



*Communities Planning For Their Future*

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### **What's involved in Community Futures?**

Communities taking part in Mayo Community Futures set up a **Community Futures Steering Group** which brings together representatives from a broad selection of local clubs and organisations to help steer the planning process locally.

A **Community Support Volunteer** is assigned to the steering group to assist with the community consultation and writes the reports that inform the plan.

**Community consultation** typically involves

- A household survey
- Meetings with different individuals and sectors of the community
- The preparation of a community profile detailing community facts and figures
- Community futures workshops and meetings

At the end of the consultation a **Community Action Plan** is written which summarises:

- The vision for the future of the community
- The community's current situation
- The main issues that need to be addressed
- The main priorities for projects and actions
- The plan is distributed to all households and to relevant public agencies

### **How long does it take?**

Typically the work takes about 6 months in the community. Steering group members meet regularly to lead the process locally, to collect facts and figures for the profile, organise the distribution & collection of survey forms, organise the community open day and the launch.

### **How much does it cost?**

Most of the cost is absorbed by Mayo Community Futures. However, there is some cost to the community e.g. envelopes for completed survey sheets, refreshments for the community open day, matched funding for the printing of the plans and costs associated with the launch of the plan in the community. The programme makes a small contribution of €400 to the community to cover costs.

### **What are the benefits?**

Community Futures Action Plans, prepared with the full involvement of the whole community, provide a clear statement of the community's needs and aspirations. The Plans identify the projects that the community as a whole thinks are most important for the future of their area. As such the plans help to answer the funders' most asked question – how do you know this (project or service) is important to the community? The Action Plans enable community organisations, County Councillors and others to represent the community at area, county or national level

Community Futures Action Plans serve as a useful guide to public agencies interested in ensuring that their own plans and services are sensitive to community needs and aspirations. A direct result of the participation process is that more people become involved in existing and new community organisations. This can help take the burden off the handful of individuals who are often at the forefront of much of the work in the community.