

## **New baseline report maps out path to regeneration of Tipperary town**

### **A Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC) report is set to become the blueprint informing Tipperary town's revitalisation**

**8th July 2022:** The launch of a summary report highlighting the findings of an 'in-depth collaborative town centre health check' of Tipperary town took place today. The 'Tipperary Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC) Report 2022' was undertaken as part of the Heritage Council's CTCHC Programme and provides clear recommendations outlining the steps for the next phase of the historic town's revitalisation.

This process began in 2020 when a number of organisations came together to set up the CTCHC project for Tipperary town, including:

- the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- the Heritage Council
- Tipperary Town Revitalisation Task Force
- Tipperary Town Chamber and,
- Tipperary County Council

As part of the project, representatives from these organisations examined and measured the views of businesspeople and consumers living, working or frequently visiting the town. Many of these groups and individuals felt there was an opportunity for Tipperary town to, among other things, improve its liveability and accessibility (walking and cycling), and to upgrade its historic built environment, enabling greater visibility and repurposing of its natural and cultural heritage.

The CTCHC assessment process of Tipperary town involved a thorough evaluation of the town's strengths and opportunities and used surveys to measure citizens' perceptions of the town's commercial, heritage and cultural assets, land/building use and vacancy levels, while also taking into account public satisfaction in terms of the town's accessibility and entertainment facilities. (Further details on the results of the surveys are available in the notes for editors below.)

The final CTCHC report will now help to inform investment decisions for the future management and revitalisation of the historic town centre, and sets out how this can be achieved while meeting the targets set out in Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021, along with supporting Ireland's commitment to delivering on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform Malcolm Noonan TD said:

*“With the launch of this report, we are continuing to deliver on our commitment to a ‘Town Centre First’ policy. It is so important that we maximise the potential of our historic town centres through sustainable regeneration, investment and engagement with the people who live and work there.*

*“I look forward to seeing how the regeneration of Tipperary town unfolds and will continue working hard to ensure that other towns wishing to avail of the opportunities afforded by the CTCHC Programme, can do so.”*

Councillor Annemarie Ryan, co-author of the Tipperary Town CTCHC report, said:

*“The new partnerships forged through this collaborative process have been hugely rewarding. In my role as Councillor for Tipperary town, I believe such partnerships can lead to long-lasting change for our town and in working with the CTCHC Programme, we have been able to unearth vital information and data which will enable us to bring the town forward and facilitate a brighter and more sustainable future for our community”.*

Virginia Teehan, Chief Executive of the Heritage Council said:

*“The publication of this report could not be more timely as Irish towns reopen fully and begin recovering from the impacts of the lockdowns. The pandemic forced people to think about their local areas in new ways and this report highlights the improvements that business owners and citizens’ living in towns across the country want to see; rethinking how we use our spaces sustainably, making town centres more accessible and ensuring that those living in or close to town centres have as high a quality of life as possible.”*

Ali Harvey, co-author of the Tipperary Town CTCHC Report and CTCHC Programme Co-ordinator with the Heritage Council said:

*“This report clearly demonstrates the importance of having a robust baseline and verified spatial data to inform communities, decision-making and investment proposals for the renewal of historic town centres. This data-driven approach to heritage and environmental management is hugely important with town centres throughout Ireland facing challenges as they emerge from the Covid-19*

*lockdown and face into an uncertain future that requires them to meet strict Climate Change and EU Green Deal targets.”*

Michael Anglim, Cathaoirleach of Tipperary-Cahir-Cashel Municipal District said:

*“The report provides useful data that will enable Tipperary County Council, working in partnership with the Revitalisation Task Force and other organisations, to focus resources and supports as the CTCHC Programme moves into Phase 2 – Town Centre Building Renewal and Investment Plans.”*

Rita Fenton, Deputy Chair of Tipperary Town Chamber said:

*“A healthy and vibrant town centre is important for everyone who lives, works and visits Tipperary Town. This process is fundamentally about how a town’s unique heritage informs our sense of identity and enables communities to embrace a more sustainable way of living that enhances well-being. Heritage reminds us of how important our historic town is in who we are and how we live. It is as important and as simple as that!”*

Michael Begley, Project Manager of the Tipperary Town Revitalisation Task Force said:

*“This was a truly unique baseline survey involving the historic town’s key strategic partners and provides us with a great framework for taking stock of Tipperary’s many undiscovered assets and opportunities. We must be equipped with this sort of data-driven process to build for the future in the new climate change era. As a town in Ireland’s mid-west region, Tipperary town, like other towns, is facing uncharted territory yet has so much to offer, and this Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC) Report will help us to enhance and maximise the quality of life and overall well-being of everyone in the historic town, and for newcomers who have moved here most recently from Ukraine.”*

ENDS

## Press Contacts:

Please contact Pearse Ó Caoimh to arrange an interview.

T. 085-8590378

E. [pocaoimh@heritagecouncil.ie](mailto:pocaoimh@heritagecouncil.ie)

## Images



**From left to right:** Noel O'Meara (Tipperary Town Chamber of Commerce), Carmel Donovan (Glen of Aherlow Fáilte Society), Brian Rafferty (Tipperary Tidy Towns) Michael Begley (Tipperary Town Revitalisation Task Force) Alison Harvey (The Heritage Council, CTCHC Programme) Rita Fenton (Tipperary Town Chamber of Commerce) John McCahill (Canon Hayes Recreation Centre) Councillor Anne-Marie Ryan Shiner (Tipperary County Council & Tipperary Town Revitalisation Task Force) Catherine Taylor (GIS Officer, Tipperary County Council) Anthony Coleman (District Administrator, Tipperary County Council) Mary Alice O'Connor (Tipperary Town Revitalisation Task Force)

## Notes to Editors:

*Tipperary Town Centre Health Check Report 2022* focuses on the survey results of a significant number of key indicators of the overall health and performance of the historic town centre including level of town centre activities, land/building use and vacancy levels, pedestrian footfall patterns and

business operators and consumers' perceptions of the quality of the overall well-being and environment of the historic town.

Tipperary Town's collaborative town centre health check showed that:

- 66% of respondents visit Tipperary Town daily;
- 0% of those surveyed cycle into Tipperary Town Centre;
- 73% of respondents travelled to Tipperary Town by car, 26% walked and 1% travelled by bus;
- 85% of businesses support the removal of the N24 from the historic town centre and 95% believe the traffic situation can be improved;
- Almost 80% of respondents are increasingly spending more online since Covid 19;
- 76% of respondents would be interested in availing of a local Online Click and Collect Service;
- Amazon is sucking up a large proportion of the online spend that is leaking from Tipperary Town's catchment – 26% of those surveyed;
- 95% of 18 to 34 year olds shop online at least once a month while only 36% of Tipperary Town businesses surveyed sell online;
- 69% of respondents thought that the choice of cafes and restaurants in the town centre was good or very good;
- 87% think there is a good standard of service in shops in the town centre.
- 50% of respondents would like to see more green spaces, family activities and more playgrounds in Tipperary Town;
- Footfall in the town centre was 11% busier on a Saturday than on a Friday;
- 42% of respondents agreed that Tipperary's unique and natural setting make a positive contribution to their experience of the town; and
- There are circa. 84 vacant buildings in Tipperary Town Centre – this represents a ground floor retail vacancy rate of 31%, which is the highest level in the CTCHC Programme
- 85% of the business respondents in Tipperary Town think that traffic from the N24, which runs right through the historic core, is impacting significantly on businesses in the historic town centre.

## **About The Heritage Council:**

Established under The Heritage Act 1995, the Heritage Council is a public body whose mission is to develop a wide understanding of the vital contribution that our heritage makes to our social, environmental & economic well-being. The Heritage Council is a prescribed body under Irish planning legislation and has a particular responsibility to promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in national heritage. See here for more: <https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/> or follow us on Twitter @HeritageHubIRE