER, SICAP, Community Services Programmes, employment activation programmes, Rural Social Scheme, Moving On (employment progression), Local Employment Service/Jobs Clubs and more. NEWKD works in the areas of community activation, social inclusion, enterprise and employment, and pursues a community development ethos. We empower local communities

through local structures, which direct local needs to our Board of Management. As a development company, NEWKD is a dynamic organisation, with a commitment to innovation and to leveraging and brokering resources on behalf of communities and entrepreneurs.

In order to complement participative / direct democracy at the local level, **NEWKD engages with Kerry County Council,** among other statutory and non-statutory organisations. The Council has executive and elected member representation on the NEWKD Board of Directors. In addition, NEWKD is a member of Kerry County Council's Local Community Development Committee (*LCDC*), which oversees all community and local development initiatives (including LEADER) in County Kerry.

Given the large scale of Ireland's local authorities (relative to other OECD countries), **civil society organisations have assumed much of the mantle of village governance.** Thus, civil society organisations provide local services (e.g., childcare, school governance, tidy towns / infrastructure, social services, environmental protection etc.) in ways that are similar to those undertaken by municipalities / communes in other EU member states. NEWKD is committed to working with all civil society organisations and to harnessing their expertise and social capital in driving this set of strategies. Thus, participative democracy will be the hallmark of our governance systems.

1.2   What is a 'village' in Ireland?

In line with the project terminology, the term smart 'village' is used in this document. The nomenclature 'village' embraces a wide spectrum of settlements outside of Europe's cities and urban regions. Official definitions and citizen perceptions of what constitutes a town, village and rural area vary depending on countries' population densities, settlement patterns and landscapes, among other variables. Linguistic factors also come into play, and in some Romance languages the words for village, people and community are monikers. In the Irish language, the term for village is 'sráidbhaile', which literally translates as a 'street-town'. Smaller clustered and dispersed settlements are have various terms in Irish e.g., Clochán or Baile Fearainn.

In Ireland, which has a population density of 72 persons/km^2, and a primate city (Dublin), the official definition of a town is 'a settlement with a population of over 1,500'. There is no population threshold at which a settlement achieves village status or classification. In more densely populated countries, settlements with 1,500 people are classified as villages. In practice, In Ireland, as is the case in many other European geographies, what constitutes a village or a town can be determined by local traditions and perceptions. Local factors also determine the geographical reach of villages. In some parts of Europe, they are densely clustered, while in others, they are more dispersed. Some villages are perched on hilltops and are surrounded by vast open spaces, while others form necklaces along coastlines and hillsides. Thus, variables of demography, history, landscape, economy, tradition and culture determine what constitutes a village and how village dynamics operate.

Dingle / Daingean Uí Chúis is a rural, coastal settlement in the southwest of Ireland, with a population of 3469[2]. This population level would lead most Europeans to classify Dingle as a village. Locally, however, most people perceive Dingle to be a town. Both perceptions are valid and correct.

Dingle's features and dynamics are strongly shaped by interactions with the surrounding communities. The town/village shares its name with the Dingle Peninsula (Leathinis Chorca Dhuibhne) – which extends 40km from Ireland's west coast into the Atlantic Ocean. Recognising the interactions, relations and dependencies between the communities on the Peninsula, the strategic actions presented here apply, not just to Dingle Town (village) as a singular settlement, but, to the entire set of communities on the Peninsula. Thus, while the name 'Dingle' is used in this document, a holistic – peninsula-wide embrace is applied. It should also be noted that the settlement's name is Daingean Uí Chúis / Dingle, although the anglicised version is commonly used.

1.3   What smart is for Dingle

The Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne Peninsula lends itself well to the application of the principles and practices of smart villages. There is a strong commitment to sustainable development trajectories and the promotion of innovation. In many respects, Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne is a microcosm of the issues – potential and challenges – found in Atlantic coastal communities, and local stakeholders are strongly committed to sharing their experiences with other villages, thus promoting multi-stakeholder information sharing and knowledge transfers. Indeed, Dingle pursued an evidence-based and inclusive approach to the formulation of this strategy, and all stakeholders are fully committed to partnership working and the fusion of bottom-up and top-down knowledge, expertise, perspectives and structures.

NEWKD is the Local Development Company (LDC) that implements a range of projects in Dingle – the village and the peninsula on which it is situated. Thus, geographically, the LDC operates across a functional area. In terms of development praxis, NEWKD has several decades of experience in community-led local development. The LDC administers LEADER and a suite of complementary social inclusion and community development programmes – in a fully integrated manner. The LDC's activities are overseen by a voluntary board of directors, comprising representatives from civil society, the social partners, NGOs and statutory bodies. Decision-making is informed from the bottom-up, and NEWKD has strong bottom-up participatory and consultative structures, including a dedicated one for the Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne Peninsula. This Local Area Advisory Council (LAAC) identified the need for, and merits of, a smart village approach

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[2] This figure is derived from the most recent Census of Population (2016), and it is based on two local statistical units. The town has a core population of 2,050.

in Dingle. This was conveyed, through NEWKD's partnership governance structures to the relevant stakeholders, all of whom have fully rowed in behind this proposal.

The mechanisms through which this proposal were devised through which it will be delivered, monitored and reviewed reflect the LEADER specific features (specificities) as follows:

LEADER Specificity	Application in Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne Smart Village(s)
The territorial approach	Corca Dhuibhne's geographical delineation is determined by physical, cultural and socio-economic factors, rather than by administrative or bureaucratic divisions. The constituent / participating communities constitute a natural area of development, with strong bonding and cultural capital. The geography is recognised internally and externally as a cohesive territorial unit.
The bottom-up approach	NEWKD invested heavily in promoting community-led local development (CLLD) to formulate this proposal. Extensive community-level consultations took place over a six-month period, during which there were public meetings, engagements with civil society organisations, widespread awareness-raising actions, group and citizen surveys and representations to statutory bodies. Community organisations were directly empowered in the process, and civil society will have a pivotal role in leading and directing the project over the coming years. This bottom-up approach is made possible by NEWKD's governance structure, in which civil society is the lead actor and main protagonist, and in which partnership principles apply.
Horizontal Partnership	NEWKD's governance structure and its interfaces with other organisations enable information-sharing, joint project development and inter-agency collaborations. Through its participation in platforms and networks such as the Kerry Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), Irish Local Development Network (ILDN) and other structures, NEWKD has channels through which it can articulate, represent and pursue issues that emerge from the bottom-up, and collaborate with stakeholders in ensuring collective responses to local needs.

Innovation	All the actions presented here are new to Corca Dhuibhne. Moreover, the way in which they are to be delivered is also new. In order to ensure fresh approaches that are bespoke and which take due cognisance of local needs and potential, NEWKD engaged the external expertise including from MaREI - the Centre for Marine and Renewable Energy and the National Rural Network (NRN). Policy briefings prepared by the Whitaker Institute (Conway, 2016; 2017; 2018 and 2019) provide evidence and pointers in respect of supportive interventions for, and empowerment of, older persons in rural communities. NEWKD also enabled and funded the completion of a Health Check for Dingle (Town) 2019/2020 and an evidence based socio-economic profiling of the locality 2019/2010. This expertise and the primary research have served to strengthen the evidence on which this proposal is based, and from which baseline and review indicators can be devised.
Integration and Multi-Sectorality	Each of the strategic-action strands presented here is complementary and mutually reinforcing; for example, the development of a retirement village dovetails with the construction of starter family homes – both require a cooperative model of housing provision, which is, in many respects an innovation. Both also imply high levels of user and stakeholder engagement, which in turn will build citizens' decision-making and governance capacity. These projects provide opportunities to showcase, promote and mainstream green technologies – thus propelling wider attitudinal and behavioural changes. The same observation may be made in respect of the development of a community centre with enhanced social and family services. These actions and the complementarities between them are elaborated in Part III (Intervention Logic). Moreover, the actions in Dingle Smart Village are informed by sustainable development principles, and they embrace strategic actions to promote local economic diversification, social cohesion and environmental conservation.
Networking and Inter-territorial Cooperation	Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne is a cohesive and distinctive territory; it is small enough to enable effective local action, and is large enough

	to generate the critical mass that is required to sustain CLLD. The territory cooperates with, and is linked to, other parts of the area covered by NEWKD. Together with Local Area Advisory Committees (LAACs) from North and East Kerry, civil society networks and collaborates with its equivalents from elsewhere in the county, and jointly manages and oversees a suite of complementary rural and local development programmes and initiatives. NEWKD enables more extensive networking and cooperation through county and regional level platforms. In parallel, civil society organisations participate in several other networks and collaborations, including Transition Kerry and the Public Participation Network.
Devolved Financial Management	In line with the LEADER model, Dingle Smart Village will operate on the basis of a multi-annual global grant. The fund and the project will be overseen by a partnership, and will report directly and systematically to the NEWKD Board of Directors. LEADER rules with respect of procurement and project management will apply.

The Irish approach to LEADER (1991-2014) was widely lauded for its application of the LEADER specificities. LEADER in Ireland strongly embraced the bottom-up approach, and local development companies were driven by civil society organisations – working in partnership with the productive sector and statutory bodies. Ireland's local development companies did not pursue a programmatic approach to LEADER, as occurred in some other member states. Instead, they **combined LEADER with a suite of other community and local development initiatives**, so that communities and entrepreneurs could access an integrated toolkit – thus increasing flexibility and the capacity to respond effectively to local needs and potential. The Irish model was noted in a number of independent studies e.g., RuDi evaluation and Douglas, 2019. Since the enactment of local government legislation in 2014, the application of the LEADER specificities in Ireland has waned (Brinklow and Gibson 2017; O'Keeffe, 2018), but current policy indications suggest that progress is being made in reinstating them. OECD Rural Policy 3.0 argues for an 'integrated package of policies', "to mobilise assets and empower communities in order to enhance the social, economic and environmental well-being of rural areas. Cognisant of the growing body of evidence – in Ireland and across the rest of the EU – in favour of CLLD, the Irish Local Development Network (ILDN) has been working with decision makers to ensure that the LEADER specificities are more fully reflected, supported and applied in LEADER post 2020. Embedding smart villages within LEADER and pursuing the ESI multi fund approach and the

structural changes proposed in the [Venhorst Declaration](#) (2017) will enhance the LEADER / CLLD capacity to support rural communities, promote connectivity and drive innovation.

The LEADER approach, particularly in Ireland, **has been associated with the promotion of social innovation,** and successive studies[3] have pointed to the importance of a renewed emphasis on the regional and territorial dimension of LEADER in tandem with ensuring that implementing bodies have greater flexibility and administrative autonomy. A [2019 seminar on Smart Villages](#), convened by Ireland's National Rural Network (NRN) noted that smart villages are about local people taking stock of local assets and responding to issues within their community e.g. declining population. Smart villages are not just about connectivity but are also about the skills base and what's already there. Any village can be Smart and similar to LEADER, there is no one-size-fits-all model.

In addition to reflecting civil society's vision and outlook and responding to locally identified needs, this proposal is informed by objective research and robust data. In the **final quarter of 2019 and in early 2020,** civil society organisations, members of the business community, private citizens and some statutory bodies participated in an **intensive and extensive profiling of the locality.** This involved mapping demographic and socio-economic features and monitoring changes over time. The maps and associated statistics were presented in public fora – [at 15 community meetings](#), and they served to inform structured multi-stakeholder roundtable discussions. The reports/discussions from these meetings were uploaded onto the NEWKD website, in a further attempt to ensure awareness and inclusivity. These crystallised NEWKD's vision and thinking around smart villages, and they inform much of our content, focus and direction, as outlined here.

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[3] Dax, T.; Strahl, W.; Kirwan, J. and Maye, D. (2013) 'The Leader programme 2007–2013: Enabling or disabling social innovation and neo-endogenous development? Insights from Austria and Ireland'. European Urban and Regional Studies 23(1): 56–68.
Katonáné Kovács J.; Varga E. And Nemes G. (2016). 'Understanding the process of social innovation in rural regions: some Hungarian case studies'. Studies in Agricultural Economics, 118:22-29.
Westlund, H. and Larrson, J.P. (2016) Handbook of Social Capital and Regional Development. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

II. CONTEXT

2.1   Context of the smart village strategy development

North East and West Kerry Development (NEWKD) has elaborated this strategy in collaboration with local civil society, statutory bodies and relevant organisations. The catchment territory for this initiative is the Corca Dhuibhne / Dingle Peninsula.

2.2   Existing strategies & initiatives

2.2.1   Links to existing local strategies

Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne is well positioned to draw on an extensive range of strategic, policy and analytical documents that describe its characteristics. These include documents provided by statutory, non-statutory and collaborative bodies.

This strategy dovetails with NEWKD's LEADER and Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programmes (*SICAP*), among the other area-based initiatives it promotes. The current LEADER programme runs up to 2021, and will be followed by further multi-annual LEADER programme, which should run to 2026. The current SICAP runs 2018 – 2021, and indications from Pobal (statutory oversight body) are that there will be a follow-up three year programme. LEADER in the Dingle area is supporting micro-enterprise development, the upgrading of community amenities, training and capacity-building for entrepreneurs and community leaders, feasibility studies and environmental projects. LEADER investments are laying the foundations for out smart village proposals, and the next LEADER programme may (subject to EU and government regulations) provide a source of (match) funding for complementary projects. SICAP will continue to be important in building up the capacity of local stakeholders to participate in developments and to input into the management, evaluation and review of its delivery over the coming years. SICAP will be particularly important in resourcing and enabling increased youth participation in project decision-making and in local development. It will also contribute to poverty-proofing and advancing social inclusion.

2.2.2   Links to higher level (local, regional, national, European) strategies

Kerry County Council, which is the statutory planning authority for the area, has put in place a county development plan (CDP) and a local area plan (LAP). The current LAP seeks to facilitate commercial and residential development in designated / zoned locations. It is due for renewal in 2020, and community consultations, undertaken by NEWKD, have already fed into the planning process, among other contributions. This is relevant to the rollout of the strategic objectives presented in this proposal, as lands that are to be used for housing need to be designated as such in the CDP and LAP. This process is currently underway in Kerry County Council, and the new LAP is due for publication before the end of 2020. In addition to having these formal plans relating to

land use and infrastructure, Kerry County Council, among bodies – including local development companies – contributes to the delivery of a Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). It was formulated by a multi-stakeholder coalition – knowns as a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), which operates under the aegis of the local authority, but which brings together the local development companies, civil society bodies, economic interests, trade unions, cultural organisations, social service providers and statutory bodies – thus reflecting aspects of representative and participative democracy. While the CDP and LAP are on a statutory footing, the LECP is underpinned by the commitments of the LCDC members.

Our proposals link with the aim and objectives of the Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021. This broadly based strategy outlines how civil society, local development actors and statutory bodies can collectively work towards promoting sustainable livelihoods. It incorporates and applies the United Nations sustainable development agenda and the OECD principles in respect of area-based development. The current and successor LECPs provide a supportive framework through which smart village stakeholders can engage with county and regional level agencies in driving their agenda.

The Dingle Smart Village vision links with the Southern Regional Assembly's Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy (RSES) in respect of promoting place-based opportunities and harnessing cultural resources and social capital. The RSES makes specific mention of peninsular and island communities in County Kerry in respect of cultural resources. The RSES refers specifically to Dingle in its analyses of the importance of innovation and creativity in driving regional development.

Our vision links with several national policies, not least those mentioned in section 1.2. Among the most pertinent national initiatives is the Wild Atlantic Way – promoted by Fáilte Ireland, which is contributing to a re-balancing of tourism activities away from so-called honey pots to more peripheral locations – specifically those along the western seaboard. Ireland's National Planning Framework envisages smaller towns and villages playing an important role in responding to future housing needs, and it commits to investing in supporting their attractiveness and enhancing their connectivity.

Among the statutory plans / strategies affecting Dingle, and which provide opportunities and leverage to support this smart village proposal are:

- Ireland's National Planning Framework – Ireland 2040; and

- The Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy (RSES) (for the southern region).

These were presented and considered at the community consultations.

Among the sectoral plans and strategies that are relevant to Dingle – and by extension to our proposal are:

- [Marine Planning Policy Statement](#);

- [Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study](#) (ICPSS);

- [Climate Action Plan](#);

- [National Mitigation Plan](#);

- [National Adaptation Framework](#);

- [Food Wise 2025](#);

- [National Broadband Plan](#);

- [People, Place And Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025](#); and

- [Kerry Tourism Strategy 2016-2022](#).

The local community has been very engaged in the planning process that are elaborated the strategies presented in this proposal. The Local Area Advisory Council set out the framework for the consultations, oversaw them and took stock of the feedback at the mid-way point. Then, they invited agencies and partner organisations, including [Kerry County Council](#), the [Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub](#) and [Údarás na Gaeltachta](#), among others, to input directly into the deliberations. This collaborative approach with agencies has been further pursued and sustained by the NEWKD Board of Directors, which itself is a multi-agency partnership.

The Marine and Renewable Energy Ireland ([MaREI](#)) Centre in University College Cork (UCC) is among NEWKD's strategic partners - in the recent awareness-raising and consultation exercises and in promoting smart systems and sustainable development on the peninsula. MaREI brings valuable scientific data and advice to bear on our proposals, and will continue to be an active partner locally.

2.2.3   Review of past and ongoing (flagship) projects and initiatives

NEWKD has experience in delivering the types of strategic projects that are presented in this proposal, including the development of a social housing and community regeneration project. The most pertinent (to Dingle Smart Village) is the rejuvenation of the Mitchel's Area in Tralee (the largest town in County Kerry). Having identified the local needs and developed stakeholder capacity, NEWKD successfully leveraged substantial funding from private, philanthropic and community sources. The Mitchel's Integrated Services Centre Company was established, as a partnership of community representatives and statutory agencies. This entity went on to develop a business plan, and sourced a loan from the local Tralee Credit Union (cooperative bank) for €1 million. The building of social houses and a multi-purpose community and service centre was

completed some five years ago, and a number of statutory agencies, community and voluntary groups work therein to provide members of the public with a broad range of community, health and family and local development services. Séamus O'Hara, who was then manager of Partnership Trá Lí, and currently NEWKD's local area manager for Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne coordinated the Mitchel's project and submitted the application for the flagship funding. Séamus remained as company secretary for a period of 8 years whilst the project was brought through all its stages of completion, and today it is a very successful community initiative, and reflects how the merging of statutory and community energies can often result in enhanced benefits for the wider community. NEWKD will build upon the success of this flagship project, in bringing its expertise and collegiality with agencies to realise Dingle Smart Village.

2.3   Cooperation with other villages

Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne **cooperates well with other villages / communities**. Dingle is the largest settlement on the Dingle Peninsula, and is the main social and commercial centre for the peninsula. It is also the focal point for many cultural activities, and the neighbouring communities are used to coming together in Dingle. Along with Tralee, which is the designated service town for the Kerry Gaeltacht, Dingle is an important service centre, with strong connections to Kerry's county town (Tralee). The recently completed (Irish) language plans for the Gaeltacht and for Tralee (as the service town) have strengthened inter-community cooperation, and these plans will be implemented over the same timeframe as Dingle Smart Village – thus creating rich opportunities for creative synergies.

As a coastal community, Dingle has always had **strong transnational connections**, particularly with Santiago de Compostela and other centres in Galicia and Asturias. Dingle was the traditional gathering point for Irish pilgrims on their way to Santiago, and Dingle's RC Church is dedicated to St James – the patron of Spain. Dingle's location in the south-west of Ireland made it a stopping point for Spanish traders travelling along Ireland's west coast. These historical, commercial and faith connections represent a reservoir that can further enhance Dingle's social and cultural capital.

As a Gaeltacht community, Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne is **well networked with other Irish-speaking towns and villages**. To date, these networks have found expression in cultural, sporting and social activities, and there is potential to harness these connections and strengthen the village's economic capital.

Decades of outmigration have given Corca Dhuibhne a large overseas diaspora, whose goodwill, capital, knowledge and international perspectives can be harnessed in ensuring that the strategies presented here benefit from innovations and objective / critical reviews.

As stated in the introduction to this document, the term 'Dingle' is used to encompass all communities on the Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne Peninsula, namely, Blenerville, Camp, Castlegregory,

An Clochán, Keel, Inch, Annascaul, Lios Póil, Daingean Uí Chúis, Ceann Trá, Baile an Fheirtéaraigh, An Mhuiríoch, Baile na nGall, Feothanch and Dún Chaoin. These communities have a combined population of 12,500. Our consortium has prepared a story map – as a visual representation of these communities; it can be accessed here.
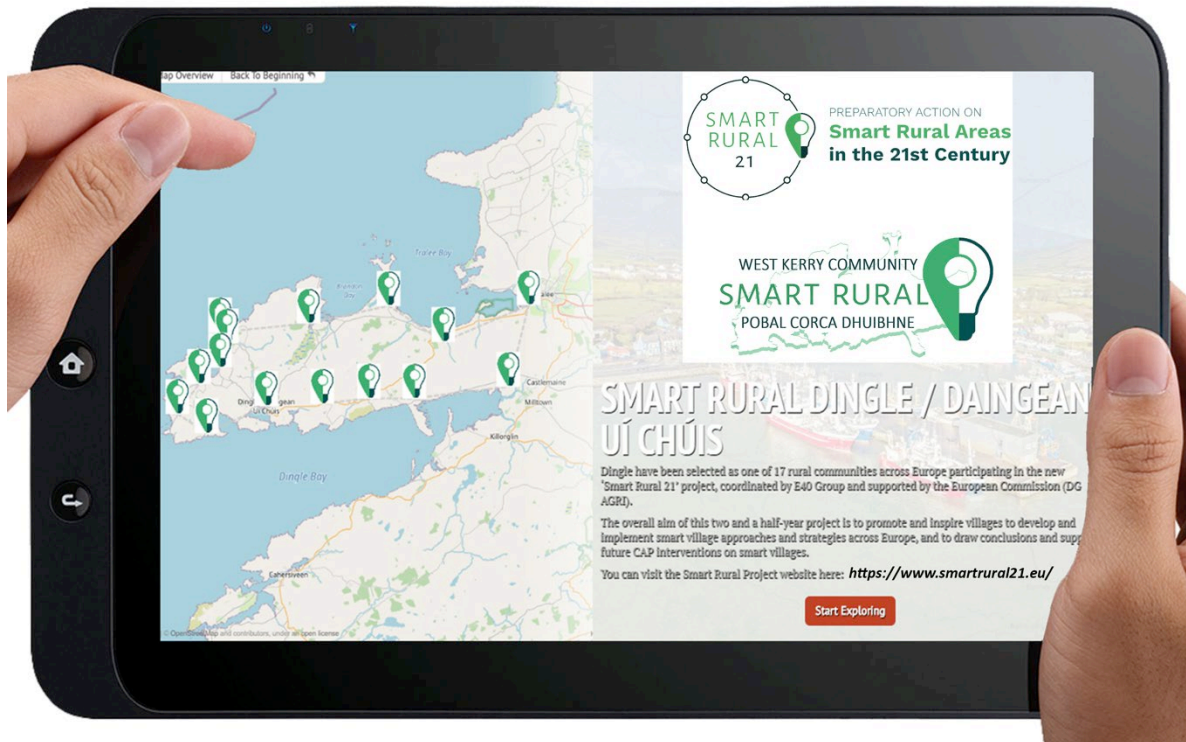
III. KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF DINGLE

3.1   Key characteristics of the village and rural area

Dingle has frequently been referred to **as 'Europe's most westerly town',** while Dún Chaoin (Dunquin), which is 15km west of Dingle, has the reputation of being Europe's most westerly village. While residents of the Azores or Portugal's extreme southwest may dispute these assertions, the fact is that Corca Dhuibhne's / Dingle's characteristics are very much shaped by the Atlantic and by its peripheral location – towards the tip of one of Ireland's most remote peninsulas. Distance from urban centres of commerce and political decision making, poor land quality and the absence of an industrial base combined to prevent the development of the local economy over many decades. From the mid-nineteenth century, the village and the entire peninsula experienced extensive out-migration – particularly to North America. This has continued, and today, the **peninsula's population is at 58% of the level it was at in 1911.** Population decline across the peninsula has undermined Dingle's role as a market town and service centre, and has delimited its development.

Notwithstanding the structural challenges – associated with topography and peripherality, and indeed, possibly because of them, Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne has developed a very **considerable resilience and entrepreneurial spirit.** Distance from external Anglo-Saxon influences has allowed the **Irish language to continue** as the vernacular language, and today, Dingle and most of its functional area are in a designated [Gaeltacht](#) (Irish-speaking) area. The language consolidates local identity, and it attracts countless scholars and visitors to the locality. The village's coastal location and challenging topography give it some of Europe's most spectacular landscapes and seascapes. The **attractiveness of the natural environment and the area's cultural and linguistic distinctiveness** combine to give Dingle a strong tourism product, and the locality's hospitality is world renowned.

The smart village concept can allow Dingle to further harness its indigenous resources and further strengthen its cultural and knowledge capital.

While Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne has worked hard to generate and sustain its resilience, the locality is susceptible to externalities. Ireland's EU membership and the associated freedom of movement have been integral to Dingle's **successes as a tourist destination**. EU structural and cohesion funds have enhanced connectivity, while the Common Agricultural Policy is a lifeline to the rural economy. EU investments in community-led local development, including LEADER, have strengthened many rural communities. At the same time however, the Common Fisheries Policy has opened up Irish territorial waters to boats from other member states, and **the Irish fishing industry has been unable to compete**. This has **propelled job losses and economic contraction** in coastal communities such as Dingle. Dingle's reliance on tourism makes the town particularly vulnerable in the context of current mobility restrictions. [A report](#) by Ireland's three regional

assemblies (May 2020) identifies Dingle as the **fourth most vulnerable location in Ireland to the economic fallout from Covid-19.**

Dingle's / Corca Dhuibhne's key characteristics are reflective of a village / rural territory that has promoted endogenous resilience – harnessing local natural and cultural resources, but is very vulnerable to externalities, including the public policy environment, global macroeconomics and freedom of movement. Its experiences in these regards and its maritime and rural heritage and identity confer a particular distinctiveness on the town, while at the same time linking it to other coastal villages.

Table 1: Closest towns[4]:

Name of closest town or city	Population of town or city	Distance between village and town/ city
Tralee (Trá Lí)	23,691	48km
Killarney (Cill Áirne)	14,504	64km
Limerick (Luimneach)	94,194	148km
Cork (Corcaigh)	208,669	151km

Table 2: Key development indicators (2016)

Indicator	Value (Dingle)	Value (nat. average)	Comments
Population *Out of which migrants* *Out of which people with disabilities*	3469 21% 13%	4,761,865 17% 13.5%	
Elderly dependency ratio %	24.2%	20%	The ratio between the elderly population (aged 65 and over) and the working age population (aged 15-64)
Unemployment rate %	7%	8%	Percentage of unemployed aged 15 and over, divided by the labour force (those aged 15 to 64)
Employment rate %	70%	64%	Percentage of those employed who are aged 15 and over divided by the working age population (aged 15-64)
Participation rate %	56%	53%	Percentage of the labour force aged 15 and over divided by the population of those aged 15 and over

[4] The figures in this table relate to Dingle (the settlement). The data are based on two Electoral Divisions – Dingle Town and Na Gleanna.

Age structure:			
Share of population aged 0-14	16%	21%	In Dingle, the corresponding value in 1996 was 22%.
Share of population aged 15-59	61%	60%	In Dingle, the corresponding value in 1996 was 59%.
Share of population aged 60-65	7%	5%	In Dingle, the corresponding value in 1996 was 3%.
Share of population aged 65+	16%	13%	In Dingle, the corresponding value in 1996 was also 16%
Educational attainment:			
Share of workers with tertiary education	31%		CSO data do not disaggregate workers from all persons aged 15+ who have completed full-time education.
Share of workers with primary education	9%		

Source: Central Statistics Office

3.2   Key challenges

3.2.1   Vulnerability to external trends and shocks

As noted in the recent (May 2020) report (by the three regional assemblies) on the economic impacts of Covid-19, tourist towns, such as Dingle, are particularly vulnerable to any restrictions on public gatherings and freedom of movement. Dingle records a vulnerability score of 62.6%; this is the fourth highest of any town in Ireland. The tourism industry has been growing over recent decades, but globally, there has been a race to the bottom, leading to more precarious working conditions and tighter margins. Locally, the proliferation of AirBnB accommodation, much of which is owned by non-residents, has undermined local accommodation (hotels and guesthouses) and has put pressure on the local environment and infrastructure.

3.2.2   Lack of demographic vibrancy – effects of outmigration and an ageing of the population

Dingle has an older age profile than Ireland has. The respective proportions of the population aged 65+ are as follows: Dingle 16% and Ireland 13%. The town has a lower proportion of persons aged 20 to 24 than do County Kerry and the State. The number of children and teenagers (aged 0 to 18) has declined, in absolute and relative terms, over the past twenty years. In 1996, they constituted 31% of the Dingle's population. Today, they constitute just 23% of the resident population.

3.2.3   Poor / limited service provision, particularly in adjoining rural communities

Closures of shops, post offices and other public amenities / commercial services, particularly the rural communities to the west of Dingle, have exacerbated isolation and has increased car dependency, as people have to travel longer distances to access services.

3.2.4   Dependence on private transport

Despite lower levels of household income, Dingle has a higher proportion of car-owning households than is the case nationally. This exacerbates the dependence on fossil fuels and the flow of revenue from the locality. Public transport connectivity to the villages west of Dingle is extremely limited, and settlements other than those on the main Dingle-Tralee road do not have a bus service. The exception is An Clochán, which has a twice-weekly bus to / from Tralee. There are no feeder or ancillary services linking with the main routes (Bus Éireann services).

Responses to the community vibrancy survey show that only a quarter of people agree with the statement 'Public Transport Services are sufficient to meet local needs.'.

3.2.5   Lack of knowledge-economy and public service jobs

Just three percent of Dingle's resident workforce is engaged in public administration. The equivalent figure for Count Kerry and the State is five percent. In the recent community vibrancy survey, over forty percent (41%) of respondents did not indicate agreement with the statement 'Most people in this community have decent jobs.' Almost half (48%) did not agree with the statement 'This locality attracts investment.'

3.2.6   Seasonality of economic activities

From September onwards, there is a considerable increase in the number of people signing on the live register. In Dingle, 37% of the workforce is classified as working in the sector known as 'other'. This is twice the corresponding figure for Ireland (18%), and is higher than the County Kerry value (23%). 'Other' employment is strongly associated with seasonality.

3.2.7   Housing supply channels not catering for local population

The proliferation of holiday homes in particular locations and speculator investments in AirBnB are making it difficult for local people to afford a home and / or to get planning permission to build a home in their community. NEWKD's (2019-2020) community vibrancy survey (preliminary data) reveals that only a quarter (25%) of people agree with the statement 'Local middle-income earners can afford to buy a house in this community.' Under forty percent (37%) agree that 'Local middle-income earners can afford to rent a house in this community.'

3.2.8   Lack of youth participation in decision-making

According to the community vibrancy survey, less than one third of people (29%) agree with the statement 'We have good facilities for our young people.' Young people (aged under 35) are

under-represented in decision-making structures and civil society organisations locally. While many are committed to getting more involved in the local community, the cost of living obliges them to work long hours, such that they have insufficient time to devote to family and community.

3.2.9 Perception that we can be better at catering for visitors' needs than those of others in our community

Tourism is one of Dingle's economic lifelines and the village and adjoining communities make a concerted effort to welcome visitors and to ensure they are happy and comfortable during their time in the locality. At peak times however, and especially during July and August, local citizens can feel that the town is being overwhelmed by tourists. The scale of the tourist inflow can put pressure on local infrastructure and amenities and traffic congestion becomes problematic. Meanwhile, communities in other parts of the peninsula feel that tourists are 'passing through', and are not conferring any economic benefits on their localities.

3.2.10 Pressures on local infrastructure / environmental resources at peak times

Associated with the points made above, pressures on local infrastructure can mount during the summer months. This is particularly the case west of Dingle, and is exacerbated by coach tours that confer little if any benefits on the local economy. In some communities (Dún Chaoin and An Clochán), over one-third of houses are holiday homes. These are unoccupied for most of the year. However, they are enumerated in the inventory of residential properties, with the result that local people find it difficult to obtain planning permission to build a home.

3.2.11 Retaining money locally (avoidance of the 'leaky bucket' scenario)

Property speculation, particularly in the tourist accommodation market / portfolio, has resulted in a capital flow out of Dingle to property owners who are located outside of the locality / county.

3.2.12 Convincing public bodies to invest in smaller villages

While Ireland's National Planning Framework and the associated investment channels provide a welcome mechanism for the promotion of balanced regional development in Ireland, government targets and indicators are much clearer in respect of investments in cities and towns than is the case in respect of villages and rural communities. We note that it will also take time for some agencies to change mindsets / cultures away from trend planning and perceiving villages and rural areas as 'making do' with spillover effects from urban centres.

3.3 Main assets & opportunities

3.3.1 Strong civil society with the proven capacity to lead and deliver projects

Every year, Dingle hosts a jam-packed calendar of festivals and events. These include an international film festival, food exhibitions, walking events, a marathon, regattas, races and several cultural events, including the renowned 'Other Voices' Festival. These attract thousands of people, including many overseas visitors. All are organised and managed by community-based voluntary committees, whose skills in event management, fundraising, mobilisation and promotion set Dingle apart from many other communities. Lá an Dreoilín (St Stephen's Day), New Year's Eve and St Patrick's Day celebrations provide clear manifestations of the strength and capacity of civil society organisations in Dingle to stage national-scale events. Dingle Smart Village harnesses the creative, cultural and social capital that is already clearly present, and it channels efforts towards sustainable economic, social and environmental goals.

3.3.2 Distinctive high quality natural environment, with abundant natural resources

Dingle's / Corca Dhuibhne's natural environment rates highly on objective indicators, as monitored and published by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Corrine land cover maps reveal a high level of natural vegetation. The nearest beaches (including Ceann Trá) all have blue-flag status. The adjoining uplands are afforded legislative protection; they are a designated special area of conservation (SAC). The coastline is a designated special protection area (SPA). Susceptibility to nitrate and phosphate vulnerability is low, and air quality is pure. The topography lends itself to potential hydroelectric projects. The coastline yields seaweed, kelp and other natural nutrients. The sea provides a thermal mass in winter, and its currents may be, in appropriate locations, suitable for energy generation.

3.3.3 Networked organisation (NEWKD) with collaborative relationships, and the capacity to input into policy-making

LEADER and various complementary local development programmes have been applied in Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne since the mid-1990s (beginning with LEADER II). These have built on a local tradition in organised self-help and collective action. They have promoted innovation and enhanced creativity in the locality. Community-led Local Development (CLLD) has strengthened the capacity of civil society and have supported entrepreneurship and local economic development. As the area's LDC, NEWKD is not just a conduit through which programmes are delivered; it is a platform that gives effect to participative democracy. The Board of Directors comprises eight representatives from Local Area Advisory Councils; these are made-up of community-sector representatives. They are joined, on the Board of Directors, by representatives of the social partners (farmers, trade unions and employers) and nominees of statutory bodies, including Kerry County Council. This tripartite structure is the core of the partnership around which working groups operate. These provide additional mechanisms through which a broad

range of stakeholders contribute to local development. Thus, NEWKD combines and coordinates the efforts, expertise and capacities of several stakeholders.

NEWKD collaborates with several other bodies through a range of relationships and networks. Moreover, NEWKD engages and works with several NGOs and local service providers, particularly those involved in social service provision. At county level, NEWKD delivers projects jointly with other local development companies (LDCs) - South Kerry Development Partnership (e.g., social farming) and IRD Duhallow. Joint action with Kerry County Council is integral to town and village renewal projects and to the delivery of the Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). Regionally and nationally, NEWKD participates in several networks, and is an active member of the Irish Local Development Network (ILDN). These vertical and horizontal relationships will stand NEWKD in good stead in driving the Dingle Smart Village project.

3.3.4   Cohesive territory with a distinctive local identity and rich cultural capital

Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne has a distinctive local identity. Culturally and geographically, the area - known as Corca Dhuibhne - has several unifying and cohesive features. The peninsula takes its name from the goddess Duibhne, whose people held the lands over several generations. Geologically, the peninsula is comprised largely of red sandstone, and it has the second highest mountain in Ireland – outside of the McGillicuddy Reeks on the neighbouring Iveragh Peninsula. This peak – Mount Brandon – is an important pilgrimage site, and the mountain and its environs are strongly associated with St Brendan (the Navigator), who embarked on one of his missionary voyages from the nearby Brandon Creek. Culturally, the area's distinctiveness finds expression in the Corca Dhuibhne dialect (canúint) of the Irish language, a deep literary repertoire and modes of celebration that are generally more colourful and flamboyant than those found elsewhere in County Kerry. These cultural resources are relevant to Dingle Smart Village, as they provide a focal point around which people can converge and engage in collective action.

3.3.5   Systematic evidence-based approach to decision-making

The community consultation processes that took place in 2019 and 2020 were rooted in an evidence-based approach. In advance of the consultations, NEWKD commissioned a **demographic and socio-economic profile** of the Dingle Peninsula. This provides baseline data on over twenty human geography indicators, thereby informing the needs analysis and vision-planning exercises that took place, and which inform the strategies and objectives presented in this proposal.

The human geography profiling was complemented by a **research undertaken by MaREI (UCC) in relation to energy consumption**. The MaREI research quantified the energy uses, the associated economic drain on the peninsula and the tonnage of greenhouse gas emissions. MaREI was represented at the various community consultations, and its scientist (Connor McGookin) presented the energy-related data and a series of maps showing the projected impacts of climate

change – particularly sea-level rise. These complementary twin-sets of data (human geography and energy / environment) gave stakeholders valuable data and a clear structure on which to pursue conversations and frame sets of strategic responses.

The presentation of the respective datasets was undertaken in the context of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). This provoked and energised discussions about the importance of a just transition to a zero-carbon society, in which citizens and communities are supported to reduce fossil fuel dependency. Citizens are committed to conservation, and it behoves policy makers, statutory bodies, NEWKD and the other stakeholders behind Dingle Smart Village to ensure they are given due support, guidance, information and back-up. The community-based engagements analysed the baseline data and promoted visioning exercises with reference to local, regional and national policy. Communities were informed about Kerry County Council's local area plan (LAP), county development plan, the regional assembly's regional economic and spatial strategy (RSES) and Ireland's national planning framework. This information has served to contextualise the objectives and projects set out in Dingle Smart Village; thus, they are grounded in local needs and have due regard to county, regional and national policy and planning objectives.

3.3.6 Tapping into marine resources, including for energy

Dingle is the largest seaport in County Kerry and the most significant fishing port in the county. While the numbers engaged in sea fishing have declined, and the village has suffered due to external competition, Dingle has a marine infrastructure that can support economic diversification. At present, the port serves commercial fishermen and pleasure traffic, and the fishing and tourism industries complement one another. Indeed, there is further potential in this regard, as the slow food movement and local food circles garner greater momentum locally and across Ireland. The work of MaREI underscores the importance of energy efficiency and independence, and has opened-up valuable conversations locally and in the energy industry regarding the harnessing of tidal and hydropower.

3.3.7 Further harnessing of knowledge capital

The aforementioned demographic profiling, commissioned by NEWKD, reveals that people in the Dingle area have a higher level of educational attainment than is the case in County Kerry and Ireland. In addition, local people have a deep wealth of knowledge (across all fourteen dimensions thereof), particularly in relation to landscape, seascapes, heritage, tradition and other aspects of culture. These various strands of knowledge capital combine to generate a strong entrepreneurial spirit in Dingle that has allowed the village to redress many of the challenges associated with physical, economic and political peripherality and to develop a world-renowned tourism product. Harnessing this knowledge and developing it further are integral to our smart village proposal. Dingle Smart Village will also draw on linkages with higher-education institutes (HEIs). These include, among others: Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITT), which compiled the

recent Dingle Town Health Check; the Sacred Heart University, which has a campus in Dingle Town Centre; University College Cork (UCC) – the base institution of MaREI and which has an outreach campus (for Irish-language students) in Baile an Fhéirtéaraigh (near Dingle); and NUI Galway, which is the host-HEI for the National Rural Network. Openness to new cultures and ways of working

Dingle's / Corca Dhuibhne's cultural distinctiveness, its high-quality natural environment and welcoming 'personality' have been attracting visitors for generations. Some come with an interest in learning Irish, others come to draw inspiration from the landscape and coastline, while many more are drawn by the heritage and strong sense of place. Whatever their original motives, many visitors become residents and members of the local community. Dingle is used to hosting national and international conferences and film crews. Thus, the community is well accustomed to interacting with people of diverse cultural backgrounds and diversity is openly celebrated locally. This openness to the co-creation of knowledge and the sharing of information and experiences will enrich Dingle Smart Village.

3.3.8   Embracing of new technologies, particularly green technology and ICT

There are several existing projects and sets of actors in Dingle, which embrace new technologies and ICT, and these will have complementary parts to play in ensuring the success of Dingle Smart Village. The **Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub** provides co-working spaces, and it supports a number of micro-enterprises and entrepreneurs. Dingle 2030 project is a vision for the peninsula, which includes wide ranging actions to reduce the carbon footprint, whilst developing a process of engagement with local people leading to a better informed population committed to this energy transition. – This project is driven by local actors, including Dingle Hub and NEWKD – working in collaboration with MaREI, ESB and UCC. The locality has networks of trained energy ambassadors, who promote smart farming and green energy. The former workhouse / hospital is envisaged as the location for an innovation hub, and a visitor experience focusing on the history, geology, heritage, archaeology, culture and Irish language of the Dingle Peninsula. Work is already underway on this front, such that Dingle Smart Village will be able to build on achievements to date and harness the associated knowledge capital.

3.3.9   Promotion of synergies among all sectors, particularly agriculture and tourism

Dingle 2030, the SKIN project, Smart Farming and the Rural Social Scheme provide a solid basis on which to promote further synergies between farming, tourism and ecology. Already, local farmers are acting as guardians of the countryside and are providing a landscape and ancillary products that are enjoyed by visitors and that afford a high quality of life to local residents. As the needs analysis indicates, there is very considerable scope for the promotion of such synergies, as well as additional alliances and inter-stakeholder collaborations. Dingle stands to gain from tourism providers sourcing more of their supplies locally – shortening food miles and helping to increase farm-family incomes. New technologies and increased capacity-building of the local

population will be important in ensuring that local citizens have a sense of ownership of the just transition.

3.4 Key characteristics of the local community

Section 2.3.1 above already noted the strengths of civil society organisations in Dingle and across Corca Dhuibhne with respect to organising events, promoting cultural activities and delivering discrete projects. This Smart Village initiative affords organisations the opportunity to build on and enhance their skill levels and to promote a more integrated approach, in collaboration with local citizens, service users and statutory bodies – at county, regional, national and EU levels.

Section 2.3.3 noted that the Dingle area is characterised by strong collaborative relationships reinforced by LEADER/CLLD. NEWKD's bottom-up approach and partnership structure stand this project in good stead in terms of vertical and horizontal collaboration. Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne **has a vibrant civil society,** with strong cultural, sporting and environmental organisations. These all have a sense of ownership of this process / submission, and will bring subject / sectoral expertise to bear on its rollout. The groups are well networked – at county, regional and national levels, and provide channels through which local lessons and insights can feed into policy formulation and the dissemination of best practice. All stakeholders note the scope to increase youth participation in local decision-making, and NEWKD is committed to strengthening the youth voice in this set of proposals and in local development more generally.

NEWKD's Local Area Advisory Council (LAAC) provides a platform for local engagement / participation and for inter-community networking. The LAAC has two representatives on the NEWKD Board of Directors, and it meets regularly in order to ensure systematic feedforward and feedback loops.

Locally, Dingle has a *Business Chamber* (representative of the business community), and this body played an important leadership role in the stakeholder consultation processes. The Business Chamber has also overseen the undertaking of a town health check(2019/2020) – in collaboration with NEWKD and the Institute of Technology Tralee (*ITT*). This provides additional baseline data and useful pointers, particularly in respect of economic development, infrastructure and amenities, and highlights local needs.

3.5   SWOT Analysis

The main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) set out above in details are summarised in the SWOT table below.

STRENGTH	WEAKNESSES
Strong civil society with the proven capacity to lead and deliver projects; Distinctive high quality natural environment, with abundant natural resources; Networked organisation (NEWKD) with collaborative relationships, and the capacity to input into policy-making; Cohesive territory with a distinctive local identity and rich cultural capital; Systematic evidence-based approach to decision-making;	Vulnerability to external trends and shocks; Lack of demographic vibrancy – effects of outmigration and an ageing of the population; Poor / limited service provision, particularly in adjoining rural communities; Dependence on private transport; Lack of knowledge-economy and public service jobs; Seasonality of economic activities; Housing supply channels not catering for local population;
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Tapping into marine resources, including for energy; Further harnessing of knowledge capital; Building on the capacity of civil society organisations to effectively deliver development projects / initiatives; Openness to new cultures and ways of working; Embracing of new technologies, particularly green technology and ICT; Promotion of synergies among all sectors, particularly agriculture and tourism;	Lack of local – especially youth - participation in decision-making; Perception that we can be better at catering for visitors' needs than those of others in our community; Pressures on local infrastructure / environmental resources at peak times; Retaining money locally (avoidance of the 'leaky bucket' scenario); and Convincing public bodies to invest in smaller villages (outside of the county's core);

IV. INTERVENTION LOGIC

4.1 Overall objective

The overall objective of the Smart Village Strategy of Dingle is to **enhance liveability in Dingle for people throughout their lifetime, through strategic investments in housing, family services, clean energy and a resilient economy.**

This proposal envisages the rollout of strategic actions on a number of fronts, including economic development, housing provision, the enhancement of youth and family support services and the progression of a just transition to a zero-carbon society. While each strand, will have its own trajectory and each will be driven by its respective set of stakeholders, all are interlinked, complementary and mutually re-enforcing. This integrated approach illustrated in the following diagram.
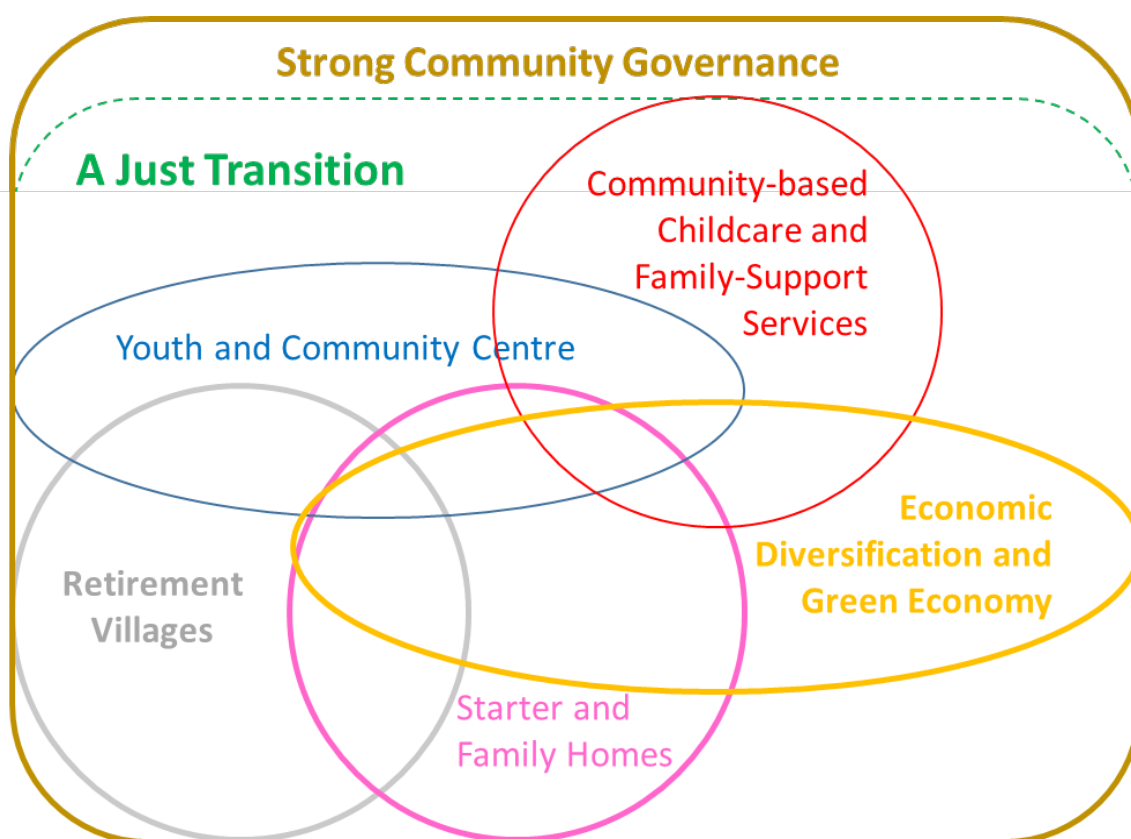
4.2 Specific & operational objectives in response to SWOT

The table below presents the specific and operational objectives of the Smart Village Strategy of Dingle set in response to challenges/ threats and strengths/opportunities identified.

Specific objective (SO)	Operational objective	Challenges & threats	Strengths & Opportunities
SO1: To enable more people to live locally year-round in accommodation that is appropriate to their stage in life;	1.1 To establish a **retirement village** in Dingle in which older people can live independently and access medical and ancillary services	❖ Housing supply channels not catering for local population ❖ Lack of demographic vibrancy – effects of outmigration and an ageing of the population	✓ Strong civil society with the proven capacity to lead and deliver projects
	1.2 To establish a **housing cooperative** (or work with a national housing body) to construct affordable **starter family homes,** for those who work locally and those who have family ties to the community	❖ Housing supply channels not catering for local population ❖ Lack of demographic vibrancy – effects of outmigration and an ageing of the population ❖ Lack of youth participation in decision-making	Building on the capacity of civil society organisations to effectively deliver development projects / initiatives
SO2: To cater more directly for the recreational, education and employment needs of young people and those with young children; and	2.1 To construct a **multi-purpose youth and community centre** in Dingle – to cater for the social, recreational and community development needs of the population	❖ Lack of local – especially youth - participation in decision-making ❖ Perception that we can be better at catering for visitors' needs than those of others in our community	✓ Building on the capacity of civil society organisations to effectively deliver development projects / initiatives
	2.2 To provide a holistic, **Irish-language, community-based childcare and after-school service**, with ancillary family supports	❖ Cohesive territory with a distinctive local identity and rich cultural capital ❖ Poor / limited service provision ❖ Lack of youth participation in decision-making	✓ Further harnessing of knowledge capital
SO3: To foster a more sustainable model of economic development	3.1 To further a just **transition to a post-carbon society**	❖ Vulnerability to external trends and shocks ❖ Dependence on private transport ❖ Pressures on local infrastructure / environmental resources at peak times	✓ Embracing of new technologies, particularly green technology and ICT ✓ Tapping into marine resources, including for energy ✓ Promotion of synergies among all sectors, particularly agriculture and tourism
	3.2 To facilitate **economic diversification and optimised service delivery** through enhanced connectivity	❖ Vulnerability to external trends and shocks	✓ Promotion of synergies among all sectors, particularly agriculture and tourism

Specific objective (SO)	Operational objective	Challenges & threats	Strengths & Opportunities
		❖ Lack of knowledge-economy and public service jobs ❖ Seasonality of economic activities ❖ Retaining money locally (avoidance of the 'leaky bucket' scenario)	✓ Further harnessing of knowledge capital ✓ Tapping into marine resources, including for energy ✓ Openness to new cultures and ways of working; ✓ Embracing of new technologies, particularly green technology and ICT
	3.3 To foster a more **sustainable approach to tourism** that builds on Dingle's renowned hospitality and best complements the area's natural resources and supports liveability	❖ Vulnerability to external trends and shocks ❖ Lack of knowledge-economy and public service jobs ❖ Seasonality of economic activities ❖ Perception that we can be better at catering for visitors' needs than those of others in our community ❖ Pressures on local infrastructure / environmental resources at peak times ❖ Retaining money locally (avoidance of the 'leaky bucket' scenario)	✓ Distinctive high quality natural environment, with abundant natural resources ✓ Cohesive territory with a distinctive local identity and rich cultural capital ✓ Promotion of synergies among all sectors, particularly agriculture and tourism ✓ Tapping into marine resources, including for energy ✓ Further harnessing of knowledge capital
SO4: To strengthen local governance and citizen participation in decision-making relating to Smart Villages and the wider development milieu	4.1 To **build on the Irish LEADER experience,** give full effect to the LEADER Specificities and build the capacity of all actors to work collaboratively in partnership governance and promote social innovation	❖ Vulnerability to external trends and shocks ❖ Poor / limited service provision, particularly in adjoining rural communities ❖ Lack of local – especially youth - participation in decision-making	✓ Systematic evidence-based approach to decision-making ✓ Networked organisation (NEWKD) with collaborative relationships, and the capacity to input into policy-making ✓ Building on the capacity of civil society organisations to effectively deliver development projects / initiatives

4.3   Smart solutions: actions, outputs and results

Key actions planned in order to achieve the objectives, their expected outcomes and results are outlined in the table below.

Operational objectives	Actions planned or taken	Expected outputs	Expected results and impact
1.1 To establish a retirement village in Dingle in which older people can live independently and access medical and ancillary services	1.1.1: Establish **a local-level working group** with representation from older people, the medical / caring sector, the parish, social services and local authority – to guide, oversee and drive this project; 1.1.2: Form **linkages / collaborations with other communities** that have developed social / sheltered housing projects (e.g., Baile Bhuirne / Rathmore) and learn from their experiences; 1.1.3: **Liaise with a national social housing body;** 1.1.4: **Survey potential residents** – to identify needs and to inform a vision and design for the retirement village; 1.1.5: **Engage with all local organisations**, including in the surrounding villages, to ensure this project responds to those with the greatest needs; 1.1.6: **Identify a suitable site** – with good linkages to local facilities – medical, religious, commercial, social and recreational; 1.1.7: **Construct and maintain an integrated housing complex – embracing smart technologies**, so that residents can live with maximum autonomy and optimum care.	A representative and inclusive housing body – fusing bottom up and top-down expertise and perspectives; A retirement village with ten+ residential units and a communal day-care setting; Complete energy-independence (for the village); Application of smart technologies – among residents and among others in the community – to enhance care and quality of life	Suitable, accessible, affordable accommodation in a collegial and caring environment for older people who would otherwise be living in isolation and / or vulnerable circumstances; Enhanced access to care facilities, supports and services; Improved quality of life for older people and for their relatives (particularly relatives who live away from Dingle); Enhanced awareness-raising of older people's needs and of their importance to every community.
1.2 To establish a housing cooperative (or work with a national housing body) to construct affordable starter family homes, for those who work locally	1.2.1 Form a **local housing association** with representation from the youth, civil society organisations and the local authority to oversee and manage a community-based social housing project; 1.2.2 **Learn from other communities** that have taken a community-led approach to the provision of family	A representative and inclusive housing body, with the appropriate legal personality (probably a cooperative) to promote a community-based model of housing provision;	Provision of more affordable housing in Dingle; Stem the outflow of young people / young families, due to the current vagrancies in the housing market; and

Operational objectives	Actions planned or taken	Expected outputs	Expected results and impact
and those who have family ties to the community	housing and network with these communities – formally and informally; 1.2.3 **Survey local youth** and those with young families to identify needs and to inform housing design; 1.2.4 **Identify a suitable site** or set of locations on which the homes will be constructed; 1.2.5 **Identify vacant, derelict or other properties** that may be suitable for conversion into starter / family homes; 1.2.6 **Design and construct homes** that embrace smart technologies and green energy – zero carbon homes; 1.2.7 **Establish and support a residents' association** to ensure that residents are full and active project stakeholders.	At least ten affordable smart family homes; Good use of brownfield / infill sites and rehabilitation of disused / under-utilised buildings; Active participation of the residents in governance and in the wider Dingle community.	Rejuvenate the village community and strengthen local capital.
2.1 To **construct a multi-purpose youth and community centre** in Dingle – to cater for the social, recreational and community development needs of the population	2.1.1 Establish a **project working group as a sub-committee** of one of the existing civil society organisations in Dingle, and which will have multi-stakeholder representation particularly from the youth and from among the artistic community; 2.1.2 **Survey the local population and potential centre users,** to garner their ideas regarding the scope, format, design and functionality of the centre; 2.1.3 Examine and **learn from models and experiences** in other communities and foster relationships with those communities; 2.1.4 **Identify a suitable site** – in an accessible location that is complementary to related functions and which will lend itself to active and increased citizen participation in community-based activities; 2.1.5 **Manage the centre** in accordance with community development principles and good	A state-of-the-art multi-purpose community centre in Dingle in which all community groups and interests have a strong stake and which caters for a wide range of social, cultural, sporting, recreational, educational and personal development needs; A friendly, welcoming and inclusive space in which everybody feels comfortable and proud; A design exemplar that reflects vernacular simplicity, zero-carbon output and efficient use of space.	Continuation / maintenance of community organisations and activities that are currently hampered by the lack of a suitable community venue; Spawning of new activities, groups and collaborations; Increased sense of civic pride and sense of place; Greater inter-group and inter-community collaboration.

European Commission

Operational objectives	Actions planned or taken	Expected outputs	Expected results and impact
	governance.		
2.1 To provide a holistic, Irish-language, community-based childcare and after-school service, with ancillary family supports	2.2.1 **Establish a project team** to guide, oversee and drive this project – with strong representation from parents, young people and the local business community; 2.2.2 **Visit other communities** and learn from their experiences; 2.2.3 **Liaise with appropriate statutory and non-statutory bodies** e.g., TUSLA, County Childcare Committee and education providers (local schools); 2.2.4 **Identify a model**, with an inclusive and multi-cultural ethos that would best suit Dingle and the surrounding communities; 2.2.5 **Develop a facility / service catering** for all families / households – regardless of their means or status; 2.2.6 **Put an agreed vision into practice** in a service or set of services that is child-centred and family-centred.	An integrated, supportive, holistic, child and family-centred service and / or suite of services embedded in the local community – open to all families / households, and catering for all children / youth, regardless of ability / disability or household means; and Greater equality – with families having the ability to access services in the language of their choice (not having to use English, as is currently the case with many services).	Collaborative engagements between childcare services and education providers – focused on children / youth; Increased parental access to family support services, training, adult education and employment; and Greater opportunities for parents (particularly newcomers) to learn Irish – in social settings with other parents and progressively with their children – thereby strengthening social and cultural capital.
2.2 To further a just transition to a post-carbon society	2.2.1 **Build on the excellent work** already being done by the Dingle Hub, MaERI, ESB, UCC, and those involved in the Dingle 2030 initiative to expedite the locality's transition to a post-carbon society; 2.2.2 **Harness and disseminate the learnings** from the current initiatives / projects; 2.2.3 Continue to **strengthen linkages between local civil society organisations and the 'experts' in advancing the zero carbon agenda** / imperative; 2.2.4 **Extend and deepen formal linkages with other communities** that are pioneering initiatives in this field, and share experiences with them – establish common platforms through which policy changes can be advanced;	An anaerobic digester fully operational – processing waste and generating clean energy; 50%+ farms in the locality engaged in smart and green farming; and A demonstration energy-generation project (hydro / tidal).	Greater public appreciation of the importance of the zero-carbon transition; Greater public sector commitment to supporting and ensuring a just transition; and Changes in citizen and agency behaviour – mainstreaming of ecological principles.

Operational objectives	Actions planned or taken	Expected outputs	Expected results and impact
	2.2.5 **Continue to trial and pilot new technologies** and ways of working; 2.2.6 **Promote the mainstreaming of low / zero carbon ways of living** and working; and 2.2.7 Investigate and promote **new ways of generating energy**, particularly from Dingle's marine resources.		
3.1 To facilitate economic diversification and optimised service delivery through enhanced connectivity	3.1.1 **Build on the work of the Dingle Hub** and **collaborate with internet service providers** to provide / enhance high-speed fibre connectivity to all premises in Dingle; 3.1.2 **Promote increased digital literacy** among the population – through training and awareness-raising initiatives; 3.1.3 **Enable statutory bodies and other service providers to offer on-line consultations** and engagements with service users; and 3.1.4 **Further the use of digital applications** (apps) in relation to key local infrastructure, amenities and attractions.	Upgrade of the Dingle Hub – as a co-working space; At least 150 people will have received ICT-related training; Web-based training programme for service providers; Installation of new technologies among all service providers; and Digital apps in place for all amenities including the Dingle Way.	20% increase in the number of persons working from home at least two days per week; 20% increase in the number of individuals and businesses using the Dingle Hub; Enhanced provision of outreach services – particularly health and family supports; Remote delivery of education (including third-level) programmes to people in Dingle; and High-quality information provision via digital apps.
3.2 To foster a more sustainable approach to tourism that builds on Dingle's renowned hospitality and best complements the area's natural resources and supports liveability	3.2.1 **Rollout a green / eco-tourism training programme** to accommodation and amenity providers in Dingle; 3.2.2 **Promotion of homestays, B&Bs and local hotels** over AirBnB accommodation; 3.2.3 **Strengthen the capacity of local bodies to further progress the post / zero carbon** transition across the sector; 3.2.4 Facilitate a **forum to promote collaboration**	Achieve EU Ecolabel status; 20% increase in our marks in the national Tidy Towns Competition and Entente Florale; Full implementation of an ecological transport management plan for tourism on the Dingle Peninsula; and	Reduced seasonality; Better integration and collaboration between tourism and other local (economic and other) activities; Higher quality natural environment – for locals and visitors alike; and Greater availability of

Operational objectives	Actions planned or taken	Expected outputs	Expected results and impact
	between farmers and tourism providers;	Longer visitor stays in the locality.	sustainable transport options and improved connectivity.
	3.2.5 **Incentivise tourism** providers to source supplies locally; and		
	3.2.6 Ensure that all tourism-related infrastructural developments, including transport provision are oriented towards **ecology and sustainable economic development**.		
4.1 To build on the Irish LEADER experience - give full effect to the LEADER Specificities and build the capacity of all actors to work collaboratively in partnership governance and promote social innovation and incorporation of smart village concepts into LEADER's delivery This is the overarching objective; it is the one on which others are predicated and through which they are sustained.	4.1.1 Establish a **project steering group**, representing all stakeholders – reporting quarterly to the Board of NEWKD and ensuring timely and effective delivery of Dingle Smart Village; 4.1.2 **Provide regular updates to Kerry LCDC** and avail of this platform to garner greater agency and social partner support for the strategic delivery of actions, the transfer of best practice and the communication of policy and practice lessons; 4.1.3 **Support ongoing capacity-building** of the LAAC and other community structures, to ensure continual endogenous direction of Dingle Smart Village; 4.1.4 Leverage of LEADER support / resources and incorporation of smart village processes, projects and needs into NEWKD's delivery of LEADER; and 4.1.5 **Undertake internal and external evaluations** of all aspects of the project and dissemination of learnings.	Effective project governance and oversight; Application of CLLD and the LEADER Specificities; Reflection / incorporation of smart villages agenda into the delivery of LEADER – mainstreaming of smart villages; Inclusion of stakeholders and harnessing a wide range of perspectives and experiences; and Vertical and horizontal transfer of learnings.	Timely delivery of actions, within budget; Increased awareness of the UNSDGs and application of sustainable development principles at all levels; and More mainstreaming of CLLD and the LEADER Specificities.

V. MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

5.1 Management

NEWKD has initiated both the process and the strategic planning element of this project. Whilst NEWKD is a large organisation, the main driving force for the ongoing development and implementation of this project arises through NEWKD's local area advisory council (LAAC). This council is a locally based fora of 14 community representatives , who live on the Dingle peninsula. This fora has committed to driving this process onwards. NEWKD has key staff living on the Dingle Peninsula, and the Area Manager and colleagues have been deeply involved in the Evidence Based Socio Economic study and also the Dingle Town Health Check process. Both reports will be launched later in 2020.

NEWKD's financial controller will be the person responsible for the management of all future funding secured for this project. NEWKD Area manager has been given the responsibility of driving this project forward. Both staff report directly to the CEO, and the Board of NEWKD, and hold regular meeting with the community forum in Dingle / Corca Dhuibhne.

NEWKD has made connections with the local authority (Kerry County Council) to advise its officials of this need within the community, and the plans to address these needs. Kerry County Council staff have given initial support for the development of this project. As noted earlier, this set of proposals gives effect to several national policy objectives, thus opening-up possibilities for leverage of exchequer resources.

The community has highlighted and articulated these needs at public meetings and during other conversations with the development of this strategy. It is now planned that a specific working group/committee be established with the skills to action this strategy. LEADER and other programmes can be used to support this group and to ensure its capacity is built and sustained.

The local media (newspapers and radio) were deeply involved in the planning and reporting of the deliberations of our fifteen public meetings during November 2019, and February 2020. The report of these meetings is soon to be launched. The media is very supportive of our work to strengthen the resources in the community, and it sees that it has a vital rile in developing same.

 Our local area advisory committee is already in place as a network which shares information to communities throughout the peninsula, and we have key members on board who will play a strong role in communicating this story to the broader population. This is a good news story, and following the many deaths in nursing homes throughout Europe and the world, there will a timeliness for the adoption of this initiative.

In addition, a new committee will be formed with the sole remit of implementing the strategy, and a key element of its work will be PR. The selection of appropriate committee members will be key to the success of this project.

5.2   Monitoring

To assess the performance, outputs and impacts of Dingle Smart Village, we will pursue a two-strand approach. The first and on-going strand will be the internal evaluation, and the second strand will involve independent ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post evaluations. The second strand will be conducted objectively, by qualified external evaluators. To this end, NEWKD will draw on our linkages with third-level institutes, and we anticipate putting the external evaluation brief out to tender. The project steering group will work with the evaluator to ensure data capture and analysis in respect of the indicators, outputs and impacts presented in the intervention logic. In line with the LEADER specificities and Smart Villages Principles, both strands will include all stakeholders including:

1.   The Project Steering Group

2.   Directors of NEWKD

3.   Local Area Advisory Council members

4.   Civil society representatives

5.   Service users / beneficiaries

6.   Project partners including statutory and non-statutory bodies

7.   Policy makers

8.   Funders of various strands / initiatives

9.   Other interested parties.

The ex-ante evaluation will operationalize the key performance indicators, based on an elaboration of the intervention logic, and informed by international literature and stakeholder expectations / perspectives. This will also put in place a system of data capture and performance monitoring, so that there is complementarity between the processes of internal and external review. The mid-term / interim review will focus on achievements versus targets and available resources. It will specifically examine the level of complementarity with LEADER and other endogenous efforts, and will record the extent to which smart village concepts and modes are being integrated and mainstreamed (or not) in stakeholders work programmes and organizational culture. This may include surveying stakeholders – including beneficiaries – to garner their views on the effectiveness and usefulness of smart village concepts. The interim review will make recommendations to enhance the on-going rollout of the various projects; these will apply locally and to policy-makers. The ex-poste evaluation will seek to appraise performance against the original indicators. Above all, it will endeavour to extract lessons and recommendations for future projects in local development and beyond. The evaluation will consider the governance and policy implications of smart villages.

VI. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

6.1   Stakeholder engagement in needs assessment

Stakeholders were heavily involved in the formulation of this strategy. Local communities were informed about the consultation process through a series of adverts and articles in the local print media and the consultation process also featured on Radio na Gaeltachta.

Two rounds of consultation and strategic planning meetings were held in all communities across the peninsula, and bespoke approaches were taken. The needs assessment was tailored for each community, including Dingle itself, based on the demographic and socio-economic facts. Attendees were facilitated to work in buzz groups to assess community needs, and these were subsequently discussed in plenary format. NEWKD related the needs assessment to relevant statutory bodies, so that they could respond to specific issues.

NEWKD also enabled the Dingle Chamber Alliance and the Institute of Technology, Tralee to undertake a town health check. Over seventy businesses and 150 service users / customers completed the survey, and the results point to specific needs that ought to be addressed.

6.2   Stakeholder engagement in strategy development

The second round of the aforementioned community consultation meetings focused **specifically on strategy development** and attendees were facilitated to work in thematic buzz groups. They responded to a series of questions as follows: where is the potential / what are the opportunities?; list five projects (under the given theme) that would benefit the community; what would be the main benefits?; what can we, as a community, do to deliver these projects? Their responses were discussed in plenary format, and all responses were typed-up and fed back to stakeholders for review and additional inputs.

The aforementioned town health check, in addition to identifying needs, has allowed the business community and those who work / shop / socialise in / visit Dingle to put forward specific recommendations and proposals.

In addition to these local consultations, **NEWKD promoted a survey among local citizens**. This sought to capture their perspectives of community resilience / vibrancy. They survey instrument used an extensive range of indicators, operationalised based on the dimensions of sustainable development (economic, socio-cultural and ecological). Over 300 people completed this questionnaire. A local second-level schools facilitated 16-17 year olds to participate in the survey, and their responses represent an important set of perspectives. The findings add to the evidence base that underpins this strategy.

6.3   Key channels of communication and awareness raising among citizens

The local media (print and radio) provided an important service in making local citizens aware of the planning process. In addition, NEWKD created a dedicated space on its website for Dingle-related material. This made it easy for local citizens to find information. In addition, they

were able to access the all power points on line, and keep abreast of the findings form the community vibrancy / resilience survey. Meetings were conducted in both the Irish and English languages, and material has been provided in both languages. Bilingualism will continue to be a feature of NEWKD's working with stakeholders.

6.4   Planned actions to mobilise stakeholders

As a community-based local development organisation, **NEWKD will continue to provide a vehicle for community / stakeholder participation in decision-making**. Stakeholders are and will be represented on the Board of Directors, sub-committees and the Local Area Advisory Councils. Other programmes such as LEADER and SICAP will continue to support animation, capacity-building, networking, training and information exchanges – thus complementing the delivery of Dingle Smart Village. Community development principles inform and guide NEWKD's modus operandi, and will continue to do so. The Board of Directors and our membership of the LCDC, among other multi-stakeholder fora will provide platforms for the dissemination of information and the mobilisation of all stakeholders – current and potential.