

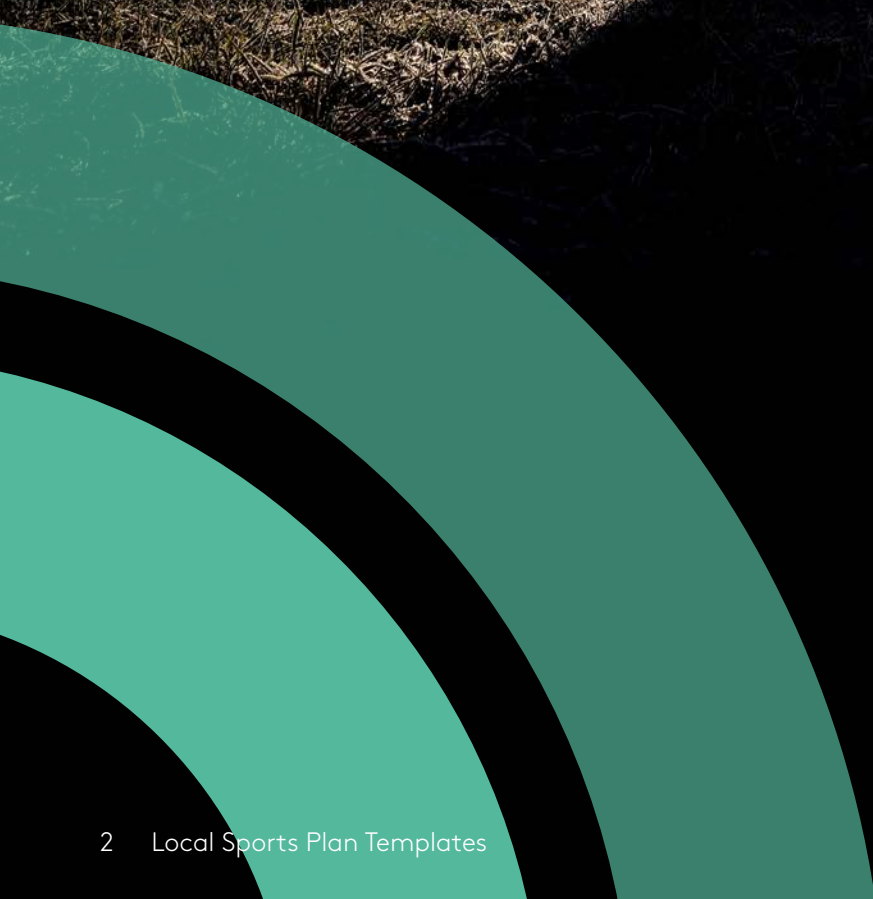


SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Local Sports Plan Templates



Introduction

It is an honour to officially launch the Local Sports Plan Templates. At Sport Ireland, we are proud to play a key role in fostering a vibrant and inclusive sporting culture in communities throughout the country. The development of Local Sports Plans is an important initiative we have in place to support Local Authorities as they continue to play their part in this vision. By establishing tailored plans that meet the unique needs of local communities, we can collectively aim to ensure that sport is accessible to everyone, regardless of age, background, or ability.



Our templated approach to Local Sports Plans supports Local Authorities to build a strong foundation for grassroots sport especially clubs and community organisations in a consistent and efficient manner. It aims to demonstrate how more collaboration will create further opportunities for people to get active, stay active, and enjoy the physical, mental and social benefits that sport provides.

The Local Sports Plan is about much more than just promoting participation through our network of Local Sports Partnerships. It is about creating sustainable, long-term change in how sport is delivered and experienced at the community level. It is about developing clear priorities for the Local Authority and a strong direction of travel to supporting local clubs, improving facilities, and collaborating to build communities where sport plays a central role in promoting health, wellbeing and social inclusion.

I encourage you to explore the Local Sports Plan Templates, which provide not only a roadmap for local framework but also highlight the potential themes and actions for your own Local Sports Plan. As we look ahead, we remain committed to ensuring that sport is not just something for the few, but for the many—accessible and enjoyable for people of all backgrounds, all abilities and all ages. The future of sport in Ireland starts at the local level and we are excited to see the incredible impact this initiative will have on communities across the country.

I want to say a special thank you to those involved in the pilot project who worked so diligently to create templates suitable for all Local Authorities across the country. Our colleagues from Clare, Cavan, Carlow and Laois Local Sports Partnerships and Local Authorities were integral to the development of the framework. I also wish to thank our colleagues in Dublin Local Authorities and their Local Sports Partnerships who have been very supportive in their willingness to collaborate.

Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to local sport, we look forward to working with you to create a healthier, more active Ireland for generations to come.

I look forward to seeing Local Sports Plans being developed across the country in the coming year, as we continue on our journey to ensure that sport and physical activity are an integral part of each and every community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Una May". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Úna May
CEO, Sport Ireland

Background

Sport Ireland

Sport Ireland is the statutory authority tasked with leading, advocating and providing directed funding for the development of sport in Ireland. With integrity as the clear foundation upon which this is built, it advises, supports and works with and through partner organisations, such as National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs), and others who deliver sport and physical activity to:

- Increase levels of participation in sport, with a particular focus on diversity and inclusion – with innovative programmes and initiatives to engage and encourage low participation groups.
- Champion high performance sport – helping Irish teams, athletes, and support staff to be the best they can be and to be successful on the world stage.
- Empower people to build a commitment to their sport and take part for longer.
- Increase the number and quality of the coaches, officials, administrators, and volunteers who run and support sport.
- Deliver key support services such as safeguarding and anti-doping so that sport is ethical, safe and fair.
- Further develop and improve the Sport Ireland Campus and the sporting infrastructure in Ireland.

Vision

An active Ireland where everyone can enjoy the lifelong benefits of sport and physical activity.

Mission

As the statutory development agency for sport, Sport Ireland will focus its work on ensuring that Ireland is an active nation where people are encouraged to start, continue to participate, progress and achieve in sport.



To do this Sport Ireland will work to:

- Support its partners, particularly NGBs and LSPs, to increase levels of introductory and sustained participation in sport and physical activity for all.
- Deliver high performance sport success.
- Communicate the value and benefits of and lead national thinking on sport.
- Develop a stronger and more effective, safe, fair sport sector with the ambition to achieve the highest standards of governance.
- Increase the number and quality of the coaches, officials, administrators and volunteers who run and support sport.
- Promote diversity and inclusion and be pro-active in supporting the sector to provide opportunities to develop physical literacy and for lifelong participation in sport for everyone.
- Optimise the impact of Government investment in sport. In driving this mission, Sport Ireland recognises that it has work to do to be an exemplar in terms of leadership, governance, strategic priorities, communication, adherence to its values and operational effectiveness.

The ten-year National Sports Policy sets out targets for Irish sport to achieve in the coming years which include:

- Overall adult participation in sport to rise from 43% to 60% by 2027.
- Reducing the participation gradient between men and women from 4.5% to 0%.
- Social participation in sport (through volunteering/club membership/event attendance) to grow 10% by 2027.
- Increased targeted high-performance funding to deliver more Olympic/Paralympic medals (from the securing of 13 medals in 2016 to a target of 20 in 2028).
- All funded bodies adopting the Governance Code for Sport and achieving the gender representation requirements on their Boards.

Sport Ireland is passionate about the promotion and improvement in the status of all sports in our country.

When referring to sport we mean “all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation aimed at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels”. It includes both recreational sport and competitive sport:

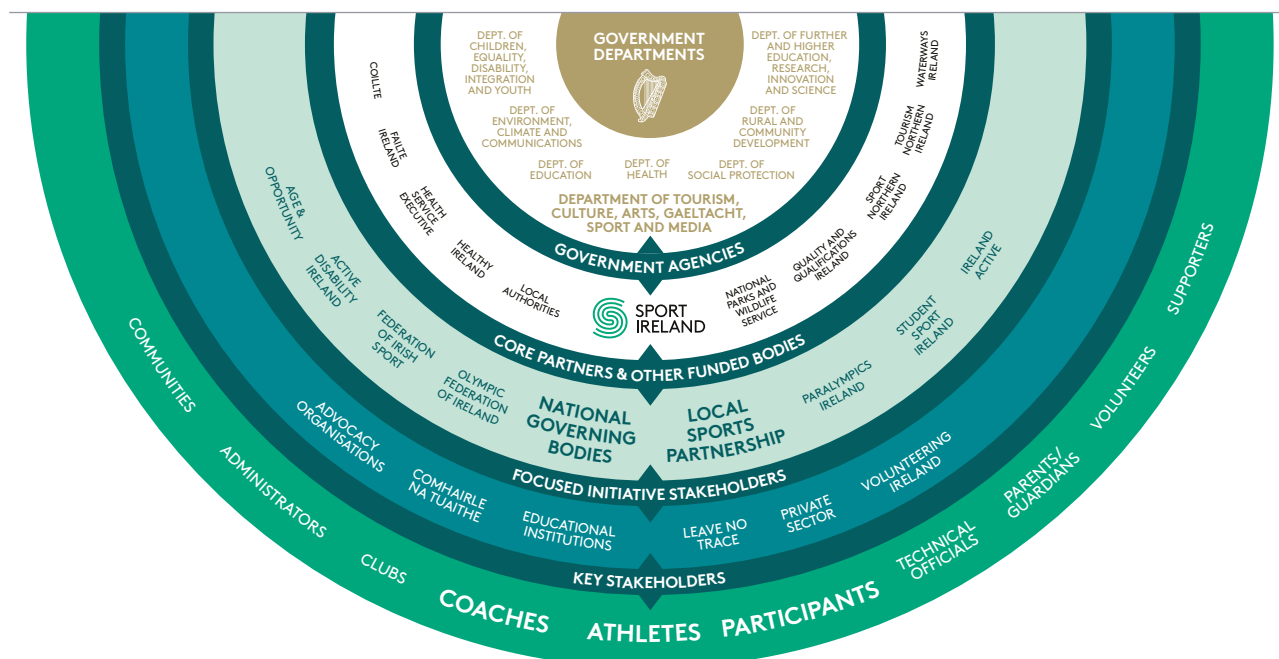
- **Recreational sport** - All forms of physical activity which, through casual or regular participation aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing and/or forming social relationships.
- **Competitive sport** - All forms of physical activity which, through organised participation, aim at improving physical fitness and/or obtaining improved results in competition at all levels.



Sport Ireland recognises the value of the Lifelong Involvement in Sport and Physical Activity (LIPSA)2 philosophy and works with and alongside a range of significant stakeholders highlighted in the diagram below, who have an interest in the positive outcomes derived from sport. The diagram outlines the complexity of the sport ecosystem with stakeholders ranging from athletes and participants to core partners, government agencies and other government departments.

Sport Ireland is committed to supporting the design and delivery of relevant policies and programmes, and facilitating multi-agency collaboration to deliver its strategic objectives at all levels of participation and performance.

Sport Ecosystem in Ireland



Local Sports Plans

Under the Government's National Sports Policy 2018-2027, Local Authorities are positioned as key stakeholders in the context of public spaces for sport and physical activity as well as providing opportunities for participation initiatives.

Under Action 8 of the National Sports Policy 2018 -2027, Sport Ireland has been given the directive to support Local Authorities in developing their Local Sports Plans. This action states:

"We will establish, through Sport Ireland, an initiative to support Local Authorities in developing Local Sports Plans consistent with the overall vision and objectives of this National Sports Policy. The Local Plan will review needs and set out actions to increase participation locally. It will be developed and implemented in cooperation with Local Sports Partnership (LSPs), clubs, communities, and partners within and beyond sport".

In addition to the important part already being played by Local Authorities in facilitating sport and physical activity opportunities, it is recognised that sport and recreation are key issues in the development of County and Local Area Development Plans, that sport is a very important element in the Local Economic and Community Plans and a core consideration for the Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs).

For the above reasons, the Government has stated that Local Authorities are uniquely positioned

- To be charged within the policy with a formal leadership role in facilitating the drive towards greater participation at a local level throughout the population
- To foster a strong sense of collaboration across traditional boundaries with key roles for clubs, LSPs, community groups, leisure centres and other partners locally

Recognising the pivotal role of the Local Authorities and in light of the participation trends, each Local Authority is asked to develop a Local Sports Plan to increase participation locally, in a manner consistent with the vision and objectives set down in this National Sports Policy and taking appropriate account of any existing plans.

To do this, each Local Authority is asked to work with the LSP, with partners on the Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) and CYPSC, with clubs, schools, leisure facility providers, community groups and other stakeholders.

A locally led, nationally supported approach will be a key feature of the participation strategy.

Project Initiation

Sport Ireland conducted informal short consultations with a sample of key stakeholders as to what a local sports plan could bring to each sector. Learnings were also taken from Dublin Local Authorities that had already begun their plan development.

Following a number of meetings with City County Managers' Association (CCMA) Rural, Community, Culture and Heritage subcommittee, it was agreed that a pilot project would be established with four local authorities. Carlow, Cavan, Clare and Laois county councils were appointed into the project by the CCMA subcommittee.

A National Steering Group was established comprising of Sport Ireland, Local Authority representatives and Department of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Gaeltacht, Media and Sport. The steering group met regularly to discuss the progress of the project. A consultancy firm, S3 Solutions Ltd, tendered through Sport Ireland, was appointed to lead the development of the Local Sports Plans for Local Authorities.

The Development had two key aims:

1. Each local authority in the pilot would receive a 5-year Local Sports Plan which will aim to meet the needs of their county.
2. A national framework to be established for all remaining (23) local authorities which involves flexible templates for use at local level to establish their individual plans easily and efficiently.

The first of its kind, this templated approach aims to reduce the overall burden on the remaining Local Authorities by providing a framework within which their plans can be easily developed based on the templates provided.

Journey of Development

Clare, Carlow, Laois and Cavan Local Authorities (as selected by City County Managers' Association Subcommittee) with the support of Sport Ireland joined the pilot project to develop their respective Local Sports Plans.

Working closely with the National Steering Group, these local authorities conducted extensive work to produce plans that are, at the time of writing, at final stage and will be approved by their Council Chambers in the coming months.

Each local authority in the pilot received a 5-year Local Sports Plan incorporating:

- A strategic vision and high-level objectives for each local authority's sports function to provide an optimal strategic direction in response to the review findings and that is consistent with each local authority's corporate plans, national and local sports and physical activity policies.
- Recommended organisational and staff structures, and associated resource allocations, for enhanced and cohesive service delivery and to maximise regional collaboration and other appropriate opportunities. This included mapping organisational resources to identified priorities, including defined objectives and geographical areas for field working resources. It also signposts improved synergies and collaborative working with relevant other local authority functions and statutory, community and voluntary agencies.
- Strategies to maximise the use of local sports and recreational facilities and for shared and collaborative working with relevant stakeholders.
- Recommended performance measures referenced to baseline data, specifically identifying key target cohorts and associated indicators.



As a result of these pilots, a suite of templates has been established to support the remaining Local Authorities in the development of their county's Local Sports Plans.

To date eight local authorities have successfully created their Local Sports Plan. Dublin City, Fingal, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown and South Dublin County Councils have developed their local sports plans independently of the pilot.

At the time of writing, Dublin City, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils have adopted and launched their plans. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown's plan is expected to be approved by the end of 2024.

To view published Local Sports Plans visit sportireland.ie/localsportsplan. As others are adopted by respective councils in the coming weeks, they will be added to the page.

Local Sports Plan Templates

A national framework, comprising of flexible templates, was developed to ensure consistency of approach across the country in each local authority. This framework devised templates that allow for flexibility:

- Systems map – understanding the current of responsibilities/projects across local authority.
- Surveys and consultations framework
- National overview of strategies, policies and developments as well as best practice examples
- Bank of full actions/KPIs that will be suitable to deliver for all local authorities, selecting what suits the landscape best.
- Proposed key strategic themes and priorities.

Please see sample images of some templates below.

Page 1: About your organisation

Question	Response Type	Response Options	Logic	Notes
What is the name of your organisation?	Text box	Open ended	None	n/a
Which of the following best describes your organisation type?	Multiple choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community and voluntary organisation i.e. youth group, community centre, family resource centre. Statutory body School Educational Authority Sports Club Business Organisation Local Authority Political Representative National Governing Body of Sport Private Sector 	None	n/a
In which areas does your organisation provide services?	Drop Down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insert electoral areas relevant to local authority Across all of County [insert county] We are a national organisation 	None	n/a
Do you provide any of the following sport and physical activities?	Check Boxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Football Archery Athletics Badminton Basketball Bowling 	None	Present response options over 3 columns

Stakeholder Survey

Strategic Context for Local Sports Plans

Sport and Physical Activity Participation in Ireland

According to the ISM (Irish Sports Monitor Mid-Year Report) (2023) and the most recent CSPPA (Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity) Study (2022):

39%
Of Irish adults classified as 'Highly Active' (considered to be meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines). An increase of 2% on the 2022 figure (37%)

30%
Of Irish adults classified as 'Inactive' (did not participate in any activity during the past 7 days). With a Disability (21%), without (9%). Both were broadly unchanged since 2019

47%
Of Irish adults are regularly playing sport - A key aim of the National Sports Policy in Ireland is that 50% of adults regularly playing sport by 2027

12% and 23%
12% of post primary and 23% of primary aged children met the National Physical Activity Guidelines of at least 50 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity every day (2022)

Strategic Context

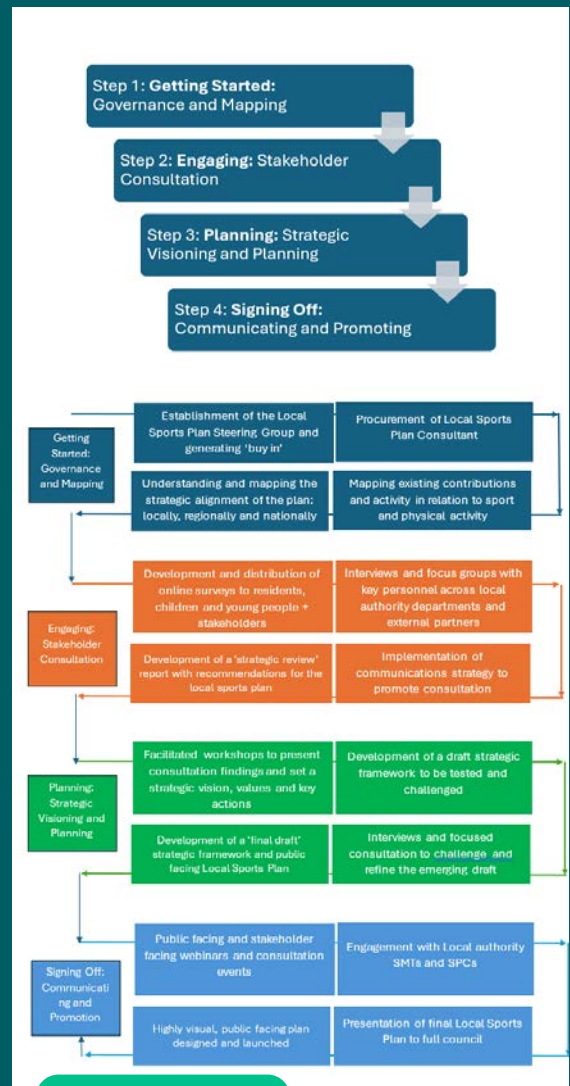
1 Local Sports Plans Systems Mapping Information Form

2 Annex A: Strategies and Studies

Systems Mapping

3 Guidance for completing the Systems Mapping Template Information Form

Systems Mapping



Toolkit

All templates can be found at: sportireland.ie/localsportsplan



A special note of thanks to the following who supported the development of Local Sports Plans:

National Steering Group Members:

Louise Burke	Sport Ireland (Chair)
Sean O'Connor	Department of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Gaeltacht, Media and Sport
Jason Murphy	Clare County Council
Brendan Jennings	Cavan County Council
Michael Brennan	Carlow County Council
Pamela Tynan	Laois County Council
Oisín Foley	Sport Ireland
Eamonn Seydak	S3 Solutions Limited

Key Members of the Development Group:

John Sweeney	Clare Sports Partnership
Nadine McCormilla	Cavan Sports Partnership
Deborah Foley	Carlow Sports Partnership
Caroline Myers	Laois Sports Partnership



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