The Smart Community Management Manual

Chapter 29 - 2.8a) Urban Biodiversity

Email info@etownz.com for queries or visit us at www.etownz.ie

Introduction

eTownz has partnered with a number of highly respected research organisations in Ireland and the EU on research projects in the community development and health spaces over the past eight years. The Smart & Engaged Community Management framework was formed based on this research and the guidance of Dr. Maura Farrell of NUIG and Dr. Maura Adshead of UL.

The framework is designed so that it can be applied to any community and under any thematic area of community development. This manual is created using the dynamic “eTownz Knowledge Hub” database which is continually updated with new project ideas and other useful information. If you would like to contribute new ideas please contact us on info@etownz.com.
This manual can be used as a standalone document or used along with eTownz Community Management Portal.

Who is involved and what is the structure?

Coordination Team

The Coordination Team facilitates coordination and knowledge sharing between different Town Teams. Highly committed Stakeholders experienced in community development are strongly encouraged to join the Coordination Team. Town Teams should retain independence and responsibility for their own areas.

Town Teams

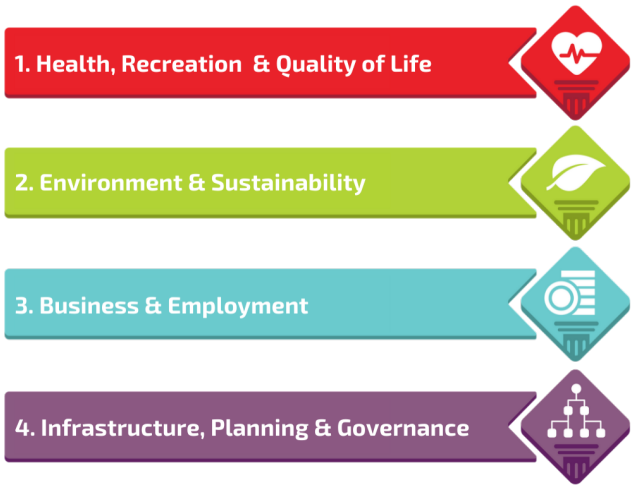
Town Teams are inclusive smart local teams focused on specific aspects of local development. Town Teams link like minded people together to develop and implement solutions to community problems.

Stakeholders

A stakeholder can be a business, club, public service provider or interested local people. A stakeholder may represent one or more of these interests. All the stakeholders are invited to join a community council.

Core Town Teams x4

Members are invited to form Town Teams related to each of the four main community development Pillars.
These are:



Every participating community should aim to have, at minimum 3 to 6 people on each of the four, top-level Town teams.

Town Teams

Specialist Town Teams are invited to form teams related to specific areas under the four main Pillars. Members of the council are invited to join the Town teams that are relevant to them.

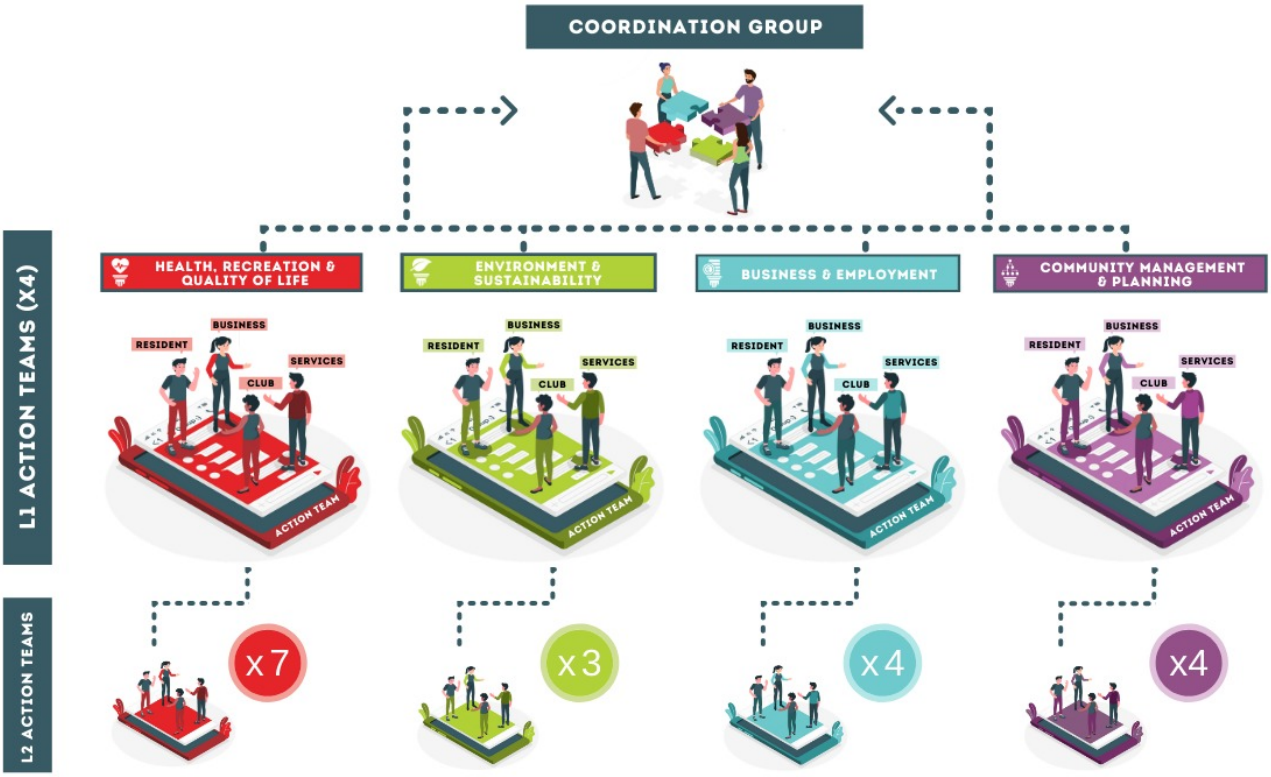
Members of the action team follow the structured format of the smart community framework. They decide their work schedule as a team, creating and implementing local action plans together.

How to use this manual to build a local action team?

The Coordination Team will introduce like-minded stakeholders who wish to form Town teams. The action team then follows a 5-step format illustrated below to compile a “Smart Community Action Plan” for their team. The then follows a 5-step format illustrated below to compile a “Smart Community Action Plan” for their team. The plans can be updated internally throughout the year.

Town teams are invited to submit their plan for the coming 12 months annually. This will be integrated into the overall community plan for the year, compiled before the community AGM.

The AGM helps align the various Town teams and encourage cross-community collaboration on implementation of the plan for the year.



Step 1: Stakeholder Review

The table below can be used by your team to help identify the stakeholders related to this theme. The stakeholders should be invited to provide their ideas, opinions and to join the local action team to help collaborate on initiatives.

Actions

- a Manage a register of local assets
- b Survey local opinions/ideas
- c Recruit & engage local action team

Outcomes

- a Top down understanding of local stakeholders
- b Bottom up understanding stakeholder perspectives
- c Expand team, increase ambitions, plan succession

	Title	Type	#	Comment
	County Concil (S72)	Public Service		
	Community Council (S58)	Club / Group		

Step 2: Asset Review

Use the table below to help build the record list of assets in your area. Use the eTownz portal or a

spreadsheet to register your local assets, discuss conditions and how the assets can be better utilised in the community.

	Title	#	Comments
	Air Quality Station (Local) (A823)		
	Bat Box (A18)		
	Bird Areas (A865)		
	Bird Nesting Box (A20)		
	Bird Sanctuary (A21)		
	Botanical Garden (A662)		
	Community Garden (A62)		
	Hanging Baskets/Flowers (A109)		
	Plan - Community / Local Plan (A150)		
	Plan - County Plan (A73)		
	Rivers and Streams (A193)		
	Wooded Areas (A253)		

Step 3: Goals & Metrics Review

Understanding the goal for each action team and attributing relevant metrics is a key part of the Smart

Understanding the goal for each action team and attributing relevant metrics is a key part of the Smart Community Management Framework. Below we provide suggested goals and metrics. Please use these as a support to define goals and metrics that work for your community. In the plan, the action team should define how often the goals are to be reviewed and how often the metrics collected.

Title	How is this data collected	Comment	☑

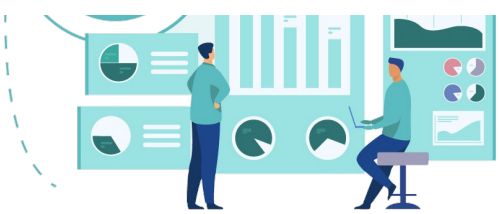
	Title	Summary	☑	Comment
	Team Building, Management & Metrics - (G85)		☐	
	Awareness, Understanding & Skills - (G86)		☐	
	Preserve, Support & Develop - (G87)	Protect Local Biodiversity Protect and develop small pockets of biodiversity across the community Aside from large habitat projects, it's also important to consider, protect and develop new smaller biodiversity pockets in the community. These pockets often provide stepping stones for wildlife between local natural habitats.	☐	

Step 4: Project Register & Planning

The action team should begin this section by taking consideration of the projects undertaken in the past 2 years, the currently active projects as well as project ideas for the future. Use the eTownz portal to conduct an online discussion on this topic. We also provide a suggested format for huddles related to this.

document learnings & celebrate successes

C Discuss, agree, prioritise and schedule projects for the coming year



pass on best practise to others

C Agree, realistic actions plans to better coordinate

Goal: Team Building, Management & Metrics - (G85)

Related Project Ideas	Rate	Comments
Audit of Local Biodiversity (P340): To build upon the compilation of information on the local biodiversity resource, a stock taking of the main habitats and species that occur within the area, or have occurred in the area in the relatively recent past should be done. This should identify features that are of - (i) international and national interest, or (ii) locally distinctive, or locally rare and therefore of local conservation interest. This audit in its simplest form can comprise a list of species and habitats that fall into the two categories shown above, which over time can be added to as more information becomes available. (Case Study: 2) Sample Audit Action Plan		

Goal: Awareness, Understanding & Skills - (G86)

Related Project Ideas	Rate	Comments
Connection Between Young People & Nature (P497): Using digital technologies to re-establish the connection between young people and forests. (Case Study: 428) Forest games – funny & money in the woods		

Goal: Preserve, Support & Develop - (G87)

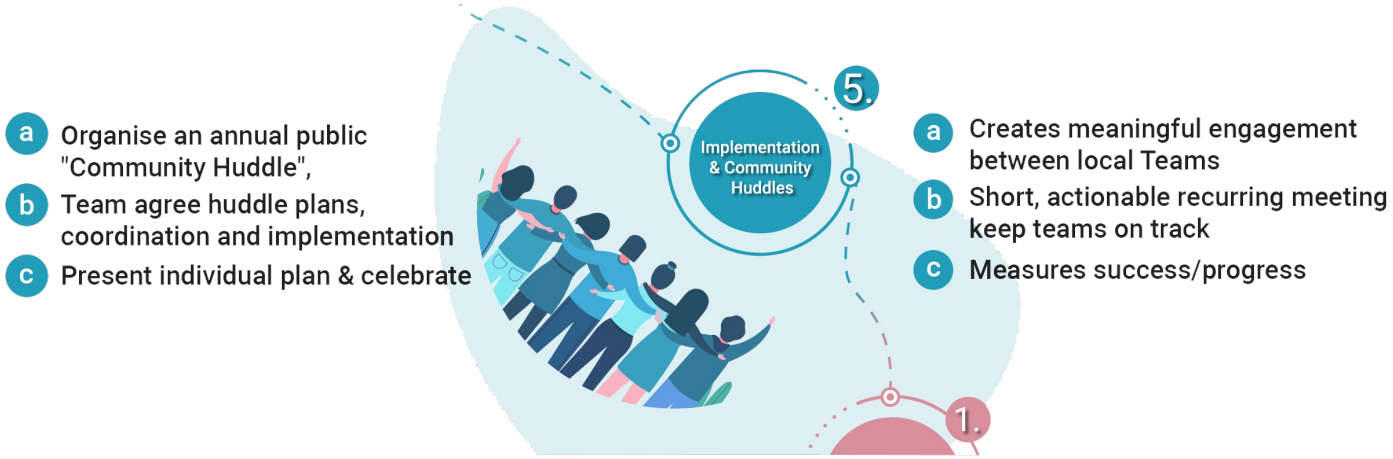
Protect Local Biodiversity Protect and develop small pockets of biodiversity across the community Aside from large habitat projects, it's also important to consider, protect and develop new smaller biodiversity pockets in the community. These pockets often provide stepping stones for wildlife between local natural habitats.

Related Project Ideas	Rate	Comments
Create Biodiverse Roundabouts (P111): Roundabouts have the potential to be so much more than traffic control features. They can also be attractive greenspaces, which greatly enhance the appearance of our cityscape and provide havens for biodiversity. (Case Study: 534) Ennis Tidy Towns transform roundabouts into wildlife havens		
Strengthen Knowledge of Decision-makers (P205): Strengthen the knowledge base of decision-makers for the conservation and management of biodiversity, and protect species and habitats of conservation value within the community (Case Study: 68) Strengthening the knowledgebase for better decision-making		
Raise Awareness of Biodiversity (P486): A campaign which wants to raise and generate awareness on the importance of biodiversity in rural landscapes by bringing together land owners, experts and the broader public. (Case Study: 421) Natur Verbindet - Nature Connects		
Protect Local Wildlife & Habitats (P509): Austria`s western Vorarlberg region used EAFRD funding to develop a support network to help its communities protect local wildlife and natural habitats. (Case Study: 335) Preserving peatland and wet meadows in Auvergne (Case Study: 349) Community-led nature conservation in Austria		
Improve Water Quality & Biodiversity (P635): A canal stream was reconstructed to get extra water storage capacity and to improve the water quality and biodiversity in the surrounding area. (Case Study: 308) Reconstruction of the Averlosche Leide canal		
Improve Access to Bicycles (P709): in order to commute to class, work etc by bicycle, people must first own or have access to a bicycle. Thus investigate the possibility of supports for the		

purchase of bicycles and safety equipment for low-paid workers who do not benefit much or at all from the bike to work scheme, those on social welfare, students and people who are retired.		
Urban Biodiversity Oasis (P784): Turn your home into an urban biodiversity oasis by plant flowers in your garden.		
Avoid using pesticides or herbicides (P785): Plants that have evolved to live in a certain place tend to already be adapted over years thus they generally dont need fertilizer chemicals, they will support the local critters without themselves being wiped out.		

Step 5: Community Huddles & Implementation

Community Huddles cover a variety of different meetings types that take place throughout the year. This includes remote meetings, project planning or project implementation meetings. We provide a suggested one hour format for the main meeting types to help make best use of people's time.



Supporting Research

Here we provide links to related research papers which your local action team may find useful.

Title	Comments
Motivations for conserving urban biodiversity Click Here In a time of increasing urbanization, the fundamental value of conserving urban biodiversity remains controversial. This study argues that urban areas do offer an important venue for conservation biology, but that we must become better at choosing and articulating our goals. Furthermore it explored	

seven possible motivations for urban biodiversity conservation: preserving local biodiversity, creating stepping stones to nonurban habitat, understanding and facilitating responses to environmental change, conducting environmental education, providing ecosystem services, fulfilling ethical responsibilities, and improving human well-being.