

# Sligo.

2030 **One Voice**  
**One Vision**

Mid-Term Review

## Newsletter April 2026



Featuring

**Wins for  
Tourism**

**Biodiversity  
Plan Launch**

**Collaborating  
For Health**

#AnotherSligo2030Project

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# Sligo 2030 - One Voice, One Vision Local Economic and Community Plan Mid-Term Review

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## A Chairde

*"It is a pleasure to introduce the mid-term snapshot of the Sligo 2030 Local Economic & Community Plan - Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision. As current Cathaoirleach and Chairperson of the Local Community Development Committee, I welcome this opportunity to reflect on the progress made to date and to acknowledge the shared effort that continues to drive this work forward.*

*Sligo 2030 – One Voice, One Vision – is more than a framework. It is a collective commitment to strengthening the wellbeing, resilience and economic prospects of our county. It sets out ambitious, smart and green actions, that support sustainable transformation, innovation and inclusivity.*

*Effective monitoring and evaluation are central to achieving these ambitions. This report helps us understand what is working well, where challenges remain, and how we can continue to use public resources wisely. By learning from ongoing delivery, we strengthen our collaborative ability to respond to emerging needs and promote unities across communities, businesses and sectors.*

*I wish to acknowledge the dedication of all action owners, supporting partners and community organisations who contribute to implementing the actions of the LECP. Ongoing cooperation and participation ensures that Sligo 2030 remains a living document - one that continues to evolve, inspire and guide meaningful change for the people of Sligo."*

*Councillor Dónal Gilroy  
Cathaoirleach Sligo County Council & Chair,  
Sligo Local Community Development Committee.  
April 2026*

# Sligo Winning for Tourism

**Award-winning digital innovation tool launched supporting tourism in Sligo.**

*Developed by the Sligo County Council, the Ideas Engine generates bespoke itineraries based on visitor interests and their time of visit.*



**position of Festival and Events Coordinator (MT) (D) Supporting specific community projects such as the implementation of the Sligo Rovers Masterplan (E) Supporting the night-time economy e.g. retention of Sligo's Purple Flag (F) Encouraging the development of an increased tourism offering where the choice and variety of tourism accommodation includes boutique hotels, hostels, glamping, 5 star hotels, etc.**

**Action 55: Develop Sligo's leisure tourism offering to deliver world class visitor experiences including through: (A) Implementing the Sligo Destination Experience Development Plan through collaboration with tourism agencies, visitors, industry, communities and environment (B) Developing further quality attractions (including outdoor activities) and the variety of events and festivals across the county (C) Develop a Festival and Events Strategy and establish the**

Actions supporting Sligo's Tourism Sector stand out as strong examples of how coordinated delivery, partnership working and targeted investment can translate strategic ambition into visible results. Focused on growing the visitor economy, strengthening the night time economy, and enhancing Sligo's destination experience, Action 55 has moved decisively from planning into delivery over the review period.

Across tourism promotion, cultural programming, digital innovation, public realm activation and night time economy supports, Sligo County Council and its partners have delivered a broad and complementary suite of initiatives that reinforce Sligo's position as a vibrant, distinctive and welcoming place to visit, live and invest.

## **Strengthening Destination Profile and Visibility**

A key objective under this action is to raise Sligo's national and international profile as a destination. This is being achieved via a blend of traditional offline marketing along with digital marketing.

## **Visit Sligo.**

The focus on a digital first approach to strengthening the destination profile and visibility is delivered through an enhanced web presence at [www.sligo.ie](http://www.sligo.ie), growth and expansion of the Visit Sligo social media pages, paid social media advertising campaigns and the development and introduction of a new digital tool bespoke for Sligo. Visit Sligo's digital platform, the Ideas Engine, continues to gain traction and credibility.

Developed by the Tourism section, the Ideas Engine generates bespoke itineraries based on visitor interests and their time of visit. The platform was shortlisted for the Irish Digital Media Awards and won a prestigious national eGovernment Award, winning top place in the category 'Promoting Ireland Overseas' during a ceremony attended by Minister Jack Chambers TD.

Recognition for innovative digital engagement tools, reflects sustained effort to modernise destination promotion and connect with visitors where they plan and share their experiences. It also directly implements Action 20, “Exploring the use of digital tools to enhance Sligo’s tourism and cultural sectors.”



Declan Tuite, Programme Chair, MSC Emerging Media DCU presenting the eGovernment award to Aidan McCormack, Tourism Officer, Sligo County Council

Integrating digital innovation into tourism delivery ensures that Sligo remains competitive in an increasingly digital visitor economy, particularly in attracting younger and international audiences.

In November 2025, just outside the review period, Condé Nast Travel recognised Sligo as one of Europe’s most underrated cities, placing Sligo alongside leading European city destinations and reinforcing its appeal to cultural and experiential travellers.

These achievements directly support Action 55 by expanding reach, strengthening brand identity, and reinforcing Sligo’s image as both authentic and contemporary.

### **Innovating the Visitor Experience**

Action 55 is not solely about promotion; it is equally focused on enhancing the quality and diversity of the visitor experience. The launch of “The Sligo Picnic – A Taste of Sligo to Take Outdoors” exemplifies this approach. By combining food, landscape and outdoor recreation, the initiative celebrates local

producers while encouraging visitors to explore Sligo’s natural settings in a sustainable and accessible way.

Similarly, the continued development of experience led tourism products has been supported through collaboration with festivals, food trails and creative partners. Training programmes for festival organisers and cultural event managers have strengthened local capacity, ensuring that events not only attract visitors but deliver consistently high quality experiences that encourage longer stays and repeat visits.

### **Transformative Cultural and Heritage Projects**

Cultural and heritage investment remains a cornerstone of Action 55 delivery. The awarding of €7 million under the THRIVE – Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme to the Sligo Gaol Project represents a major milestone. This transformative project will restore and repurpose one of Sligo Town’s most significant historic buildings, creating a new cultural and tourism asset at the heart of the town.

The investment links heritage conservation

with tourism development and town centre vitality. When complete, the Sligo Gaol project will enhance the visitor offering, support cultural programming, and strengthen the integration of tourism with broader regeneration goals.

### **Advancing the Night Time Economy**

Further progress under Action 55 has been the ongoing development of Sligo's night time economy. Sligo Town's achievement of a 10th Purple Flag Award demonstrates sustained excellence in creating a safe, vibrant and diverse evening and night time environment. This recognition reflects long term commitment by Sligo BID, Sligo County Council, businesses and community stakeholders to quality standards, safety, and inclusivity.



Launching Sligo Picnic Initiative

Building on this foundation, Sligo Town was selected as a pilot location for night time economy enrichment and diversification grants, supporting new programming and initiatives that broaden activity beyond traditional offerings. In parallel, involvement in the national Safe & Sound training initiative has strengthened safety capacity for night time economy workers, addressing issues such as harassment prevention and customer welfare.

These initiatives reinforce emphasis on balanced growth—supporting economic activity while ensuring that social wellbeing and public safety remain central to night time economy development.



Launch of Sligo NTE

### **Partnerships as the Engine of Delivery**

Perhaps the most important lesson from these achievements is the central role of partnership working. Progress has depended on close collaboration between Sligo County Council, Fáilte Ireland, Sligo BID, Local Enterprise Office Sligo, cultural institutions, festival organisers, national agencies and community groups. This partnership model has enabled alignment between capital investment, programming, promotion and skills development.

Crucially, Action 55 has also complemented other LECP actions, particularly those focused on public realm enhancement, transport accessibility and placemaking, ensuring that tourism growth is underpinned by a high quality environment for residents as well as visitors.

### **Looking Ahead**

Measurable progress has been delivered on Action 55: enhanced destination visibility, new and improved visitor experiences, significant cultural investment, a strengthened night time economy and recognised excellence in digital engagement. As implementation continues, the focus will shift towards consolidating these gains, supporting delivery of major capital projects such as Sligo Gaol, and further embedding sustainability, inclusion and community benefit into visitor economy growth.

This work demonstrates how strategic intent, when matched with partnership, funding and innovation, can deliver tangible outcomes that benefit businesses, communities and visitors alike—positioning Sligo for continued success as a compelling place to experience, day and night.

# Supporting Better Health Outcomes

**Collaborative actions achieve results for the health and wellbeing of Sligo's communities.**

*A spotlight on the interagency work supporting better health outcomes for all.*



**Action 41: Work collaboratively to identify community needs and gather feedback on services to influence the development of Sligo's healthcare services including acute, primary care, disability, older person and health & wellbeing**

Better health happens when services work together and meet people where they are. Across Sligo, health professionals, community organisations and Sligo County Council are joining forces to make sure that people can access the right care, in the right place, at the right time. This partnership approach is bringing real improvements to the daily lives of older people, families, and those living with long term health conditions.

This article outlines the progress being made under LECP Action 41, which focuses on working collaboratively to understand local health needs and influence how services develop. The work taking place in Sligo shows how joined up thinking can make healthcare more accessible, more connected, and more person centred.

## **Stronger Integrated Care for Older People**

One of the most important developments is the continued growth of the Integrated Care Service for Older Persons in Sligo and Leitrim. This service brings together different health professionals into one team, making it easier to support older people with complex needs. The goal is simple: help people to stay well and remain living in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.

The service continues to strengthen pathways of care in key areas such as frailty, falls prevention, memory and cognitive health, and residential and step down care.

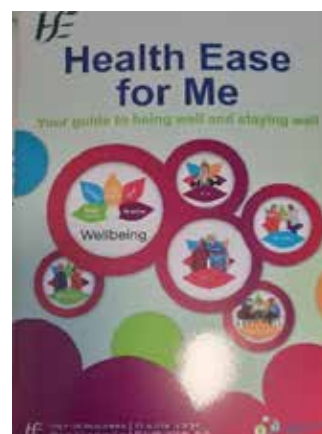
As Cara O Neill, HSE Head of Service, Health and Wellbeing and HSE representative on the LCDC explained:

“Integrated care is about making services work better together around the needs of the person. We’re seeing real benefits from closer collaboration between hospital teams, community services and our community and voluntary partners – supporting older people to remain independent in their own homes for longer.”

This work is supported by strong links with the Frailty at the Front Door Team, inpatient services in Sligo University Hospital, GPs, Primary Care and Community Mental Health Teams. This joined up approach helps avoid unnecessary hospital stays and makes transitions between hospital and home smoother and more coordinated.

## **Making Health Information More Accessible**

Good health also depends on having clear, accessible information for everyone. The HealthEase for Me project is helping to make this possible. Health Ease for Me is a health education resource to support people with Intellectual Disabilities (ID). The focus is on wellness, chronic disease prevention and self-management.



This easy read booklet provides practical advice for people with intellectual disabilities, their families and carers. The aim is to foster an interactive and engaging health service environment for people with ID emphasising the principle of 'Nothing for Me, without Me'.

Health Ease for Me has been co-produced by people living with Intellectual Disabilities in the area, the Health and Wellbeing Self-Management Support (SMS) Coordinator for Chronic Conditions and Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP), Disability Services, Sligo Leitrim.

This approach aligns with the LECP commitment to equality, accessibility, and supporting community wellbeing.

### Community Based Support for Heart Health

Heart health is another area where Sligo is seeing good progress. A Cardiac Peer Support Group now meets bimonthly. The group is a collaboration between the Health and Wellbeing Self Management Support (SMS) Coordinator for Chronic Conditions, the Heart Support



Service at Sligo University Hospital, the Cardiology Integrated Care Team – Benbulbin Chronic Disease Management Hub and Croi Heart and Stroke Charity. The group serves the population of Sligo Leitrim, South Donegal and West Cavan. The main purpose of this collaboration is to provide a platform for people living with heart disease and their carers /family members to come together to meet, talk, share lived experience and learn from each other. A gathering such as this provides an opportunity to access education, support and information on living well following a cardiac event. It also helps to reduce feelings of loneliness and increase confidence for people living with cardiac conditions.



Sligo County Council partnered with Croí to host Croí HeartFest 2025 in Queen Maeve's Square, last September, drawing hundreds of attendees for two impactful days of free heart health checks and education in the lead-up to World Heart Day on Monday, September 29th. Generously supported by Benecol, the event provided the public with the opportunity to receive health checks in the Croí Mobile Health Hub, Ireland's first and largest mobile unit dedicated to stroke prevention and heart health.

Visitors availed of free cholesterol, blood pressure, pulse, and stethoscope checks, participated in CPR demonstrations, and received expert guidance from Croí's multidisciplinary health team on cardiovascular wellbeing and prevention.

Speaking at the event, Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council, Cllr. Dónal Gilroy, said: "Croí HeartFest was a fantastic success and a testament to what can be achieved when health promotion organisations and local authorities work together. We were proud to welcome the Mobile Health Hub to Sligo and to see so many people engaging with their heart health in such a positive way."

## Falls Prevention: Keeping People Active and Confident

Falls prevention is a major priority for healthy ageing. In September 2025, two 24-week Falls Management Exercise Programmes began at the Northside Community Centre in Sligo. These programmes are delivered jointly by the HSE, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership (SSRP) and the Sligo Volunteer Centre.



The classes combine progressive strength, highly challenging balance and functional training with education and social connection. They are delivered with fidelity to an evidence based programme which has been demonstrated to reduce the risk of falls and concern about falling.

These programmes don't just reduce the risk of falls – they build confidence, social connection and long term wellbeing.

## Healthy Ireland: A Whole Community Approach

Alongside these clinical and community health services, the Healthy Ireland / Healthy Sligo Programme delivered by Sligo County Council, the HSE and community partners played a major role in supporting wellbeing across all age groups.

Healthy Ireland initiatives in Sligo included:

- Adult and Junior Parkrun events in Doorly Park and Tubbercurry
- Stronger for Longer strength and mobility classes
- Activator Poles fitness sessions focusing on improving balance, posture and mobility in rural communities
- Outdoor yoga sessions delivered with Sligo Tourism
- Programmes for children and families, including play therapy and community wellbeing events



These initiatives focus on physical activity, mental wellbeing, social connection, and reducing health inequalities – all essential elements of a healthy community.

Healthy Sligo’s collaborative approach brings together sports partners, community groups, disability services, youth organisations and the HSE. This complements the work of the Integrated Care Programme by promoting prevention, early intervention and healthy lifestyles.

### **Protecting Community Health through Immunisation**

The HSE continues to deliver the full range of immunisation programmes across Sligo delivered by HSE Teams, GPs and Pharmacies, including:

- childhood and school based vaccinations,
- flu and COVID 19 vaccines,
- RSV immunisation for infants, and
- outreach vaccination clinics for people who are housebound.

These programmes protect individuals, their families and also helps to reduce pressure on hospitals, especially during winter months.

### **A Joined Up System Working for Sligo**

Together, the work of the HSE, Integrated Care, Healthy Ireland, Croí, Sligo Sports and Recreation Partnership, community and voluntary partners and Sligo County Council is creating a more connected and responsive health system.

This is exactly what LECP Action 41 set out to achieve: better collaboration, better access, and better outcomes for people in Sligo and real progress toward a healthier, more inclusive future for everyone.



# A Plan of Action for Sligo's Biodiversity

Inside the development, launch, and actions to protect, conserve and enhance Sligo's biodiversity.



**Action 31:** Implement initiatives to protect Sligo's natural habitats, landscape and ecosystems including: (A) Developing a standalone Biodiversity Plan for Sligo and applying to the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) for the appointment of a Biodiversity Officer within Sligo County Council (ST) (B) Implementing initiatives around rewilding, creation of new native woodlands, urban

food growing, allotments and protection and restoration of bogland (LT) (C) Identifying areas that may be at risk from development and working with the community to monitor and protect them (LT)

## Nature Positive Sligo: Inside the New Biodiversity Action Plan 2025–2030

Sligo's landscapes and seascapes define the county and shape our lives. Over the past two years important, practical steps have been taken to look after the county's biodiversity –building the team, listening to communities, and agreeing a clear plan for action. This article sets out what has been done under Action 31 of the LECP and what it means for residents, landowners and partners.



Common dolphins off Sligo's Coast. Credit: Ruth Hanniffy

## Building the capacity to act

In June 2023, Sligo County Council appointed a Biodiversity Officer through the Heritage Council's Local Authority Biodiversity Officer programme. The role leads on habitat and species protection, supports community projects, and works across Council departments so that biodiversity is part of everyday decisions. The post is supported by a multi agency Biodiversity Working Group to help turn plans into delivery. This approach—professional leadership plus broad partnership—was highlighted again when the County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan 2025–2030 was launched in December 2025, with the Working Group's expertise acknowledged as "invaluable".

## Consultation, development and publication of the Plan

Between 2024 and 2025, people across Sligo were asked how the county should protect and restore nature. Public drop ins were held in library branches, and an online consultation gathered views on priorities for habitats, species and local projects. Feedback helped shape a five year plan with clear actions for the Council and practical opportunities for communities and landowners. The Plan was then launched on 8th December 2025, setting out an ambitious but achievable programme up to 2030.



Launch of the Sligo Biodiversity Plan December 2025

## What's in the Plan

The County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan 2025–2030 includes 52 objectives organised under five strategic themes. Together, they cover how the biodiversity work of the Council is managed and how we support action across Sligo through partnerships.



Red Squirrel. Credit: Ruth Hanniffy

**Knowing** – Improve the evidence base through surveying and monitoring, mapping areas of importance for nature, and supporting citizen science so local knowledge informs decisions.

**Acting** – Protect and restore Council lands for biodiversity, manage invasive species and develop biosecurity protocols and demonstrate best practice for biodiversity in built and natural heritage.

**Promoting** – Grow awareness and skills through partnerships with NGOs, schools, libraries and educators. Deliver a programme of talks, training and seasonal events to connect people with nature, raise awareness and develop skills.

**Practicing** – Embed biodiversity into everyday Council policies, projects and activities integrate best practice across all departments and align with climate and land use planning.

**Partnerships** – Work with ATU, community groups, NGOs, landowners and State bodies to deliver projects at the right scale and share resources and expertise.

These themes link directly to how the Council acts on biodiversity - how it plans, buys, plants, mows and maintains), and the external partnerships that make local delivery possible—from farm gates and schoolyards to community woodlands and coastal paths. The Plan is designed to be practical and transparent so people can see where they can help and how progress will be tracked.



Irish Hare. Credit: Ruth Hanniffy



Compass Jellyfish. Credit: Ruth Hanniffy

## A practical, community first approach

Proven models are being used to support our biodiversity actions. The Hare's Corner initiative – developed by Burrenbeo Trust – partnered with Sligo County Council in 2025 and again in 2026. The scheme supports landowners, farmers, schools, communities and householders toundertake supported actions for nature such as mini woodlands, hedgerows, woodlands, ponds or orchards. Participants can apply for a Plan for Nature, receiving a bespoke, mapped report with recommendations tailor to their site.

## Show Me the Money

Delivery is backed by a blend of national and local support. The Local Biodiversity Action Fund (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage) provides targeted grants for county level biodiversity projects, while Sligo County Council contributes staff time, in kind support and co funding where required. The Heritage Council's Biodiversity Action Plan Fund supports development of the Plan, and its implementation. This mix enables the launch of small pilot projects quickly, to scale what works, and maintain steady progress over the life of the Plan. The 2025 launch acknowledged the importance of sustained support and collaboration to move from "words to action."

## Early actions for 2026

With the Plan now in place, the focus turns to delivery. Priorities for 2026 include:

- Community led projects funded through the Local Biodiversity Action Fund—the Hare's Corner, pollinator planting, training and education, and invasive species control.
- Habitat enhancement on public lands and with partners, focusing on woodlands, sand dunes and artificial lighting where actions benefit biodiversity and demonstrate best practice.
- Training and awareness raising for landowners and community groups, wso people can increase their knowledge of biodiversity and the practical actions they can take for nature
- Data and monitoring to track change over time, supporting future decisions and reporting.



*Fulmar. Credit: Ruth Hanniffy*

## How you can get involved

The Plan is for everyone. Whether you have a window box, a garden, a town verge, a farm or a school yard, there is a way to help:

- Join a local biodiversity or tidy towns group;
- Take part in a citizen science survey;
- Plant native trees, hedgerows and flowers
- Avoid herbicides and use peat-free compost
- Attend a bat walk or wildlife talk
- Make space by nature by leaving an area of your garden unmown for pollinators
- Let nature have dark spaces – avoid lighting hedgerows, gardens and trees

News of funding calls, training and events will be posted on Sligo County Council website and social media channels when opportunities open.

## One county, one plan, many hands

Sligo's Biodiversity Action Plan 2025–2030 is a shared plan for the long term. We have the officer in place, a strong partnership table, and a practical set of actions shaped by public consultation. We are already seeing small but meaningful changes on the ground, and we will build on these step by step over the coming years.

Together—with residents, landowners, community groups, schools, agencies and businesses—we can keep Sligo's nature thriving for the next generation.

# Developing Sligo's Housing Stock

A spotlight on the role of Sligo County Council in providing housing across the county.



**Action 8:** : Address current and future housing needs and requirements in Sligo through: (A) Supporting the annual development of a Housing Delivery Action Plan to include social and affordable housing delivery that assist in bridging the digital divide in line with the Housing for All Strategy (LT) (B) Developing a collaborative working group of key stakeholders to discuss innovative solutions to address housing supply and increase affordable and sustainable/green housing (ST) (C) Preparing a Housing Needs Demand Assessment (HNDA) as part of the County Development Plan process (ST)

Access to a safe, secure, and affordable home is central to wellbeing. Under Action 8 of the Local Economic and Community Plan, Sligo County Council continues to make steady and meaningful progress in increasing the supply of social and affordable homes across the county. The past year has seen new homes completed and handed over, major construction programmes advancing, and a strong pipeline of projects moving through procurement and design. Each development plays its part in meeting the Housing Needs Demand Assessment set out in the County Development Plan 2024–2030, and reflects commitment to sustainable, well planned communities.

This update shares what has been delivered, what is underway, and what is progressing through the early stages of development.

## Keys to the Door: Recent completions

The completion of Seaville Estate represented a significant step forward in providing modern, energy efficient homes for individuals and families who need them. The homes were built to a high standard and delivered in partnership with an approved housing body, reflecting the important role of collaboration in meeting local housing needs.

Another milestone will shortly be reached at Camross, Ballymote. Works are substantially completed on the first phase of a new development, delivering 17 homes. These units add valuable capacity in Ballymote and are part of a wider two phase scheme. The second phase, which includes 22 additional homes, is expected to be delivered during Q2 2026. Together, they will provide a well designed neighbourhood close to community services and amenities.

## Homes under construction

Across Sligo Town and its surrounding areas, construction continues on a number of important schemes that will provide new homes over the coming year.

At Geldof Drive and Benson Court in Cranmore, construction is well advanced on 30 new social housing units. This development will support the regeneration of the wider Cranmore area and is due for



Phase 1 Nearing Completion at Camross

completion early Q3 2026. Providing high quality homes alongside broader renewal initiatives helps to create strong, resilient neighbourhoods.

In Maugheraboy, works are progressing on 62 social housing units at Robbers Lane. This is one of the largest schemes currently under construction and will make a substantial contribution to meeting local housing need. Delivery is expected Q3 2026.

Work also commenced in Grange on a scheme of 16 social housing units. These homes are being

delivered through a Design and Build contract using modern methods of construction. Insulated Concrete Formwork (ICF) is being used to improve the speed, quality and energy efficiency of the build. This approach supports climate and energy goals by reducing heat loss and long term running costs for residents.

In Finisklin, a 47-unit scheme is progressing. This project is also being delivered through a Design and Build contract using modern methods of construction. This project utilises timber frame construction methods.



*Finisklin development*



*Camross, Ballymote development*



*Maugheraboy Development in construction*

### **Homes entering the pipeline**

Alongside active construction, several housing schemes moved into the procurement and contract award stages during the review period. These projects are essential to ensuring a steady pipeline of delivery into the coming years.

The following schemes have new contracts underway or awarded:

- Dromore West and Easkey: 26 social housing units across two coastal settlements
- Collooney: 31 social housing units
- Glenview Park, Ash Lane: 3 units
- Pirn Mill Road: 20 units, currently at tender assessment
- Cairnsfoot Field, Cranmore Road: procurement in progress for a mixed tenure scheme.

These projects will widen housing choice across both urban and rural areas, offering a good mix of smaller and larger schemes. The inclusion of mixed tenure developments is particularly important, supporting community balance and long term sustainability.

### **Planning for the years ahead**

Some of the most important work happens before construction workers arrive on site. Project development, design and statutory processes ensure that new housing reflects good placemaking, safe layouts, and strong connections to services, transport and community facilities.

The following projects are currently in development:

- Rathellen, Finisklin: 63 units
- Carrowbunnaun: 51 units
- High Street, Sligo: 5 units
- Grange Phase 2: 12 units

These schemes will move through the design, planning and funding stages before entering formal procurement. Their progression ensures that Sligo has a balanced portfolio of future projects ready to advance as resources and approvals allow.



*Finisklin development*

### **Supporting sustainable, well planned growth**

All of this work is guided by the Housing Needs Demand Assessment (HNDA), which forms part of the County Development Plan 2024–2030. The HNDA sets out the number and types of homes required across Sligo, helping the Council make well evidenced decisions on location, scale and timing. It ensures that new homes are delivered where they are most needed and where residents can access schools, transport, healthcare and employment.

The developments highlighted above reflect the priorities of the HNDA: compact growth in Sligo Town and key settlements, balanced regional development, and a mix of housing types for different household sizes and ages. They also align with national policy under Housing for All, emphasising affordability, energy efficiency and long term sustainability.

### **Working together for delivery**

The progress achieved under Action 8 is the result of strong partnerships between Sligo County Council, approved housing bodies, Government departments, contractors, design teams and local communities. Each project involves the work of many across numerous stages, from early design through to keys being handed over.

One year on, the combined impact is clear. New homes are already occupied, more are nearing completion, and a strong pipeline is in place to support continued delivery in 2025 and 2026. These homes will provide security for families, support local employment through construction, and strengthen towns and villages across Sligo.

Action 8 will continue to play a central role in shaping Sligo's future. By investing in quality, sustainability and community, we can ensure that every new development helps build a county where people can put down roots and thrive.

# Developing Smarter & Active Travel

## Improving and supporting how we move around Sligo



**Action 27: Encourage smarter travel and increase and upgrade active travel infrastructure including cycleways, greenways and cycle paths across the county (LT). This will include: (A) Developing a segregated cycling network through committing to all new cycle paths being segregated from other traffic (pedestrian and vehicular) where feasible and upgrade existing cycle paths to segregate from traffic where possible (ST) (B) Exploring options for the development of new greenways in the county (ST) (C) Putting in place a plan for regular maintenance and upkeep of existing cycleways, greenways and cycle paths (ST) (D) Support the roll-out of the Bolt e-bikes scheme (ST)**

Helping people move around safely, sustainably and comfortably is at the heart of Action 27 in the Local Economic and Community Plan. The action focuses on encouraging smarter travel, improving active travel routes, and expanding the choices people have for walking, cycling and wheeling across County Sligo. Over the past year, significant progress has been made in planning and developing new infrastructure, improving existing routes, and supporting initiatives that make active travel a normal part of daily life.

Action 27 commits Sligo County Council to increasing and upgrading the county's network of cycleways, greenways and segregated paths. It also recognises the importance of maintaining what we already have, ensuring routes remain safe

and pleasant to use. The action has four key areas: developing a segregated cycling network, exploring greenway options, putting maintenance plans in place, and supporting the roll out of shared mobility schemes such as e bikes. Together, these priorities aim to make sustainable travel easier for everyone, whether for school, work, recreation or daily errands.

### Segregated cycling for safer journeys

A key element of Action 27 is the commitment to segregated cycling wherever feasible. Segregation provides dedicated space for cyclists, separate from both pedestrians and vehicles, improving safety and encouraging more people to leave the car behind. Sligo County Council continues to apply this principle to all new active travel designs, while evaluating opportunities to retrofit segregation into existing routes as part of future upgrades.

This approach supports people of all ages and abilities. Families travelling to school, older people joining local walks and cyclists commuting to work all benefit from routes that feel safe, comfortable and continuous. Segregation also helps to support national climate goals by making active travel a realistic choice in more areas.



*Photomontage of proposed Active Travel Scheme at Cleveragh*

## Greenways TII & Active Travel Road Design

The Council continues to explore opportunities for greenway development and active travel facilities across the county. Greenways provide scenic, car free routes that link communities, support tourism, and give residents new ways to enjoy Sligo's landscapes. These feasibility and route identification processes take time, as they involve landowner engagement, environmental assessment and long term planning. However, they remain an important part of Action 27 and will continue to inform the county's active travel network in the years ahead. Active Travel Projects allow people to access safer options to move from car travel to walking or cycling to school, work, leisure activities and socialising. These projects are aimed to provide a option for car users on shorter journeys less than 1 - 3 kilometres.

Maintaining and improving what we already have  
Well used infrastructure requires regular upkeep. Under Action 27, Sligo County Council has strengthened its approach to maintenance, ensuring existing cycleways, footpaths and shared routes remain safe, attractive and accessible. This includes surface repairs, vegetation management, signage improvements and responses to local issues raised through the Council's customer service channels. A consistent standard of maintenance helps build trust in the network and ensures active travel routes continue to support health, wellbeing and community connection.

## Supporting shared mobility

The roll out of the Bolt e bike scheme, where operational, provides residents and visitors with new ways to travel short distances without a car. Shared schemes support first and last mile connectivity and encourage people to try cycling even if they do not own a bicycle. Civic e-bike charging infrastructure has been installed to support the shared scheme.

Action 27 supports these options as part of a broader shift toward more flexible and low carbon travel.

## County wide works in progress

Across Sligo, several major active travel schemes are now underway, each representing an important investment in safer, climate friendly travel.

The N4 Active Travel Emerging Corridor from Collooney to Castlebaldwin is now in Phase 2, the option selection stage. This phase explores different alignments and design solutions with the aim of identifying the preferred route. The scheme is intended to deliver a safe, continuous active travel corridor along this strategic route, connecting communities and supporting more sustainable daily journeys. Later phases will involve detailed design, environmental evaluation and public consultation before construction can begin. While timelines are still subject to technical assessment and funding, each phase moves the project a step closer to delivery.

Three more national route schemes are in the early stages of development:

- N15 Grange Active Travel
- N17 Curry Active Travel
- N59 Ballisodare Active Travel

Active Travel Road Design Projects (Non-national roads)

- Carraroe to ATU
- Strandhill
- Cleveragh Drive
- First Sea Road
- Clarion Road
- Coolaney
- Caltragh Newtownhomes
- Rosses Point
- Ballygawley
- Carraroe
- Safe Routes to Schools County wide



Photomontage of proposed active travel Intervention in Strandhill village

## Complementary urban improvements

Alongside these large regional schemes, a range of complementary projects have progressed within Sligo's urban area. The resurfacing of the N4 Inner Relief Road has improved safety and comfort for all road users. While not an active travel project on its own, high quality surface upgrades support smoother movement and enable better integration with walking and cycling facilities.



At Cleveragh, investment in active travel continues through several initiatives. The new Learn to Cycle facility at Cleveragh gives children and beginners a safe, welcoming space to build confidence on bicycles before joining the wider network. This type of facility plays an important role in encouraging long term cycling habits.

In addition, plans are advancing for a two way cycle lane, enhanced footpaths and traffic calming measures along Cleveragh Drive as part of broader development plans for the area. These improvements will provide safer routes for people travelling to Cleveragh Regional Park, nearby homes and local amenities, reinforcing Cleveragh as one of Sligo's most cherished recreational spaces.



## Looking ahead

Active travel is about giving people choices. It is about creating places where children can cycle to school, where older people feel comfortable walking to local shops, and where families can enjoy safe routes through parks and towns. Action 27 has already delivered planning and design progress across the county, supported important upgrades in urban areas, and strengthened the foundation for long term investment. As these schemes move through the design, consultation and delivery stages, the network of active travel options in Sligo will continue to expand. This supports health, climate action, community wellbeing and local businesses, helping to build a more connected and sustainable county for everyone.

Safe Routes to School St Johns

Viewpoint 1



<b>Viewpoint Location &amp; Capture Information</b> Location (TM): 568911, 830637 Camera Level (Metres Above Ordnance Datum): 12.1 Date & Time: 2025/02/25, 1:33 pm	<b>Camera Information</b> Camera: Canon SD Mark IV Lens: Canon TS-E 24mm F2.8 L Focal Length: 24mm	Work prepared by <b>innovision</b>   The Report Generated By
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Photomontage of proposed safe route to school works at St. John's N.S., Sligo Town.

# Sligo 2030 Actions at a Glance



## Action 50 & 57: Appointment of World Heritage Bid Coordinator and Progress on the Sligo Tombs Nomination

Sligo's ambition to secure UNESCO World Heritage Site status for The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo moved forward significantly during 2024–2025. A major milestone came with the appointment of Project Coordinator Dr Robert Hensey in November 2024, a dedicated role established to coordinate and guide the nomination bid on behalf of Sligo County Council. This appointment strengthened the Council's capacity to manage the substantial technical, archaeological and stakeholder engagement work required for nomination.



*Dr Robert Hensey leading the group at Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery*

A further step forward was the establishment of a formal Project Team and Nomination Team—cross sectoral groups bringing together the National Monuments Service, Office of Public Works, Coillte, NPWS, Fáilte Ireland, Sligo LEADER, the Sligo Neolithic Landscapes Group, and the Farming Pillar, among others.

Their first official meeting took place on 2 July 2025, following a site visit to the Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery. This gathering marked the start of coordinated work to prepare the nomination dossier, management plan and long term governance framework for the site.

The nomination seeks World Heritage inscription for a landscape containing over one hundred interconnected passage tombs at Carrowmore, Carrowkeel, Knocknarea and surrounding uplands—monuments dating back more than 5,000 years and representing one of Europe's most significant Neolithic ceremonial complexes.



## Action 35: From Development to Implementation of the PEACEPLUS Co designed Local Community Peace Action Plan

Sligo's PEACEPLUS Co designed Local Community Peace Action Plan has transitioned from development into full implementation following its launch in City Hall on 15 May 2025. The plan, funded with €3.604 million through the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), was shaped through extensive co design consultation with local groups and communities across Sligo.

The process identified local needs and opportunities, resulting in a suite of 15 projects across three core themes:

- Community Regeneration and Transformation
- Thriving and Peaceful Communities
- Cultural Diversity and Inclusion

These include four capital projects, eight capacity building initiatives, and three cultural and social inclusion programmes aimed at tackling division, strengthening social ties, and widening opportunities for participation.

The Red Dress Embroidery Project, a global arts initiative symbolising shared stories and understanding, was exhibited as part of the launch week—an Irish first and a fitting expression of what the PEACEPLUS programme aims to achieve. The launch was attended by representatives from the Irish Government, the Northern Ireland Executive, SEUPB and Sligo County Council, highlighting the importance of the programme for cross community and cross border cooperation.



*The Red Dress launches Sligo PEACEPLUS Co-designed Local Community Peace Action Plan*

Implementation continues until summer 2028, with activities including arts, sports, storytelling, digital initiatives, environmental projects and community-led engagements designed to bring together people of all ages and backgrounds. The plan marks a significant reinvestment in community cohesion and reflects Sligo’s commitment to peacebuilding, diversity, and long term social wellbeing.



**Action 42: Capacity Building and Outdoor Physical Activity – Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership (SSRP)**

Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership (SSRP) continues to expand opportunities for people of all ages to be active outdoors, supporting Action 42’s goal of building community capacity and participation. In 2024, Sligo was selected for a three year Outdoor Recreation Officer pilot programme, funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development. This new role coordinates outdoor recreation efforts across agencies, including Sligo County Council, Coillte, NPWS, Fáilte Ireland and community organisations. A County Outdoor Recreation Committee has been established to oversee delivery of a countywide Outdoor Recreation Plan, focusing on trail development, sustainable access, safety, environmental protection and increased participation.

SSRP also leads a range of initiatives encouraging people to enjoy outdoor activity, including training programmes, community events and skills development workshops. Programme highlights include Try a Tri initiative with Sligo Triathlon Club, youth coaching workshops, and expanding student placements to build capacity in sports development.

Together, these actions demonstrate sustained investment in helping people connect with the outdoors for wellbeing, recreation and social inclusion, while strengthening Sligo’s outdoor recreation infrastructure for the years ahead.



**Action 43: Improving Educational Outcomes – ATU Sligo’s Leadership in Flexible, Digital and Skills Based Learning**



Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Sligo continues to play a strong role in delivering Action 43 by expanding flexible learning

pathways, digital upskilling and postgraduate opportunities. ATU offers over 350 online, flexible and professional development courses, from Level 6 to Level 9, enabling learners to study part time, upskill for career progression or re-enter education.

Digital innovation is a major part of this work. ATU leads national initiatives in digital teaching and learning, including AI informed pedagogy and immersive learning technologies such as VR and AR, ensuring students gain future focused skills.

In June 2025, ATU announced 38 Springboard+ upskilling courses across its campuses, including Sligo—covering business, IT, engineering, biopharmaceutical sciences and more. These programmes are heavily subsidised or free, supporting workforce development and lifelong learning.

ATU also supports digital inclusion through initiatives like MyCareerPath and RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning), helping learners access higher education using life and work experience. The strong partnership between ATU and local organisations such as SSRP further helps integrate learning with real world practice.

Through flexible delivery, digital innovation and employer aligned course design, ATU continues to broaden educational access and improve outcomes for learners across Sligo and the wider region.



### Action 7: Supporting Social Enterprises – LEADER Actions

Social enterprise continues to grow in Sligo, supported by Sligo LEADER Partnership and aligned to Action 7's goal of expanding opportunities in this sector. LEADER's work includes training, mentoring, community supports and funding for socially driven enterprises across tourism, heritage, recreation, environmental action and community services.



In 2024, LEADER launched Social Enterprise Grants offering up to €750 per enterprise for essential costs including marketing, equipment, training and governance supports. These grants help emerging and established social enterprises strengthen operations and increase community impact.

Sligo LEADER's 2025–2030 Strategy, launched in May 2025, further reinforces support for rural innovation, social inclusion and enterprise development—highlighting the importance of social enterprise in sustaining jobs and services across the county. Minister Dara Calleary described the strategy as an ambitious roadmap for empowering communities and driving local development.

Social enterprises contribute to the social and environmental fabric of the county and support reinvestment of profits into the community. Collectively, these programmes help maintain a vibrant ecosystem where community based enterprises can thrive.



### Actions 17 & 19: Optimising Digital Connectivity and Supporting Smart Initiatives

Sligo's digital connectivity and smart region capabilities continue to strengthen through ongoing investment in ICT infrastructure and EU funded innovation programmes. Under PEACEPLUS, the DS3 project represents a €3.27 million investment to modernise towns and villages through digital tools, smart services and community focused technology. Sligo County Council is a partner in this cross border initiative led by ICBAN, working to improve access to digital skills, enhance local business competitiveness and build digital confidence in rural areas.

In addition, the Connexus Project, received approval to value of €2.47 million from SEUPB under PEACEPLUS 2.4, Smart Towns and Villages. With Lead Partner, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, Sligo and Leitrim County Councils will support the roll out of improved connectivity, collaborative digital actions, and training to enhance communities and local economic development through new technologies.

These investments directly advance Action 17's objective to enhance County Sligo's digital infrastructure and Action 19's focus on supporting existing smart community initiatives.

All of this is in tandem with design and deployment of new ICT systems across Council services and community facilities. The broad focus is on improving digital public services, supporting enterprise innovation and ensuring communities benefit from high quality digital access.

Together, these initiatives position Sligo for long term digital resilience—helping communities and businesses innovate, enabling remote and flexible work, and supporting full participation in an increasingly digital society.



### Action 33: Initiatives that support inclusion – Sligo Disability Consultative Committee

The inaugural meeting and reconvening of the Disability Consultative Committee (DCC) took place on 11th December 2025, at County Hall. This followed extensive engagement with the Disability Persons Organisation (DPO) and Public Participation Network (PPN) regarding membership. Cllr Declan Bree was elected as Chairperson with Cllr Arthur Gibbons elected as Vice Chair. The membership of the committee consists of elected members of the Council, members of the DPO as lived experience representatives, Advocacy organisations and staff. The DCC is the consultation forum to ensure linkage between the policies and practices of the Council and disability issues.

The Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2024–2027, prepared under the guidance of the DCC, represents the commitment of the Council to provide leadership in this area and ensure its services are accessible to disabled people and that Sligo is an inclusive place for all to live in. The DCC term will run concurrently with the Council term, from June 2024 to May 2029.

The Council has also set up an Interdepartmental Access Team across its directorates. Its role is to support the work of the Disability Consultative Committee and ensure the implementation of the Disability Inclusion & Access Strategy 2024–2027.



Members of the DCC following its inaugural meeting in Dec 2025

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