

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025



**LIMERICK COMMUNITY  
EDUCATION NETWORK (LCEN)**





## **TRUSTEES' FOREWORD**

We are delighted to present the Limerick Community Education Network's Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

Our Strategic Plan reflects a commitment to the on-going support and provision of adult community education across Limerick City. The voices of both learners and participants were central to the process.

This Plan begins by outlining our Vision, Mission and Values which underpin everything we do. The strategic priorities will provide the framework to achieve our vision.

All of our activities will be driven by our members to support and enhance the experience of community education. This will ensure that we are working to improve access to adult community education, reduce educational inequality and ensure the highest standards of good governance.

We would like to personally thank all the learners, tutors, partners and supporters for their involvement in shaping this Strategic Plan. We would also like to acknowledge the funding provided by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and Limerick City and County Council. Finally we wish to thank Paul Partnership for the expertise through the development phase and drafting of this plan.



## **ABOUT US**

The Limerick Community Education Network (LCEN) is a network of organisations and individuals involved in supporting and promoting community education in Limerick City.

## **COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

Community education is education 'for the community within the community'. It takes place outside the formal education sector and aims to enhance learning, foster empowerment, and contribute to civic society.

## **OUR VISION**

A thriving, high-quality, and co-ordinated community education sector accessible to all in Limerick City.



## OUR MISSION

To provide a forum for the promotion, provision, co-ordination, and development of Community Education in Limerick City

## OUR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The work of the LCEN is relevant to learners, in both area-based and issue-based communities, and to those providing and supporting community education locally, regionally, and nationally

## OUR HISTORY

The Limerick Community Education Network (LCEN) was established in 1993 by community education providers and stakeholders as a means of providing information and support. Since then, it has expanded and solidified its role in supporting, developing and co-ordinating community education provision in Limerick City, and contributing to community education policy at local and national level.



## OUR VALUES

Our work is underpinned by a commitment, at all times:

- To work in Collaboration with our partners and stakeholders
- To be Supportive to our members, partners, and stakeholders
- To focus on the principle of Equality
- To maintain high standards of Quality
- To be Accountable and Transparent
- To be Innovative, Responsive and Adaptable to changing policy, circumstances and needs

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Co-ordination of Community Education Provision
2. Capacity-building, Support and Quality Assurance
3. Promotion, Outreach and Awareness-Raising
4. Policy Development and Advocacy
5. Governance and Operational Management



# 1) CO-ORDINATION OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROVISION

## AIM:

To provide a collaborative forum for providers of community education and other relevant stakeholders to work together to ensure a co-ordinated approach to community education provision in Limerick City.



## STRATEGIES:

- Bring together LCEN members in a formal forum structure, with associated sub-groups and working groups, to work together to co-ordinate community education in Limerick city.
- Work together to plan and deliver a co-ordinated annual programme of community education in Limerick city which meets the needs and requirements of learners and stakeholders.
- Organise annual citywide registration and recruitment events for community education.
- Identify and address gaps and duplication in community education provision in Limerick city.

## OUTCOMES:

- A diverse range of community education options is available and accessible to learners across the city.
- Community education provision caters for the needs of diverse communities, including geographic communities and issue-based communities.
- Community education provision is provided in a way that avoids unnecessary duplication and maximises an efficient use of resources.



# 2) CAPACITY-BUILDING, SUPPORT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

## AIM:

To develop the knowledge and skills of LCEN members in respect of community education planning, delivery, and quality standards.

## STRATEGIES:

- Provide ongoing advice, guidance, and mentoring support to members, and in particular, new members in relation to the planning and delivery of community education.
- Provide and/or support access to relevant training and capacity-building opportunities for members.
- Support members to adhere to Quality Assurance standards as set by the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).
- Work with members to establish and maintain quality assurance standards for non-accredited courses.
- Disseminate information about events, opportunities, and key policy developments to members.
- Develop and provide LCEN Induction Packs to new members.
- Develop members knowledge and skills in relation to providing community education in a digital environment.

## OUTCOMES:

- Members have greater knowledge and skills in relation to community education provision.
- Members are informed and up to-date in relation to key developments in the sector.
- Members adhere to relevant QQI standards.
- Quality assurance standards are in place for non-accredited education provision.
- Members have increased digital learning knowledge and skills.



### 3) PROMOTION, OUTREACH, AND AWARENESS-RAISING

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**AIM:**  
To raise awareness about the role and availability of community education.

- STRATEGIES:**
- Continue to promote community education opportunities in existing communities.
  - Promote and raise awareness of community education opportunities to communities not already engaged in community education.
  - Raise awareness of research and evidence on the role and value of community education among stakeholders.
  - Raise awareness of the role and work of the LCEN among wider stakeholders and to communities not already represented on the LCEN.
  - Continue to be a supporter of, and an active participant in, the Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival – through participation in the Festival Organising Committee, organisation of individual events, and supporting members to host events.
  - Participate in, and support, other local and national lifelong learning events and festivals including Aontas Adult Learner's Festival, Culture Night etc.
  - Develop the LCEN's digital media presence.



- OUTCOMES:**
- Increased visibility and awareness of community education – its role, impact, and availability in Limerick.
  - Increased awareness of the role of the LCEN.
  - Increased membership of the LCEN.
  - Strong presence of community education learning opportunities in local and national lifelong learning festivals and events.
  - Increased digital media presence with increased engagement with the website and with social media platforms.



### 4) POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY

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**AIM:**  
To be a collective voice for members to influence and inform the development of policy at local, regional, and national levels in relation to community education.

- STRATEGIES:**
- Communicate to, and inform members, about new policies and policy developments.
  - Develop and implement processes for consulting with learners about their perspectives, experiences, and needs.
  - Ensure the voice and needs of learners inform policy development.
  - Engage in or support research which develops new understandings and knowledge about community education.
  - Develop and disseminate position and policy papers as appropriate.
  - Strengthen relationships with, and involvement in, relevant local and national decision-making structures, e.g., Public Participation Network (PPN), Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC), Aontas.
  - Ensure new knowledge and learning about changing and emerging needs is used to inform strategies and actions across relevant priority areas e.g., responding to digital exclusion issues.

- OUTCOMES:**
- Local and national policy is informed by the knowledge and experience of community education providers, learners, and other relevant stakeholders.
  - A communication structure is in place to support two-way communication between learners and the LCEN.
  - Learner voice is at the centre of, and informs, community education planning, delivery, and policy development.
  - The LCEN is represented in relevant decision-making structures, including the PPN and the LCDC.



## 5) GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

### AIM:

To ensure the highest standards of good governance at Board and Operational Levels.

### STRATEGIES:

- Maintain a regular calendar of relevant meetings to ensure key activities are co-ordinated and communicated appropriately.
- Develop Annual Work Plans to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- Develop processes to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- Produce Annual Reports to show progress achieved in implementing the Strategic Plan.
- Review existing and future staffing and other financial resource needs required to implement the Strategic Plan and annual work plans.
- Identify and source longer-term financial resources if required.
- Establish sub-structures and working groups of members, with associated Terms of References and review mechanisms, to guide and assist implementation of key work areas and strategic strands.
- Review and develop, as appropriate, policies and procedures to comply with the Charities Regulator Governance code.



### OUTCOMES:

- Sufficient staffing and financial resources in place to implement the strategic plan and associated annual plans.
- Annual monitoring data collated, analysed and reported.
- Sub-structures and working groups established, where required, with clearly documented Terms of References and processes for review of effectiveness.
- Annual reports published showing progress against the Strategic Plan.
- Policies and procedures in place to ensure effective and efficient operational management.
- Full compliance with the Charities Regulator Governance Code achieved and maintained.

## CURRENT MEMBERSHIP (2022)

- Adapt domestic abuse services
- Garryowen CDP
- Limerick Womens Network
- Limerick City CDP
- Moyross Adult Education Group
- Northside Family Resource Centre
- Our Lady of Lourdes Adult Education Group
- Southill Family Resource Centre
- St Mary's Adult Education Group
- St Saviour's Adult Education Group
- Paul Partnership
- Learning Limerick
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board

## LEARNER TESTIMONIALS



*It may take time, it might take second third fourth, however many tries to get there but once the gateways continue there is a chance to get there*

**- Karen Wallace**



*It means I am actually living and in communication with people and not obsolete as life would make you feel/believe !!*

**- Annette Egan**



*Learning new skills, improving old ones and making new friendships*

**- Margaret Wallace**



*I am so grateful for adult education. Learning does not stop.*

**- Mabel Mescall**



*It's never too late to learn and make new friends*

**- Margaret Fitzgerald**





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