



Údarás na
Gaeltachta

Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2028



TABLE OF CONTENT

01	Introduction	1
02	Company Profile	2
03	Delivering Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028	4
04	Vision, Mission and Values	5
05	Overarching Aims, Outcomes and Impact	7
	Strategic Aim 1 & 2	7
	Strategic Aim 3 & 4 & 5	8
06	Strategic Objectives and Priority Actions	9
	Strategic Objective 1	10
	Strategic Objective 2	11
	Strategic Objective 3	12
	Strategic Objective 4	13
	Strategic Objective 5	14
	Strategic Objective 6	15
	Strategic Objective 7	16

INTRODUCTION

The years from 2020 to 2022 have been tumultuous for community and voluntary organisations throughout Ireland. The impact of Covid-19 on operations management coupled with changing societal attitudes to work and lifestyle, reinforce the need for social enterprises everywhere to review strategic direction.

In Autumn 2022, Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla commenced the process of developing a new five-year strategic plan. The results of this planning process are contained in this document, which sets out a blueprint to guide the activities of the local development company and the Parish of Achill from 2023 – 2028.



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Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla Cuideachta
Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta was registered as a
company limited by guarantee in 2000.

COMPANY PROFILE

WE ARE:	For the local community and broader stakeholder base
WHO:	Wish to realise the economic, tourism, cultural and heritage opportunities available in Achill
OUR:	G-Teic co-working and enterprise space, Achill Experience Aquarium and Visitor Centre, Irish language and community infrastructure supports
ARE:	Readily available year-round, cost effective and well managed
ENABLING US:	To deliver social and economic benefits through a community-oriented social enterprise business model

WHAT WE DO

Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta is committed to driving the social, cultural and economic development of the Parish of Achill.

To help Achill achieve its full potential, the challenges that lie ahead will need to be appropriately addressed. These challenges include:

- The departure of a younger generation of people leaving Achill to seek economic and employment opportunities elsewhere
- Access to suitable enterprise space and the increased costs associated with doing business
- Access to a wide range of job opportunities to meet the needs of a highly educated workforce
- Keeping the Irish language and unique culture of Achill an inherent part of the lives of people living in Achill
- Addressing the implications of Common Agricultural Policy reform
- Combating social isolation and addressing the needs of an aging residents living in increasingly depopulated towns
- The demand for affordable housing
- Ensuring investment in local broadband, tourism infrastructure, facilities and public realm initiatives keeps pace with the needs of the local population and all necessary climate change mitigation measures

Responding to these challenges, Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla is pursuing a Theory of Change designed to achieve meaningful social and economic benefits for the local community and wider base of stakeholders.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Social Impact:	We positively impact the reputation of Achill as a place for people to visit and live
Outcomes:	We make a difference through our work. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We help foster a respect for marine life• We provide year-round employment opportunities• We support the development of the local economy• We help to preserve the history and culture of the Parish of Achill• We support remote working, enterprise development and entrepreneurship in the Parish of Achill
Outputs:	We generate economic, social, cultural and heritage activity
Activities:	We provide activities related to tourism, enterprise development, culture and Irish language, education, retailing and heritage
Inputs:	We contribute financial resources and staff and voluntary board time and effort



DELIVERING STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 – 2028

The Management and staff team, working under the guidance of the Board of Directors will manage the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Board members, Management and staff of Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta will work closely with the Community and stakeholders to ensure that strategic outcomes are maximised.

Progress in implementing strategic aims and objectives will be measured during the period 2023–2028 using key performance indicators. Specific targets for each key performance indicator will be set annually in response to company and community needs and priorities.

Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028 was reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors on _____.



OUR

VISION, MISSION, VALUES

OUR VISION

Achill as a vibrant, thriving, forward looking place where people can realise their full potential and enjoy an excellent quality of life in a safe, supportive, unspoilt, friendly and beautiful part of the west of Ireland.

OUR MISSION

Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta is committed to acting as a catalyst and conduit for the sustainable and inclusive social, economic and cultural development of the Parish of Achill, through the provision of facilities and supports that help alleviate personal and communal disadvantage while also promoting the use of the Irish Language.

OUR VALUES

Our work will be guided by our principles and commitments to:

- *Professionalism*
- *Social inclusion*
- *Inclusivity and equality for all*
- *Honesty and trustworthiness in our conduct*
- *Being forward looking, innovative and courageous in our thinking*
- *Enthusiasm for the Irish language, culture and heritage of Achill*
- *Accountability and transparency*



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are a call to action to create a more sustainable future for all countries. We are committed to playing our part to help Ireland achieve its sustainable development priorities. Our activities, outputs and outcomes contribute positively towards five Sustainable Development Goals.

<i>SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS</i>	<i>FOCUS</i>
SDG 3 - Good Health and Wellbeing	We facilitate activities that appeal to all sections of our community. We encourage an enjoyment of the outdoors and an appreciation of the language, culture and heritage of the Parish of Achill. We foster social inclusion, providing activities that suit the ability levels of people with disabilities and marginalised groups.
SDG 4. Quality Education	We organise and provide school tours to help educate children about marine life and provide Irish language classes.
SDG 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth	We provide job opportunities through our company and support entrepreneurship and enterprise development in the wider community through G-Teic.
SDG 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	We drive the agenda with stakeholders with respect to infrastructure development and public realm initiatives in the Parish of Achill.
SDG 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities	We provide economic, recreational, social and cultural activities in the Parish of Achill that lead to a more inclusive and satisfying place for people to live.

OVERARCHING

AIMS, OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta is committed to pursuing five strategic aims during the lifetime of the strategic plan.

Strategic Aim 1: Combat rural de-population through positively impacting job creation and remote working opportunities in the Parish of Achill.

OUTCOMES	MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM IMPACT
More people have opportunities to work in high quality jobs that reflect their interests and qualifications, thus resulting in an increase in the number of people living in the Parish of Achill	Contributes to keeping more younger people and families living in the Parish of Achill. As a result, they may be more able to support elderly parents and relatives living locally

Strategic Aim 2: Future proof the environmental sustainability of the Parish of Achill through mitigating the impacts of climate change.

OUTCOMES	MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM IMPACT
Local people have the broadband, services and infrastructure they need to lead fulfilling lives	Contributes to making the Parish of Achill a more socially inclusive and attractive place to live and work, thereby positively impacting population demographics
The Parish of Achill has the means to combat coastal erosion	Contributes to positively protecting marine areas, local biodiversity and the Parish of Achill from risks associated with climate change
The Parish of Achill has the means to address energy and climate related challenges	Contributes to making the Parish of Achill a geographically sustainable place in which to live and establish businesses

Strategic Aim 3: Nurture an appreciation and delight in the Irish language, unique heritage and history of the Parish of Achill.

OUTCOMES	MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM IMPACT
More people use Irish in their everyday lives	Contributes to keeping the Irish language alive for future generations
More people are attracted to the Parish of Achill to experience the culture and heritage of the place for themselves	Contributes positively to tourism revenue generation and levels of visitor footfall in the Parish of Achill and the western region

Strategic Aim 4: Position the Parish of Achill as an attractive West of Ireland location in which to live from cradle to grave.

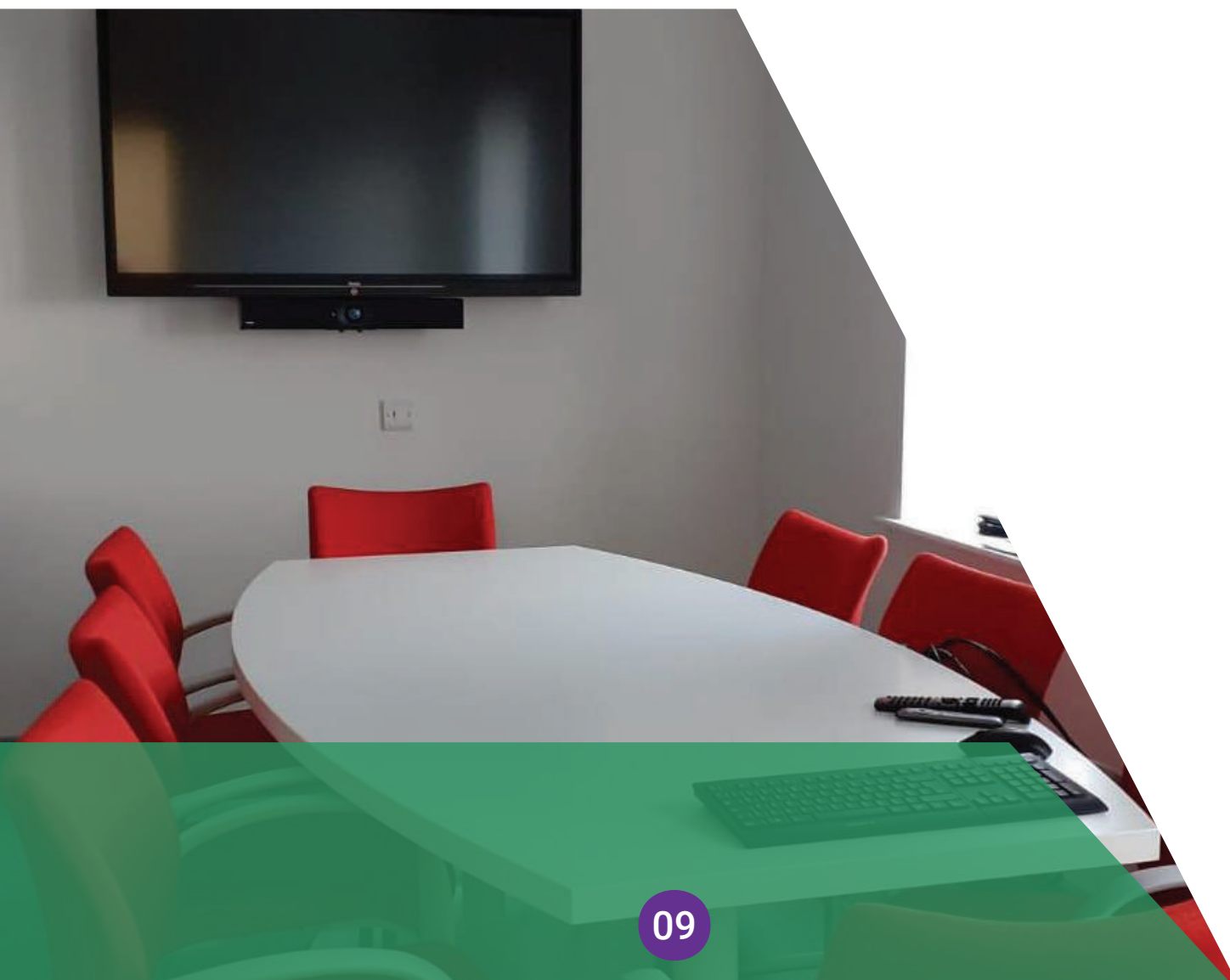
OUTCOMES	MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM IMPACT
More people are attracted to remain living in the Parish of Achill or choose to re-locate to live and work in Achill	Contributes to making the Parish of Achill a sustainable and vibrant location for people of all ages to live into the future.

Strategic Aim 5: Strengthen the resilience of Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla enabling it to respond to business opportunities in the coming five years.

OUTCOMES	MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM IMPACT
Facilities are developed and managed in a way that enables the company to cost effectively scale capacity to respond to community needs and avail of business opportunities as they arise	Contributes to making the company more responsive to changes in the external environment and better able to withstand unforeseen business challenges
The company has access to an expanded set of employee skills	Contributes to upskilling and fostering a shared learning environment for staff

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITY ACTIONS

Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta will focus on seven strategic objectives and related priority actions during the lifetime of the plan. Specific targets for each Key Performance Indicator will be set annually in Quarter 4 by the board. This will ensure that targets remain achievable and realistic throughout the lifetime of the strategic plan.



Strategic Objective 1:

Language Culture and the Arts - Preserve and promote the local dialect and by 2028 increase the number of Irish speakers in the area by 10%.

Key Performance Indicators:

1. Increase in the number of Irish speakers in the area.

Tracking Metrics:

Number of language classes, number of training participants, social media metrics, training evaluation

<i>Priority Actions and Outputs</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Implement the 7 year Pleanail Teanga	
Deliver Irish language classes locally	
Organise Irish language events	
Promote the Irish language classes on offer through online and offline marketing methods	
Work with the business community so that the Irish language can be an additional support to help promote their business and activities	

Strategic Objective 2:

Tourism – Work with tourism stakeholders to enhance the attractiveness of the Parish of Achill as a primary tourism destination in the West.

Key Performance Indicators:

1. Increase in the number of visitors to the area.

Tracking Metrics:

Footfall, number of activities on offer in the Parish of Achill, level of publicity generated about Achill

<i>Priority Actions and Outputs</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Work with Mayo County Council to enhance facilities and services on beaches: disability access to beaches, life guard station, secure storage lockers, showers	
Work with Mayo County Council to improve the public realm in Achill Sound and Keel	
Work with stakeholders to develop the Greenway through Achill	
Work with stakeholders to develop looped walks around Achill	

Strategic Objective 3:

Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise – Cultivate an ecosystem in Achill that supports job creation and enterprise development, using G-Teic Achill as the primary co-working and remote working hub in Achill and the recognised location for business start-up support.

Key Performance Indicators:

1. Increase in the number of people working in Achill.
2. Increase in the number of people making enquiries about starting a business in Achill.

Tracking Metrics:

Level of employment across all age cohorts, number of business start-up and development supports offered through G-Teic, enquiries handled by G-Teic

<i>Priority Actions and Outputs</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Increase the number of remote working pods available in G-Teic	
Work with Údarás to increase the availability of office space in Achill suitable for relocating businesses or start-ups expanding to the next stage of their development	
Work with Mayo LEO to run a business development programme and workshops for young people and start-ups in G-Teic	
Work with a successful mentoring programme to provide mentoring opportunities to business start-ups and established businesses	

Strategic Objective 4:

The Green Gaeltacht – Working with stakeholders to pursue sustainable energy projects that enable Achill to lower its carbon footprint by 20% by 2028.

Key Performance Indicators:

1. Decrease in the carbon footprint of Achill.
2. Increase in the levels of solar and wind energy generated in the wider area on land and on sea.

Tracking Metrics:

Kw of energy produced in the Achill area, level of recycling and upcycling in the area, number of people participating in environmental awareness training and initiatives.

Priority Actions and Outputs	Timeframe
Seek funding to appoint a sustainability officer	
Develop a programme of energy efficiency and environmental awareness raising among individuals and businesses	
Develop a decarbonisation plan for Achill branded Achill 2060	
Liaise with the local authority to discuss challenges arising from the ACRES funding programme	
Continue with improvements to the Achill Experience Aquarium and Visitor Centre with respect to solar energy production, EV charging points, water conservation and use of recyclable materials through the facility	
Work with the local authority and national stakeholders to help support the protection of the Special Area of Conservation and marine Special Protection Area around Achill	
Work with stakeholders to address deficiencies in rural bus transport options serving the Parish of Achill	

Strategic Objective 5:

Services and Infrastructure – Over the next five years, pursue investment in Achill’s broadband, transport, road network, public realm and amenities infrastructure to enhance the Achill experience for visitors and residents alike.

Key Performance Indicators:

- 1. Increase in the number of people visiting the area.
- 2. Increase in the number of people living in the area.

Tracking Metrics:

Footfall, demographic profile of Achill, number of sustainable energy projects located in the Achill area on sea/land, level of investment in local infrastructure, broadband speeds across Achill

Priority Actions and Outputs	Timeframe
Work with stakeholders to invest in the broadband infrastructure across Achill	
Lobby stakeholders to upgrade piers and harbours and the road network across Achill	
Act as a point of contact for renewable energy companies considering Achill as a location for offshore projects	
Work with the local authority to enhance tourism related amenities and across Achill	

Strategic Objective 6:

Education and Training Services – Develop Achill Experience Aquarium and Visitor Centre as a primary location for school children and adults who wish to learn more about marine life in an accessible, environmentally sustainable facility.

Key Performance Indicators:

- 1. Increase in the number of visitors to the Aquarium and Visitor Centre.
- 2. Increase in the number of people with disabilities visiting the Aquarium and Visitor Centre.

Tracking Metrics:

Footfall, revenue generated, number of tour groups

Priority Actions and Outputs	Timeframe
Expand the Aquarium and Visitor Centre and ensure it is accessible to people of all visual and mobility levels	
Position the Aquarium and Visitor Centre as an accessible location in all marketing communications	
Develop a fundraising pitch to attract sponsorship support in Ireland and in Cleveland, USA	
Develop a resource allocation plan to enable the Centre to expand operating capacity in line with local and visitor needs	

Strategic Objective 7:

Promote the work of Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla and lobby stakeholders to develop the tourism infrastructure in the Parish of Achill befitting of a leading visitor destination in the West of Ireland.

Key Performance Indicators:

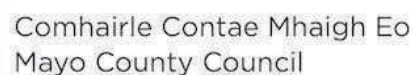
1. Increase in tourism infrastructure investment in the Parish of Achill.

Tracking Metrics:

Stakeholder engagements, infrastructural developments, visitor numbers to the Achill Aquarium and Visitor Centre

Priority Actions and Outputs	Timeframe
Develop and implement an annual marketing plan to guide the communications and lobbying activities of Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla	
Develop a mobile responsive website for Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla	
Develop and implement monthly social media marketing plans for Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla	
Participate in exhibitions promoting the Achill Aquarium and Visitor Centre	
Support the work of stakeholders promoting the Parish of Achill	
Promote the Local Link Achill annual magazine	

This Strategic Plan was developed as an output of the training received through the Cooperating to Succeed social enterprise training initiative. The Board of Directors would like to acknowledge the support received through the Cooperating to Succeed programme, which is delivered by West Limerick Resources in partnership with South Tipperary Development CLG and South West Mayo Development Company.



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