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

Guide for Local Community Safety Partnerships

Developing, Delivering and Reviewing a Local Community Safety Plan



Contents

1. Purpose of This Guide 4
2. Legislative and Policy Context 4
2.1. Role of the National Office for Community Safety 5
2.2. Functions of Local Community Safety Partnerships 5
2.3. Public sector duties 6
3. What is a local community safety plan? 8
4. The role of the Safety Partnership 8
5. Developing the local community safety plan 10
6. Phase 1: Preparation 11
6.1. Socio-economic and demographic analysis 11
6.2. Reviewing the policy landscape 12
6.3. Local asset and stakeholder mapping 14
6.4. Strategic framing 14
7. Phase 2: Engagement 15
7.1. Public consultation 15
7.2. A participative approach 16
7.3. Consultation methodologies 16
7.4. Communications plan 20
8. Phase 3: Development 20
8.1. Identifying key themes 21
8.2. Developing actions 21
9. Phase 4: Delivery 22
9.1. Governance 22
9.2. Communicating the Plan 22
9.3. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting 24
9.4. Reviewing and updating the Plan 24
Appendices 26
10. Appendix I: Resources 26
10.1. Community engagement 26
10.2. Youth engagement 26
10.3. Data resources 26
10.4. Community safety plans 26
11. Appendix II: Public sector duties 27
11.1. Section 118 – community safety duty 27

11.1.1. Community Safety Assessment.....28
11.2. Appendix III: Section 42 – equality and human rights duty.....29
12. Appendix IV: Sample local community safety plan Gantt chart with indicative actions;.....31
13. Appendix V: Sample communication channels.....33

1. Purpose of This Guide

This guide has been developed by the National Office for Community Safety 'National Office') to support Local Community Safety Partnerships ('Safety Partnerships') in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing local community safety plans.

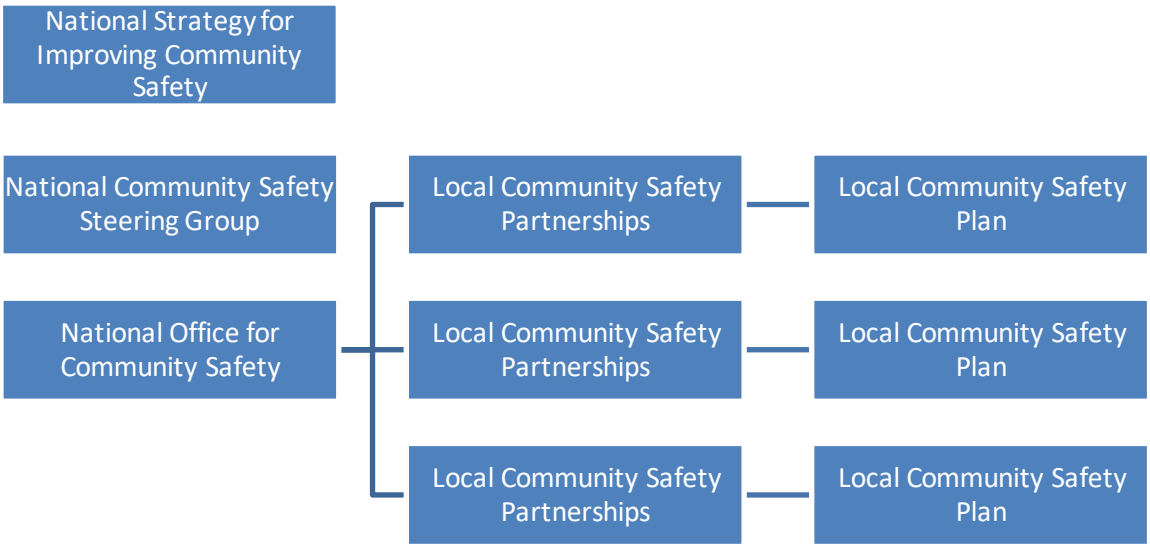
It is intended to serve as a guiding framework rather than a prescriptive instruction manual. The aim is to assist Safety Partnerships in identifying an approach that is appropriate to their local context while meeting their statutory obligations to develop, adopt and implement a plan to improve community safety in their administrative area. It should be read in conjunction with the Guidance for the Operation of Local Community Safety Partnerships, also prepared by the National Office.

The guide outlines the legislative framework, sets out best practice informed by pilot initiatives, and provides a practical, phased approach to the development of local community safety plans. It is intended to promote consistency of approach while recognising that Safety Partnerships retain responsibility for determining how best to fulfil their functions, allowing flexibility to reflect local context and priorities.

2. Legislative and Policy Context

The Policing, Security and Community Act 2024 ('the Act'), which commenced in April 2025, represents a major shift in national community safety policy, recognising that community safety, the sense of being and feeling safe, cannot solely be the responsibility of An Garda Síochána and requires a multi-agency, problem solving approach.

Part 3 of the Act establishes a full national and local infrastructure (see Fig 1 below) to support this holistic model of community safety which is centred on multi-agency collaboration, proactive engagement and empowering communities to have a say on issues relating to community safety in their area.



2.1. Role of the National Office for Community Safety

Under Section 108 of the Policing, Security, and Community Safety Act 2024, the National Office for Community Safety ('National Office') provides training, guidance, and support to Safety Partnerships in their operation and the performance of their functions. and the National Office also has a statutory responsibility to monitor the implementation of local community safety plans.

This guide forms part of that guidance and support function and is intended to assist Safety Partnerships in fulfilling their statutory role in relation to their plans.

2.2. Functions of Local Community Safety Partnerships

Under Section 116 of the Policing, Security, and Community Safety Act 2024, each Safety Partnership is required to:

- Act as a forum for discussion on community safety issues
- Develop and adopt a local community safety plan every three years
- Carry out meaningful public consultation to identify local community safety objectives and priorities
- Coordinate the delivery of actions within the plan
- Monitor and review plan implementation

- Align actions with Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs) and other relevant plans or strategies.
- Provide views on local policing plans, where relevant

These functions rest with the Safety Partnership collectively.

The Safety Partnership team (Coordinator and Administrator) support this work but do not replace the role of the Partnership in setting direction, priorities, or decisions.

2.3. Public sector duties

Statutory bodies have public sector duties that they have to fulfil which have a particular relationship with community safety plan which Safety Partnerships as a whole may like to take into consideration at each phase of the development of their own Plan.

2.3.1. Community Safety (Section 118)

Section 118 of the Act places a statutory obligation on all public service bodies to take all reasonable steps, within their functions and available resources, to improve community safety. This includes a clear emphasis on the prevention of crime and the prevention of harm to individuals, particularly those who are vulnerable or at risk. It places responsibility on all relevant bodies not only to act within their own remit, but also to cooperate with one another in a structured and meaningful way to improve outcomes for communities.

This section of the Act also introduces specific strategic and reporting requirements on public service bodies who must assess the community safety issues relevant to their functions, set out how they are addressing these issues within their strategic plans, and report on progress through their annual reports.

In the context of Safety Partnerships, the Community Safety Duty provides a strong statutory foundation for the development and implementation of Local Community Safety Plans. It reinforces the role of Safety Partnerships as a mechanism through which public service bodies can collectively meet their obligations under Section 118.

Local Community Safety Plans should therefore be informed by an understanding of both:

- Presenting issues, such as patterns of crime, anti-social behaviour, or community concern; and
- Underlying drivers, including socio economic conditions, service gaps, and broader determinants of vulnerability and risk.

This approach supports the development of more effective, preventative, and sustainable interventions.

Further details on the Community Safety Duty and community safety assessments and how they might align with community safety plans are available at Appendix II.

2.3.2. Equality and Human Rights (Section 42)

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 establishes the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, which places a proactive and ongoing legal obligation on all public bodies in Ireland to integrate equality and human rights considerations into the full range of their functions. This includes policy development, service delivery, strategic planning, and internal organisational practices.

The Equality and Human Rights Duty requires public bodies not only to avoid discrimination, but to actively assess how their work impacts different groups in society, identify where inequalities or human rights issues arise, and take proportionate steps to address these. It operates at both a strategic and operational level, meaning that equality and human rights must be considered from the earliest stages of planning through to implementation and review, with progress reported on an ongoing basis.

There are a number of cross cutting issues that commonly arise in the community safety context, including equality (and gender equality), poverty and social inclusion, rurality, age, disability, and sustainability, including climate considerations. Applying a human rights and equality lens to the different phases of developing their Plan provides a framework for addressing these cross-cutting priorities.

This can be achieved through:

- Having regard to human rights and equality issues relevant to key themes or priorities within the Plan
- Having regard to human rights and equality issues relevant to priority actions supporting the key themes
- Supporting this through inclusive consultation

As with the Community Safety Duty, having regard to equality and human rights within their local community safety plan can support statutory partners in fulfilling and reporting on their statutory obligations under the Equality and Human Rights Duty, whilst also enriching the impact of the Plan for communities.

3. What is a local community safety plan?

A local community safety plan ('the Plan') is a three-year strategic plan developed and adopted by a Local Community Safety Partnership to improve community safety and wellbeing in its functional area.

The local community safety plan will provide the framework for the Safety Partnership to fulfil their role of developing, coordinating and implementing coherent and integrated approaches to improving community safety at local level.

The purpose of the Plan is to establish a shared, coordinated approach to community safety, based on evidence and informed by the lived experience of communities. The Plan should reflect national and local policy objectives, alongside local priorities.

While the Plan should have regard to the National Strategy for Improving Community Safety, Safety Partnerships may begin preparatory and developmental work in tandem with the development of the National Strategy. This allows Safety Partnerships to scope issues, build relationships, and gather evidence to inform the development of their Plan.

4. The role of the Safety Partnership

The Safety Partnership is central throughout the entire process of developing a local community safety plan, and not solely at the point of final approval, formal adoption, and implementation as per their statutory responsibility

Members of the Safety Partnership should therefore be actively involved from the outset in collaboratively shaping how they approach the process of developing their plan, including developing a workplan for engaging the community that reaches across different demographics and communities, identifying high-risk or vulnerable groups and underserved geographic areas who may be most affected by community safety issues; agreeing consultation methodologies; and monitoring emerging themes and insights as feedback is collected.

The National Office Guidance for the Operation of Local Community Safety Partnerships provides nine guiding principles to underpin the work of Safety Partnerships:

- A whole-of-government approach
- Collaboration and partnership
- Harm prevention
- Targeted support for disadvantaged communities
- A participative approach
- Social inclusion
- Accountability
- Evidence based approach
- Respect/recognition of experience and contribution of all members

These principles provide a framework for both the development and delivery of the local community safety plan, offering an agreed set of core values and transforming these values into structured, actionable goals.

The Safety Partnership are supported by their staff team – Community Safety Coordinator and Administrator – in developing and delivering their local community safety plan. The Local Community Safety Partnership Coordinator plays a role in supporting collaboration, maintaining momentum, and resolving challenges as they arise.

Whilst the Coordinator has a key role to play in managing the research and public consultation process; coordinating the development, delivery and review of the Plan; tracking progress against agreed actions and outcomes; and supporting transparency,

reporting and communication with the public; the Coordinator acts on behalf of, and under the direction of, the Safety Partnership and does not replace the collective responsibility of the Safety Partnership for decisions, priorities, or adoption of the Plan.

The Chair also has an important role to play as they have responsibility for the leadership of the Safety Partnership and ensuring its effectiveness, particularly in relation to the development and implementation of the local community safety plan.

The Safety Partnership may decide to create a subgroup or other sub-structure of the overall membership to lead on the process of developing the Plan, supporting the Chair and staff team during the first three phases of developing the Plan as outlined below. However it is the responsibility of the Safety Partnership as a collective to decide on priorities, actions and to adopt the Plan.

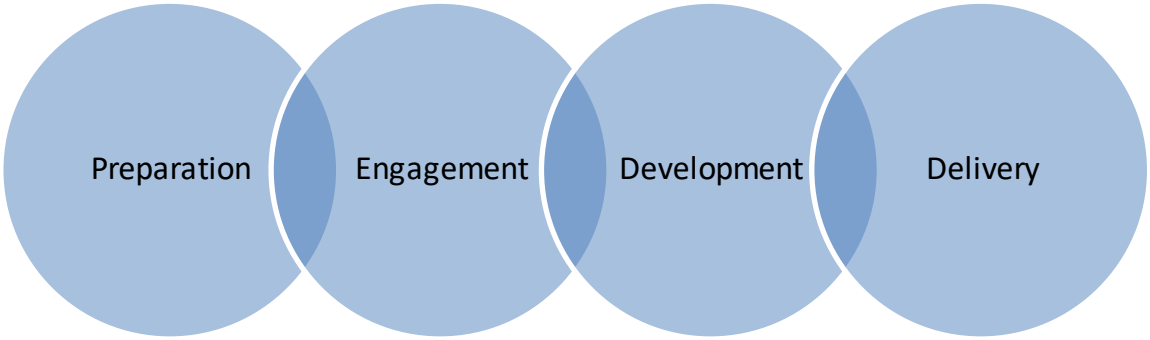
5. Developing the local community safety plan

A four-phase approach to developing a local community safety plan is proposed below.

This approach is informed by the Safety Partnership pilot initiatives in Dublin North Inner City, Longford, and Waterford City and County and the independent evaluation of these pilots.

- Preparation
- Engagement
- Development
- Delivery

This approach can enable local community safety plans to be evidence-based, informed by community input, and focused on achievable outcomes. However, it should be noted that this has been provided to support Safety Partnerships in the development and is not a mandated approach.



These phases are intended as a guide rather than a rigid sequence. A Safety Partnership may adapt, combine, or revisit phases depending on local capacity, emerging issues, and alignment with national strategy development.

A sample project planning Gantt chart for local adaptation is provided at Appendix IV.

6. Phase 1: Preparation

Local community safety plans should not only reflect the needs of local communities but also embed the move away from reactive, anecdotally driven approaches to community safety issues and challenges, to proactive, evidence and asset-based interventions. The Plan must also sit into and complement, rather than duplicate, the local service and policy landscape.

A preparatory phase, scoping out the local context, to support the approach to consultation and plan development is therefore an important element of the process.

6.1. Socio-economic and demographic analysis

Undertaking a socio-economic and demographic analysis supports understanding of the specific context of the Safety Partnership administrative area.

Such analysis should extend beyond crime data and consider a broad range of indicators, such as population profile, housing, education, employment, health, social inclusion, and access to services.

Data sources may include Census data; the Pobal HP Deprivation Index; Regional Development Monitor; Live Register data; HIPE, An Garda Síochána and other statutory service information where appropriate, and other local and national datasets. Safety Partnership members may also have access to local datasets that would provide an additional evidence base to the development of the Plan. Examples of this could include Fire Service data; ETB Area Profile Tool relating to youth service need in an area; local DSGBV related data, outside of crime statistics; Drug & Alcohol Taskforce data in relation to drug use.

Safety Partnerships may adopt a proportionate approach based on available resources where a detailed analysis is not possible. The extent and depth of analysis undertaken will depend on local capacity and access to data.

Rather than duplicating existing research, Safety Partnerships are encouraged to draw from and build on demographic information already available in their area such as that gathered in Local Economic and Community Plans, Local Development Strategies, Children and Young Persons Services Committee (CYPSC) local area plans, Local Divisional Policing Plans and other local authority or agency plans as part of this scoping work.

6.2. Reviewing the policy landscape

The preparatory phase also includes a review of existing national, regional, and local policies and plans relevant to community safety to ensure there is policy congruence and alignment in the relevant Local Community Safety Plan. This review is intended to inform and support Safety Partnerships rather than direct it and should be used to identify opportunities for collaboration and coherence across plans.

Local Community Safety Plans created by the pilot Local Community Safety Partnerships provide examples of this. These plans are available to view here.

6.2.1. Statutory obligations and Plan alignment

Whilst the Safety Partnership should review the broad range of policies and plans in both the local and national landscape under the Act they have specific functions in relation to Local Economic Community Plans and local policing plans.

Local Economic Community Plan

The Act requires Safety Partnerships to collaborate with other stakeholders in relation to actions under a Local Economic Community Plan. Local community safety plans must therefore be aligned with Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs).

LECPs provide a six year framework for promoting and supporting the economic, social, and community development of a local area, setting out high-level objectives and actions that aim to enhance quality of life, foster inclusion, and drive sustainable development.

They bring together the work of multiple stakeholders, including local authorities, state agencies, community and voluntary organisations, and business interests, to ensure a coordinated approach to local development priorities.

Aligning a local community safety plan with the LECP helps ensure that safety initiatives complement wider economic and community development priorities, supports cross sector collaboration, and avoids duplication of effort.

Safety Partnerships should review relevant LECP objectives and identify opportunities to link community safety actions with broader social, economic, and community outcomes. While full integration may not always be possible, Safety Partnerships should aim for meaningful alignment wherever feasible, ensuring that local community safety plans support and add value to existing local development frameworks.

Divisional Annual Service Plans

Under the Act Safety Partnership may provide views on the preparation, or progress on implementation, of An Garda Síochána Divisional Annual Service Plans in their administrative area.

These annual plans provide a framework for the delivery of policing services in the relevant divisional area. They will reflect core policing priorities of An Garda Síochána's Annual Service Plan, adapted to local context following engagement with stakeholders.

Local community safety plans should refer to and reflect the functional responsibility of Safety Partnerships to provide views on Divisional Annual Service Plans.

6.3. Local asset and stakeholder mapping

As envisaged by the Act and outlined in the Community Safety Policy the community safety approach means harm prevention and interventions delivered pro-actively, by the service best placed to deliver it, and doing so in a joined up, integrated way with other services. Often this means the redirection of already existing service provision or better coordination of services.

The local community safety plan must therefore reflect the local landscape, not only in terms of gap identification but also in terms of asset mapping.

Safety Partnerships draw together the resources and expertise of a broad spectrum of services and agencies providing an opportunity to identify and leverage the people, infrastructure, amenities, and services that contribute to safe communities.

Initial engagement with Safety Partnership members and other stakeholders with a community safety remit such as local authority departments, local drug and alcohol taskforces, and service providers in this preparatory phase can inform more targeted asset mapping activity during the consultation phase.

6.4. Strategic framing

During this phase, the Safety Partnership may begin to articulate a shared vision for community safety in their administrative area.

These early framing discussions can support more focused engagement during the consultation phase. This early framing supports later consultation and helps Safety

Partnerships explain the purpose and scope of engagement clearly to communities and stakeholders.

This may include engaging an external facilitator to support structured brainstorming workshops, or embedding vision setting exercises within the wider consultation and engagement process. Such approaches can help ensure inclusive participation, generate diverse perspectives, and strengthen collective ownership of the emerging community safety priorities.

7. Phase 2: Engagement

7.1. Public consultation

Public consultation is a statutory requirement and a core principle of the Safety Partnership model. The purpose of consultation is to identify local community safety priorities directly from residents, community groups, and stakeholders. Consultation should be proportionate to local context and capacity. Safety Partnerships are encouraged to focus on meaningful engagement rather than compliance-based exercises.

The consultation processes should be inclusive, accessible, and seek to engage those who may be under-represented in existing structures. This may include consideration across the Equal Status Acts protected grounds, socio-economic disadvantage/status, locality, language needs, and digital access.

National strategies and policies such as the National Strategy for Women and Girls; the National LGBTQI+ Inclusion Strategy; the National Action Plan against Racism; and the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy recognise that these demographics have a particular experience of community safety and name Safety as a core pillar in recognition of this. In planning consultation and engagement consideration could be given to how the experience of these groups may be heard, and how they may be specifically referenced within the Plan.

The Safety Partnership could consider establishing a subgroup to identify underheard voices in their community and mechanisms for in-reach and/or the development of an engagement plan that responds to the demographics of their area.

7.2. A participative approach

A participatory and practical approach to consultation helps ensure engagement is meaningful, rather than simply a compliance exercise. Best practice resources such as the Guide to Inclusive Engagement and Hub na nÓg are available to support Safety Partnerships in developing their approach, both include practical checklists to support consultation design.

A participative approach ensures that residents and stakeholders are not just consulted but actively involved in shaping priorities and solutions. This can include co designing initiatives, contributing to decision making, or collaborating on community-led projects, which strengthens ownership, trust, and the likelihood of sustainable outcomes.

Consultation methodologies must be accessible and inclusive as an extension of meaningful community involvement. When methods are designed with communities in mind, barriers related to language, disability, literacy, or digital access are reduced, allowing a wider range of voices to be heard. Inclusive approaches strengthen the quality of data collected and help ensure that measurements of safety reflect the experiences of all community members, rather than only those who find it easiest to engage.

7.3. Consultation methodologies

7.3.1. Public survey

Surveys are used in consultation to efficiently gather standardised feedback from larger groups of people. They can provide cost effective insights and provide a mechanism for a wide range of voices to be heard.

Safety Partnerships may utilise public consultation surveys to gather evidence-based insights for their local safety plans. These surveys serve as a critical bridge between statistical data and the lived experience of the community.

Core survey objectives

The following community safety pillars are proposed to underpin survey design:

- **Perceptions of Safety:** Measuring how safe residents feel in various contexts, for example in their local area, in town centres, or using public transport after dark.
- **Priority Issues:** Identifying the specific community safety issues or behaviours that most impact quality of life in the area.
- **Community Solutions**: Gathering local views on what specific interventions or resources would most effectively improve safety.

Data strategy and analysis

Safety partnership should consider how they plan to analyse the data that they collect through a survey. It is recommended that open-ended (qualitative) questions are kept to a minimum to make the analysis of the data manageable. Closed-ended questions including multiple choice, Likert scales, rating scales, ranking and matrix tables are recommended.

Best practice in survey design

To maximise participation and ensure high-quality data, Safety Partnerships should consider to these four standards:

- **Accessibility:** Ensure the survey is written in plain English. Provide the survey in multiple formats (digital and paper) and languages relevant to local communities.
- **Data Minimisation**: Only collect data that is necessary for the Safety Plan. Avoid collecting personal information.
- **Neutrality:** Avoid leading questions and instead use neutral phrasing to avoid bias.
- **Dissemination:** Develop a robust communications plan to capture a broad spectrum of views within the community and targeting particular groupings as identified in the preparation phase.

The National Office hosts regular webinars and engagement sessions for Safety Partnership staff. The March 2026 session included a presentation from a member of the department's research and evaluation team on effective survey design. A link to view this recorded session is available on request to info@communitysafety.ie.

National community safety survey

The National Office designed and developed a national community safety survey which was administered in early 2026 and incorporated the above core survey objectives.

A copy of the national community safety survey has been made available in word format. Safety Partnerships are free to use the content from the national survey in their own surveys with the below caveats:

- **Consistency:** Safety Partnerships are encouraged to use the full survey as the content has been NALA reviewed and the completion rate was particularly strong for a survey of this nature.
  If using all or some of the questions from the national survey the content of the question, including response options, should not be changed to adhere to the plain English review and allow for data benchmarking.
- **Local Adaptation:** Safety Partnerships can supplement the template with additional specific questions relevant to their unique local context

7.3.2. Qualitative consultation methodologies

Whilst there are advantages to the administering of public surveys to hear from local communities there are also limitations including selection bias and limited depth compared to engaging with people directly.

Mixed method approaches triangulating quantitative data from the preparatory phase and administration of surveys with qualitative engagement with individuals and groups will give a more rounded insight into community safety in the Safety Partnership administrative area.

The below is an indicative list of qualitative consultations methodologies, it is not exhaustive, neither are any of the options mandated:

- **Public meetings and Town Halls:** Suitable for large scale information sharing and collecting general feedback. Planning of formal townhall type engagement should consider accessibility in the broadest sense.

- **Roundtables:** Facilitated, collaborative discussions designed for stakeholders to discuss specific issues in smaller groups. The World Café model is an example of a roundtable consultation. Roundtables can be combined with townhall meetings to facilitate deeper conversations with larger groups of people, however consideration should be given to capacity and maximum/minimum number numbers. For example, for a World Café to be effective it requires at least 12 people to provide sufficient diversity of perspectives and allow for meaningful rotation.
- **Focus Groups:** Facilitated discussions with small, selected groups (usually around 6-10 people) to gather in-depth qualitative feedback. Focus can work particularly well in hearing the experience of specific groups within the community, for example people with disabilities or people from underserved communities, as they can be held in 'safe space' venues and designed to specifically address barriers to participation.
- **Interviews:** One to one or small group interviews (2-3 people) can be very effective in facilitating detailed conversations with key stakeholders to understand specific experiences, perspectives and gather service knowledge.
- **Exploratory walks:** Exploratory walks or walkability audits can provide a useful tool in gaining an insight into actual and felt safety in particular locations or for specific groups of people. They should include diverse representation and pre-defined questions and recording tools to document observations thematically.

Safety Partnerships are encouraged to leverage existing initiatives and events where possible, rather than creating new activities, to maximise engagement and avoid duplication and resource constraints. For instance, this could include attendance at and engagement with Age Friendly events for older people; Local Sports Partnership activities such as national play day; Local Authority Integration Team engagement events; and Public Participation Network plenary meetings.

Informal consultation can also be effective in meeting people where they are at, this might involve engaging with the public in places where they already congregate such as shopping centres or local festivals and events. Carlow PPN have developed a toolkit for community consultation that includes engagement tools such as World Cafés, Appreciative Inquiry, Consultation Picnics and Community Mapping that can be used in a variety of contexts both formal and informal.

7.4. Communications plan

Developing a comprehensive communications plan will support the engagement process and ensure key groups are given the opportunity to engage with the consultation process.

Formal aspects of the consultation process should be widely publicised using multiple channels, such as local authority websites, social media, newspapers, local radio and community networks. Email circulars such as those sent to the Public Participation Network membership are useful and effective promotion channels.

Stakeholder mapping as outlined in section 6.3 can support the development of the communications plan as it allows the Safety Partnership to identify whether targeted engagement with specific groups or organisations is required. It can also help to identify gaps in the consultation process.
Stakeholder mapping is an ongoing, iterative process and can be reviewed and refined as the process of engagement on and development of the Plan proceeds.

'Ad hoc' or organic engagements with communities, for example hosting a stand in a shopping centre or at an event, should also be recorded on the communications plan.

A table listing communication channels for consideration when developing a communication plan is provided at Appendix V.

8. Phase 3: Development

A draft of the local community safety plan can be developed at any point in the preparatory, engagement and development stages but should be revised to reflect learnings, particularly from the process of engaging with communities. This aspect of developing the plan can reflect principles of co-production, whereby communities and partners contribute to shaping both priorities and responses.

It is recommended that the Safety Partnership review draft revisions iteratively, providing input on how public feedback is interpreted and integrated into the Plan.

By participating in these stages, the Safety Partnership can ensure that the consultation is meaningful, inclusive, and aligned with local priorities.

8.1. Identifying key themes

All submissions, engagements and feedback gathered in the engagement phase should be recorded and triangulated with data from the preparation phase to identify key themes, and priorities for the Safety Partnership administrative area.

The Safety Partnership may approach the process of synthesising findings into key themes in whatever manner is appropriate for their context. Some may wish to evolve early iterations of these themes as part of the strategic framing outlined in Section 6.4 and informed by the initial preparatory analysis and use this as foundation for community consultation. Others may wish to allow themes to evolve organically from stakeholder and community engagement, developing their thematic priorities during or after the consultation phase.

8.2. Developing actions

As indicated above the evidence gathered during research and the priorities identified through engagement should inform the development of clear priority areas, actions, and outcomes.

Each action should identify the lead agency, supporting partners, timelines, and indicators of progress. Where possible multi-agency responses and opportunities for collaboration should be identified and called out in actions. Actions should also be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Bound - and incorporate mechanisms to embed plan delivery within mainstream structures for long term ownership and sustainability.

When developing their Plan Safety Partnerships should consider including short-, medium- and longer-term actions. The inclusion of actions that would deliver visible, early wins will serve to build community and stakeholder trust and will also give a sense of momentum to action delivery to Safety Partnership members.

Engagement with key stakeholders throughout this phase can ensure actions align with, complement rather than duplicate, and enhance the delivery of services and responses to community safety in their administrative area.

Safety Partnerships may consider further community engagement as part of the development phase – holding workshops to present findings, thematic areas and indicative responses – revising and adjusting their draft plan to reflect this activity.

Once the Plan has been revised considering consultation and Safety Partnership input, it should then be formally submitted to a full meeting of the Safety Partnership for approval and formal adoption, either with or without further modifications. This ongoing involvement ensures that the Plan reflects both community priorities and the Safety Partnership's strategic oversight.

9. Phase 4: Delivery

9.1. Governance

Safety Partnerships can consider establishing a coordination structure with clear roles, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms. For example, all three pilot Safety Partnerships established subgroups based on their thematic priority areas, to review, monitor and report on delivery of actions to the broader Safety Partnership membership.

Such governance 'infrastructure' to support monitoring of action delivery should be called out in the Plan so clarity is provided to stakeholders and the community.

9.2. Communicating the Plan

Developing a comprehensive communications plan to launch and share updates on the local community safety plans is an essential element of raising awareness, building trust and aligning stakeholders. Clear communication helps to build community confidence and trust in the partnership model.

Steps to consider when planning the launch and further communication in relation to the Plan:

- Identifying of target audiences:
    - think about who was engaged in the consultation process and how they may be participate in, invited to or informed of the Plan launch as part of the 'feedback loop'
    - think about stakeholders or access points for communities that need to 'buy in' to the plan, how are they included in the launch. Could they be asked to speak at an event about actions they have responsibility for or how they see the plan being impactful for communities?
    - think about channels of communication – who is being targeted, how and when
- Identification of communication channels:
    - Having identified the target audience map out appropriate communication channels. Use a variety of channels to reach a variety of audiences – social media, mainstream media, presentations at events.
    - Consider how Safety Partnership members can 'amplify' the launching of the Plan through their own organisations and networks
    - Consider how other structures within the local partnership landscape can also amplify messaging in relation to the Plan.

The communications plan can include mechanisms such as public and stakeholder facing events – in person and/or through webinars; presentation to the local authority; engagement with structures such as the LCDC, PPN, Local Drug & Alcohol Task Forces, etc.

Appendix V lists a number of communication channels for consideration.

Ongoing communications:

The Safety Partnership may consider developing an annual communications plan to sit alongside their local community safety plan mapping points of contact with communities and other stakeholders to keep them informed of progress.

This could include:

- Holding public meetings on Plan delivery
- Publishing progress reports and updates

9.3. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Monitoring involves tracking progress against agreed actions and indicators, while evaluation assesses the extent to which the Plan is contributing to tangible improvements in community safety, wellbeing, and public confidence. Monitoring and evaluation are essential to understanding whether the local community safety plan is achieving its intended outcomes.

In terms of **monitoring** delivery the ongoing maintenance of an action log to regularly track progress against deliverables and milestones can provide a practical means to identify and address barriers to delivery early, allowing the escalation of issues where necessary.

Given the complexity of community safety, **evaluation** should be based on a range of indicators and not solely on crime statistics.

Examples of such measures include:

- Improvements in residents' perceptions of safety and confidence in local services
- Evidence of reduced incidents or severity of harm in targeted areas
- Increased community engagement and participation in safety initiatives
- Demonstrable cross-agency collaboration leading to tangible community outcomes
- Progress in addressing key local safety priorities identified by the community

As noted in section 9.2 above, **reporting** on progress should be made publicly available and included in an overall communications plan. This can include formal reporting mechanisms such as issuing reports after Safety Partnership meetings, through an annual report, or using traditional and online media on an ongoing basis to share updates on specific actions, interventions or activity.

9.4. Reviewing and updating the Plan

In accordance with the Act, Safety Partnerships must review the Local Community Safety Plan at least once during its three-year lifecycle and amend it as appropriate.

In practice, annual or mid-term reviews (for example, after 18 months) should include both an assessment of progress against actions and an evaluation of the Plan's impact on community safety, community engagement, and the Safety Partnership's effectiveness. Assessment of viability of long-term funding and resource continuity beyond initial implementation phases of action delivery could be considered for inclusion in the review process.

Ongoing community engagement and feedback through surveys, engagement at events and forums such as the Safety Partnership's public meeting(s) can assist in evaluating what is working, what needs adjustment and whether additional interventions are required.

Local community safety plans are intended to be flexible and responsive. As new data becomes available and local circumstances change, Local Community Safety Partnerships may update the Plan to ensure it remains relevant and effective. Any adjustment to priorities, strategies or actions in response to changing community needs and conditions should be formally adopted by the Safety Partnership and shared with stakeholders and the community, explaining the rationale for these changes.

Such published reviews should also celebrate and communicate success, recognising the contribution of individuals and organisations involved, and supporting the building of trust between communities and services.

Appendices

10. Appendix I: Resources

10.1. Community engagement

- Gude for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making
- Carlow PPN Consultation Toolkit
- WHO presentation on Good Participatory Practice

10.2. Youth engagement

- Hub na nÓg: Young Voices in Decision Making
- Participation of young people in decision making action plan 2024-2028
- Tusla Child and Young Person Participation Resources
- UNICEF resources for meaningful youth engagement

10.3. Data resources

- Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht webinar for LCDCs on socio-economic indicators.
- Pobal HP Deprivation Index
- Regional Development Monitor
- Live Register data
- State of the Nation's children – this is due to be updated in 2026

10.4. Community safety plans

- Dublin North Inner City Pilot plan
- Longford Pilot plan
- Waterford Pilot plan
- City of Victoria community safety and wellbeing plan
- Toronto community safety and wellbeing plan
- Shire of Broome community safety plan

11. Appendix II: Public sector duties

11.1. Section 118 – community safety duty

Section 118 of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 establishes a statutory Community Safety Duty on all public service bodies to take all reasonable steps, within their functions and available resources, to improve community safety. This includes a clear emphasis on the prevention of crime and the prevention of harm to individuals, particularly those who are vulnerable or at risk.

The Duty reflects a significant shift in how community safety is understood and delivered in Ireland. It recognises that community safety is not the sole responsibility of any one agency, but rather requires coordinated, multi- agency action across the public sector. It places responsibility on all relevant bodies not only to act within their own remit, but also to cooperate with one another in a structured and meaningful way to improve outcomes for communities.

In relation to Section 118, this includes highlighting the Community Safety Duty and the role of Local Community Safety Plans in supporting its practical application. In particular, the clear allocation of ownership for actions within the Plan, together with the identification of collaborative and cross agency interventions, can assist statutory partners in demonstrating how they are taking all reasonable steps to improve community safety.

Section 118 introduces specific strategic and reporting requirements. Public service bodies must assess the community safety issues relevant to their functions, set out how they are addressing these issues within their strategic plans, and report on progress through their annual reports. This embeds community safety as a core consideration in organisational planning and accountability processes across the public sector.

In giving effect to the Community Safety Duty, Safety Partnerships should adopt a broad and holistic understanding of community safety. This extends beyond visible or immediate issues such as crime, anti-social behaviour, or public disorder and includes consideration of the wider social, economic, and environmental factors that influence safety and wellbeing.

Community safety issues are often shaped by underlying or structural factors. These may include socio economic disadvantage, poverty, inequality, housing instability, educational attainment, health outcomes, substance misuse, and access to services. Focusing solely on front facing issues risks addressing symptoms rather than the root causes from which those issues emerge.

Local Community Safety Plans should therefore be informed by an understanding of both:

- Presenting issues, such as patterns of crime, anti-social behaviour, or community concern; and
- Underlying drivers, including socio economic conditions, service gaps, and broader determinants of vulnerability and risk.

11.1.1. Community Safety Assessment

A key mechanism for giving taking Section 118 into account at local level is the option of carrying out a Community Safety Assessment as part of the plan development process.

This assessment if used can avail of bringing together a range of quantitative and qualitative data to develop a shared, evidence-based understanding of community safety in the area. In doing so, it could incorporate both immediate safety concerns and the wider socio-economic context in which these arise.

In practice, this may include:

- Analysing crime and incident data to identify trends and patterns
- Examining socio-economic and demographic data to highlight areas of disadvantage or vulnerability
- Drawing on service data (e.g. housing, health, youth services) to understand demand and pressure points
- Incorporating community feedback to reflect lived experience and perceptions of safety
- Identifying groups or areas that may be disproportionately impacted by community safety issues

Safety Partnerships may also consider how different factors interact, for example, how deprivation, lack of access to services, and social exclusion may contribute to increased risk of harm or reduced feelings of safety.

The findings of this assessment can then directly inform the priorities and actions set out in the Local Community Safety Plan, ensuring that responses are not only reactive but also preventative, targeted, and proportionate.

11.2. Appendix III: Section 42 – equality and human rights duty

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 establishes the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, which places a proactive and ongoing legal obligation on all public bodies in Ireland to integrate equality and human rights considerations into the full range of their functions. This includes policy development, service delivery, strategic planning, and internal organisational practices.

The Duty requires public bodies not only to avoid discrimination, but to actively assess how their work impacts different groups in society, identify where inequalities or human rights issues arise, and take proportionate steps to address these. It operates at both a strategic and operational level, meaning that equality and human rights must be considered from the earliest stages of planning through to implementation and review, with progress reported on an ongoing basis.

In the context of Local Community Safety Partnerships, Local Community Safety Plans may reflect the Public Sector Duty throughout their development and delivery of the Plan and should demonstrate a clear and consistent regard for equality and human rights. At its core, the Duty requires Safety Partnerships to ensure that their Plans:

- Eliminate discrimination in how community safety issues are identified and addressed
- Promote equality of opportunity across all communities and population groups
- Protect and uphold the human rights of all individuals, particularly those most vulnerable or marginalised

This begins at the preparatory stage, where Safety Partnerships could consider the specific equality and human rights context of their administrative area. This includes understanding how community safety issues may affect different groups differently, particularly those who may be disproportionately impacted. Building this understanding into the evidence base helps ensure that the Plan is grounded in an inclusive and realistic assessment of local need.

As the Plan is developed, equality and human rights considerations can inform both the overall strategic direction and the identification of priority actions.

Consideration of equality and human rights is also closely linked to how Safety Partnerships may engage with communities. For example, consultation processes should be accessible, inclusive, and meaningful, enabling participation from a diverse range of voices, including those who may not typically engage.

In practical terms, Safety Partnerships can demonstrate how equality and human rights have been considered and applied across the Plan, including:

- Assessing equality and human rights issues relevant to community safety in the area
- Reflecting these considerations in strategic goals and priority actions
- Ensuring inclusive and representative consultation processes
- Delivering actions in a way that is accessible and non-discriminatory

In this regard, Safety Partnerships may want to also consider having regard to a number of cross cutting issues that commonly arise in the community safety context, including equality (and gender equality), poverty and social inclusion, rurality, age, disability, and sustainability, including climate considerations. These factors often intersect and influence how individuals and communities experience community safety.

12. Appendix IV: Sample local community safety plan Gantt chart with indicative actions;

The below is for indicative purposes to assist Safety Partnerships in developing a project plan based on the proposed 4 stage process of developing a local community safety plan. It is not a mandatory template.

Phase	Action	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Preparation	Establishment of a Local Community Safety Plan Subgroup, generating support and strategic framing for Plan									
	Establishing a baseline evidence and data profile									
	Asset and stakeholder mapping: collating existing contributions and activity relating to community safety									
	Understanding and mapping strategic alignment at local, regional and national levels									
Engagement	Develop consultation plan including mechanisms for engagement; target communities; and consultation tools and approaches									
	Design and implementation of communications strategy to promote public consultation									
	Delivery of consultation and engagement activity									
Development	Development of key themes or pillars for the Plan.									
	Development of a draft strategic framework with recommendations for the local community safety plan									
	Consultation on draft framework									

	Development of final local community safety plan for adoption by Safety Partnership									
Phase	**Action**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sept**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**
Delivery	Establish a governance framework for ongoing monitoring, evaluation and review									
	Create a visual, public facing version of the Plan									
	Develop a communications plan, including launch, ongoing communications and reporting schedule									

13. Appendix V: Sample communication channels

Communication activity	Purpose
Development of promotional materials	Posters/flyers produced with QR codes for survey and links to information on townhalls, public workshops, and so on to raise public awareness of and registration for consultation events. These can be adapted to both digital and print formats. Local authority communications teams may be able to provide assistance with this.
Public launch	A launch event/photocall can support general awareness raising amongst target audiences about the purpose and focus of the development of a local community safety plan and consultation process. Launch event(s) should be accompanied by PR and other communications materials outlining how people can get engaged / involved. For example, listing consultation events and how to attend/register, sharing link to public survey.
Webpage	A dedicated webpage which acts as a central point of information for all engagement activity. This can be the QR / url that all promotions are directed to so as to ensure up to date information is available at all times. Such a dedicated webpage can also be used to provide updates and reporting on the delivery of the Plan.

Communication activity	Purpose
Social media	Regular and targeted social media posts via all key channels such as the local authority, Safety Partnership member, and other key stakeholder social media can reach a broader audience. Sponsored posts may assist in reaching identified target groups. Creative content such as short videos; reels; carousel posts; infographics and live Q&A sessions can enhance community engagement and impact.
Local media	Local print and radio media outlets are an important channel for raising awareness of the Plan. Engagement could include: Interviews with the Chair and/or other members of the Safety Partnership to 'tell the story' of consultation / Plan launch / Plan delivery. Regular engagements with community slots on local radio to enhance engagement with consultation; amplify actions within the Plan; deliver key safety messages. Issuing of reports and press releases directly to local media. Inclusion of information in relation to the Safety Partnership in PR issued by partners (local authority; statutory agencies; community organisations)
Email and Newsletters	Amplifying engagement and raising awareness through the inclusion of information in relation to consultation, launch, plan delivery in scheduled newsletters and emails issued by the local authority; Public Participation Network; CYPSC; LCDC; Sports Partnership; Healthy Ireland. Communications sent to Safety Partnership member email databases.

Communication activity	Purpose
In person engagement	Attending events or spaces where the community congregates. This could include hosting a stand in a local shopping centre; attending a community day; holding community safety information sessions in community centres; attending local festivals. 'Piggybacking' on or partnering with other structures on events – such as Age Friendly safety days; Healthy Ireland community wellbeing events; CYPSC events; Public Participation network plenary sessions
Youth engagement	Identify communication channels that will reach young people, particularly those who may be impacted by community safety issues or are seldom heard. Direct engagement to reach identified groups could involve partnering with schools; youth organisations; attending local youth cafés; holding focus groups with Youth Diversion Programme participants. Partnering with young people to design a communications campaign to amplify Safety Partnership messaging in an appropriate way.

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

Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, 51 St. Stephens Green, D02HK52
info@community.ie
www.gov.ie/communitysafety