

**Leathinis Corca Dhuibhne / Dingle Peninsula**

**Cruinnithe Pobail / Community Meetings**

**Samhain 2019 / November 2019**

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## 1. Introduction

This report presents a summary of discussions, deliberations and recommendations at eight community meetings that took place on the Corca Dhuibhne Peninsula as follows:

Date	Venue	Communities
12 November	Lios Póil (SN)	Lios Póil
13 November	Camp (Old Schoolhouse)	Camp, Derrymore, Blennerville
14 November	Baile an Fheirtéaraigh (Ionad Pobal)	Baile an Fheirtéaraigh, Dún Chaoin, An Mhuiríoch
18 November	Castlegregory (Club Rooms)	Castlegregory, Stradbally
19 November	Annascaul (Community Centre)	Annascaul, Inch
26 November	Dingle (Benner's Hotel)	Daingean Uí Chúis, Ceann Trá
27 November	Keel (Community Centre)	Keel, Boolteens, Castlemaine
28 November	An Clochán (Halla le Chéile)	An Clochán, Bréannain, An Baile Dubh

At each meeting, Breandán presented the demographic and socio-economic profiles (for each community) and Connor presented data on environmental and energy issues. Both presentations were followed (either separately or collectively) by discussions. This report provides a summary of the notes taken during those discussions.

A number of common features, themes, issues and proposals emerged across all eight meetings. These included the following:

- The development of sheltered housing complexes in villages across the peninsula;
- Supporting community development and the work of community / voluntary groups;
- The expansion of facilities and amenities for young people;
- Improvements to public transport provision;
- Ensuring farming is competitive and that there are better linkages between farming and tourism;
- Supporting the use and development of the Irish language; and
- Making energy production and consumption more sustainable.

Communities welcomed the provision of data, and recommended answering the following to enhance the quality and usability of the information provided:

- i Can we secure data on full-time and part-time employment?
- ii Can we separate out farming from fishing (in primary sector employment)?
- iii Can we profile the skills / qualifications of those who have left the locality?
- iv How much social housing is there on the Peninsula?
- v How many Air B&B premises are there?
- vi Can we access the property price register?
- vii How many actual jobs (not workers) are there on the Peninsula?

## 2. Summary of key themes

### **Economic Development**

- Better protect and harness the peninsula's heritage, language and natural resources, and develop more activities – for locals and visitors – based on access to, and celebration, of heritage, ecology and local identity;
- Compile an inventory of vacant homes, including holiday homes, and ensure an approach to housing and planning that is more in tune with local needs and potential;
- Provide supports and investments for enterprises in areas (of activity) that are compatible with, and valorise, the local landscape and environment and are active beyond the summer season;
- Provide additional supports for young farmers, particularly in terms of ecology and high-nature-value farming; and
- Improve broadband connectivity, particularly in areas west of Daingean Uí Chúis.

### **Community**

- Encourage more visible use of the Irish language and further the development and implementation of the local language plans;
- Provide a broader range of sporting and recreational outlets, especially for young women;
- Involve young people to a greater extent in community development and decision-making;
- Reduce bureaucratic burdens on community and voluntary groups, so that volunteering is more attractive and sustainable; and
- Promote stronger inter-community networking and collaboration – a whole-of-peninsula approach.

### **Well-being**

- Improve family support services, to include the expansion of outreach public services;
- Enhance services for older people – by applying new technologies, improving transport and broadband connectivity, supporting social enterprises and providing social housing;
- Enhance public transport services – expand local routes and develop feeders to connect with Bus Éireann services;
- Address the housing pressures, particularly in and around Daingean Uí Chúis – with the objective of enabling young families to live locally and participate in the community; and
- Provide more opportunities for lifelong learning and upskilling – based locally and through virtual platforms – that are relevant to the local context.

### **Environment and Energy**

- Expand the network of cycleways, walks (especially loops) and make roads safer for walking and cycling – good for the environment, health and well-being;
- Encourage and incentivise households and business to be more energy smart – to reduce consumption and to embrace new and more sustainable forms of energy;
- Rollout a scheme for the retrofitting of existing buildings (would be good for the environment and would create jobs);
- Support community-based energy projects, rather than large-scale / industrial approaches; and
- Devise and implement a traffic management plan that is underpinned by sustainability principles.

The following pages present the reports for each community.

## 3. Community reports

### 3.1 Lios Póil

#### a. Community Profile

In responding to the demographic and socio-economic profile, attendees noted the need to address / redress population decline through a series of interventions as follows:

- Promotion of culture and language;
- Increasing tourism income;
- Relaxing restrictions on planning (for housing);
- Creating more employment (outside the tourist season);
- Promotion of cooperatives;
- A technological hub;
- Developing more amenities;
- Rural transport;
- Providing a community focal point; and
- Village infrastructure – traffic calming and a pedestrian crossing.

#### b. Environment and Energy

In response to the presentation, attendees stated that there is an over-dependence on oil, and this needs to be addressed through the following interventions / initiatives:

- Solar panels (domestic and on farm / commercial premises);
- Wind turbines;
- Electric cars and electric tractors;
- Geothermal heating;
- Feasibility study for an anaerobic digester;
- Wood pellets;
- Public transport – expansion of local link bus service;
- PV panels; and
- Battery storage.

#### c. Taking Stock and Setting a Vision

The meeting identified the following as the community's main assets:

- The GAA is still strong.
- The school is excellent.
- There is an interest in the language and in heritage.
- The landscapes, especially along the coast, are stunning.

In capitalising on these assets, and in developing the locality, the meeting proposed the following:

- Upgrade the hall to facilitate all needs.
- Pedestrian crossing – traffic calming;
- Development Mín Árd Slipway;
- Green Area Development;
- Services geared towards older population e.g., bingo, dancing;
- People's Shed: craft workshop, book club, laundry service; and
- Loop Walks.

#### **d. Planning for the Future**

##### **Economic Development**

The meeting recommended focusing on the following: heritage, agriculture and landscape. The area has an abundance of heritage sites. Increasing heritage tourism would benefit landowners and the wider local community. The development of loop walks would complement heritage and agriculture. It was also noted that the Irish language is strong locally, and that people should speak it more frequently and be more confident and assertive in promoting it.

The meeting also noted the high percentage of unoccupied houses in the locality, and suggested that an inventory of these might be compiled.

##### **Wellbeing**

The area has a strong community spirit, but the physical infrastructure – to support community development – requires further investment.

Addressing wellbeing is essential to arresting population decline, and goes hand-in-hand with promoting investment in the community. It is important to build connections locally, and to encourage and enable participation in the community. In particular, there is a need to provide more opportunities for women to meet (outside of GAA) and to reach out to those who live alone.

The cost of insurance is becoming prohibitive for many community activities.

## 3.2 Camp / An Cam – Derrymore / An Doire Mór & Cathair Uí Mhóráin/ Blennerville

### a. Community Profile

The meeting noted the standout features as follows:

- The employment profile is different from the rest of the Peninsula, and is driven by commuting to Tralee.
- The area performs better than other parts of the peninsula; it is more vibrant.
- In the twenty-year post-war period, the area experienced a lot of out-migration to the UK, but the boom in agriculture and building in the 1970s benefited the area, and led to some return migration.
- Other the past ten to fifteen years, there has been a decline in dairying, and this is not good for the local economy.
- The lack of young people in the locality is palpable.

The meeting also discussed the following issues, arising from attendees' analysis of the profile:

- The lack of feeder routes to the Dingle-Tralee public transport service;
- The ageing of the population – catering for the future needs of older people;
- The decline in volunteerism;
- Difficulties in running and maintaining community organisation and facilities (insurance, bureaucracy); and
- The changing fabric of rural life.

The meeting noted that while the area is cohesive, there are internal differences. Blennerville is very much associated with Tralee, while Derrymore is more rural and has not benefited to the same extent as other parts of the locality – from the Tralee spillovers.

The meeting asked about the age profile for farmers. In response, it was noted that this cannot be derived from the Census of Population. It can be derived from the Census of Agriculture. The next census of agriculture takes place in 2020.

People were encouraged by the data on Irish-speaking, and asked if more can be done to promote the language locally.

Mobile phone reception is patchy in this community. It is absent in some townlands.

### b. Environment and Energy

The meeting noted the area's vulnerability to rising sea levels and coastal erosion. Attendees noted the need for individual action / change, in tandem with policy changes. They noted that young people are more informed and enlightened about environmental issues, and can teach the wider community about the changes that need to be made. There was considerable discussion about public transport provision and about the extension of the current cycle ways, which people argued would be good for the environment as well as for public health, wellbeing and mobility.

### **c. Taking Stock and Setting a Vision**

The meeting identified the following as assets that could be useful in promoting local development:

- Access to skilled and professional people (especially retirees), with the capacity to design and lead community projects;
- Farmers with an interest in community; they may be interested in social farming and environmental initiatives;
- The Dingle Way and
- Good connectivity to other communities.

In capitalising on these assets, and in developing the locality, the meeting proposed the following:

- Improve broadband connectivity – to support micro-enterprise development and to encourage inward investment;
- Plan for the ageing of the population;
- Make it easier for local people to get planning permission to build homes locally; and
- Develop enterprises in areas that are compatible with the local landscape and environment, e.g., wellness retreats and walking holidays.

### **d. Planning for the Future**

The discussion noted the linkages between economic and social wellbeing. Attendees spoke about the social / health / recreational benefits that would accrue from the extension of the current cycle lanes and the development of others. They noted that cycling would bring revenue into the local economy.

The meeting noted the importance of community amenities. People made specific mention of the current community centre and pitches – and the importance of supporting and developing these, as well as community childcare.

It was recommended that there be an astro-turf pitch in the locality.

Other suggestions included:

- Lego serious play;
- Irish dancing/set dancing;
- Story telling; and
- Radical environment education.



### 3.3 Baile an Fheirtéaraigh / Dún Chaoin / An Mhuiríoch

In response to the two presentations, the meeting noted:

- The Common Fisheries' Policy and the industrialisation / internationalisation of the fishing industry had have a significant impact on Dingle and the wider peninsula. This has been bad for the local economy; jobs have been lost. It is also bad for the environment, as cargo is transported by road from Corca Dhuibhne to Rosslare and exported from there. There is also over-fishing and the seal population has expanded to the detriment of fish stocks.
- The closure of shops in villages is 'forcing people into their cars'.
- Young people do not see a future in rural areas, as the high-skilled and government jobs are predominantly in the main urban centres.
- The Irish language remains strong locally, and language learners provide a welcome boost to the local economy and community. Further promotion of the language is essential.
- The drink-driving laws are compounding rural isolation. The figures (in the profile) show a high number of people living alone. Most of these are elderly people, and they are increasingly isolated in their own homes.
- Local people find it difficult to get planning permission, and are inclined to move away from the area.
- The GAA is a very important social outlet, but there need to be alternatives (especially for young women).
- The area is vulnerable to climate change and rising sea levels. The meeting showed interest in tidal / wave energy. People expressed concerns about the health impacts of 5G.
- People were (pleasantly) surprised to note the data on educational attainment levels.

**Radharc agus Dul Chun Cinn – Moltaí a tháinig chun cinn.**

#### **Forbairt Eacnamaíochta / Economic Development**

1. Resources / Assets
  - The local golf course and coláistí samhraidh are evidence of successful economic development. These and other similar ventures need to be supported. We also have excellent craft workers and artists.
  - Tourism is strong – we have repeat visitors and the feedback from tourists is very positive.
2. Issues
  - Distance from markets adds to costs.
  - The area does not attract external investment.
  - We are not harnessing (sufficiently) the benefits from fishing and the environment.
3. Ideas / Proposals
  - Quality of life is integral to economic development. If people know they can work and live in an area that has a good quality environment, with decent amenities / services, they are more likely to move here (and come back from Dublin and other cities). Quality of life includes housing. We need good quality housing – family-centred and not developer-led.
  - Economic development and environmental conservation go hand-in-hand, especially in an area like ours that lives on tourism. It is important to protect our landscapes and to avoid pollution. All houses should have PV panels. There needs to be an emphasis on local food

and local energy. We need to cultivate food / crops (barraí) for local people – rather than cattle for export.

- Broadband connectivity needs to be improved. It is good in Dingle town, but not good west of it.
- The development of greenways and blueways is good for the economy and for people's health and wellbeing. This links to quality of life.
- We need to improve the place's reputation as a sustainable destination.
- The **language is key** to the area's future – in every sense.

### **Pobal / Community**

#### 1. Resources / Assets

- Community participation is strong, particularly in sporting and cultural events.
- Our local schools are excellent.
- The Irish language and culture are strong – must be protected and promoted.
- There is a strong sense of community and sense of place.

#### 2. Issues

- Lack of a space for young people;
- No community / public space in Dingle; and
- The number of holiday homes is problematic. While some holidaymakers support local businesses and the community, many do not. Local young people cannot afford to live locally.

#### 3. Ideas / Proposals

- There is a need for a peninsular vision – fíís don leithinis;
- Strengthening of community organisations – animation and capacity-building; and
- Statutory bodies and service providers need to allow people to engage with them through the medium of Irish.

### **Wellbeing**

#### 1. Resources / Assets

- People move to this locality because it is attractive.
- Culture, music, dance and drama are still strong.
- People are supportive of one another.
- We have good sports and recreational facilities – GAA, soccer, rugby, golf, walking.

#### 2. Issues

- Housing – the lack of quality housing is a major challenge.
- Walkability – roads need to be safer – so that pedestrians and cyclists can get about.
- Access to health services (GPs) is essential.
- The cost of living is high.
- Insurance is prohibitive for community groups / events.

#### 3. Ideas / Proposals

- (Any) improvements to health and transport services.
- Reach out (more) to older people and those who live alone.
- A state-sponsored insurance scheme for the community and voluntary sector.

- Develop walkways and cycleways to the local beaches.
- Support youth clubs (like in An Clochán).

## **Environment and Energy**

### **Pobal / Community**

#### 1. Resources / Assets

- We are far too dependent on oil and our energy supply is vulnerable.

#### 2. Issues

- Young people understand these issues, but most people are unaware of the urgency of the situation. We need to disseminate information – particularly the local angles / implications.
- How much power do we have? The multi-nationals and governments are telling us to consume, consume...
- Japanese knotweed – an invasive species.

#### 3. Ideas / Proposals

- Small-scale wind energy projects;
- More native woodlands – as carbon sinks and public amenities;
- Prevention of heather / bracken burning;
- Prevention of run-off from farms and industries;
- More research / trials on wave / tidal energy;
- Reinstate grants to upgrade houses and install energy-saving devices (solar panels);
- Grant aid to refurbish old and abandoned houses; and
- PV-electricity generation.

### 3.4 Castlegregory / Caisleán Ghriaire

#### **a. Community Profile**

In responding to the demographic and socio-economic data, attendees commented on:

- The proportion of people who live alone;
- The high number / proportion of holiday homes; and
- The reliance on fossil fuels.

There was also some discussion on the seasonal nature of employment and changes in agriculture. People also spoke about changes in fishing and the decline in the number of boats 'going out'.

The meeting noted the significance of local services, particularly the post office, shop(s) and schools. It is important to support these services and local businesses.

The lack of public transport is a barrier to local economic development and to reducing car dependency.

#### **b. Environment and Energy**

In response to the presentation, attendees remarked on the locality's vulnerability to rising sea levels and coastal erosion. The Maharees Conservation Group has been working to protect the dunes and coastal areas, and its work needs to be supported and acknowledged.

The meeting noted that while young people are better informed about the science of climate change, older people can be more environmentally friendly in their attitudes and behaviour e.g., consuming less energy. Thus, there is a need to draw on the strengths of both generations – the knowledge of youth and the wisdom of older people.

#### **c. Taking Stock and Setting a Vision**

The meeting identified the following as the community's main assets:

- Landscape / seascape;
- Amenities – walks, sporting and recreational facilities;
- Tourist tradition – a welcoming community;
- Local schools;
- Entrepreneurship and can-do attitude;
- Good social / recreational activities for older people;
- Environmental awareness and a commitment to action; and
- Local farmers' participation in agri-environmental schemes.

In capitalising on these assets, and in developing the locality, the meeting proposed the following:

- Promote the expansion of walking and cycling in the locality – among residents and visitors – good for wellbeing, community and environment;
- Reach out to older people, especially those who live alone. Develop services / sheltered housing;
- Provide public transport – not just for shopping / recreation, but for commuters as well;
- Expand the range of amenities and facilities in the community – especially for younger people;
- Retrofit homes to make them more energy efficient; and
- Refurbish the community centre – adapt it to enabling more activities.

### 3.5 Abhainn an Scáil / Annascaul

#### **a. Community Profile**

In responding to the profile, attendees remarked on:

- The high number (absolute and percentage) of persons living alone;
- The decline in the number of full-time farmers; and
- The importance of local economic development and diversification.

#### **b. Environment and Energy**

In response to the presentation, attendees noted the challenges across the Peninsula, notwithstanding the fact that Annascaul will be less affected than other communities (due to its topography and high coastline). The meeting stressed the importance of public transport, including feeder routes to the Dingle-Tralee bus service. People also spoke about the fares and the need to make transport more affordable.

Attendees expressed interest in the environmental initiatives that are currently underway, and in particular, in the anaerobic digester.

#### **c. Taking Stock and Setting a Vision**

The meeting identified the following as the community's main assets:

- Natural amenities – landscape and seascape;
- Strong cultural identity;
- GAA; and
- Proximity to Dingle.

In capitalising on these assets, and in developing the locality, the meeting proposed the following:

- Doing an inventory of vacant houses – to see if these can be restored / occupied;
- Getting more data on the number of jobs locally (in the parish and in Dingle);
- Tapping (more effectively) into the passing tourist trade;
- Involving young people more in community development; and
- Supporting farm diversification and micro-enterprise development.

#### **d. Planning for the Future**

##### **Economic Development**

The meeting noted that the area has a strong entrepreneurial tradition, and people are proud of local entrepreneurs. They stated that it was important to support enterprises to grow / expand and to spawn new micro-enterprises. The planning system will have to allow for economic / business development in rural locations – particularly in the early stages of enterprise development.

##### **Wellbeing**

The meeting noted the significance of the Rural Social Scheme in supporting community development and in enabling farmers to get 'out and meet people'. Volunteers and community & voluntary groups are doing Trojan work in the community, but are challenged by rising costs (especially insurance) and red tape. It is important that volunteers be supported and that groups have access to development officers to support and guide them in their work.

## 3.6 Dingle / Daingean Uí Chúis & Ceann Trá / Ventry

### a. Community Profile

In response to the presentations, the meeting noted the following:

- Lack of young people/children; there has been a notable decline in a generation;
- Housing question – the under-supply and cost are barriers to enabling young people to live in the community;
- Social isolation is a problem in rural areas;
- Public transport – west of Dingle Town is ‘non-existent’. This compounds isolation, and is a driver of car dependency;
- Local shops to the west of Dingle have closed down, and the loss of rural services is also leading to increased car dependency; and
- The number of lone parents is higher than people had expected.

The discussion focused in on the type of place that Dingle is:

The town is a very successful tourist destination, with a wonderful offering. It is ‘the envy’ of many other parts of Ireland. However, there is a deficit locally in respect of public spaces. There is no community hall and no youth centre. The town does not have a theatre, and there is no dedicated space for concerts. Thus, while it is important to meet tourists’ needs, it is also important to look after the local population.

People also spoke about the seasonal nature of the local economy.

The meeting noted the differences between Dingle Town and other parts of the Peninsula – especially the Gaeltacht. The town is performing much better than rural areas. The Gaeltacht has particular vulnerabilities. The profile points to a need to promote better linkages between town and countryside.

The meeting welcomed the presentation of the data. Some attendees stated that they were aware of the trends, but that they had not quantified them. They also welcomed the evidence-based approach.

### b. Energy and Environment

The meeting welcomed the data on energy consumption and noted the need to:

- diversify energy production and farming;
- provide efficient public transport; and
- install more charging-points for electric cars (fast-charging).

People noted that large-scale wind turbines would be inappropriate on the local landscape and would undermine the local economy (a deterrent to tourism). However, they encouraged the exploration of tidal energy.

The meeting also noted that the figures presented (in respect of energy consumption) represent an under-reporting. They only include the resident population, and do not take account of the tourist traffic and consumption.

### **c. Taking Stock and Setting a Vision**

Among the many strengths that Dingle has in terms of supporting further local development are:

- A well-educated and skilled population;
- Vibrancy – associated with festivals and cultural activities;
- The Sacred Heart University;
- A proven ability to stand-up to safeguard local interests and to fight against exploitation;
- Good shops; and
- A commitment to caring for the environment.

The meeting noted that Dingle has several assets, associated with its location, heritage, identity, landscape and tourism industry and tradition. These bring many benefits, but they also bring challenges including:

- the town centre being depopulated (as Air B&B properties take over from residences);
- (possible) over-reliance on tourism;
- reliance on seasonal employment;
- a lack of social and affordable housing and
- a higher cost of living (than other parts of Kerry).

### **d. Planning for the Future**

The meeting identified a number of issues that ought to be addressed in a local area plan.

Attendees also put forward specific proposals as follows:

- We need to explore domestic / farm / small business wind energy projects and to harness wave energy;
- Broadband and public transport connectivity in rural areas needs to be improved;
- There is a need to address seasonality in tourism;
- The tourism product needs some modification – to focus more on culture, walking and ecological tourism;
- Dingle Town needs a traffic management plan – probably to include park & ride;
- Farmers need to be supported to grow more food (rather than industrial commodities) – this would be better for the environment and would create more jobs;
- Undertake a skills audit and engage with the diaspora in promoting micro-enterprise development;
- A community space; possible venues include the workhouse/ the ice plant;
- Foster a stronger sense of community in the town, and establish a Community Council as an umbrella body for all community and voluntary groups;
- Provide better facilities for youth and for people with special needs; and
- Provide more recreational space e.g., a town park.

## 3.7 Keel, Boolteens and Castlemaine

### a. Community Profile

The meeting welcomed the data and attendees stated that the figures confirmed the perceptions they had. People agreed that Keel, Boolteens and Castlemaine are great places in which to live. The quality of life is excellent, and the area is relatively close and well connected to services and employment in Milltown / Killorglin. They noted the figures (in the presentation) in respect of population change, and they commented on the youth 'exodus' that has affected the community over the past twenty years. They attributed this, in part, to the scattered nature of the settlement pattern from Castlemaine to Annascaul and the lack of a focal point or cluster. This can mitigate against local people when they want to get planning permission locally, and some have moved to nearby centres, notably Milltown and Killorglin.

People spoke about the changes in farming and the challenges associated with attaining farm viability. They also talked about social change, and the decline of the pub as a focal point in the community. They spoke about newcomers to the community and about the importance of engaging with them and encouraging them to feel more included. They noted that the rural settlement policy (that was in place) discriminated against them, and that communities had to counteract this by being welcoming to individuals / families.

There was a lengthy discussion about mobility and specifically the lack of walkability in the locality. The main Killarney – Dingle road intersects the community and is constantly busy. The meeting felt that unless this was addressed and public transport provision improved that there would be a 'glass ceiling' on the area's development.

### b. Environment and Energy

In response to the presentation, attendees asked openly: "Why haven't we been told this before and what are we doing about it?" The meeting noted that due to its low-lying location and soft coastline, this community is very vulnerable to erosion and rising seas. Discussions focused on ways of reducing car dependency and improving public transport provision.

The meeting heard that a number of homes in the locality have installed a 'black box' that uses humidity / moisture to heat the water.

### c. Taking Stock and Setting a Vision

The meeting identified the following as the community's main assets:

- A newly refurbished community centre that is well used;
- Excellent schools with good pupil-teacher ratios;
- Local lift scheme (working well);
- Good GAA club;
- Strong community organisations;
- Affordable housing (relative to other areas);
- Beautiful scenery; and
- Social services e.g., meals-on-wheels.

Milltown Mart is an asset to the entire Mid-Kerry Area, and it needs to be promoted. The Rural Social Scheme (RSS) is important to local farmers and provides excellent services to the community.



The meeting also noted some of the challenges and trends that have emerged over recent years. While local schools are excellent and have pupil capacity, schools in neighbouring towns (Milltown) are 'stretched', and the Department of Education and Skills is spending money on prefabs and extensions. This appears to be a waste of resources. The meeting also spoke about medical / health services and noted 'there are four vets in Milltown, but places are struggling to get doctors'. They recommended the opening of a primary care centre in Milltown.

People also spoke about inter-group communication in communities, and the importance of having good channels for the exchange of ideas and information.

#### **d. Planning for the Future**

The meeting put forward the following recommendations:

- Connect Kerry Way and the Dingle Way;
- Ensure the community centre is widely used – particularly by older people;
- Compile a list of activities in all community centres on the Peninsula and encourage communities to exchange information and experiences, with one another, on community centre management / promotion / development.

### 3.8 An Clochán, Bréannain agus An Baile Dubh

This meeting took an ‘open forum’ format, rather than workshops.

In response to the demographic and socio-economic profile, people spoke about the fabric of the local community – its assets, challenges and potential:

- The youth club has been running consistently since 1971, and has a strong inter-generational element. Young people engage with and go to visit the elderly.
- The local school is excellent.
- The community has a development plan, but it will be out-of-date next year; this process (NEWKD) provides an opportunity.
- Much has been achieved with respect to Tidy Towns.
- An Tinteán is very popular (especially the Christmas celebration).
- A meals-on-wheels service is fully operational and well regarded
- We get good support from ASE and Údarás.
- The gymnastics classes, and other activities in the hall, are very popular.

Some of the challenges include:

- Lack of public transport;
- Planning permission is difficult to get;
- Ageing of the population;
- Relationship with Dingle – ensuring that Dingle does not suck in all the development;
- People living alone – need for outreach services / sheltered housing;
- A (bespoke) crèche;
- The area has a high proportion of holiday homes. These bring mixed blessings; property prices are inflated and locals cannot compete. At the same, time many holiday home-owners contribute to the local community and get involved in activities.
- Travelling out to Castlegregory/Dingle for activities for young people / teenagers.

Considerations for future development:

- Planning should be community-led, not funding-led.
- Should we have a hub or business centre?
- Need for business units – small scale;
- Potential for more teleworking;
- Importance of putting in the infrastructure;
- Walking: several people come to climb Mount Brandon, but they do not stay locally - need for accommodation: a hostel and more agri-tourism;
- People leave, but they do not come back. We need to hold people, and/or get them back.
- Going down to two teachers (in the school) was a turning point.
- People travel out to work, and do their shopping elsewhere. People need to support the local shop.
- Passing points on the road to Brandon Point.
- Reliance on a core pool of volunteers, as the population base is small.
- The governance code and administrative obligations on community & voluntary groups can be off-putting.