



*'Project is funded by the  
Department of Rural and Community Development'*

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## 2023 - 2026





## **FORWORD**

I believe that this strategic plan marks an important milestone for the Traveller community in County Clare. It is the result of in depth engagement with members of the Traveller community, as well as the sustained efforts of local organisations resulting in the selection of Clare Traveller Community Development Project as one of only seven pilot CDP's nationally. It is especially important to acknowledge the work undertaken by the Steering Group (comprising representatives from Clare Local Development Company, Clare Public Participation Network, Clare Women's Collective and the HSE Traveller Health Unit Midwest) in creating this opportunity.

Establishment of the pilot project offers a unique and unprecedented opportunity for the voice of Travellers in Clare to be heard in all decisions that affect us. And this three-year plan, I believe, provides a road-map that can guide us in our efforts to move forward in partnership towards a future where Travellers can reach their potential and have their human rights respected. I look forward to implementing the programme of work as outlined, and I have no doubt that it will lead to improvement in living conditions and opportunities for Travellers in Clare.

The success of all actions and programmes contained in the plan will depend upon our capacity to build up Traveller leadership and self-determination and to make use of the great resource of talent, experience, expertise that resides within our communities. But it will also depend upon us being able to maintain and strengthen the very solid partnerships we have already established with local service providers and statutory agencies (especially in the areas of accommodation, education, health and social enterprise).

We look forward to working for a better future for our community and to working in solidarity with the other diverse communities in Clare.

Ní neart go cur le chéile.

**Bridgie Casey**  
Co-ordinator  
Clare Traveller CDP



## Acknowledgments

Thanks to Brian Dillon of Nexus Research Cooperative for Strategic Plan development

**Design:** *Travellers' Voice*

**Photography:** William Hederman

Clare Traveller CDP would like to express our sincere thanks to our Traveller community members who devoted their time, effort and experience as members of our targeted focus groups.

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In particular, CTCDP would like to thank Nexus Research Cooperative Ireland who designed, evaluated & supported this Plan.

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CTCDP wish to thank our stakeholders



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## Background and Context

Clare Traveller Community Development Project (CDP) was one of seven pilot projects supported under the Department of Rural and Community Development's *"Pilot Project Community Development Fund"*.

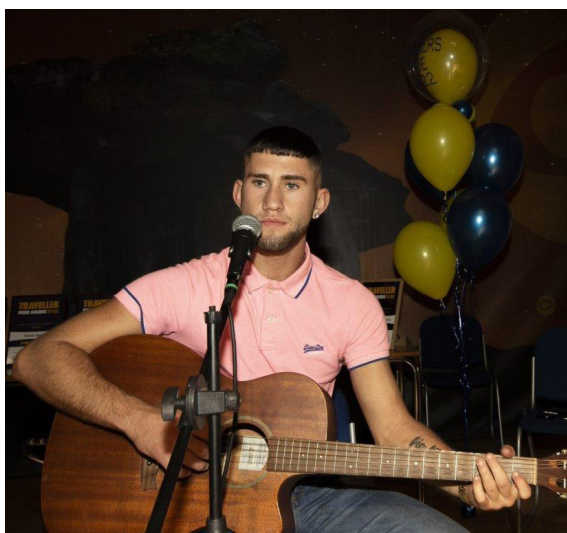
The application was made in 2021 on behalf of four organisations in Clare: Clare Local Development Company, Clare Women's Network, Clare Public Participation Network and the HSE's Mid-West Traveller Health Unit. It was endorsed by a number of other community and voluntary organisations around the county.

A strong case was made for the establishment of a Traveller specific organisation in Clare, the absence of which has proven to be a significant barrier to addressing the range of challenges faced by the Traveller community. The need for a mechanism through which *"active Traveller participation in the decisions that affect their lives"* was especially emphasised. The rationale, in arguing for a three-year pilot project, was established around the conviction that:

- Firstly, a dedicated Traveller initiative will provide a solid framework within which the needs of the community can be addressed in a targeted way. This is especially important as a coordination point for the range of agencies and service providers – allowing for a comprehensive and collaborative response to be developed.
- Secondly, a meaningful and effective response to Traveller community needs will be possible only if Travellers themselves have a central role in identifying challenges and making decisions on appropriate responses.<sup>1</sup> Those organisations fronting the pilot proposal pledged support, through institutional and governance guidance, with the aim of establishing autonomy and self-determination for the Clare Traveller CDP.<sup>2</sup>

The strategic planning process was aimed at developing an approach and structures that would meet both of these objectives:

1. Building up an understanding of priority needs and challenges for the Traveller community in Clare, mainly through engagement with members of the community.
2. Identifying programmes and actions that would address development needs of the Traveller community in Clare by engaging with and involving a range of relevant stakeholders county-wide.



<sup>1</sup> "We want to ensure that Travellers are involved at every level of this project and are front and centre in the decision-making roles." – CEO of Clare Local Development Company on announcement of Pilot Project funding.

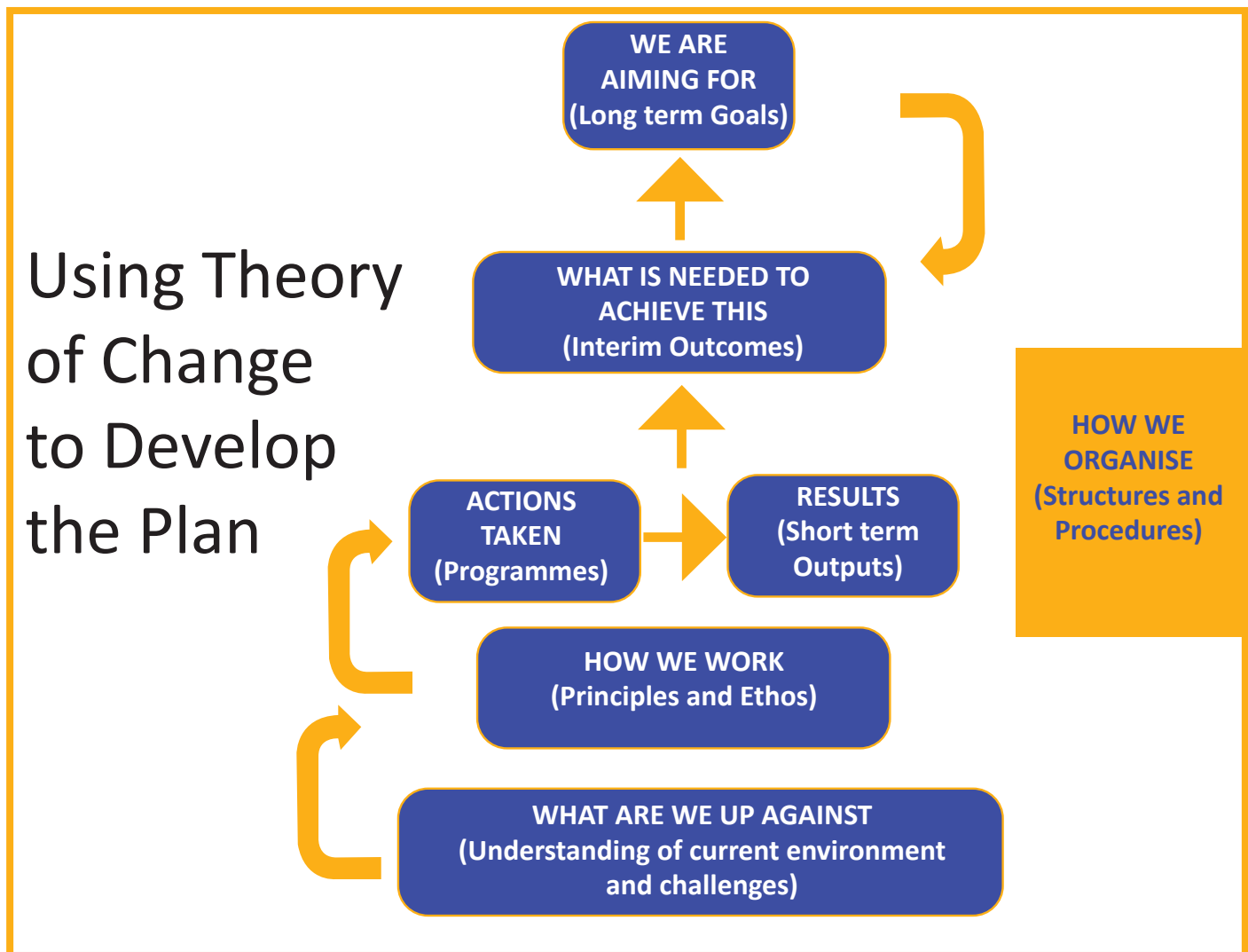
<sup>2</sup> "It is our explicit aim that over the proposed three years of the scheme the Traveller Community Development Organisation will become fully independent and Traveller-led, developing a strong grassroots voice to address social exclusion, poverty, and to advocate for Travellers' Human Rights." – Collective statement from four founding organisations.

## The Strategic Planning Process

This plan is the result of a series of joint workshops and consultation with a range of stakeholders. Using the 'Theory of Change' approach, the central voices in this process were voices from the Traveller community.

A total of five joint planning workshops were facilitated; setting goals and targets for the strategic plan; identifying challenges to be addressed and strengths to be built upon; reaching agreement on priorities for actions and programmes; deciding on structures and procedures needed if goals and targets are to be met. As well as planning workshops held in Ennis, meetings were also held with members of the Traveller community based in Ennistymon, Shannon, Kilrush and Lahinch.

A summary of the Theory of Change process used in the workshops is shown below.



The process led to an agreed statement on our 'vision statement' to provide direction and guide the project's actions and approach for the coming three years

### CLARE TRAVELLER CDP VISION STATEMENT

*"Our aim is to improve living conditions, opportunities and achievement of human rights for Travellers in Clare. This will be pursued through establishing and strengthening local alliances and, most importantly, through building effective Traveller leadership and a strong Traveller voice"*

## Understanding the Challenges Faced by Travellers in Clare

The 2016 census of population recorded a total of 30,987 Travellers living in Ireland. Of these, 910 were resident in County Clare (with over half living in Ennis). The local authority annual count, carried out in November 2018, indicated that there are 305 Traveller families resident in the county. While this represents less than 1% of the total population of Clare, members of the Traveller community continue to face higher levels of disadvantage than any other section of the county's population. Inputs from participants in the planning workshops (as well as consultations with members of the community in other centres) underlined ongoing challenges for Travellers in Clare in respect of:

1. **Accommodation and living conditions.** In addition to problems associated with poor and inadequate accommodation, those consulted made particular reference to difficulties in accessing the kind of accommodation they saw as appropriate. Families made reference to accepting housing in areas or circumstances, because of a lack of any choice, even though they knew this would lead to problems and did not represent a solution in the longer term. At the more extreme end of the accommodation problem for Travellers is the level of homelessness within the community. There is certainly at least anecdotal evidence that this problem is growing within the county, that this is reflected especially in younger or newly formed families, and the response in terms of emergency provision is inadequate.
2. **Mental and Physical Health.** As would be expected (given what is known from health research undertaken on and with the Traveller community) general health and wellbeing concerns were among the most frequently raised in our community engagement process. And by far the greatest concern was raised in relation to mental health. While no precise estimates are available, feedback from Travellers consulted was of personal experiences of increasing incidences of suicide – and of fears in relation to the risk of suicide. Many of the fears expressed were in respect of young Travellers, with continued exposure to discrimination and a lack of hope in the future being cited as principle contributors.
3. **Education and Progression.** The continuing trend in early school leaving was a concern expressed by many parents consulted. And feedback from young Travellers highlighted what they saw as the negative experience of being in school – a feeling of *'not belonging'* and being *'looked down on'*. There was also the difficulty (shared by parents) in seeing *'the point'* in staying at school – given the perceived lack of opportunities to progress into employment following education. There was an equally negative assessment of opportunities for participation in training. The majority of those consulted had low expectations of training leading to opportunities for meaningful employment. The content of training being offered was not seen as being work related (with a particular absence of opportunities for apprenticeships and trade-related training being identified). The continued experience of discrimination on the part of employers was also cited as barriers to employment by Travellers consulted.
4. **Culture and Identity.** A common thread running through feedback on all other challenges was the discrimination and prejudice experienced by most people consulted on an ongoing basis. This was directly linked by some respondents to poor mental health and the risk of suicide. It was also raised in relation to the alienation felt by many young Travellers in the schooling system; as a barrier to securing employment; and frequently as a problem arising when trying to access certain mainstream services. There is, on the one hand, the likelihood of experiencing negativity and even hostility for no other reason than *'you are a Traveller'*. Added to this, on the other hand, is the gradual erosion of many aspects of Traveller culture and the tendency towards what some people described as the danger of *'losing your identity'*. For young Travellers the danger was in some cases seen as being about becoming *'confused about your identity'* or *'questioning your identity'*.

## Key Policy Developments and the National Picture

A number of key developments have taken place within the policy environment over the past decade. For example:

- Official recognition by the Irish state of Traveller ethnicity in 2017
- Implementation (and subsequent review) of the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) 2017-2021
- Completion of the review of national Traveller accommodation policy and delivery (by Minister-appointed Expert Review Group) in 2019.
- Locally, implementation of the Clare Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2019-2024 and interim review of the programme in 2022.

Despite what can be seen on the surface as a commitment at public policy level to address serious disadvantage, all indicators are that conditions and prospects for the Traveller community are continuing to deteriorate.

Accommodation for Travellers remains at the centre of these worsening conditions. There was a decline of more than 70% in funding for the provision of Traveller accommodation in the decade between 2008 and 2018 (from €40 million per annum to €12 million per annum). Furthermore, there is a continuing mismatch between funding allocated to Traveller accommodation and the amounts drawn down by local authorities to provide or improve homes. The Expert Review Group points to the fact that this mismatch was highest during those years where allocations were also highest.

*“Analysis of trends in the proportion of funding allocated which was actually drawn down reveals that the mismatch between the two was particularly high in the years when funding was higher. During the three years when the funding allocated was lowest (2013, 2014 and 2015) drawdown exceeded or almost matched funding allocated, while in the years when the funding allocated was highest the opposite pattern pertained.” Expert Review Group on Traveller Accommodation, 2019.*

Significant decrease in national commitment, added to by local authorities’ lack of willingness and/or ability to draw down the limited funds that were available, has added to the crisis in Traveller accommodation. The overall effects of this have been most recently highlighted in respect of:

- Record levels of homelessness among the Traveller community, the highest of any growing in Irish society.
- Similarly unprecedented levels of overcrowding and numbers living on the side of roads or on unauthorised halting sites.
- A continuous decline in the number of Traveller families able to access Traveller-appropriate accommodation, with increasing numbers forced to engage with a private-rented sector that has become almost inaccessible for most.<sup>3</sup>

Repeated and ongoing attempts to highlight this situation by Traveller representative organisations, together with pleas for urgent intervention, have not led to any improvement. Indeed, attempts to do the same at the European level have met with a similar lack of response.

The European Committee of Social Rights – which works under the Committee of Ministers and is part of the Strasbourg-based Council of Europe – has on two occasions ruled that Traveller human rights are being violated. On the first occasion (May 2016) the committee found violations in four respects: that there is not enough Traveller accommodation; that many Traveller sites are in an inadequate condition; that Irish law provides inadequate safeguards for Travellers threatened with eviction; and that evictions are carried out without necessary safeguards.

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<sup>3</sup> “Traveller Homes Matter”. Research carried out by the Irish Traveller Movement, 2019



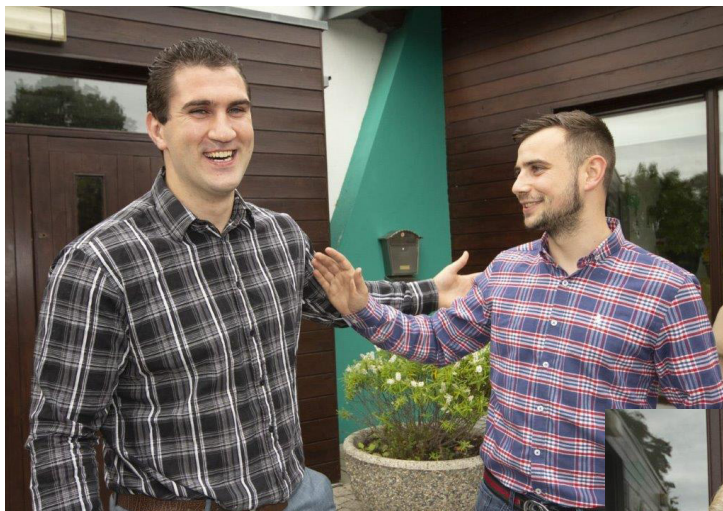
Ireland was again found to be in breach of the European Social Charter in relation to treatment of the Traveller community in January 2019. This time the European Committee of Social Rights ruled that current laws do not give Travellers enough consultation rights in cases where landowners wish to evict families camping on their property. It also recommended that legislation should allow for the provision of alternative accommodation or legal representation for the affected families.

The continuing failure to address outstanding accommodation needs has in turn added to the levels of deprivation experienced in a range of other areas. Cutbacks imposed across a range of development programmes and services since 2008 have not been reversed<sup>4</sup> and Travellers are continuing to experience the highest levels of unemployment, lowest levels of educational attainment, the fewest opportunities for progression, the poorest health and the highest incidence of suicide of any grouping in Irish society.

Deterioration in living conditions and quality of life has coincided with decimation of the local development or support infrastructure for Travellers. Even though Travellers were prioritised as a target group in SICAP (Social Integration and Community Activation Programme), there was a significant decline in the number of groups either working with or representing Travellers. The SICAP 2016 annual report indicated that only 8% of local community groups were working with Travellers. This compared to 63% of local community organisations working with settled people living in disadvantaged communities.

More significantly, Travellers represented less than 3% of overall SICAP caseload in 2022. (Travellers remained the group with the lowest level of engagement within SICAP of all target groups). This is despite the fact that Travellers had a higher incidence of experiencing direct discrimination than any other grouping (33% of Travellers experiencing discrimination compared to 12% for Black community, 12% for Asian and 17% for Roma community – SICAP EOY Report 2016).

It is inevitable, therefore, that the past five years has seen serious deterioration in living conditions and an undoubted increase in levels of social and economic exclusion for Travellers.



<sup>4</sup> Between 2008 and 2013, support for Traveller education programmes and initiatives was cut by 86.6%; support for equality initiatives cut by 76.3%; funding to national Traveller organisations cut by 63.6%; support to Traveller SPY youth initiatives cut by 29.8% and financial aid to initiatives to combat drug abuse among Travellers cut by 32.5%.

## Rationale and Approach: Guiding Principles and Values

All programmes and actions in this plan are informed by the very strong conviction that much needed and urgent change for Travellers in Clare will come about only if Travellers themselves are at the centre of that change.

In practice, and in all of our work, this means we are committed to:

- Involving, listening to and taking direction from Travellers in all our actions and decision-making.
- Strengthening the collective voice and unity within the Traveller community – to jointly understand the causes of exclusion, to share ideas on how to tackle challenges, and to take a unified approach to bringing about change.
- Creating a space for the celebration and promotion of Traveller culture and identity, as well as the deepening of cultural awareness in society generally. We are committed, at the same time, to protecting human rights, and to monitoring instances of discrimination and prejudice.
- Building strong alliances. While remaining Traveller-led, we realise that we are stronger when we work in partnership with our allies – but we are committed to being directed by the needs of the Traveller community, not by the needs of service-providers.
- Remaining informed at all times. We will engage in research, the monitoring of policies and trends. The results at all times will be used to define evidence-based solutions.
- Ensuring that more excluded or marginalised members of our community are at all times involved and included in activities and decision-making.

The plan will guide Clare Traveller CDP in working towards change and the improvement of living conditions and life opportunities for members of the Traveller community. In doing so we are committed as an organisation to:

1. Building and supporting self-determination within the Traveller community.
2. Bringing forward solutions, and demonstrating how these solutions can benefit everyone.
3. Making alliances and building understanding with relevant groups and initiatives in the settled community.
4. Working continuously to build awareness and commitment around the causes of social problems and challenges we face in our community, while at the same time continuing with the work that is very necessary in dealing with the consequences on a day-to-day basis.



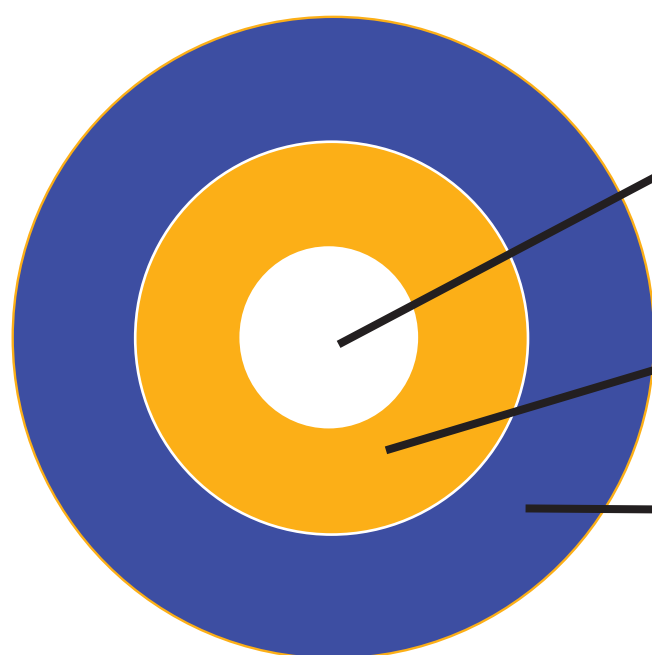




All of our programmes and actions will be informed by the four key principles as outlined (around Traveller leadership, equality of opportunity, and the right to cultural identity).

At the centre of all actions will be the principle of self-determination, as illustrated below.

### *Working for Lasting Change: From the Inside Out*



#### **Self - Determination in the Traveller Community:**

- Understanding our Past
- Visualising our Future
- Developing our own Answers
- Strengthening our Voice

#### **Mainstream Services and Mainstream Decision Makers:**

- Making the Causes Clear
- Bringing the Solutions
- Showing the Benefits

#### **Wider Irish Society:**

- Forging Alliances
- Building Confidence and Respect
- Showing the Benefits for All

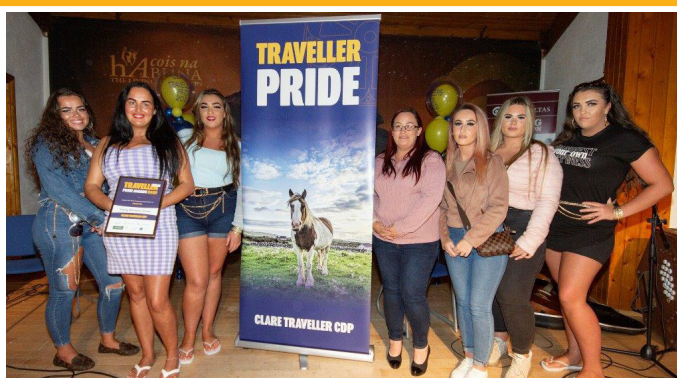
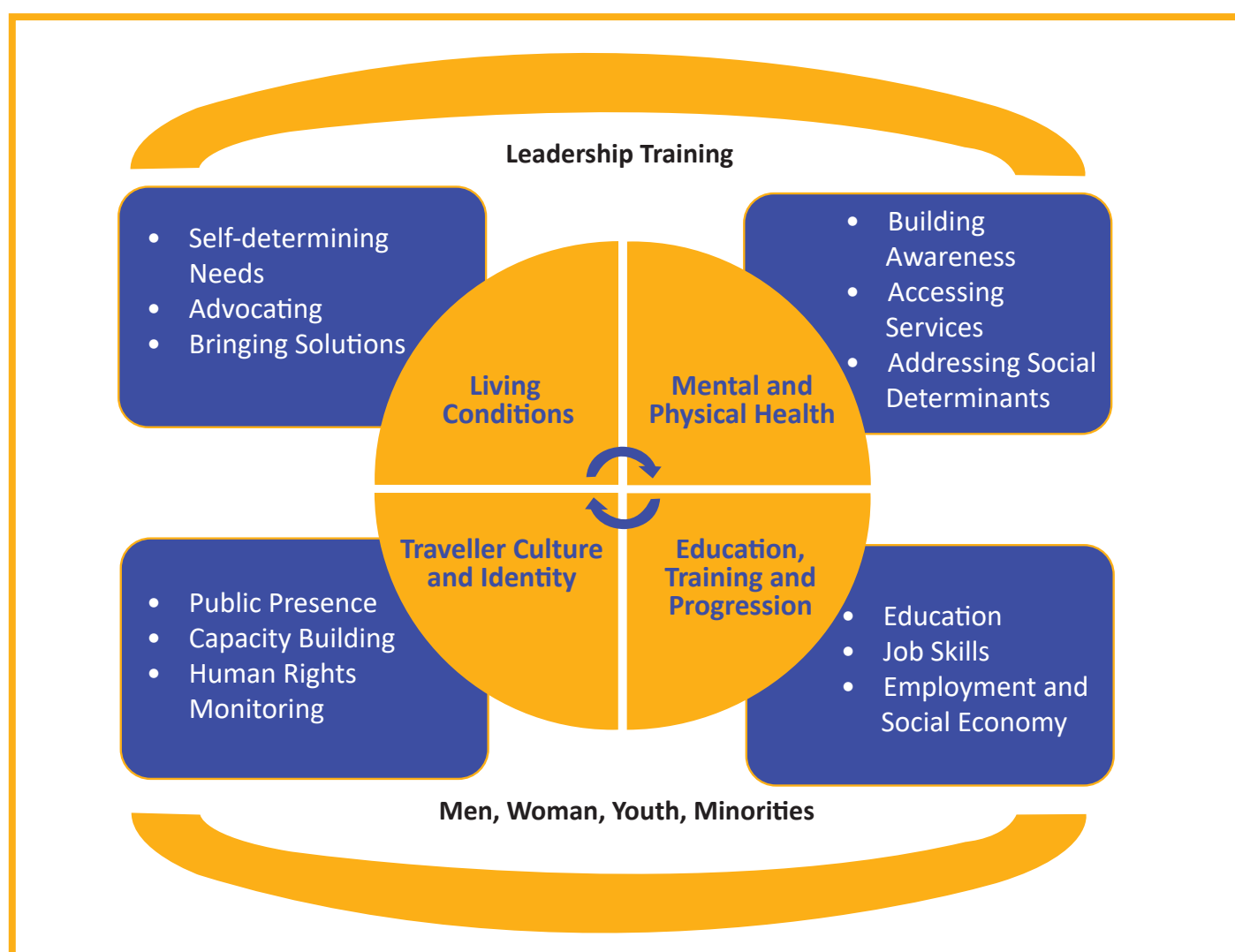
## Programmes and Actions

Over the coming three years, Clare Traveller CDP will be working across four development programmes, all of which are designed, delivered and evaluated according to the strategic approach outlined. The programmes will address:

- Accommodation and Living Conditions
- Mental and Physical Health
- Culture and Identity
- Education, Training and Progression

These programmes are interlinked, as shown below. But each also has its own set of actions.

### Summary of Four Programmes





The effective implementation of all programmes and actions will depend upon:

1. Ongoing leadership training and support, to ensure that members of the Traveller community most impacted by the development issues will be enabled to take a leading part in defining and implementing responses.
2. Specific focus on ensuring that all members of the community are included (not only in terms of age and gender but also those who may be more excluded within the Traveller community (including, for example, those with a disability, LGBTQ+ or those living in more remote rural areas).

There are strong links between the four programmes. For example:

- The links between cultural identity and accommodation are critical for Travellers – understanding and delivering culturally-appropriate accommodation that has been denied for so long.
- Accommodation and living conditions have ongoing effects on the health and wellbeing of Travellers, as well as on the chances for progressing through education, training or employment
- Cultural identity is also strongly related to mental health challenges in the Traveller community. The everyday experience of discrimination and prejudice can contribute significantly to low self-esteem, and ultimately to the threat of suicide.



## Health Programme

As well as focusing on mental and physical health, the Health Programme will also address those factors impacting health status and wellbeing of Travellers.

### Mental Health

- Understanding the Causes
- Building Peer Supports
- Facilitating Service Access

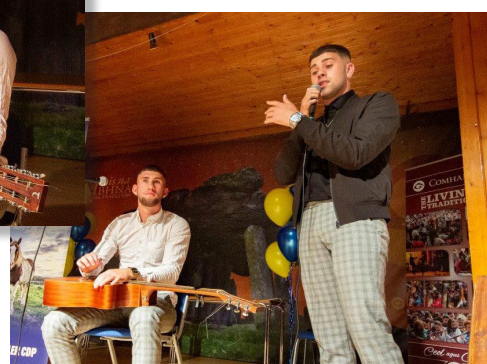
### Physical Health

- Lifestyle Awareness with Travellers
- Cultural Awareness with Service Providers
- Facilitating Service Access

### Social Determinants

- Health/Accommodation Links
- Discrimination/Mental Health Links
- Progression/Health and Wellbeing Links

		Activities	Allies and Partners
Mental Health	Understanding Causes Peer Supports Service Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research on Suicide</li> <li>• Training support workers</li> <li>• Drop-in Facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional THU</li> <li>• Counselling Services</li> <li>• National Traveller MHN</li> <li>• Clare PHCP</li> </ul>
Physical Health	Lifestyle Awareness Cultural Awareness Service Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community outreach</li> <li>• Service Provider Training</li> <li>• Access to Screening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitals, GPs</li> <li>• Regional THU</li> <li>• HSE</li> <li>• Clare PHCP</li> </ul>
Social Determinants	Health/Accommodation Discrimination Progression/Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researching the links</li> <li>• Influencing Policy</li> <li>• Public awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LTACC</li> <li>• Clare LDC</li> <li>• Clare PHCP</li> <li>• Local and national media</li> </ul>

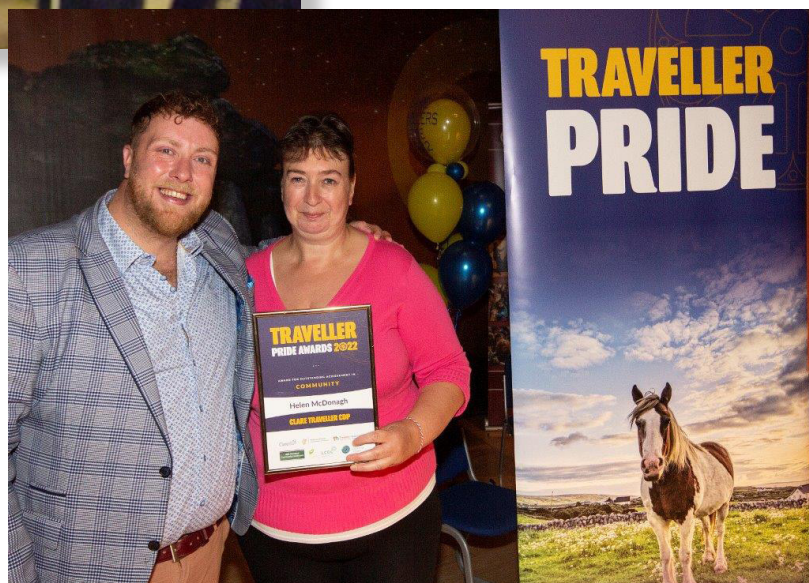
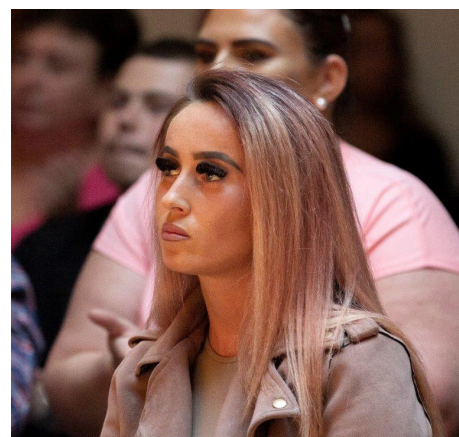




To ensure that actions on health and wellbeing are community-centred and community-driven, much of the initial efforts will be on capacity building of Travellers (staff and volunteers) who will act as information providers and peer support workers. Clare PHCP (Primary Health Care Project) will be central to all these actions <sup>5</sup>. The PHCP is peer led – facilitated by members from the Travelling Community.

The programme will aim to increase awareness (among health and other service providers) around both:

- The causes of poor mental and physical health among Travellers and the need to address these causes.
- The need for an informed approach and ethnic recognition in delivering services to Travellers. A targeted approach will be taken to involving different sections of the community in building the capacity for peer support and mentoring. This will involve a range of activities designed around the interests and motivation of people (the strong ties many Traveller men have with horses will be a starting point for some activities, for example, while the involvement of young Travellers in sporting activities will also be a focus).



<sup>5</sup> Delivered through a Community Development model by Primary Healthcare workers and Community Link workers from the travelling community, the programme focuses on health promotion in different areas including cardiovascular health, diabetes and mental health

## Outcomes of Mental and Physical Health Programme

Clare Traveller CDP is aiming, over the three-year period of this strategic plan, to have achieved:

- A greater understanding around factors contributing to good and to poor health within the Traveller community of Clare.
- A strong and recognised voice for Travellers, impacting positively in relation to health risks and to the risk of suicide.
- The capacity for self-organisation and Traveller participation increased in a range of fields, all of which will impact positively on mental and physical health.
- More timely and more effective access to health and mental health support services for those in need of them, and especially for those at risk of suicide and self-harm.
- Heightened and more widespread awareness around causal relationships between lifestyle and health, living conditions and health, good mental health and good physical health.
- Increased availability of Traveller friendly and Traveller managed spaces to facilitate activities that are health positive (women's groups, men's sports associations, social and mainstream media outlets).
- Higher rates of participation in national screening programmes.
- Strengthened links, and more informed from a cultural point of view, with GPs.
- A greater emphasis among mainstream service provision on the social determinants of health (demonstrated, for example, in a greater emphasis on accommodation determinants within the Traveller Health Unit and a greater emphasis on health outcomes within the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee).
- Stronger working alliances with other Traveller projects to agree on and implement effective and appropriate models of healthcare, health promotion and health monitoring.
- A strengthened emphasis on recording of health outcomes (and an enhanced understanding of the reasons for positive outcomes). We will engage in ongoing research, and dissemination of research results, with this in mind.

All of these are achievable goals, and legitimate in their own right. However, there is little or no possibility of meaningful change or improvement with regard to the mental and physical health challenges faced by Travellers without a serious shift in priorities at national level. All of our planned activities over the coming years will have the aim of raising consciousness around the crisis of suicide in our community.





## Accommodation and Living Conditions Programme

### Understanding Needs

- Building the capacity for Self-assessment of needs
- Long-term and future-oriented solutions
- Monitoring of living conditions

### Support and Advocacy

- Individual and family supports (especially in crisis)
- Strengthening tenant voices
- Group representation

### Influence

- Networking and Collaboration
- Strengthening the collective voice
- Highlighting the challenges and promoting solutions

		Activities	Allies and Partners
Understanding Needs	Self-assessment of Needs Future-oriented Strategy Monitoring Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training outreach workers</li> <li>• County-wide assessment</li> <li>• Future-oriented Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clare County Council</li> <li>• Cena AHB</li> <li>• ETB</li> </ul>
Support and Advocacy	Family Supports Strong Tenant Voices Group Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community outreach</li> <li>• Tenant training</li> <li>• Homelessness Response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clare County Council</li> <li>• Clare PPN</li> <li>• HSE</li> </ul>
Influence	Networking Collective Action Promoting Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional project links</li> <li>• Accommodation Action Group</li> <li>• Building Community Relations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Traveller Orgs</li> <li>• Clare LDC</li> <li>• Local &amp; national media</li> </ul>

The foundation for the accommodation programme will be built around the strengthening of Traveller capacity to assess their own accommodation needs, to define what is *'Traveller-appropriate'* accommodation, to represent their own interests, to collaborate with service providers and to manage their own living spaces.

The starting point for this will be a county-wide Traveller-led accommodation needs assessment – with a considerable investment in training so that outcomes (and resultant strategy) are the result of Traveller-to-Traveller engagement. We will work to establish and support an Accommodation Action Group – representative of Travellers in different parts of the county



## Outcomes of Accommodation Programme

We are aiming, over the three-year period of this strategic plan, to have achieved:

- Most importantly, confidence in a vision for Traveller accommodation that is achievable and sustainable.
- A detailed home-by-home assessment of accommodation needs for all Travellers in Clare (informed by in-depth engagement with families and allowing for future needs based on projected new family formation)
- A realisation (among policy makers, service providers and Irish society generally) that providing Traveller appropriate accommodation, based on Traveller-identified needs, has many more benefits than costs.
- A strengthened capacity of Traveller families to identify their own accommodation needs, to '*future-proof*' these needs, and to represent themselves as residents.
- A focus on solutions to accommodation needs that are Traveller-specific and that are sustainable in the long term.
- Inclusion of these solutions in a meaningful local authority-led Traveller Accommodation Programme.

At the same time, the project will continue to deal with day-to-day requests for help in accommodation (we anticipate that needs and demand will remain critical in the continuing accommodation crisis for Travellers). But we also know that there are no solutions to this that are not based on an understanding of causes, and are not driven by a longer term vision of a better future.



## Traveller Culture and Identity Programme

### Public Presence

- Celebration of culture: public events
- Engagement with media
- Building cross-community relations

### Capacity Building

- Support for self-organisation
- Reviving and maintaining traditional skills
- Inter-generational learning

### Human Rights Monitoring

- Monitoring discrimination and hate speech
- Legal advice and support
- Engagement with institutions and service providers

		Activities	Allies and Partners
Public Presence	Public celebration Media engagement Community Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media skills training</li> <li>• Video production</li> <li>• Cross-community meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local community groups</li> <li>• Clare PPN</li> <li>• Local radio and press</li> <li>• Arts and music groups</li> </ul>
Capacity Building	Self-organisation Traditional skills Inter-generational learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horse Association</li> <li>• Traveller youth and older people engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ETB</li> <li>• Local Youth Services</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul>
Human Rights Monitoring	Discrimination monitoring Legal support Institutions and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-line reporting system</li> <li>• Training in reporting and collation</li> <li>• Cultural awareness training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FLAC</li> <li>• IHREC</li> <li>• Garda Síochána</li> <li>• Social outlets</li> </ul>



Our Culture and Identity Programme will, over the three years of this strategic plan, aim to:

1. Build the capacity of Travellers to protect and strengthen aspects of their culture through self-organisation (for example, with respect to Traveller men's association with horses, young Traveller involvement in sporting activities, Travellers' involvement in music and the arts).
2. Promote culture and pride in identity within the Traveller community. The project has already begun this process with a successful live entertainment event in Ennis to mark Traveller Pride week.
3. Strengthen awareness of Traveller identity within the settled community and enhance cross-community awareness and mutual respect.
4. Build up a detailed awareness of incidences of discrimination (including institutionalised discrimination) through a reporting, monitoring and recording system.
5. Reduce levels of discrimination and prejudice through interaction with relevant authorities and agencies (for example the Garda Síochána, the prison service, housing services etc).

## Outcomes of the Culture and Identity Programme

Clare Traveller CDP is aiming, over the three-year period of this strategic plan, to have achieved:

- Increased capacity of Travellers to challenge discrimination in all its forms
- Heightened awareness of the damage caused by discrimination
- Strengthening of pride in identity and culture (especially among young Travellers)
- Positive changes in service delivery policy and practice – based on greater awareness of the need for mutual respect, equality and parity of esteem



## Education, Training and Progression Programme

### Education

- Younger children learning programme
- Peer support initiative for secondary school
- Engagement with schools and teachers

### Job Skills

- Researching existing skills and skills deficits
- Targeted job-related training initiatives
- Matching skills to existing job opportunities

### Employment

- Feasibility studies re: culturally relevant social enterprises
- Cultural awareness initiatives with employers
- Matching Traveller skills with developing opportunities

		Activities	Allies and Partners
Education	Child learning Peer support Schools engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family learning programme</li> <li>• Secondary supports</li> <li>• Teacher cultural awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Traveller parents</li> <li>• Traveller graduates</li> </ul>
Job Skills	Skills database Job-linked training Positive placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation for learning</li> <li>• Accessing apprenticeships</li> <li>• Interview training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers</li> <li>• Research partners</li> <li>• ETB</li> <li>• Solas</li> </ul>
Employment	Feasibility studies Cultural awareness Employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social enterprise pilot</li> <li>• Good practice recruitment</li> <li>• Proactive vacancy advertising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authority</li> <li>• Tourist interests</li> <li>• CLDC</li> </ul>





Our Programme on education, training and employment will, over the three years of this strategic plan, aim to:

- Set up Traveller-led programme for Traveller children outside school (based on the ‘Family Learning’ model and involving Traveller parents)
- Set up and manage a peer support programme for young Travellers still in secondary school (led by young Travellers who have completed their Leaving Certificate)
- Increased inclusion practices in schools (through ongoing interaction and awareness training with local schools)
- Establish a profile of skills deficits and a register of work-related skills among Travellers in Clare.
- Monitor incidents of discrimination in recruitment and workplace-based practices
- Liaise with employers in relation to job opportunities emerging (specifically where new local development is planned)
- Identify the potential for culturally-based social enterprise opportunities, providing support and direction for those Travellers pursuing opportunities – with the aim of establishing at least one pilot social enterprise initiative.

### Outcomes of the Education, Training and Progression Programme

We see these activities as resulting in higher numbers of young Travellers staying in school; improved educational achievements for both Traveller children and young Travellers in secondary



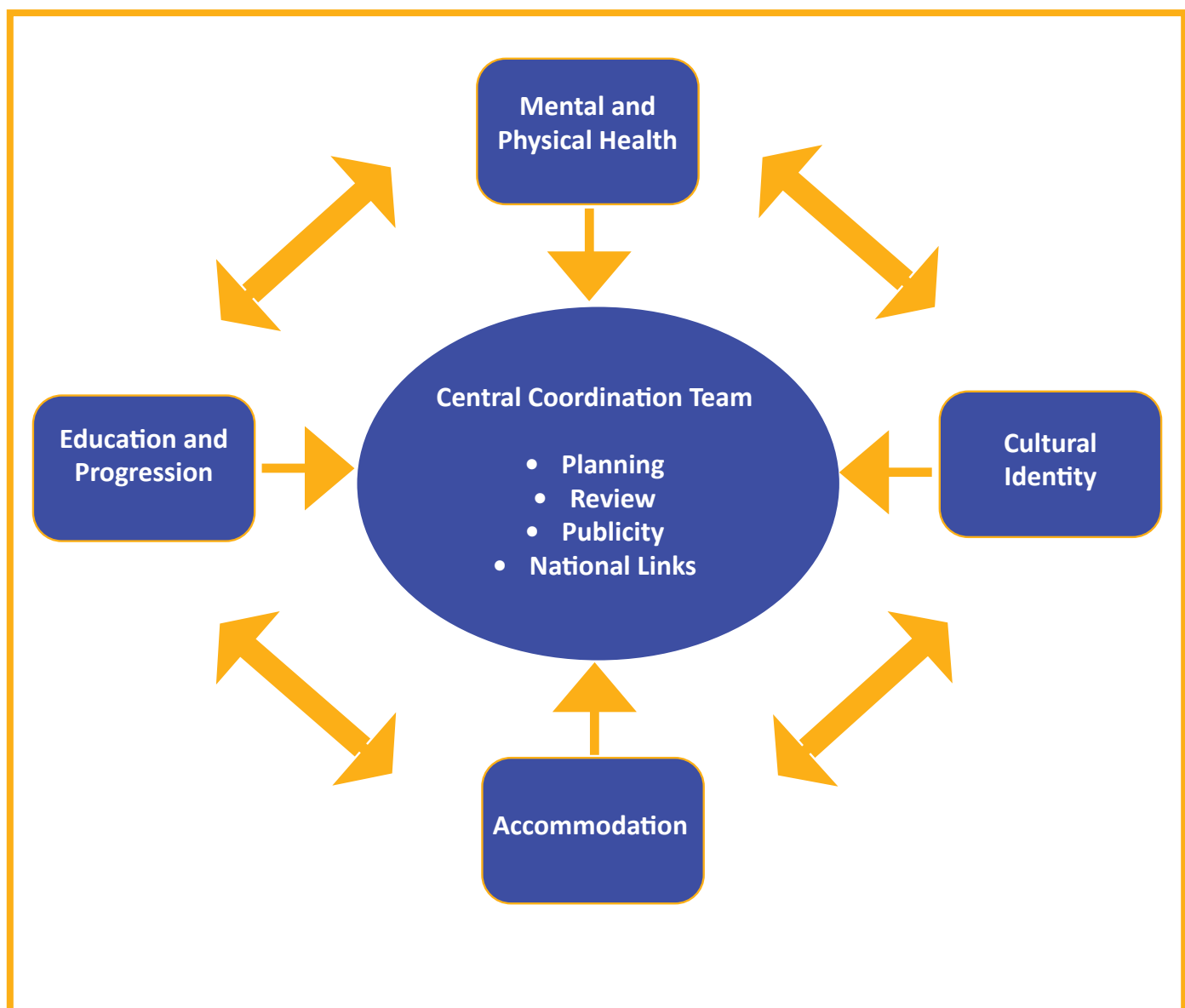
## Management and Monitoring

The project will work to establish four action groups – with the participation mainly of Travellers who have particular interest or experience in the particular programme area.

It is important that each action group (and efforts to involve Travellers) takes into account the different needs and circumstances of different sections of the Traveller community (men, women, young Travellers, and Travellers who are more marginalised and excluded – for example, Travellers with a disability, members of the LGBTQ+ community, Travellers in prison, Travellers living in more isolated rural areas). Each of our programmes, and all of our actions, will be inclusive and encourage the active participation of all Travellers – avoiding exclusive focus on particular areas or particular families.

A central coordination team (made up of staff and volunteers) will also draw on membership of action groups.

### *Four Action Groups*



While the action groups will be made up, in the main, of members of the Traveller community, representatives of other organisations and service providers will be invited to join in the planning and implementation of specific actions as they arise. Membership of action groups will therefore not be fixed to the same people over the period of the plan. It will rather be open and flexible – with the capacity to invite new people to join as new actions are taken on. This applies to representatives of local service providers as much as to members of the Traveller community – with people participating on the basis of their interest and expertise, depending on the activity. For example:

- Where the Health Action Group is addressing challenges to do with suicide, it will be open to invite members of mainstream mental health services, as well as those active in voluntary suicide prevention organisations, to join the action group for the planning and implementation of that particular action. Equally, it is important that those members of the Traveller community with direct experience of suicide in their family (or living with the fear of suicide) are encouraged to take an active role in the action group around this subject.
- The Accommodation Action Group should be open enough to encourage participation of those Travellers facing the greatest challenges in relation to their accommodation needs. In addressing the serious and growing concern with homelessness, for example, it is important that those with first-hand experience of homelessness can lead the discussion. But it is also important that those with expertise in the delivery of accommodation are also encouraged to participate (from, for example, local authority housing section, Approved Housing Bodies or homeless organisations).
- When the Cultural Identity Action Group addresses the issue of ongoing discrimination, the same principle applies. One aspect of this, for example, is the experience of young Travellers in their engagement with law enforcement. Where monitoring of incidences of harassment or discrimination is taking place, it is important that the voices and experiences of local young Travellers are taken on board in the working group. It will be also important that members of the Gardaí are afforded the opportunity to participate – increasing awareness of the problems involved and creating a platform for improvements to come about in equality and human rights terms.
- When the Education and Progression Action Group looks at possible opportunities to create social enterprise, it will be extremely important to involve Traveller men (especially in those areas in which men have an interest, such as horses). When this group addresses support for young Travellers in education, the parents of children in school will be central to planning and carrying through on actions. In all of these cases, the relevant service providers and support agencies will also be encouraged to participate (teachers, enterprise support agencies, training providers etc)

Participation in Action Groups will therefore change and evolve as the plan progresses, and as different challenges are encountered. This will have the benefit, on the one hand, of people being engaged on the basis of what they are most interested in. It will also, on the other hand, guarantee that people are bringing their own expertise and experience to the task in hand.

A key element in our Action Group strategy is linked to our strong commitment to build and maintain strong Traveller leadership in the organisation as a whole. The period of this plan will therefore see a commitment to encourage and facilitate Travellers in specific Action Groups to become more centrally involved (in either the central coordination team or the project's Board of Management).

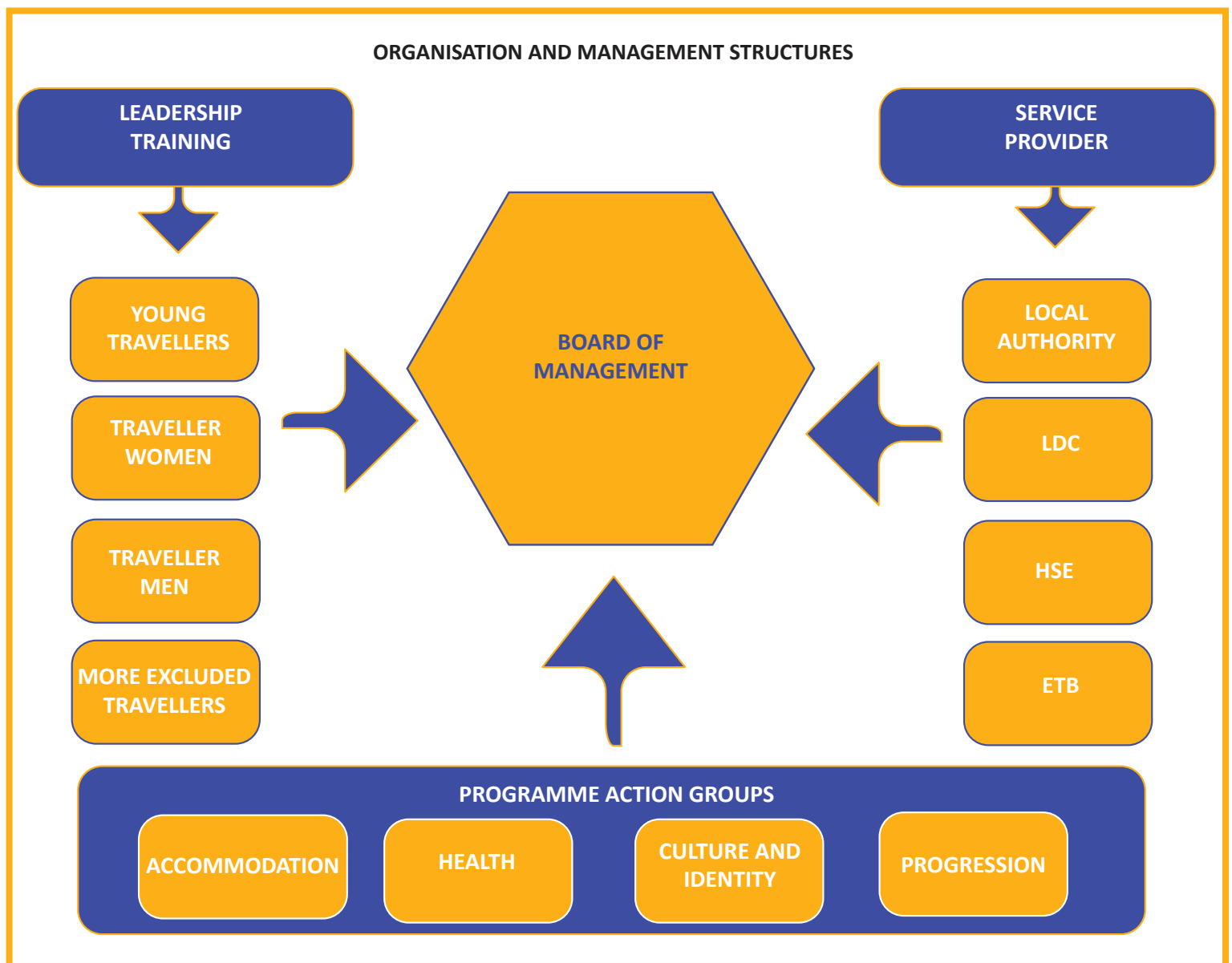
Coordination will be the responsibility of a team (with one worker and/or volunteer from each of the four programme areas) facilitated by the project coordinator.

The coordination team will meet weekly, planning actions and reviewing outcomes, according to yearly operational plans agreed by the Board of Management. A key objective in organisational terms is to facilitate succession to Traveller leadership at project management level. The existing coordinator will work through programmes and actions in the plan, in close cooperation with a member of staff, with this succession objective in mind.

## Overall Coordination

The project will work towards the establishment of a Traveller-led management and coordination structure. It is important that the experience and expertise of key service providers is drawn upon in terms of membership of the project's Board of Management (see below). But it is essential that the expertise and experience of Travellers remain as the dominant influence. The capacity of Travellers to direct and manage will be built up through:

1. A specifically-designed leadership course, and
2. Enabling and supporting Travellers who are active in programme action groups to progress to active involvement in the project's Board of Management





## Evaluation and Review

Clare Traveller CDP is committed to evaluation as an integral part of our development activities throughout the strategic planning period because we recognise the importance of:

1. The ever increasing need to demonstrate results in relation to resources invested. We are committed to demonstrating that the project not only succeeds in achieving the objectives and targets we have set ourselves, but that it also makes economic sense in terms of outcomes. This is especially important in the work we undertake in relation to health, education, accommodation and youth development. We will adopt an evidence-based approach to showing value for money in this respect.
2. Secondly, we are aware that impacts of the project go beyond the benefits to individuals participating in our programmes. There are also clear benefits for their partners, their children, and members of their community. Funding providers do not always request information or evidence in relation to these wider benefits (funding of educational courses, for example, often confine their requirements to numbers receiving qualifications; or measurement of success in training can be restricted to numbers accessing employment etc.). While these are important indicators in their own right, we are also committed to demonstrating related outcomes for participants in the longer term; as well as for their families and communities. We are also committed to using evidence to demonstrate the benefits of a more inclusive approach for mainstream service-providers and Irish society generally.
3. Thirdly, we are also strongly aware that successful outcomes are very much dependent upon the approach taken by project workers and volunteers. Our evaluation efforts will not only show what we have achieved; we will also focus on how these achievements have come about. We are committed to ongoing critical reflection on what works well and what may not – informed at all stages by participant and service-user feedback. As a result we will be able to demonstrate (and share) our ‘model’, and show how particular approaches and interventions can contribute to particular results.
4. Finally, we see lessons and insights emerging from the work as being of significant importance in shaping effective mainstream responses to social exclusion, education, health and other key challenges faced by the Traveller community. Our evaluation and review process provides a mechanism through which these lessons are captured, and then shared with our working partners within mainstream service provision and policy development.

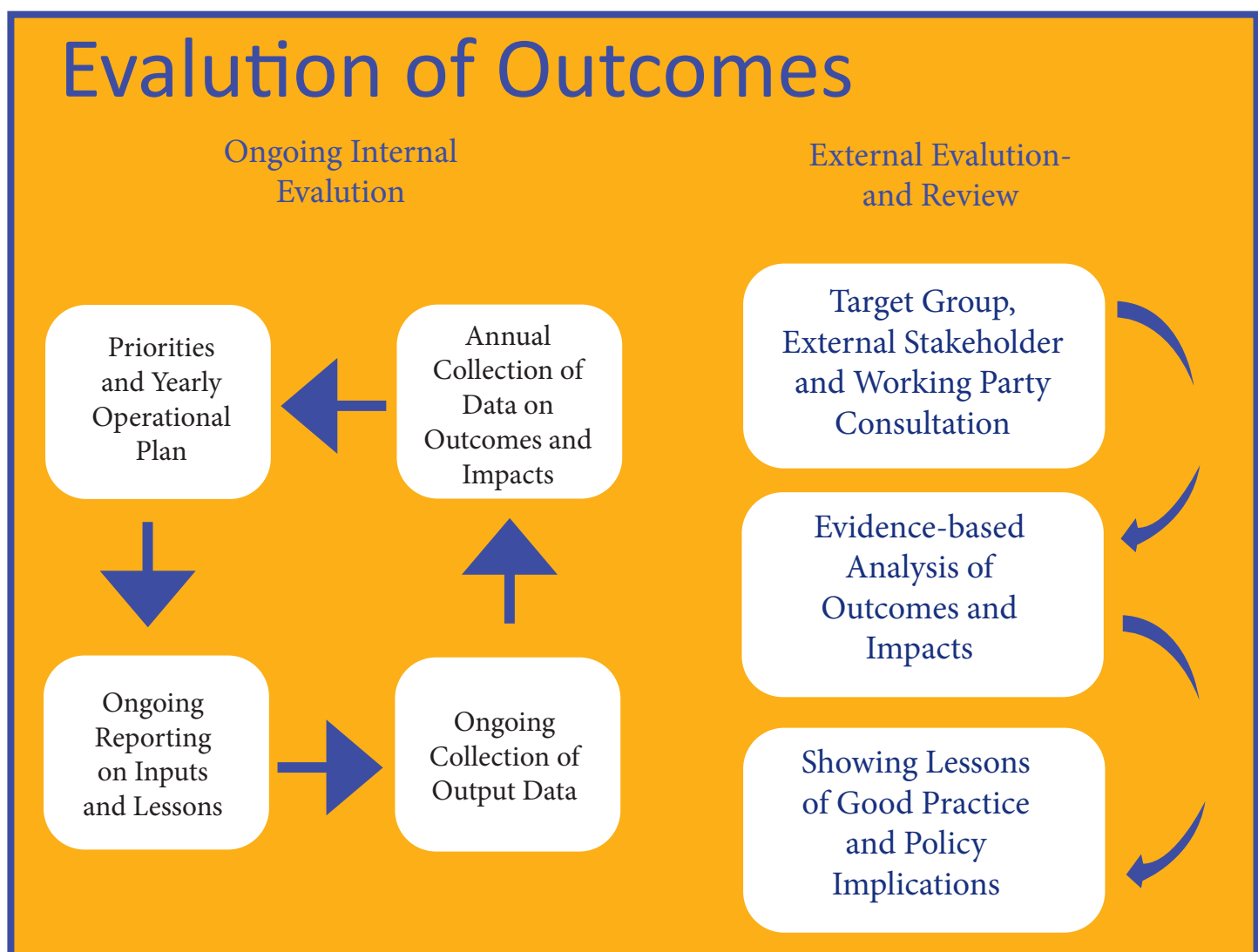




We will facilitate the participation of staff, board members, volunteers and programme participants in a review process. An annual cycle will result in the production of a yearly report: summarising progress towards achievement of strategic objectives and highlighting issues for future planning.

The plan, and review approach, is based on the '*Theory of Change*' model: with an emphasis on understanding changing and evolving circumstances; setting clear aims, and increasing the organisation's capacity to link and understand inputs and outputs on an ongoing basis.

An annual cycle will result in the production of a yearly report: summarising progress towards achievement of strategic objectives and highlighting issues for future planning. The evaluation system will also be used to assist staff with preparation of monthly progress reports to co-ordinator and Board. The basic elements of the model are presented below.

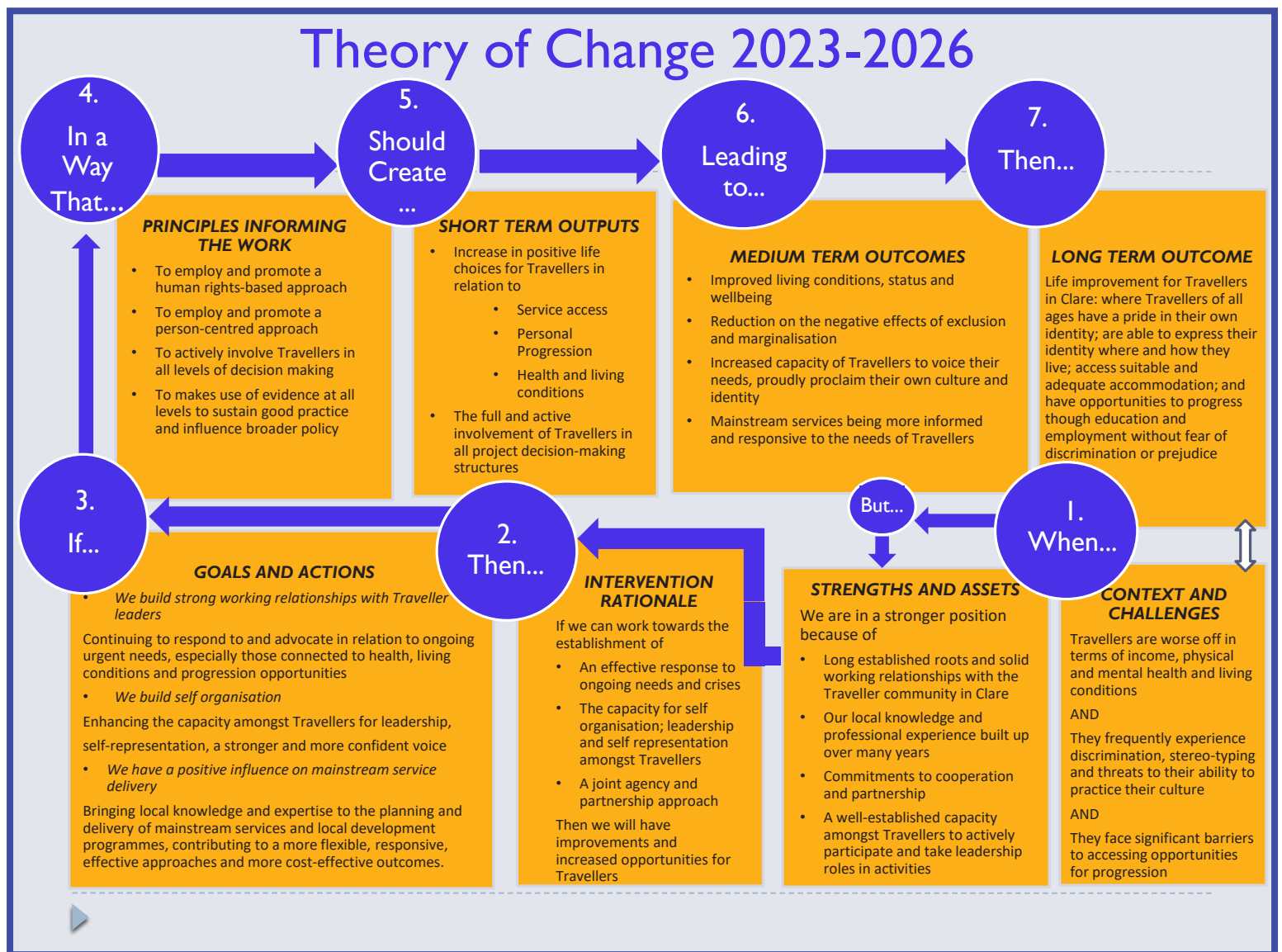


Internal evaluation and outcome data collection will be built into all programmes and actions. Weekly staff and volunteer meetings will facilitate ongoing monitoring and re-focusing of efforts where required.

The overall plan will also be externally evaluated to demonstrate outcomes, impacts and lessons for the future.

## Appendix: Theory of Change ‘Map’

The map below is just an example of the kind of ‘Theory of Change Map’ that can be completed – based on rationale, goals and objectives in the plan. The wall map can often be a more used and understood summary than the written plan!





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