



# Cootehill Town Team Plan 2023 – 2026

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Page No.**

1.	Introduction and Background	3
2.	Process used for the Plan	4
3.	Members of the Town Team and Structure	5-6
4.	Vision for Cootehill	7
5.	Action Plan	8-12

**Cover Photo:** *Darkness into Light 2024, Liam Wallace, Cootehill Youth Club*

## 1. Introduction and Background to Cootehill Town Team

Cootehill Town Team is one of four in the county, set up in 2016-2017 to respond to community and business needs in the town and its hinterland. Town Teams bring people and groups together through a Team that is representative of the different stakeholders. The Town Teams act as a catalyst to encourage businesses, local communities and others to work together to energise and reinvigorate their towns and communities in collaboration with public authorities and other service providers.

Cootehill Town Team has had many successes over the past 7-8 years. These have included:

- Two public consultations resulting in development of Hub Muinchille and Le Chéile and plans for a multi-purpose community hub in the former Bank of Ireland;
- Through Hub Muinchille, provision of a regular venue for Parents & Tots, Senior youth club, Bridge Club, Narcotics Anonymous, Cootehill First Responders, ETB-run and other courses;
- Consultation with parents and the expansion and redevelopment of the playground and formation of playground committee;
- Two walkability studies and work on footpaths, crossings and junctions;
- Flower baskets and streetscape painting;
- Work on Church Street Graveyard;
- Pride of Place award in 2023.



**Hub Muinchille**, a key achievement under the last plan

## 2. Process for this Plan

This plan was drawn up with support and facilitation of Ómra Support Agency, who were contracted by Cavan Co. Council. It sets out what Cootehill Town Team hopes to achieve over the next 3 years. It was drawn up between June and November of 2023 and commenced with a review of progress made under the last plan. A public workshop was held in September and the draft plan was discussed at an AGM in November.

However, the most important aspect of the plan development was through the ongoing discussions that Town Team members have had with various local groups. These have included consulting with Cootehill Youth Club through their leaders, the young people in Cootehill Youthreach and with many other groups that Town Team members are involved with.

The draft plan was finalised at a further meeting of the Town Team in December and the Team also discussed a collective vision for the coming years. The final draft and the vision were put back out for public comments and feedback through making copies available in Hub Muinchille and Cootehill Library.



Inclusion has been a central principle of the work of Cootehill Town Team and, in particular, of groups that are frequently excluded. Ensuring access for people with disabilities has been and will continue to be an important focus within this.

### 3. Members of Cootehill Town Team and Structure

Name	Sector / group represented
Bridget Boyle (Chairperson)	Accessibility, Le Chéile Working group, Dideán refugee support
Mary Brigid Duffy (Secretary)	Accessibility, arts, playground committee
Aiden Fitzpatrick	Cavan Co. Council Elected Member
Carmel Brady	Cavan Co. Council Elected Member
Mary Lennon (Joint Treasurer)	Economic, Heritage
John Grogan (Joint Treasurer)	Tidy Towns
Olivia Boyle	Youth, arts, mental health
Sean Shields	Men's Shed, Economic
Lisa Hogan (PRO)	Youth group
Jean Kirwan	Le Cheile Working Group, arts, Youth Club, Social Inclusion

The Town Team operates through the Team as a whole and through project specific working groups based on the proposals in the plan.



Town Team members Aiden Fitzpatrick, Seán Shields, Camel Brady, Bridgie Boyle, Mary Lennon, John Grogan and Mary Brigid Duffy (*missing from picture Olivia Boyle, below, and Lisa Hogan and Jean Kirwan, page 8*).



Olivia Boyle, Town Team member, works with young people in art education and mental health. She is most passionate about providing the young people of Cootehill with the best resources possible to grow up healthy and happy.

## 4. Vision for Cootehill

The following sets out how the Town Team sees Cootehill – town and community – in the long-term.

### **Vision for Cootehill**

#### ***(How we want our town and community to be)***

- An inclusive and welcoming community for all – all generations, new people, visitors with equal access to resources and services;
- Strong community spirit and leadership where ownership of physical areas and of initiatives is encouraged and supported;
- An environmentally aware community that protects the environment;
- Local organisations / clubs and businesses feeding into all of this;
- Development of a space that is creative, inspiring and learning and that meets both social and economic needs.



Lisa Hogan, Town Team member in front of Church St. Graveyard. Heritage projects, including the mausoleum in this graveyard, are included in the new plan

Jean Kirwan, Town Team member, in front of the soon to be redeveloped Bank of Ireland







## TOWN TEAM PROPOSALS FOR COOTEHILL

**Diversity, inclusion and accessibility will be cross-cutting themes throughout all projects**

Project	Key Players	Time scale to completion			Progress
		Short-term (1 year)	Medium-Term (2-3 years)	Long-term (4+ years)	
<b><i>Social Projects</i></b>					
1. Create Community Hub with a dedicated youth space in Bank of Ireland (BOI) premises (see <i>Economic projects also</i> )	Town Team, Cavan Co. Council (CCC), Cootehill Youth Club (CYC)		X		
2. Create a permanent home for the Men's Shed in BOI premises	Men's Shed, Town Team		X		
3. Continued development of playground including sensory area (ongoing at present)	CCC, Town Team, Playground Committee	X			
4. Develop football pitch at Drumnaveil	Town Team, CCC, Playground Committee, Dídeán (Refugee Support Group)		X		
5. Finalise development of basketball court / MUGA (multi-use games area) at Drumnaveil and identify suitable locations for development of other outdoor MUGA	Town Team, CCC, Playground Committee, Dídeán (Refugee Support Group)		X		



6. Bring Jigsaw or other youth mental health supports, family room, etc. into BOI premises	Town Team, Croílár na Dromlíne, CYPSC (Children & Young People's Services Committee), CMETB (Cavan Monaghan Education & Training Board), CYC		X		
7. Continue and expand counselling/mental health supports	Town Team, HSE	X			
8. Support the work to establish a domestic violence refuge in Cootehill	Town Team, HSE, Department of Equality and Children, Tusla, Safe Ireland	X			
9. Organise a community Health and Wellness Forum	Cavan Sports Partnership, Cootehill Town Team, local community and sporting groups, local G.P		X		
10. Organise a Local Development Conference in BOI premises	Town Team, Chamber of Commerce, LEO (Local Enterprise Office), CCLD (Cavan County Local Development)		X		
<b><i>Economic Projects</i></b>					
11. Develop a training / education hub and start-up small enterprise space in the Bank of Ireland (BOI) premises	Town Team, CCC, Chamber of Commerce		X		



<b>Heritage Projects</b>					
12. Carry out further exploration of mausoleum in Church Street graveyard	EWG		X		
13. Provide signage and access to archaeological sites including Quaker graveyard, Cohaw Tomb and famine graveyard	Town Team, CCC (Heritage Officer) and Cootehill Area Development		X		
<b>Infrastructural Projects</b>					
14. Put in new footpaths at Halton's / Fairy Forest and Cycle Lanes going to St. Aidan's Comprehensive School. Address Cavan Road safety issues e.g. with pedestrian crossing and improve lighting outside main town centre	Town Team, CCC, Active Travel, Town Team		X		
15. Continue to paint / maintain Cootehill Main Street derelict buildings	Town Team, CCC		X		
16. Identify suitable locations and facilities for bike parking	Town Team, CCC,		X		
17. Underground electric wires and improve signage	Town Team, ESB Networks, CCC				
18. Continue to improve access to footpaths and to buildings, increase awareness of accessibility	Town Team	X			



<b>Environmental Projects</b>					
19. Re-introduce floral displays/ hanging baskets to the town	Tidy Towns	X			
20. Identify a location and develop a Community garden	Tidy Towns		X		
21. Increase sustainability/bio diversity awareness	Tidy Towns	X			
<b>Collective Projects (multi-organisational)</b>					
22. Develop collaboration and improved communication between local organisations, and strengthen community spirit and involve new people, through: - 2025 Cootehill celebrations;  - Organisation of volunteer appreciation event/s; - Development of Community Forum / Network; - Interactive Board / website, social media	All interested local organisations – Town Team to host meeting & committee to be set up  To be explored To be explored Town Team, Chamber of Commerce, Cootehill Area Development	X  X X	X		
23. Organise Cootehill arts events	Town Team, Cootehill Drama Group, St. Michael’s Hall, CCC, local, regional and national artists	X			
24. Link with and support Cootehill Area Development in following up on the feasibility study completed re Sustainable Energy Community	Cootehill Area Development				