KILMORE QUAY
CONSERVATION GROUP

Survey Report and Recommendations

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Acknowledgements

The Kilmore Quay Conservation Group (KQCG) would like to express its sincere appreciation to everyone in Kilmore Quay and its close environs and to its visitors who supported this initiative, thus making the compilation of this report possible.

Executive Summary

The Kilmore Quay Conservation Survey, conducted with 206 respondents, reveals a community strongly committed to protecting the village's natural beauty and cultural heritage.

There is an overwhelming consensus that conservation and development need to work together (95% agreement), provided that future development is subject to stricter planning enforcement (87% agreement) and extensive community input (93% demand). The top priorities for action are addressing coastal erosion and litter/pollution, while the highest demand for projects centers on Natural Habitat Protection & Stewardship.

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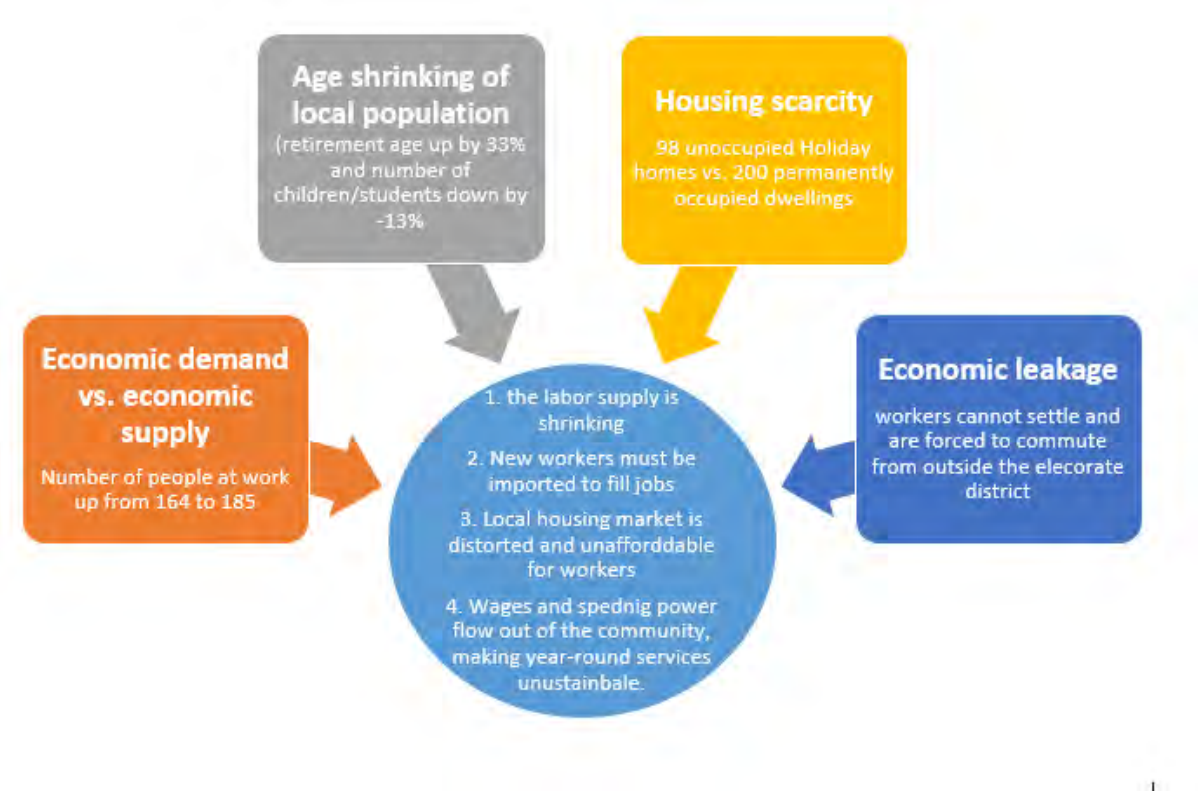
1. Context

To properly interpret the survey findings, they must be viewed in the context of the demographic and economic conditions of Kilmore Quay within the Kilmore Electorate District (ED). The Central Statistics Office (CSO) Census 2022 recorded the ED's population at 482, revealing significant changes since the 2016 Census.

1.1 A Demographic-Economic Disconnect



Information gathered from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Census 2016 and 2022

1.2 Infrastructure & Amenity Progress (Inventory)

Since 2016, there has been substantial and positive investment, development and initiative in Kilmore Quay, which acts as the foundation for future planning (see table below: Kilmore Quay Development Inventory: Key Projects and Improvements since 2016)

Category	*Key Project*	*Impact Benefit*
Public service	Sewage Scheme and new WWTP (complete) - UISCE	Ended raw sewage discharge; supports future development capacity; blue flag for the marina.
Visitor Amenity	New Pontoon and Fuel	Modernised marine facilities; supports tourism
Visitor Amenity	Kilmore Quay Holiday Park	Support tourism and brings visitors to local businesses.
Visitor/local Amenity	Upgraded Playground (July 2024)	Improve local quality of life and visitors' experience.
Traffic/Safety	Kilmore Quay Link Road and Traffic calming	Reduces HGV traffic through the village
Cultural	Community Mosaic Artworks; Documentary Film Festival	Strengthen cultural identity
Activity-based tourism / Eco-tourism	Seashore Explore; Kilmore Quay Safari	Tourism Diversification; awareness; education
Community-led environmental action	Tomhaggard Clean Coast (2021); Kilmore Quay Conservation Group	Community empowerment; habitat and wildlife protection; resource management; litter reduction
Social Inclusion Accessibility	Hippocampe beach wheelchair, upgrade of steps on burrow, ICA run sewing classes for challenged people, language classes and social activities for Ukrainians, ramp from car park to Centre, Sunshine Club and Active Retirement, ETB held Community Ed classes for the unemployed community.	Promote universal access to natural amenities and safety, Community Resilience, Skill Building & Integration, Integration, Economic Empowerment
Local Enterprise/ Retail	Lick'd ice cream parlour; Julie Caufield; Oh My Cod chipper; the Grounds, Storm House Pizza and several coffee trailers.	Local jobs, increases the variety of services available to both residents and visitors, and contributes to the village's vibrancy and local economy
Amenities / Services	Saltee Sauna	Enhanced quality of life for residents, extension of the tourism season beyond peak summer months

2. Analysis

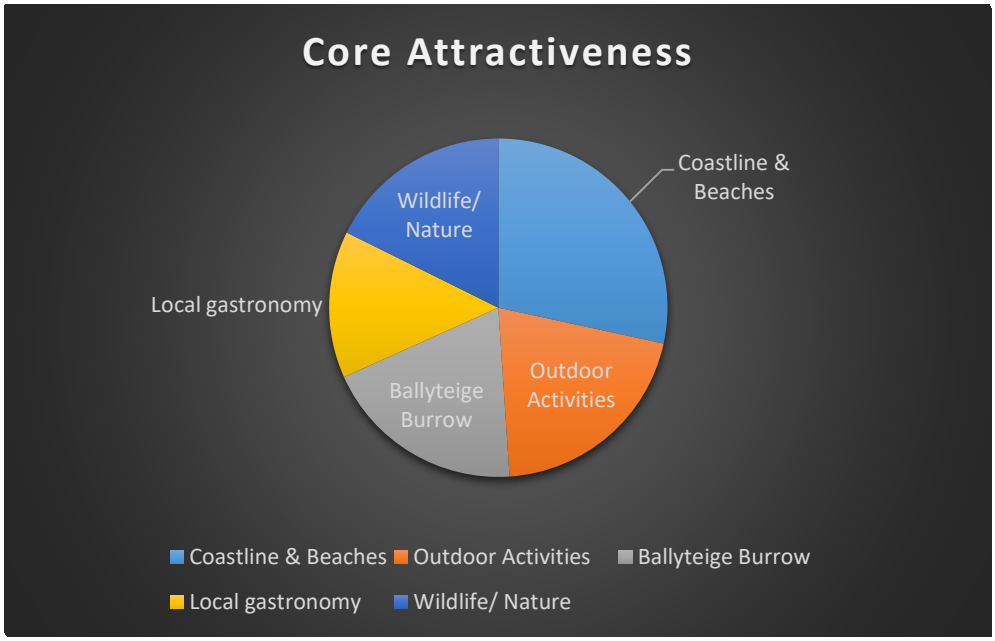
2.1 Overview

- **Total respondents:** 206
- **Purpose:** Gauge public perceptions of Kilmore Quay's attractiveness, conservation priorities, and engagement willingness.
- **Key themes:** Environmental protection, community involvement, and balanced development.

2.2. Analysis

Question 1: Core Attractiveness

"What makes Kilmore Quay attractive to you?"



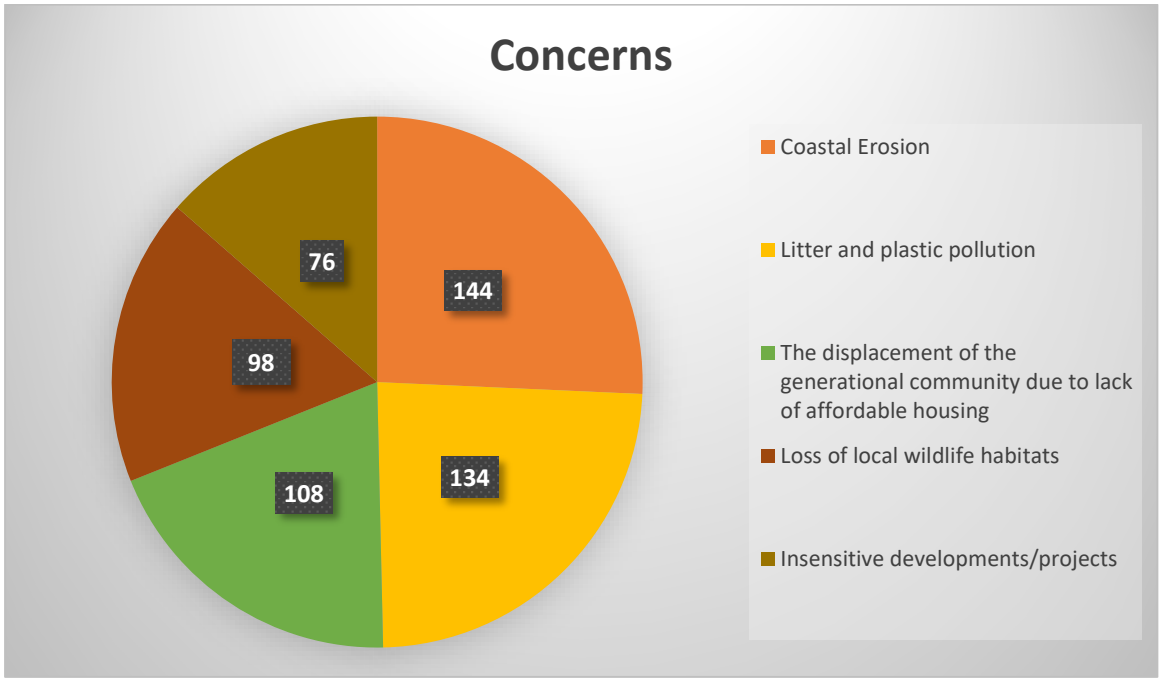
Category	Top 5 answers
Coastline & Beaches	**188**
Outdoor activities	**136**
Ballyteige Burrow	**128**
Wildlife/Nature	**117**
Local gastronomy	**93**

Emerging Themes from Write-In Responses under "Other"

Insight: Natural and outdoor experiences dominate perceptions of attractiveness — Kilmore Quay's identity is strongly tied to its landscape and biodiversity.

Questions 2: Key conservation concerns

"Which of the following issues in terms of conservation in Kilmore Quay concern you the most?"



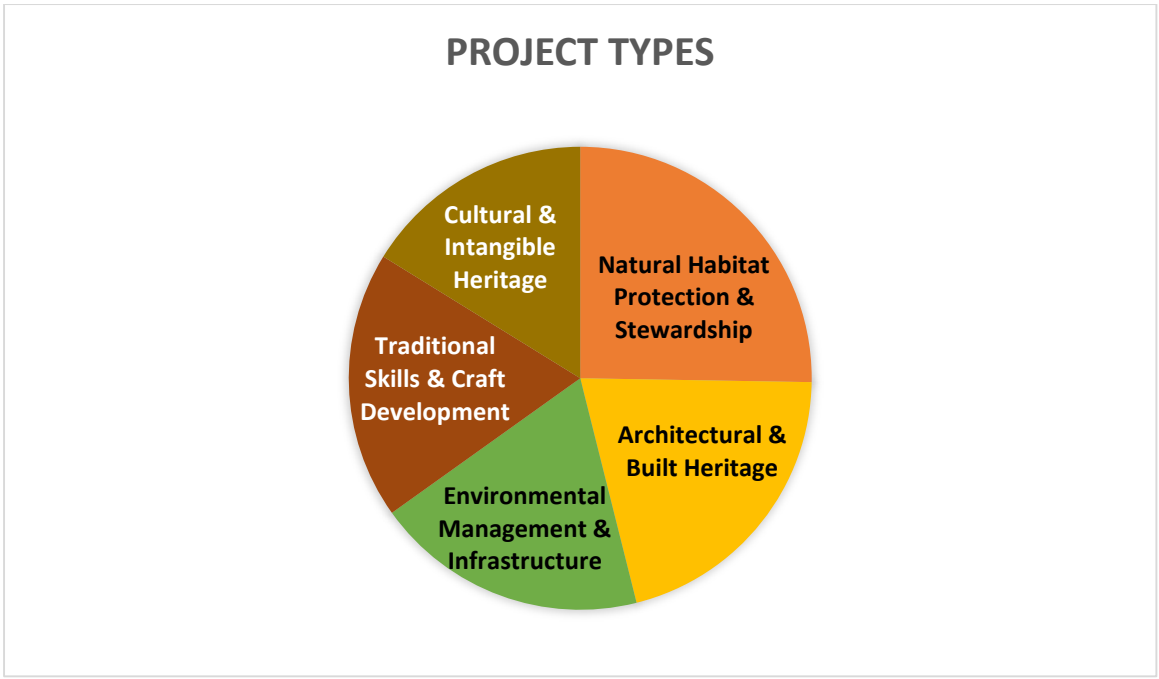
Concern	No. of responses
Coastal erosion	**144**
Litter & plastic pollution	**134**
Displacement due to lack of affordable housing	**108**
Loss of wildlife habitats	**98**
Insensitive developments	**76**

Emerging Themes from Write-In Responses under "Other"

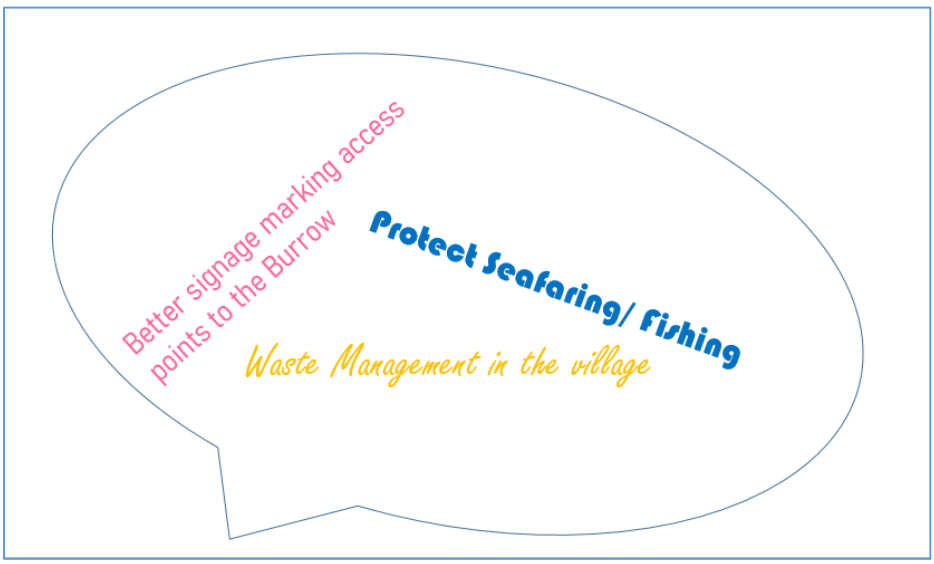
Insight: Environmental degradation (erosion, pollution) and social sustainability (housing, insensitive projects) are dual priorities for the community.

Question 3: Desired conservation projects

"Which type of conservation projects would you like to see in Kilmore Quay?"



Project Type	No. of Answers
Natural habitat protection	**142**
Architectural & built heritage restoration	**117**
Traditional skills & crafts	**107**
Environmental management & infrastructure	**105**
Cultural & intangible heritage	**91**



Emerging Themes from Write-In Responses under "Other"

Insight: Respondents favor holistic conservation — combining natural, cultural, and built heritage with education and awareness initiatives.

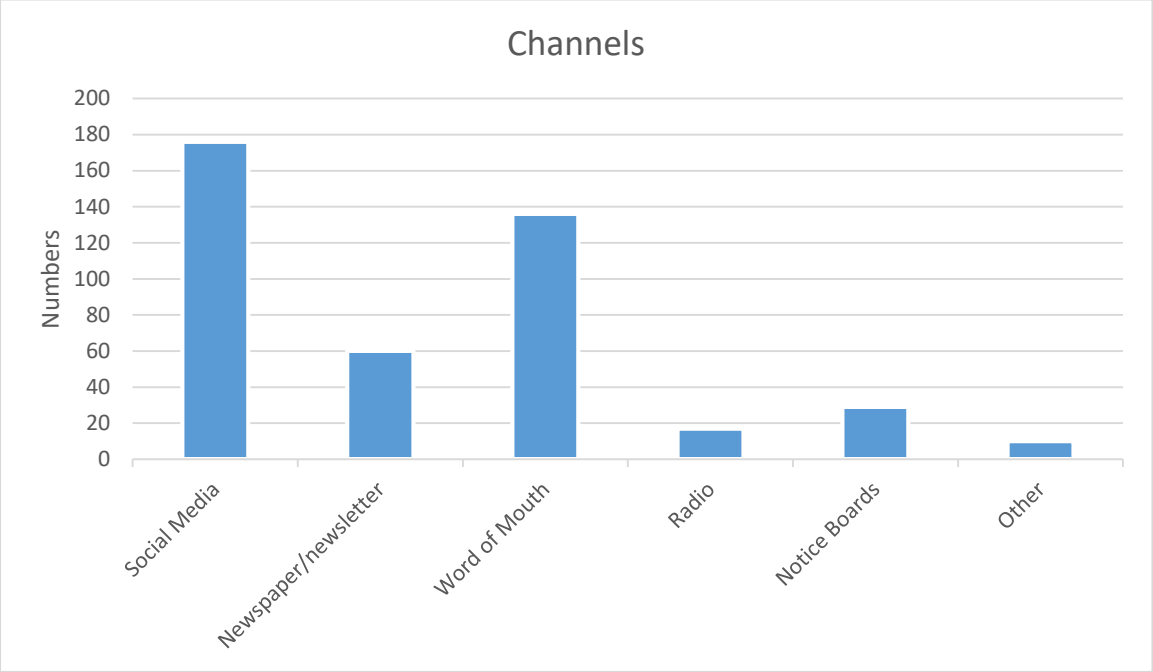
Questions 4, 5 and 6: Attitudes toward development

- **"Conservation and development can work together":** 95% agree
- **"Heritage protection rules should be enforced more strictly":** 87% agree
- **"Community should have extensive input in development decisions":** 93% yes

Insight: The public supports development *only* if it's community-led and conservation-conscious. There's strong consensus for stricter protection and inclusion.

Question 7: How people stay informed

"How do you currently get information about local issues in Kilmore Quay?"



Insight: Social media and personal networks dominate as a means to consult and inform—outreach strategies should prioritize online community engagement.

Question 8: Willingness to volunteer

"Would you be willing to volunteer your time for a local conservation project?"

47% of respondents were willing to volunteer their help in any conservation project, while 30.4% would consider doing so.

Insight: There's a large pool of potential occasional volunteers — with good engagement, many could become regular contributors.

Questions 9 and 10: Respondent demographics

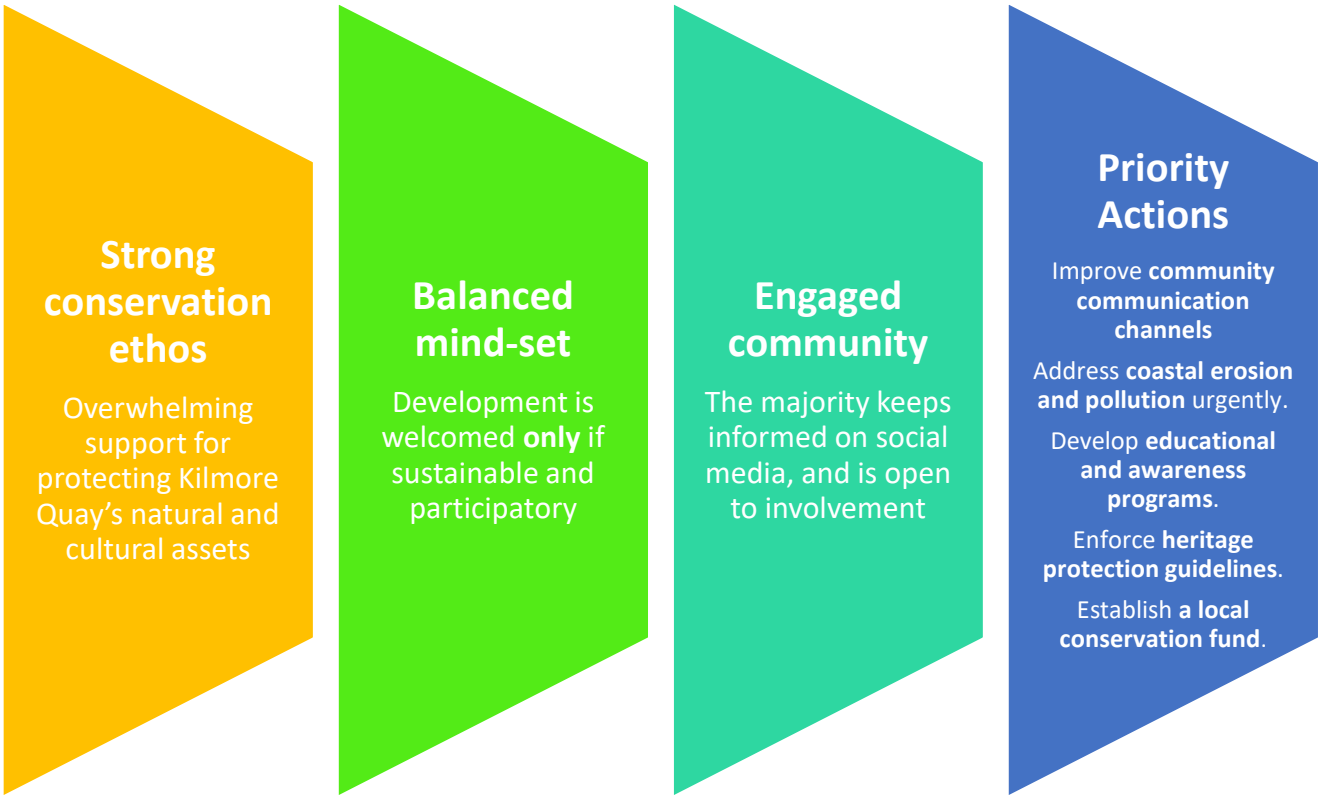
- **Local residents:** 54%
- **Holiday home owners (in/outside Kilmore Quay):** 7%
- **Non-resident locals:** 11%
- **Other:** 28%
- **Age:** 41–60 (57%) and over 60 (26%) dominate
- **Proximity:** 56% live **within 5 km** of the village

The demographics give strong credibility to the survey, ensuring that the resulting recommendations are firmly grounded in the perspectives of those who live in, and are deeply connected to, the area. The concerns and priorities reflect the experience of those most directly affected by local issues, infrastructure, and environmental change.

While primarily local, the inclusion of non-resident locals (11%) and "Other" (28%) indicates the survey also gathered input from those with strong ties who may commute or visit frequently. The 7% of holiday home owners provides a voice from a critical tourism stakeholder group, whose willingness to support the initiative is important for sustainable tourism planning.

Insight: The survey represents a mature, locally based demographic with strong personal ties to the area. This strong local representation gives the survey a powerful mandate to advocate for a Community-Led Conservation Plan and community input in development decisions

2.3 Summary Insights



3. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the KQCG's survey and the context provided, the following recommendations are made as possible building blocks for future sustainable developments.

3.1 Prioritise Coastal and Environmental Protection

The community clearly identified environmental degradation as a top concern, with Coastal Erosion and Litter & Plastic Pollution being the top two threats.

- **Action:** Implement shoreline management and erosion control programs and surveys (or monitoring initiatives), possibly with state or EU funding. Develop a long-term community-led conservation plan by networking and collaborating with all residents, local groups and businesses.
- **Litter Solutions:** Address the call for more public bins by implementing high-capacity, efficient waste management infrastructure, such as solar-powered smart bins (like BriteBin) in high-traffic areas.
- **Plastic Reduction:** Encourage local businesses to adopt a reusable cup scheme, like the *2GoCup Deposit and Return Scheme*, to cut down on single-use plastic waste, especially from visitors. Or install shaped metal wired bins for visitors to deposit their plastic bottles or aluminium cans (encouraging the public to separate plastic and aluminium from general waste and avoid them ending up in landfill sites).
- **Community Stewardship:** Develop a community-led conservation plan in partnership with residents and local groups. This could include, for instance campaigns such as *"Adopt A Dune"* to raise funding for community-led work around Ballyteigue or the creation of an app where visitors (and residents) can log data about certain types of marine birds they have spotted or the type and amount of marine debris seen on the shoreline.

3.2 Demand for community-led development and planning

The public strongly agrees that development should only proceed if it is sustainable, conservation-conscious, and community-led.

- **Action: Stricter Rules:** Advocate for **tighter enforcement of heritage and planning rules**. This aligns with the 87% of respondents who want stricter rules.
- **Action: Community Veto Power:** Create a formal structure, such as a new model of Community Governance Group, to ensure the local community has the power to sign off on major new developments. Draft a Co-Governance Charter and Terms of Reference (ToR**)** for the new board with clear, quantifiable list of project types that require the Co-Governance Board's sign-off and with a Community Vision/Sustainable Development Plan. This answers the 93% demand for extensive community input.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Encourage the re-use of historic buildings, such as exploring the possibility of turning the Sluice Cottage or Coast Guard station into a small local museum or showcase space.

3.3 Boost Education, Engagement and Volunteering

Nearly half of respondents are willing to volunteer, representing a large pool of potential contributors.

- **Action:** *Targeted Outreach* **-** Since most people get information through Social Media and Word of Mouth, prioritize online community engagement and personal networks for consultation and announcements.
- **Action:** *Education Programs***-** Organize guided walks, interpretive signage, and workshops focusing on the area's top attractions—the coastline, wildlife, and fishing

legacy. (*Examples: a Harbour Heritage Walk* tracing the fishing history, Village Folklore Trail**,** a walking route through Kilmore Quay's historic buildings or Saltee Islands Nature Excursion in Partnership with local boat operators and the owners of the Saltees Islands with guides explaining seabird colonies, grey seals, and marine ecosystems /a *Ballyteigue Nature Excursion* explaining the local habitat)

- **Action: Volunteer Recruitment:** Launch regular, practical volunteer days for habitat restoration and biodiversity monitoring to convert the large pool of "willing" volunteers into active contributors.
- **Target Groups:** Schools, youth groups, and visitors.

3.4 Develop Sustainable Tourism Initiatives

The survey highlights that Kilmore Quay's attractiveness is strongly linked to its natural landscape (Coastline, Wildlife, Ballyteige Burrow) and local gastronomy. In line with Wexford Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP), the following could be developed:

- **Action:** Market Kilmore Quay as a sustainable destination, emphasizing wildlife, culture, and local gastronomy. Promote a "Slowlyday" tourism strategy are focused on encouraging visitors to slow down, stay longer, spend more locally, and engage deeper with the culture and environment, thereby maximizing the regenerative impact of travel (for instance, market an itinerary titled "Kilmore Quay: 72 Hours of Coastal Immersion", offer of discounted rates or value-added perks (like a free local dining voucher) for booking three or more nights**,** cooking classes using the "Catch of the Quay", installation of detailed, high-quality interpretive signage that encourages visitors to pause, read, and reflect on the local history, geology, and biodiversity, organisation of monthly food markets, organise in partnership with local businesses a digital voucher or passport upon check-in that gives small rewards or discounts *only* at certified local, independent businesses, steering spending away from large chains, etc.)
- **Implementation:** Promote local produce and arts, and adopt environmental and partnership certification for tourism businesses.

3.5 Secure Funding and Partnerships

- **Action:** Pursue funding through LEADER, Community Investment Funds, Town * Village Renewal, Community Benefit Funds, CCAF, FLAG, Heritage Council, or EU LIFE programmes, in collaboration and cooperation with other local groups/associations such as Kilmore Quay Community Development Association (KQCDA).
- **Rationale:** Diverse project areas (natural, built, cultural) align well with existing funding streams.
- **Next Step:** Develop a pipeline of ready-to-fund conservation and education projects.

3.6 Summary of recommendations

The overall goal is a framework for development that actively improves the village, rather than just sustaining it. This is based on a concept called *Regenerative Tourism*.

Kilmore Quay is in a strong position to follow successful Irish community-led examples (like The Burren or Loop Head in Clare or the Maharees Conservation in Kerry) by implementing a strategy that ensures:

"*Tourism revenue strengthens the local social fabric and year-round economy, while directly funding environmental and ecological protection*".

The next immediate step is to unify all local stakeholders—residents, groups, businesses, and public bodies—to draft a transparent, actionable Community-Led Conservation Plan.

Conclusion

The Kilmore Quay Conservation Survey, with its 206 strong responses, delivers a powerful and unified message to every local group, resident, and public representative: future planning in Kilmore Quay must be community-led, conservation-first. The community has also clearly identified the most urgent problems and the most desired solutions, which must form the immediate agenda: protect our coast, protect our habitat and empower our voice.

This report sets Kilmore Quay on a new, ambitious path. The goal is not merely to *sustain* the village as it is, but to actively *improve* it—socially, culturally, and ecologically. This goal is known globally as Regenerative Tourism and Development. In simple terms, this means, every visitor, and every local decision, should leave Kilmore Quay better off than before.

The next and most critical step is for the Kilmore Quay Conservation Group to convene a Stakeholder Summit to translate these powerful findings into a concrete, measurable Community-Led Conservation Plan.

The future of Kilmore Quay now rests on our collective action.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Solar-Powered smart bins

To address litter and bin capacity concerns, *Carlingford has deployed 12 solar-powered smart bins* known as **BriteBin Solar** units (but there are similar systems like Bigbelly used widely across Ireland).

These bins are designed to automatically compact waste, significantly increasing their capacity and reducing the frequency of collections. Here's how they work and why they're effective:

1. <u>Features of Carlingford's Smart Bin System</u>

- Solar-powered compaction: Each bin uses solar energy to compact waste internally, allowing it to hold up to five times more than a standard bin.

- Real-time monitoring: The bins are connected to a *software data management platform* that tracks fill levels. This enables Louth County Council to dispatch collection crews only when bins are full, optimizing resources.
- Touch-free and sealed design: The bins are hygienic and reduce the need for single-use plastic liners.
- Award-winning technology: BriteBin Solar is recognized for its innovation in sustainable waste management.

2. Strategic Placement

The bins have been strategically installed throughout Carlingford, especially in high-footfall areas like the village center and tourist hotspots. This directly addresses the issue of insufficient public bins and helps maintain cleanliness in a popular destination.

3. Restrictions on Household

- Waste Purpose-built for public litter: These bins are installed in high-footfall areas to manage waste from pedestrians, tourists, and local businesses—not for residential garbage disposal.
- Small chute openings: The bin openings are typically narrow and designed to accept small items like wrappers, bottles, and takeaway containers. This physically limits the size of waste that can be inserted.
- Sensor-triggered access: Some models use motion sensors to open the chute, which discourages dumping large bags or bulky items.
- Sealed and compacting mechanism: The internal compactor compresses waste, but only after it's deposited through the designated chute. This prevents people from opening the bin to stuff in large loads.
- Monitoring and alerts: Smart bins are connected to a central system that tracks usage. Unusual activity—like overfilling or tampering—can trigger alerts to local authorities.

By **Donard McCabe**
04 Sept 2023 5:33 PM

FREE NEWSLETTER
Sign Up Today

Louth County Council in partnership with Carlingford Tidy Towns has installed a fleet of new solar powered compacting litter bins across the village of Carlingford.

Local authority outdoor staff are in the process of fitting 12 new 'Britebin Solar' bins in the village. The award winning solar powered bins which automatically compact waste are ideal for managing general and recycling waste.

The BriteBins, in combination with a unique software data management platform, allow Louth County Council crews the ability to monitor real-time fill-levels across the litter bin fleet in Carlingford.

By gaining this data on waste being deposited, it further allows for proactive deployment of appropriate collection resources to only those Britebins requiring service.

The bins are contained in a sealed, non-touch unit, and eliminate the need for single use plastic bin liners. They are also suitable for the disposal of dog waste.

Almost fifty of the solar powered bins are already in place across other parts of County Louth, including Dundalk, Drogheda and Blackrock.

Louth County Council Chief Executive Joan Martin welcomed the installation of the new bins in Carlingford, saying: "There are a range of benefits from these solar power bins, including the reduction of carbon emissions, reducing the number of waste collections needed, helping to maintain a cleaner environment, and creating efficiency across waste collection services in the village of Carlingford."

This project is being funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development through the CLÁR Programme, in partnership with Carlingford Tidy Towns and Louth County Council.

Article from Ireland Live, September 2023

Appendix 2

2 GoCup Deposit and Return Scheme

Kilmore Quay could adopt the 2GoCup system, provided there's a cluster of participating businesses and a viable logistics route to a nearby centralized cleaning hub—likely based in Wexford or another regional town.

1. Feasibility for Kilmore Quay

- Towns like Adare, Blessington, and Enniskerry have successfully implemented the system, showing that rural communities can participate if they have enough local cafés or food outlets.
- Kilmore Quay's tourism and café culture make it a strong candidate, especially during peak seasons when takeaway coffee demand rises.

2. Logistics and Centralized Collection

- Customers pay a €2 refundable deposit when ordering takeaway drinks in a reusable 2GoCup. They can return the cup to any participating business for a refund or swap it for a clean one.
- Used cups are stored by businesses and collected regularly by 2GoCup's logistics team. Cups are transported to a centralized washing hub where they are professionally cleaned and sanitized. There is a 2GoCup logistics site in Wexford.
- Clean cups are returned to businesses based on demand, ensuring a steady supply and minimizing overstocking. The system is designed to be scalable, with regional loops minimizing transport emissions.
- Clean cups are returned to businesses based on usage patterns. This ensures a steady supply without overstocking.
- Local cafés, restaurants, and hotels would join the scheme by subscribing to 2GoCup's service, which includes cup supply, logistics, and promotional support

3. What Kilmore Quay Would Need

- At least 3–5 participating cafés or food outlets to justify regular collection
- Local coordination through a tidy towns group, business association, or council
- Community education to encourage adoption and proper use
- Support from 2GoCup to set up logistics, signage, and training

4. How the System Pays for itself

- *Business Subscription Fees*. Participating cafés, hotels, and food outlets pay **a** monthly service fee to 2GoCup. This covers: supply of reusable cups, collection and redistribution logistics, industrial cleaning and sanitation, customer support and promotional materials.

- *Deposit Model*: Customers pay **a** €2 refundable deposit per cup. While this is returned upon cup return, some deposits are retained when cups are not returned, helping offset operational costs.
- *Cost Savings for Businesses:* According to 2GoCup, cafés save an average of €24,356 per year by eliminating the need to purchase disposable cups. These savings help justify the subscription cost.
- *Public and Local Authority Support***:** in towns like Killarney and Blessington, local councils and tidy towns groups have partnered with 2GoCup to support rollout and community engagement. This may include grants, promotional support, or integration into broader waste-reduction strategies.

5. Benefits to the Kilmore Quay Community

- **Environmental Protection**

  Reduces litter in public spaces and along the coastline, prevents plastic pollution in marine habitats, and supports Ireland's circular economy and climate goals.

- **Tourism Appeal**

  Enhances Kilmore Quay's reputation as a sustainable destination, aligns with eco-conscious visitor expectations, offers a visible commitment to environmental stewardship

- **Community Engagement**

  Encourages responsible consumer behaviour, provides educational opportunities for schools and local groups, and strengthens ties between businesses and residents through shared sustainability goals.

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KILLARNEY
COFFEE
PROJECT
KILLARNEY IS SINGLE USE
COFFEE CUP FREE
WHY?
HOW?
KILLARNEY IS SINGLE USE
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WHY?
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KILLARNEY IS SINGLE USE
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