

South West Cavan

Rural Transport

Initiative



Annual Report 2005

CONTACT DETAILS

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The South West Cavan Rural Transport Initiative (S.W.C.R.T.I.) opened its office in The Réaltóg Centre Kilnaleck on the 18th March 2003. The original project aimed to provide transport services for local people who have difficulty in accessing essential facilities and services due to the absence of public/private modes of transport.

The project is managed by a committee of 14 which comprises representatives from Kilnaleck and District Community Co-operative, Kilnaleck Social Services, County Social Services, Cavan Partnership, the Health Services Executive for the North East, Irish Wheelchair Association and Bus Éireann. The Committee also contains passenger representatives and community representatives.

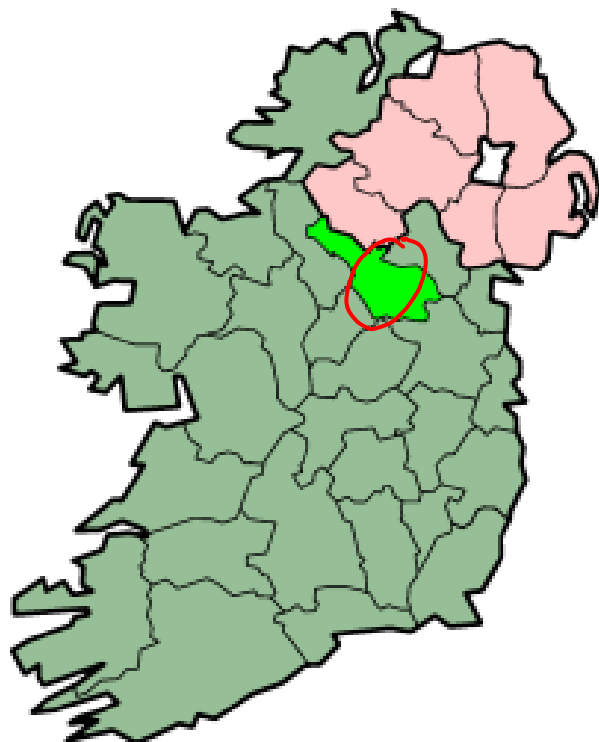
The project has been successful in increasing the availability of all ability access. In 2005, 54% of services provided by S.W.C.R.T.I. were wheelchair accessible. All drivers to date have undertaken MiDAS training. The project also provided Mini-bus Emergency Evacuation Procedures (MEEP) Training for its drivers.

The ongoing growth of the project passenger numbers show that the project enhances rural transport services to secure long term improvement in rural people's access to services and social activities, in the first nine months of operation, up until the end of December 2003, the S.W.C.R.T.I. carried 2092 passengers, on a total of 416 services. In 2004 the project carried 6603 passengers, on 628 services, and in 2005 the service carried 8103 passengers on 716 services. The average number of passengers per service was 5 in 2003, while in 2004 the average number of passengers per service was 10.5. In 2005 the average number of passengers increased further to 11.3 passengers per service. This figure shows that the project is running at almost full capacity.

S.W.C.R.T.I. has also extended its services to include an isolated part of south Cavan by the provision of a service around the parish of Killinkere to the town of Virginia once a week on Friday, the operator contracted by the project to provide this service is also contracted by Flexibus (Meath Accessible Transport Project Ltd.) to provide a service on the south side of Virginia. Due to increased passenger numbers the project increased capacity on its service from Cliffernna to Cavan via Grousehall, Stradone and Tullyco in North Cavan by introducing an extra mini-bus and extending the area served by both mini-buses.

A research project titled "A Study of the qualitative impact of the South West Cavan Rural Transport Initiative on its passengers" was commissioned by project and carried out by The Nurture Programme. A draft of the aforementioned study is attached to this report.









2. INTRODUCTION



S.W.C.R.T.I. is situated in the south west of county Cavan. The County of Cavan is in the province of Ulster and has an area of 189,060 hectares. The average density of population is 29.9 persons per square kilometre. It is mostly rural and agricultural with only 16.8% of the population living in the three towns of 1,500 or over. County Cavan is characterised by drumlin countryside dotted with many lakes and small hills. The North West area of the County is sparsely populated and mountainous. The county has several areas of highly scenic landscape. The towns and villages of the county are distinctive centres which provide for various employment, service and social needs.

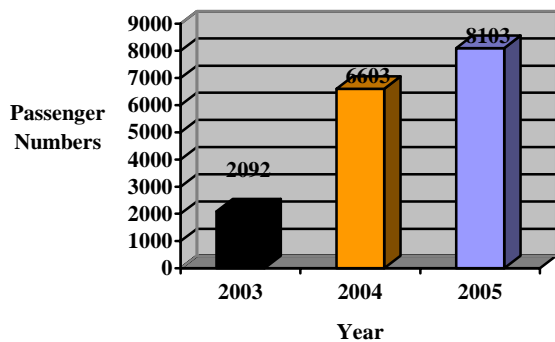
Our mission statement states that, "South West Cavan Rural Transport Initiative is a community based rural transport provider, whose aim is to improve the quality and quantity of all ability access rural transport services in County Cavan. Thus, promoting and maintaining living and working populations in rural areas, resulting in reduced social exclusion and increasing opportunities for people with reduced mobility".

The aims of the project are:

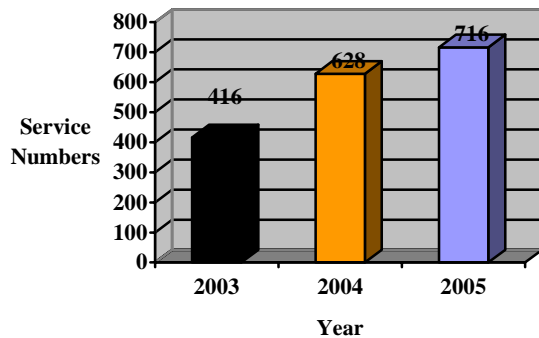
-  To develop a rural transport system that would meet the needs of the community, particularly those who are isolated, marginalized and who feel socially excluded.
-  To sustain local communities to ensure that local shops, post offices, banks etc. are viable in rural communities, and to ensure the continuity and lifestyle of the local community.
-  To co-ordinate activities which will sustain, support and provide resources for the long term betterment of the local community.
-  To leverage funding from statutory and semi-statutory bodies while providing services that are beneficial to those involved.
-  To promote the participation of local people and relevant statutory and semi-statutory representatives in the management and running of the project.
-  To tackle isolation and social exclusion, to empower people by building self-confidence and self-worth and to support and compliment other local community activities.
-  To encourage transport operators to provide all ability access.
-  To extend the current geographical area to cover all of County Cavan, where a need for transport exists.

S.W.C.R.T.I. opened its office in The Réaltóg Centre Kilnaleck on the 18th March 2003 with its first service beginning on Tuesday 8th April 2003 with 3 services per week; at the end of December 2003 the project had a total of 416 services with over 2092 passengers with an average number of 5 passengers per service this figure has risen sharply to 8103 passengers on 716 services with an average number of 11.3 passengers per service in 2005. All services provided by the project in 2005 offered a door to door service with 686 services operated on a semi-flexible route bases with 30 services being demand responsive.

No of Passengers using services provided by S.W.C.R.T.I.



No of services provided by S.W.C.R.T.I.

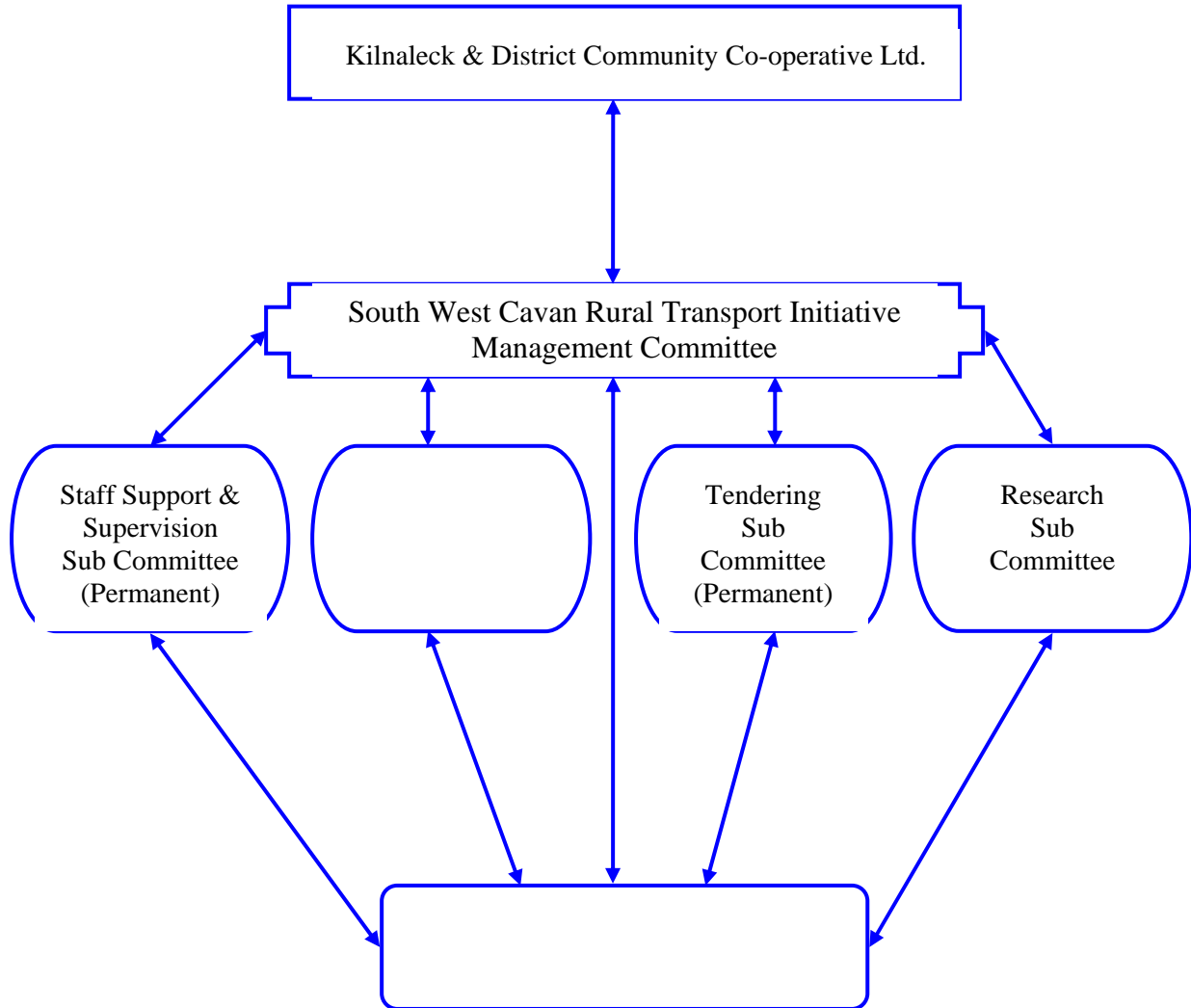


S.W.C.R.T.I. original geographical area was focused around the village of Kilnaleck and included the parishes of Ballymachugh, Ballintemple, Crosserlough, parts of Denn and parts of Kilbride. This area was extended in late 2003 to include Ballyhaise, Bunnoe, Carrickallen, Clifferna, Laragh, Redhills, Scothouse and Stradone. In 2005 the project extended its geographical area further to include the parishes of Lavey and Killinkere.

A Door To Door Services which collect passengers at the door of their home and leave them back to their door is offered on all services provided by the project. The provision of a door to door service is essential in tackling members of the community, particularly those who are isolated, marginalised and who feel socially excluded. This type of service is also essential for those who have mobility issues or those who use a wheelchair and are marginalised because of their lack of accessible transport.

3. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL CHART

The following is the 2005 organisational chart of S.W.C.R.T.I.



Above is illustrated an organisation chart for the S.W.C.R.T.I. The organisation is under the umbrella of Kilnaleck and District Community Co-operative Ltd., and a report on the initiative progress is made available to the co-operative on request. The S.W.C.R.T.I. is made up of a Management Committee of 14 people. There are 3 permanent Sub Committees which are made up of 3 members and these Sub Committees report back to the overall Management Committee.

There was also a Sub Committee setup to oversee the research project. The members of this Sub Committee are Pamela Carney, Brian Daly, and Mary Callan with the development worker of the South West Cavan Community Development Officer Hazel Leahy co-opted as a member for her experience in carrying out such research.

The table below contains a list of members of the board, the groups they represent and whether or not they work on any of the 3 permanent Sub Committees.

Name & Group Represented	Management Committee	Staff Support & Supervision Sub-Committee	Finance Sub-Committee	Tendering Sub-Committee
Donald Gibney Kilnaleck & District Community Co-op	✓		✓	
Maureen Keady <i>Kilnaleck Social Services</i>	✓	✓		
Maureen Mc Enerney <i>Community Representative</i>	✓			
Bridget Boyle <i>Irish Wheelchair Association</i>	✓			
Michael McCormick <i>Bus Éireann</i>	✓			✓
Geraldine Clarke <i>South West Cavan C.D.P.</i>	✓	✓		
Bridie O Reilly <i>County Social Services</i>	✓			
Francis O'Callaghan <i>N.S.E. North East</i>	✓			
Brian Daly <i>N.S.E. North East</i>	✓			
Patrick Gaffney <i>Community Representative</i>	✓		✓	✓
Nancy Reilly <i>Passenger Representative</i>	✓			
Mary Callan <i>Kilnaleck Social Services</i>	✓			✓
Pamela Carney <i>Cavan Partnership</i>	✓	✓		
Noelene Conaty <i>Kilnaleck & District Community Co-operative</i>	✓		✓	

The functions of each Sub Committee are listed below:

Staff Support & Supervision Sub Committee:

The role of the staff support and supervision sub committee is to consider aspects of the professional developmental needs of the supervisee. This includes the need for re-assurance and feedback, the need to be involved in particular decisions, the need to explore time management issues, on going appraisal and specific work tasks. It includes challenges both professionally and personally in issues that impact on the work. The training needs of the supervisee are also addressed by the sub committee.

Finance Sub Committee:

The role of the finance sub committee is to supervise the financial workings of the group, to monitor and review expenditure on an ongoing basis. To review all financial reports i.e. cheque journals, cash receipt journals, Pobal quarterly returns etc.

Tendering Sub Committee:

The role of this sub committee is to evaluate all tenders received, and provide recommendations for the Management Committee.

4. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

S.W.C.R.T.I. is working towards extending the geographical coverage area to all parts of County Cavan where there is no current provision of transport. This would extend the project area west to meet with Rural Lift, North to meet Baltibus, East to meet Flexibus and South to meet North Longford Rural Transport Initiative.

Funds received from Cavan Partnership enabled to project to extend its service to the Parish of Killinkere. A semi-flexible route based service was designed and operates every Friday serving three local Post Offices and into the town of Virginia. This allow the passengers using the service to access larger shops, chemists, hairdressers and it also allows passenger link with Bus Éireann Expressway service on the Dublin to Cavan corridor which operates every hour. This service is unique as the operator contracted by S.W.C.R.T.I. also provides a service for Flexibus. Providing service for both S.W.C.R.T.I. and Flexibus allows the operator to be very competitive when tendering for such services.

The project in conjunction with the Community & Voluntary Forum provided transport for the multi-cultural network to a very successful multi-cultural event which promoted cultural diversity and showcased the different gastronomic delights of our new communities. The provision of transport was essential so that non Irish National could participate in the event because of the lack of transport within there community.



Cavan Partnership and the North Eastern Health Board allocated funds to carry out a study on the qualitative impact of S.W.C.R.T.I on its passengers. This study was carried out by the Nurture Programme and is at the publication stage (a draft of the abovementioned study is attached to the report). The recommendations of this study is along three intersecting strands

1. Expansion, both of the company generally and services
2. Staff deployment to resource strategies going forward
3. The relationship of the Management Committee to the Company.

Recommendation 1: The Initiative should focus on consolidating its existing structures and services generally before proceeding to expand beyond its present geographical boundaries. Presently given the limited resources in terms of personnel it would be imprudent to endeavour to roll out additional services to neighbouring areas; especially given that there is no real strategic advantage to the Project; while there may be a real danger in reducing the existing high standards and undermining the overall success of the project going forward.

Recommendation 2: Following on from the above recommendation, I strongly recommend that the number of regional meetings presently being attended by the Project co-ordinator is dramatically reduced to allow him focus almost exclusively on service delivery.

Recommendation 3: There is need to differentiate the roles and responsibilities of the Co-op and the voluntary Management Committee. To this end I am recommending that a clarification meeting be arranged post haste.

The Management Committee has taken on board the recommendations as outlined above and to that aim the Management Committee arranged a meeting with the Kilnaleck & District Community Co-op to clarify the position of S.W.C.R.T.I. within the Kilnaleck and District Community Co-op organisational structure. With regards to the other recommendations the project will deal with them on an ongoing basis in 2006.

The Management committee also believes in the up-skilling of staff employed by the project whether they are employed directly or sub-contracted by the project. To this aim the project trains all drivers in MiDAS. There is also MEEP training provided to all the drivers. The Transport Co-ordinator also trained as a Driver Assessor/Trainers (DAT) so that the project can train new drivers in a more auspicious manor. The Transport Co-ordinator as took part in a diploma Course in Community Development Practices which was run by Cavan / Monaghan Leader

5. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community involvement and participation is vital to the future successes of the S.W.C.R.T.I. Two public meetings were held in 2005 in order to consult with the local community. The first of these meetings was held in the Réaltóg Centre, Kilnaleck in January 2005. Transport was provided to ensure that the most isolated and vulnerable members of the community had the opportunity to attend the meeting and express their opinions and views. A second meeting was held in July 2005 at which Cormac Russell (The Nurture Programme) facilitated an informal discussion with passengers with regards to the qualitative impact of the service on passengers' lives. Again transport was provided to and from the venue. The community also played an important part in the design of the new route taking in the Killinkere area of south Cavan.

6. SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

Services were designed and planned in accordance with the needs expressed in the original major survey. However since 2003 some routes have been taken off due to low demand in those areas. 2005 saw the establishment of a new route (Route 12) and the expansion of routes 3 & 11. This was achieved through splitting the route and widening the catchment area of the route.

Summary of Route in Operation as at the 31st December 2005

Route Number	Route Name
Route 3A	Kilnaleck South Service (Friday)
Route 3B	Kilnaleck North Service (Friday)
Route 5	Cavan Service (Thursday)
Route 6A	Bruskey - Kilnaleck Service (Wednesday)
Route 6B	Derrin's Bridge - Kilnaleck Service (Wednesday)
Route 7A	Crosskeys - Ballyjamesduff Service (Wednesday)
Route 7B	Crosskeys - Bullarua Service (Wednesday)
Route 9	Bunroe via Redhills - Cavan Service (Friday)
Route 11A	Lavey via Clifferna – Cavan Service (Friday)
Route 11B	Carrickallen via Knockataggert - Cavan Service (Friday)
Route 12	Killinkere Area – Virginia Service (Friday)

7. MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Throughout the year the Transport Co-ordinator travelled on the services provided by the project to enable passengers to give their views on how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the service the S.W.C.R.T.I. provides. This offers the passengers the opportunity to give any suggestions they may have to improve the service. The Passenger expresses a high satisfaction rate on all the services that are provided, and that the passengers from the coverage area hope that these services continue as they have given them new independence and improved their quality of life. Timetables are distributed via churches, post offices and local shops, to increase public interest.

The local news sections of the Anglo Celt news paper were used to inform the public of surveys and changes of route areas etc. There was no media campaign to increase the awareness of the project existing routes as almost all were running to capacity. Route 9 from Scotshouse via Bunnoe, Redhills, and Ballyhaise to Cavan was the only route that had spare capacity.

The extension in services by the project was publicised in a targeted way. The extension in area covered by Routes 3 & 11 which was split into 2 routes to increase capacity was publicised mainly by the passengers already using the service, there was also an identified need the area for the route to be extended so that more people could avail of the service.

The Route in the Killinkere area was publicised in the Local note of the Anglo Celt newspaper and also by having a stand at the local festival "Killinkere Jamboree". This proved very successful because it allowed the local community to take ownership of the service.

8. CO-OPERATION, COLLABORATION & LINKAGES

Since the S.W.C.R.T.I. inception there have been strong linkages with other organisations that have an interest in transport provision in areas covered by the project, there has also been ongoing efforts to create new linkages with other organisations through members of the board and the co-ordinator becoming actively involved on other committees. The Co-ordinator is a member of the Operational Sub Committee that Pobal setup, and he is also the Treasurer of County Cavan Community and Voluntary Forum and Vice Chairperson of South West Cavan Community Development Project

The table below shows the linkages that the S.W.C.R.T.I. currently holds through representation on its board:

<i>Agency and Representation on the Board</i>	Areas of Co-operation, Collaboration and Linkages
HSE North East <i>2 Committee Members</i>	Meeting with the HSE in the Cavan/Monaghan area in a bid to negotiate funding to provide transport services which would be mutually beneficial to both parties. Cavan/Monaghan elderly services have given support both financially and in an advisory capacity to carry out the study into the qualitative impact of the S.W.C.R.T.I. on its elderly passengers.
Cavan Partnership <i>1 Committee Member</i>	Cavan Partnership allocated funding toward the study into the qualitative impact of the S.W.C.R.T.I on its passengers can be undertaken. Cavan Partnership has also facilitated S.W.C.R.T.I in an advisory/support capacity.
Irish Wheelchair Association Cavan Branch <i>1 Committee Member</i>	The Irish Wheelchair Association Cavan Branch have given invaluable support at committee level as well as supporting the operators providing the service by given useful information on wheelchair and all ability access.
Bus Éireann <i>1 Committee Member</i>	Bus Éireann have provided assistance with the process of tendering for services, and were always available for comment and advice on the set up of routes. All services into Cavan town can connect to onward services on the Bus Éireann network.
Kilnaleck & District Community Co-op Ltd. <i>2 Committee Member</i>	Kilnaleck & District Community Co-op Ltd is the umbrella organisation under which the S.W.C.R.T.I. operates. Since start up they have provided the initiative with a project base and meeting room facilities. They have also resourced the group in an advisory and support capacity. Kilnaleck & District Community Co-op also absorb the cost of auditing S.W.C.R.T.I. accounts
Kilnaleck Social Services <i>4 Committee Members</i>	Kilnaleck Social Services provide the project with assistance in identifying routes and passengers. They have also been instrumental in promoting and marketing the project. Kilnaleck Social Services also provide refreshments to passengers on Fridays, and also undertook the catering for S.W.C.R.T.I. meetings.
Community Representatives <i>2 Committee Members</i>	Community Representatives provide feedback from local community groups on route and passenger requirements.
Passenger Representative <i>1 Committee Member</i>	The Passenger Representative provides feedback from passengers using the service.

The table below shows the linkages that the S.W.C.R.T.I. currently holds with other organisations that are non board members.

Agency	Areas of Co-operation, Collaboration and Linkages
County Development Board	The County Development Board have assisted the project financially in setting up new routes in 2005, and through providing the project with a county base platform for networking and promoting the project
County Cavan Community & Voluntary Forum	S.W.C.R.T.I. co-ordinator is treasurer of the County Cavan Community & Voluntary Forum. This will provide the project with a platform to promote itself on a county basis
Cavan Monaghan Rural Development Co-operative LEADER <i>Rural Social Scheme (R.S.S.)</i>	S.W.C.R.T.I. co-ordinator is a member of the interview panel and the treasurer of the R.S.S. in the Ballyjamesduff electoral area. It is anticipated that the R.S.S. will be able to provide passenger assistants on some of the services provided by the project
Irish Central Border Area Network (I.C.B.A.N.)	S.W.C.R.T.I. is a member of the Cross Border Community Transport Forum which is facilitated by I.C.B.A.N. This allows the project to network with other transport projects in the border areas both North and South.
Rural Transport Network (R.T.N.)	S.W.C.R.T.I. is a member of the R.T.N. which allows the S.W.C.R.T.I. staff and board members network with other R.T.I. groups across Ireland.
South West Cavan Community Development Project (S.W.C.C.D.P.)	The S.W.C.C.D.P. has worked with the S.W.C.R.T.I. over the past two years. The S.W.C.C.D.P. has provided administrative support to the S.W.C.R.T.I. and has assisted the S.W.C.R.T.I. in an advisory and supportive capacity.

9. LEVERAGE OF FUNDING

Source of funding	Amount	% of overall budget	Contribution to group or contract for service	Non financial support (please state)
Rural Transport Initiative	€57,092.00	67%		
Dept. Social & Family Affairs (Free Travel)	€13,173.00	16%		
Fares	€3,451.00	4%		
Kilnaleck Social Services	€972.00	1%	Contribution to training expenses	Kilnaleck Social Services provide the project with assistance in identifying routes and passengers. They have also been instrumental in promoting and marketing the project. Kilnaleck Social Services also provide refreshments to passengers on Fridays, and also undertook the catering for S.W.C.R.T.I. meetings.
Kilnaleck & District Community Co-op				Kilnaleck & District Community Co-op Ltd is the umbrella organisation under which the S.W.C.R.T.I. operates. Since start up they have provided the initiative with a project base and meeting room facilities. They have also resourced the group in an advisory and support capacity. Kilnaleck & District Community Co-op also absorb the cost of auditing S.W.C.R.T.I. accounts
South West Cavan Community Development Project	€900.00	1%	Contribution towards training expenses	The S.W.C.C.D.P. has worked with the S.W.C.R.T.I. over the past 2 years. The S.W.C.C.D.P. has provided administrative support to the S.W.C.R.T.I. and has assisted the S.W.C.R.T.I. in an advisory and supportive capacity

FAS (C.E)				The local C.D.P. allocated a FAS worker to the S.W.C.R.T.I. for 5 hours a week until mid summer 2005 when this position was discontinued.
HSE North East	€2,500	3%	The HSE North East provided funds to carry out research on the qualitative impact of S.W.C.R.T.I on its passengers	Meeting with the Health Board in the Cavan/Monaghan area in a bid to negotiate funding to provide transport services which would be mutually beneficial to both parties. Cavan/Monaghan elderly services agreed to give support both financially and in an advisory capacity to carry out a study into the qualitative impact of the S.W.C.R.T.I. on its elderly passengers.
Bus Éireann				Bus Éireann have provided assistance with the process of tendering for services, and were always available for comment and advice on the set up of routes. All services into Cavan town can connect to onward services on the Bus Éireann network.
The County Development Board (CDB)	€150.00	<1%		The County Development Board have assisted the project through providing the project with a county base platform for networking and promoting the project
Cavan Partnership	€6,500.00	7%	Funding was provided to carry out a study into the qualitative impact of the S.W.C.R.T.I on its passengers.	Cavan Partnership allocated funding toward the Running of the project in 2004/ 2005 Cavan Partnership has also facilitated S.W.C.R.T.I in an advisory/support capacity.

10. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

A research project titled "A Study of the qualitative impact of the South West Cavan Rural Transport Initiative on its passengers" was commissioned by project and carried out by The Nurture Programme. A draft of the aforementioned study is attached to this report.

Qualitative outcomes

Below are some quotes from letters received by S.W.C.R.T.I. by passengers using the service.

"I am an old age pensioner, I lost my husband last September. He did the driving for shopping and to collect pensions etc. As I do not drive it would be impossible for me to get out. Since I started to avail of the rural transport service I am able to get out as I am collected at my door and left back to my door. I congratulate those in charge for such a wonderful service."

"There is a special aspect to the rural transport, we meet and chat with people we haven't met for a long time. We also see what's going on in the countryside, new houses, and new farm yard building and so on."

"It means a lot to me to be able to use my Bus Pass."

"I have used the new Mini-bus transport and would like to say that it is a wonderful convenience and give us senior citizens a degree of independence which we would not otherwise have. Living in the heart of the country we are very dependent on others to get to town. It is a great feeling to be able to attend to ones own business and at a time of day when it is most suitable for us to go to town."

"A lot of people think it is a good thing because there was nothing like this before."

"A note to let you know how pleased I am with the transport service which is so reliable. Now that the post office is closed in Redhills it is great to get to Ballyhaise and on to Cavan."

Quantitative Outcome

Below is a table of the Quantitative outcomes of the project in 2005:

	No. of Services	Fares Collected	Total Number of Free Travel Pass Holders	Number of Other Free Passengers	Total No. of Passengers	Total No. of Male	Total No. of Female	Total No. of Passengers Requires Assistance	Total No. of Wheelchair Users	Total No. of Pre-booked Passengers	Total No. of Hail & Ride Passengers	Total No. of Door-To-Door Pick-Ups
Route 3A	104	€3.00	807	0	840	189	651	52	86	834	6	801
Route 3B	72	€10.00	635	0	639	211	428	82	0	638	1	638
Route 5	102	€18.00	1036	4	1280	178	1102	99	2	1165	115	1055
Route 6A	46	€5.00	526	0	528	46	482	72	38	518	10	490
Route 6B	46	€0.00	503	2	505	180	325	78	0	497	8	495
Route 7A	20	€0.00	151	0	151	14	137	54	14	149	2	121
Route 7B	20	€0.00	138	0	138	24	114	0	0	138	0	132
Route 9	110	€1,068.00	1303	111	1822	488	1334	0	0	1425	397	193
Route 11	108	€1,532.00	873	30	1504	517	987	158	0	1387	117	985
Route 11B	18	€18.00	135	2	222	94	128	10	0	206	16	141
Route 12	66	€65.00	378	0	404	0	404	0	0	396	8	396
Specials	4	€200.00	10	40	70	14	56	0	0	70	0	10
<i>Yearly Total</i>	<i>716</i>	<i>€3799.00</i>	<i>6495</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>8103</i>	<i>1955</i>	<i>6148</i>	<i>605</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>7423</i>	<i>680</i>	<i>5457</i>

11. PROOFING OBLIGATIONS

The experiences of the S.W.C.R.T.I. Committee in addressing local transport needs in the community shows that people living in Rural South West Cavan are very capable of bringing about positive change in their area.

Extent to which the S.W.C.R.T.I. strategies impact on Rural Disadvantage

South West Cavan is characterised by diversity and remoteness and local people are often best placed to develop appropriate solutions. Although the particular transport needs and solutions of each community will differ, the solution provided by S.W.C.R.T.I. has been effective in tackling marginalisation, social exclusion and isolation.

Extent to which the S.W.C.R.T.I. strategies impact on Equality

The project has had an impact on equality by addressing the need for all ability access, initially no services had all ability access, while today, 18 months 45% of services provide all ability access, thus impacting on the lives of people with special needs.






























Extent to which S.W.C.R.T.I. strategies impact on poverty

The low fare structure which the project has developed, as well as the acceptance of free travel passes enables those experiencing economic disadvantage to make use of the services.

Extent to which S.W.C.R.T.I. strategies impact on the environment

As the S.W.C.R.T.I. has grown over the past 2½ year, the average passengers per service has grown – from 5 passengers per service in 2003, 10.5 passengers per service at the end of 2004 to 11.3 passengers per service at the end of 2005, this has a positive impact on the environment, as more and more people turn to use public transport, resulting in the better use of vehicles and better organisation of transport.

12. S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Serving people in rural areas.  Door to door services  Strong representation on board  Quality services provided by Operators  All drivers MiDAS trained  MEEP Training Provided  Provided transport where previously it was not available  Loyal passengers  Tight budget control  Good networking with other projects  Excellent public relations  A positive action to tackle social exclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Aailed of other funding  Aailed of the expertise of committee members  Good relationship with the HSE  Pilot programme of Co-ordinated Hackney Scheme in conjunction with HSE  To expand to a point where with the support of partner agencies an accessible transport matrix for the entire community could be secured
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Services are running at almost full capacity  Co-ordinator hours are very constrained  Unable to promote service due to capacity issue  Excessive administration is time consuming  New ideas difficult for elderly to comprehend  No marketing strategy in place  Rising cost of fuel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Uncertainty of what mainstreaming will bring  Inability to extend geographical area due to funding constraints  Low availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles  Changes in legislation needed  Unpopularity of some passengers on certain services  Other projects encroaching on our operational area

13. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The key achievements of 2005 were:

- Leveraged funding to carry out a study of the qualitative impact of the S.W.C.R.T.I. on its passengers
- Leveraged funding to pilot a new route
- Leveraged funding to carry out training for drivers, operators, and the co-ordinator
- Carried out a study into the qualitative impact of the S.W.C.R.T.I. on its passengers which is now at publication stage (a draft of this report is attached)
- Successfully piloted a new route in the Killinkere area of Co. Cavan
- Successfully expanded routes 3 & 11 by splitting routes and increasing the geographical area covered by these routes
- All drivers operating services for the S.W.C.R.T.I. are MiDAS trained
- Provided additional Fire Evacuation training for drivers and operators
- Increased the passenger confidence in services

14. KEY CHALLENGES & ISSUES 2005

The key challenges and issues faced by the S.W.C.R.T.I. in 2005 are examined in detail in the Nurture Programme study "A Study of the Qualitative Impact of the South West Cavan Rural Transport Initiative on its Passengers":

One of the project's primary aim's is to enhance rural transport services to secure long term improvement in rural people's access to services and social activities, and this it has done with due aplomb, in the first nine months of operation, up until the end of December 2003, the SWCRTI carried 2092 passengers, on a total of 416 services. In 2004 the project carried 6603 passengers, on 628 services; figures thus far in 2005 will exceed targets for the preceding year. The average passenger number per service was 5 in 2003, while in 2004 the average passenger number per service increased by 110%, to 10.5 passengers per service, again this has increased yet further in 2005 (mean average will become available at the end of this trading year). The SWCRTI has also extended its routes to include isolated parts of North Cavan, these new routes have proved very successful, and are working to meet the projects aim, which is, to promote social inclusion and tackle the problems of social isolation. The above figures illustrate at least quantitatively the ongoing impact of the project. The service links isolated individuals with essential and non-essential services, including GP's, the Post office, main transport arteries etc.

Also given the demography of its end users (see section two above), SWCRTI adds tremendous additionality to local and regional HSE services, which may otherwise be virtually inaccessible to nearly a quarter of South West Cavan's population, many of whom are themselves already extremely vulnerable, isolated, and likely to be in a cohort that require high levels of service support from the Health Service. Indeed it is difficult to imagine how the HSE could hope to adequately reach their target constituency without such a service. It is

therefore, commendable and strategically sound for the HSE to continue as active supporters of the Initiative. Moreover given the symbiotic nature of the relationship between both it is reasonable to assume that the HSE can expect to accrue tangible gains from any extra support offered to assist in expanding the transport initiative going forward.

As well as promoting social inclusion among isolated groupings the initiative is quiet remarkable on a number of other levels. Firstly, the Co-ordinator; is an energetic, committed and innovative leader. He appreciates the intricacies of running a community based transport initiative, and presents as an extremely competent line manager. He also demonstrates a commitment to promote the service, as well as the principle of RTI in general. I have no doubt that if his hours were extended that he would be well positioned to expand the service (see above) to connect with other RTI's in the County and it environs and thereby provide an accessible transport matrix for the whole of County Cavan.

Notwithstanding his enthusiasm, the Co-ordinator is expected to achieve far too much by the management committee. While it is reasonable on the part of the management committee to wish to be represented at various meetings throughout the county, and indeed laudable that they should wish to expand the service going forward, these aspirations are simply unrealistic, and will remain so, until such time as the co-ordinator post is extended to a full time post, with, if possible, secretarial assistance. Notwithstanding the excellent work of the coordinator, I cannot emphasis enough the fact that the stresses he faces are real and immediate, evidenced for example by the fact that in the third quarter of the year the Programme of Activities for 2005 has not been agreed by the Board of Management.

The restricted timeframe within which the initiative is coordinated serves to make its achievements to date all the more remarkable. Secondly, then, the initiative as well as successfully reaching its intended market has also remained true to the original aims of the RTI in that it does not compete with any local commercial passenger transport operators, thereby ensuring that the initiative simply enhances passenger services provided to the public, as opposed to duplicating and/or displacing existing services.

Thirdly, adding to the strength of the co-ordinator is the diversity of representation of the management committee; there are representatives from key stakeholders with an interest in the area of transport and social inclusion from the HSE, Bus Éireann, Cavan Partnership, County Social Services, Kilnaleck Social Service, Passenger Representatives and Kilnaleck & District Community Co-op (KDCC).

Presently, however, despite the talent and credentials of the management committee they continue function under the auspices of KDDC, so technically they are no more than a sub-group of that company, though they appear for the most to function separately from it. This management committee as it is presently termed to all intense purposes act as would company directors, and as already noted, do so with extreme proficiency. If the group wish to avoid a situation where the legal status of the decisions made by the management

committee (i.e. Corporate Governance) is called in to question, the specific relationship between the two groupings should be clarified forthwith aided where appropriate by relevant legal advice.

Fourthly, routes that are provided by SWCRTI are certainly tackling social isolation; combating poverty and linking passengers who would otherwise have little or no access to private or public transport. Currently the routes in question are running at capacity which while enhancing figures also limits the development of these services unless routes are split. Indeed plans are en train to split some routes subject to the availability of funds; but again this will also mean that the initiative will be unable to expand its geographical coverage. Clearly the expansion of geographic coverage would be the best of all options given that it would make the project more viable. It is important therefore that existing funds are overly tied into splitting routes.

Fifthly, the quality of drivers is yet strength of the project; they are remarkably accommodating and passenger-centred in their approach. That said the smaller operators are more willing than the larger operators to take part in training provided by the Initiative. Indeed it would appear to the independent researcher who travelled on each of the routes that the smaller operator display a higher level of regard for the service, and demonstrate a greater level of appreciation regarding the underlying objectives of SWCRTI. To date SWCRTI has provided MIDAS and Fire evacuation training to any driver who would like to take part.

Finally, the evaluation has identified one of the core reasons for the level of such of the initiative lies in its willingness to collaborate with other agencies/services/initiative across the county. For example at present SWCRTI are working with Flexibus in Meath in providing a transport service around Virginia. This service is provided by a single operator with Flexibus paying and organising the southern side of the town and SWCRTI providing a service on the northern side of the town. This type of co-operation provides an operator with a half days work and gives both projects a cost benefit in that cost are divided across both projects. Other committees and programmes the SWCRTI are working with include ICBAN Joining up Development Programme, Community & Voluntary Forum, ADM's Operational Policy & Mainstreaming Consultative Committee and South Cavan Rural Social Scheme. Involvement with these committees and programmes is vital because it raises the profile of the RTI and by association potentially assists SWCRTI when looking for additional funds in the future. SWCRTI also works very closely with South West Cavan Community Development Project (SWCCDP) in all aspects of its work. Indeed SWCCDP have provided a huge amount of assistance with annual reports, strategic reviews and ongoing planning. The HSE and Cavan Partnership have been stalwarts of the Initiative since its inception, and as already noted duly recognise the mutual benefits of such a close cooperative relationship.

Despite a range of restrictions, the initiative has achieved much and has the potential to achieve even more in the future, that said it important that if the project intends to expand, it first consolidate its existing base.

There is a stated aspiration on the part of the Co-ordinator and the Management Committee that the project be extended to cover all areas of county Cavan that are currently unable to access transport services. Clearly the latent capacity for such an expansion can only be mobilised by funding a full-time co-ordinator post. Unfortunately to date there have been no guarantees of long term funding over the next 3 years; all that has been forthcoming, however vague, is that the RTI will be mainstreamed from the end of 2006 (Nurture Programme, 2005).

The recommendations as highlighted from the report are along three intersecting strands:

- Expansion, both of the company generally and services
- Staff deployment to resource strategies going forward
- The relationship of the Management Committee to the Company

Recommendation 1: The Initiative should focus on consolidating its existing structures and services generally before proceeding to expand beyond its present geographical boundaries. Presently given the limited resources in terms of personnel it would be imprudent to endeavour to roll out additional services to neighbouring areas; especially given that there is no real strategic advantage to the Project; while there may be a real danger in reducing the existing high standards and undermining the overall success of the project going forward.

Recommendation 2: Following on from the above recommendation, I strongly recommend that the number of regional meetings presently being attended by the Project co-ordinator are dramatically reduced to allow him focus almost exclusively on service delivery.

Recommendation 3: There is need to differentiate the roles and responsibilities of the Co-op and the voluntary Management Committee. To this end I am recommending that a clarification meeting be arranged post haste.

The above recommendations are currently being systematically worked through by the Management Committee and the Co-ordinator.

14. FUTURE PLANS

The future plans of the project in the short term are broadly in line with the recommendations made in the study carried out by the Nurture Programme on the qualitative impact of the S.W.C.R.T.I. on its passengers (see above section).

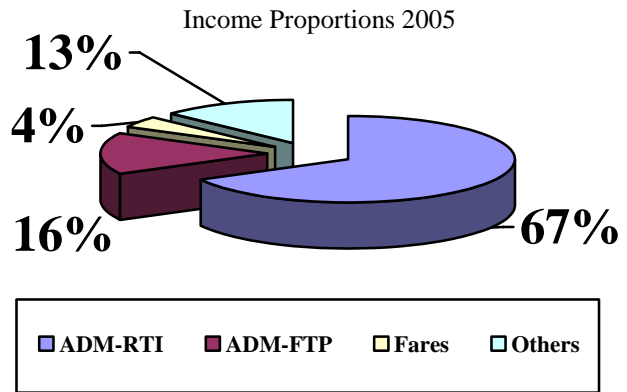
The exceptions to this are:

- To increase capacity on route 5 by splitting this route and covering a larger geographical area
- To provide a weekly service around the village of Ballinagh to help tackle issues of social isolation, exclusion and disadvantage in this area arising as a direct result of the lack of an adequate transport infrastructure in this area
- To pilot a co-ordinated hackney service in conjunction with the HSE Child and Family Services Section in Cavan, with a view to expanding this service to other disciplines within the HSE and to use additional capacity to the betterment of the projects other passengers

15. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Income 2005

ADM-RTI	€57,092.00
ADM-FTP	€13,173.00
Fares	€3,451.00
Others	€11,094.00
Total	€84,810.00

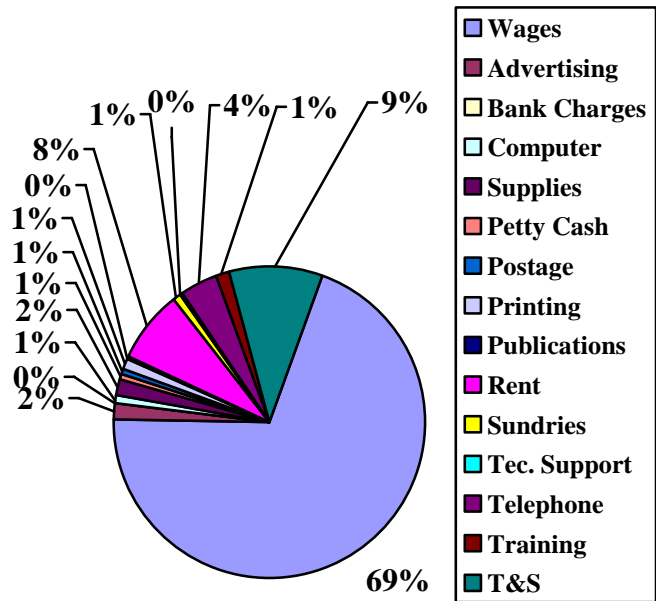


Expenditure 2005

Administration

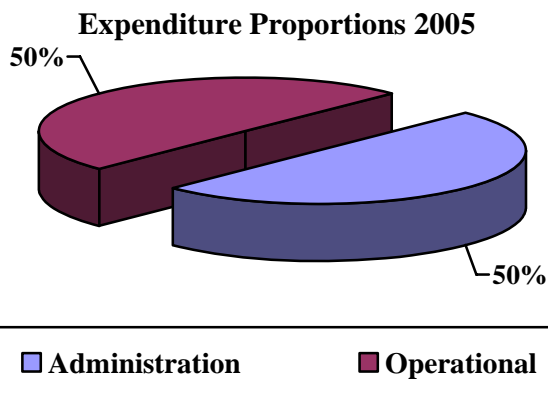
Wages Co-ordinator	€24,032.48
Advertising & Publicity	€559.44
Bank Charges	€35.08
Computer Maintenance	€250.00
Office Supplies	€573.44
Petty Cash	€200.00
Postage & Courier	€192.00
Printing & Stationery	€382.37
Publications/Subscriptions	€50.00
Rent	€2,600.00
Sundry Expenses	€300.00
Technical Support	€86.46
Telephone & Fax	€1,355.32
Training	€500.01
Travel & Sub (Staff)	€3,322.05
Total Administration	€34,438.65

Administration Proportion 2005



Operational Costs

Sub Contracting Costs	€31,620.00
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Expenditure 2005

Administration	€34,438.65
Operational	€34,504.00
Total Expenditure	€68,942.65