Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

An enabling framework for community safety

National Strategy for Improving Community Safety

2026 – 2030



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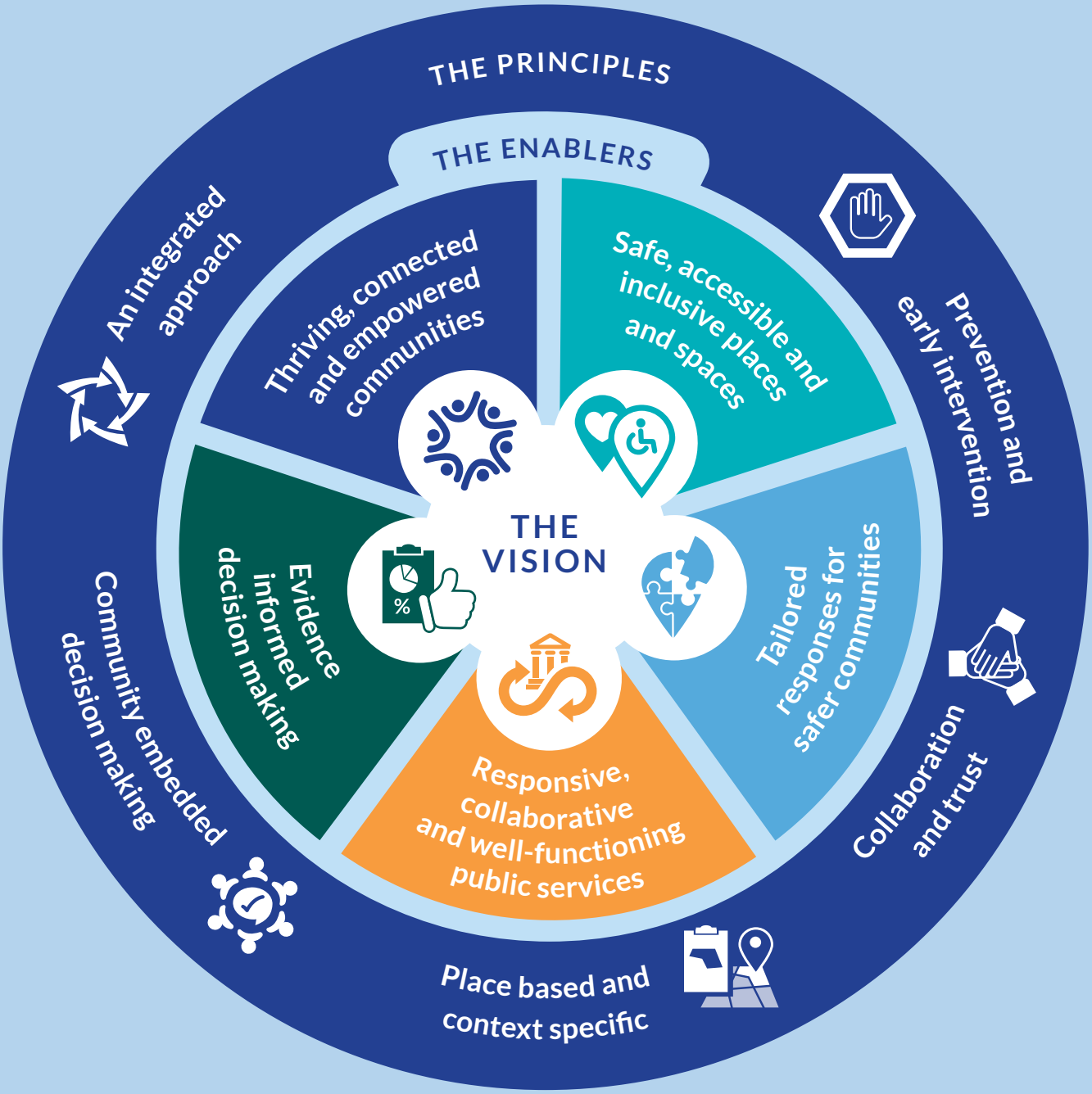
"No one size fits all, it is not necessarily about top down or bottom up, it is about partnership, it is about collaboration, it is about working together, it is about pride in each other. ***Community safety is a collective responsibility.****"*

- MidWest Regional Drug and Alcohol Forum



THE VISION

Working together to create safe and resilient communities in Ireland where everyone - whoever they are, wherever they are – can be safe and feel safe



THE PRINCIPLES

The framework of the national strategy is rooted in five core principles that underpin decision making, service delivery, and community engagement.

5 Principles: Text Alternative in Appendix V

Prevention and early intervention

Addressing root causes and strengthening protective factors to support long term community safety, wellbeing, resilience and quality of life.

Collaboration and trust

Meaningful, participatory collaboration and the building of trust as the foundation of effective responses to community safety.

Place based and context specific

Locally informed, place-based approaches that reflect the distinct strengths, challenges, experiences, and priorities of communities across Ireland.

Community embedded decision making

Communities should be active partners in shaping the decisions, policies, and responses that affect their lives. Recognising communities not simply as recipients of services, but as essential partners in improving community safety outcomes.

An integrated approach

Improving community safety requires coordinated and coherent action across Government Departments, public service bodies, local authorities, communities, civil society, and other stakeholders.

THE ENABLERS

The framework is built on five mutually reinforcing enablers that create the conditions for safe, resilient and thriving communities.

5 Enablers: Text Alternative in Appendix V

Thriving, connected and empowered communities

Safe, connected communities with a shared sense of belonging are more resilient and empowered.

Safe, accessible and inclusive places and spaces

Safety means welcoming, accessible spaces that support dignity, inclusion and connection — not just less crime.

Tailored responses for safer communities

Responses informed by the distinct social circumstances and identities of communities and the people living in them.

Responsive, collaborative and well-functioning public services

Public services, communities and stakeholders working together to tackle the complex, interconnected causes of community safety issues.

Evidence informed decision making

Strategic decisions informed by and grounded in a range of community safety indicators and evidence.

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Taoiseach's Foreword



Strong communities are among Ireland's greatest strengths, and they depend on people feeling safe, connected and supported in their daily lives.

A central commitment in the *Programme for Government* is 'ensuring our communities thrive, and making our villages, towns and cities safer'.

This is why Government continues to invest in our justice system, resulting in more gardaí on our streets, to both prosecute and prevent crime.

We recognise that community safety means more than protection from crime.

It is about creating the conditions in which people can participate fully in community life, feel connected to those around them, and have confidence that they will be supported when challenges arise.

The seminal report of the *Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland* was explicit that community safety is not the sole responsibility of An Garda Síochána.

They emphasised that for communities to feel safe, a multi-agency approach was required where government departments, state services, and local communities work together alongside the police to prevent harm.

This strategy reflects that broader understanding, and sets out a framework to support government, public service bodies, communities and civil society to work together to foster a safe, resilient and thriving society.

The development of Ireland's first national strategy for improving community safety, *An Enabling Framework for Community Safety 2026-2030*, was informed by consultation with communities and other relevant bodies.

While these engagements show that policing and criminal justice responses remain important, they also highlight that community safety is shaped by a broad range of interconnected social, economic, environmental and community factors.

Community safety is not separate from other government priorities.

Safer communities support better outcomes in areas such as education, health, housing, social inclusion, integration, community development and economic participation, while progress in these areas can in turn improve community safety.

This strategy seeks to strengthen coherence, support implementation, and maximise the impact of collective action. It will enable everyone to work together to deliver our shared vision of communities where everyone can be safe and feel safe.

This *Enabling Framework for Community Safety 2026-2030* provides the foundation for a more coordinated approach, demonstrating our commitment to building safer, stronger and more inclusive communities throughout Ireland.

It sets a guiding platform for local community safety partnerships. In particular, it highlights the role local community safety partnerships should play in ensuring public bodies and community groups work together to think about what makes people in their community feel safe and unsafe, and to come up with tailored priority responses with and for the people in their local area.

It provides guidance and tools for what has worked elsewhere but allows flexibility to respond to what matters most and what will work best for individual communities.

As Taoiseach, I am very mindful that to get more than the sum of the parts, we must support and put in place the conditions for a whole-of-government, cross-agency effort. That is what will work best and that is what will ensure that community safety remains a shared priority across Government.

I commend all those who contributed to the development of this strategy and look forward to seeing its vision translated into meaningful improvements in the lives of people and communities across Ireland.

Micheál Martin

Taoiseach

Tánaiste's Foreword



Community means a great deal in Ireland. We see it in the people who volunteer, the neighbours who look out for one another and the local groups that bring people together. In every part of the country, there are people making life better for those around them.

That is the starting point for this strategy. We have strong communities, with enormous goodwill and local knowledge. Our job in Government is to support them and ensure that our public services work together to meet their needs.

The National Strategy for Improving Community Safety 2026–2030 sets out a clear ambition - that everyone, whoever they are and wherever they live, can be safe and feel safe. That matters to all of us. It means being able to enjoy your local area, take part in community life and feel that you belong.

An Garda Síochána has a central role in making that possible. Every day, Gardaí work with communities to prevent crime, protect people and provide reassurance. This strategy supports that work while recognising that many of the things that shape our experience of safety require a wider response.

A young person with somewhere to go and someone to turn to. A family able to access the support they need. A public space that is welcoming, accessible and well cared for. These things make a difference. They strengthen communities and help prevent problems from developing in the first place.

We also know that the best ideas often come from people who live and work in an area. They know its strengths. They know what needs attention. They deserve a real say in the decisions that affect their lives.

The 36 Local Community Safety Partnerships give that approach a practical foundation. They bring residents, community organisations, local authorities, Gardaí and other public services together to develop and deliver local community safety plans. Their work must reflect the priorities of the communities they serve, because the right response will differ from place to place.

As Tánaiste and Minister for Finance, I welcome the focus on prevention, collaboration and evidence. Public investment achieves more when services work together, when decisions reflect local needs and when we learn from what works. This strategy provides a framework for strengthening those connections and making community safety a shared consideration across public policy.

What matters now is what happens in practice. People should see services working together, know where to bring their concerns and have confidence that their contribution is being heard. We must support Safety Partnerships as they establish themselves, learn from their experience and keep a clear focus on delivery.

I want to thank everyone who helped shape this strategy, particularly those who shared their own experiences and those already doing so much for their communities.

Simon Harris

Tánaiste and Minister for Finance



Minister's Foreword



The commencement of the *Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024* last year marked a significant shift in Ireland's approach to community safety. For the first time it established a statutory framework that recognises community safety as a shared responsibility and provides for new structures through which public service bodies, communities and civil society can work together to improve both safety and perceptions of safety across Ireland.

The publication of this strategy is an important milestone in implementing the Act, giving practical effect to its vision of collaborative responses to the prevention of crime and harm. As Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration I am pleased, together with my Government colleagues, to publish Ireland's first national strategy for improving community safety – *An Enabling Framework for Community Safety 2026-2030*. This strategy provides a shared framework through which we can work together to create safer, stronger and more resilient communities throughout the country.

The challenges affecting community safety today are often complex and interconnected. Social exclusion, disadvantage, trauma, mental health difficulties, harmful behaviours, and experiences of victimisation can have profound effects on individuals, families, and communities. Addressing these challenges requires responses that are preventative, coordinated and informed by the experiences of those most affected.

I have been encouraged by the commitment, insight, and enthusiasm shown by communities and stakeholders across the country in the development of this strategy. They identified the importance of prevention, early intervention, collaboration, and inclusion while recognising that experiences of community safety vary and that responses must reflect local needs and circumstances.

The continuing importance of policing and criminal justice responses was also highlighted. As Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, I remain committed to effective policing, crime prevention and criminal justice responses. This strategy does not replace those responses; rather, it complements them by recognising that lasting improvements in community safety require action across a broader range of social, economic and community factors.

This *Enabling Framework for Community Safety* establishes a shared vision for community safety underpinned by principles that promote prevention, inclusion, collaboration, participation and evidence informed decision making. It also identifies the enablers needed to create conditions for safe, resilient and thriving communities. Together, these principles and enablers will support practical tools and approaches to strengthen community engagement, improve collaboration and assist public service bodies in their community safety responsibilities.

Continued engagement with communities and stakeholders will be central to implementation. The community safety structures established under the Act, particularly Local Community Safety Partnerships, will play a key role in engaging with communities, translating the strategy into action and delivering its vision. Through these structures, national priorities and local needs are connected, supporting collaborative responses to community safety challenges.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of everyone who participated in the development of this strategy and look forward to working with communities, public service bodies, and colleagues across Government to deliver its vision of resilient communities where everyone in Ireland can be safe, and feel safe.

Jim O'Callaghan

Minister for Justice,
Home Affairs and Migration



Executive Summary



This national strategy for improving community safety (national strategy) *'An Enabling Framework for Community Safety'* sets out Ireland's first whole of government and whole of society framework for improving community safety through prevention, collaboration and community participation. Developed under the *Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024* (the Act), the national strategy represents a significant shift in how community safety is understood and delivered in Ireland: from an approach centred primarily on crime and policing towards one that is preventative, collaborative and embedded within communities.

An Garda Síochána has a central role in community safety, particularly in preventing and responding to crime and harm, but sustainable improvements cannot be achieved through policing and enforcement alone. Community safety is a shared responsibility requiring coordinated action across Government Departments, public service bodies, local authorities, communities, businesses and civil society.

The national strategy builds on the evolution of community safety policy in Ireland since the publication of the *Report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland* in 2018, the Community Safety Policy of 2021 and the experience of the Local Community Safety Partnership pilots. The commencement of the Act in April 2025 established the national and local infrastructure needed to support this approach, including the National Community Safety Steering Group (Steering Group), the National Office for Community Safety (National Office) and 36 Local Community Safety Partnerships (Safety Partnerships).

Community safety is understood as both being safe and feeling safe. It encompasses experiences of crime, harm, victimisation, anti-social behaviour and environmental risk, alongside trust, belonging, inclusion, wellbeing, confidence and quality of life. The development of this national strategy was informed by extensive public and stakeholder engagement, which demonstrated that experiences of community safety differ across individuals, communities and places. They are influenced not only by crime and disorder, but also by wider social, economic, environmental and institutional conditions, including social exclusion, inequality, housing, access to services, mental health, community cohesion and trust in public institutions.

The national strategy therefore recognises that improving community safety requires both effective responses to crime and harm, and action to strengthen the conditions that enable people and communities to thrive. Prevention and early intervention are central to this approach, with a focus on addressing risk and protective factors before problems escalate and on ensuring that responses are informed by local knowledge, lived experience and evidence.

The national strategy is guided by a shared vision for safe and resilient communities in which all people can be safe and feel safe. This vision is supported by five guiding principles that shape how community safety is understood and advanced, and by five interconnected enablers that represent the conditions that support community safety. Together the vision, principles and enablers provide a coherent framework for collective action, informing policy development, service delivery, partnership working and community participation at local, regional and national level.

The Principles

Five principles underpin the national strategy and apply across all areas of implementation:

Prevention and early intervention addressing the underlying social determinants of community safety, including inequality, discrimination, housing insecurity and barriers to participation before problems escalate.

Collaboration and trust – building strong, sustained and transparent relationships between public services, communities and other partners.

Place based and context specific – recognising that communities have different needs, strengths, risks and experiences and priorities.

Community embedded decision making – ensuring that communities are active partners in identifying priorities and shaping solutions.

An integrated approach (Policy Coherence) – promoting policy coherence and coordinated action across Government and wider society.

The Enablers

These principles are brought together through five interconnected enablers that foster the conditions required for safe and resilient communities.

1. **Thriving, connected and empowered communities**

   Safe, connected communities with a shared sense of belonging are more resilient and empowered.

2. **Safe, accessible and inclusive places and spaces**

   Safety means welcoming accessible spaces that support dignity, inclusion and connection - not just less crime.

3. **Tailored responses for safer communities**

   Responses informed by the distinct social circumstances and identities of communities and the people living in them.

4. **Responsive, collaborative and well-functioning public services**

   Public services, communities and stakeholders working together to tackle safety's complex, interconnected causes.

5. **Evidence informed decision making**

   Strategic decisions informed by and grounded in a range of community safety indicators and evidence.

The national community safety infrastructure provides the governance and delivery framework through which the national strategy's vision, principles and enablers will be translated into action.

The Steering Group provides strategic leadership, oversight and coordination.

The National Office provides support to public service bodies in implementing the national strategy; develops annual programmes of work to support implementation; supports Safety Partnerships; monitors local plans; and commissions research and evaluation.

Safety Partnerships provide the key mechanism for translating the national framework into locally relevant action, bringing statutory bodies and community representatives together to identify priorities and develop and implement local community safety plans.

In addition to the community safety infrastructure, which is underpinned by this national strategy, the Act also provides an important statutory foundation for the collaborative approach that is the heart of the national strategy's vision. Section 118 of the Act provides a statutory foundation for delivering the vision, principles and enablers of this national strategy. It places a duty on public service bodies to take reasonable steps to improve community safety and to cooperate with one another in doing so, reinforcing a whole of government approach to prevention, partnership working and early intervention.

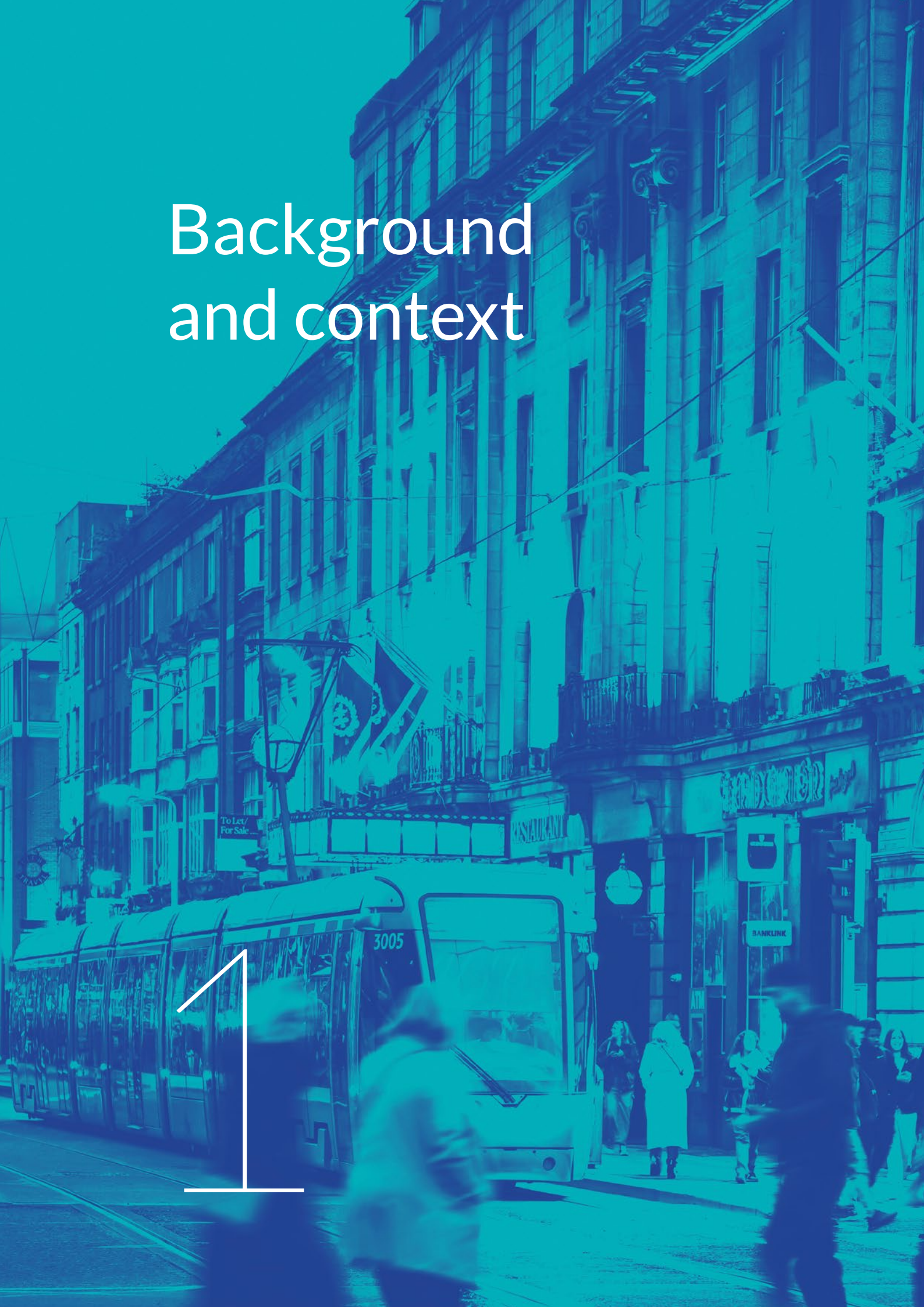
This creates a system in which national policy, local knowledge, community participation and evidence can inform one another. Local community safety plans will provide a key mechanism for identifying and responding to local priorities; while monitoring, evaluation and reporting will enable learning from local implementation to inform national policy and future programmes of work.

Implementation of the national strategy will therefore be an iterative process. Annual programmes of work prepared by the National Office and approved by the Steering Group will support national delivery, while local plans will provide flexibility to respond to different community contexts and priorities. Progress will be monitored through national governance arrangements, local reporting, evaluation and annual reporting to the Minister and the Oireachtas.

The national strategy also recognises that effective community safety requires sustained investment in the people, relationships and resources needed to make collaboration meaningful. By supporting public services, communities and other partners to work together, resources can be better targeted towards areas of greatest need and interventions that are most likely to have a positive and lasting impact.

Ultimately, this national strategy establishes a framework and vision for working together to create safe and resilient communities in Ireland where everyone - whoever they are, wherever they are – can be safe and feel safe. It recognises that lasting improvements in community safety depend not only on responding effectively when harm occurs, but on creating the conditions in which harm is less likely to occur in the first place. Through prevention, collaboration, community participation, tailored responses and evidence-informed action, Ireland can build safer, stronger, more inclusive and more resilient communities and improve quality of life for current and future generations.

Background and context



Community safety is increasingly understood through a holistic framework encompassing crime prevention, health, wellbeing, environment, and social inclusion. The policy landscape for this broader understanding of community safety as a whole of government, whole of society responsibility has been evolving in Ireland since the publication of the report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland in 2018; culminating in April 2025 with the commencement of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 under which this national strategy has been developed.

The Community Safety Policy Journey

2018

Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland (2018)

- Community safety is not solely the responsibility of An Garda Síochána and requires **multiagency cooperation** and policing being done in **partnership with communities**

2021

Community Safety Policy (2021)

- Community safety is the concept of people **being safe** and **feeling safe**.
- Improving community safety requires a **multi-sectoral approach**, strong inter-agency **collaboration** and **proactive dialogue** with the community

2021 - 2024

Local Community Safety Partnership Pilots (2021-2024)

- Dublin North Inner City, Longford and Waterford
- Independently evaluated
- Responsive to **local** needs
- Developed tailored **local community safety plans**

2024

Policing, Security and Community Safety Act, 2024

- Commenced 2 April 2025
- Statutory obligation to have regard to **harm prevention** and **cooperate with each other** to deliver safer communities
- Establishes infrastructure to support community safety

The national community safety infrastructure



2

With the commencement of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 [1] ('the Act') on 2 April 2025 a full national and local infrastructure was established to support a holistic model of community safety which is centred on multi-agency collaboration, the prevention of harm, and empowering communities to have a say on issues relating to community safety in their area.

The establishment of this community safety infrastructure is ambitious and groundbreaking, transitioning community safety from a centralised policing model into a multi-agency, community-led response. In placing an obligation on public sector bodies to work together, and with communities, to improve community safety, it mandates this shift in focus and strengthens the role of communities in the identification of responses to issues of importance to them.

2.1. National Strategy for Improving Community Safety



The national strategy is a core pillar within the community safety infrastructure, providing the policy framework to support public service bodies and communities to work together in a coordinated manner to improve community safety at local, regional and national levels. It is an unprecedented, whole of government commitment to redefining and improving community safety in Ireland.

This policy framework:

- promotes multi-disciplinary approaches and collaboration between public service agencies
- engages communities in developing and implementing strategies to improve community safety in their localities
- supports cohesion with other national and local strategies relevant to community safety

[1] *Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024:* https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2024/act/1/enacted/en/print



2.2. National Community Safety Steering Group

The National Community Safety Steering Group ('the Steering Group') is a key pillar of the community safety infrastructure. The group draws together senior representatives from nine Government departments, alongside agencies with a community safety remit such as the Health Service Executive, Tusla, An Garda Síochána, local authorities, the Policing and Community Safety Authority, and Cuan - the Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Agency. Further details on Steering Group membership are available at Appendix I.

The Steering Group acts as a coordinator and enabler; fostering conditions to empower local, regional and national partners to create safer, more resilient communities through

- a shared problem-solving approach,
- inclusive collaboration, and
- coordinated, evidence-informed action that is based on the needs of communities themselves.

It is a core function of the Steering Group to drive, monitor and measure the success – in terms of real, lasting benefits for communities in Ireland - of the national strategy meaning the Steering Group plays a strategic leadership role in the delivery of the national strategy.

2.3. National Office for Community Safety

An Oifig Náisiúnta um Shábháilteacht Pobail
The National Office for Community Safety

The National Office is the central coordinating body for the community safety infrastructure, supporting the delivery of the national strategy and the wider community safety framework by:

- **driving the national strategy** through annual programmes of work, monitoring implementation, supporting collaborative delivery and reporting to the Steering Group on all of these.
- **providing support to public service bodies** to deliver their statutory obligations under Section 118 through the development of implementation guidance, communities of practice and periodic reporting to the Steering Group.
- **supporting Safety Partnerships** through the provision of training, guidance and support – including in relation to the design and delivery of local community safety plans.
- **monitoring local community safety plans** by establishing reporting and evaluation mechanisms to review implementation at both individual Safety Partnership and collective levels.
- **commissioning research and promoting awareness** of community safety issues, including evaluating the impact of the community safety infrastructure on community safety outcomes, and through the administration of the Community Safety Fund[2].

To make this happen, the National Office, an Office of the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, works collaboratively with public service bodies, community organisations and other stakeholders.

[2] *Community Safety Fund:* https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/collections/community-safety-fund/

2.4. Local Community Safety Partnerships

Local Community Safety Partnerships ('Safety Partnerships') are a forum for the discussion of community safety concerns and for the development, coordination and implementation of coherent and integrated approaches to improving community safety at a local level. They are collaborative structures where public services and community representatives work in partnership to address community safety issues in the Safety Partnership administrative area.

A total of 36 Safety Partnerships have been established in each local authority area, including five in the Dublin City Council administrative area and two in the Fingal Local Authority area.

Each Safety Partnership is mandated to consult with their community in the development of a local community safety plan to improve community safety in the relevant area. Safety Partnerships' local community safety plans are an essential component of the community safety infrastructure. Rather than a top-down, centralised approach, they support a tailored response to local community safety needs. As action plans with clear, measurable targets they allow the community to track delivery, enhancing accountability and community trust in service providers.

Safety Partnerships take a place-based approach and as such must also collaborate and coordinate with public service bodies, community organisations, sectoral representatives and partnership structures operating in their administrative area in relation to the development and delivery of actions within their plan. This includes the relevant local elected council, and in particular local Municipal Districts and Area Committees. See Appendix II for examples of programmes and structures operating in the same local, place-based landscape as Safety Partnerships.

Operating within this broader local governance and service delivery landscape, Safety Partnerships provide the statutory framework for coordinating community safety action at local level. They are mandated, both within the Act and in Guidance for the Operation of Local Community Safety Partnerships[3] provided by the National Office to work collaboratively across this landscape, supporting a joined-up approach to identifying priorities, aligning resources and delivering responses to community safety issues. They provide a practical mechanism for public service bodies to work together on locally identified community safety issues, supporting the delivery of their statutory duty under Section 118 of the Act at local level.

As the key delivery agent of a community driven, collaborative approach to community safety at local level, Safety Partnerships play a pivotal role in addressing some of the challenges facing communities across the country. Leveraging local and national policies, planning and funding, they ensure service delivery is aligned with local need. Drawing together the collective resources of partners at the table, they ensure interventions are delivered proactively by the service best placed to deliver it and in a joined up, integrated way with other services.

Safety Partnerships also provide an important mechanism through which local priorities, community knowledge, lived experience and emerging issues can inform national policy development and community safety practice.

[3] *Guidance for the Operation of Local Community Safety Partnerships:* https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/84f181bd/Guidance_for_the_Operation_of_Local_Community_Safety_Partnerships.pdf



2.5. Public service body duty

Public service bodies now have a statutory duty to take reasonable steps to improve community safety in carrying out their functions and to cooperate with one another for the purposes of doing so. This statutory duty is provided for in Section 118[4] of the Act creating an important mechanism for embedding community safety considerations across policy development, service delivery, planning and resource allocation. It strengthens accountability for community safety outcomes. In mandating public service bodies to cooperate with one another for the purposes of community safety it supports a whole of government approach to prevention, partnership and early intervention. This reflects the shift towards recognising community safety as a whole of government and whole of society responsibility as envisaged by this national strategy, requiring long term, preventative, and collaborative approaches that address the root causes of harm and support safer, stronger, and more connected communities.

Section 118 not only provides the statutory foundation for the delivery of this national strategy, but implementation of the strategy also enables public bodies to demonstrate compliance with the statutory obligations set out in that section.

[4] *Section 118*: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2024/act/1/section/118/enacted/en/html#sec118

2.6. Community Safety infrastructure establishment journey

PHASE 1

Pilot
(2021-2024)

- Pilot Safety Partnerships - Dublin NIC, Longford, Waterford
- Policing, Security & Community Safety Bill enacted
- Review and evaluation of Pilots

PHASE 2

Establishment
(2025-2027)

- Commencement of Act
- National Office & Steering Group
- Safety Partnerships
- Community Safety Fund Review
- National Strategy
- Local Community Safety Plans

PHASE 3

Interim
(2028-2029)

- National Strategy Interim Review
- Safety Partnerships Model Review
- 2nd Local Community Safety Plans

PHASE 4

Review and Renewal
(2030-2032)

- National Strategy Review
- Safety Partnerships Model Review
- 2nd National Strategy
- 3rd Local Community Safety Plans



How we developed this strategy



3

The development of this national strategy was led by the National Office for Community Safety. The National Office drew on the guidance and expert input of the Steering Group in planning for the development and delivery of the national strategy.

The process of developing the strategy was grounded in meaningful public and stakeholder engagement, cross-sectoral collaboration and learning from both national experience and international best practice. An iterative process was undertaken with each layer of engagement informing the next. There were several opportunities to contribute to and give feedback on the national strategy throughout this process.

The process included:



108 written submissions from 101 individuals, civil society organisations and public service bodies in response to an issues paper outlining core community safety themes;

10 focus groups with identified demographics such as older people, rural residents, LGBTQI+ community members, Traveller & Roma, and migrants & refugees;

7 in person and online townhall consultations, attended by 166 participants;

11 targeted engagements to draw on the expertise of agencies, organisations and networks with a vested interest in community safety. Over 300 people were engaged in this exercise;

7,222 responses to an online national community safety survey, inviting the public to share their views on, and experiences of, community safety;

104 written submissions on a draft of this national strategy which was published online.

In developing this strategy, due regard was paid to the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty when designing this process.

Further detail on the consultation and engagement process is provided in Appendix III and consultation reports are available here[5].

[5] *Consultation reports are avaiable here:* https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/collections/national-office-for-community-safety-consultation-reports/

What we heard



> *"Community safety is not a one-size-fits-all concept, making it difficult to define."*
>
> - National Disability Authority

Community safety is a broad and multi-dimensional concept that cannot be captured through a single fixed definition. Experiences and perceptions of community safety can differ significantly between individuals, communities, and places, shaped by broader social, economic, environmental, and institutional conditions.

Community safety encompasses both objective experiences of safety, including exposure to crime, harm, anti-social behaviour, and environmental risks, and subjective experiences, including people's sense of safety, confidence, belonging, and trust within their communities.

Experiences of what community safety means in practice are not uniform and may vary across communities or population groups. Factors such as age, disability, housing, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, geography, health and social exclusion can influence both how community safety is understood and the resources, supports, and opportunities available to respond.

Across the various consultation mechanisms - online community safety survey, townhall engagement sessions, written stakeholder submissions, focus groups – we repeatedly heard how community safety is experienced differently by different groups. There was recognition that some have additional vulnerabilities when it comes to the experience of community safety; whilst the importance of *felt* safety to individuals and communities also came across strongly in the consultations.

Participants consistently highlighted that some groups experience community safety differently due to their identity, circumstances or lived experience. Women and girls, minority communities, LGBTIQ+ people, disabled people, Traveller and Roma, migrants, refugees and people experiencing mental health challenges described particular concerns





relating to safety, inclusion, participation and belonging. Respondents emphasised that effective community safety approaches must recognise these differing experiences and respond through prevention, inclusion, early intervention and tailored supports.

Our consultations therefore reinforced the complexity and breadth of how community safety is felt and understood across society.

While experiences and perspectives differed across individuals, communities, and sectors, there was broad recognition that community safety extends beyond crime control or policing alone and is closely connected to broader issues of wellbeing, inclusion, prevention, environmental quality, access to services, and social cohesion.

Issues of public intoxication, drug use and misconduct, loitering, intimidation, hate incidences, hate crimes and other forms of prejudice-based harm lead to people, particularly minority communities, feeling distressed and under-threat. For many of those who participated in the consultation process, high visibility policing and enforcement remain important aspects of community safety, particularly in relation to public reassurance, responsiveness, and addressing crime and anti-social behaviour. The importance of community policing, where there is a strong connection between local Gardaí and the community they serve, was further underlined as having positive impacts on community safety.

At the same time, participants consistently emphasised that community safety is shaped by wider structural and social conditions, including poverty, exclusion, inequality, mental health, housing, environmental neglect, access to services, and levels of trust in public institutions. Safety strategies which focus exclusively on crime reduction and enforcement were therefore not considered likely to address the lived experience of safety for many community members by participants.

There was also recognition that community cohesion, resources, and evidence based local interventions are key to creating safe communities. The importance of universal and diversionary youth service provision; inclusive community spaces and infrastructure; and community organisations and activities that foster connection and belonging across cultures, generations and localities were referenced as having a positive impact on community safety. Throughout the consultations the importance of good communication, building positive relationships across services and communities, and the centring of the community/local voice as foundational to the trust required in building safer communities were also repeatedly conveyed by participants.

Community safety is increasingly understood as a shared societal responsibility that extends beyond policing alone. While An Garda Síochána has a central role, improving community safety requires coordinated and collaborative action across Government Departments. It requires communities and services working together in a proactive, preventative, and joined up way to identify and respond to the issues that impact community safety, wellbeing, and quality of life.

What we heard through consultation therefore confirms the importance of making communities safer, both in reality and perception, through cooperation between relevant departments, public service bodies, communities, and other stakeholders in the prevention of crime and harm. The national community safety infrastructure, and in particular Safety Partnerships, will have a key role to play in supporting the coordinated, context specific and community centred approaches advocated for by consultation participants.



Participants consistently highlighted that some groups experience community safety differently due to their identity, circumstances or lived experience.

Principles



5

These five principles apply across the enablers of community safety and should be considered together rather than in isolation. They provide the foundation for policy development, service delivery, partnership working, decision making, and community engagement across the lifetime of this strategy.



5.1. Prevention and early intervention

A preventative and early intervention approach is fundamental to improving community safety and reducing exposure to crime, harm, vulnerability, and social exclusion. This national strategy promotes coordinated, evidence informed interventions that strengthen protective factors, address root causes, and support long term community safety, wellbeing, resilience, and quality of life outcomes for individuals and communities. This includes addressing the underlying social determinants of community safety, including poverty, inequality, discrimination, exclusion, poor health outcomes, housing insecurity and barriers to participation.

5.2.
Collaboration and trust

Collaboration and trust are the foundation of an approach to community safety that is focused on harm prevention. Providing more targeted and effective support to those most impacted by issues of community safety requires relevant public service bodies and voluntary organisations to work with each other and their local community in identifying, and addressing, these issues.

Building trust and transparency between services and the community is essential to achieve effective collaboration. This national strategy seeks to go beyond statutory obligations of cooperation to foster the relational, trust based and transparent approaches that are essential to strengthening public confidence, enabling meaningful participation, and delivering effective responses to complex and interconnected community safety challenges.



5.3.
Place based & context specific

Community safety issues are experienced differently across communities, places, population groups, and online environments, and are shaped by varying social, economic, geographic, cultural, and environmental conditions. This national strategy supports locally informed, place-based approaches that reflect the distinct strengths, challenges, experiences, and priorities of communities across Ireland, including in digital and online settings.

5.4. Community embedded decision making

Communities should be active partners in shaping the decisions, policies, and responses that affect their lives. Inclusive, participative, and trauma informed engagement strengthens legitimacy, supports shared ownership, and ensures responses are informed by lived experience, local knowledge, and the diverse needs and experiences of communities.

This national strategy supports participative, place based, and community led approaches that recognise communities not simply as recipients of services, but as essential partners in identifying priorities, shaping solutions, and improving community safety outcomes. This includes recognising the value of community development approaches, local leadership, lived experience, community grounded knowledge and the importance of ensuring that learning from communities informs decision making at local and national level.

Particular effort should be made to ensure that communities who may face barriers to participation such as children and young people, people with disabilities, Traveller and Roma, and migrant communities, are supported to participate in the development, implementation and monitoring of community safety actions at local and national level.



5.5. An integrated approach (Policy coherence)

Community safety is influenced by a wide range of interconnected social, economic, health, environmental, and institutional factors that cannot be addressed by any one agency, sector, or intervention acting alone. Improving community safety requires coordinated and coherent action across Government Departments, public service bodies, local authorities and their elected members, communities, civil society, and other stakeholders.

This national strategy promotes integrated planning, policy coherence, and shared responsibility across sectors and agencies of government to ensure that community safety considerations are embedded within relevant policies, services, and decision-making processes. By strengthening alignment between national and local priorities and fostering collaboration across systems, this approach supports more effective, sustainable responses to community safety challenges.

See Appendix IV which sets out the local, regional and national policies which intersect and support each of the enablers.



The enablers of community safety

6

Whilst participants raised concerns during consultations about deficits in community safety, thematic analysis of consultation data also revealed critical protective enablers. The strategy therefore focuses on five core enablers of community safety, shifting the focus from community safety problems to community safety strengths.

These five enablers of community safety are the conditions that allow community safety – in the sense that community members are and feel safe - to flourish. They are mutually reinforcing, creating an ecosystem for community safety that empowers public services and communities to effectively work together to improve community safety at local, regional and national level.

The enablers of community safety align with national and international commitments to improve the quality of life for members of our community, with each enabler translating global goals into local action by actively contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The enablers, and this national strategy, also sit within a broader policy landscape that contributes to and is supported by community safety. It is important, therefore to embed cohesion with other policies and strategies. To support this each enabler is mapped to the policy environment at Appendix IV.



High level strategic actions are identified for each enabler ('What we will do'), providing a roadmap for national delivery whilst allowing for the agility of approach required when responding to community safety; localised innovation and delivery through local community safety plans; and cross sector partnerships that leverage the unique strengths of public services and communities themselves.

Safety Partnerships

Safety Partnerships will also play a central role in translating these enablers into place-based action, ensuring that local priorities, evidence and community perspectives inform implementation.



6.1.
Thriving, connected and empowered communities

"Communities that are engaged, connected, and empowered tend to experience lower levels of antisocial behaviour and higher levels of trust and safety."

- Association of Irish Local Government



What this means

At the heart of community safety is the principle that every community has the right to be safe and feel safe in order to thrive and flourish. Communities where people feel a sense of belonging, connectedness and shared identity may be less likely to experience crime and harm, as strong social ties encourage mutual care and collective responsibility. Connected communities are also more likely to be resilient, better able to work together to address divisions and to withstand external shocks.

Strong social connections and participation in community life can contribute positively to individual and community wellbeing. Conversely isolation, exclusion, trauma and loneliness can undermine both mental wellbeing and community safety. Supporting opportunities for connection, participation and belonging is therefore an important preventative measure in improving community safety outcomes.

Community safety is a public good, both created by and contributing to social cohesion. Integrated communities, where people of different ages, backgrounds, and experiences interact positively, are a core driver of safety rather than a secondary outcome. Strong community connection and social cohesion may prevent crime, reduce antisocial behaviour and counteract the isolation that often leads to vulnerability. There is also a strong mutually-reinforcing link between safe communities and economic opportunities, business development and employment creation. Access to employment, training opportunities and economic participation can contribute positively to social inclusion, community resilience and the prevention of disengagement and antisocial behaviour.

In community safety, those who are closest to the problem are often closest to the solution. Context is also key to understanding community safety issues. Communities hold a deep understanding of the specific risks, barriers, and challenges in their areas, which are informed by daily experience and social relationships. Including community members in shaping solutions allows for the delivery of interventions that are shaped by understandings of place and context.

Engaging communities in practical ways such as education, awareness-raising, mentorship, and participation in business or neighbourhood watch schemes can also cultivate ownership and accountability, empowering communities to move beyond simple awareness towards active participation in identifying risks, developing solutions, and supporting safety measures. This also positions community safety as a shared responsibility amongst individuals, families, community groups, local economic actors and the public sector.

Existing community development structures, programmes and organisations play an important role in building social capital, community resilience, local leadership and participation, all of which contribute positively to community safety outcomes. Supporting and strengthening these community assets can enhance local capacity to identify issues, respond to emerging challenges and foster safer, more connected communities.



Social cohesion is both a process and an outcome. It requires the investment of time, intentional relationship-centred practices, a strong social infrastructure that fosters community activity, and inclusive policy making to address issues of power sharing, capacity and structural inequalities.

A community-led approach builds trust, ensures legitimacy, and delivers responses that reflect the diverse needs of communities. This requires open dialogue between residents, businesses, the community sector, and the public agencies who are mandated to provide local services. Such dialogue must actively include and support the engagement of communities who are underserved, marginalised or historically excluded from decision making processes. There must also be recognition that for traumatised communities these conversations should not be undertaken lightly. A trauma informed, trust-based approach can facilitate effective dialogue between communities, agencies and other partners. Safety Partnerships and the development and implementation of their local community safety plans will be the driving force behind the execution of this enabler.

What we will do

Support Safety Partnerships to include, engage and build capacity within their local communities to play an active leadership role in identifying and implementing responses to community safety in their area; recognising community development, local leadership, volunteering, participation and capacity building as important contributors to safe, resilient and connected communities.

Review international best practice on programmes that build community resilience to respond to issues relating to community safety and test in an Irish context.

Support opportunities for intergenerational and intercultural engagement to foster trust within and between communities; recognising the value cultural, sporting and community events and spaces that create connection can have in building cohesive communities.

Evaluate and resource interventions that cultivate community ownership and responsibility in practical ways such as education, awareness-raising, mentorship, and participation in schemes such as neighbourhood or business watch.

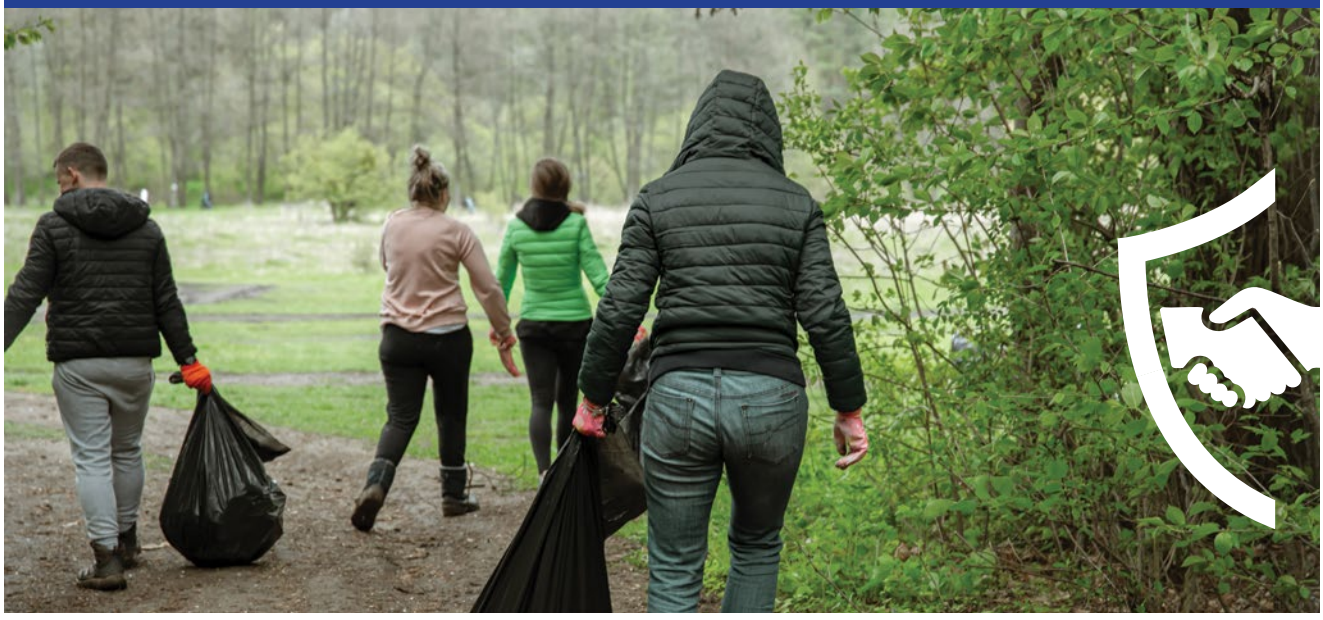
Ardnacassa – Engage, Mobilise and Unite

Longford Local Community Safety Partnership identified building a model of community and agency collaboration and response in targeted geographic areas of Longford as a priority in their local community safety plan. The model would require sustained commitment from relevant stakeholders and the inclusion of community and local resident voices to build trust with local communities.

The model was piloted in Ardnacassa, an area considered to have high deprivation levels; persistent low level crime; significant levels of school refusal/truancy; and poor community spirit. Residents are diverse in nationality with a statistically significant number of residents from the Traveller Community.

The Longford Safety Partnership established 'Ardnacassa Joint Action Group', a multi-stakeholder forum to address issues in the area, primarily anti-social behaviour and to prevent or stymie criminal activity. It also aims to address public realm issues by supporting the local residents to improve the area. The Joint Action Group operates under the auspices of the Safety Partnership and is co-chaired by the local authority and An Garda Síochána.

Following engagement with the local community the Joint Action Group developed an action plan for the area. The plan recognised that issues raised by the community have complex and systemic roots and that addressing and improving them requires sustained effort and increased funding from a range of partners beyond Longford County Council and An Garda Síochána. Actions undertaken include the provision of a local authority property for public/community use including waiving of fees to allow the space be offered free of charge to services and community groups; installation of traffic calming measures at key locations; establishment of a targeted Homework Club and youth group; and development of a public realm 'Master Plan' for a large unkempt green area.



6.2.
Safe, accessible and inclusive places and spaces



"A safe community is one in which people can move freely, access services, and enjoy public spaces without fear, exclusion, or intimidation."

- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown PPN

What this means

Safe, inclusive, and accessible places and spaces are fundamental to building strong, connected, and resilient communities. The environments in which people live, work, travel, learn, and socialise shape not only their physical safety, but also their sense of belonging, confidence, participation, and wellbeing. Community safety is therefore experienced not solely through the absence of crime or disorder, but through the presence of environments that are welcoming, accessible, well maintained, and designed to support dignity, inclusion, and social connection.



The quality, accessibility, and design of physical and digital environments play a significant role in shaping how people experience community safety in their everyday lives. Safe communities rely not only on effective policing, but also on environments that foster trust, participation, connection, and shared responsibility. Well designed and inclusive public spaces can strengthen social cohesion, encourage participation, and support greater confidence in communities and public institutions.

Experiences of community safety are not uniform across communities or population groups. Factors such as age, disability, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, and geography can influence how people access and experience public spaces, services, transport systems, and community infrastructure. Poorly maintained or inaccessible environments, through dereliction, unsafe infrastructure, litter, and vandalism can contribute to insecurity, reduced participation, and perceptions of increased safety risk, even where levels of recorded crime in a community may be relatively low. Meanwhile visible drug use, public intoxication, and antisocial behaviour can increase perceptions of spaces being unsafe and restrict people in moving freely and confidently around their neighbourhoods.

Access to safe, welcoming, and inclusive community infrastructure is an important protective factor in supporting resilient communities. Parks, libraries, playgrounds, sports facilities, youth services, teenage recreation spaces, alternative places of belonging and community spaces provide opportunities for connection, participation,



and positive social interaction. Family Resource Centres and other services that support families are important community safety assets, strengthening protective factors and supporting early intervention to prevent harm, social exclusion and vulnerability. Dedicated third spaces such as youth clubs and youth diversion projects, sports facilities, and mentoring programmes, where young people can engage in prosocial activity; low threshold and harm reduction spaces for vulnerable service users; and vibrant and accessible shared community spaces all contribute positively to community safety. Equally, safe and accessible transport systems, walking routes, and public amenities are essential in enabling individuals and communities to remain connected to employment, education, services, and social opportunities.

Gender can significantly influence experience of public spaces, with women and girls frequently modifying their behaviour in response to safety concerns. The design, accessibility, maintenance and management of public spaces, transport networks, town centres and recreational amenities should therefore consider the lived experience of women and girls.

The importance of accessibility and universal design is central to supporting inclusion, equality, dignity, and independent access for disabled people, older persons, children and young people, and those living in rural areas or communities experiencing deprivation and disadvantage. Similarly, the implementation of measures to prevent incidences of suicide and self-harm in public spaces can help create safer spaces for all.

Community safety challenges can differ significantly between urban and rural settings, including issues relating to service accessibility, transport connectivity, social isolation, digital connectivity and emergency response capacity. Recognising these differing experiences is important in ensuring that community safety responses remain locally informed, place-based and responsive to community needs.

Experiences of community safety increasingly extend across both physical and digital environments. While online spaces can support participation and connection, they can also expose individuals and communities to misinformation, intimidation, abuse, hate speech and othering of certain groups. Building safer and more inclusive communities therefore requires coordinated and preventative approaches that embed safety, accessibility, inclusion, wellbeing, and environmental quality across planning, infrastructure, service delivery, regeneration, and community development.

What we will do

- **Promote community safety across a range of environments and settings,** including urban, rural, transport and night-time settings, recognising differing community experiences, vulnerabilities, and needs.

- **Explore the development of a community safety asset mapping tool** to support communities, local authorities and their elected members, and other stakeholders in identifying infrastructural, community, and service resources that contribute to community safety in a local area.

- **Promote and support environmental, spatial and universal design approaches** that support crime prevention, safety, accessibility, and positive use of public spaces and places, including public transport.

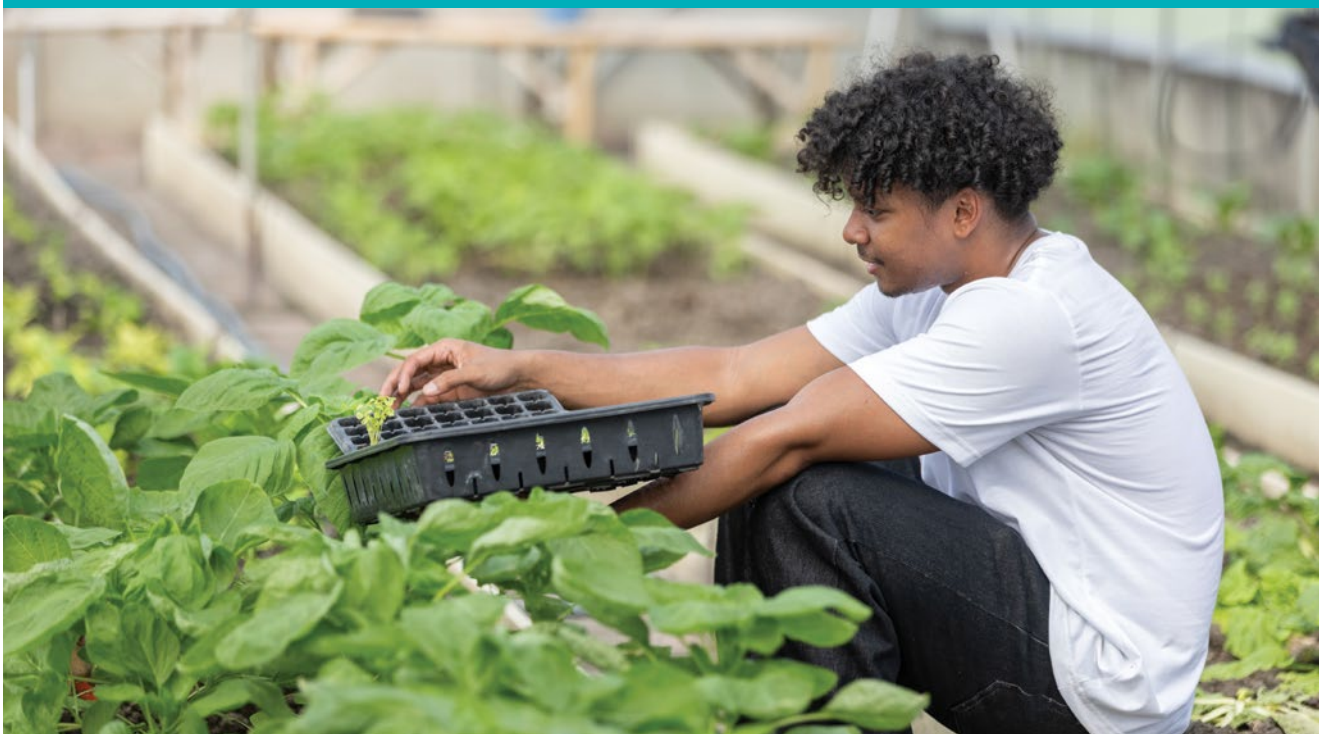
- Recognise online environments as significant spaces of interaction and potential harm, and **support measures that strengthen online safety, accountability,** and strengthen community resilience to misinformation and harmful online activity.

Dungarvan Community Garden Project

The Waterford Local Community Safety Partnership developed the Dungarvan Community Garden Project in response to antisocial behaviour, public drug use, illegal dumping and fly-tipping on a derelict three-acre site owned by Waterford City and County Council. Located between four housing estates and the Shandon Traveller Halting Site, the site included an abandoned community garden and a vacant community house.

The Safety Partnership coordinated the involvement of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB), Waterford City and County Council, An Garda Síochána and other partners. This included involving young people at risk of engaging in low-level antisocial behaviour in a community activity in which they could develop a sense of ownership; refurbishing the community house as a further education and training centre; and securing the adjoining land to deter vandalism and antisocial behaviour, supported by increased Garda patrols and engagement by Community Gardaí.

Following an initial grant allocation of just over €41k the Safety Partnership secured further financial and in-kind resourcing to deliver the project. This included provision of building to support delivery of a dedicated community education space, land for allotments and fencing by the local authority; fitting out of the community house into a Community Further Education & Training Centre and provision of horticultural, computers and IT classes to the local community by WWETB; and a drawdown of funding of over €86k by the Safety Partnership from the Community Recognition Fund to expand training opportunities and facilitate increased integration by providing a social hub for diverse communities in the immediate area.



6.3.
Tailored responses for safer communities

"To solve people's problems (and not what we think they are), we must ensure even those without power have a voice and are heard" - Rural Safety Forum



What this means

Safe and resilient communities are places where all people can enjoy being and feeling safe regardless of their age, gender identity, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and locality. Our experiences and feelings of safety are not uniform and are shaped by our different circumstances. Community safety therefore requires the grounding of safety interventions and responses in people's different experiences, specific needs, and accounting for the different capabilities, resources and opportunities of communities to prevent and respond to safety issues. It involves addressing the root causes through harm prevention and early intervention.

Different groups and communities experience varying barriers to accessing support and assistance, including resource constraints, lack of trust in services, previous experiences of reports being disregarded, and cultural, linguistic or other accessibility challenges. Some communities can also face distinct or disproportionate safety concerns. Marginalised groups such as LGBTIQ+ and minority communities are at greater risk of hate crime, while women and girls are disproportionately impacted by domestic, sexual and gender-based violence (DSGBV). People from the Traveller community can be over-represented in the justice system. Children and young people who are living with, or are affected by, domestic, sexual and gender-based violence can experience significant and particular impacts to their safety and wellbeing, highlighting the importance of prevention, early intervention and coordinated supports across services.

Critically, identities, socio-economic status and geography can often intersect meaning certain communities can face overlapping risks and multiple marginalisations. This means certain groups or localities need more targeted approaches.

Even where people are not directly exposed to harm, it can have a psychological impact, creating fear of perceived risk and a hyper vigilance which alter people's behaviour, affecting their overall quality of



life and ability to participate in their communities. These real experiences of safety, barriers to dealing with them and perceptions of safety can often intersect and compound each other and can be more acute for vulnerable groups or those experiencing marginalisation or multiple discrimination.

Travellers, migrants and refugees, and people affected by poverty and social exclusion, for example, may hold high levels of distrust in enforcement agencies but require access to enforcement agencies to deal with their safety issues. Similarly, communities experiencing poverty and disadvantage may experience more crime and safety issues but have less resources to deal with these issues.

Creating safer and more resilient communities means tackling the root causes that allow community safety issues to develop through harm prevention and early intervention. These multiple and overlapping root causes, including marginalisation, discrimination, deprivation, economic instability, housing stability mental health and inadequate access to services impact not only a community's vulnerability to crime and harm but also the circumstances in which harmful and unsafe behaviour occurs. These issues cannot be addressed by a single agency or intervention but rather require a coordinated and collaborative approach where the public service bodies, communities and relevant stakeholders work together in a targeted approach which includes responding where needs are most acute.

Building safer and more inclusive communities also requires action to challenge discrimination, prejudice, racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism and other forms of hate-related behaviour that undermine community trust, cohesion and belonging.

Involving affected communities and groups in the co-designing of solutions ensures their actual safety needs are responded to and met. As vulnerable communities and groups experience significant barriers to accessing services and participating in their community, deliberate actions must be taken to ensure they are included in participatory processes and that services are responsive to their needs. This will help ensure that community safety responses are targeted where they are needed most and informed by those who know their communities best.



What we will do

- Identify and implement tools to embed and **measure meaningful participation** in community safety decision making processes, focusing on specific groups such as young people, migrant communities, LGBTIQ+ and people with disabilities.

- Utilise existing funding streams and programmes to **allocate resources to community safety responses** that are inclusive, targeted and take a preventative approach.

- Explore opportunities for public service bodies and Safety Partnerships to **address barriers preventing marginalised groups from accessing and/or engaging with supports and services**.

- **Work with the education and youth sectors** to promote inclusion, attendance, wellbeing, positive relationships and early intervention approaches that contribute to safer communities and better life outcomes for children and young people.

Galway City hate speech and community tensions forum

Following the election of Galway's first black mayor, and a case late last year relating to an attempted arson attack on a Mosque in the city, in addition to national trends and local incidences, Galway City Local Community Safety Partnership and the Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT), in cooperation with An Garda Síochána developed a collaborative forum to provide a space for regular communication and the sharing of updates. In particular, the forum provides a safe mechanism for IPAS managers to raise concerns.

The model seeks to strengthen relationship-based approaches to ensure emerging risks linked to community tensions, misinformation and discrimination are addressed early through coordinated responses. It is deliberately inclusive, drawing in expertise through presentations from key stakeholders such as COPE, Tusla and Youth Work Ireland Galway.

The Safety Partnership and LAIT team also prioritised capacity building through identifying and providing specialised, targeted training for members of both the Safety Partnership and Community Integration Forum (CIF) in recognising, recording and responding effectively to hate incidents, both online and offline. They are now seeking to develop this further by developing and distributing a comprehensive toolkit to provide stakeholders with clear guidance on identifying harmful content and responding proportionately while upholding freedom of expression.



6.4.
Responsive, collaborative and well-functioning public services

"... criminal justice actors cannot prevent or respond effectively to crime and social harm without involving actors in other social policy domains and services, such as education, health and mental health, community and youth work, social work, housing and local government."

- Dr. Ian Marder



What this means

Effective community safety cannot be achieved by public services alone, and requires the input of communities, businesses and civil society to identify and address the factors impacting safety. Community safety issues are determined by complex and interconnected individual, social, communal, societal, and economic causes that are outside the scope of any single service. Community safety and wellbeing are closely interconnected. Individuals and communities experiencing distress, trauma, social exclusion or mental health challenges may require coordinated, preventative responses delivered through collaboration between health, social, community and justice services.

Addressing these requires concerted, adaptive, collaborative and stewarded approaches. These approaches should involve the proactive cooperation of multiple public services, agencies, and stakeholders, with communities, individuals and the public placed at the centre. The effectiveness of these approaches depends not only on the ability of services to work together, but also on the trust and confidence communities place in them.

Trust in service providers to deal with community safety issues is shaped both by day-to-day interaction with public services, and through the planning design and decision making to address these challenges.

In day-to-day interactions this is the availability, responsivity, reliability and effectiveness of services to deal with safety concerns. In the longer term, trust is strengthened when communities see tangible improvements in safety and wellbeing arising from coordinated action and prevention.

Building public trust requires the relevant public services and agencies to address community safety on these differing levels. This can entail more responsive services with inclusive and supportive reporting structures but also requires the action of relevant agencies and public services to target the root causes of these issues before they reach crisis point.

A coordinated whole of government approach is essential to drive collaboration across departments, state agencies and service providers and to embed community safety principles in the areas of housing, health, education, justice, transport, and community development. This includes ensuring that relevant sectors and service providers have appropriate mechanisms to engage with Safety Partnerships in the development and delivery of local community safety responses.

Creating trusted and well-functioning services that aim to address the complex causes of community safety outcomes requires collaboration and coordination among public services and community and voluntary organisations, businesses and other relevant service providers, data-sharing, accountability structures and adequate resourcing.

It also requires leadership to sustain collaboration, dialogue and shared understanding among stakeholders and services, drawing on international best practice such as public health approaches to prevention and early intervention, continuous learning and research, and accountability of public services to community safety outcomes.

What we will do

- Facilitate the development of communities of practice with joint training, shared protocols, and coordinated information campaigns to **develop shared understanding and language** across Safety Partnership teams, members, agencies and the broader community.

- **Explore the development of a resource hub** and evidence base that allows the sharing of best practice on tackling community safety and how a shared approach to community safety can contribute to community, organisational and sectoral priorities.

- Embed a collaborative and inclusive approach to community safety through **developing guidance for public service bodies**, monitoring and evaluating implementation of the duty of public service bodies under Section 118 of the Act

- **Prioritise community policing and empower Gardaí** to work with communities and other sectoral stakeholders to achieve collaborative solutions to community safety issues.

Meitheal early intervention practice model

Many community safety challenges such as school attendance and educational disengagement, domestic violence, mental health concerns, youth antisocial behaviour or substance misuse involve engagement with multiple systems simultaneously.

Meitheal is a national early intervention practice model coordinated by Tusla which brings together children, families and relevant services to identify needs and develop coordinated support plans.

Designed for families who do not meet the threshold for statutory child protection, it brings professionals, families, and communities together to co-create solutions tailored to each child's context. It is designed to ensure that the strengths and needs of children and families are identified, understood and responded to in a timely manner through service collaboration.

Meitheal brings together public service bodies and community organisations, promoting integrated working and shared learning rather than siloed service delivery.

Instead of asking "Which agency owns this problem?" Meitheal asks "What support does this child or family need and how do services organise themselves around that need?", placing the child and family at the centre and fostering trust in services and empowering families.



6.5.
Evidence informed decision making



"Getting the measurement 'tool' right at the outset is important"

- LGBTQI+ Steering Group

What this means

The preventative approach to community safety is based on the principle that it is more effective to prevent harm before it occurs, which can be achieved through targeted interventions that address risk factors for both individuals and communities. This transition from ad hoc, reactive responses to a proactive preventative approach requires a shift away from reliance on anecdotal evidence and intuition to a robust, data driven framework to underpin strategic decision making. Positive outcomes of collective data measurement can include heightened levels of trust among community members, stronger sense of safety, improved community relationship with public services and increased reporting of incidences. The development of a community data strategy or measurement system and nature of data collected should therefore be guided by a focus on such outcomes.

Community safety cannot be assessed in isolation from broader health, wellbeing and social indicators. Crime statistics and victimisation rates alone do not give a full picture of the experience of community safety. For example, incorporating infrastructure indicators into safety measurement frameworks could help capture how physical environments influence perceptions and behaviour, and where targeted investment may improve community confidence.

Inclusion of existing administrative datasets such as Accident & Emergency admissions, school completion and exclusion rates, emergency service response times, availability of and access to services, road safety data, environmental and resilience datasets, infrastructure indicators and other relevant community datasets may contribute to a more rounded understanding of community safety.

Similarly, given the importance of community cohesion as a protective buffer against crime rates and perceptions of safety, the incorporation of civic engagement indicators is likely to be of value in a community safety data framework.

Different groups experience safety in distinct ways, shaped by factors such as age, gender, race or ethnicity, disability, and socio-economic context. Recognising this variation is essential for measurement as aggregated data can obscure unequal experiences and mask the specific concerns of particular groups. Disaggregation of data and linking of datasets from multiple sources could contribute further to understanding and responding to experiences of community safety amongst communities. Particular attention should be given to understanding the experiences of groups who may experience community safety differently such as children and young people, Traveller and Roma, LGBTIQ+ and minority communities.

Factors such as mental health, access to services, social connection, housing stability, and experiences of discrimination also shape how safe people feel.

Feeling unsafe on public transport, in local neighbourhoods, or at certain times of

day has a real impact on behaviour, mobility, and quality of life, regardless of whether crime rates are trending downward. This disconnect highlights the limits of relying solely on quantitative measures and underlines the importance of having processes that support listening to how individuals and communities experience and interpret safety in their own environments. Such data collection should be an extension of meaningful community involvement. Inclusive approaches strengthen the quality of data collected and help ensure that measurements of safety reflect the experiences of all community members, rather than only those who find it easiest to engage.

By integrating quantitative and qualitative data gathered from multiple official sources and through participative community engagement, including community intelligence, lived experience, service-user perspectives and local knowledge we can gain a holistic understanding of community safety that bridges the divide between official metrics and community reality.

The establishment of Safety Partnerships in every local authority area provide a valuable mechanism for gathering such rich data directly from communities to both inform local decision making and national policy making. They will provide an important mechanism through which community knowledge, lived experience and learning from local implementation can inform the national evidence base for community safety. Insights emerging from local community safety plans, partnership activity and evaluation will help identify research priorities, highlight emerging trends and support the continuous development of evidence-informed policy and practice.



What we will do

Develop with Safety Partnerships, the Steering Group and other stakeholders, **a long term community safety data strategy** to include identification of baseline metrics for evaluating community safety, considering approaches that combine administrative data, community intelligence, lived experience and local evidence to strengthen understanding of community safety issues and responses.

Review opportunities for access to and sharing of data to inform decision making. For example, explore with the CSO the development of a National Community Safety Data Gateway to enable secure and responsible access to and cohesive interpretation of administrative, survey, secondary and privately held data.

Carry out a gap analysis on national and international research on the impact of felt safety on quality of life, social cohesion and community resilience and commission research to bridge any data or information gaps.

Support research, evidence gathering, and public awareness initiatives relating to emerging and existing community safety issues.

The Cardiff Model

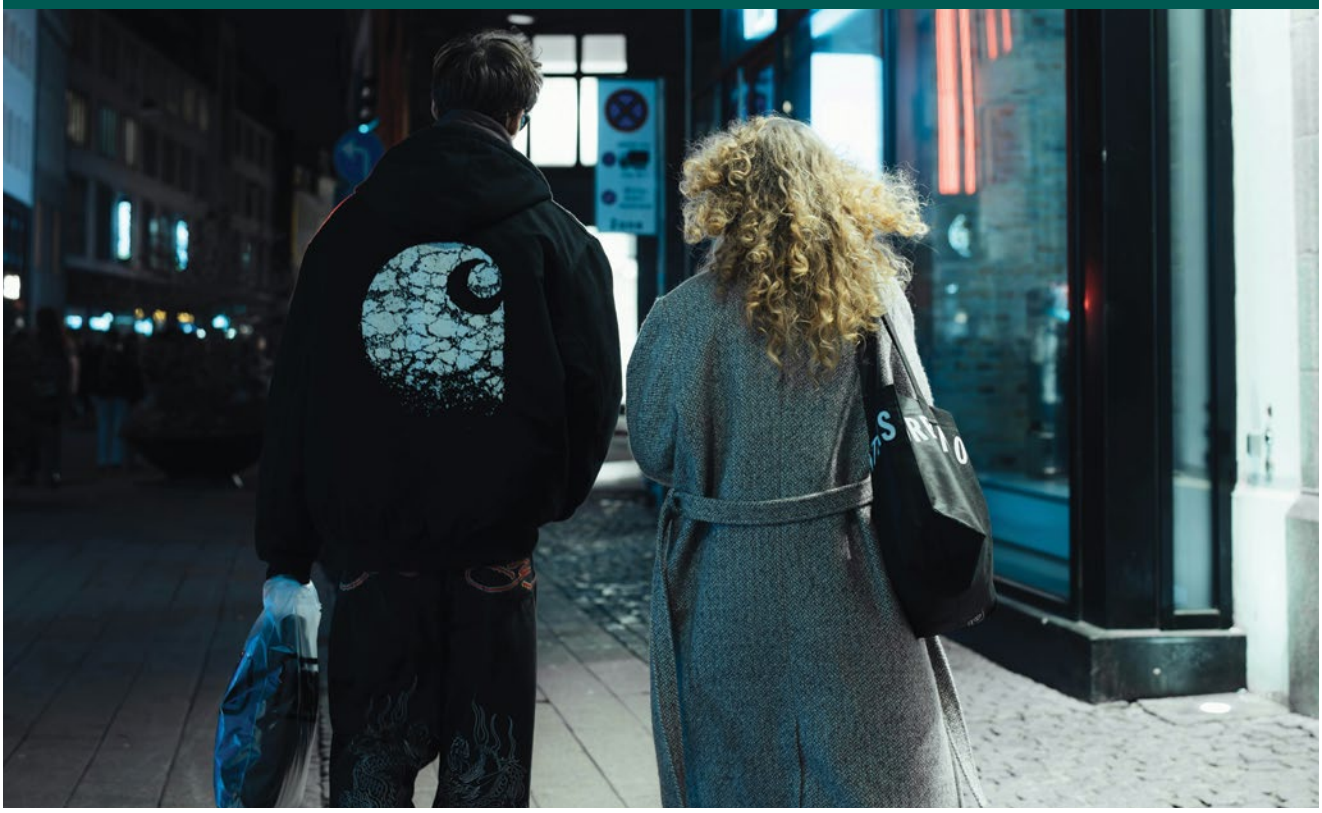
The Cardiff Model is the use of specific Emergency Department (ED) and police data to prevent violence and establish a multi-agency approach to generate accountability and prevent silo working.

The model relies on data on time and date of each violent incident, the precise location of the violence in each case (named street location, named school etc.), the weapon used, numbers of violent assailants in each case, and the relationship between the injured person and their assailant(s) in each case. Data is anonymised by the NHS Trust before sharing with other agencies.

A 'Violence prevention board' brings police, health, local authorities (including education providers) and the voluntary sector together to decide on and implement prevention actions. Violence prevention boards serve the whole city, not just night-time economies. They help prevent all types of violence – including domestic violence, violence in parks, schools, workplaces, licensed premises, street locations etc. – and violence in which people of all ages and sexes are injured.

Examples of successful interventions include

- the identification that a number of violent attacks were happening in the gardens around Cardiff Castle. Action was taken to cut down shrubbery which increased natural surveillance and dramatically reduced incidents at that location.
- use of data to inform situational interventions, such as park redesign, school-based child safeguarding and pedestrianisation of entertainment streets.



Implementation and monitoring



The national strategy is intended to provide the overarching vision and framework for improving community safety at national and local level. Its delivery will be supported through annual programmes of work, governance arrangements, guidance materials and supporting implementation mechanisms developed by the National Office and relevant partners. This approach provides the flexibility required to respond to emerging issues, local priorities and evolving community safety needs over the lifetime of the national strategy.

Recognising that the community safety infrastructure established under the Act is new, the focus will be on embedding and strengthening the infrastructure at local and national level across the lifetime of the national strategy. Priority will be given to building capacity, supporting partnership working, establishing effective governance and reporting mechanisms, and creating the foundations for long term improvements in community safety.

Through this work, the national strategy seeks to strengthen collaboration across public services and communities, improve the ability of partners to identify and respond to community safety issues, increase participation in community safety decision-making, and support more evidence-informed and preventative approaches to improving community safety outcomes.

Implementation is therefore designed to be iterative and adaptive with monitoring, evaluation, research and learning from local implementation being used to refine approaches, identify emerging priorities and strengthen the evidence base for future policy and practice. Evaluation of interventions and delivery approaches will be essential to understanding what works, for whom, in what contexts, and to supporting continuous improvement in community safety policy and practice. Learning from the delivery of this first national strategy will inform subsequent iterations including the development of more mature outcome measures and the identification of long-term strategic community safety outcomes.

The Act provides a blueprint for implementation and monitoring that facilitates national delivery and oversight; an agile approach; tailored local adaptability; and ongoing learning and feedback.



Under the Act

- The **Steering Group** approves the annual programmes of work prepared by the National Office, monitors implementation of the strategy, and reviews and evaluates its effectiveness. The Steering Group must also prepare and submit an annual report to the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration which will be laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas and published on www.gov.ie/communitysafety.
- The **National Office** must prepare annual programmes of work to support the implementation of this strategy. The National Office is also mandated to monitor implementation of local plans and commission research into the effectiveness of Safety Partnerships.
- **Safety Partnerships** develop local community safety plans in consultation with communities in their area. While these bespoke plans are developed independently, at local level, and in response to locally identified community safety needs, their implementation is monitored by the National Office. This provides the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the intersection between the high-level strategic aims of this document with on the ground delivery by Safety Partnerships.
- **Local community safety plans** will be a crucial repository of evidence-based interventions. The monitoring of their implementation and impact will serve as a powerful mechanism for evaluating the community safety enablers as set out in the national strategy. The National Office will work with Safety Partnerships, the Steering Group and relevant stakeholders to support consistency of approach, promote learning across partnership areas, and identify emerging issues and examples of effective practice that may inform future policy development and implementation.
- **Public service bodies** have a statutory duty to take reasonable steps to improve community safety, to cooperate with one another in doing so and to report on developments and achievements in their annual reports. The implementation of this duty across public service bodies will provide an important mechanism for embedding the vision, principles and enablers of this strategy across government and the wider public sector.
- Implementation and monitoring arrangements for both local plans, the national strategy and the public service duty will also **seek to support appropriate reporting and accountability mechanisms**, with a focus on both community safety outcomes and progress in delivering strategic commitments.
- The **Minister** and other **relevant Ministers** may review the national strategy.[6]

[6] *The Act states that the Minister and relevant Ministers shall review the national strategy not less than once in every period of six years from publication*


An Lár
City Centre

Resourcing



People are a critical resource in improving community safety and the collaborative approach that is required to achieve that improvement. Effective collaboration requires investment in the capacity, skills, leadership and time needed for public services, communities and other stakeholders to work together in a meaningful and sustained way. Supporting participation, relationship building and partnership working will be essential to delivering the ambitions of this strategy.

The successful delivery of this strategy will also depend on ensuring that appropriate resources, staffing, training and implementation supports are available to support action at national and local level. Sustained investment in partnership working, community engagement, capacity building and evidence-informed practice will be essential to delivering meaningful and lasting improvements in community safety outcomes.

The time given by senior officials of government departments and public sector bodies to the Steering Group is a commitment of resources that speaks to the value placed on community safety at national level.

Membership of and engagement with Safety Partnerships also requires a significant commitment of people resources by all partners and this must be valued and recognised as a resource contribution. The resourcing of sectoral representatives with the time, supports and authority to fully engage with their responsibilities as members of Safety Partnerships will be a crucial success component. It is also recognised that community representatives are contributing significant resources through their time, expertise, and connection to the community voice.

The Guidance for the Operation of Local Community Safety Partnerships[7] issued by the National Office recognises the importance of this contribution by all members through 'Respect and recognition of experience and contribution of all members', one of the nine Guiding Principles for Safety Partnerships.



An effectively implemented whole of government, whole of society approach to community safety should also result in the targeting of resources and interventions at areas of greatest need and where they will have greatest impact providing a more effective use of public funds.

Nonetheless, it is also recognised that the root cause analysis required to inform a preventative approach will take a sustained effort over a period of time to understand and tackle. This will require the investment of appropriate time and resources, and recognition that such work may span multiple iterations of the national strategy.

[7] *Guidance for the Operation of Local Community Safety Partnerships:* https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/84f181bd/Guidance_for_the_Operation_of_Local_Community_Safety_Partnerships.pdf

Appendices

9



9.1.
Appendix I – Steering Group membership

Member body	Role of representative
Department of An Taoiseach	Assistant Secretary, Social Policy and Public Service Reform
Department of Children, Disability and Equality	Assistant Secretary, Equality, Youth and Participation
Department of Culture, Communications and Sport	Director of Creative Ireland
Department of Education and Youth	Assistant Secretary, Communications, Evidence, Strategy and Policy
Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Skills	Assistant Secretary, Head of Higher Education Policy Division
Department of Health	Deputy Chief Medical Officer
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Assistant Secretary, Local Government
Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration	Assistant Secretary, Head of Criminal Justice Policy
Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration (National Office for Community Safety)	Director (ex Officio member)
Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht	Assistant Secretary, Community Development
An Garda Síochána	Assistant Commissioner Roads Policing and Community Engagement
An Ghníomhaireacht um Fhoréigean Baile, Gnéasach agus Inscnebhunaithe (Cuan)	Chief Executive
County and City Management Association (Local Authorities)	Chair CCMA Rural, Community, Culture and Heritage Committee
HSE	National Director, Access and Integration
The Child and Family Agency (Tusla)	National Director of Services & Integration (Interim)
The Policing and Community Safety Authority	Chief Executive

9.2.
Appendix II – the local landscape – place based structures and programmes

Name	Description
Age Friendly Ireland	The Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service supports cities, counties and towns across Ireland to prepare for the rapid ageing of our population by paying increased attention to the environmental, economic and social factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults. https://agefriendlyireland.ie/about-us/
Children and Young People's Services Commitees	CYPSCs are county-level committees that bring together the main statutory, community and voluntary providers of services to children and young people. https://www.cypsc.ie/
Comhairle na nÓg	Comhairle na nÓg are child and youth councils in the 31 local authorities of the country, which give children and young people the opportunity to be involved in the development of local services and policies. https://comhairlenanog.ie/
Community Integration Fora (CIFs)	Community Integration Fora (CIFs) facilitate communication and collaboration amongst actors in the local integration sphere. Hosted by each Local Authority, they bring together a network of Government and Non-Government Organisations, voluntary and community groups, including LAITs, to collaborate on a community-led integration approach. https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/collections/community-integration/
Connecting for Life (CfL)	Ireland's Strategy to Reduce Suicide and Self Harm: Connecting for Life builds on the preceding strategy. The first implementation plan will include the utilisation of collaborative partnerships developed under its predecessor, coordinated by the local HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention. Membership includes AGS, HSE, CYPSCs, community organisations , Local Development Companies, etc. https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/683788b6/Irelands_Strategy_to_Reduce_Suicide_and_Self-harm_Connecting_for_Life_20262035.pdf
Creative Ireland	Creative Ireland is an all-of-government culture and wellbeing programme with the ambition to inspire and transform people, places and communities through creativity. https://www.creativeireland.gov.ie/en/
Healthy Ireland	Healthy Ireland is a government-led initiative aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of everyone living in Ireland. https://www.gov.ie/en/healthy-ireland/campaigns/healthy-ireland/

Local Authority Integration Teams (LAITs)	Local Authority Integration Teams (LAITs) are teams in each Local Authority area that provide information and guidance to humanitarian migrants to help them access supports and services necessary to participate in Irish life and live independently. https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/collections/community-integration/
Local Community Development Committee (LCDCs)	LCDCs are committees in each local authority area set up for purposes of developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development and have a similar 'bottom up' and partnership based approach to developing this approach. https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-rural-and-community-development-and-the-gaeltacht/publications/local-community-development-committees-list/
Local Development Companies (LDCs)	Local Development Companies (LDCs) are not for profit companies that deliver community and rural development, labour market activation, social inclusion, climate action and social enterprise services. They employ a partnership model fostering local ownership and delivering place based solutions. https://ldcn.ie/
Local Sport Partnerships	Local Sports Partnerships help people to get active and removes barriers to sport and physical activity. https://www.sportireland.ie/participation/local-sports-partnerships
Public Participation Networks	A Public Participation Network (PPN) is a network that allows local authorities to connect with community groups around the country. https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-rural-and-community-development-and-the-gaeltacht/campaigns/public-participation-networks/
Regional and Local Drug and Alcohol Task forces	Local and regional drug and alcohol task forces implement the national drugs strategy in the context of the needs of their local area. Drug and alcohol task forces comprise representatives from a range of relevant agencies, such as the HSE, the Gardaí, education and training boards, and local authorities, as well as elected public representatives and voluntary and community sector representatives. https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/php/drug-alcohol-task-forces.php
Sláintecare Healthy Communities	The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme is a Department of Health initiative aimed at reducing health inequalities in Ireland. The programme delivers health and wellbeing services and supports across 24 communities experiencing the greatest health inequalities. It is implemented locally by the HSE, local authorities and community partners. https://www.gov.ie/en/healthy-ireland/publications/sl%C3%A1intecare-healthy-communities/

9.3. Appendix III – Consultation and engagement

The National Office drew on the guidance and expert input of the Steering Group in designing a consultation and engagement plan for the national strategy. An iterative process was undertaken with each layer of engagement informing the next. There were several opportunities to contribute to and give feedback on the strategy throughout this process. These are described briefly below.

9.3.1. Issues Paper

A review of national and international literature in the field of community safety was carried out to understand what problems need to be addressed and to identify thematic areas of priority to improve community safety. A broad range of stakeholders with specialist knowledge, expertise or vested interest on issues relating to community safety were invited to make written submissions on these core themes. The public were also provided with the opportunity to make submissions. Altogether, 108 individual submissions were received from 101 individuals, organisations, agencies and departments.

This issues paper can be viewed here.

https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/09d9ecad/National_Strategy_for_Improving_Community_Safety_Issues_Paper.pdf



Click here to view all written submissions

https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/collections/community-safety-issues-paper-submissions/



Issues Paper Submissions Analysis

Stakeholder Groups	Count of Submissions
Academics	5
Business	8
Community & Voluntary Sector (Social Partners)	52
Government / Statutory Bodies	22
Local Community Safety Partnerships	6
Statutory Partners (Local Authority)	11
Statutory Partners (Statutory Agencies)	4
Total	**108**

STAKEHOLDER LIST SUBGROUPS (BREAKDOWN)

Community & Voluntary Sector (Social Partners)	Submissions
Children & Young People	3
Equality and social issues	3
Health & Mental Health	4
ILDN	1
LGBTQI+	4
Lived Experience of Prison	2
Migrants & Minority Groups	2
Older People	5
People with Disabilities	6
PPN	5
Rural	4
Traveller and Roma	3
Victims & DSGBV	10

Government / Statutory Bodies	Submissions
Education	1
Government Departments	6
Oireachtas Members	1
Statutory Bodies	13
Rural	1

9.3.2. Focus Groups



Ten bespoke, trauma informed focus groups with identified groups who may have a specific experience of community safety were delivered between November 2025 and January 2026. A specialist provider was procured to design and deliver this bespoke element of the consultation process. These were attended by 73 participants in total. Participants were identified through representative groups as outlined below:

Target Group	Partner Organisation
Older people	Age Friendly
Young people	EPIC Youth
Rural residents	Muintir na Tíre
People with lived experience of prison	Tosú
Members of the LGBTQI+ community	LGBT Ireland
People experiencing homelessness	Novas
Socio-economically disadvantaged people/groups (urban)	All Together in Dignity (ATD) Ireland
Migrants and refugees	Irish Refugee Council
People with disabilities	Disabled Persons' Organisations Network
Traveller and Roma community	Irish Traveller Movement

9.3.3. Townhall consultations



A series of seven in-person and online consultations were held by the National Office team from October 2025 to February 2026, listed below. These were attended by 166 participants.

- Westmeath
- Galway
- Dublin
- Wexford
- Limerick
- Islands (online)
- National (online)

9.3.4. Targeted engagements



The National Office team leveraged pre-existing in person or online networks, meetings or activity to draw on the expertise of agencies, organisations and networks with a vested interest in community safety. Over 300 people were engaged with through this process which ran from October 2025 to February 2026. Groups/organisations engaged with included:

- An Garda Síochána
- CCMA Rural, Community, Culture and Heritage Committee
- Children & Young Persons' Services Committee Coordinators
- Family Resource Centre representatives
- LGBTQI+ National Advisory Group
- Local Authority Integration Teams
- Local Community Development Committee Members
- Local Community Safety Partnership teams
- Mental Health Reference Group
- National Action Plan Against Racism Advisory Group
- Rural Safety Forum

9.3.5. Online survey

The above consultation activities, along with input from the Steering Group, collectively informed the development of an online survey. The survey was designed to support the public in providing their views on community safety. Participation was voluntary and not based on a representative sample of the population of Ireland. It was open to anyone living in the Republic of Ireland, reviewed by NALA and made available in nine languages. It was also made available to submit in paper format. The survey was open for three weeks from the 5 to the 27 February 2026, with 7,222 responses received.

Further information on the survey is available here.

https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/consultations/national-strategy-for-improving-community-safety-online-survey/



Whilst the survey was not a representative sample of the population there were a broad spread of respondents.

From a geographic perspective every county in Ireland is represented in survey responses; whilst for those who completed the question 33% indicated they lived in a city; 41% in an urban setting; and 24% from a rural area; 0.3% of respondents indicated they lived in the Islands.

5.5% of those who responded to a question asking their age indicated that they are 24 or under, this is regarded as a strong response from that demographic. Respondents were spread throughout all the other age categories with 13% indicating they are over 65 and the strongest response rate from those who are 45-54 at 26%.

In terms of gender almost 60% of respondents were female, and almost 40% male, 1.3% chose gender options such as trans and non-binary. Almost 9% indicated an LGBTIQ+ sexual orientation. In relation to ethnicity the majority of respondents selected White Irish as their ethnic or cultural background, with 0.5% indicating they are of Irish Traveller or Roma background; whilst almost 11% said they were of any other white background. The next largest ethnic group represented were Asian or Asian Irish (Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi) at almost 7%.

Further detail on the demographics and analysis of the survey data is available in the National Community Safety Survey Analysis report, available here.

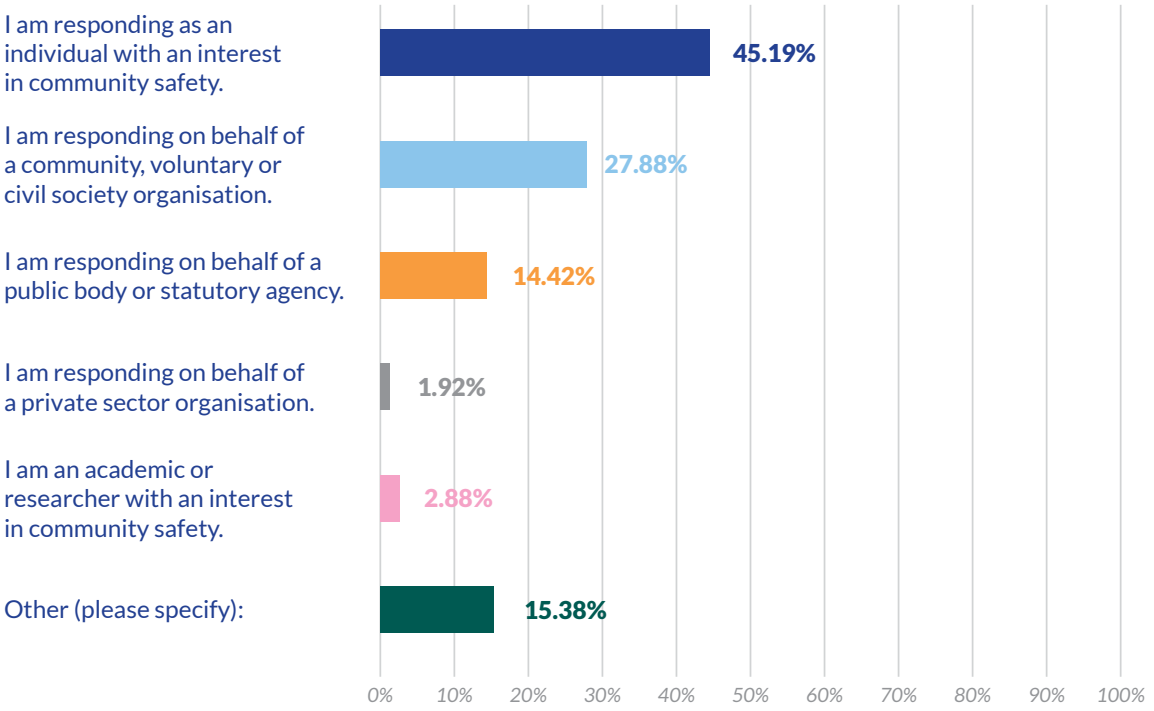
https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/collections/national-office-for-community-safety-consultation-reports/

9.3.6. Publication of draft national strategy

A draft of the national strategy was published online. Written submissions on this draft document were invited via an online survey platform from 31 July to 11 September 2026. Advertisements were placed in national media to make the public aware of this, whilst notification was also circulated to those who had made written submissions on the issues paper (see 9.3.1) in addition to Safety Partnerships.

A total of 104 submissions were received through the consultation platform from individuals, community and voluntary organisations, public bodies, academics, Safety Partnerships and other stakeholders.

Which of the following best describes your main reason for responding to this survey? *(Please select all that apply)*



Overall, the draft strategy consultation findings demonstrated strong support for the strategic direction of the draft national strategy.

Many respondents highlighted the need for, and gave practical examples of, implementation, oversight and monitoring arrangements. These will be further considered for incorporation into operational planning and implementation frameworks.

The draft national strategy was revised to reflect feedback on the published draft before being submitted to Government for approval.

9.4. Appendix IV - The Policy Environment

The whole of the new approach to community safety is founded in partnership and collaborative work and alignment of strategies and plans to achieve shared problem solving of community safety issues.

The enablers of community safety align to national and international commitments to improve the quality of life for members of our community, with each enabler translating global goals into local action by actively contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The enablers, and this national strategy, also sit within a broader policy landscape that contributes to and is supported by community safety. It is important, therefore to embed cohesion with other policies and strategies. To support this each enabler is mapped to the policy environment at Appendix IV.

This section provides a framework of the key strategies and whole of government policies that can assist us in achieving the objectives and vision of this strategy organised according to the five enablers.

9.4.1. Thriving, connected and empowered communities

SDG Goals



SDG 3:
Good health and well-being



SDG 8:
Decent work and economic growth



SDG 10:
Reduced inequalities



SDG 16:
Peace, justice, and strong institutions



SDG 17:
Partnership for the goals

Supporting policies

Ar Scáth A Chéile: Promoting Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities 2026-2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/6ac589ce/CV_Strategy_2026-2030_V7.pdf
Better Public Services	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/better-public-services-public-service-transformation-2030-strategy.pdf
Ireland's Strategy to Reduce Suicide and Self-harm Connecting for Life: 2026–2035	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/e444207b/Irelands_Strategy_to_Reduce_Suicide_and_Self-harm_Connecting_for_Life_20262035.pdf
Local Economic and Community Plans	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/guidelines-on-local-economic-and-community-plans.pdf
Local Sports Plans	https://www.sportireland.ie/published-local-sports-plans
National Sports Policy 2018-2027	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/national-sports-policy-2018-2027-0815113f-8d44-4756-8d19-5ac2c4501e35.pdf
Our Rural Future 2026-2031	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/4e2510c7/Our_Rural_Future_2026-2031_Consultation_Paper.pdf
Pathways to Wellbeing: National Mental Health Promotion Plan 2024-2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/pathways-to-wellbeing-national-mental-health-promotion-plan-20242030-be104271-ab72-481.pdf
Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2026-2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/5d2f5151/20260526_26.05.25_Department_of_Social_Protection_-_Roadmap_for_Social_Inclusion_2026-2030.pdf
Young Ireland: National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2023-2028	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/young-ireland-6782f479-d5da-4f33-85a1-b49e39490912.pdf
Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/youth-justice-strategy-2021-2027-a4f019c4-6e87-4935-be3a-11265c134d07.pdf
Zero Tolerance: Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence 2022-2026	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/third-national-domestic-sexual-and-gender-based-violence-strategy.pdf

9.4.2. Safe, accessible, and inclusive places and spaces

SDG Goals



SDG 3:
Good health and well-being



SDG 10:
Reduced inequalities



SDG 11:
Sustainable cities and communities



SDG 13:
Climate action



SDG 16:
Peace, justice, and strong institutions



SDG 17:
Partnership for the goals

Supporting policies

Coimisiún na Meán Strategy Statement 2025 - 2027	https://www.cnam.ie/app/uploads/2025/04/Coimisiun-na-Mean-Plain-English-Exec-Summary-Strategy.pdf
Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/91497c90/20251218_Delivering_HomesBuilding_Communities_18_Dec_Web_Version.pdf
Dublin City Play Strategy 2022-2027	https://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/2022-10/Play%20Strategy%202022.pdf
Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 – 2025	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/healthy-ireland-framework.pdf
Local Economic and Community Plans	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/guidelines-on-local-economic-and-community-plans.pdf
Local Sports Plans	https://www.sportireland.ie/published-local-sports-plans
National Cyber Security Strategy 2019–2024	https://www.ncsc.gov.ie/pdfs/National_Cyber_Security_Strategy.pdf
National Sports Policy 2018-2027	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/national-sports-policy-2018-2027-0815113f-8d44-4756-8d19-5ac2c4501e35.pdf

National Sustainable Mobility Policy	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/sustainable-mobility-policy.pdf
Our Journey Towards Vision Zero: Ireland's Government Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030	https://www.rsa.ie/docs/default-source/road-safety/legislation/government-_road_safety_strategy_2021_2030_13th_dec21_final.pdf?sfvrsn=cf289e63_3
Our Rural Future 2026-2031	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/4e2510c7/Our_Rural_Future_2026-2031_Consultation_Paper.pdf
Outdoor Play and Recreation Provision for Children and Adolescents: A National Review for Ireland July 2024	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/outdoor-play-and-recreation-provision-for-children-and-adolescents-a-national-review-f.pdf
Places for People: National Policy on Architecture	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/places-for-people-national-policy-on-architecture.pdf
Preventing suicide in public places: A best practice toolkit	https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-health/publications/irelands-strategy-to-reduce-suicide-and-self-harm-connecting-for-life-20262035/#toolkits-and-resources
READY, STEADY, PLAY! A National Play Policy	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/ready-steady-play-a-national-play-policy-b799a688-1bc2-4ec2-86f9-c1a8ced0dd06.pdf
Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/town-centre-first.pdf
Traveller and Roma Education Strategy 2024-2030	https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/consultations/traveller-and-roma-education-strategy/
Waterways Ireland: Reimagining Our Waterways 10 Year Plan	https://www.waterwaysireland.org/getmedia/58a0d37b-81ed-4d6b-9f7c-7d9e999c1d93/Waterways-Ireland_10-Year-Plan_2023.pdf?ext=.pdf

9.4.3. Tailored responses for safer communities

SDG Goals



SDG 1:
No poverty



SDG 5:
Gender equality



SDG 10:
Reduced inequalities



SDG 11:
Sustainable cities and communities



SDG 16:
Peace, justice, and strong institutions



SDG 17:
Partnership for the goals

Supporting policies

A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/a-guide-for-inclusive-community-engagement-in-local-planning-and-decision-making-f0d41.pdf
Building Pathways Together: Criminal Justice Reintegration Through Employment Strategy 2025-2027	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/building-pathways-together-strategy-2025-2027.pdf
DEIS Strategy to 2035	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/7b9b0c9b/DEIS_Strategy.pdf
Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/91497c90/20251218_Delivering_HomesBuilding_Communities_18_Dec_Web_Version.pdf
Guidelines for Poverty Impact Assessment	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/guidelines-for-poverty-impact-assessment.pdf
Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty	https://www.ihrec.ie/downloads/Implementing-the-Public-Sector-Equality-and-Human-Rights-Duty-%E2%80%93-2nd-Edition.pdf
Ireland's Strategy to Reduce Suicide and Self-harm Connecting for Life: 2026–2035	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/e444207b/Irelands_Strategy_to_Reduce_Suicide_and_Self-harm_Connecting_for_Life_20262035.pdf

National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025-2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/33a36e70/National_Human_Rights_Strategy_for_Disabled_People_WEB_04.09.25.pdf
National Drugs Strategy 2026-2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/9073c3d1/National_Drugs_Strategy_2026-2030.pdf
National Equality Data Strategy 2026-2031	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/c5b4afc0/The_National_Equality_Data_Strategy_2026-2031.pdf
National LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Strategy II 2024-2028	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/National_LGBTIQ_Inclusion_Strategy_II_2024-2028.pdf
National Strategy for Women and Girls 2025–2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/dfe2f9bb/The_National_Strategy_for_Women_and_Girls_2025_-_2030.pdf
National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy II (NTRIS II) 2024–2028	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/national-traveller-and-roma-inclusion-strategy-ii-2024-2028-fdea41cc-e165-48dc-ba03-26.pdf
Opportunities for Youth: National Strategy for Youth Work and Related Services	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/c6763ae3-opportunities-for-youth-national-strategy-for-youth-work-and-related-services.pdf
Pobal Deprivation Index	https://data.pobal.ie/portal/apps/sites/#/pobal-maps
Policy Handbook: A 'Real World' Guide to Policy Development, Civil Service	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/policy-handbook-a-real-world-guide-to-policy-development.pdf
Suicide Prevention Impact Assessment Toolkit	https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-health/publications/irelands-strategy-to-reduce-suicide-and-self-harm-connecting-for-life-20262035/#toolkits-and-resources
Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2026-2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/5d2f5151/20260526_26.05.25_Department_of_Social_Protection_-_Roadmap_for_Social_Inclusion_2026-2030.pdf
Young Ireland: National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2023-2028	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/young-ireland-6782f479-d5da-4f33-85a1-b49e39490912.pdf
Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/youth-justice-strategy-2021-2027-a4f019c4-6e87-4935-be3a-11265c134d07.pdf
Zero Tolerance: Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence 2022-2026	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/third-national-domestic-sexual-and-gender-based-violence-strategy.pdf

9.4.4. Responsive, collaborative and well-functioning public services

SDG Goals



SDG 4: Quality education



SDG 10: Reduced inequalities



SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities



SDG 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions



SDG 17: Partnership for the goals

Supporting policies

Better Public Services	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/better-public-services-public-service-transformation-2030-strategy.pdf
Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013–2025	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/healthy-ireland-framework.pdf
Hub na nÓg | Young Voices in Decision-making	https://hubnanog.ie/
Joint Working Protocol for An Garda Síochána/Tusla	https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/CF_Joint_Protocol.pdf
National Drugs Strategy 2026-2030	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/9073c3d1/National_Drugs_Strategy_2026-2030.pdf
National Equality Data Strategy 2026-2031	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/c5b4afc0/The_National_Equality_Data_Strategy_2026-2031.pdf
National Planning Framework	https://www.npf.ie/wp-content/uploads/National-Planning-Framework-First-Revision-April-2025-1.pdf
National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/national-strategy-on-children-and-young-peoples-participation-in-decision-making-2015-.pdf
Our Public Service 2020 - Public Service Reform Plan 2020	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/our-public-service-public-service-reform-plan-2020.pdf
PCSA Policing Priorities for An Garda Síochána 2026-2028	https://www.pcsaireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Policing-Priorities-2026-2028.pdf
Sharing the Vision: A Mental Health Policy for Everyone	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/sharing-the-vision-a-mental-health-policy-for-everyone.pdf
Traveller and Roma Education Strategy 2024-2030	https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/consultations/traveller-and-roma-education-strategy/
Young Ireland	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/young-ireland-6782f479-d5da-4f33-85a1-b49e39490912.pdf

9.4.5. Evidence informed decision making

SDG Goals



SDG 10:
Reduced inequalities



SDG 11:
Sustainable cities and communities



SDG 16:
Peace, justice, and strong institutions



SDG 17:
Partnership for the goals

Supporting policies

Better Public Services	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/better-public-services-public-service-transformation-2030-strategy.pdf
CSO Data Strategy 2026-2028	https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/cp/cp-ds/csodatastrategy2026-2028/
Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013–2025	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/healthy-ireland-framework.pdf
National Equality Data Strategy 2026-2031	https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/c5b4afc0/The_National_Equality_Data_Strategy_2026-2031.pdf
Open Data Strategy 2023-2027	https://data.gov.ie/docs/Open.Data.Strategy_FINAL_ENG.pdf

9.5. Appendix V – Text Descriptions

Vision Statement, Principles & Enablers Text

VISION: Working together to create safe and resilient communities in Ireland where everyone - whoever they are, wherever they are - can be safe and feel safe.

PRINCIPLES:



1. **Prevention and early intervention:** Addressing root causes and strengthening protective factors to support long term community safety, wellbeing, resilience and quality of life.



2. **Collaboration and trust:** Meaningful, participatory collaboration and the building of trust as the foundation of effective responses to community safety.



3. **Place based and context specific:** Locally informed, place-based approaches that reflect the distinct strengths, challenges, experiences, and priorities of communities across Ireland.



4. **Community embedded decision making:** Communities should be active partners in shaping the decisions, policies, and responses that affect their lives. Recognising communities not simply as recipients of services, but as essential partners in improving community safety outcomes.



5. **An integrated approach:** Improving community safety requires coordinated and coherent action across Government Departments, public service bodies, local authorities, communities, civil society, and other stakeholders

ENABLERS:



1. **Thriving, connected and empowered communities:** Safe, connected communities with a shared sense of belonging are more resilient and empowered.



2. **Safe, accessible and inclusive places and spaces:** Safety means welcoming, accessible spaces that support dignity, inclusion and connection — not just less crime.



3. **Tailored responses for safer communities:** Responses informed by the distinct social circumstances and identities of communities and the people living in them.



4. **Responsive, collaborative and well-functioning public services:** Public services, communities and stakeholders working together to tackle the complex, interconnected causes of community safety issues.



5. **Evidence informed decision making:** Strategic decisions informed by and grounded in a range of community safety indictors and evidence.



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