The Smart Community Management Manual

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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.
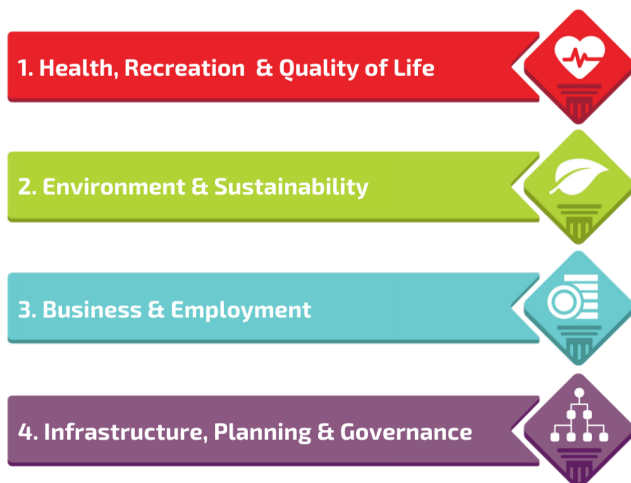
Stakeholders

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:

1. Health, Recreation & Quality of Life
2. Environment & Sustainability
3. Business & Employment
4. Infrastructure, Planning & Governance

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.
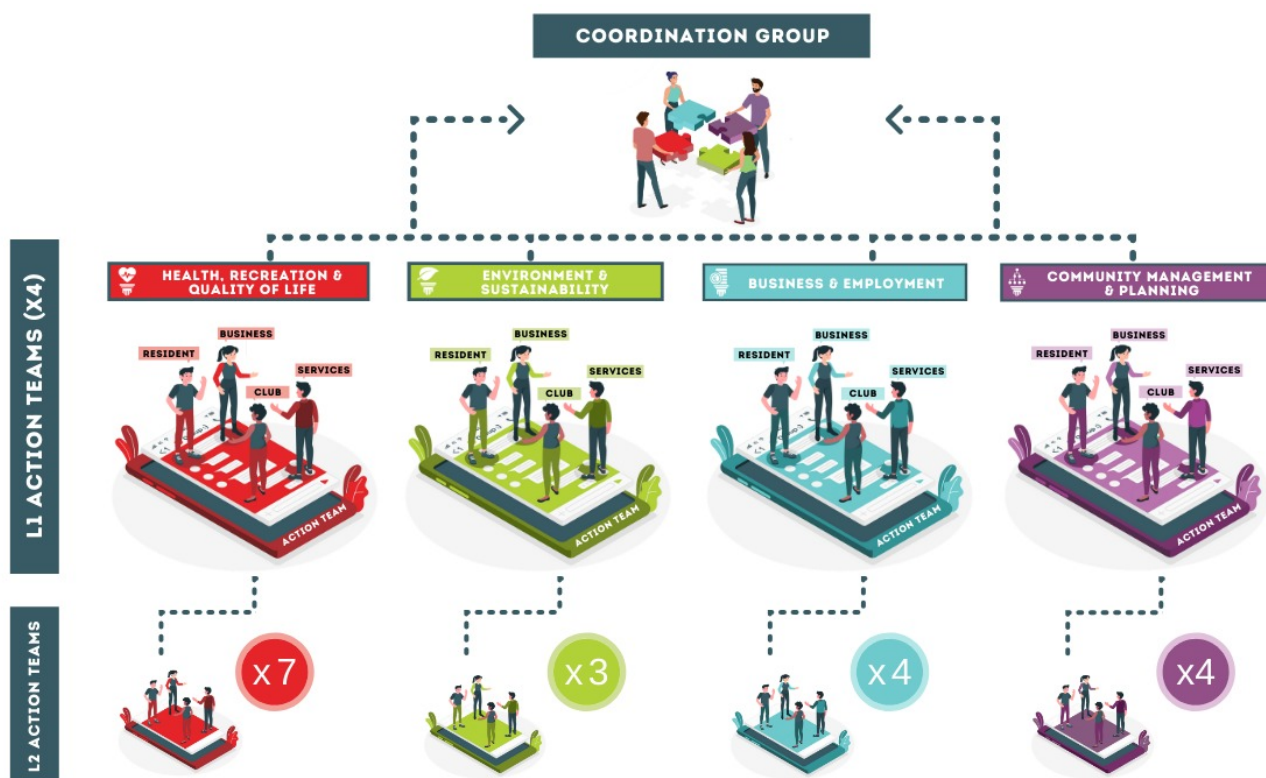
Step 1: Stakeholder Review

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

1. Stakeholder Review

Outcomes

a Top down understanding of local stakeholders

b Bottom up understanding stakeholder perspectives

c Expand team, increase ambitions, plan succession

	Title	Type	#	Comment
	Colleges (S383)	Business		
	Language Schools (S751)	Business		
	Motorcycle Trainer (S385)	Business		
	Adult Education Centre (S3)	Public Service		

	Arts College (S9)	Public Service	
	Career Guidance Officer (S37)	Public Service	
	Local Education and Training Board (S147)	Public Service	
	Local Enterprise Office (S148)	Public Service	
	Mental Health Support Services (S157)	Public Service	
	Special Needs Transport (S218)	Public Service	
	Third level college (S235)	Public Service	
	Book Club (S22)	Club / Group	
	Computer Programming Club (S277)	Club / Group	
	Creative Writing Club (S279)	Club / Group	
	ICA (S120)	Club / Group	
	Migrant (S846)	Individual	
	Unemployed (S831)	Individual	

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.

2. Asset Review

a Update register of local assets
b Undertake assessment of local assets
c Profile & discuss local assets

a Thematic database of all local assets
b Better understand, develop & maintain local assets
c Forum for cross community collaboration

	Title	#	Comments
📚	**Library** (A140)		
👨‍💻	**Local CE Schemes** (A143)		
🏫	**School** (A849)		
👥	**Training and Upskilling Supports** (A243)		
🏛️	**Universities** (A386)		

Step 3: Goals & Metrics Review

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.

a Agree suitable goals & metrics
b Coordinate data collection
c Compare & analyse performance to help plan

3. Goals & Metrics Review

a Helps focus local action teams
b Leverage data for better decision making
c Compare project outputs to planned goals

Title	How is this data collected	Comment	☑
Number of adults with no qualification (M14)	Increase in volunteers, self-employed and part-time/full-time workers		☐
Level of Library Membership (M16)	Measure the level of interest in cultural activity		☐
Quantify and categorise local training opportunities for unemployed (M37)	Through feedback from relevant members of the community (via surveys, interviews or other feedback mechanisms).		☐
Number of adults with literacy and numeracy issues within the community (M38)	Through feedback from relevant members of the community (via surveys, interviews or other feedback mechanisms).		☐
Number and type of			☐

	Number and type of community adult literacy and numeracy training programmes within the community (M39)	Through feedback from relevant members of the community (via surveys, interviews or other feedback mechanisms).		☐
	The number and type of computer skills training courses available within the community (M40)	Through feedback from relevant members of the community (via surveys, interviews or other feedback mechanisms).		☐

	Title	Summary	☑	Comment
	Team Building, Management & Metrics - (G173)	Initiate & develop a local team who can coordinate activities related to this theme. Support the team in gaining a greater understanding of local challenges, opportunities and help them formulate a detailed and achievable micro plan for the future. The town team can be small or large and determine its own level of activity. The team may take on its own projects or simply meet occasionally to help coordinate activity among related groups. The team can be comprised of local residents, businesses, club or public service representatives. The team structure can be simple to start with and can decide how often they should meet (e.g. weekly/monthly/quarterly) as they see fit. The team should focus initially on improving the overall understanding of where the challenges and opportunities lie and then help coordinate activities and related projects. There is also a wide variety of supports available and the team can help ensure the community can take advantage of these supports when they become available.	☐	
	Awareness, Understanding & Skills - (G174)	Education and reskilling are important factors in developing opportunities in the local jobs market. Undertake an assessment of local education/reskill facilities and opportunities and in conjunction with this survey local people to gain understanding of the demand for different types of education and training.	☐	
		According to the National Adult Literacy Agency, literacy and numeracy is a valued right, which allows individuals to play a greater role within their own personal lives	☐	

		role within their own personal lives, their community and it enhances their employment prospects. An Adult Skills Survey carried out in 2012 (Kelly et al. 2012) confirmed what previous research has shown - people with literacy and numeracy difficulties are more likely to be unemployed and poorly qualified. Additionally, a report published by the National Adult Literacy Agency and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) suggested the that men and women with literacy difficulties are more likely to be long-term unemployed and to benefit more from training than those without literacy needs.
	Preserve, Support & Develop - (G175)	

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.

4.

Project Register & Plan

a Add new & update existing projects in project register

b Review completed projects, document learnings & celebrate successes

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

a Continual cycle of new idea generation & team building

b Teams learn from experience & pass on best practise to others

c Agree, realistic actions plans to better coordinate

Goal: Team Building, Management & Metrics - (G173)

Initiate & develop a local team who can coordinate activities related to this theme. Support the team in gaining a greater understanding of local challenges, opportunities and help them formulate a detailed and achievable micro plan for the future. The town team can be small or large and determine its own level of activity. The team may take on its own projects or simply meet occasionally to help coordinate activity among related groups. The team can be comprised of local residents, businesses, club or public service representatives. The team structure can be simple to start with and can decide how often

they should meet (e.g. weekly/monthly/quarterly) as they see fit. The team should focus initially on improving the overall understanding of where the challenges and opportunities lie and then help coordinate activities and related projects. There is also a wide variety of supports available and the team can help ensure the community can take advantage of these supports when they become available.

Related Project Ideas	Rate	Comments
Collaborate with Local Organisations (P62): Collaborate with local support organisations to determine what training and education programmes are needed within the community.		
Evening Adult Education Classes (P295): Set up evening classes in local schools who are willing to give permission to access the space. This space can be then used for evening classes to tackle literacy and numeracy issues, basic computer skills or to promote adult education by providing talks on how to access adult education and what would be the best options available for people wishing to return to education.		
Develop Skills (P644): Supporting people from across the community to have a voice and develop their skills to taking part in local decision-making.		
Bring Together Stakeholders involved in Education (P837): Develop structures which can support an integrated service for immigrants as this would enhance education opportunities available to them and improve their knowledge of the Irish Educational System.		
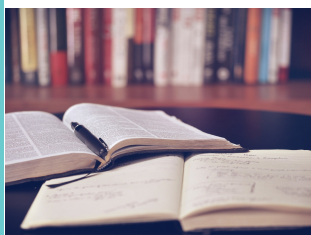
Goal: Awareness, Understanding & Skills - (G174)

Education and reskilling are important factors in developing opportunities in the local jobs market. Undertake an assessment of local education/reskill facilities and opportunities and in conjunction with this survey local people to gain understanding of the demand for different types of education and training.

Related Project Ideas	Rate	Comments
Built Awareness on Adult Literacy (P61): Build awareness of adult literacy and numeracy problems with the assistance of the National Adult Literacy Agency		

Training Needs Assessment (P127):
Undertake a training needs assessment and work with local organisations to help bring relevant training to the area and ensure their is good attendance.

Setup Knowledge Transfer Workshops (P302):
Youth groups might volunteer to hold workshops, for example for older people.

Archaeology Education and Training (P374):
Outside experts can instruct local schoolchildren and adults on archaeological practices and techniques. This can help to conserve a community's local heritage.

(Case Study: 105) School of Irish Archeology

Events management training (P418):
Some training provided to those who could arrange and organise events in the local area. This could be provided in workshops or via online platforms

(Case Study: 149) Inspiring By Degrees

Support Local Artisan Food (P452):
Provide suports such as training to those interested in making and selling artisan foods.

(Case Study: 183) Going Big on Artisan Foods

Digital Training Programme (P473):
A digital training programme to help adults to get online. Could be based in the local community centre. n promoting adult education it is important to remember that not everyone is technology friendly. Especially those that have been away from formal education for a long time, they might not have had the skills needed to work with technology. In this instance the youth could give sessions on how to work with technology for example sending emails, typing, saving text on word.

(Case Study: 201) BITE Digital Skills Training Programme

Improve Digital Skills (P597):
Digital Clare used training, mentoring and regular online exchanges to improve digital skills in rural County Clare and create a locally recognised name for digital innovation and networking.

(Case Study: 376) Digital Clare – taking advantage of digital opportunities in rural Ireland

Develop Skills (P644):
Supporting people from across the community to have a voice and develop their skills to taking part in local decision-making.

Journalism Training (P648):
Identify those in the local community or wider community who would be interested in journalism

training and with the help of local public service arrange for the training to be delivered.

(Case Study: 435) Rural journalism – training local correspondents

## Goal: Preserve, Support & Develop - (G175)

According to the National Adult Literacy Agency, literacy and numeracy is a valued right, which allows individuals to play a greater role within their own personal lives, their community and it enhances their employment prospects. An Adult Skills Survey carried out in 2012 (Kelly et al. 2012) confirmed what previous research has shown - people with literacy and numeracy difficulties are more likely to be unemployed and poorly qualified. Additionally, a report published by the National Adult Literacy Agency and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) suggested the that men and women with literacy difficulties are more likely to be long-term unemployed and to benefit more from training than those without literacy needs.

Related Project Ideas	Rate	Comments
Open Day On Adult Education (P474): An event that would help local people to get information on how to return to education. (Case Study: 202) Adult education and training		
Under Achievement & Educational Disadvantage (P484): An organisation which works with old and young people in a place to identify local needs and take joint action to tackle under-achievement and educational disadvantage in the local area. (Case Study: 203) Education and training		
Develop Skills (P644): Supporting people from across the community to have a voice and develop their skills to taking part in local decision-making.		

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.

a Organise an annual public "Community Huddle",

b Team agree huddle plans, coordination and implementation

c Present individual plan & celebrate

5. Implementation & Community Huddles
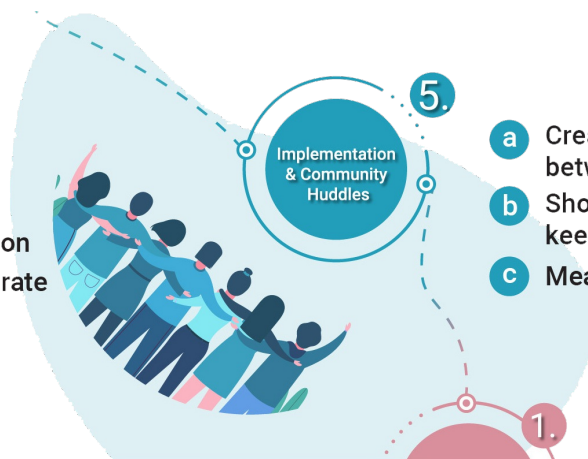
a Creates meaningful engagement between local Teams

b Short, actionable recurring meeting keep teams on track

c Measures success/progress

1.

Relevant/Supporting Organisations

Title	Comment
The Ecology Centre The Ecology Centre , based in the heart of Connemara offers exciting, education programmes in ecology and conservation.	
Carlow Astronomy Club. Page dedicated to Astronomy and all topics related. Everyone is welcome to learn and ask questions I will do my best to answer. We welcome posts and chats	
National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) Click here Provides professional services to help organisations to be more accessible to people with literacy or numeracy difficulties. There are benefits and cost savings of doing this.	