

ACCESS FOR ALL

REPORT ON DISABILITY AWARENESS
WORKSHOPS IN CO. KERRY



DISCLAIMER

This publication provides a report on the participants feedback from the Access for All - consultation workshops, held in the four Municipal Districts in Co. Kerry. The opinions and views expressed in this publication are those of the participants who attended the workshops. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of the Kerry PPN Secretariat, Kerry County Council or the Disability Federation of Ireland.



**DISABILITY FEDERATION
OF IRELAND**



Líonra Páirtíochta Pobail Chiarraí
KERRY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

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FOREWORD

ACCESS FOR ALL



DISABILITY AWARENESS WORKSHOPS 2018

During 2018, the Kerry Public Participation Network undertook a series of workshops throughout County Kerry. These consultation workshops took place in the four Municipal District in County Kerry, starting in Killarney, Tralee, Listowel and finally ending in Killorglin at the end of October 2018.

The Kerry Publication Participation Network (Kerry PPN) has been delighted to be involved in facilitating this important conversation in cooperation with the Disability Federation of Ireland and found the experience to be enlightening and rewarding.

It was a fantastic opportunity for the various groups whether it was from a community, voluntary or statutory organisation, whether representing people with disabilities from a paid position or a service, this consultation has resulted in the most recent evidenced based research in County Kerry, which looked at the issues people with disabilities have and how we as a collective can affect change within our community.

Though tremendously rewarding, the planning and organisation of the workshops was at times challenging and it has highlighted the difficulty groups who represent people with disabilities have with regard to engaging with some organisations and get buy in to the process.

The disability awareness workshops focussed on access for all in the truest sense and how best the quality of life for people with disabilities can be enhanced.

Of course, it is essential to note the very progressive works that are being carried out, throughout the county, however, the purpose of these workshops was to look at the issues in a solution focussed way in order that they can be kept on the agenda and progress them.

The format and structure of the workshops was designed in consultation with the Access groups in Killarney, Tralee and Killorglin and one of the fundamental asks, was to ensure that a broad range of individuals with disabilities, support agencies, Kerry PPN Representatives, as well as Kerry County Council staff from a number of departments attended and fully contributed to the discussions. The Kerry PPN feels that this type of workshop and consultation was long-overdue and this was evidenced by the full attendance in all the four Municipal District areas. The round-table, thematic format, facilitated people to actively participate and covered all Strategic Policy Committees themes. The role of the Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's) is to harness the experience and expertise of relevant external groups and improve the overall role of counsellors by providing a platform for an input in to policy planning at an early stage. Also, one of the important functions of SPC's is the **"consideration of the needs of people with disabilities in the formulation and implementation of relevant policies"**.

Across all discussions it was clear that there had been a vacuum in providing a basic discussion forum to begin exploring the issues. These workshop are a good first step in addressing this need and ultimately, it is proposed that a Disability Network will be established that will link directly into the Kerry Public Participation Network and form a valuable linkage group in the county of Kerry.

The Local Economic and Community Plan (2016 - 2022), under the Social Inclusion goals contains the action;

“through the quality of Life and social inclusion goals that a good environment, equality of access, engagement and participation, pride of place, promotion of health and wellbeing, meeting the needs of the most vulnerable within our communities are the very foundations of a healthy inclusive society”. The Kerry PPN was tasked with facilitating one of the High level goals 3.7 of the LECP plan under Sustainable Community Development Objectives which outlines “To create an environment where people with disabilities can participate in communities with equal rights to live life to their full potential”.

An event like this, does not happen in isolation and the Kerry PPN, would like to thank Áine O’Sullivan of The Disability Federation of Ireland for her involvement and commitment to the workshops and to Senator John Dolan who travelled from Dublin to attend the workshop in Tralee.

A sincere thank you has to be expressed to all the facilitators and note takers who devoted their time, energy and commitment to participating and supporting the workshops, to the Access groups in Killarney, Tralee and Killorglin who played an invaluable part in the organisation: to Mr. John Breen, Director of Services and Mr. Michael Scannell , Director of Services Kerry County Council, and finally to Kerry County Council’s Community Department who supported all the workshops.



THE KERRY PPN SECRETARIAT

Bill Morrell, Environment pillar, Charlie Farrelly, Killarney MD area, Gillian Wharton Slattery, Tralee MD area, Caroline Toal, Kerry PPN Development Officer, Maura Fitzgerald, Social Inclusion pillar, Dr. Catherine Mc Mullin, Environment Pillar, Sean Quinlan, Listowel MD area, Matt Mooney, Community and Voluntary pillar, John Spillane, Social Inclusion pillar. Missing from photograph Niamh Ní Dhuill, Environment, Mary Grandfield South and West MD area. Siobhan Griffin KCC.

We would like to thank Kerry County Council for their assistance in the publication of this report through the Community Enhancement Programme 2018.

FOREWORD

ACCESS FOR ALL



PJ CLEERE

Coordinator of the DFI Community Development Team

DFI has had the privilege to work in partnership with Kerry PPN to run the Access for All – Disability Awareness Workshops in Co. Kerry. Strategies and action plans which are framed by people in their communities, for their own communities are always the most effective. But to achieve this requires insight and leadership. It also requires direct participation and engagement by local stakeholders in a process which is accessible, and where local stakeholders recognise that their input and experiences are heard.

The Secretariat of Kerry PPN has demonstrated this kind of leadership and DFI is proud to have been involved as a partner in this project. I would like to thank our colleague Áine O Sullivan for her work and commitment to this project on behalf of DFI and I would also like to thank Caroline Toal, Resource Worker with the Kerry PPN.

In particular I would like to acknowledge the people who participated in the workshops. It is through their participation most of all that real change can take place. Change must be felt where people live, train, work and participate in leisure and other activities. This is not the task of any single agency. This project demonstrates that agencies and communities working together can and will deliver real change where it matters most.



ÁINE O'SULLIVAN



Community Development Worker for Disability Federation of Ireland

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kerry Public Participation Network Secretariat and their fantastic resource worker Caroline Toal, who Disability Federation of Ireland have worked alongside to run the Access for all – Disability Awareness workshops in Co. Kerry as part of the Local Economic and Community Pan.

Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) is the national support organisation for (120+) voluntary disability organisations in Ireland who provide services to people with disabilities and disabling conditions. DFI also acts as an advocate for people with disabilities across the country and supports organisations to improve their services

The Access for All – Disability Awareness workshop initiative started in early January 2017 where DFI were asked to come on board and work in collaboration on a common goal;

'To create an environment where people with disabilities can participate in communities with equal rights to live life to their full potential'

The workshop offered people with a disability, their families and people working in the area of disability to have their voice heard in their local area and County for the first time. It hosted a space where people could network and encourage people to understand issues and then solve those problems using their unique, first-hand experience. This is important we gave the expert, people with lived experience of disability a chance to come up with their own solutions.

The workshop is very relevant to people with a disability today as we seen on April 19th 2018 the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was ratified in Ireland. This has not given people with disabilities additional Rights but it underpins the Rights already in existence which are internationally monitored. It also presents the potential for sanctions where nations are found to be in contravention of the convention.

The following articles are very relevant to this process:


- **Article 9** - Accessibility – To enable persons with a disability to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life on an equal bases as others.
- **Article 19** – Living independently and being included in the Community – To live in the community, with choice equal to others.
- **Article 30** – Participating in Cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport – to recognise the right of persons with disability to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life.

The requirement for Public Bodies to adhere to these Articles, Public Sector Duty and Equality Legislation is at the heart of every action being carried out in all communities.

Having being involved throughout the development and roll out of the workshop in Killareny, Tralee, Listowel and Killorglin it has opened many doors for people with a disability.

None of this ground breaking work would have been possible without the support of Kerry County Council which we are very grateful for. Working closely with the council has had a huge effect throughout the county and we are looking forward to support a joint up thinking *'To create an environment where people with disabilities can participate in communities with equal rights to live life to their full potential'*.

“It was wonderful to get the opportunity to meet others from different organisations and to learn about the challenges that face their client groups.”





ACCESS FOR ALL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



BACKGROUND

During the development of the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2022, Kerry County Council, recognised the importance of collaboration between all stakeholders – both private/public and organisational/individual. Kerry County Council acknowledged that in order to get support for actions to be taken and fulfilled, the Local Economic and Community Plan must mirror the collective socio-economic ambitions of all Kerry stakeholders.

With this in mind, the Kerry Public Participation Network was tasked as the lead agency to support and facilitate some of the high level goals and objectives under the section Community and Social Inclusion.

Goal 3.7 of the Kerry Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 set outs to;

'Create an environment where people with disabilities can participate in communities with equal rights to live life to their full potential'

In order to achieve this goal, the PPN identified the need for a consultative process in order to engage with people with disabilities, with organisations representing people with a disability, and with other agencies and Non-Government Organisations.

Following on from consultation with the Killarney Access Group and the Disability Federation of Ireland, it was agreed to host a pilot workshop in Killarney and to use the learning gleaned from this workshop as a template that could be replicated throughout the county.

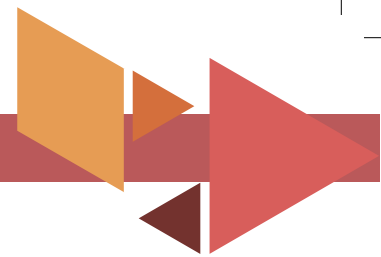
The 'Access for All' Accessibility Report was commissioned by the Kerry Public Participation Network (PPN) and the Disability Federation of Ireland as an analysis and evaluation of accessibility for those with disabilities in County Kerry.

The purpose of this report is to identify the current level of accessibility and inclusion in Kerry services for those with disabilities. The report is based on the 'Access for All - Disability Awareness Workshop" devised by the Kerry Public Participation Network that acted as an access for all audit through-out the four municipal districts of Kerry.

METHODOLOGY

The workshops took place in the four municipal districts of County Kerry on the following dates::

KILLARNEY	5th September 2017
TRALEE	27th February 2018
LISTOWEL	25th September 2018
SOUTH & WEST	25th October 2018



The format for the workshops in each location was based on a round table discussion between participants attending the workshops. This type of format allows for people to share information in a short timeframe. It also provides valuable networking of individuals, community and voluntary organisations and state agencies at each table.

A broad range of individuals such as those with disabilities, different support agencies, Kerry PPN Representatives, as well as Kerry County Council (KCC) staff from several departments, attended and fully contributed to the discussions of the workshops. The round-table, thematic format, facilitated people to actively participate and discuss the key issues under each of the four Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) themes.

1. Economic Development and Enterprise;
2. Operations;
3. Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation;
4. Quality of Life.

OUTCOMES

This report provides an analysis of the issues identified and recommendations made under each SPC for each of the Municipal Districts at the public workshops.

The “Access for all – disability awareness” workshops proved to be very successful. This is clearly evidenced by the words and feedback from the participants. The themes examined by the participants at the workshop and the feedback from the roundtable discussions has provided valuable information. The actions arising

from the workshop now need to be pursued to make Kerry a more disability-friendly county.

Across all discussions it was clear that there had been a void in providing a basic discussion forum to begin exploring the issues. The workshop provided a good starting point with regard to a conversation around addressing this need.

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

Transport continues to be a major issue for many people with a disability, and that includes both urban and rural settings. Accessibility of vehicles also needs to be included in the provision of transport. Overall, a county transport strategy is required to begin addressing the substantial challenges involved in ensuring the inclusion of people with disabilities in everyday life.

Access to information was also highlighted as an ongoing issue. Better use of new technologies needs to be examined, as this can greatly assist in addressing communications. However, it is not a cure-all and consideration must also be given to the provision of paper-based information and forms. Some solutions are low-cost, or no-cost, but will greatly add to the convenience and comfort of people with disabilities.

There seemed to be a lack of awareness among those attending this workshop of the existence and role of Kerry County Council Disability Access Officer. Feedback called for this post to be strengthened, made full-time, and for links with the disability sector to be developed. This would help to address the perception of a lack of coordination between Kerry

County Council departments when responding to disability matters.

Access to employment for people with disabilities continues to be an issue, with people with disabilities finding it much harder to gain employment than able-bodied people. From table discussions it is suggested that Kerry County actively promote the employment of people with a disability to employers.

Under the Quality of Life SPC, a key issue highlighted is that of housing. This relates to supply, as there is insufficient availability of housing, to universal design of all social housing, and to the speeding-up and simplification of the home-renovation grant scheme. It was also emphasised under this theme, that additional



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



social supports are required to assist people with disabilities in applying for housing and housing grants etc. Another issue highlighted under this theme is access to community-managed facilities; participants would like to see grant-aid conditional on improving the access and inclusion of those with a disability.

Workshop participants stated the absence of measures to ensure their inclusion in cultural events and venues. This links in with the theme of tourism; with Kerry being a major destination, it is felt that it is not disability-friendly to tourists and visitors. Participants felt strongly that as a lead tourism county, Kerry should now lead out on the development of a disability-friendly tourism strategy, thereby enhancing the attractiveness of the county for visitors with disabilities as well as for Kerry people with a disability.

Workshop participants are now keen to see progress arising from this workshop. Expectations are now raised, and it is important to maintain momentum on the initiative. The PPN can now begin to engage with the SPCs to plan for incorporating the proposed actions into work plans.

When considering the range of issues and actions highlighted in this report, it is important to bear in mind the effects of reduced opportunities for people with disabilities; i.e. community involvement is compromised, independence is limited, contributing to feeling excluded and to poorer mental health. It is the responsibility of all concerned to take full advantage of the current opportunity to develop strategic relationships

and plans to ensure the full inclusion of Kerry citizen's with a disability.





ACCESS FOR ALL

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

KERRY PPN

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES



THE KERRY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

PPNs are collectives of environmental, social inclusion, community and voluntary organisations in the county which;

- Facilitate the participation and representation of communities in a fair, equitable and transparent manner through the environmental, social inclusion, community and voluntary sectors on decision making bodies.
- Strengthen the capacity of communities and of the environmental, social inclusion, community and voluntary groups to contribute positively to the community in which they reside/participate.
- Provide information relevant to the environmental, social inclusion, community and voluntary sector and acts as a hub around which information is distributed and received.

Having PPN representation on a Board or Committee is a huge advantage. It enables the concerns and experiences of the community to be incorporated at an early stage of policy development, leading to more positive outcomes. It also supports the monitoring and evaluation of existing policies. The PPN are the main link through which the Local Authority (LA) connects with the community, voluntary, environmental and social inclusion sectors and the PPN will enable the public to take an active role in the policy making and oversight activities of the Local Authorities area of responsibility.





KERRY PPN

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES



Participatory

Accountable

Independent

Inclusive

**PRINCIPLES AND
VALUES OF PPN**

Valuing of Diversity

Transparent





AIMS OF THE REPORT

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES



During the development of the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2022, Kerry County Council, recognised the importance of collaboration between all stakeholders – both private/public and organisational/individual. Kerry County Council acknowledged that in order to get support for actions to be taken and fulfilled, the Local Economic and Community Plan must mirror the collective socio-economic ambitions of all Kerry stakeholders.

This plan clearly sets out high level goals, objectives and actions required to promote and support local economic and community development within the county. Through agreed coordinated actions, Kerry can advance as a prosperous, modern and forward-thinking region, with a high quality of life offering.

With this in mind, the Kerry Public Participation Network was tasked as the lead agency to support and facilitate some of the high goals and objectives under the section Community and Social Inclusion.

Following on from consultation with the Killarney Access Group and the Disability Federation of Ireland, it was agreed to host a pilot workshop in Killarney and to use the learning gleaned from this workshop as a template that could be replicated throughout the county.

High level goal 3.7 of Kerry Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 states;

'To create an environment where people with disabilities can participate in communities with

equal rights to live life to their full potential'

In order to achieve this goal the PPN identified the need for a consultative process in order to engage with people with disabilities, with organisations representing people with a disability, and with other agencies and Non Government Organisations.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES:

- To create an awareness of the challenges people with disabilities face.
- To strengthen links and improve communication between community, voluntary and statutory agencies.
- To support the involvement of people with disabilities in decision-making, through the Public Participation Network.
- To develop a disability representative group at county level linked to the PPN which represents people with disabilities in Co. Kerry.
- To hold workshops that would be strategically focussed around the work of the four Strategic Policy Committees of Kerry County Council.
- To have clear next steps built in so that at the end of the workshop, all participants would be aware of a feedback meeting.

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

THE WORKSHOPS TOOK PLACE IN THE FOUR MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS OF COUNTY KERRY:

- Killarney, 5th September 2017
- Tralee, 27th February 2018
- Listowel, 25th September 2018
- South and West, 25th October 2018

METHODOLOGY AND FORMAT OF WORKSHOP:

The format for the workshops was round-table; a variation of the World-Café format www.theworldcafe.com. This type of format allows for a lot of people to share information in a short timeframe. It also provides valuable networking of individuals, community and voluntary organisations and state agencies at each table. To ensure the most effective and efficient running for the afternoon, it was agreed to limit the number of tables to 8, with a maximum of 10 people per table, consisting of 6-8 participants, a table facilitator and note-taker.

Each table discussed questions relating to the work of the SPCS with 25 minutes per SPC. Notes were taken at each table and fed back to the facilitator.

The 5th round of discussions looked at the High-Level Goal 3.7 from the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2022 –

“Develop a disability representative group at county level linked to the PPN which represents people with disabilities in Co. Kerry”.

The participants of the workshops then evaluated, through a survey, the overall efficiency of the workshop in reaching its goals.



Strategic Context

ACCESS FOR ALL



Below are the local, regional and national plans and strategies that support and implement the objectives of the 'Access for All' evaluation.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Kerry County Development Plan 2015-2021 was adopted by the Elected Members of Kerry County Council on 16th February 2015 and is effective since 16th March 2015.

The County Development Plan 2015-2021 incorporates the aims, objectives, policies and guidelines to provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Kerry. The County Development Plan is a spatial planning framework that gives effect to the delivery of sustainable and planned economic and social development in a manner consistent with higher level plans and strategies such as the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 and the South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.

THIS PLAN INCLUDES:

Public Participation

Consultation with the public is fundamental to the Plan making process. A number of consultation methods were used including publishing public notices (in newspapers and on the Council website) inviting written submissions; public meetings and drop-in sessions. The various issues arising from the consultation process informed the preparation of the Plan.

Social Inclusion

Social Inclusion aims to ensure that everybody should have the right to fulfil their potential, through access to high quality public services, education, employment opportunities and adequate housing in an attractive and safe environment. It is therefore important that our living, working and leisure environments are designed and maintained in a manner to ensure people of all backgrounds and circumstances can achieve equality and access to the facilities and services needed to achieve their own potential in life. The Development Plan has an important role in promoting social inclusion in the County and includes a range of strategies to promote access to housing, community facilities and public transport.

Access

Physical access is key to creating a socially inclusive community. It has been common practice to address physical access by focusing on 'special needs' of the elderly or the disabled. This has resulted in policies and objectives that segregate access and therefore people by making provision for different groups in different ways – for example by providing steps for the able bodied and ramped access for wheelchair users. Kerry County Council is committed to contributing to the development of a more inclusive public realm which allows all people to use space in the same way – and on equal terms.

LOCAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP) 2016 -2022

The Local Economic & Community Plan is an integrated plan to guide the development of Co. Kerry from an Economic, Community, Cultural, Sporting and Recreation perspective from 2016 to 2022. This plan will be used to focus the role of Local Government, State Agencies, Community Sector, Local Development Groups and other bodies that are involved in the development of County Kerry. This plan is being guided by the Local Community Development Committee in co-operation with the Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee of Kerry County Council.

RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE LECP TO THIS STUDY:

Chapter 6: Quality of Life

2.3 To devise practical locally appropriate responses to address difficulties in accessing services in consultation with stakeholders.

2.3.3 Support initiatives that improve access for people with disabilities.

2.4 To ensure that inclusive citizen engagement is promoted and supported at all levels so that people and communities affected by a decision or a policy are part of the decision-making process.

Chapter 7: Community and Social Inclusion

3.7 To create an environment where people with disabilities can participate in communities with equal rights to live life to their full potential.

3.7.1.1 Draw up a Disability Action Plan for County Kerry in consultation with all of the stakeholders and the Local Disability Consultative Forum.

3.7.1.2 Ensure that people with disability can participate fully.

3.7.2.1 Carry out a baseline physical access audit through- out the county to identify barriers to services and facilities.

3.7.2.2 Disability proof all new policies. Disability proofing aims to make sure that people with disabilities and their requirements are included from the start in the development of all structures, policies and practices. It is the basic tool of inclusion. Education and awareness raising of the needs of people with disabilities is the starting point for this process.

3.7.2.3 Promote Kerry as a “disability friendly” county through the development of “Disability Friendly” Flag Award.

3.7.2.4 Work in partnership with communities and other state agencies to establish Kerry as an international hub of good practice for its holistic approach to inclusion for people with disabilities.



STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES



BACKGROUND TO THE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES

Kerry County Council's Strategic Policy Committees for the next five years have been finalised. The committees, also known as SPCs include elected councillors and representatives of several sectors including business, farming, social inclusion groups and the community and voluntary sector. The number of Strategic Policy Committees has been reduced to four, following changes in local government structures. The committees include:

1. Economic Development and Enterprise;
2. Operations;
3. Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation;
4. Quality of Life.

The committees meet regularly to discuss policy issues which are often referred to them by a full council meeting. They also give several sectors in the county like trade unions and commercial groups an input on the formulation of council policies on a range of issues.

Background to the Strategic Policy Committees
Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) are local authority committees in city and county councils whose membership includes elected councillors, representatives of business, farming interests, environmental and conservation groups, trade unions and community and voluntary members. It is the task of the Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), as committees of the council, to advise

and assist the council in the formulation, development and review of policy. They have no remit in relation to routine operational matters regarding the delivery of services. The SPC system is intended to give councillors and relevant sectoral interests an opportunity for full involvement in the policy making process from the early stages.

Since 2014 at least one of the SPCs must be established to consider matters which relate to the functions of the local authority in relation to economic development and enterprise support. The chairperson of an SPC is appointed by the local authority while the sectoral interests are nominated by their organisation/group.

The number of SPCs in Kerry has been reduced to four and include:

1. Economic Development and Enterprise
2. Operations
3. Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation
4. Quality of Life

The primary role of the Strategic Policy Committees is to assist Kerry County Council in the formulation, development and review of policy. In this role, they will harness the experience and expertise of relevant external Bodies, which in turn enhances the overall role of Councillors by providing a platform for an input into policy formulation at an early stage.

Strategic Policy Committees also have a function in other non-statutory policy fields such as:

- Policy related to development of Work Programmes and the establishment of priorities for particular services.
- Consideration of the needs of people with disabilities in the formulation and Implementation of relevant policies.
- Integration of sustainability principles to particular services.
- The strategic monitoring of Local Authority services.

These Committees will not have power to decide or determine Council Policy; this power will continue to be a function of the Council acting as a Body. However, if the Strategic Policy Committee system is to work in a meaningful way, it will be important that the Council take full cognisance of the work of the Committees when deciding on policy matters.



THE FOUR COMMITTEES COVER THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

Economic Development and Enterprise

- Planning and sustainable development
- Capital infrastructure
- Business Support
- Economic Planning
- Promoting Kerry

Operations

- Transport Policy
- Service delivery plan
- Bye laws
- Casual trading


Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation

- Tourism
- Culture/Heritage
- Arts
- Irish Language
- Commemorative events
- Recreation policy
- Libraries

Economic Development and Enterprise

- Housing policy
- Social supports
- Environmental protection
- Rural transport
- Emergency services

“ Highly beneficial to understand the workings of the community and to align all the work various stakeholders are doing ”





ACCESS FOR ALL

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OPERATIONS STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



"Excellent networking opportunity"

ANALYSIS

The following provides an overview of the key issues that were raised and discussed under the Operations SPC Theme at each of the workshops in the MD areas.

Housing:

- It is important that young adults with disabilities are provided the same options as other adults when it is time to move out of the family home and live independently. Social and affordable housing should be accessible for people with disabilities so as they can live independently.

- There are limitations on housing grants and people also felt that there should be more information on grants and supports for people with disabilities.

Streetscapes and General Access

- Access in town and villages presents many problems for people with disabilities. Many of the towns and villages have old infrastructure in terms of footpaths and narrow streets which makes it difficult for people to move around the towns and villages freely.

- Further issues around 'obstacles' such as signs, refuse bins and illegal car parking also presents access issues for people with disabilities.

- Pedestrian crossings, and junctions need to be better designed to accommodate people with disabilities.

- Surfaces on footpaths and pedestrianised areas



repair, which again creates issues for people. Some surfaces are uneven or are dangerous when wet for people with poor mobility or visual impairments.

- Casual Trading in towns and villages can also create obstacles and reduce access and free movement around streets and pedestrianised areas.

- Hedgerows alongside footpaths if not cut back and maintained can also create obstacles.

- Street lighting where there are footpaths in many cases is inadequate. Public seating very often is of poor design and not accessible for people with disabilities or that are mobility impaired. For example, some seating is relatively low to the ground.

- More disabled parking spaces are needed and illegal parking on spaces that are available needs to be addressed by wardens. The design and location of future parking spaces should insure

that they are close to as many services as possible and that the design allows for adequate room for wheelchair users.

- Other public spaces such as graveyards are in many cases not accessible.

Public Parks

- Each MD has exceptional outdoor amenities in terms of public parks and playgrounds. However even though these Public Parks may be aesthetically of very good quality, there is an issue with universal access to some or all parts of these amenities. The issue of access for wheel chair users, uneven pathways and surfaces, steps, narrow paths and inaccessible public toilets are issues which should be addressed. The issue of some anti-social behaviour and fear of intimidation must also be addressed.
- Existing playgrounds are in many cases unsuitable for children with disabilities or have limited accessible play equipment.



Transport

- A key issue raised across all MDs and under each SPC was public transport. Given the geography of the County and the sporadic nature of settlements across the County, access to transport is essential to leading any sort of 'normal' life. In general, rural public transport is inadequate, but for people with disabilities the lack of accessible public transport prevents people from participating in everyday life.

Both Killarney and Tralee have a very few accessible taxis for urban centres of their size.

- Where there is public transport i.e. buses and trains, there are inadequate access to the trains and buses and the infrastructure at the terminals and stations are also inadequate. i.e. toilets, ramps, audio public announcements instead of audio and digital announcements on screens.
- The lack of transport in both urban and in particular rural areas is preventing people with disabilities in participating in work, education and social activities. Independence is also reduced due to the reliance on private transport through family and friends.



OPERATIONS STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



“The discussions at the table were very informative and interesting”

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are some of the generic recommendations under the Operations SPC that were put forward at the MD workshops.

- Implicit in all the discussions was the need to enforce existing by-laws, and priority areas include parking, street furniture, wheelie-bins/ refuse collection and building emergency evacuation.
- An assessment of built infrastructure (footpaths, pedestrian areas, pedestrian crossings, public toilets and public seating) needs to be carried out with a plan of works put in place to make necessary repairs to infrastructure where required and to install necessary infrastructure where needed.
- Bins, signs and casual trading stands should not be allowed on footpaths where it creates obstacles for wheel chair users and people visually impaired.
- Use of visual signs and audio announcements for warning signals and at any information point.
- There should be a review of best practice in urban and streetscape design in other counties and countries.
- All new building (residential public and residential) design should allow access for all.
- Tailored Social and affordable houses should be developed for people with disabilities.
- Education and training needed for businesses regarding disability awareness, consequences and a leaflet needed to support this and highlight the issues.
- Trader’s licences should include responsibility for their street frontage, not to allow it to become blocked or to obstruct people.
- Create greater awareness in towns of the access needs of people with disabilities. Develop partnership arrangements with traders, chamber groups etc.
- Information and advanced notice should be provided of public events, road works and any other possible events that would cause disruption and reduce access around a town or village.
- Playground design should incorporate accessible play equipment and disability parking spaces should be provided at all playgrounds.
- Conduct a review of transport policy in the county in relation to Accessible Taxis.
- Develop a countywide transport policy to include taxi, public and community transport availability and accessibility for all. SPCs to feed into development of the plan. Include Rural Transport, Public Transport in consultation with Local Link Kerry, Bus Eireann, and Transport

Infrastructure Ireland. This plan will look at Public and Rural transport and also look at the development of initiatives that support tourism in County Kerry.

- Kerry PPN to initiate a study on transport for people with disabilities.
- Improve connectivity between transport modes at Killarney and Tralee Train and Bus Stations.
- Make better use of technology for communications at bus stations and train stations.
- Continue to ensure footpaths are disability-friendly.
- Develop a disability representative group at county level linked to the PPN which represents people with disabilities in Co. Kerry. It should be made up of people on the ground, including people with disabilities and not just support agencies.
- Every disability grouping should be represented in this body.
- Disability group should always have a rep on the PPN Secretariat and should feature on each meetings agenda.
- Ensure there is funding for interpreters and other special requirements that might be needed.
- Chief executive and senior management team should be involved.
- A designated PPN representative from each PPN area.

- To ensure a two-way flow of information, the PPN feedback all agenda items to the Disability Network.

- Develop a disability representative platform at county level.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



“Excellent initiative”

ANALYSIS

At each of the workshops, people were asked to address how business and enterprise strategy and operations impact on people with disabilities as employees and also as service users. The following provides an overview of the key issues identified and also provides a set of recommendations that should influence economic and enterprise policy going forward.

Employment

- There is a major lack of employment for people with a disability.
- There is a perceived fear in the private business sector re employing a person with a disability, yet there are some examples of businesses making changes to facilitate employment; a change of culture is needed.
- Questions were raised regarding Kerry County Council plans for promoting Kerry as an accessible destination for remote workers and people with disabilities seeking employment.
- People with disabilities are “assigned” to a service provider. Their quality of life is affected by the funding given to that service provider.
- Disability Organisations need to focus on employment opportunities and pathways to employment using a client centred approach, where the client is empowered to have choice in their training or career paths. There are too many people with disabilities that are either unemployed or under employed.

- Employment Schemes such as Community Employment (CE), Rural Social Scheme (RSS) and TÚS need to adapt to the capabilities of people with disabilities.
- There needs to be greater incentives for businesses to employ people with disabilities. More information needs to be given to employers about the incentives that do exist.
- Employment focused training and education opportunities for people with disabilities need to be supported and implemented.
- There should be greater supports for people with disabilities who chose to start their own business. Secondary benefits should be maintained if they take up self-employment.
- Social service providers do not have or provide access to resources for job coaching. Business Premises
- Concern was expressed regarding fire safety in buildings such as bars and night clubs which are often overcrowded. It was felt that regulations are not being enforced.
- Commercial and public building design needs to factor in access for all and existing building regulations must be enforced.
- There is not enough disability access at events, seminars, trade shows etc.
- Service centres such as post offices and banks are very often not accessible. ATM machines, too high as are the counters in the banks, post offices
- People with disabilities visiting Kerry need to have knowledge of where they are visiting, accessibility, maps and signposting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Chambers of Commerce across the county should be engaged and consulted with in developing an access for all strategy at local level. This strategy would outline potential actions to be implemented with all business sectors, in an effort to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities and to promote better access for customers with disabilities.
- All disability groups should be consulted as part of next review of the County Development Plan, Local Area Plans and any economic strategy planning process. It would be an ideal opportunity for the proposed 'Disability Linkage Group'.
- The SPC to lead, facilitate and incentivise employment of people with disabilities in all business sectors in the county.
- Consult with unions and employer's forums to support and promote the employment of people with disabilities.
- Meet the target that 1/3 of staff in public offices should be people with a disability.
- The ratio of opportunities and equal access to employment should be surveyed and monitored.
- Employers should be encouraged to hire a certain percentage of disabled people.
- Reduce employment barriers for people with disabilities by giving business training, education and employment.
- Provide more information on becoming employed with a disability.

- Local Employment Office should have targets for disability start-up businesses. Mentoring support would be highly beneficial.
- Business owners and workers should be upskilled in disability awareness.
- There is limited awareness of the role of Kerry County Council ACCESS Officer. There was a consensus that the Access Officer position should be whole-time and should work across all SPCs, KCC policies and Development Plan to ensure strategies and targets are achieved. The role would also have responsibilities to liaise with disability agencies about issues including housing, transport, services, and ensure information provision is accessible.
- Kerry County Council website and facebook page to be consumer friendly. Make more use of social media.
- Information and Forms - All information needs to be in a format that is accessible (easy read, Plain English)
- Provide sign language interpreter for KCC public meetings and events
- Create a programme for better cohesion between departments and provide disability training for all Kerry County Council and Public Sector staff.



TOURISM CULTURE, ARTS AND RECREATION SPC

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



“Really good engagement and involvement”

ANALYSIS

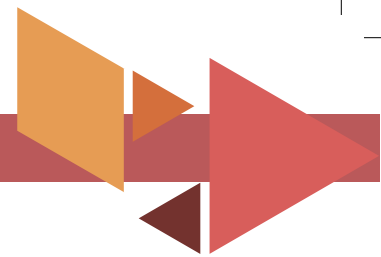
Tourism is a very important industry sector in Co. Kerry, and it is of huge economic benefit in terms of job creation and visitor spend each year. The key question is how do we make Kerry a suitable destination for visitors with Disabilities.

The following provides an overview of the key issues identified and provides a series of recommendations that will influence disability tourism strategy.

Tourism Infrastructure

- It was felt there is a lack of joined up thinking and action in relation to communication with people with disabilities on what is available under the Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation Strategic Policy Committee.
- Many cultural and recreational events do not take people with disabilities into account e.g. for parking and access
- It was felt that Kerry is not accessible as a tourist destination. People with a disability are not able to travel The Ring of Kerry in tour buses, sites are not accessible.
- While some accommodation is advertised as being accessible in many instances it is only partially accessible. There are inconsistent standards.
- Co. Kerry needs to take a lead in ensuring accommodation and visitor sites become truly accessible to visitors with disabilities.

- There is limited accessibility to hotels, bars and restaurants as they may have only steps to access the building, the buildings do not have adequate space and/or their tables are too low for wheelchairs.
- Accessible Public Transport is limited and needs to be addressed if we are to promote the County as an access for all destination.
- Lack of visual displays for hearing impaired and display units not subtitled.
- Heritage buildings, museums and theatres are not always accessible to people with disabilities.
- Guided Tours in many cases are not considerate of the hearing impaired.
- Irish Language has no support for translation.
- It was stated that access to hubs for services, culture and recreation is an issue as infrastructure and facilities are not suitable.
- Signing is limited for those with hearing disabilities.
- Places are not suitable for certain hidden disabilities – such as those who can’t cope with loud noise and bright lights.
- Some bus tours do not describe accessibility of tour destination and leads to lack of involvement and inclusion on arrival.
- Access to beaches is limited.
- Playgrounds are not fully accessible by way of equipment.
- During Kerry Arts Week there is a lack of available information in Braille and a lack of inclusion or engagement of any of those with disabilities.



- Loop systems for the hearing impaired are not always available and this can be dangerous for big public events.

- Outdoor facilities funded by community social fund are not inclusive.

Libraries

- A query was raised as to the accessibility of all Kerry public libraries.

- There are not enough books for people with an intellectual disability.

- People with intellectual disabilities need easy to read material or APPs.

- Issues for people with visual impairment need more audio books and braille.

- There are few books for people with intellectual disability.

- The mobile library is not accessible.

- A library card is not easy to get if you have a disability.

- Need more information on where the library is, access, services available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A suggestion was made to refer organisers to the Universal Transformational Management Framework, which is felt to be an excellent tool to inform people of what is needed before holding any event.

- People would like to see Kerry County Council ensuring that sign-language interpreters, Braille and large text are made available for KCC public events.

- Access audits at public beaches, visitor attractions and heritage/culture sites should be carried out with a plan of works produced for required infrastructure. The beach wheelchair initiative was complemented and should be expanded.

- Enforce regulations ensuring every recreation centre is accessible.

- It was proposed that future Kerry County Council Community Support Fund support a theme of greater access.



TOURISM CULTURE, ARTS AND RECREATION SPC

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



"Great energy"

- Community Support Fund to report on level of funding received by disability groups.
- Community Fund and other funds for facilities and initiatives to ensure access and inclusion are included in all form of funding. Follow up on this requirement to ensure compliance, and if not, to withdraw funding.
- Kerry as a Tourism County, needs to ensure appropriate access for people with disabilities.
- Tour operators need to provide accessible buses.
- Develop a pilot project in County Kerry to promote tourism which is accessible for all. E.g. all aspects of a tourist project in Kerry to be fully accessible. This initiative would include Tourism Dept. KCC, Failte Ireland and disabilities organisations.
- SPCS & KCC to adapt the Irish Sign Language.
- Ensure full accessibility of the proposed Greenways in South Kerry, Listowel, Fenit/ Tralee e.g. the surface, seating, information and signage (audio, Braille).
- Pursue total accessibility in all hotels and guesthouses, as well as food and drink outlets to ensure Kerry is to the fore for people with disabilities. This must have full support of KCC.
- Develop initiatives to encourage accommodation providers to ensure greater accessibility in their premises e.g. visual fire alarms, vibrating alarm clock, subtitles on TV and accessible bathrooms.
- KCC Arts Dept. to develop an arts inclusion policy for people with disabilities.
- Ensure all Cultural and Heritage sites are accessible where practical.
- Better use of technology such as large signs, Braille, pictorial signs etc for KCC public and commemorative events.
- Make public parks more accessible.
- Greater wheelchair accessibility in Cinemas and specific screenings could be provided for people with sensory needs, lighting, sound etc.
- Include accessibility in Kerry County Council Tourism Strategy. Include participation of people with Disabilities on the SPC.
- Publish a map for towns with a specific logo identifying disability friendly sites.
- Implement universal design to ensure all are included. New buildings should be completely accessible to all.
- More public awareness and training needed.
- Public toilets need to be updated.
- More taxis are needed for those with physical disabilities around Kerry.

- Look at grants available for transport for people with disabilities for example for more accessible taxis.
- A disability inspector is needed to monitor, report and control disability spaces.
- Transport needs an audit. A local audit would inform a regional audit.
- Up to date research is required on the numbers of people with disabilities visiting Kerry – should be undertaken by Tourism Ireland or Fáilte Ireland.
- Educate people about hidden disabilities, that if you can't see a disability it does not mean one is not present. e.g. someone walking out of a car in a disabled spot does not mean they do not have another condition. Educate young children.
- Study needed to address sensory issues like has been addressed in Lidl.
- Establish a Disability Access Strategic Policy Committee.
- Set up an Access Award for towns and financial support for improvements with relation to access.
- Increase parking spaces to 25ft to allow for wheelchairs to exit vehicles.

Libraries:

- Computers should be available for people with disabilities.
- The library should provide someone that can help people with disabilities.
- More funding is required to provide services to people with disabilities.
- Make libraries fully accessible, not just getting into the building, but more audio books etc.
- Library could go into partnership with other voluntary bodies doing excellent work.
- Make all libraries fully accessible.
- Increase supply of easy read books for people with an intellectual disability.
- Investigate accessibility for the Mobile Library.



QUALITY OF LIFE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



“Important seminar which raised a lot of issues”

ANALYSIS

A key aim of the access for all analysis and report is to address issues that have an impact on the quality of life, access to opportunities and participation in society by People with Disabilities. The following provides an analysis of the issues identified and the recommended actions put forward at the MD workshops.

- Participants acknowledged that those with disabilities are being viewed as disadvantaged and although they have the same rights as everyone else, must fight for everything and are frequently marginalised. Lack of awareness has led to limited access both physically and interactively which means that those with disabilities have less opportunities for inclusion and a poorer quality of life.
- Issues with HAP and rented accommodation which is substandard. Landlords should be held accountable. Housing applicants are also being offered unsuitable properties and some adapted houses can be in unsuitable locations such as areas with little accessible transport or footpaths.
- It is commonly felt that there is a huge lack of accessible housing for people with a disability.
- Another complaint is that the processes of applying for social housing and for applying for the Housing Adaptation Grant are lengthy and complicated especially for some people with a disability who may require additional supports in accessing services.

- There is a lack of available supports to help people with disabilities.
- Transport has impacted the quality of life of people with disabilities, especially those in rural areas as the limited availability of disability access buses or taxis. This results in rural isolation and an inability for participation in education, employment and social activities, and has an impact on mental health and well-being.
- Transfer from one transport to another in the county can also be difficult although necessary which hinders the ability to travel freely.
- When considering contact with emergency services it was a concern that those with visual or hearing disabilities did not have adequate access to emergency services. It was also a concern that were a critical event or a catastrophe to happen that there was no national or local plan to secure the safety of those with disabilities, leading to fear of safety.
- It was stated that there is a lack of communication between KCC Access Officer and support groups, with some groups not being aware until this workshop of the existence of the position.
- Lack of public awareness for integration and awareness of those with intellectual disabilities.
- It was commented that Respite services are limited in Kerry and few have availability. These services were identified as key for both carer and those with a disability, but that funding has been cut.

- Children and teenagers with severe behaviour and mental health issues can be waiting a long time to be seen by the CAMHS and can then sometimes receive minimal service which causes a struggle for the parents and the child.
- It is very difficult to access good public funded residential services for children or young people with severe mental health and behavioural issues.
- There is a general worry about accessing emergency services, it is stated that emergency services sometimes find it difficult to find rural locations and that selecting options once the emergency services have been contacted is not accessible for all disabilities, which causes vulnerability and fear.
- There is a limited access to funding and social support for very young children due to an age restriction.




RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a county housing policy with universal design.
- Develop greater links between Kerry County Council and disability agencies.
- Enhance the role of Kerry County Council Access Officer. It should be a full-time position with a clear role and responsibility towards people with a disability.
- Improve the social supports for people with a disability to access Kerry County Council Services.
- Simplify the application process and provide easy-to-read accessible information.
- Use HSE database – NIDD to inform future housing planning.
- Identify the percentage of housing available to people with a disability in the county.
- Ensure the housing meets emergency evacuation regulations.
- Ensure social housing is included in new housing by developers.
- Support independent living, need purpose- built housing for people with disabilities.
- Better to keep people in their own homes, better society and more inclusive.
- Need more housing schemes like Cluid.
- Better use of technology; install hearing loop system, visual aids and speakers in KCC public offices.
- Individualisation of each case for certain grants.
- Need more campaigns to ensure people feel safe in their own home.

- Need to work with Bus Eireann towards inclusion.
- Public transport should be seen as a right and should be honoured and provided for disabled people.
- A sharing of private cars scheme should be set up for people with disabilities.
- Respite centres need to become more available or the buddy system should be introduced, as these systems aid the quality of life of both the carer and the those with a disability.
- Pendant alarms should be available.
- Emergency services should be aware of location difficulties and accessibility regarding some calls for people with a disability.
- There needs to be more consideration of those with hearing disabilities with regards to ability contacting the emergency services.
- Ensure adequate evacuation facilities and procedures in public buildings.
- Make early assessment of children and social support more accessible.
- It was suggested that there should be a register of those with disabilities for the emergency services and their needs and a panic button should be available for those people, where necessary. Carers or those with disabilities should be made aware of Eircodes and be encouraged to put Eircodes next to the telephone for the case of an emergency.

“Very informative, a positive step towards integrating different organisations to work to a specific aim”





ACCESS FOR ALL

SUMMARY OF THE KEY ISSUES RAISED
AT EACH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT WORKSHOP

TRALEE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

ISSUES IDENTIFIED



"Would like to have decision makers present"

TOURISM, CULTURE, ARTS AND RECREATION SPC

Transport:

- Train spaces are limited.
- Illegal parking on access spaces.
- There are only 3 accessible taxi's in Tralee.
- Very disjointed rural transport, lack of choice or no choice.
- Tralee Peoples Bus – needs to be rejuvenated.
- Cycle lanes are not policed, cars park in them and cyclists don't use them.
- Cycle lanes are inadequate and dangerous.
- Abuse of disability parking discs.

Tourism:

- Lack of visual displays for hearing impaired and display units not subtitled.
- Accessible tourism accommodation is limited.
- Heritage houses are not always accessible to people with disabilities.
- Siamsa Tire has very little space for wheelchair users.
- Historic sites are difficult to navigate.
- Irish Language has no support for translation.

Recreational:

- Lack of trained personnel specific to disability.
- People need to accompany those with intellectual disabilities, which can make it hard for those with disabilities to participate and take up classes.



- Access to cultural facilities, cinema, theatres, art galleries etc can be an issue.
- Loop systems for the hearing impaired are not always available and this can be dangerous for big public events.
- Outdoor facilities funded by the community support fund are not inclusive.
- Playground equipment is not accessible.

Libraries:

- People with intellectual disabilities need easy to read material or APPs.
- Issues for people with visual impairment. Need more audio books and braille.
- Tralee library is good for children but not adults.
- There are few books for people with intellectual disability.
- The mobile library is not accessible.
- A library card is not easy to get if you have a disability.
- A toilet code is needed which restricts access and space is narrow.

OPERATIONS SPC

Housing:

- Limitations on housing grants.
- No opportunities for people who want to move out and live independently.
- Where additional supports are required regarding housing, no funds are available.
- There are delays with housing improvements and access to information for those with an intellectual disability.
- The threshold for grants is too high and families have to fund raise.
- Adult life should be accessible at the age of eighteen.
- Lack of information and user-friendly information on housing grants for people with disabilities.

General Access:

- Street cleaning: footpaths are covered in dog fouling, rubbish and chewing gum, broken glass is a major problem.
- Footpaths are uneven.
- Parking on footpaths.
- Wheelie bins and signs are obstructions.
- Non-slip surfaces are fading and wearing away.
- Overgrown hedges coming onto the footpath.
- The square in Tralee centre is slippery and this needs to be addressed.
- Visually impaired have a serious issue with cars parked on footpaths, wheelie bins signage etc.
- Pedestrian crossing – need lights/buttons for those with intellectual disability.

- There are issues with lighting on streets and areas need to be brighter for safety.
- Disabled parking spaces are very tight, there is no room between spaces and the cars behind, and therefore no room for a ramp for a wheelchair.

Town Park:

- The pathways are too narrow in town parks.
- Security is an issue in the town park.
- Gates are locked too early and the small gate that is left open is not wheel chair accessible.
- The playground needs equipment for children with disabilities.
- Casual trading can obstruct access.
- Public toilets can be difficult to access, they are small and hard to move the chair in and out.
- Timing crossing the road for people with disabilities is too tight and cars don't stop.
- Poor suitable seating for people with disability.

Casual Trading:

- Stalls make access difficult and there should be a designated and convenient area.
- Festivals in town make access nearly impossible for people with disabilities, the town is too busy, congested and not safe. There are problems with railings and access.



TRALEE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

ISSUES IDENTIFIED



"I felt it was very interesting and enjoyable"

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

General:

- No universal access design for all.
- A serious lack of involvement by the Local Authority.
- Sustainability is not being achieved.
- People are sitting at home alone with no way to access the world outside, especially in rural areas.
- People with disabilities are "assigned" to a service provider. Their quality of life is affected by the funding given to that service provider.

Building and Planning:

- Not enough spaces at events.
- Not enough suitable spaces.
- Planning and sustainable development, - people with disabilities not catered for.
- ATM machines, too high as is the counters in the banks, post offices.
- Inadequate planning legislation and guidelines.
- House design is an issue, adults with disabilities living with their parents, should have their own independent space.

Employment:

- People with disabilities are unemployed and/or under employed.
- CE Schemes need to adapt to the capabilities of people with disabilities.
- More incentives to employers.

- Disability groups not specifically targeted with information at most events, lack of information.
- Education, training and employment, not specifically mentioned in any of the 4 SPC's.
- No disability training for staff.
- Transport is a barrier for allowing someone with a disability taking up work.

Promoting Kerry:

- People with disabilities visiting Kerry need to have knowledge of where they are visiting, accessibility, maps and signposting.
- Accessible transport is a barrier for promoting Kerry as a disability friendly county.





QUALITY OF LIFE SPC

General:

- Disabled people are being viewed as disadvantaged. They have the same rights as everyone else yet must fight for everything and are frequently marginalised.
- A high level of trust has to be established by people to avail of services.
- Social supports – most sports facilities are not accessible to children or adults with disabilities.
- Emergency services – There is a delay arriving at a house, negotiating bad roads.
- Emergency services – for a critical event plans are not in place on a national and local level for a catastrophe / critical event.

Housing:

- Issues with HAP, rented accommodation substandard, landlords should be held accountable.
- Disability grants: complicated forms, means test is not fair and deters people from applying, lack of available supports to help people with disabilities.

Transport:

- There is rural isolation as there is very little transport and out of hours, it is even more limited.
- Very few taxis.
- The local Tralee People's bus is not accessible.
- Transfer from one transport to another in the county can be difficult.
- Public walks are too narrow.
- A sharing of private cars scheme should be set up for people with disabilities.



KILLARNEY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

ISSUES IDENTIFIED



"An excellent day, where it will be wonderful to see progress from it"

TOURISM, CULTURE, ARTS AND RECREATION SPC

General:

- It was felt there is a lack of joined up thinking and action in relation to communication with people with disabilities on what is available under this Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation Strategic Policy Committee.
- Many cultural and recreational events do not take people with disabilities into account e.g. for parking and access
- A suggestion was made to refer organisers to the Universal Transformational Management Framework, which is felt to be an excellent tool to inform people of what is needed before holding any event.
- People would like to see Kerry County Council ensuring that sign-language interpreters, Braille and large text are made available for KCC public events.
- It was felt that Kerry is not accessible as a tourist destination. People with a disability are not able to travel The Ring of Kerry in tour buses, sites are not accessible.
- While some accommodation is advertised as being accessible in many instances it is only partially accessible. There are inconsistent standards.
- Kerry County needs to take a lead in ensuring accommodation and visitor sites become truly accessible to visitors with disabilities.

Libraries

- Killarney library toilets aren't wheelchair accessible.
- A query was raised as to the accessibility of all Kerry public libraries.
- There are not enough books for people with an intellectual disability.

OPERATIONS

Transport

- Accessible Taxi. There is only 1 accessible taxi in Killarney, with very little availability outside town. Questions were raised as to how come 7 licences were awarded but yet only one vehicle is in operation.
- Parking spaces for people with disabilities are abused, and disability parking permits are also abused.
- For Killarney town there is no direct connection between the bus station and the train station even though they are side by side.
- While CIE has an accessible bus it is not in use because the infrastructure is not in place
- Lack of transport is a barrier to participation for people with disabilities. Accessible public and community transport is limited especially for rural areas

- Policy needs to be developed regarding the suitability of accessible vehicles, in particular with regard to side access as it is not appropriate. Also, the height of the step, the doorway and storage of equipment needs to be taken into consideration.

- It was felt that there needs to be a better system for providing ramps for trains

- People with hearing difficulties can't hear public announcements at bus and train stations, there is a need for signage also, and technology can be better used.

Roads/ Streets;

- The biggest issue under this heading is that of Wheelie Bins and refuse collection days as traders tend to block the footpath with the Wheelie Bins. This is a weekly occurrence causing regular inconvenience for people.

- Casual street traders can also cause inconvenience by the location of their stalls.

- People would like advance information on road works, street closures etc

- There is no parking for people with a disability close to the playground.

- Make better use of technology for communications at bus stations and train stations.

- Continue to ensure footpaths are disability-friendly.



KILLARNEY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

ISSUES IDENTIFIED



Playgrounds

- All playgrounds to be inclusive develop best practice to include accessibility for children with a disability.
- Kerry County Council to develop best practise in the County.

Bye-Laws

- Implicit in the discussions was the need to enforce existing by-laws, and priority areas include parking, street furniture, wheelie-bins/ refuse collection and building emergency evacuation.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

Fire Safety

- Concern was expressed regarding fire safety in buildings such as bars and night clubs which are often overcrowded. It was felt that regulations are not being enforced.

Promoting Kerry

- Questions were raised regarding Kerry County Council plans for promoting Kerry as an accessible destination.

Employment

- There is a major lack of employment for people with a disability.
- There is much fear in the private business sector re employing a person with a disability, yet there are some examples of businesses making changes to facilitate employment; a change of culture is needed.
- It was felt that it would be good to engage more with chambers of commerce on this issue.

County Development Plan

- All disability groups should be consulted as part of next review of the county plan. It would be an ideal opportunity for the proposed 'Disability Linkage Group'.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Housing

- It is commonly felt that there is a huge lack of accessible housing for people with a disability.
- Another complaint is that the processes of applying for social housing and for applying for the Housing Adaptation Grant are lengthy and complicated especially for some people with a disability who may require additional supports in accessing services.
- It was reported that information and forms are not available in print format, and not everyone is IT literate. On-line applications are not accessible to all.
- It was stated that there is a lack of communication between KCC Access Officer and support groups, with some groups not being aware until this workshop of the existence of the position.
- Provision of housing is bigger than simply building units – it involves a range of housing supports.
- Regarding the design of houses; minimum standards are no longer acceptable, equipment and chairs are now bigger and this needs to be taken into account in the design process.



LISTOWEL MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

ISSUES IDENTIFIED



TOURISM, CULTURE, ARTS AND RECREATION SPC

Transport:

- There is a lack of access to public transport, mainly taxis but also buses and trains which is causing rural isolation.
- Rural transport – cannot get to library.

Recreation and Tourism:

- It was stated that access to hubs for services, culture and recreation is an issue as infrastructure and facilities are not suitable.
- Signing is limited for those with hearing disabilities.
- Places are not suitable for certain hidden disabilities – such as those who can't cope with loud noise and bright lights.
- Need companion passes e.g for those with vertigo etc.
- Leisure centres are not accessible.
- There is a lack of footpath access.

- Some bus tours do not describe accessibility of tour destination and leads to lack of involvement and inclusion on arrival.
- Access to beaches is limited.
- Playgrounds are not fully accessible by way of equipment.
- Staff of sport event locations should be able to give equal service to all.
- Need more information on where the library is, access, services available.
- Some need assistance with IT.

OPERATIONS

General Access:

- The visually and physically impaired are obstructed on the streets due to carelessness with street cleanliness (dog fouling) and obstacles such as sandwich boards and bins.
- There are paths with no lamps.
- Not enough footpaths and some poor footpath surfaces.
- Abuse of disability parking.
- Sound and light for the deaf and the blind need to be addressed at pedestrian crossings.
- The graveyard is not accessible.

Housing:

- Accommodation accessibility is limited.
- Not all council houses are adapted.

- Space needs to be maximised and all housing to be accessible so that even those visiting or temporarily staying somewhere are catered for.

Casual Trading:

- Street traders create obstacles.
- Busy times such as Listowel Races create make it difficult for those with disabilities to access the town.
- Yet, it was agreed the access is usually fair and an example of good access was Listowel Farmers Market.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

General:

- Need further planning to address rural isolation.
- Lack of business support.
- Employment is not equally accessible to the disabled.
- There is no access group in Listowel.
- Council websites should be accessible for all disabilities, such as visual impairment, for accessibility to local knowledge.
- Identified a lack of awareness of disability when initiating projects.

Promotion of Kerry:

- Kerry is not known to be as accessible as other counties.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Housing:

- There is a lack of support for independence and integration such as insufficient funds for housing adaption.
- People with disabilities can outgrow houses and have accidents, are forced to stay in nursing homes.
- Housing applicants are also being offered unsuitable properties and some adapted houses can be in unsuitable locations such as areas with little accessible transport or footpaths.
- It was agreed that the Disability Housing Committee needed to acknowledge and amend the housing situation.

General:

- Lack of public awareness for integration and awareness of those with intellectual disabilities.
- There is a group need for transport and Local Link is not accessible.
- It was commented that Respite services are limited in Kerry and few have availability. These services were identified as key for both carer and those with a disability but that funding has been cut.



South and West MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

ISSUES IDENTIFIED



TOURISM, CULTURE, ARTS AND RECREATION SPC

General:

- There are not enough disability parking spaces and the footpaths are too high for access.
- There is an issue with illegal parking in disability spots.
- Accessible taxis are limited.

Hospitality:

- Accommodation can be difficult to find as they do not all have ramps or accessible toilets.
- There is limited accessibility to hotels, bars and restaurants as they may have only steps to access the building, the buildings do not have adequate space and/or their tables are too low for wheelchairs.

Culture/Heritage:

- During Kerry Arts Week there is a lack of available information in Braille and a lack of inclusion or engagement of any of those with disabilities.
- Heritage sites are not fully accessible and talks that can sometimes be provided are not considerate of the hearing impaired.

Tourism & Recreation:

- Leisure centres are not access friendly.
- There is limited access to beaches.
- Cinemas are not inclusive of any hearing disabilities.

OPERATIONS

General:

- Housing for people with disabilities should be located near town centres.
- Parked cars, outdoor tables and chairs, signs and bins and a lack of street cleaning are obstructing footpaths.
- Footpaths are also too high and there is a lack of ramps for accessibility.
- Transport is very limited and isolates those in rural areas. Information about transport is also not accessible to the blind and braille should be considered.
- Some public lighting such as strip lighting and public events with speaker phones can affect people on the autistic spectrum and must be considered.

Casual Trading:

- Stalls need to be more aware of people's needs, can cause obstruction and difficulty moving around.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

Building and Planning:

- Housing was considered an issue as houses built for those with disabilities are not in convenient locations for access to towns, causing isolation. General housing stock is also not suitable for people who are ill or had a stroke or who are incapacitated.
- It was recognised that footpaths and audible crossing (from traffic lights) are not the same in any two towns in Kerry. Continuity in planning for this would be beneficial for safe and convenient travel.

Employment:

- Opportunities for employment need to be implemented, such as training and education.
- Those with a disability who are able and decide to be self-employed can lose certain disability benefits such as the medical card and others.
- There is a lack of encouragement and business support for those with disabilities.
- Social service providers do not have or provide access to resources for job coaching.


QUALITY OF LIFE

General:

- Rural transport is not accessible and limits access.
- Housing accessibility issues was recognised in this district.
- Children and teenagers with severe behaviour and mental health issues can be waiting a long time to be seen by the CAMHS and can then sometimes receive minimal service which causes a struggle for the parents and the child.
- It is very difficult to access good public funded residential services for children or young people with severe mental health and behavioural issues.
- There is a general worry about accessing emergency services, it is stated that emergency services sometimes find it difficult to find rural locations and that selecting options once the emergency services have been contacted is not accessible for all disabilities, which causes vulnerability and fear.
- There is a limited access to funding and social support for very young children due to an age restriction.



“ Gaining greater awareness of challenges facing people, not just with disabilities but on a social and physical level ”





ACCESS FOR ALL

APPENDIX

FACILITATORS & SUPPORT TEAM



FACILITATORS AND NOTE TAKERS AT THE ACCESS FOR ALL WORKSHOPS THAT TOOK PLACE IN COUNTY KERRY

Facilitators:

Aine O'Sullivan - Disability Federation of Ireland

Andy Smith – Kerry County Council

Carmel Walsh – Local Link Kerry

Caroline Robson – National Council for the Blind, Ireland

Caroline Toal – Kerry Public Participation Network

Dave Fitzgibbons – North East West Kerry Development

Diana Mc Carthy - North East West Kerry Development

Éadaoin Moyihan – South Kerry Development Partnership

Eithne Garvey – Kerry Down Syndrome.

Geraldine Mc Gettigan – Healthy Ireland

Jean Foley – Kerry County Council

Joanne Nelligan – National Learning Network

Kathryn O'Donnell – Kerry County Childcare Committee

Laura English – Disability Federation of Ireland

Margaret Wrenn – Killorglin Family Resource Centre

Mary Ellen Browne – Listowel Family Resource Centre

Mary Gallagher - South Kerry Development Partnership

Mary Grandfield – Citizens Information Services

Patricia Maher – HSE, Community Department

Paudie Healy – Universal Access

Siobhan Griffin – Kerry County Council

Susan Murphy – Kerry County Council

Note takers:

Clare Murphy - Kerry County Council , Community Department

Cora Carrigg - Kerry Recreational and Sports Partnership

Damien Quigg – Killorglin Access Group

Geraldine Lennon, Kerry County Council, Community Department

Gillian Wharton Slattery - Kerry Public Participation Network

Gina Kelly – HSE, Community Department

Irene Brune – Cúnamh Iveragh of South Kerry

John Spillane - Kerry Public Participation Network

Mary O’Shea – Killarney Access Group

Matt Mooney - Kerry Public Participation Network

Maura Fitzgerald - Kerry Public Participation Network

Niamh Blanch – Kerry County Childcare Committee

Sean Quinlan - Kerry Public Participation Network

Sinead Egan – Kerry Recreational and Sports Partnership

Registration and set up:

Padraig Mc Cannon, Clare Murphy, Geraldine Lennon and Tony Taggart KCC Community Department who supported the event.



SUMMARY EVALUATION



PARTICIPANTS WERE ASKED TO PROVIDE THEIR OVERALL OPINION ON THE WORKSHOP

I would be interested in attending a follow-up more advanced workshop on this subject

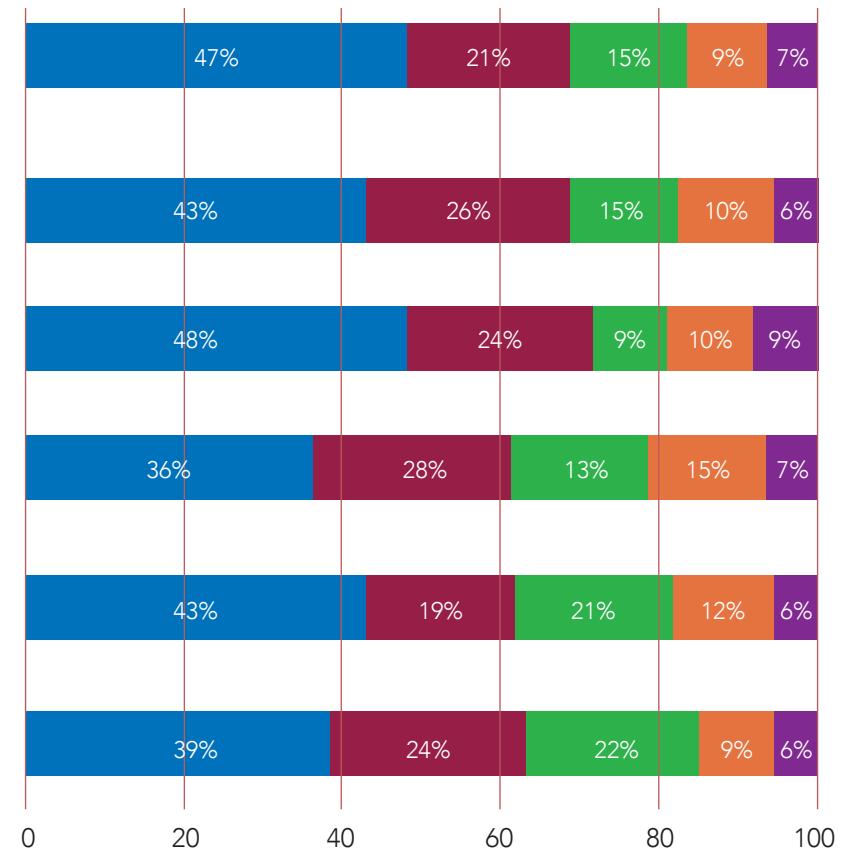
The material was presented in an organised manner

The facilitator was a good communicator

The programme was well paced within the allocated time

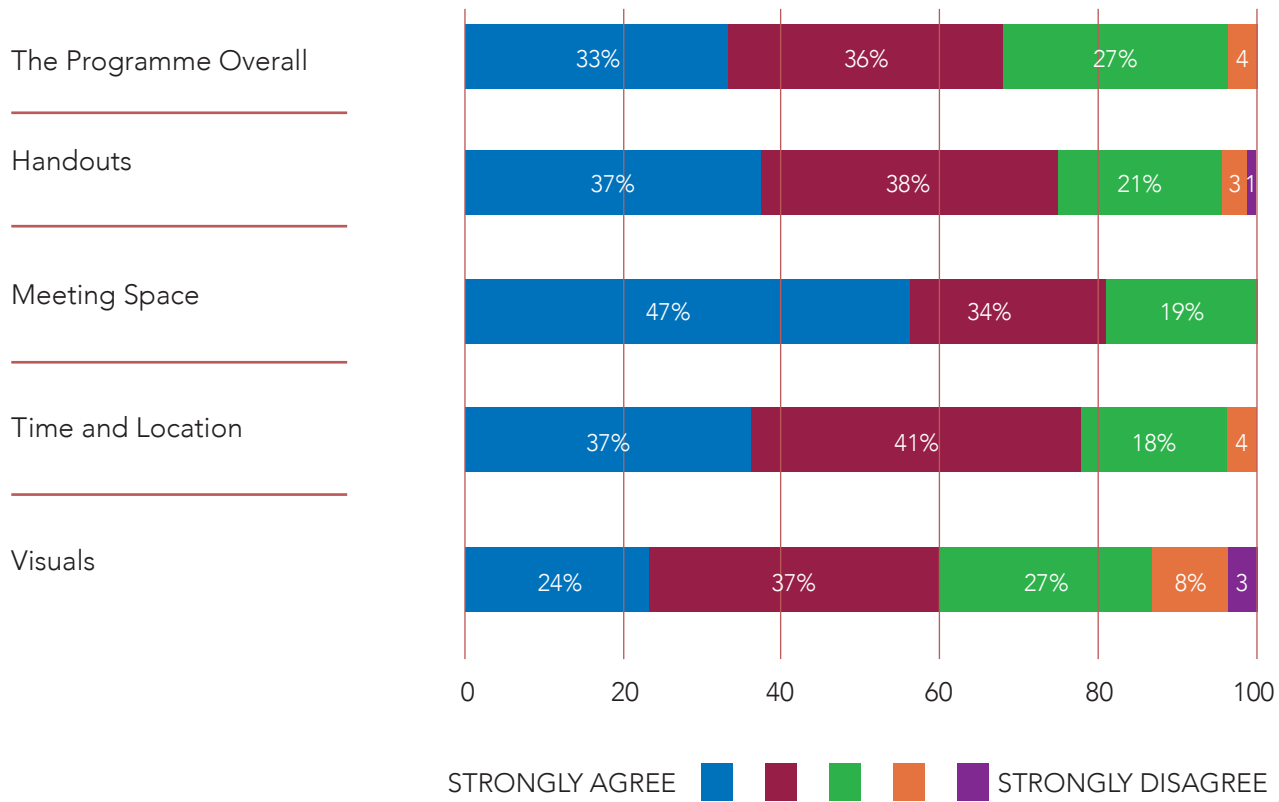
I will recommend this workshop to others

The Workshop was applicable to my job



STRONGLY AGREE ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ STRONGLY DISAGREE

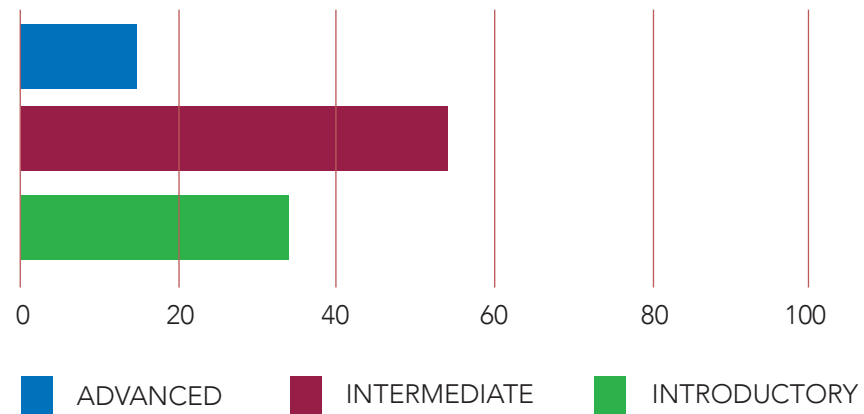
PARTICIPANTS WERE ASKED TO PROVIDE THEIR OVERALL OPINION ON THE WORKSHOP



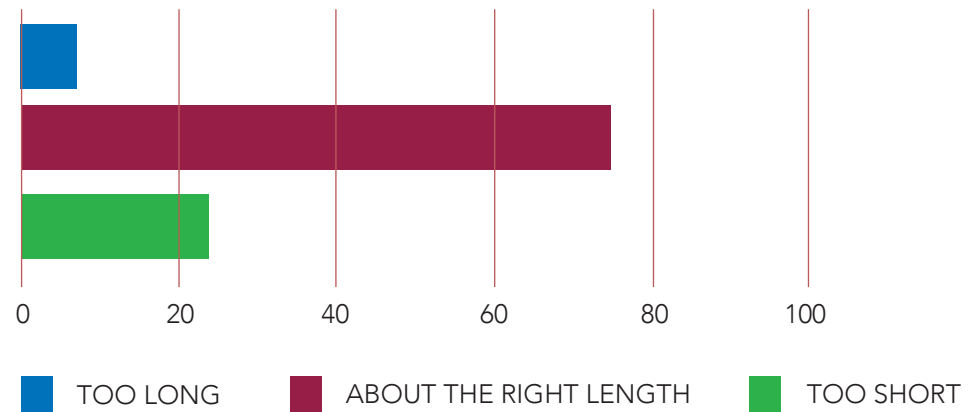
SUMMARY EVALUATION



PARTICIPANTS WERE ASKED THEIR OWN OPINIONS ON WHAT LEVEL THEY PERCEIVED THE WORKSHOP TO BE PITCHED AT



PARTICIPANTS WERE ASKED THEIR OPINION ON THE FORMAT OF THE WORKSHOP





“ It gave me hope for the future
for people with disabilities,
that Kerry would become
more accessible and inclusive ”



Kerry Public Participation Network,
Kerry County Council,
County Buildings,
Rathass,
Tralee,
Co. Kerry

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