

Annual Impact Report 2023



WATERFORD AREA PARTNERSHIP CLG



EMPOWERING PEOPLE,
SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES



WATERFORD AREA PARTNERSHIP CLG

Empowering People, Supporting Communities

Waterford Area Partnership was established in 1995 as a Local Development Company working in Waterford City and County.

We provide services and supports to people and communities in Waterford that help to improve access to education, employment, self-employment, health & well-being and community development for prioritised groups and communities.

Waterford Area Partnership is a registered charity and not-for-profit company that is managed by a voluntary board.

Registered Charity Number (RCN): 20035228

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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



EUROPEAN UNION
Asylum, Migration
and Integration Fund



Có-mhainithe ag an
Aontas Eorpach
Co-funded by the
European Union



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae Phort Láirge
Waterford
City & County Council



Waterford, South Tipperary
Local Area Employment Services



IRISH LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT
NETWORK



Tús
To a chair ag obair



Social Inclusion &
Community Activation
Programme



wweth
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board



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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

Welcome to our Annual Impact Report 2023, an insight into the great work of our staff and, most importantly, the services and supports they provide for the citizens of our city and county.

Since 1995 Waterford Area Partnership (WAP) has supported individuals and communities on a not-for-profit basis driven by the values of equality, diversity, and inclusion. We are citizen focused and committed to affecting change at local level through providing essential and meaningful responses to social need. We work in partnership with the State and a range of community and voluntary organisations to deliver programmes that improve the quality of life of those we serve.



In recent years the Board of WAP has worked closely with the CEO, Senior Management, and staff to guide the organisation through challenging times, building relationships with key partners and stakeholders whilst planning to strengthen and resource our organisation for the years ahead. During 2023 we launched our Strategic Plan 2024–2028, our promise to the citizens of Waterford that we will continue to provide and expand our services.

This Report sets out progress across a range of programmes and services during the year including the impact each has had on those citizens who engaged with us. A particularly positive development in 2023 was the renewal of our contract to deliver the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP). We also saw the integration of the Atelier Roma Project into WAP and the opening of its new centre in Ivory Park. It was also our first full year operating the Local Area Employment Service (LAES) in co-operation with Waterford Leader Partnership and South Tipperary Development Company.

While the publication of this 2023 Report reflects the commitment of the current voluntary Board, in place since 2021, to restructure and expand WAP, in truth, it marks the culmination of the extraordinary level of hard work by our committed and professional staff who believe in the importance of our work. I salute the entire team led by our CEO Liam Quinn.

I also wish to record my gratitude to the Board who give of their time and experience willingly, to all our external suppliers and support services and also to Michael Walsh (recently retired) CEO Waterford City & County Council and the various Government Departments we work so closely with.

But most of all I salute the citizens of our city and county who turn to us for support and encouragement. Our success will always be measured by the benefits of our services to you.

Beir Bua,

Eoin Ronayne

CHAIRPERSON

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

2023 was another busy year for Waterford Area Partnership and local community and voluntary groups.

The migration to Ireland of Ukrainians fleeing war and dealing with the resulting trauma has been a challenge for all relevant agencies and community groups in Ireland, including our staff who have responded by working in collaboration with others to support the resettlement and integration of individuals and families. The numbers of International Protection applicants also continues to grow at a time when opposition to their arrival provides additional challenges to our staff working with communities to respond with empathy and compassion to the needs of those fleeing persecution.



Our various migrant support programmes, in tandem with our SICAP teams, have worked tirelessly to ensure that all migrants and asylum seekers are afforded their rights under international law and opportunities for integration are promoted.

One of the highlights of the year has been The People's Transition Project in collaboration with TASC (Think Tank for Action on Social Change). Focused on the communities of Lisduggan and Larchville the aim of this community led project is to ensure that its residents experience a "Just Transition" as we move to a greener future for all. The report on the project priorities a greener, healthier and more economically sustainable future for its residents.

Our focus in 2023 was to support those people and communities across Waterford that have experienced social, economic and cultural exclusion from opportunities afforded to others. We aim to do this by providing person centred wraparound services that meet their identified needs. In partnership with statutory agencies and social partners WAP delivered a range of supports across our various programmes.

Looking to the future, we are constantly exploring new and innovative ways in which we can support local people and communities. There will be an increased focus on climate related projects and supports for migrants and international protection applicants as well as our continued support to those who have not benefitted from the economic progress experienced by many.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the various stakeholders, volunteers and public bodies without whose support WAP would not be able to deliver services to our communities. A special thank you to our voluntary Board of Directors who give tirelessly to the redevelopment of the company and in doing so ensure its success and growth. Finally, to our fantastic staff team who have endured many challenges in recent years but are stronger and more determined than ever to deliver for the people of Waterford.

Liam Quinn

CEO

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS IN 2023

3,127

People supported to improve their quality of life through training, employment, work placement, education, or well-being opportunities.

83

Local Community Groups supported to improve their capacity and services.

7,548

Food parcels delivered.

30,192

People supported with food parcels.

129

Disabled people received education, employability and well-being supports.

400

Ukrainian refugees and International Protection Applicants attended Fáilte Isteach volunteer-led English classes weekly.

629

Families and Children engaged in education and well-being supports.

317

Individuals availed of SICAP lifelong learning supports.

112

Migrants supported by the Integration & Employment of Migrants programme.

ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

Our Mission

We work in collaboration with others to empower communities and individuals by implementing person-centred programmes and activities that support social inclusion and equality.

Our Values

- ✓ INNOVATION
 - ✓ COURAGE
 - ✓ COLLABORATION
 - ✓ INTEGRITY
 - ✓ PERSON-CENTRED



Our Vision

A diverse and inclusive society that values everyone through promoting access, participation, equality and human rights.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- 1 Innovation**
Enhance innovation in how we support our communities.
- 2 Connection**
Improve our internal and external connections in supporting individuals and communities to connect with each other and with relevant services and supports.
- 3 Collaboration**
Enhance cross-organisational collaborative working and partnering with others to support people.
- 4 Capability**
Facilitate participation and engagement so that people have a voice and enhance our capacity to serve them best.
- 5 Policy Shaping**
Influence policy to ensure the most appropriate and relevant responses at local, regional and national levels.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES

In 2023 we delivered the following programmes and projects:

- ✓ Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)
- ✓ Atelier Roma Project for Men and Women
- ✓ Care & Repair Programme
- ✓ Integration and Employment of Migrants Programme (IEM)
- ✓ Jobs Initiative (JI)
- ✓ Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) (City & County based), and including Ukraine Response
- ✓ Tús Community Work Placement Scheme
- ✓ Waterford City Local Area Employment Service (WSTLAES)
- ✓ Waterford Food Bank

In 2023 our funding came from National and European funding streams which prioritised supports to the following groups:

- ✓ Migrants, Refugees, Temporary Protection Applicants, and International Protection Applicants
- ✓ Disabled People / People with a Disability
- ✓ People who have been out of paid employment for over 1 year
- ✓ Members of the Roma Community
- ✓ Members of the Traveller Community
- ✓ People who may have left school early and now want to return to education in the community / college
- ✓ People on low income or living in a jobless household
- ✓ Heads of one parent families
- ✓ People living in specific geographic communities in Waterford
- ✓ Local Community Groups
- ✓ Social Enterprises that benefit any of the above target groups
- ✓ Community Networks that benefit any of the above target groups



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Supports to Local Communities

SICAP Community Development staff work collaboratively with a wide variety of local community groups, organisations, service providers and state agencies. Our work is informed by the Annual Support Plans of local groups that register with us and, through collaboration with partners, delivering practical responses to local and national policies and strategies within communities. Local Community Groups that engage with us develop creative and innovative activities to respond to their community's needs, whilst supporting inclusion and sustainability. This work is as a result of an enormous voluntary effort given by local people.

In 2023 we worked with staff, volunteers, and voluntary Board members of **83** Local Community Groups to support their capacity and committee skills development to enable them to respond to their identified community needs and to ensure their compliance with governance requirements. We also provided funding and supported groups to apply for other funding to bring much needed resources to their local communities and to build the involvement of community members in running local assets.

In conjunction with **Larchville & Lisduggan Residents Association** and **TASC (Think-tank for Action on Social Change)** a specific project based on The People's Transition and climate justice emerged from local consultation and the existing work of the local community. This project will build in 2024 towards a number of key outcomes that aim to see solid improvements in the built environment, well-being, and sustainable futures of Larchville and Lisduggan and the people that live and work there.

Local community groups within **Lismore** delivered on many activities which created new friendships and promoted integration for Ukrainian refugees and other migrants. Through their local history, sports, arts, and family activities groups welcomed new residents to contribute to developing the community and a communal sense of place.

*Larchville &
Lisduggan
Residents'
Association*



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)

Social Enterprises and Community Networks

A **Community Growers networking** event in SETU Arena for community garden groups across the city and county supported shared learning and skills development through a series of demonstrations and speakers. This event enhanced ongoing links through visits and produce sharing.

A networking event for **Men's Sheds**, a collaboration with the National Men's Shed Association, supported local groups to promote their products and share knowledge, expertise and information with other groups and the public. The event was very lively and led to shed members developing new friendships and some new people signing up for membership.

In October a networking event for local **Women's Groups** was held in SETU arena. **14** groups attended with **110** women at the event sharing their work and group experiences.

The **Dungarvan International Women's Day** event was a joint action with WWETB, and was hugely successful, reaching **16** Local Community Groups and **144** women across the County representing women from diverse backgrounds including the Traveller Community, Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan and Disability groups. The **Waterford City International Women's Day** event brought together over **60** women from diverse communities to celebrate their activities, share their work and to network.

We also support social enterprise as part of our SICAP delivery. This support is in the form of small grant aid, awareness raising, mentoring and networking. A post-covid needs analysis report in 2022/3 in collaboration with SETU provided a route for re-vitalisation of WAP engagement in the sector for the next programme iteration.



Community Garden Network Event



Déise Men's Shed



International Women's Day, Dungarvan



A Social Enterprise is an enterprise whose objective is to achieve a social, societal or environmental impact, rather than maximising profit for its owners or shareholders.



It pursues its objectives by trading on an ongoing basis through the provision of goods and/or services, and by reinvesting surpluses into achieving social objectives.



It is governed in a fully accountable and transparent manner and is independent of the public sector. If dissolved, it should transfer its assets to another organisation with a similar mission.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)

Collaboration

We collaborate with local, regional and national partners to respond to identified need and local / national policies. As a lead agency or in partnership with others WAP implements actions and develops projects which support social, economic and cultural inclusion for local community groups and people in Waterford. In 2023, through our participation on the Waterford Ukrainian Community Response Forum, we worked with other agencies and the Ukraine refugee community to deliver supports and activities that responded to individual and group need. This was also reflected in our work with migrants, other refugee groups and International Protection Applicants.

We also engaged with other structures in the city and county such as; the Waterford Roma Interagency Group, Waterford Age Friendly Alliance, West Waterford Community & Family Hub, the Waterford Migrant Strategy Interagency Group, the Adult Learning for Life Literacy Coalition, the Local Community Development Committee and the Children and Young Persons Service Committee.



International Women's Day, Waterford City



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS

Health & Well-Being

We support individuals from target groups to participate in health and well-being activities which can have a positive impact on personal issues such as social isolation, community integration and trauma. We work with a range of agencies to deliver programmes that respond to individual need and recognise that not everyone is ready or able to move into further education or employment. These programmes are hugely important in building social networks and supporting people to engage in activities that build practical skills. A number of individuals attend multiple programmes which reduces isolation, improves integration and builds confidence towards taking the next step to improving their quality of life.

In 2023 SICAP staff delivered over **29** individual health and well-being programmes with **200** individuals availing of supports which included:

- ✓ A collaboration with Foróige to deliver 2 x 6-week programmes for women living in the Lismore Direct Provision Centre while they were awaiting their work permits and access to Further Education courses with WWETB.
- ✓ A number of programmes focused on supporting people to improve their mental health through holistic self-development programmes, such as mindful arts, dance, fitness and yoga for adults with disabilities.
- ✓ 9 cookery programmes were delivered across the City and County which focused on integrating parents from new communities, older people impacted by rural isolation and lone parents.
- ✓ 6 dance fitness programmes ran in the city aimed at improving the social integration of Ukrainian, Brazilian, Asian and African parents in collaboration with Home School Liason Officers.
- ✓ 4 furniture upcycling courses were completed, some attendees progressing from previous DIY workshops.
- ✓ A pottery workshop in Cappoquin was delivered for women experiencing social/rural isolation and 4 craft programmes were delivered in Portlawn, Waterford Inner City, Larchville/Lisduggan and Kilchohan.

“IF I HADN’T DONE THE COURSE I WOULD HAVE BEEN AT HOME DOING NOTHING.”

“EVERYONE WAS SO FRIENDLY AND IT WAS AMAZING TO SEE THE FURNITURE AT THE END.”



Festive Crafts

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS (CONT'D)

In August 2023 WAP partnered with Dunhill Multi-Education Centre on a week long integration project that brought together **46** Ukrainian refugees and local community members for a range of well-being activities.

- ✓ A group of nine Ukrainians and Dunhill's community volunteers joined GIY Tramore on a visit to Brendan and Kathryn Fullam's garden, in Fenor. The garden is on a 7-acre site with planted hedgerows and woodland, apple and nut orchard, a vegetable plot, fruit cage, hens, wildflower meadow and grazing paddocks for horses.
- ✓ A group of 22 Ukrainian and community gardeners and 6 Ukrainian children met at the Copper Coast Mini-Farm. It was an opportunity for the parents or grandparents of children to relax and benefit from being around animals while also interacting with the local community and tourists at a joyous and therapeutic event. The group walked through the village of Fenor picking blackberries for their picnic which was prepared by Barbara from the Dunhill Park Café, with our own garden produce and home bakes provided by our community. Afterwards, a small group visited Fenor Bog to see the flora and fauna.
- ✓ A group of Ukrainian Refugees and local community volunteers took part in a patchwork workshop. It was suitable for beginners and those attending were invited to bring along any fabric that had a special meaning for them. Fabric and thread were purchased and sewing machines were on loan for the day. Fiona, the workshop facilitator explained the plan of action and it was translated to the group. The group learned very quickly and. It was a pleasant social event which uncovered hidden talents.



Members of the Waterford Ukrainian community attending various events



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS (CONT'D)

Waterford Food Bank

In 2023 Waterford Food Bank supplied over **7,548 food parcels** which impacted on the well-being of over **30,000 individuals**. Each food parcel supplies a family of 4, on average, with 3 days food, 3 meals a day, which is approximately 36 meals in every parcel.

Waterford Food Bank, the only Waterford Area Partnership programme which is not in receipt of state funding, operates throughout the city and suburbs delivering food parcels to those in need, at no cost to the recipients.

Referrals for recipients come from St Vincent de Paul, the Waterford Money Advice & Budgeting Service, Home School Liaison Officers, Focus Ireland, Tinteán Housing, Tusla and sometimes from homeless services, to support someone who has just moved into accommodation and needs a helping hand for a week or two.

Each food parcel contains 3 fresh meats, eggs, milk, bread, and dairy products that we purchase weekly, alongside the non-perishable products we receive from FEAD (Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived).

We also obtain products from FoodCloud that we collect weekly from Cork, and which can contain surplus foods with a decent shelf life. Potatoes and carrots are donated weekly by O'Shea's Farm, Piltown.

In December, a mammoth task of packing and delivering up to 1,000 food parcels makes it necessary to engage with companies and the Lions Club who volunteer with us for two weeks. In December 2023 we had 500 volunteers over 10 days. These 500 people worked alongside our regular foodbank staff, and successfully ensured 68,000 meals were delivered to over 4,000 people who had a nicer Christmas than they might otherwise have had.



Bauch + Lomb staff present Waterford Foodbank with a new van

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS (CONT'D)

Education & Lifelong Learning

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation programme provides signposting to individuals on education and lifelong learning opportunities in Waterford that are delivered by community and state providers. The programme also provides direct supports such as grant aid which enabled **100 people** across designated target groups to access **Post Leaving Cert courses or accredited education programmes** in 2023.

A **Pre-College Workshop** introduced students to effective study skills, what to expect from college, making the most out of their time in college and key student, health & welfare support organisations. Supported students attended a range of L5 & L6 courses from Mechanical Engineering to Beauty Therapy.

Other **community education programmes** such as Driving Ambitions, basic DIY and fitness courses supported people to build their life skills so enhancing their further education and employment capacity and social integration.

Children and Families

Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP) staff work closely with DEIS Schools and voluntary housing associations to provide a range of supports to children and families from target groups to enable access to education supports, both in school and out of school, and, in particular, to support the inclusion of children with a disability, and children from new communities in activities that benefit their integration and well-being.

A collaboration with DEIS schools across the City and County supported children from new communities to participate in activities such as **yoga classes, resilience workshops and festive events**, with **213 children from New Communities also supported to attend Summer Camps in 2023**.

39 children attended a World Book Day Initiative facilitated by WAP and Respond Housing, and **80 children from 3 DEIS schools** attended a collaboration initiative, "Learning for Life" with the School Completion Programme and the South East Technical University. This initiative introduces 5th and 6th class children to the 3rd level environment.

30 children with disabilities were supported to attend Summer Camps in collaboration with Waterford Sports Partnership, and SICAP facilitated autism-friendly events for 87 children and their families.

"MY DAUGHTER LOVES COMING TO THESE EVENTS SO MUCH. SHE GETS VERY UPSET AND OVERWHELMED AROUND NEUROTYPICAL CHILDREN BUT REALLY ENJOYS BEING AROUND OTHER CHILDREN WITH AUTISM WHERE THERE IS NO PRESSURE TO BE A CERTAIN WAY. WE ALSO LOVE COMING AND CHATTING TO OTHER PARENTS."

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS (CONT'D)

Employment

WAP provides a range of services to assist people to increase their chances of employment or to move into better quality employment. In 2023 **327** people from Waterford city & county received **industry related employment training and CV & interview skills supports** through the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP).

A total of **37 pre-employment programmes** were delivered across the city and county such as safe pass, manual handling, barista, HACCP level ii, customer service and cv & interview skills.

A total of **59 employment training grants** were awarded to people who were ready to take up job offers. Grants supported training such as: fork lift driving, nail & beauty therapy, train the trainer, guarding skills, healthcare and business administration.

731 people from Waterford City received **employment mentoring, job search and CV preparation support** through the Waterford City Local Area Employment Service which is delivered in partnership with the Waterford Leader Partnership Company and Intreo.

Tús is a community work placement scheme providing short-term working opportunities for unemployed people throughout Ireland. Work placements are provided by not-for-profit community and voluntary organisations. In 2023 Waterford Area Partnership's Tús Programme placed **84 people** in **44 sporting, community & voluntary organisations** in and around Waterford City.

During 2023 the Waterford Area Partnership Care and Repair service completed **97** gardening jobs and **37** DIY jobs around the city from public requests. In addition to this, the WCCC referral process established in 2022, delivered the completion of **20** gardening and **16** DIY jobs in 2023. Lastly, the WAP care and repair service facilitated **8** Tús placements, providing long term unemployed individuals the opportunity to work within their community.

The Jobs Initiative scheme is a programme providing full-time employment for people who are 35 years of age or over, unemployed for 5 years or more, and in receipt of social welfare payments over that period. In 2023 WAP continued to support **5** participants to work in local community and voluntary organisations across Waterford.

"ELLEN WAS AMAZING, SHE WAS VERY HELPFUL AND SENT ME ON JOB OPPORTUNITIES THAT SHE KNEW WOULD SUIT ME. SHE ENCOURAGED ME TO APPLY FOR THE JOB I AM IN NOW AND I AM SO GRATEFUL."



Waterford City Local Area Employment Service staff 2023

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS (CONT'D)

Enterprise

242 people received Start Your Own Business mentoring and training supports to enable them to build their business plan, improve their financial management skills, increase sales, and market their business effectively.

Our **SICAP enterprise support staff** work closely with the **Department of Social Protection Back to Work Enterprise Allowance (BTWEA) caseworkers** to enhance the potential for business sustainability for people starting their business journey who are in receipt of the Job Seekers Allowance. **60 clients** were referred from BTWEA staff to WAP for business mentoring in 2023.

- ✓ **4 Start Your Own Business workshops** were delivered in 2023 with 31 attendees. **1 Self Employment Preparation Programme** was delivered for 12 attendees at very early start up stage and focused on the challenges and opportunities for self-employment.
- ✓ **2 Book-Keeping Workshops** and **1 Introduction to the Revenue Online Service** for submitting annual financial returns were delivered to support good financial management.
- ✓ **A Digital Marketing Workshop** supported attendees to develop a digital marketing strategy for driving traffic to their business.

Our enterprise supports are delivered on site from offices in Waterford City and Dungarvan Enterprise Centre.

Our enterprise support staff also assist with mentoring and business training for Social Entrepreneurs, and community based Social Enterprises in collaboration with our SICAP Community Support Staff.

In 2023 WAP continued to provide support to the Waterford Micro Business Network (WMBN) with a committee of former SICAP enterprise clients. The Network ran 11 events which were attended by 145 people, with speakers on topics relevant to sole traders which provided opportunities for peer support and information sharing.



WMBN Networking Event March 2023

“ALL HELP FROM WAP WAS AMAZING, THANK YOU. THE BUSINESS STARTUP COURSE AND THE BOOKKEEPING COURSES WERE SO HELPFUL. I HAD A GREAT EXPERIENCE ATTENDING BOTH COURSES.”

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS (CONT'D)

Atelier Roma Project

In 2023 the **Atelier Roma Project** moved to Waterford Area Partnership management. Through the men's and women's weekly programmes staff provided one-to-one and group training, education and personal development supports to enhance progression to employment.

Participants from Romania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Ireland attended programmes, courses and advocacy clinics.

28 men were supported with job readiness and progressed into employment in construction, retail, security and farming with **32** participants completing training in safe pass, barista and woodwork.

29 women progressed into employment in retail, farm work, cleaning and clerical. **40 women** participated in courses including jewellery making and dress making with **4 achieving their Driving Theory Test**. 2 Health advocates held a discussion forum on cervical cancer which resulted in **13 Roma women registering for screening**.

Advocacy supports assisted families to access services to enhance their quality of life and integration. **3 families** were successfully housed in Waterford City & County Council accommodation with others receiving assistance with pending evictions, PPS applications, Jobseekers applications, Habitual Residence, Medical Cards, Domiciliary Care, Carers Allowance, Child Benefit and school registrations.

Waterford Area Partnership and the Atelier Roma Project actively supported the progression of the National Traveller & Roma Inclusion Strategy through our participation on the Waterford Roma Interagency Group. We collaborated with other community organisations, service providers and agencies to strengthen supports to the Roma Community in Waterford.

One Roma woman successfully completed her driver theory test. This required a lot of one-on-one sessions to help her understand the questions and the environment of the test centre. We also practiced the driving theory test online prior to her sitting the exam.

Her success rate in the exam was above average. She is the first Roma woman in Waterford to have taken this step and she now owns her car for the use of her employment.

Following this success, a further two Roma women passed their Driving Theory Test.



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS (CONT'D)

Supports to Asylum Seekers (IPAs), Refugees and Migrants

Additional (SICAP) Ukrainian Response funding in 2023 enabled the employment of 4 multi-lingual staff to support the integration of refugees, and people living in Direct Provision Centres in Waterford. WAP also delivered the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Integration & Employment of Migrants Programme (IEM) in Waterford on behalf of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Throughout 2023 SICAP Goal 1 staff continued activities to strengthen the integration of Ukrainian refugees in collaboration with local partners including Waterford City & County Council, HSE and Waterford Red Cross. Our team of Ukrainian Community Workers provided in-person supports to those living in hotels, rest centres and pledged accommodation across the city and county and provided translation, information and links to services and their local community.

Our responses and activities continuously adapted as by December 2023 Waterford had approx. 2,600 Ukrainians residing in our communities. Key supports included one-to-one/family orientation through staff visits to residences to answer specific queries on; school placements, health care, passports, driving licences, employment, training and more. Telegram messaging was a key communication tool with groups established based on geographical areas. This allowed us to translate and disseminate information promptly, promote community events and registration for SICAP activities and supports.

Our 'Life in Ireland' information sessions were organised to provide opportunities for Ukrainians to meet with services and gain an understanding of Ireland's systems in areas such as education from primary to third level, employment, health care (HSE), childcare (Waterford Childcare Committee and Tusla) and volunteering (Waterford Volunteer Centre).

Community integration was critical to all aspects of our work. Local community groups played a vital role in welcoming Ukrainians and International Protection Applicants to their communities; collecting items such as clothes, toys, bed linen and bicycles, and organising coffee mornings, family gatherings and community events. It is difficult to capture all the positive work undertaken within local communities however the outcomes are very evident in the friendships and sense of belonging many Ukrainians experience.

Our team organised a calendar of specific community engagement events to strengthen community integration and a sense of belonging. We organised age-appropriate art, craft and music events and for older people we organised trips to Kilkenny and Wexford and a history tour of Waterford. Pub quizzes, chess and other activities during Halloween and Christmas supported Ukrainians to reconnect with friends.

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS (CONT'D)

Another aspect of our work included participating on local and national structures to advocate on issues impacting on integration. We engaged with the Ukrainian Civil Society Forum and the Community Response Sub-group led by Community Work Ireland.

We coordinated local actions under the Department of Health Ukrainian Fund through Waterford City & County Council, and collaborated with a range of community and voluntary services. Activities organised included horticulture courses, walking tours, women group, arts and music and family activities. We are thankful to the organisations who were so proactive in expanding their activities to support integration, mental well-being, learning of new skills and creating opportunities for new friendships.

502 individuals from new communities participated in SICAP Goal 2 activities to assist in improving their quality of life through employment training, supports to access further / community education and health / well-being support. **297 individuals** were resident in Direct Provision Centres and **284 identified as an Asylum Seeker. 100 Ukrainian refugees** received employment training and CV & interview supports to improve their employment potential and **145 Ukrainian refugees** attended health, well-being and education activities. 2 Start Your Own Business Workshops were delivered in Dungarvan for **18 Ukrainian refugees** with translation support.

The Integration and Employment of Migrants Programme (IEM) work closely with SICAP and WCLAES staff to support individuals to engage in training and education that meets their needs and personal goals. In 2023, IEM supported a total of **112** people to receive career coaching and CV/Interview Skills. **40** people were referred for training in safe pass, manual handling, security and forklift driving. **7** grants were awarded to support individuals to attend train the trainer, solar panel installations, IT for beginners and safe pass/manual handling. 2 employers in the healthcare and engineering fields engaged with IEM to support clients to move into careers in engineering and pharmacy.

Andrii moved to Ireland in 2023 and sought help to transition into employment. After a personal planning session he enrolled in a manual handling course. From his personal plan we learned that Andrii was a chimney sweep in Ukraine. We supported him to acquire the relevant chimney sweep certificate in Ireland and provided a grant to cover the course fee.

By early autumn, Andrii had obtained his chimney sweep certificate and began working. He has since gained considerable experience in this field in Ireland and is now in the process of submitting a business plan to DSP (Department of Social Protection).



*Waterford Integration Services
Energy Practice Workshops*

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS (CONT'D)

24 people were guided into further education: healthcare, industrial installation, business administration, sports coaching, pharma, legal terminology, graphic design, apprenticeships, completion of medical training and referral to AMIF Level 6 Supervisory Management course.

5 people received advocacy support for housing and mental health issues.

Over **400** Ukrainian refugees / International Protection Applicants /Migrants attended Fáilte Isteach English Language Conversation Classes delivered by over **40** volunteer tutors across the City & County. All students attended at least 1 x 2 hour class per week and were provided with workbooks to assist their language development.

Collaboration with 3 English Language Schools in Waterford delivered **10** courses for **120** students at 3 different levels:

- ✓ Complete beginners needing English for successful social integration
- ✓ General English proficiency with a professional module
- ✓ IELTS exam preparation courses for those who planned to apply to higher education institutions or needing to validate their diploma in Ireland.

112 migrants were assessed for their language level by the IEM programme and either referred to Fáilte Isteach classes, WWETB or the IEM internal language programme (**34** people).



Fáilte Isteach Volunteer Tutors

With WAP support Daria, from Ukraine, completed the IELTS English exam preparation course, achieving the highest score among all the participants. She also engaged in a HACCP course to explore potential job opportunities in the food industry. However, her career path took a significant turn in September. The Department of Social Protection (DSP) was in the process of recruiting new staff. Daria navigated through all three stages of the interview process and, by October, she had embarked on her new journey as a Clerical Officer with DSP. Daria commented that the courses she took with WAP were key to supporting her in her employment journey.

2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The following summary* is taken from the audited accounts which were approved by the board on July 10th 2024

Waterford Area Partnership CLG Income & Expenditure Account for the financial year ended 31/12/2023

	2023	2022
	€	€
Income	2,968,682	2,528,373
Project costs	(1,571,001)	(1,260,874)
Administrative expenses	(1,345,582)	(1,251,157)
Surplus/(deficit) for the financial year	<u>52,099</u>	<u>16,342</u>

Waterford Area Partnership CLG Balance Sheet as at 31/12/2023

	2023	2022
	€	€
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets	87,115	32,301
Current Assets		
Debtors	163,752	410,262
Cash & cash equivalents	800,755	385,425
	<u>964,507</u>	<u>795,687</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(1,010,327)	(838,791)
Net Current Assets	(45,820)	(43,104)
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	41,295	(10,803)
Reserves		
Members Funds	41,295	(10,803)

*A full set of annual accounts is available on www.wap.ie

MEMBERS OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EOIN RONAYNE (Chair)	Forsa, Trade Union Sector	<i>Appointed 2021</i>
JIM FINN	Community and Voluntary Sector	<i>Appointed 2021</i>
PAUL O'SULLIVAN	Former CEO Clann Credo (Retired)	<i>Appointed 2021</i>
DEIRDRE GARVEY	Irish Red Cross, NGO Sector	<i>Appointed 2021</i>
BRENDAN McEVOY	Business Sector	<i>Appointed 2022</i>
EAMONN FREEMAN	Business Sector	<i>Appointed 2022</i>
MARGARET BOND	Chamber of Commerce	<i>Appointed 2022</i>
GER MOONEY	Connect, Trade Union Sector	<i>Appointed 2022</i>
SUZANNE WALSH	SETU, Education Sector	<i>Appointed 2023</i>
EADAOIN CARRICK	Chamber of Commerce	<i>Appointed 2024</i>



Launch of Waterford Area Partnership Strategic Plan (from left): Eoin Ronayne (Chairperson, WAP) with Cllr Joe Conway (Waterford City & County Mayor), Tammy Darcy (CEO, The Shona Project) and Liam Quinn (CEO, WAP)

Key Partners

Aldi

Access IT

An Cosán Virtual Community College

Barnardos

Bausch & Lomb

BRILL Family Resource Centre

Brothers of Charity

Camino Tours

Carriglea Cairde Services

Céim Eile

DEIS Primary & Secondary Schools

DG Foods

Dunhill Multi-Education Centre

Fund for European Aid to the

Most Deprived (FEAD)

Flahavan's

Focus Ireland

Food Cloud

Foróige

Garter Lane Art Centre

GOMA

Health Service Executive (HSE)

International Protection Accommodation

Services (IPAS)

Klearcom

Klub Muzik

Lismore Heritage Centre

Local Sports Clubs

Men's Shed Association

O'Shea Brothers Farms

Rehab Care

Respond Housing

Sacred Heart Family Resource Centre

Sanofi

School Completion Programmes

Smurfit Kappa

Social Prescribing

St Brigid's Family and

Community Centre

St Vincent de Paul

South East Technical University

Tesco

Tusla

Waterford Chamber of Commerce

Waterford Skillnet

Waterford Childcare Committee

Waterford City & County Council

Waterford Integration Services

Waterford Leader Partnership

Waterford Libraries Service

Waterford Local Enterprise Office

Waterford Sports Partnership

Waterford & Wexford Education

and Training Board (WWETB)