



## Theme 2: Transportation

Goal: to provide affordable and accessible transport options for older people so that they have the opportunity to engage and participate to a greater extent in economic, cultural social life in the County. This will be done through a more co-ordinated approach to the use of current transport resources, exploring alternative transport options and better promotion of the importance of transport as an essential part of older people's lives.

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT:

Good access to transport makes it easier to participate in community life. In Ireland, around a third of people living in rural areas have difficulty in accessing essential services because of poor transport services. People who depend on others for help with transport tend to prioritise essential outings, such as grocery shopping and medical appointments, and neglect their social and leisure needs.

The Local Link Tipperary (LLT) currently has 61 services/ routes operating during the week running to various destinations and local towns. The service covers 70% of Tipperary County with new services being looked at over the next few years in order to cover the remaining areas that are not currently served. In Tipperary, over one in ten people have no motor car in the County (13.3%) with this figure rising to over 20% in some areas like Tipperary Town, The Commons, Templemore, and Roscrea. But even when people do have access to a car, the HAPAI survey figures show that driving reduces substantially as they get older. The proportion of people at risk of losing their license or inability to drive as they age will only increase in line with population projections and the question of 'what happens when I can't drive?' is one that will face more and more people and needs to be factored into policy making and service planning.

The constricting of participation in economic and social life as people age contributes to the feeling of loneliness and isolation. As people begin to feel more vulnerable, this affects their confidence which in turn, slowly begins to inhibit their desire or their ability to get out and about. Essential services in their community such as the shop, bank, post office, bank, library – these are all ways older people can continue to connect with their local community. But where these services are disappearing and the challenge of accessing them in larger centres looms, an alternative way for people to engage has to be found and central to this is an affordable and accessible transport network.

## TRANSPORTATION

**61%**



of people  
in Tipperary

Aged  
**55+**



lower than

**78%**



of people  
in other counties

Aged  
**55-69**

ARE CURRENT DRIVERS

**23%**

of over 70s had reduced their driving in the past five years lower than the 34% in other counties.

**20%**  
AGED 55-69

reported that transport was very difficult or difficult to access.

**29%**  
AGED 70+

a further **20%** said that they did not use public transport.

**87%**



(rarely or never)

did not report any problems socialising because of transport issues

**88%**



(rarely or never)

did not report any problems doing essential tasks because of transport issues

1 in 5  
**20%**



rated public transport in their locality as poor or very poor.

**4.5%**

AGED  
55+

in Tipperary reported difficulties in socialising or essential tasks because of lack of transport and a further **7.7%** had difficulty some of the time.

THIS RISES TO

**10%**

AGED  
55+

who did not drive and 12% for those with walking difficulties.

**3.3%**

AGED  
70+

reported a difficulty attending health or social care appointments or doing essential tasks (most or all of the time) because of transport issues.

A further **17%** reported a difficulty some of the time because of transport issues.

### KEY ISSUES FROM CONSULTATIONS:

- Rural transport infrastructure is seen as weak across the county with a lack of public transport options and routes, particularly in North Tipperary. There is poor connectivity in some areas and it is cited as a barrier to accessing work, training, education and social activities
- The majority of buses are not wheelchair accessible
- Accessing services and urban centres for key needs can be a challenge for older people and this is particularly the case for health appointments
- Rural isolation and loneliness is a recurring concern particularly for people who live alone, with declining infrastructure and services in rural areas compounding this concern
- Lack of information or promotion around the various bus/ transport options in the county
- Real issue with people losing their driving license as they get older – people have to get a cert from their Doctor and as people age and are prone to more illnesses, this gets more difficult
- Insurance costs for older people driving are significant.

### ACTION 2.1: DEVELOP A TRANSPORT PLAN

The recommended Local Transport Plan will cover the whole county and detail what the ideal transport service/connections should be in place to allow individuals access other services in the main towns and villages, what transport services/connections are currently available, and a roadmap on how to bridge the difference including infrastructure such wheelchair accessible buses and bus stops, seating and shelter at bus stops, bike racks at bus shelters/bus stops. Services should be

placed where the existing transport service/connections exist and developed in conjunction with the public transport providers with particular attention paid to vulnerable groups, such as older people, who are more reliant on public transport. While the Plan will map a way forward, the more immediate issue is that of improving the co-ordination of transport services around the county where connectivity is generally focused on larger towns and the and the emphasis needs to be placed on connecting people in rural areas.

<b>Lead Partner:</b>	Tipperary Transport Co-ordination Unit
<b>Support Partners:</b>	Tipperary County Council, Bus Eireann, National Transport Authority, Health Service Executive, Older Persons Council, Local Development Companies, Youth Groups, HSE, Community and Voluntary Sector, Chamber of Commerce, Private Transport Operators, SPC on Transportation and Travel, Local Enterprise Office
<b>Link to Plans:</b>	Healthy Tipperary; LECP

## ACTION 2.2: EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE COMMUNITY TRANSPORT PROVISION OPTIONS

Examine community transport models currently operating in other areas e.g. volunteer car schemes, affordable taxis, car pooling, car sharing, car buddy project and see if any can be implemented in the County, linking with Tipperary Local Link, the Volunteer Centre and other relevant organisations. Particular attention should be paid to facilitate getting people to medical appointments, mass, shops and services and social activities. The use of HSE and school buses should also be examined to see if they could be integrated in the county wide transport network options.

<b>Lead Partner:</b>	Tipperary Transport Co-ordination Unit
<b>Support Partners:</b>	Tipperary County Council, Tipperary Volunteer Centre, Bus Eireann, National Transport Authority, Health Service Executive, Older Persons Council, Local Development Companies, HSE, Community and Voluntary Sector, Chamber of Commerce, SPC on Transportation and Travel, Resource Centres
<b>Link to Plans:</b>	Healthy Tipperary; LECP

## ACTION 2.3:      ADVOCATING, INFLUENCING AND PROMOTING TRANSPORT ISSUES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Work with key stakeholders to influence planning policy and development management, linking with the Transport Plan, to enable: age friendly parking; appropriately located bus stops; adequate shelters and seating; clear timetables at stops; interconnectivity with services; scheduling of timetables and routes; a shop route to connect people to local businesses and services; urban transport loops; cognisance of transport to and from all future developments and builds. Better information and promotion is needed around the work of the Transport Co-ordination Unit and of the services and options available to people including what buses run within and externally in the County, where they pick up, times of pick up, the services offered.

<b>Lead Partner:</b>	Tipperary LCDC Health and Wellbeing Alliance
<b>Support Partners:</b>	PPN, Tipperary County Council – C&E section, Local Link Tipperary, Older Persons Council, Local Development Companies , Community and Voluntary Sector, Chamber of Commerce, Private Transport Operators, SPC on Transportation and Travel
<b>Link to Plans:</b>	LECP
<b>Expected Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Tipperary Transport Plan developed with a particular focus on supporting access by older people to villages/ towns/ services</li> <li>• Greater availability of transport options available throughout the county, particularly in rural areas</li> <li>• A greater awareness among older people of the transport options available to them and among decision makers and programme designers about the importance of accessible transport in everyday lives.</li> <li>• An increase in frequency and volume of transport options available to older people</li> <li>• Increased passenger numbers</li> <li>• Better use made of vehicle downtime.</li> </ul>