



# Northside Community Enterprises

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## Strategic Plan 2020 - 2022



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# I. Northside Community Enterprises



## About NCE

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Northside Community Enterprises Ltd was founded in 1993 to provide support services to communities in Cork City and to offer new opportunities to the long term unemployed through work experience, training, and education. Since its formation NCE's values and commitment to the community remains steadfast. NCE believes that all people have the right to integrate with others in our community, re-educate, train, work and gain the relevant experience to progress to future full-time employment. Our aim is to promote social inclusion and provide accessible training opportunities to serve the needs of the local community.

Through partnerships with educational organisations and government agencies NCE offers effective solutions to enhance workforce preparation and increase employment levels in the area. NCE offers a diverse range of training

programmes that are sector specific and which serve the social and economic needs of the local community. NCE is spread over 3 locations on the North side of Cork city namely Farranferris Education & Training campus, the North Cathedral Visitors Centre and Eason's Hill, Shandon.

NCE offers training and education opportunities in the following areas that are designed to assist long term unemployed return to full time employment: Childcare - Catering - Insulation- Floral Arrangement - Security Training - Administration - Gardening - Accounts - Historical Research and Sport and Fitness. NCE is an accredited Q.Q.I, ITEC, and ECDL Centre.

The above-mentioned projects have created a positive impact in the community and local economy through increased spending in these areas which in turn creates more employment opportunities and has a positive impact on people lives.

The employees of NCE come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences; however, the integration of training and education programmes takes place in a natural and inclusive environment. NCE has always emphasised the importance of integration on site, to facilitate this, Farranferris also hosts Gaelscoil Pheig Sayers, (280 children), SHEP Social Health Education Project, Cork Folklore & Ethnology project in conjunction with U.C.C., L.T.I. Work Initiative for Northside, & the CETB Culinary Course.

NCE is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and has a variety of funding streams on which it depends.

#### NCE Main Objective

***The main objective for which the company is established is:***

***To establish, maintain, promote, assist, facilitate and organise the carrying on of a Community Enterprise Centre and in doing so to advance the education of unemployed people, provide services to the elderly and to provide and advance educational services to children and adults alike.***

# Vision & Mission

## VISION

We believe that all people have the right to integrate with others in our community, re-educate, train, work and gain the relevant experience to progress to future full-time employment.

## MISSION

To promote social inclusion and provide accessible training opportunities to serve the needs of the local community.



# Values

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The Board of Directors and the Management Team has identified the following values that will set the tone for all N.C.E activities. All activities will be performed in compliance with ethical practices, legal provisions, safety standards with utmost competence and consistency.

## **1. Social Inclusion & Equality**

Provide inclusive and respectful services that promote community, empowerment, integration, personal development, a sense of belonging and equal opportunities for all employees. Fairness and transparency are also key here.

## **2. Collaboration & Participation**

Work and communicate with all NCE stakeholders by offering services that adapt to the needs of the community (NCE employees, trainees, funding bodies, customers, other organisations, the local and wider community)

## **3. Courage & Adaptation**

To pioneer new ways of moving forward to meet the needs of our community by developing and integrating more sustainable practices throughout NCE. Provide training and share best practice that reflects resilience by finding new ways to adapt to changing times. (ongoing pandemic, climate change and community training needs)

## **4. Education & Training**

Continue to deliver and develop certified training courses that improve employment opportunities for the community. Offer diverse training options to suit a variety of learning styles. Provide certified programmes that focus on building work life and skills, personal development, confidence building and development of career pathways

## **5. Community Engagement & Excellent Customer Service**

Respect, react and adapt NCE by developing services that are vital and reflect the needs of the local and wider community. Continue to provide a consistent, affordable and a high standard of services provided by NCE staff that are a supportive, collaborative and experienced team that recognise the importance of generating customer loyalty, creatively adapting and developing the social enterprises to suit the needs of the community

## Context of this Strategic Plan

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We conducted research, held consultations, and reflected with our stakeholders to form this strategic plan for the next 3 years. We have witnessed great changes and growth in our organisation over the last 23 years and most recently with the Covid -19 Pandemic which has forced us once again to reflect on how we can **creatively adapt** and move forward.

**Collaboration** is a key strength within our organisation, and we are continuing to implement new ways of facilitating participatory practice with our stakeholders, especially with our CE participants. We are developing a holistic model that encompasses education, training, personal development, work experience and sustainability life skills. The transformative effect this service has will not only be seen at an individual level but will impact the organisation as a whole and will also reach out and strengthen the wider community at large.

**NCE** operates from operates out of **Northside Community Enterprises** located at St Finbarr's, Farranferris with other locations at the North Cathedral Visitors centre and the Recreate Centre at Eason's Hill all located on the north side of Cork city.

NCE provides over 100 community employment opportunities and work experience as well as uncertified and certified training for the community which is funded by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

We are alert to the challenges that changes in community employment policy may bring, the way the economy can impact our social enterprises, the longer-term effects of the current Covid- 19 Pandemic and if funding for educational programs ceases. Therefore, we need to continually look for new creative ways to continue our work.

There were a number of recurring messages that came through the reviewing process of NCE which guided this plan.

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To be **Open**  
and  
**transparent**

To be of  
benefit to the  
wider  
**community**

To focus on  
**Collaboration**

To be  
**Inclusive** &  
provide **equal**  
**opportunities**  
for all.

Improve and  
**share our**  
**practices**

Promote  
Empowerment &  
**Build Resilience**

create more  
**employment**  
**opportunities**

Building &  
maintain  
**relationships**  
with  
stakeholders

Provide  
**Targeted**  
**Training**

## Strategic Priorities

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We believe that everyone has the right to integrate with others in our community. We believe that everyone should be given equal opportunities when it comes to education, training and employment opportunities especially those in rehabilitation programs. We exist to provide a holistic service for people undergoing rehabilitation programs so that they can build life skills and get the necessary experience to progress to employment or further education.

We want our organisation to be at the heart of the Community providing key services that strengthens its social and economic fabric.

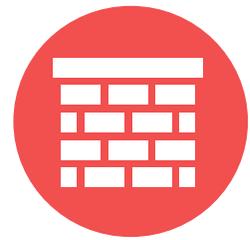
With this in mind five strategic objectives will contain and propel our work over the period 2020-2022.



## Strategic Objectives

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1. Create more employment and training opportunities for people at NCE
2. Increase the profile of Northside Community Enterprises (NCE)
3. Maintain and establish links with the community, local businesses and organisations
4. Develop NCE as a model for innovative sustainable practices
5. To remain resilient



# Objective 1

## Create more employment and training opportunities for people at NCE

### Why this is important?

When working with people from a variety of different backgrounds and educational levels it is important to find and develop new ways to engage the participants so that they can get the full benefits of training programmes and work placements. NCE must be aware of current jobs markets and develop social enterprises and training to reflect this. NCE aim to increase employment opportunities by 50% in the next three years.

Key Actions	Impact – How will it be measured
<p><b>1. Extended Induction &amp; Participant Evaluation: A weeklong induction that includes the background on NCE, training opportunities, policies &amp; procedures, certified training, and learner evaluation.</b></p>	<p>New participants will have a better understanding of NCE and training and work opportunities and NCE will have a better understanding of each participants needs and career goals. Participants will have certification in <b>Manual Handling, Slips, Trips &amp; Falls &amp; Children First</b></p>
<p><b>2. Individual Learning Plans (ILP) for DEASP will continue to be maintained as well as sourcing suitable training</b></p>	<p>ILP's will help to support participants in setting short- and long-term goals with the support of Supervisors who will work collaboratively with the participant to source options for training and future progression</p>
<p><b>3. Supervisors Reports will be submitted to collect data on the progress of participants. This includes current training, work placement and certification</b></p>	<p>Data will be entered into a database to help to track participant progress and certification as well as to create a report for Board of Management meetings.</p>
<p><b>4. Feedback forms will be circulated to participants throughout their employment with NCE to assess the benefits of training programmes and work placements</b></p>	<p>Feedback from participants can help to develop existing training programmes as well as the need for new training programmes. It will also engage in a participatory approach to developing the strategic objectives for NCE</p>
<p><b>5. Training Course Database of all internal and external training courses that are available for participants</b></p>	<p>A database of all available training courses will be compiled so that all staff have access to available programmes that participants can access both internally and externally. This would include part time and full time as well as costs and financial supports. Keep training current and up to date to allow NCE to flourish and expand. Develop a program of learning that offers participants the opportunity to achieve QQI major or Industry equivalent awards in year two</p>
<p><b>6. Seek and apply for additional funding for education &amp; training programs.</b></p>	<p>A database of all funding opportunities as well as timelines will be compiled that are applicable to the development of NCE Outreach and training programmes. Applications for funding will be made at the appropriate time in collaboration with management.</p>

<p><b>7. Train new and existing staff so that they have the tools to help learners to gain employment.</b></p>	<p>A database of all available training courses will be compiled so that all staff have access to possible training opportunities. Work in a collaborative way so that staff can benefit from peer support and skills sharing</p>
<p><b>8. Assign a person responsible as Employment Liaison Officer / Career Advisor</b></p>	<p>Responsible person to coordinate a local employment register, liaise and network with local employers and update existing database on a continual basis to create job opportunities and links with external organisations as well as develop projects and training at NCE that reflects the current jobs market. Build relationships and coherent links with LES, DEASP and other community organisations so they promote CE to increase referrals/</p>

## Objective 2

### Increase the profile of Northside Community Enterprises (NCE)

Since 1993 NCE has been working with the community to provide accessible employment and training opportunities while promoting social inclusion and serving the needs of the community. While much of the local community are aware of the company and services, NCE needs to adapt to further promote the work that is being done by developing a communications strategy, promotional packages and hold more public events to reach a larger demographic.

**Why this is important?**

Key Actions	Impact – How will it be measured
<p><b>1. Raise NCE's public profile</b></p>	<p>Promote existing projects at NCE by creating records and promotional materials that can be disseminated online (website and social media) as well as physically (newspapers, videos, brochures, and publications) Develop the brand of NCE to include the company becoming a model and educational tool for sustainable practices</p>
<p><b>2. Hold an annual NCE Open Day</b></p>	<p>Organise an Open Day for NCE to highlight the employment and training opportunities as well as the social enterprises and sustainable practices being developed by NCE. Target external recruitment agencies, local businesses, local community, state agencies and other stakeholders. Create a marketing campaign to promote the event which could be held in February when other educational organisations hold events also</p>
<p><b>3. Encourage people to take up Community Employment</b></p>	<p>Build and maintain relationships and coherent links with LES, DEASP and other community organisations so they promote CE as there is less referrals (could be new staff, encouraged to source contract employment for clients) Promotion of CE to LES, DEASP etc. by networking or creating more posts through social media, website, job sites etc.</p>
<p><b>4. Highlight opportunities for training and qualifications that can be gained on CE schemes through NCE</b></p>	<p>Collect data and monthly reports on participants engaging with training and progression to further education or employment. Collect participant feedback and testimonials. Collate and analyze data to gain a better understanding of the current jobs market and the need for tailored training and work placements.</p>

	Data to form part of NCE's annual report which could be used as a promotional tool to highlight the opportunities at NCE.
<b>5. Develop a Communications Strategy for NCE</b>	Develop a communications strategy for the company which would outline the use of consistent branding, identifying our target audience, continuous promotion of NCE projects and social enterprises. Create strategies for internal and external communications for NCE and a document that is available to all staff of NCE

## Objective 3

### Maintain and establish links with the community, local businesses and organisations

#### Why this is important?

For over 25 years NCE has created links and provided services for the local and wider community. As NCE adapts and evolves its practices to the challenges of Covid 19 and Climate Change, it has become vital to work together as communities and share best practices to become resilient to the changes ahead. The existing links with stakeholders and organisations based at NCE is our strength. NCE aims to preserve these positive working relationships as well as continuously grow relationships with more of our community and other likeminded organisations and businesses.

Key Actions	Impact – How will it be measured
<b>1. Create and maintain positive relationships with local community, businesses, stakeholders and state organisations</b>	Make more links with local businesses and update existing database. Learn from and share best practices with the community and other organisations.
<b>2. Continuously promote NCE, employment and training opportunities and social enterprises</b>	Create more links through a communications strategy by creating promotional packages through digital media, videos, publications and press releases. Create a friendly and professional brand which is consistent in all marketing campaigns
<b>3. Organise and hold a local business fair at NCE</b>	Form relationships with and invite local businesses to attend a local business fair where the northside community can work together to promote business through an event that highlights home grown industry and innovation. Use the event to showcase the sustainable practices being used throughout NCE
<b>4. Develop a number of Sustainable Workshops that focus on the different areas (water, waste, food, energy, consumption, biodiversity, community)</b>	Develop interactive workshops that create awareness and promote individual and community actions to reduce carbon emissions and aim to benefit physical and mental health.
<b>5. Offer and promote workshops and training to the local schools and community</b>	Provide and promote short term training programs such as Sustainable Workshops, IT skills or job seeking skill to NCE staff, schools and the wider community.

<p><b>6. Seek and apply for additional funding for social and environmental projects.</b></p>	<p>A database of all funding opportunities as well as timelines will be compiled that are applicable to the development of NCE Outreach and training programmes. Applications for funding will be made at the appropriate time in collaboration with management.</p>
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## Objective 4

### Develop NCE as a model for innovative sustainable practices

#### Why this is important?

In 2019 Ireland declared a national climate and biodiversity emergency. NCE understand the crucial need to take action in order to protect the health of its employees, stakeholders and the wider community as well as educating staff and visitors on the importance of taking climate action. There are 5 acres of listed grounds in Farranferris that need to be maintained and protected to support biodiversity. This will be used as an educational tool for all stakeholders as well as the wider community. NCE is in the process of developing an environmental strategy that aims to integrate sustainable practices throughout our campuses while also improving and supporting biodiversity on the grounds. NCE aim to be flexible and proficient in standards of best practice across the full organisation.

Key Actions	Impact – How will it be measured
<p><b>1. Conduct a SWOT analysis with all staff and Board of Management around NCE operations and sustainable practices</b></p>	<p>Consulting with the full NCE Community will help to develop an achievable plan to reduce waste, save energy, save money and improve the overall physical and mental health of the community</p>
<p><b>2. Develop a 3-year action plan for environmental strategy within NCE while serving the local and wider community</b></p>	<p>Taking results and ideas from the SWOT analysis, the development of an environmental strategy to include actions with the aim of reducing the carbon footprint of NCE and creating awareness around sustainable lifestyles and practices.</p>
<p><b>3. Carry out a biodiversity audit at Farranferris as well as implement and promote sustainable practices throughout NCE</b></p>	<p>Apply for and source funding to have a biodiversity audit completed on the grounds of Farranferris. The results of the audit will help create awareness of the existing biodiversity and contribute goals to the 3-year action plan for sustainability. Implement sustainable practices that are visible (i.e. less plastic packaging in the café, clearly designated bins for waste disposal, development and promotion of a Zero Waste shop and ReUse paint shop.</p>
<p><b>4. Plan and deliver sustainability workshops for staff and the wider community</b></p>	<p>Link with other environmental organisations to organize events. Apply for and source funding to develop training programs for NCE and the wider community. Circulate feedback forms to develop and improve training programmes as well as assess the increased level of awareness of environmental concerns. Reports on number of workshops and attendance to be delivered at each BOM and staff meeting.</p>

<p><b>5. Assign designated staff to be responsible for and work to develop environmental initiatives and projects</b></p>	<p>Deliver training to designated people who will evaluate the current systems on site and then create a reduction plan over a 3-year period to be included in the environmental plan. Reports to be compiled for each social enterprise regarding sustainable practices and impacts for each BOM and staff meeting.</p>
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## Objective 5

### To remain resilient.

#### Why this is important?

NCE has had to adapt to meet the challenges of Covid 19 and Climate Change. NCE serves the needs of the local community by providing employment opportunities and training that are vital in 2020. NCE needs to evolve to reflect the current jobs market and need for training. NCE can remain resilient by being consistently informed around learning from and sharing best practices with other likeminded organisations as well as promote the work of NCE to a wider demographic. NCE must aim to act proactively to change the future rather than reactively to constantly adapt to it.

Key Actions	Impact – How will it be measured
<p><b>1. Maintain and create more partnerships with state organisations in all areas</b></p>	<p>Create connections and networks through attending public events or meetings. Positively promote NCE through professional communication and publications. Requested reporting, policies and procedures for state organisations must be upheld to a high standard to maintain a positive reputation for NCE.</p>
<p><b>2. Create a shared vision and objectives with referral groups and stakeholders</b></p>	<p>Collaborate and review strategic and operational plan with stakeholders as well as assess feedback forms. Maintain positive professional relationships with stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>3. Continue to review and develop policies and procedures</b></p>	<p>Review and develop legal policies and procedures as well as in each department and training programme. All staff will have access to all these documents which will also create an awareness of the full company. Create timely action plans and strategies in response to changing law and recommended good practices. (e.g. Covid 19 or Climate Action Plan)</p>
<p><b>4. Develop open and transparent communication channels with stakeholders</b></p>	<p>Feedback Forms circulated to stakeholders (customers, referral organisations, state organisations, staff, CE participants) and feedback used to assess the operational plan, benchmarks, communication and programmes that can be developed and improved. Hold formal and informal meetings to create positive working relationships as well as maintaining professional and friendly written and verbal communication. Hold events like graduations or open days to create awareness around the programs and businesses operating from NCE.</p>
<p><b>5. Encourage new organisations on site</b></p>	<p>Create connections and networks through attending public events or meetings. Positively promote NCE through professional communication and publications. Preserve positive working relationships with existing organisations to help promote NCE to other organisations. Update the NCE website and social media to continuously promote the company. Update the NCE website and social media to continuously promote the company.</p>

**6. Ensure that NCE has the structure, capacity, and resources to deliver the strategic and operational plan**

People responsible must aim to meet stated benchmarks and create reports for BOM and staff meetings which will contribute to annual reports and the development of operational plans and meet objectives outlined in all objectives and key actions within this plan.

## Highlights of our work to date

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Since 1993 NCE has been developing employment opportunities for the north side of Cork and the wider community. NCE operates from three different locations Farranferris Campus, The North Cathedral Visitors Centre and Eason's Hill.

### Farranferris Campus



Surrounded by beautiful landscapes, Farranferris boasts a proud tradition in learning. Located in the old college of Farranferris, NCE offers a convenient location just 5 minutes from the city centre. Our vibrant campus is an excellent centre in which to develop new and existing enterprises which play host to a broad range of training opportunities. Our state-of-the-art facilities include fully equipped kitchens, workshops, training rooms, childcare facilities, and coffee shop.

## North Cathedral Visitor's Centre

The Cathedral of St. Mary and St. Anne (or North Cathedral) Visitor Centre was established in 2017 in the crypt of the Cathedral. The Visitor's Centre invites the public to view the various exhibitions relating to the history of the cathedral and the wider community. The Visitor's Centre also offers the services of a café and houses the Cork Folklore Project.



## Eason's Hill

Located in historic Shandon, NCE's newest location is in the recently refurbished Eason's Hill Community Centre. This location is home to the Work Initiative Northside project, a CETB-funded Local Training Initiative which provides full-time training and Office Skills certification to participants.

## Community Services



NCE continuously aims to offer invaluable services to the community.

Our bakery has continued to provide fresh confectionaries and savoury items to Cup n Cino, The Cathedral Café, Little Hands Creche and to other community organisations affiliated with NCE.

In 2019 our staff at Papillon Flowers design produced a wide variety of floral arrangements for all occasions. Our laundry service provided a washing, drying & ironing service for local churches, soccer/GAA teams, and local organisations.

## Little Hands Creche

Little Hands Creche continues to offer childcare facilities for the local community. In 2019, the crèche began taking part in Healthy Ireland Smart Start (HISS), a national Health Promotion Programme which is specifically aimed at pre-school services. The programme focuses on



promoting health, emotional wellbeing and literacy, physical activity, nutrition, oral health, and health and safety for young children. The programme has seen the crèche begin to implement new health promoting policies and practices, along with staff training and development.

## Cathedral Visitor's Centre

The Visitor's Centre has continued to welcome locals and tourists alike, encouraging them to take part in the interactive displays and offering tours of the historic Cathedral. The Visitor Centre also acts as a community space and service for community organisations and the café has continued to be a social hub, providing a place for people to come for a cup of tea or a chat.



## Cork Folklore Project

The Cork Folklore Project has continued to operate from their Outreach Hub in the Cathedral Visitor's Centre. The CFP was busy in 2019 with plenty of educational activities for the community to take part in.



In August 2019, the CFP took part in Cork Heritage Open Day, offering members of the public to view the collections and listen to extracts of some of the collection's oral history recordings gathered in the community. In October, CFP took part in UCC's Community Week 2019 with their *Evening of Memory and Lore*. For this event, audio samples from the oral history and folklore recordings of the Cork Folklore Project were presented, focusing on the community memories documented by the group over many years.



In December 2019, the Cork Folklore Project released their *Christmas Memory leaflets*, which printed and shared stories and Christmas traditions of local community members.

## Work Initiative Northside

The Work Initiative Northside (WIN) was established 14 years ago and has continued to provide Office Skills and Customer Service training in its QQI Level 4 Local Training Initiative. WIN had an eventful year in 2019, with a move from the Farranferris campus to their new home in the recently refurbished Eason's Hill Community Centre in Shandon. The new location not only provided more space for the growing course, but also



increased its catchment area, allowing WIN to cater to more members of the wider community. August saw the graduation of the 14<sup>th</sup> group of students trained under the WIN programme. These students had the opportunity to take part in one of NCE's first Greener Living initiatives. This was a short course aimed to equip students with a greater knowledge of sustainability and how they can make positive changes in their own energy consumption.

In October 2019, the WIN team welcomed their 15<sup>th</sup> group of full-time students who were set to complete the course in August 2020.





## Northside Community Enterprises



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