



**2020-2025**



Facilitated by  
Monaghan  
County  
Council





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## Foreword

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This is our Plan. It is the result of the various groups which work for the development of the community coming together to share ideas and discuss what is best for the future of the area. It is also the result of consultation with the people of Lough Egish & Aughnamullen, who were given opportunities to feed into the planning process at the early stages and again when the Draft Plan was produced.

We believe that we have identified a set of Actions that will improve the community, and the lives of the people who live here, and we are committing each action to delivering our part of the Plan.

We acknowledge that it will take a partnership approach in order to make real progress, and we ask that every person in the community thinks about how they can contribute to making it a better place to live. Can you give some time to help in one of the clubs? Or perhaps start a new activity in the Social Centre, so that young people have something to do in the evenings? If everyone did something small in the community, then the change would be HUGE!

One of the priorities for us is to address the social needs of our community. In coming together to discuss the work our groups are doing, we realised that not enough focus is currently going on social issues in the area. We have committed to working together to fix this over the lifetime of this Plan, through a mix of social events, training opportunities and ensuring that supports for vulnerable people are available locally. Please look out for more news on this, and if you're interested in becoming involved, we'd be delighted to welcome new volunteers.

There are many new people living and working in our village today, and we would like to say welcome to you. Please get involved in helping to look after and improve your new home, and please add your ideas and energy to the work. New voices help to keep a community fresh and able to cope with new challenges. You are an important part of the Lough Egish of tomorrow.

A **Community Council** is being set up to help all the groups which are active in developing the community to keep in touch and ensure that progress is made on this development plan. Each group will have a seat on the Council, so that all have an equal voice. If your group would like a seat on the Council, please don't hesitate to come forward. All are welcome.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who participated in the making of this Development Plan. Thank you for your time, your energy and your ideas. Thank you also to Monaghan County Council for facilitating the local meetings and helping to put the Plan on paper. Thank you also to them for committing to continuing to meet with the new Community Council on an ongoing basis to help ensure that the actions don't grind to a halt.

This Plan represents a new way of doing things for our community. We ask that everyone gets involved and throws their energy behind it, so that it will succeed, and bring benefits to the people of Lough Egish & Aughnamullen for many years to come.

Ní neart go cur le chéile!

Aughnamullen Comhaltas Branch  
Aughnamullen Ceili Club  
Aughnamullen GFC  
Aughnamullen Pipe Band  
Aughnamullen Social Centre  
Aughnamullen Sports & Leisure Centre  
Aughnamullen Vintage Group  
Carrickatee Community Hall  
Ceara Women's Group  
Crossduff Church Society  
Health & Wellbeing Aughnammullen  
Laragh Heritage  
Lough Egish Carrickatee Macra na Feirme  
Lough Egish Community Development Ltd  
Lough Egish Rod & Gun Club  
St Oliver Plunketts NS  
St Oliver Plunketts Parents Association  
St Oliver Plunketts PreSchool



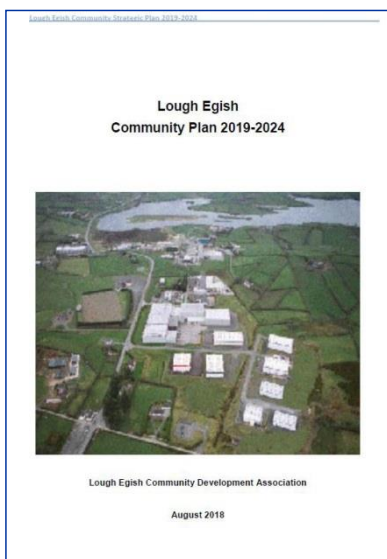
Gateway to Crossduff Church



# 1. Introduction

Monaghan County Council and the Lough Egish community and area have a long history of collaboration, covering many areas, including business, innovation, sport, heritage and the arts.

The journey towards producing this Community Plan began in 2018, when Lough Egish Community Development Company carried out a planning exercise, in preparation for a number of government funding programmes which were in the pipeline. This resulted in the production of a five-year Community Plan for the Lough Egish area.



The production of the Lough Egish Plan involved wide consultation with the community and with the business sector, and it identified the key infrastructural projects which would underpin the development of the area over the next five to ten years.

In January 2019, Monaghan County Council met with Lough Egish Community Development Company, and with other community leaders, to discuss where the Council's community planning process might add value to the work already achieved by the community itself.

It was agreed that whereas the Lough Egish Community Plan had focused on the capital projects required to develop the area, it lacked information on the activities and supports that the people of Lough Egish need in order to thrive as individuals, and for the Lough Egish area and its environs to be a strong, sustainable community.

It was agreed that further research into the social and cultural needs of the community was needed, and that a revised Community Plan, which takes into account the holistic well being of the people of the community, then be produced.

During 2019, Monaghan County Council's Community Development staff carried out research in the community, including interviewing the children of St Oliver Plunkett's NS and employers at Lough Egish Food Park before producing a Draft Community Plan in November 2019. This went to public consultation and contained a draft set of actions which were proposed to be delivered by the various groups over the next five years.

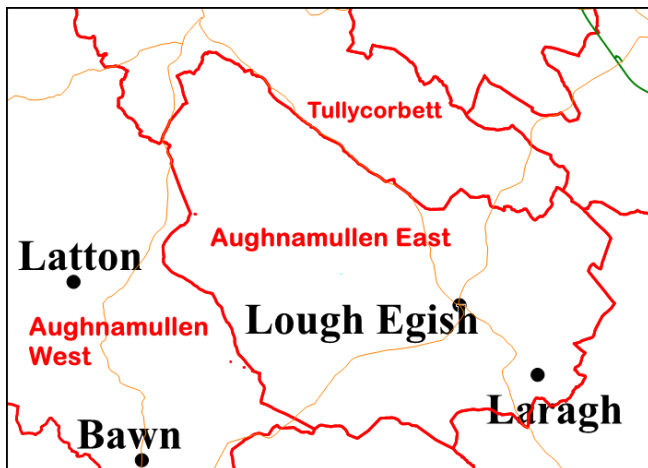
A public meeting held in February 2020 was attended by all of the community groups listed at the front of this Plan. The outcome of the consultation process, including 60+ surveys received through the school, was discussed and the list of Actions for inclusion in the Plan finalized.

This document brings together the work of Lough Egish Community Development Company, Monaghan County Council and all the individual groups working in the Aughnamullen area into one Community Plan for the area. It looks at everything that is needed in the area in order for the people of the community to thrive.

## 2. Community Profile

### 2.1 Defining the Area

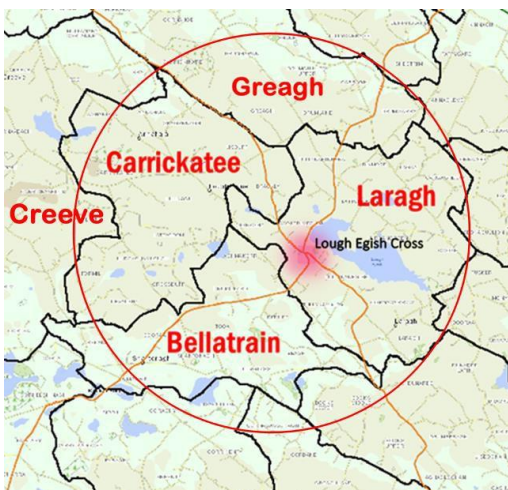
Lough Egish and the parish of Aghnamullen East is located right in the centre of County Monaghan. One of the issues which took up a lot of time in initial discussions was trying to define the exact area which makes up the community of Lough Egish.



Some people living in the north of the Parish of Aghnamullen East identify as belonging to Tullycorbett, and some living in Aghnamullen West might identify more with either Bawn or Latton communities.

It was decided to use Lough Egish cross as a central point for the area. The map below shows roughly the area that the committee felt people identified as belonging to the community of Aghnamullen & Lough Egish.

The area is made up of the entirety of three District Electoral Divisions, namely Carrickatee, Laragh and Bellatrain, as well as part of Greagh.



The area is very rural in nature, lacking any towns or villages. It is characterized by its drumlin landscape, with low-lying wetlands between whitethorn hedge-trimmed hills. Lough Egish is the largest lake in the area, but there are many more, and the area was once closely associated with mills and the production of flax.

The closest the area has to a focal point is Lough Egish cross, at which is located a number of business premises as well as the GAA premises and main community centre for the area. The local primary school is located 3.4km away, along a very narrow minor road. There are two Catholic Churches and a Church of Ireland Church in the community, again, none are connected to other amenities, so there are few opportunities to benefit from economies of scale or from sharing amenities such as car parking. The former St Peter's Tin Church at Laragh is now used as a heritage centre.

## 2.2 Socio Economic Profile

### Population

1,168 people make the Lough Egish area their home. This is broken down into:

388 households made up of:

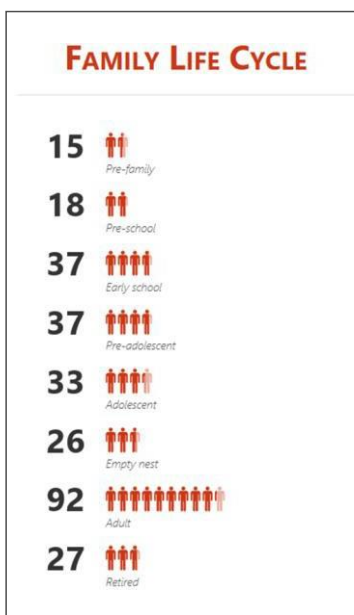
- 285 families
- 91 people live alone
  - This represents 23% of all households

120 people in the community have a disability

- This represents 10.3% of all people in the community

32% of people in the Lough Egish Community are under the age of 20.

14% are over the age of 65.



There is a mix of family life cycle stages, with some still needing pre-school and early school facilities, many needing amenities for children and teens, and a growing pressure on the area to find ways of retaining their younger members into adulthood in order to keep the community alive into the future.

### Disadvantage

According to the Haase Pratschke index of deprivation, the area was classified as 'marginally below average' in the 2016 Census in terms of affluence. The area is slightly worse off than the county score, which while also classified as 'marginally below average', is nearer to the national average of 0 at -3.23 than any of the three DED's which make up Aughnamullen. The area has seen more of a fluctuation in its fortunes than the county has overall during the last ten years, however, as can be seen in the chart below. This is probably due to the area's strong ties to the agri sector.

	2006	2016
Carrickatee	-9.55	-4.94
Laragh	-3.33	-4.26
Bellatrain	-1.81	-5.14
COUNTY	-3.06	-3.23

Disadvantage scores for Lough Egish area



### Housing

There are 388 houses in the community. 90% of these are owner occupied and 60% of these are mortgage free.

- ❑ 62 houses (16%) were built before 1919
- ❑ 12% of the community live in these houses
  - *Higher ratio of the people living alone, so they are likely to be older people, living in older, fuel-poor homes*
- ❑ 64% of the housing stock was built prior to 1990
  - *These homes are also likely to be energy inefficient*
- ❑ 81% of all the houses in Aughnamullen rely on oil for heating
- ❑ 31% rely on private wells for their water supply
- ❑ 82% rely on individual septic tanks for sewerage disposal

The environmental sustainability credentials of Aughnamullen's housing stock are low!

### Nationality & Religion

- 91% of Aughnamullen's list their religion as Catholic
- 86% are Irish by birth, and 11% are UK citizens

8% of people speak Polish 11% speak Lithuanian

10 people speak little or no English

### Education & Employment

- ❑ 74 households (19%) rely on farming/ agriculture as their main source of income
- ❑ 44% of the workforce left school at or before Junior Cert
- ❑ 53 people (11% of workforce) stated their home is also their place of work (high rate of self-employment)

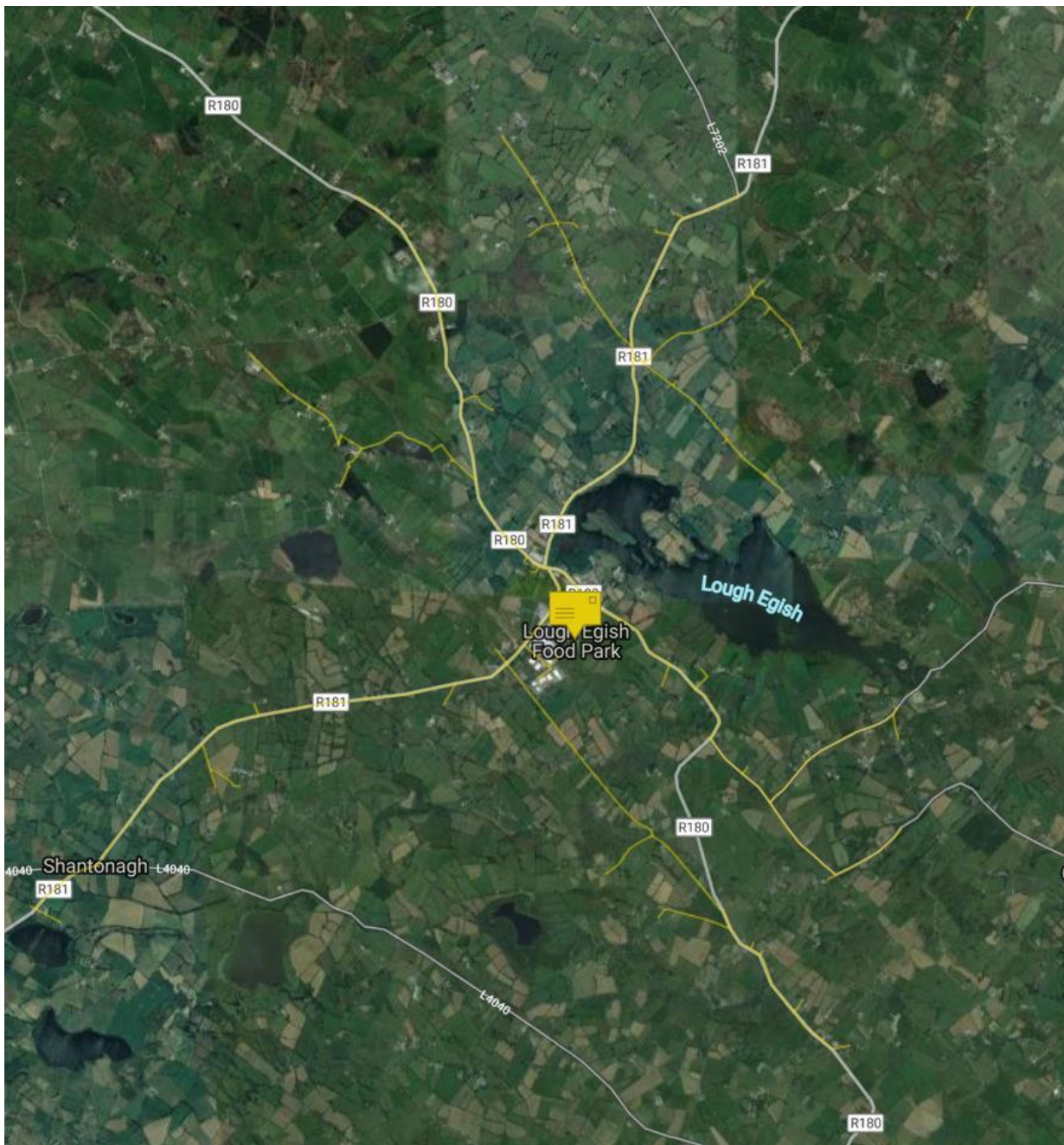
Lough Egish Business Park is the largest source of employment in the area. It is home to a number of food-related businesses, and ancillary services such as cold storage.

There is one primary school in the community, at Tossey, Loughmourne (Saint Oliver Plunketts NS). A community pre-school is located in portacabins on the school grounds but is operating at full capacity in its present home. There are plans to construct a purpose-built facility beside the school on a green-field site.

### Connectivity

The area is rural in nature, with roads providing the only way to get around. In this context, it is surprising to find that 7% of households, or 28 houses, have no car.

- 35% of households have NO computer
- 60% HAVE broadband. However, feedback from the majority of respondents on the Community Needs Survey suggests that it is slow and not adequate for modern needs, such as gaming, and streaming movies.



According to [www.fiberollout.ie](http://www.fiberollout.ie), broadband of up to 1000MB was to be available from winter 2018 at the premises along the routes outlined in yellow on the map above

### Environment

The area is very sensitive to water pollution, due to the dense soil which doesn't drain easily. Lough Egish was identified as one of Ireland's five worst polluted lakes in an EPA report in late 2019 (Water Quality Ireland Report 2013-2018). Biodiversity and climate adaptation considerations must be prioritised with any further development of the food park and lake.

### Transport

Lough Egish lies on a regional intersection of routes (east-west and north-south), making it relatively easy in rural Irish terms to get around. However, the area is still totally reliant on vehicular transportation, and public transport links are rare. Cavan Monaghan Local Link runs a bus service through Lough Egish on a Friday to Ballybay, and Collins Coaches runs a daily bus service to Dublin from Ballybay through Lough Egish and Carrickmacross.

## Culture & Heritage

The area is associated historically with the flax industry – Acadh na Muileann, the Irish version of the name references the mills which once dotted the landscape. Two mills still remain remarkably well preserved in the area, and the remains of the mill village of Laragh are being conserved by a very active heritage group. The former church of the village, St Peter’s Tin Church, has been restored by the group, and is now in use as a heritage centre. It enjoys protection as a monument of national importance.

Lough Egish is of ornithological scientific interest and it is a good over-wintering site for Whooper and Bewick's Swans and Goldeneye. Breeding birds recorded here include Black-headed Gull, Common Sandpiper, Lapwing, Coot, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Tufted Duck and Pochard. Lough Egish bogs have also been listed in the County Development Plan as being a county site of Biodiversity Importance, and the scenic views around the lough have also been protected in the Plan.

A number of trees of special amenity value have been identified in Laragh village and given protection in the County Development Plan.

The Record of Protected Structures includes the following local landmarks:

Creevelands - Detached 3 bay two storey house	Creeve, Ballybay
Creeve Chimney Stack - Freestanding industrial brick chimney stack	Creeve, Ballybay
Carnaveagh House - Detached three bay three storey house	Creeve, Ballybay
St. Mary's Catholic Church	Annahaia, Carrickatee
Church of the Sacred Heart,	Tullynamaltra Crossroads, Lough Egish
Single storey gatelodge	Creevelands, Creeve Ballybay

Crossduff Church of Ireland	Shantonagh
Farm Hill Flax Mill complex consisting of five bay two storey central building with water wheel	Reduff

Laragh Hill workers cottages - Terraced of four two bay single storey mill worker's cottages with attic storeys	Laragh, Castleblayney
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## How Lough Egish Fits into the County Development Plan

Monaghan County Council adopted a new County Development Plan in March 2019. This document outlines how MCC views the county developing over the next 5 to 7 years and sets out the types of development it will allow, and where, in order to guide and control development. Within the Plan, the Council has categorised Lough Egish as a 'Tier 6' type Settlement, and states that it sees the future for this type of settlement lying mainly in one-off housing developments. Where a settlement is mostly focused around a crossroads or community building, future developments should also try to take this into account.

## 2.3 Overview of Social Capital

### Buildings & Amenities:

#### *Social Centre*



The main community building in the area is Aghnamullen Social Centre, which was built on GAA ground to the front of the Aghnamullen Sarsfields Football grounds. The current centre is itself an extension of the original Clubhouse, to make it into a community facility. This was facilitated by PEACE Programme funding, amongst other sources over many years. Amenities in the complex include a sports hall, gym, meeting rooms, and a bar/ lounge area. The bar can cater food and does dinners on Sundays.

Murals depicting local landmarks decorate the walls, promoting pride in the heritage of the area, as well as showcasing the local talent. The main car park lies between the building complex and the roadside and is used both for events at the complex, and by employees working in the business park in the campus on the opposite side of the road, by permission of the GFC. This creates a road safety issue, with traffic speeds on the straight outside the Centre being 80kph. There is a proposal to introduce a pedestrian crossing point and some traffic calming measures to mitigate the danger.



The facilities at the GAA grounds include a pitch and walking track. The club has ambitions to floodlight the walking track and pitch and erect a seated stand, improve the surface of the pitch, and develop an all-weather training pitch.



## *School*

St Oliver Plunkett's school, Loughmourne is the only primary school in the community. In addition to catering for mainstream education needs, it houses an autism unit for the South Monaghan area. The school is located along a very narrow minor road, and experiences severe problems with vehicular access at opening and closing times, with buses being unable to turn, and lengthy delays being a regular feature of the school day. Parking for teachers is limited, and while there is ample land to the rear of the school, funding has limited the school's ability to provide play facilities.



## *Preschool*



There is one community-run preschool, on the grounds of the school in old portacabins once used by the school. Plans have been drawn up to construct a new facility beside the school, but funding has yet to be found.

Consultation with the employers in the Food Park indicate that they would find it easier to recruit and retain employees if childcare were available close to the Food Park. Some thought should be given to finding a way to facilitate both the needs of local parents and those who need childcare closer to their place of work, so that both local families and local businesses may thrive.



## *Carrickatee Hall*



An old building to the roadside at Carrickatee chapel was formerly used as a community hall, and it holds an important place in the heritage of the local community. However, the site is completely surrounded by either road or graveyard, making it difficult to develop. As the building does not currently have toilets, the cost of bringing it up to modern building regulations would make this a very expensive proposition per metre gained. What would that same amount of money provide elsewhere in the community?

## *Saint Peters Tin Church Laragh*



Laragh Tin Church is a listed building of national importance and as such we now have signage on most national routes and the Tin Church also features on Failte Ireland signage for Ireland's Ancient East. It has also been recognised on national television and media along with being advertised in the Aer Lingus autumn magazine as being a national heritage site. The Visitor book within the church highlights the number of visitors to the area which includes a large number of overseas visitors.

Laragh Tin Church is also a site of social importance, attracting national and local bus tours along with other heritage and conservation groups. There are also a number of events held throughout the year such as an Irish language summer camp for children with an attendance of over 70 children, also a visit from Santa Claus which attracts up to 500 children. The Tin Church is also used as a venue for bands and drama groups and also as a location for promotional videos and wedding photography. The Heritage Group has also provided a sense of community amongst the local people, as they now use the walkways around the Tin Church along with the community garden which provides them with somewhere to picnic and avail of seasonal flowers and vegetables.

## Crossduff Church



This limestone-built Church of Ireland church dated 1828 was restored in the 1990s. Its congregation are few in number and will require the assistance of the wider community to care for this fine building on an ongoing basis.

## Outdoor Amenities

Lough Egish lake is 289 acres in size. The lake is difficult to navigate, with many submerged rocks lying close to the surface. The Two Loughs are well known in the area for being good coarse angling lakes.

### Chapel Moyle



On the rocky shore of Lough Egish in the townland of Lattonfaskey is an ancient and interesting ecclesiastical site. Chapel (Temple) Moyle is steeped in historical significance as far back as 1590 AD where it is marked on ancient mapping as Temple Egas. This fine old monastery site is registered in Rome as one of the oldest burial places in Ireland. The ruins of an ancient Franciscan monastery which was destroyed by Cromwell remain at the site, in a scenic and ever-changing landscape which could support tourism and amenity type developments. The Temple Moyle heritage site/hub is accessible from the local road which interlinks to the R181.

Hunting and shooting are popular, with an active hunt club and a shooting range in the area.

Care needs to be taken to ensure that any development of local amenities for economic reasons does not result in a lowering of the high-quality environment that the local residents enjoy or endanger the sustainability of local wildlife and habitats.

### *Carrickatee Rock*

Carraigarellan Well is situated in Carrickatee at the foot of a high rock convenient to the chapel. This well is said to be a holy one and the people of the district used to go to it to get cured of headaches. They had to say some prayers, bathe their foreheads and drink some of the water.

The well is said to never go dry even in the warmest days of summer. Beside it there is a Mass Rock, where mass was celebrated in the penal days when the practice of the Catholic religion was forbidden by law.

Some distance from this rock there is a place which is called the gunroom, where the English soldiers were said to have kept their guns hidden.

These landmarks are reminders of periods in Ireland's past which shaped the community as it is today. They need to be marked and their story told, as they are a part of us.

### *Gaps in Amenities*

There are a few notable gaps in community amenities in the area; there is no park, and no playground, for example, and despite having more than one lake with good access in the area, they remain underdeveloped for either angling or amenity use. Despite being surrounded by wonderful countryside, the people of Aughnamullen have limited opportunity to enjoy a peaceful walk in it, as there are no off-road trails in the area.

In the Community Needs Survey, respondents also expressed the desire to have more access to the lakes of the area, so that they could enjoy them as leisure amenities. Picnic areas, walks around the lakes, and viewing points were all suggested projects which would enhance the lakes' amenity value for local people, while also improving them as a tourism asset.

## **Local Groups:**

### *Lough Egish Community Development Company Limited by Guarantee*

The Lough Egish Community Development Company (LECD) was incorporated on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 1996. LECD as part of a unique partnership with Private Sector Companies, Monaghan County Council and Grant Agencies, led to the successful development of Lough Egish Food Park. This successful partnership continues to influence growth potential at the Food Park.

In addition, the PPN registered Community Development Company continues to deliver on its goal to develop the area, for the benefit of the people of Lough Egish community and its surrounding environs within and outside of Aughnamullen.

LECD sees its future role in the community as being one of coordinating and facilitating development, bringing people together to enable projects to be put together, and helping groups to put together funding applications so that the area can maximise the potential for new developments benefiting the area.

### *Sarsfield's GAA*

Founded in 1954, the Aughnamullen Sarsfields are the local Gaelic Football Club that covers the wider parish. The club grounds are located adjacent to the Food Park and Lough Egish crossroads. The club currently fields very successful men's and ladies' teams from underage right up to senior level and engages in an extensive programme to promote wellbeing to the general community.



### *Aughnamullen Sport, Leisure and Social Development Association Ltd.*



Established in 2005, this very successful organisation oversees the delivery of fitness and leisure facilities through a lease arrangement with Aughnamullen Sarsfields and runs the community centre building. The entity is PPN registered and are active participants in that body.

### *Le Cheile Community Resources CLG*

Established and registered as a CLG in April 2017, this board of management's objective is to broaden and enhance the remit of Saint Oliver Plunkett Community Preschool Ltd. It has plans to construct a new purpose-built childcare facility located on and adjacent to Saint Oliver Plunkett's National School. However, to date, no funding has been secured to advance from the planning stage.



Artists impression of proposed new childcare facility

### *Laragh Heritage*



Laragh Heritage was founded in 2012 by a group of residents and friends of Laragh village and surrounding townlands with common interests and aims; to bring our community together and to form links with those people with Laragh connections. One of the group's most successful projects has been the restoration of Laragh Tin Church, which also provides a venue for many of the events which are hosted by the group. The total visitor numbers to Laragh "Tin Church" in 2017 was approx. 3,500.

### *Ceara*

Ceara women's group run a regular programme of outings, talks and demonstrations which mix information provision with craic and friendship.

### *Rod & Gun Club*

There is a strong interest in shooting and fishing in the area, which is not surprising, given the number and size of lakes in the area, and the rural nature of the landscape. This club dates to the early fifties and has over 100 members presently.

There is a privately run shooting range in the area, Mourne Shooting Grounds.

### *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*

There is an active branch of CCE in Aughnamullen, which organises regular music lessons and supports its members to compete in Fleadhanna Cheoil.

### *Macra na Feirme*

Macra remains active in the area, catering for young rural adults up to age 35. However, there is a need for an organisation to target teenage youth in the area.

### *Aughnamullen East Pipe Band*



Formed in the 1940's as Lough Egish band, it was renamed in the 1970s as Aughnamullen East Pipe Band and it recently celebrated its 40th birthday with a function in the Aughnamullen community social centre. The band has over thirty pipers and drummers with the youngest pipers being trained at 5 years of age.

### *Holistic Dogs*

A nonprofit organisation that provides a unique kenneling service, facilitates re-homing & rescuing dogs and provides natural methods to rehabilitate animals back to their happy self. All kenneled dogs have the opportunity to avail of services and are spoilt with swims & walks.

### *Community Alert*

Aughnamullen Community Text Alert provides a service right across the area. It has recently joined the new county-wide Monaghan Community Alerts initiative set up by the Joint Policing Committee.

### *Human Resources*

The area belongs to the Muckno Parishes CE Scheme, which allocates workers to the following:

- Aughnamullen Church & Grounds
- Carrickatee Church & Grounds
- Aughnamullen Sarsfields grounds



## Festivals

Aughnamullen was once famous for its annual carnival, which was first held 51 years ago in Oct '69 and was one of the most popular festivals in the county for 2 decades.

Recent annual festivities include the parish annual tractor run in July, the annual parish dance also run in July, the Laragh Flax festival in September, and the vintage festival every October bank Holiday weekend.

## Lough Egish Vintage



Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2019, this active group of vintage enthusiasts recreate and present the ambience and activities of a typical harvest day. This social gathering draws more than 800 people to the community centre grounds for the annual event which also sees a community dance late into the night.



In addition, an annual 5km walk is conducted in memory of Michelle Mc Cabe. This walk raises funds for all the local charities and draws a large support for the community and the neighbouring communities.

## 2.4 Gaps in Social Capital

While the range of groups in the area is impressive, there are some notable gaps which should be looked at. For example, there are few activities for children outside of structured school activities and the GAA, and there are few amenities where young people might come together on a casual basis to socialise. There is no youth club.

At the other end of the age scale, again there are few organised activities or spaces which cater for older people. In a rural area such as Lough Egish, isolation, particularly of older people, is likely to be an issue, and initiatives such as the men's shed or an active age/ older persons club in Lough Egish could be of assistance in this regard. The community centre has the capacity to provide meals; could it combine some social activities for older people with lunches? The prospect of a hot meal might also prove attractive to workers across the road in the Food Park.

There has been no Tidy Towns group since the early 1990's, and no area in the community competes in the National Tidy Towns competition.

This shows in the lack of progress made in improving the physical appearance of the area over the years: one of the benefits of having a Tidy Towns committee is that they work to a plan and make improvements to the area year on year.

## 3. Needs Identification

### 3.1 Community Surveys

During 2018, Lough Egish Community Development Company carried out a Community Survey, asking the people of the area what they felt was needed in the area. Ideas included:

- Day care for the elderly
- more indoor sports facilities
- a youth club
- activities for kids that aren't sport-focused
- a small housing project
- a playground/ outdoor recreation area
- improved access at the school
- more transport links
- coffee mornings & social meet-ups
- tidy up the cross roads
- new community childcare facility

In preparing this Community Plan, a Draft Plan was circulated throughout the community in November 2019, along with a survey which was designed to help people to comment on the Draft Plan and make suggestions as to how it could be improved upon. St Oliver Plunkett's National School sent the survey home with the pupils, and 66 families returned completed forms. These were combined with surveys and comments received from the general population and from local community groups.

The community survey can be found in Appendix B and the feedback from the school survey can be found in Appendix C.

### 3.2 Business Park Needs

Right in the centre of Aughnamullen East parish and the Lough Egish Community lies Lough Egish cross, which has developed over the years into a business park of significant size. The businesses are mostly connected to the food sector and related services. The development has three broad components:

- The first, nearest to Lough Egish Lake, dates back to the founding of a farmer's co-operative on the site, which has evolved into the current Lakelands operation.
- The second consists of the privately-owned businesses on the roadside which service the co-op and its customers
- The third, most recent development is a substantial plot of land behind the Lakelands co-op and extending up from the crossroads towards Lough Egish chapel, past the GAA grounds. This park was developed in partnership with the local community and included a significant expansion in capacity of the water treatment plant, which not only provided for new businesses within the food park, but for the expansion of the existing Lakelands facility.

The amenity has grown into a substantial regional hub for the processing and storage of food products.

The amenity is one of the largest employment campuses in Co. Monaghan, with many of the businesses operating around the clock.

We invited campus businesses to meet with Council staff to discuss their needs. Challenges identified included:

- The entrances to the campus could be enhanced, with clearer signposting, to help new lorry drivers identify which entrance to use
- Transport links could be improved to neighbouring towns, especially for shift workers
- Some employees are dropped off at Lough Egish Cross and make their way up to the Food Park from there. There is no footpath or lighting from the cross to the Food Park entrance, so this is a dangerous situation which needs to be rectified as a priority.
- A bus shelter at the cross would also be of benefit for those waiting for lifts/ bus links to town
- Childcare: being able to drop children off on the way to work, and having after school care available locally would enable many employees to remain in work after becoming parents
- Food/ lunch/ rest facilities for some businesses, which do not have canteen facilities with hot food available
- Car parking is an issue for some businesses, with accommodation being provided by the GAA at the social centre opposite the Business Park. This creates a road safety issue, as this stretch of road is known for speeding. A pedestrian crossing is recommended.
- Wi-Fi access would enable workers to do some personal business online during breaks, eg banking, paying bills, booking holidays etc. It's difficult to get these done when you work in a rural area and have limited time to get into town during work hours.

Where employees' needs can be accommodated by the local community, it will greatly aid the businesses in holding on to valued employees, ensuring that it is sustainable for them to remain in Lough Egish for the long term.

Providing services such as childcare and hot lunches to the business park is also an opportunity for the local community, which may help to increase the number of customers/ users of amenities & services to a feasible level, thus enabling this rural area to benefit from facilities, services and activities that would not normally be viable in such a small rural community.

### 3.3 Community Meetings

Monaghan County Council met three times with representatives of voluntary groups active in the area. The meetings provided the community with an opportunity to discuss the priority needs for the area. These included:

- Enhancements to the primary school, including improved access for buses, car parking facilities, and improved play facilities for the children
- Amenities and activities for older children and young people
- Road safety – traffic calming, particularly near community facilities
- More community events, to bring people together more often
- Supports for older people, particularly to improve social connections
- Supports for mental well-being, particularly for men, and people living alone
- More leisure facilities
- Development of a new community childcare facility
- More heritage information, to help develop tourism in the area
- Access to the lakes

Key projects identified included:

- New community childcare facility & linkage between the food park and local childcare services
- Renovation of Carrickatee Church & hall, including provision of car parking
- Creation of a community park
- Improved signage to amenities around the community, including school, churches and lakes
- Improved rural transport links across the area
- Public realm works to improve the appearance of Lough Egish cross

- Road safety works between Lough Egish cross and entrance to Food Park, to protect pedestrians
- Improved recreational amenities in the area, including off road walks, children’s play facilities, access to the lakes for fishing and relaxation
- Need to improve the water quality of Lough Egish lake, which has been identified as having one of the worst levels of pollution in Ireland
- Need to focus more on supporting the social needs of the community, as there are few groups in the community which currently have a remit in this area
- Promotion of the area’s rich heritage, which includes its connection to the linen trade, Laragh village, the RIC barracks at Shantonagh and the ancient religious site at Chapel Moyle
- Improved broadband connectivity is a must, in order to support the food park and other local businesses, as well as local students

### 3.4 SWOT Analysis

Lough Egish Community Development Company, when completing their Community Plan during 2018 looked at the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the Lough Egish and Aughnamullen areas. They were:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Levels of Self-Employment;</li> <li>• Strong Agricultural Base;</li> <li>• Established Community Structures;</li> <li>• Strong volunteerism tradition</li> <li>• Strong Base of Work Skills and higher education.</li> <li>• Strong community &amp; voluntary sector</li> <li>• Accessible Location</li> <li>• Population Growth &amp; Potential</li> <li>• Good Local Committee</li> <li>• Lots of Groups &amp; Organisations –</li> <li>• Established School and Autistic Centre</li> <li>• Have large town and city bus Services</li> <li>• Location adjacent to a regional traffic route</li> <li>• Strong fundraising ability locally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No clear scene of place/ village</li> <li>• No community hub or all-encompassing focal point.</li> <li>• No Garda Station</li> <li>• Poor Community Physical Infrastructure</li> <li>• Lack of Community Hub</li> <li>• Lack of Political Representation</li> <li>• Lack of Services/Retail</li> <li>• Lack of broadband infrastructure</li> <li>• Poor Telecom connectivity</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Rural Development Programme will bring an opportunity to realise some significant capital projects.</li> <li>• To help with and provide much needed local services.</li> <li>• Improve Quality of Life</li> <li>• Tap into EU &amp; Public Funding Schemes</li> <li>• Develop Strategic partnerships</li> <li>• Apply for village status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commuter culture – people travel outside the area to work.</li> <li>• Lack of Inward Investment.</li> <li>• Economic downturn, improved economy not reflected locally.</li> <li>• Costs of basic services.</li> <li>• Availability of adequate funding to realise plans.</li> <li>• Losing Business opportunity.</li> <li>• Losing Young People.</li> <li>• Decline in Population.</li> <li>• Visual Appearance continue to further deteriorate.</li> <li>• Crime.</li> <li>• Loss of Jobs &amp; Economic Activity</li> <li>• Further Loss of Public Services.</li> </ul>

## 3.5 Schools Consultation

Staff of Monaghan County Council visited the Saint Oliver Plunkett's Loughmourne School in April 2019 and spoke to 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class students about what they liked and didn't like about living in the parish of Aughnamullen East and the Lough Egish community. They also spoke to them about what they would like to see happen in the community, and how to make it an even better place to live.

The children are very concerned about the amount of littering in their environment. They spoke a lot about pollution and providing habitats for wildlife. They want to have more activities to do in the early evenings, preferably not sport.

They view the community centre down at the GAA grounds as the hub of community life, and would like to spend more time there, taking part in a range of activities.

They also would like improved play facilities at the school, and also a park in the community.

Here is a snapshot of what the children had to say:





The school also participated actively in encouraging each family to study the Draft Community Plan and respond to the survey to give their opinion on what the priorities are for the community. Sixty-six families responded, and their feedback was collated by the school and given to the Council.

The number one priority for families with school children were:

1. Playground & community park
2. Community Childcare
3. Young Family community housing
4. Daycare for the elderly
5. Home energy efficiency grants
6. GAA changing facilities

There was strong support for more activities in the area, including:

- a youth club
- Hurling/ camogie club
- Indoor sports such as basketball, volleyball and badminton
- Community Games
- Irish dancing

It was picked up that the lake was underutilized, with watersports on Lough Egish being mentioned, as well as walking/ cycling paths around scenic areas.

The need for family-focused community events, and supports for older people were recognized, as was the need for improved public transport services.

The full feedback from the school's survey can be found in Appendix C.

## 3.6 Identifying the Key Issues for Lough Egish

Having listened to everything the people of Lough Egish and the parish of Aughnamullen East have to say about their community, Monaghan County Council pulled all the information together, identified some areas of concern, and brought them to a community meeting for discussion in February 2020. The meeting was attended by over fifty people representing all the active voluntary groups in the community, as well as interested individuals of all ages.

It was agreed at the meeting that one of the biggest challenges that the community faces is that there are few groups in the area whose primary focus is on the social needs of the people of Lough Egish. It was agreed that this must be addressed going forward, as it is clear from the information that there are many areas of life where people's needs are not being met, such as those of older people, young people and the socially isolated.

There are some other areas where Lough Egish is doing really well, and these will stand the community in good stead as we go forward:

- There is a strong work ethic, and a track record of being able to deliver large scale projects, such as the food park, the social centre and St Peter's Tin Church

- Groups already collaborate with one another and are used to pooling resources and pulling together to achieve a common goal.
- The area is rich in heritage, and there is a strong interest in this in the community, with active groups working to promote various aspects of local heritage

It was agreed at the meeting to build on these strengths going forward.

The following problems were identified in the community and discussed at the meeting in February:

- The public realm needs to be improved, particularly road safety & general visual appearance of the industrial area around Lough Egish crossroads.
- there are road safety issues outside the Food Park, where the traffic is picking up speed on the straight, just as lorries are slowing to turn in to the Park. Also, workers using the Social Centre car park are at risk crossing the road. Since this was first identified during the early stages of preparing this Plan, a successful funding application has been made and work has commenced on road safety measures.
- There is a lack of awareness of issues such as littering, pollution, looking after the environment, and this is perhaps not helped by there being no active Tidy Towns initiative in the area and no public realm/ Tidy Towns plan
- No local group has a focus on older people, and there are no active supports for older people in the area.
- Similarly, there are limited supports for young people, outside of activity-led clubs
- Parents are also asking for help. Childcare is an issue for many, including for those working on the Business Park campus. All-day child care service is required to cater for working parents. Parent & toddler activities and supports for parents of older children are also needed
- St Oliver Plunkett's NS needs upgrading works, including road safety works and play facilities
- Broadband is hit and miss in the area, impacting on business and on leisure. It is also having an impact on families with third level students, who sometimes have to stay at college at weekends to complete course work due to the unavailability of broadband at home, thus putting additional cost on families.
- Water quality in Lough Egish is very low; so low in fact that it was named by the EPA as one of Ireland's top five most polluted lakes in 2019. This is obviously a threat to any further commercial development at the Food Park, but also a serious threat to wildlife in the area, and to those who wish to enjoy the lake for its amenity value. It is obviously not possible to develop projects which encourage people down to the lake until the water quality is sorted out, so a plan to tackle this is needed urgently.

The community identified a number of opportunities, including:

- The area is rich in natural wealth, apart from the recent restoration of St Peters Church at Laragh, its heritage and amenities remain relatively underdeveloped:
  - o No off-road walks
  - o Limited development of the lakes as an amenity
  - o No playground
  - o No outdoor community space/ park
- The influx of hundreds of people into the community daily to work in the Food Park provides the community with a potential market for services which might be developed in the nearby area, which might benefit both the local community and the employees of the Food Park. Whereas demand from the local population on its own may not be sufficient to make the service viable, the added custom from the Food Park employees may make services such as daily hot meals at the Social Centre, transport to nearby towns to accommodate changes in shift or child care through the summer months sustainable.

- There are opportunities to develop more social activities in the community. These are needed for all ages, with our survey revealing that both young people and older people are keen to see activities in the area that they could take part in. Women, in particular young mothers, also reported feeling isolated and wishing to have more activities in the area. The community is lucky to have a well-appointed, modern community centre. However, much of the current activity in the centre is sports-focused. Perhaps space needs to be made for less 'high octane' pursuits? Young people in particular can often feel unwanted in community centres if they 'hang around'; some centres have successfully addressed this by giving young people their own dedicated space within the facility, allowing the young people to decorate it and encouraging them to hang out, use the wifi, drink coffee and meet friends. It can be a great way of including young people in the life of the community and getting them involved in what is going on locally.
- The younger children of Aughnamullen asked our survey for more activities, in particular after school, non-sport activities such as drama, dance and art. These are great for building confidence and helping young people to explore their creative side and find their individual voice. Monaghan County Library runs an annual 'Creative Monaghan' programme which supports this kind of activity and may help interested individuals in Lough Egish put together a programme for the children of the area.

### 3.7 Projects in Development 2019

The consultation process facilitated the various stakeholders to exchange information, and in some cases to make progress on plans. During the course of putting together this Plan, the following projects have been progressed:

#### **Community Well Being Centre**

- Right on the doorstep of the Food Park Hub is an established recreational amenity that currently has two pitches and with plans to develop a MUGA at the Aughnamullen GFC site.
- The committee is presently concluding a very successful six figure fundraising challenge that has given the group the capacity to match fund multiple sports capital programmes into 2020 and beyond.

#### **Lough Egish Community Development**

- The Lough Egish Community Development Company made an application to the 2019 Town and Village Improvement Fund to create a Footpath linkage from Lough Egish Cross roads past the GFC and Food park linking to the church car park. Depending on amount secured, this may require successive funding applications before the project is complete
- The Group has also secured €24k from the Leader programme to appoint a specialist consultant to assess the business needs of the Lough Egish Food park and its supporting community
- Further collaboration with the Local Enterprise Office in Monaghan during 2019 should result in the addition of new enterprises at the Food Park.

**Laragh Heritage**

- A planning application is in development for permanent toilet facilities on site to enable the Tin Church to cater for further events

**Saint Oliver Plunkett's NS Loughmourne**

- The school made a successful application to CLAR in 2019 for funding to address bus turning and car parking issues at the school. They will now seek improvements on road safety at the school entrance

**Le Cheile Community Resources CLG**

- Plans are at an advanced stage for the development of a new, purpose-built childcare facility. Planning permission has been granted for a 678m<sup>2</sup> indoor and outdoor area, sensory garden, car parking and effluent treatment adjacent to Saint Oliver Plunkett's National School at Loughmourne. Funding is not yet in place for the project, however.

**Carrickatee Hall**

- A committee has been working on plans to restore the hall at Carrickatee Church. Architect's plans have been commissioned, and permission is being sought from the diocese to lease the hall so that funding can be accessed for the project.

The Plan is a rolling document, with the Community Council continuously reviewing the area's needs, and adding new projects as necessary. It is expected that as the community becomes accustomed to working together to address the area's needs, more large-scale undertakings will emerge, and will take their place in the list of Projects in Development.

## 4. A Vision of the Future

A 'vision' is a picture that the community creates in its head of the end result of its efforts. It describes what the Lough Egish community as a whole in Aughnamullen will look like at a specified time in the future –say in ten years' time - after all the hard work has paid off, and the various initiatives have been put in place to create 'the Ideal Lough Egish'. ***Here is the agreed vision for Lough Egish/ Aughnamullen:***

**A Vision for the Lough Egish Community in Aughnamullen in 2030:**

***Aughnamullen is a beautiful rural community, with good local amenities and a clean, tidy environment. People take pride in the area, and love living here. Everybody feels welcome in Aughnamullen, and everyone has a part to play in the community. There is always something going on, and nobody is left out, young or old.***

***There are regular social gatherings, which help to keep this community closely connected, and helps to ensure that the needs of the people are identified and acted upon, thereby ensuring this community will remain strong and successful for many years to come."***

There are four key elements to this Vision:

1. The **physical appearance** of the area
2. The **activities & amenities** which are built up within the area
3. Looking after the vulnerable **people** of the area
4. **Building community spirit**, so that everyone feels equally welcome and knows how they can contribute best to their community. The idea of giving back to community should be automatic to everyone in a strong community.

We have identified five key strategies which will help to drive progress towards this Vision:

- Creation of a **strong identity/ brand** for the area
- **Improvement of amenities and services**
- Improving **road safety**
- Ensuring that **everyone's** needs are looked after (social inclusion)
- Building a **strong community spirit**

There are three underlying objectives which sit at the heart of the work:

- **Addressing Isolation**
- **Promoting Community Spirit and Pride**
- **Sensitive Development & Promotion of Local Heritage**

The next section lays out how and what we propose to do.



## 5. Main Strategies

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### 5.1 Creation of 'Identity'

The Lough Egish Community within Aughnamullen is very dispersed, with no one centre around which the community is focused, such as a village. There are no welcome signs to the area, to orient the visitor and inform them they have arrived in the Lough Egish Community. There are few places where the name 'Aughnamullen' is featured, giving few occasions for the creation of a sense of identity or belonging to the community.

To assist in the creation of a sense of one community, the name 'Aughnamullen' should be used more widely - in Carrickatee and Laragh and Lough Egish – to convey the sense of the area all belonging to the one community. This will bear fruit also in helping to promote a sense of pride in the area.

The primary character of the area is rural, and for the most part the area enjoys a blend of the most stunning drumlins covered with whitethorn hedges and studded with lakes. However, right in the middle of what is an idyllic rural location, a cluster of buildings of very unlovely industrial design has grown up around Lough Egish crossroads, particularly those associated with the dairy co-op.

This area is very industrial in appearance, with functional rather than beautiful buildings. This lends an 'uncared-for' feel to the area, which the local community has done its best to offset by creating a feature at the crossroads. The road verges themselves lack definition, which, when traversed by heavy lorries, get cut up on a regular basis and give an unloved appearance to the crossroads area. The dead space between buildings looks unloved and very hard – there is no greenery, no colour, and no effort made to 'soften' the bulky buildings with greenery to blend in to the surrounding countryside. Given the large scale of the buildings, trees are needed to blend their verticality back into the surrounding landscape.

While we understand that the purpose of these buildings is industrial, so also must the businesses responsible for them understand that they are located within a community, and that the community is affected by their appearance.

The community and businesses need to form a partnership to address the physical appearance of the area. This should start by agreeing a set of objectives for the partnership, and then setting out to achieve them together. Funding is available for such initiatives through programmes such as the government's Town & Village Renewal Programme, which offers between €20,000 and €100,000 for projects which aim to revitalise areas of dereliction to stimulate local economies. Competitions such as the National Tidy Towns competition can yield further cash incentives.

The GAA grounds car park is in need of resurfacing and landscaping, and the area around Lough Egish cross also needs to be landscaped.

It is difficult to take pride in your area when you feel it doesn't look its best, so this is an important place to start. It also has a real impact on the area's economic potential, as the area's tourism potential cannot be realised until it matches up to the image of unspoilt countryside that holidaymakers have in their minds when they come to Ireland.

The children have noticed the lack of pride in the area's appearance, and every single class commented on the serious littering problem throughout the countryside when the Council's consultation team visited the school. Littering is a symptom of the lack of regard many have for the physical appearance of the area. It has been proven in many studies that when an area looks uncared for, it attracts more and more vandalism, littering and graffiti, whereas if it is well kept, incidences of antisocial behaviour drop dramatically.

While this may seem like an insignificant thing to focus on, it has such a profound effect on people's mind-set, and it has the potential to transform both the appearance of the area and the outlook of the community. Therefore, it is important to make the appearance of the area a priority.

The following actions have been agreed:

- A Tidy Towns movement is to be started in the community, and the area will get involved in the annual national competition
- A Public Realm Plan will be developed for the area around Lough Egish cross, to include measures to give proper definition to the roadside boundaries, some visual enhancement of the road side around the cross itself, and public lighting and footpaths from the cross up to the business park.
- A brand/ image for the area will be developed, and will be featured on welcome signage erected on the approach roads, to define the boundaries of the community and raise awareness and pride
- Local heritage will be promoted through the erection of visitor information points, perhaps drawing inspiration from the area's association with flax mills, from which the name Acadh na Muileann (the field of the mills) derives.
- A feasibility study into the development of the ancient monastic site of "Chapelmoyle" is to be commissioned. The site ideally would be linked to Laragh village via a walking route.

## 5.2 Improving Community Amenities & Services

It was clear from talking to the community that more amenities are needed in the community, and that these should cater for all ages and interests. The following amenities are to be developed as a priority:

- The Social Club is to consider developing a Youth Hub, to include Wi-Fi, and a coffee area, to encourage young people to call in and spend time in the Hub on a regular basis
- A new community childcare facility is to continue to be a priority
- The community will try to put in place a Community Park, for the enjoyment of all
- The heritage of the area is to be brought to prominence through improved access to local sites of heritage interest, and the provision of information signage at the sites

- More use is to be made of the local lakes as an amenity.
  - o Improved access is to be sought to Lough Egish for rowing boats from a point visible from the main road, to promote tourism development.
  - o A project to map and mark underlying rocks in the lake will help to improve safety for boats
  - o The poor water quality in Lough Egish is to be tackled through community action
- The ancient monastic site at Chapel Moyle is to be developed with the necessary sensitivity
- A public playground is to be developed, preferably as part of the community park development
- The Social Centre is to investigate the extension of its services, to include more activities for older people and children, and hot meals on a 5 days/week basis to cater for the Business Park employees as well as older people in the area.
- The sports & recreation facilities at the GAA park are to be extended, to become the recreational hub for the area. Economies of scale should be sought with regard to using the community-owned buildings at the centre of the facility to provide changing facilities for other amenities such as a walking track, and a multi-use games area (MUGA) in the same locality.

Other projects which are to be pursued include:

- The restoration of the mill cottages at Laragh
- The restoration of Carrickatee Hall
- A social housing project for older people

## 5.3 Road Safety

If one should wish to be dropped off or picked up at the crossroads and walk up to the GAA grounds or Food Park, which is a very short distance from the cross, there is no footpath, verge or lighting to safely see you to your destination. Workers parking in the GAA car park take their lives in their hands as they try to cross the only straight and wide stretch of road as vehicles pick up speed leaving the cross. A pedestrian crossing is needed. Some road markings to effectively narrow the surface of the roadway and discourage speeding would greatly increase road safety for all at this location.

The Business Park has two entrances, which are not clearly marked. This is confusing for a new driver and could lead to a road traffic accident as drivers stop in the middle of the road to assess the situation. Some feature signage to brand the park and to signpost which entrance is the correct one for which business would be helpful to drivers.

There are traffic congestion problems at the school, with buses not being able to get turned due to parents trying to drop off children along the same narrow road.

The following measures are to be undertaken:

- Traffic calming measures & pedestrian crossing at food park
- Pedestrian link between food park and Lough Egish cross
- Bus shelter at crossroads
- Feature signage for food park
- Road improvements and access works at the Saint Oliver Plunkett NS Loughmourne

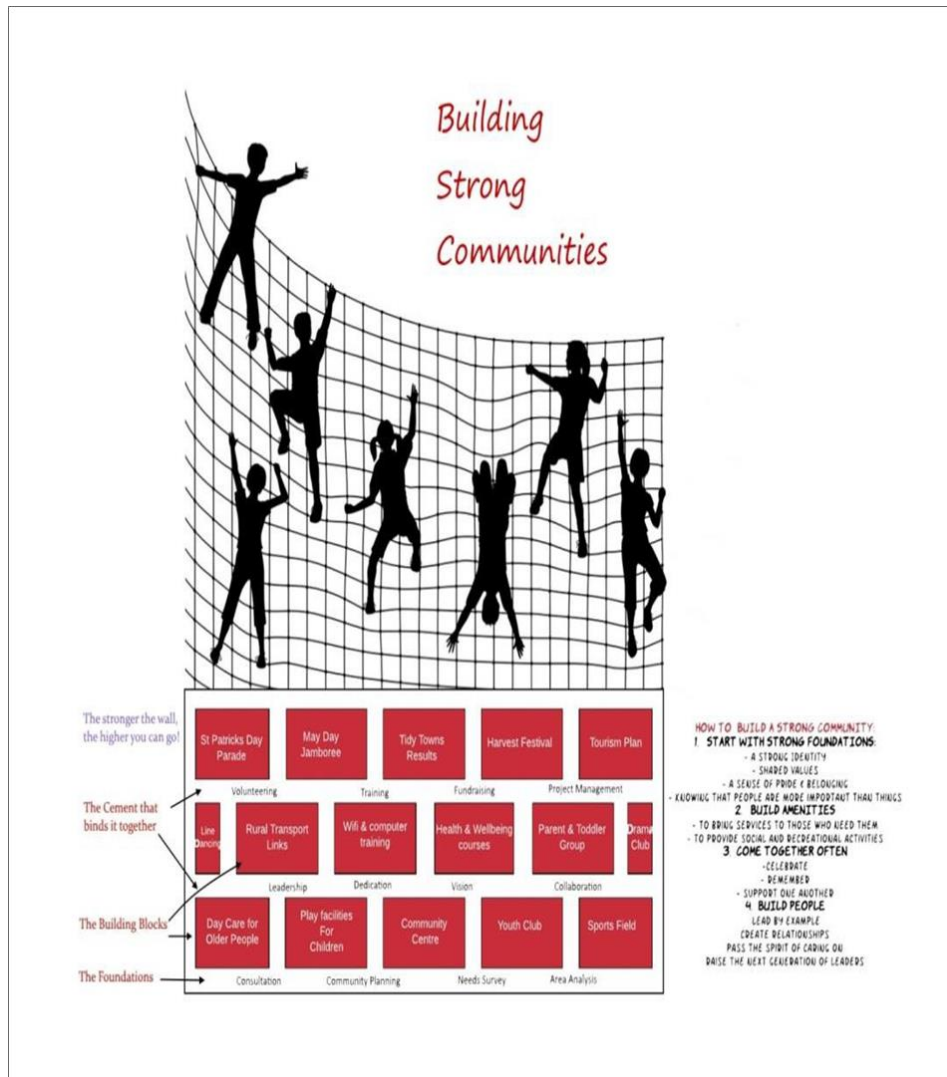
## 5.4 Looking after Everyone

A community thrives when the people who live and work in it know each other well and come together often. They learn from one another, and they help one another to grow. They also look out for each other. As a person passes through life, there will be times when they will need a lot of care and others when they have the capacity to give care to others.

There will be times in their life when things are going well, and other times when they will need the support of others to get through; sometimes emotionally, sometimes physically, sometimes even financially. There will be people in the community who will have skills that they can use to help give something back; others will be vulnerable and need the community's protection. A strong community finds a place for all, and everyone finds their place.

Many things have a part to play in creating a strong community, and all must be present in order to achieve a good balance, capable of withstanding the storms and tempests that time and life will bring.

To ensure that all the 'bricks in the wall' are in place, a **Community Council** will be formed. Every community group and organization active in Aughnamullen will have a 'seat' on the Council. The Council will meet once a year, to discuss local issues and work together on common projects. These common projects will typically cover areas of activity where none of the groups are currently active. This will enable new areas of activity to be built within the community.



At present, there are very few activities or groups focusing on the needs of older people or children and teenagers. These are vulnerable members of the community and this should be looked at specifically.

It is also of concern that the people who work in the Food Park are being ignored. At best, the community is missing an opportunity – the social club could be making money from providing lunches, for example. At worst, the indifferent attitude of the community to the needs of the workers on the campus may jeopardise the long-term survival of the campus itself, if the businesses located on the campus find it difficult to recruit or retain employees due to the remote location, difficulties accessing suitable childcare, transportation etc.

The following actions will be undertaken to address the issue of **Social Inclusion**:

- The Social Club will look into providing hot lunches, to serve not just the workers in the Food Park, but also the community of Aughnamullen. There is currently



no meals on wheels service available in rural south Co. Monaghan. The Social Club will investigate the feasibility of running a meals on wheels service.

- A Youth Club will be established in the area and the Social Club will facilitate the provision of a youth space
- More focus on supports for older people will be developed, to include a social element, and also to look at services such as day care, seniors alert and rural transport.

## 5.5 Nurturing Community Spirit

As people become increasingly busy, we cannot take it for granted any more that people will automatically know how to be good neighbours or know that this is important because it builds strong community bonds that see us through in tough times.

We also cannot take it for granted that the next generation are picking up the skills that come naturally to the present generation; where are our young people being given the opportunity to participate in community activities? Where are they learning how to organise events? How to plan activities? How to run fundraisers? How to run meetings?

Community spirit has to be built, and then it has to be nurtured. It can be built around a cause, or a team. It can be nurtured by bringing people together regularly to celebrate, to commiserate, to have the craic, to remember, and to find joy in each other's company. Community days and festivals are the foundation stone upon which a strong community thrives. The community needs to build on its successes when it comes to functions and dances. It is recommended that all groups should get involved in running an annual festival, to pull people together and help bind them.

Projects which will help to bind the community of Aughnamullen together include:

- A community park will be created, to provide local people with somewhere they can share, and can come together for small events, family picnics, fun days etc. The park will function as a Community Space and will be an important asset in fostering a sense of community spirit, providing a place for people to meet, get to know their neighbours, and enjoy belonging to the community of Aughnamullen.
- The community will develop an annual family-oriented event, to bring people together at least once a year for a bit of craic. This event will provide an opportunity to 'touch base' and check that all is well with the community, to ask people what activities they would like to see run over the upcoming period, and also to act as a thank you to all who have been working hard behind the scenes all year. It will also promote a sense of community. We suggest that the community look at rejuvenating the Carnival, with all local groups helping to organise aspects of the event (using the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first carnival as a reason to reminisce and celebrate the people of Aughnamullen)
- A 'committee shadowing' programme will be initiated by all local groups, whereby young people will be invited onto all committees, and given the

role of shadowing those in positions of responsibility, so that they may 'learn the ropes'.

- To ensure that young people are given a meaningful role in local development, the young people who become involved in shadowing local committees will be facilitated to form a Youth Leaders committee and mentored to take on their own programme of work. Two initial projects will be:

- o The researching of local heritage and development of a heritage trail, with website, app and on-site information boards.
- o The development of a brand/ logo for Aughnamullen, to be used on all promotional material including the heritage signage

- A Community Council will be set up, with a seat being given to each community group active in Aughnamullen. The purpose of the Council will be to meet once a year to review progress on developing the area, identify problems, agree solutions, and plan for the future. Monaghan County Council will attend the meetings if requested.

- A website (linked to Facebook) will be set up to cover the whole community, with each group posting their news to the site. This will aid in keeping everyone in touch with what is happening in the community, and will enable groups to gain feedback from the residents of the area through surveys etc. This will help the community to respond to emerging needs as the years roll on.

## 5.6 The Main Objectives behind the Priority Themes

### Addressing Isolation

The research has shown that for many reasons, there are many people in the community who are at risk of becoming isolated, be it because they live alone, or they are newly arrived to the area, or they have small children and can't get out much, or they are disabled, or they have no transport or no internet access.

Councils and community groups working together can be very good at addressing causes of isolation, through the provision of services, the development of amenities, and the running of activities such as fun days, evening classes, etc.

Involvement in community activities can be difficult when you don't know many people; it can be intimidating to step into a gathering where you're the only person who seems to not know everyone there. Clubs need to be mindful of this and find innovative ways of providing a less 'closed' face to those who may not have the confidence to approach them. Could you introduce a 'newbies' day into your calendar of events, for example?

## Promotion of Community Spirit & Pride

Giving the community – young and old, newly arrived and lifelong residents alike – a Community Plan to get behind, to sign up to, and to play an active role in delivering, gives everyone a chance to be a part of a fresh start for Aughnamullen. Everyone has been asked to identify what part they play, and what gifts they bring to the community, and to put something back into their community.

Starting a Tidy Towns group in the area and making enhancements to the appearance of the area around Lough Egish cross will provide local residents with the opportunity to take action to improve the appearance of their area, and to take pride in their community. The development of a brand and the promotion of the area's heritage will also give the community a sense of place and something to proud of. As they see these projects begin to slot into place, the community will rightfully take pride in their achievements together.

## Sensitive Development & Promotion of Local Heritage

The community is situated in an ancient pocket of the county and the area has much heritage to be explored. However, there is little signage, or literature promoting the area's history and culture. The Plan includes actions which will promote the area's heritage and make it more accessible for visitors. This will also help to generate local pride in the area.

## 6. The Action Plan

The table below outlines the wider suite of projects and activities which have been agreed by the community of Aughnamullen, each of which will play a part in achieving the Vision set out for the area.

We find that unless a task is assigned to someone, it doesn't get done, and unless you give that task a deadline, it never moves forward. So, against each Action is listed the organization which is taking the initiative to make that project happen.

Plans work best when they stay flexible and respond as local circumstances change. This is why we have built into the Plan that the community will come together once a year to review how things are going and see if its priorities remain the same. This yearly review will also enable us to identify where a project has stalled, and we can then work together to get the project back on track.

When prioritising projects, as a community, we have agreed to use the following criteria to help us to determine how one project is given priority over another on the list:

- *Their potential to impact on a large number of people*
- *Their potential to have a far-reaching impact through facilitating people accessing personal development opportunities*
- *Their potential to improve the quality of life for people in the community through improved services, access to opportunities, etc.*

Only the people of Lough Egish and the Aughnamullen community will know the right balance of projects to meet their needs.

A committee shadowing programme will be implemented by each group, as a mechanism to facilitate the inclusion of new people onto local committee structures. Strong communities know that the knowledge of how to carry out community projects must be known to as many in the community as possible, so that all may understand the important role they play in creating the 'glue' that holds the community together.

***A community that:***

- ***understands and values community development***
- ***nurtures its youth and supports young families***

***will never be short of willing volunteers***

For this reason, you will find that our Plan does not focus entirely on **Projects**, but also on the **Programmes and Supports** that facilitate the development of People and the **Processes and Structures** which facilitate the co-ordination of effort to deliver the projects and programmes.

At the end of the day, a Community Plan is all about the **PEOPLE**. They are the **WHY** behind the Plan – the reason behind all the work, all the facilities, all the meetings, all the fundraising, all the planning. It's all about making life better for the people of Aughnamullen.

When considering projects, the impact on the people of the community should guide the decision-making on priorities.



What	Who	How
<b>1.Developing Community Capacity &amp; Co-ordinating Local Effort</b>		
1.1 Lough Egish Community Development Company to expand their remit beyond the continued development of the industrial park to look at the wider needs of the community	Lough Egish Community Development Company	Some of the projects which the community wishes to develop may need the formal structure of a limited company to proceed. Rather than having to set another community-led limited company up, LECDC will act as an umbrella for the community. Where a community project is infrastructural in nature, it will be led by LECDC where feasible.
1.2 A bespoke training programme to be put in place to meet the needs of local community groups	Community Council	Training/ skills needs assessment of local committees, followed by a request to PPN/ Monaghan Integrated Development/ ETB for support in putting together a programme of support to upskill the community leaders where deficits/ needs are identified
1.3 Groups to formally buy in to the Community Plan & the planning process which goes with it.	ALL	Annual progress meetings to be held, facilitated by Monaghan County Council, to monitor progress, identify obstacles, agree changes to the Plan etc.
1.4 Committee shadowing programme, to provide learning opportunities for new people on all committees.	ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committees to prepare a list of roles &amp; tasks suited for inclusion in the shadowing programme</li> <li>- Programme should be for a specified time period e.g. 1 year</li> <li>- Invitation to the wider community for volunteers to fill the roles</li> <li>- Training and induction to be provided at the start, and a learning/ celebration to be organised at the end</li> <li>- Links to accreditation, e.g. Gaisce award for young people, should be developed</li> </ul>
1.5 Set up a Community Council, with every local group to have one seat. Monaghan County Council and Business Park also to be represented on the Council, as stakeholders in the community  Community Council to meet annually to review progress on agreed Plan, identify areas of concern, agree solutions, update the Plan, etc	ALL, facilitated by Monaghan County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All groups to be invited to a meeting</li> <li>- Terms of reference to be agreed</li> <li>- Each group to identify tasks they will try to progress before next meeting</li> <li>- Agree date of next meeting, at which progress will be shared, lessons sought, plans adjusted, and new tasks assigned</li> </ul>

1.6 Set up a Youth Leaders committee. Facilitate the committee initially to undertake two projects, then to set their own programme of work	ALL, facilitated by Monaghan County Council	Research local heritage & develop a trail, with website, app and on-site information boards.  Oversee the development of a brand/ logo for Aughnamullen, to be used on all promotional material including the heritage signage
1.7 Organise an annual 'Community Feedback' event, to enable the community to give their input into the development of the area, how things are going, and where priorities should lie going forward	Community Council	Create a family fun event, at which surveys will be distributed asking for feedback  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'What are we doing well?'</li> <li>- 'What could we do better?'</li> <li>- 'Where should we focus our efforts next?'</li> <li>- 'Have you any suggestions?'</li> <li>- 'Would you like to offer any help?'</li> </ul>
<b>2.Creation of Identity</b>		
2.1 Develop a 'brand' for the area, to feature the name 'Aughnamullen'	Youth Leaders Committee	Design brief agreed by the Community Council. Project led by Shadow youth (see 1.6)
2.2 Erect 'Welcome to Aughnamullen' feature signage at the limits of the area	County Council / Tidy Towns	Signage along the roadside is best erected by the Council, for insurance reasons. The design will come from 1.6 above, and the placement will be overseen by the Tidy Towns committee
2.3 Erect visitor information points at Lough Egish Cross, Laragh, Carrickatee and Crossduff with key heritage & tourist information	Youth Leaders / Tidy Towns	Local heritage information to come from 1.6, with support from Heritage Committees Tourism information to come from Monaghan Tourism  Design & placement to be overseen by Tidy Towns Committee  Installation by County Council
2.4 Conserve & promote local heritage & find ways to connect with the community	Laragh Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extend Laragh Heritage to look at heritage of wider area</li> <li>- Agree a set of projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o To conserve sites of importance</li> <li>o To explain local heritage to visitors</li> <li>o To promote the importance of heritage to everyone</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Put a Plan in place to help deliver a range of Actions, from talks &amp; training to restoration of buildings.</li> </ul>

<b>3.Area Enhancement</b>		
3.1 Establish a Tidy Towns committee & compete in the National Tidy Towns competition annually	Local volunteers	Interested local volunteers to call a meeting to kick things off. County Council will support with initial funding & mentoring  Tidy Towns will develop a Plan for the area, to address the appearance of public areas, littering, etc
3.2 Improve the 'industrial' appearance of Lough Egish area, to fit in more with the rural aesthetic of the surrounding area	Tidy Towns/ Local property owners/ County Council	Design a Public Realm/ Landscape Plan for the area around Lough Egish Cross and up to Food Park entrance.  Work with property owners to implement improvements
3.3 Undertake litter awareness projects, with the aim of decreasing the amount of littering in the area	Tidy Towns/ IFA/ County Council/ School	Participate in national spring clean, farm plastics campaign and other initiatives aimed at cleaning up the countryside. Tidy Towns to co-ordinate local events, and get school/ local IFA branch etc involved
3.4 Undertake water quality projects, with the aim of protecting the quality of rivers & lakes in the area, in particular improving the status of Lough Egish lake	Rod & Gun Club	Funding available from LEADER. Advice available from both Monaghan Co Co and LAWCO
3.5 Enhancement of the landscape	Tidy Towns/ landowners	The area is characterised by drumlins, whitethorn hedges, wetlands and flax mills. Every effort should be made to bring this character out where possible in all new developments, and in restoring the old
3.6 Conservation of local heritage landmarks, including buildings associated with the local mills, Temple Moyle, Laragh cottages, Carrickatee Hall	Heritage Committees	Compile a list of heritage buildings. Prioritise the buildings, according to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. State of repair</li> <li>2. Suitability for use by the community</li> <li>3. Cost of the project</li> <li>4. Availability for development</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish ownership &amp; availability of site for community development/ access</li> <li>- Establish condition of site</li> <li>- Establish suitability of site for modern purpose &amp; identify use for the site</li> <li>- Commission design</li> <li>- Cost the project - who/ how many will it benefit? Is it feasible given the cost?</li> <li>- Secure resources</li> </ul>

4.Extension & Enhancement of Amenities		
<p>4.1 Create a 'community hub', to make economical use of existing social and sports facilities and related amenities such as changing rooms &amp; toilets</p> <p>Because of its location opposite the Food Park, the hub should include amenities which support the businesses on the Food Park Site. Such amenities will also support the local community e.g. Meeting rooms, training facilities and wifi will all be of benefit to the wider community as will the availability of catering facilities.</p>	GAA & local community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agreement with GFC to provide space for other physical activities around social centre</li> <li>2. Add indoor space to social centre, to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Youth Hub</li> <li>-Conferencing/ Meeting facilities</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Expand the kitchen facilities in the Centre to enable it to provide catering for training events, seminars etc.</li> <li>4. Design &amp; build walking track</li> <li>5. Design &amp; build MUGA</li> </ol>
<p>4.2 Improvements to St Oliver Plunketts NS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access for buses/ improved traffic flow</li> <li>- Parking for teachers</li> <li>- Play facilities for children, to facilitate learning outside the classroom environment</li> <li>- Multi use games area with goal posts</li> </ul>	Parents Committee/ County Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Funding application to CLAR for road safety measures at school</li> <li>2. Funding application for playground enhancement</li> </ol>
<p>4.3 Increased childcare services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New, purpose-built facility</li> <li>- All day childcare for working parents</li> <li>- Links to Business park</li> </ul>	Childcare committee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secure funding to progress plans for new facility</li> <li>2. Consult with Business Park re employee needs</li> <li>3. Provide transport link between food park and childcare</li> </ol>
<p>4.4 Enhanced transport links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide bus shelter at Lough Egish cross</li> <li>- Develop Local Link routes to facilitate shift workers</li> </ul>	County Council/ CMTCU	<p>Monaghan MD to erect bus shelter</p> <p>Invite Cavan Monaghan Transport Co-Ordination Unit to carry out a transport needs review of the area &amp; work with the Business Park employees to ensure their needs are met</p>

4.5 Create a lakeside amenity, to maximise the leisure, tourism and sporting potential of scenic Lough Egish	Lough Egish Community Development Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify suitable sites</li> <li>- Consider management &amp; insurance of site</li> <li>- Develop partnerships with other groups (eg rowing club) &amp; design their needs into the project</li> <li>- Commission drawings &amp; costings</li> <li>- Secure funding for project</li> </ul>
4.6 Develop a community park & playground	Lough Egish Community Development Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify site</li> <li>- Consult on design with community</li> <li>- Fundraise</li> <li>- Build</li> </ul>
4.7 Improved sports facilities at GAA grounds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved surface to football pitches</li> <li>- Provision of a walking track</li> <li>- Provision of floodlighting</li> <li>- Provision of all-weather pitch</li> </ul>	GAA	Plans are in place Further fundraising required



5.Road Safety		
5.1 Improve road safety at entrances to Business Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide traffic calming along stretch outside entrances, to limit overtaking of lorries as they turn in</li> <li>- Provide pedestrian crossing between Park and Social Centre, to facilitate employees using Social Centre car park</li> <li>- Provide pull-in area at Lough Egish cross to facilitate employees being dropped off, and provide footpath and lighting from the cross up to the entrance of the Business Park</li> <li>- Provide monolith-style signage at entrances to Business Park to clarify for new drivers which entrance to use to access which business on the Park</li> <li>- Improve surface of car park at Social Centre</li> </ul>	Monaghan County Council, GAA, Food Park, Business Owners	Design roads scheme & get approval from MCC/ TII  Source funding
5.2 Improve road safety at St Oliver Plunketts NS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve traffic flow at school pickup and drop-off times</li> <li>- Create bus turning circle</li> <li>- Create off-road parking for teachers</li> </ul>	School/ County Council	Design a solution  Acquire planning permission  Secure funding  Carry out project
5.3 Identify any accident black spots in the community & work with Council to have these addressed	County Council	Meet with County Council reps to discuss remedial works

6.Nurturing People		
<p>6.1 Supporting children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social club to provide a dedicated space for the use of young people</li> <li>- After schools and summer camp activities to be organised for children. A good range to be provided, including non-sporting, eg art and drama.</li> <li>- Opportunities to develop skills and grow in confidence to be the priority, with the aim of growing well balanced, engaged, caring future citizens, with the leadership skills they need to be an asset to their community throughout their lives</li> </ul>	<p>Parenting Group Youth Club Macra Social Club</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Invite Youth organisations to work with local development groups to get a range of clubs and activities going in the area</li> <li>- Avail of programmes run by the following organisations to bring activities into the area for the benefit of local people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Monaghan Sports Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Go for Life (older people)</li> <li>▪ Sport for people with disabilities</li> <li>▪ Child protection training</li> <li>▪ National Bike Week</li> <li>▪ National Recreation Week</li> </ul> </li> <li>o Education &amp; Training Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Music Generation</li> <li>▪ Education in the community</li> </ul> </li> <li>o Creative Ireland (run through Monaghan Library)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>6.2 Supporting families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parent &amp; Toddler classes &amp; parenting courses to be organised</li> <li>- Quality childcare to be available to those who need it</li> <li>- Play facilities to be provided at school and in the community</li> </ul>	<p>Childcare Committee Monaghan Co Council</p>	<p>Project at advanced stage for childcare facility. Funding needed to advance to construction stage</p> <p>Work with Monaghan Co Co and local landowners to identify a suitable site for a playground, secure resources and construct</p>

<p>6.3 Fostering Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create a climate of acceptance and support around physical and mental wellbeing issues and provide opportunities for people to talk</li> <li>- Run activities to address loneliness and isolation</li> <li>- Start a Men's Shed</li> <li>- Run annual health &amp; fitness programmes</li> <li>- Provide fitness facilities – walking track, outdoor gym</li> <li>- Provide a 24-hour- accessible Defibrillator and register its location with the National Ambulance Service</li> <li>- Participate in 'Healthy Monaghan' events</li> </ul>	<p>Lough Egish Community Development Company, Sarsfields GFC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise an event to mark National Suicide Prevention Day</li> <li>- Invite guests to speak on mental health</li> <li>- Display posters with crisis phone numbers in prominent locations</li> <li>- Volunteers to train in SafeTalk</li> <li>- Provide quiet room in Social Centre</li> <li>- Provide Mindfulness and yoga classes, to send out the message that these types of activities are important</li> <li>- Organise an 'Operation Aughnamullen' lifestyle transformation community support programme</li> <li>- Organise CPR training so as many members of the community as possible know how to use the defibrillator</li> </ul>
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<p>6.4 Look after the Housing needs of the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enable older people to stay in their homes for longer by linking them into supports such as home care &amp; Seniors Alert</li> <li>- Facilitate homeowners to remain in the community throughout their lifecycle stages by developing sheltered accommodation and community housing suited to all needs</li> <li>- Provide sites at affordable cost for young families</li> <li>- Assist local homeowners to avail of energy retrofit grant packages through the SEAI's Better Energy Communities fund</li> </ul>	<p>Lough Egish Community Development Company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct a housing needs survey to establish the extent of the need &amp; the type of housing required</li> <li>- Identify &amp; secure suitable land</li> <li>- Work with housing charities to design &amp; build houses</li> <li>- Work with Castleblayney Sustainable Energy Group to prepare funding application for SEAI</li> </ul>
<p>6.5 Looking after our Vulnerable People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bring supports for older people into the community</li> <li>- Consider developing a sheltered housing project so that older people can remain in the community for longer</li> <li>- Strengthen Community Alert</li> <li>- Provide hot meal service to older people through the social club</li> <li>- Start an Active Aughtnamullen club, with a mix of activities to suit all tastes and levels of mobility</li> <li>- Build support into the above for carers</li> </ul>	<p>Community Council to focus on building the capacity of local groups in the area of Social Inclusion, which is low at present</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discuss the needs of the area with Monaghan Integrated Development, which runs a Befriending Service, and a Helping Hands service, both of which support older people</li> <li>- Work with Community Alert to identify older people in poor housing, and/or considering moving into care, to assess the potential demand for a sheltered housing project in the community</li> </ul>
<p>6.6 Connecting to the Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote a sense of belonging &amp; pride in the community</li> <li>- Ensure everyone knows what's going on &amp; feels welcome to join in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Develop a PR campaign &amp; keep sending out the message 'all welcome'</li> <li>o Develop a digital noticeboard/ website/ facebook page where all groups post their news</li> <li>o Publish a newsletter</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Run regular community events, to give the community an opportunity to come together in a relaxed setting, to socialise, celebrate, and build strong bonds</li> </ul>	<p>Lough Egish Community Development Company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Run a poster competition in the schools, asking children to come up with a slogan that captures how everyone has a part to play in the community and that by looking out for one another, we all become stronger</li> <li>- Avail of the available supports to organise events around national events, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Street Feast/ National Community Day/ The Big Hello</li> <li>o Bike Week</li> <li>o National Play Day</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Organise an annual community festival</li> </ul>

## 7. Making it Happen

To transform any Community Plan from a document into reality needs three key ingredients:

**1: Commitment from the Community**

**2: A Process/ Structure which enables everyone to play their part**

**3: Resources**

We would like to energise the whole community behind this Plan and use it to get people who are not yet active in community life to come out and find out more about the benefits that being more closely connected to the community brings.

To help give this new approach the shape and structure it will need, a new Community Council is being put in place to facilitate communication between the many groups in the area. The Community Council will work to co-ordinate the efforts of all, for the overall benefit of the area rather than the good of any one organisation. It will also seek to address gaps, get new activities going, etc, if there is an agreed need. It will also meet regularly with the County Council to review progress and address any barriers.

The following simple steps will help to ensure there is follow-through on this Plan:

*1. A Community Launch for this Plan*

At the launch, we will promote the concept of every person signing up to playing their part in community life. On offer will be volunteering opportunities with existing and new organisations in the community, such as the Youth Leaders group, and the Shadow Committee roles.

*2. First meeting of Community Council*

A date for the first Community Council meeting will be set for three months following the launch date. The business of the meeting will be:

- to agree a Terms of Reference for the Council
- to lay out a Workplan for Year 1
- to formalize the membership

*3. Agree when the first Community Feedback Event will be*

An annual community feedback event has been designed into the Plan. As well as being an opportunity to celebrate together as a community and build community links and raise local morale, the annual event provides an opportunity to update everyone on progress, which is critical to maintaining public support, and to test the waters to see what level of support various potential project ideas under consideration by the Community Council might have amongst the wider community.

*4. Hold Review Meetings with Monaghan County Council*

This meeting will first take place six months after the Community Council is formed, then once a year after this. The purpose of the meeting will be to review progress on the Plan and discuss how the Council can assist the community.

Monaghan County Council will cover the cost of a Facilitator to organise the first twelve months' set up of the implementation phase of the Plan, to help get the process off to a smooth start. The Facilitator will help the community to set up the Community Council, and to run the first review meeting.



## Afterword

Co. Monaghan communities have a long and proud tradition of community development. A strong community takes a special sense of pride in the area, reaches out to those that are vulnerable, cares for those most in need, celebrates together when times are good, and gathers around to support one another in the sad times.

Communities need to be nurtured in order to grow; they need a mix of physical resources such as meeting facilities, and activities and services which encourage and support all members of the community, from the youngest to the oldest. They also need leaders, who know that the process of bringing people together can often be as important as the event itself, as it can help to foster a sense of achievement, belonging, and pride in their community.

Monaghan County Council is committed to supporting communities to be the best version of themselves. As part of our drive to support communities, we are helping communities to prepare Community Plans.

This document is the product of a year-long process of consultation and planning which was facilitated by the Community Dept of Monaghan County Council. It gathers together the opinions, plans and aspirations of the people of Lough Egish and Aughnamullen for their community.

Over the next few years, you will hopefully see the months of planning and consultation bear fruit as projects are delivered in Lough Egish and Aughnamullen for the benefit of the community. Already, €44,233 has been spent on upgrading lighting and car parking at St Oliver Plunkett's NS under the 2019 CLAR programme, a Wifi hub has been provided at the Social Centre under the WiFi4EU programme being delivered through Monaghan County Council and a further €100,000 in funding has been secured under Town & Village Enhancement funding to construct a footpath linking the church, food park and GAA facility, which will greatly improve road safety along this busy road. These actions were identified as priority needs by the community during the preparation of this Plan.

This Plan is a living document, which needs to respond to the changing needs of the community. Already in the year since beginning this planning process together, the COVID crisis has brought many new challenges to communities, requiring them to respond in imaginative ways. As a result, the gap for a 'meals on wheels' service in the area is now filled, but perhaps other gaps have emerged. The Community Council structure proposed in the Plan should enable the community to respond to the changing dynamic and to plan in a co-ordinated way moving forward, so that the needs of all are looked after.

Monaghan County Council hopes to play a significant role in many of the projects outlined in the Plan and views the drafting of this document, together with you, the community, as the first step in a long and fruitful partnership.

Thank you for your investment in your community, and in helping to make Co. Monaghan the best county to live in Ireland.

**Eamonn O Sullivan**

**Chief Executive**

**Monaghan County Council**



## **Explaining Monaghan County Council's Ethos Behind Supporting Community Development:**

### **Building Strong Communities = Building Resilient People**

Why is supporting communities so important? We believe it's because being part of a strong community helps individuals to reach their full potential. Communities are a supportive environment where the young are safe to explore and learn, the youth are supported to challenge themselves and find what they shine at, parents find that their family is embraced and supported by the entire community, and the older members of the community still feel they have something to contribute and feel secure in their homes. The vulnerable are looked after, and everyone is included.

Without the support of a strong, nurturing community, structures and supports break down, and it gets harder to succeed in life. The odds begin to stack against you; people fall through the cracks; the most vulnerable are lost, and as we all become hardened in order to survive, we all lose the best qualities of ourselves and our communities; compassion, empathy, caring, hope, love. This is not the kind of community that Monaghan County Council wants for the people of Monaghan.

A strong community develops a set of values, lives by these values and passes them on to the next generation. These values include caring for people; knowing the value of spending time with those we love; learning from life's set-backs and picking ourselves up and trying again; not having to do everything alone, but learning to share both the burdens and the joys of life. These are the kind of 'life lessons' that people pick up as they bounce off other people. There is much wisdom in the old saying, "it takes a village to raise a child"!

A community needs strong, resilient people, who can work together, support each other in hard times, bounce back from life's set-backs and cheer each other on to success. Resilient people know that life will not always be smooth sailing, and they develop the ability to dust themselves off and go again whenever they encounter difficulty. Some people are born knowing how to be resilient, but it is a skill that can be learned, and communities are good places to pass it on.

A community thrives when the people who live and work in it know each other well and come together often. They learn from one another, and they help one another to grow. They also look out for each other. As a person passes through life, there will be times when they will need a lot of care, and other times when they have the capacity to give care to others.

There will be times in their life when things are going well, and other times when they will need the support of others to get through; sometimes emotionally, sometimes physically, sometimes even financially. There will be people in the community who will have skills that they can use to help give something back; others will be vulnerable and need the community's protection. A strong community finds a place for all, and everyone finds their place.

Monaghan County Council has a part to play in creating the conditions which help the people of the county to flourish individually, as well as together. We provide amenities such as playgrounds, public spaces and leisure facilities, and we support local communities to provide all kinds of facilities and services in every corner of the county.

Building communities is about investing in people. We put amenities in place in order to provide people with somewhere to go to avail of training, pursue a personal interest or hobby, meet friends, develop social skills, grow in confidence and raise their sense of self worth. They get an understanding not just of themselves, but

of how they connect with others, and how they contribute to the wellbeing of other people and to the community as a whole.

Think of those amenities as building blocks, each one helping to build something worthwhile. The blocks are held together with things like volunteering, leadership, fundraising – the cement which binds the blocks into something greater than the individual pieces. How we know which blocks are needed, and what mix of cement will give the best result is by getting the foundations right – doing surveys, needs analysis, community planning, etc.

Directing the construction are the community groups, who hold the “Vision” for their community. The bigger the vision, the higher the people within their community can climb! But only so long as the groups nurture the foundations, the blocks and the cement equally!

So, it all starts with Community Planning. And what we are ultimately trying to arrive at is a strong, tight-knit, resilient community which can cope with whatever life brings, both on an individual level and on a community level, both today and in twenty years – because part of being a strong community is raising children to know the value of community and who will want to nurture it for their children, too.

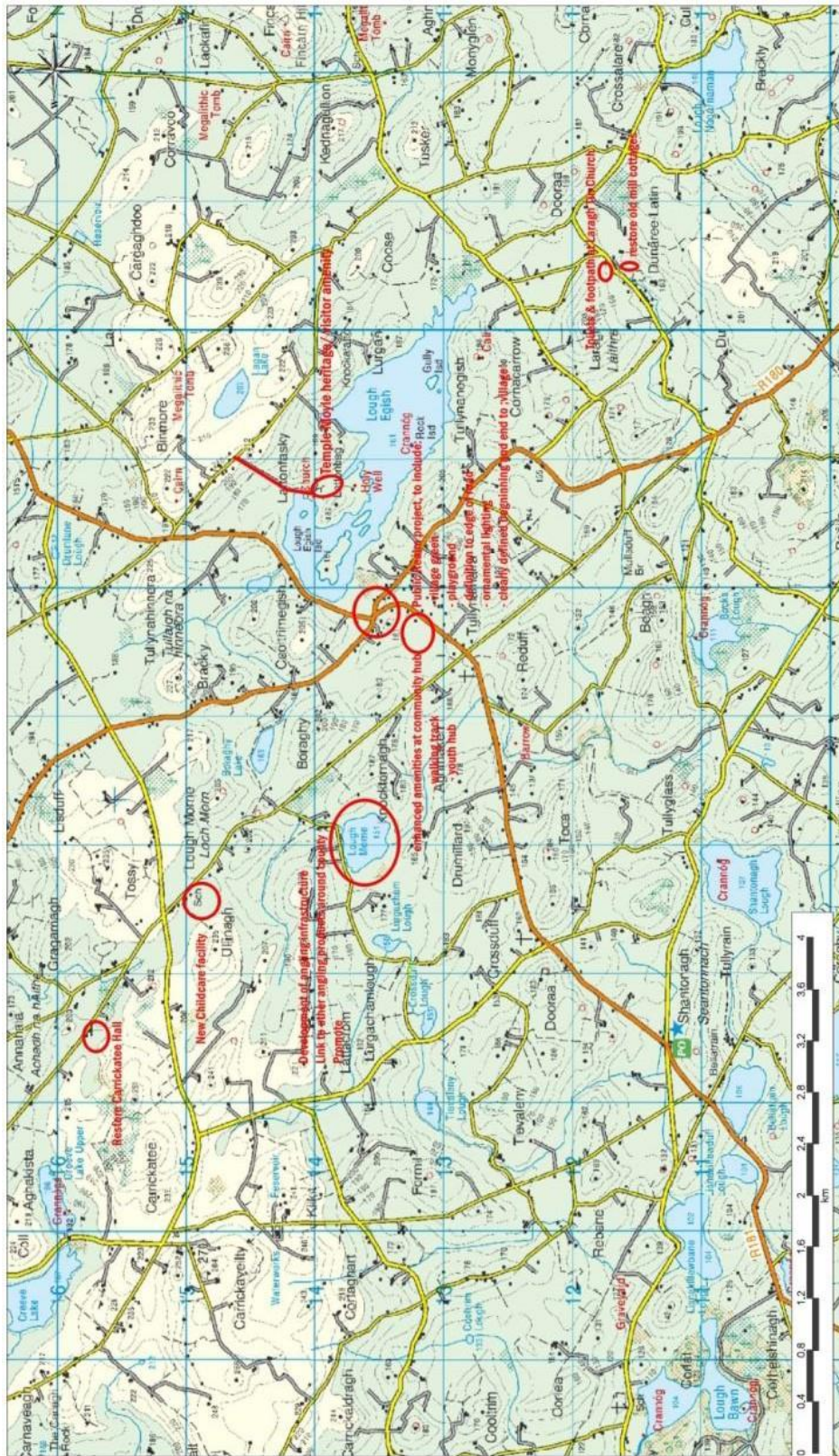
And so we come to the work at hand. Monaghan County Council committed to preparing local community development plans as an Action of the Local Economic & Community Plan, a key strategic document which guides all local development in the county. As part of this commitment, we carried out an exercise where we mapped funding coming into the county, to identify those communities which were availing of the many opportunities currently available, and those who appeared to be missing out. We then selected four priority communities to work with in 2019/2020, with the intention of bringing them through the process of agreeing a development plan for their communities. One of those priority communities is Lough Egish.

Monaghan County Council attended a public meeting in Lough Egish in November 2018, and outlined our vision for creating sustainable, resilient communities throughout the county. The people of Aughnamullen wanted that for their community too and agreed to enter into partnership with the Council to devise and deliver a Community Plan.

This document is the result of that commitment. It marks the end of an opening phase of collaboration between the local community and the Council, where agreement has been reached on the issues facing the community and the solutions which are to be taken. Over the next five years, Monaghan County Council will work with the local groups to progress the Actions as identified in the Plan. We will meet with the groups to review progress, and we will assist with expertise and resources.

We hope that having access to our team of engineers, community development staff, tourism, heritage and other expertise will assist the various groups in the village to advance their projects, individually and collectively, and we look forward to seeing Aughnamullen and Lough Egish grow and thrive in the years ahead.

## Appendix A: Map of Proposed Infrastructure Projects



## Appendix B: Draft Plan Feedback Form & Feedback collated by St Oliver Plunketts NS





# Lough Egish



## COMMUNITY PLAN DRAFT PLAN – November 2019 FEEDBACK FORM

Thank you for taking the time to review this document. We hope that you found much to like in it. Please let us know how the Plan can be further improved upon, by filling out the form below and returning it **before the 29th November 2019** to any of the following:

Community Dept  
Monaghan County Council  
The Glen  
Monaghan

Clones Ballybay MD Offices  
The Diamond  
Clones

Box provided in  
Aughnamullen  
Social Centre

You can also fill out the survey online by following this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PXJLNRY>.

**Q1. Have we got the best projects/ actions in the Plan? Please tell us about any that should be added or taken out, in your opinion**

**Q2. Do you support the idea of developing a theme or brand for the area?**

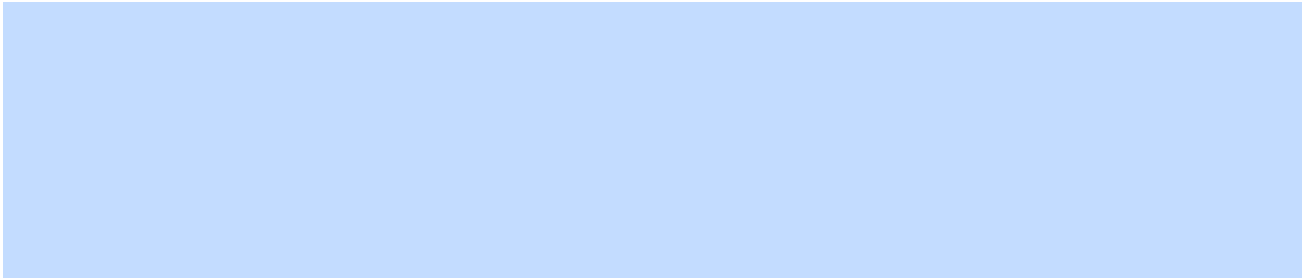
Yes  No

**Q3. If you wish to propose an idea for the theme, please give details here:**

**Q4. What are your thoughts on the following ideas which are proposed in the Plan?**

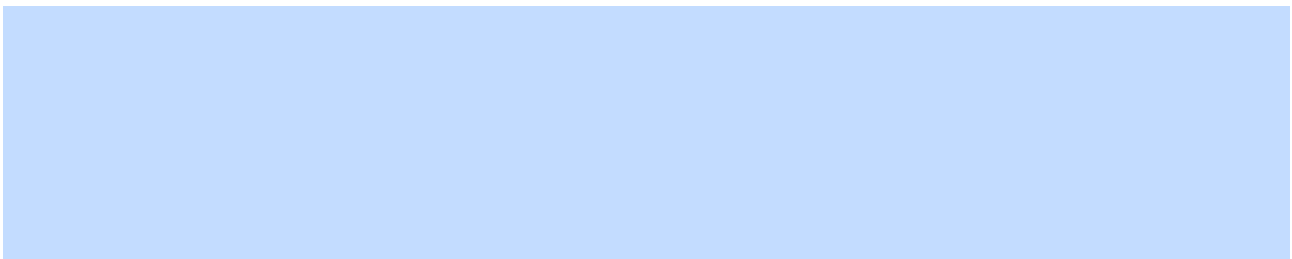
	Don't like it, wouldn't support it	Needed, but low priority	Needed, medium priority	Urgently needed, high priority	Not needed
Introduce speed reduction measures from Lough Egish cross up past social centre/ Food Park					
Provide dedicated Youth Area within Social Centre					
Provide Children's Playground					
Construct footpath from Lough Egish Cross up to Food Park/ Social Centre					
Enhance car parking at GAA grounds					
Find a suitable site and create a community park					
Improve changing facilities at GAA grounds					
Soften the streetscape of Lough Egish with tree planting, screening of industrial buildings etc					
Create a Community Council to organise local development					
Develop meeting facilities at social centre to serve needs of local businesses					
Social centre to serve hot meals daily					
Run summer community festival					
Run Christmas celebration event					
Better communication of what's on in the area					
Introduce committee shadowing opportunities, to give new people an opportunity to join committees and learn the ropes					
Community website/ newsletter to promote what's on					
More rural transport services to Blayney, Ballybay, Carrick and Shercock					
Local supports for older people, including day care					
Develop housing for older people					
Develop affordable housing for young families					
Help homeowners avail of grants to improve energy efficiency of homes					
Preserve and promote local heritage sites					
Develop new Community Childcare Facility					
Restore Carrickatee Hall					

**Q5. Which project would be your No.1 priority?**

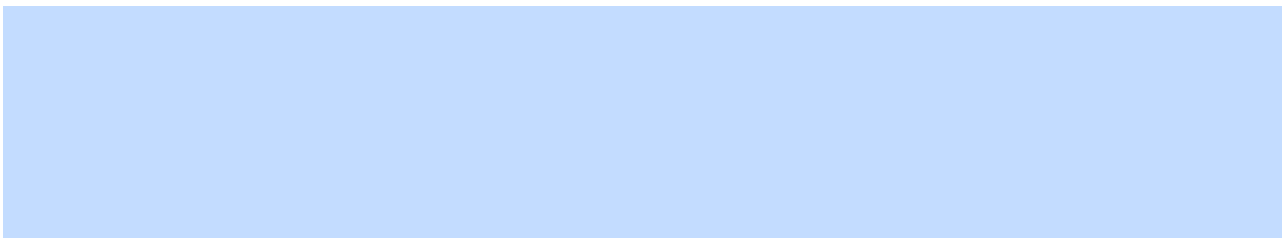


**Q6. Where do you think would make the most sense to locate a new Childcare facility?**

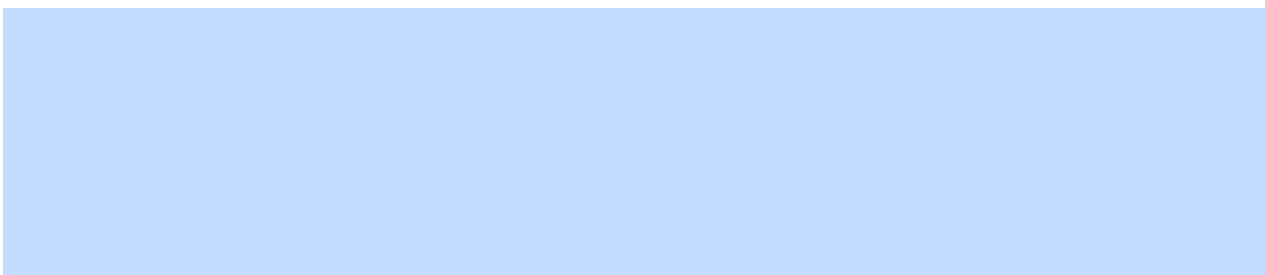
- a) At the school
- b) Near the food park, to facilitate working parents and help the businesses retain staff
- c) Other (Please give details)



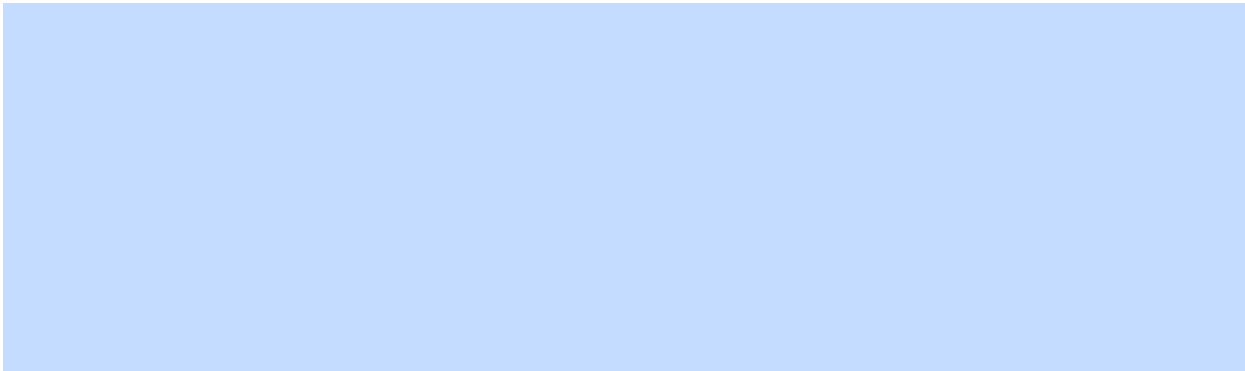
**Q7. What activities would you like to see available in the area?**



**Q8. What services/ amenities would you love to have in the area?**



**Q.9 Please tell us about any improvements to existing facilities and amenities which are needed**



**Q 10 Please tell us a little about you:**

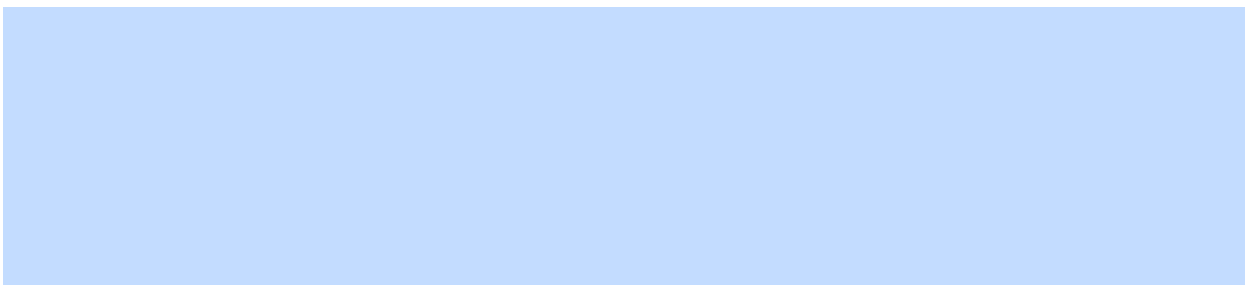
	Under 14 years	14 - 19 years	20 -34 years	35- 49 years	50 - 64 years	65 + years
Your age range	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q 11 Your gender**


- Male
- Female

**If you would like a copy of the final version of the Strategic Plan, when it is available, please supply your contact details here\*:**

For a hard (paper) copy, supply your name & postal address:



\* Your contact details will be stored separately from the data collected through this survey, and will be deleted as soon as we have sent you out your copy of the Final Plan



*(Your contact information will be used only to contact you in relation to the Community Plan, and will not be stored once the Final Plan has been launched)*

For a pdf (digital) copy, supply your email address:

Your information will only be used to send out the Plan to you and will not be stored.

**Thank you for helping to make Lough Egish and its environs within Aughnamullen a fantastic place to live.**

## Appendix C

### Feedback from St Oliver Plunkett's NS

**Based on surveys distributed to parents by the school**



## Lough Egish Community Plan Survey 2020

Please put an X in the correct box:

My child is in:

Junior Infants  
  Senior Infants  
  First Class  
  Second Class  
  Third Class  
   
 Fourth Class  
  Fifth Class  
  Sixth Class  

What are your thoughts on the following ideas which are proposed in the Plan?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Introduce speed reduction measures from Lough Egish cross up past Social Centre/Food Park	40%	31%	14%	15%	0%
Provide a dedicated youth area with the Social Centre	20%	63%	10%	7%	0%
Find a suitable site and create a community park/playground	64%	31%	5%	0%	0%
Enhance car parking at the GAA grounds	18%	45%	22%	13%	2%
Improve changing facilities at the GAA Grounds	28%	39%	22%	11%	0%
Soften the streetscape of Lough Egish with tree planting, screening of industrial buildings etc.	15%	39%	22%	11%	2%
Create a community council to organise local development	9%	50%	30%	11%	0%
Develop meeting facilities at Social Centre to serve the needs of local businesses	11%	35%	33%	17%	4%
Social Centre to serve hot meals daily	5%	21%	46%	25%	3%
Run summer community festival	17%	44%	32%	7%	0%
Community website/newsletter to promote what's on	19%	65%	12%	4%	0%
More rural transport to Blayney, Ballybay, Shercock and Carrick	32%	51%	15%	0%	2%
Local Supports for older people including day care	51%	42%	7%	0%	0%
Develop housing for older people	39%	42%	13%	3%	3%
Develop affordable housing for young families	28%	42%	19%	9%	2%
Help homeowners avail of grants to improve energy efficiency of homes	41%	45%	5%	6%	3%
Preserve and promote local heritage sites	31%	45%	22%	2%	0%
Develop a new Community Childcare facility	35%	36%	20%	7%	2%
Restore Carrickateer Hall	4%	23%	46%	12%	15%



**Which project would be your number 1 priority?**

1. **Playground & Community Park.**
2. **Community Childcare**
3. **Young Family Community Housing**
4. **Day care for elderly.**
5. **Homegrants**
6. **GAA Changing facilities.**

- Car Parking at Centre.
- Sports for elderly.
- Soften streetscape.
- Rural Transport.
- Daily food.
- Church enhancement.
- Housing for elderly.
- Youth Area.
- Speed management at L Eghis Cross.

**Where do you think would make the most sense to locate a new childcare facility?**

- A. At the school 77.3%
- B. Near the food park, to facilitate working parents and help businesses retain staff 22.7%

**What activities would you like to see available in the area?**

1. All weather pitch
2. Playground
3. Youth/Foroige Club.
4. Hurling/Camogie
5. Basketball
6. Volleyball
7. Badminton
8. Indoor sports
9. Community Games

- Irish Dancing
- Tennis
- Water sports on L Eghis
- Family focused community events.
- Cycling Club.
- Rounders.
- Bingo
- Handball
- Swimming

**What services/amenities would you love to see in the area?**

1. Community/Playground.
2. Transport/Taxi Bus services.
3. Running/Walking/ Athletics track/club.
4. Supports for Elderly.
5. Childcare services.
6. Fibre Broadband.
7. Cycle Paths along scenic areas.

- Public toilets
- Art & Crafts
- Childrens bus stop.
- Recycling Centre.
- Creche.
- Café
- Picnic area.
- Boxing Club
- 

**Please tell us about any improvements to existing facilities and amenities which are needed.**

1. School Carpark.
2. Play park structure at school.
3. Repair/fill potholes.
4. Childcare expansion.(Not temporary acc.)
5. Carparking at Carrickatee.
6. Speed management around school.
7. Lighting around school.
8. Lighting around Centre
9. Temple Moyle improvements.

- Repair school yard.
- Youth safety measures.
- Footpaths around Centre.
- Improved signage.
- Roundabout at Larkins & Tossey Cross.
-