



# Clonakilty Autism Friendly Town Plan

## Principles of an Autism Friendly town

1. Improve awareness of autism with a view to greater acceptance of autism amongst the general public in Clonakilty
2. Make it easier for the autistic community to live and work in Clonakilty
3. Make it easier for the autistic community to visit Clonakilty
4. Seek to combat the stigma around autism and recognise the diverse experience of those with the condition
5. Give an autistic perspective to organisations that seek support
6. Be an example for other towns and villages in Ireland
7. Increase employment opportunities for autistic people

## Build Landscape

- Installation of a sensory garden near Model Railway Station
- Install visual signage at the entrance, exit and key public areas
- Make improvements in the playground to make it more Autism Friendly
- Consult with County Council twice yearly on Autism Accessibility in the town
- Create a town-wide "sensory alert" system - this would be housed on the "Autism in Clonakilty" webpage and would notify autistic people of any changes to the environment/building work. Example <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/visit-and-learning/autism-and-the-assembly/>
- Explore other sensory installations in the town: eg. soft lighting in all public spaces



## Public Awareness & Understanding

- Host an annual autism awareness day in the town, with input and direction from autistic people
- Host an annual briefing for other towns and villages on building an Autism Friendly Town
- Bring Autism Experience to Clonakilty Annually for 3 years running
- Building Clonakilty's reputation as an "Autism Hub" by holding an annual "Clonakilty Lecture" on autism from a leading international expert
- Promote Clonakilty Autism Friendly Town through tourism channels
- Encourage event organisers to integrate autism friendly element to their events
- Autism Friendly Annual Update 9th October
- Use "I Love Clonakilty" website to give a monthly tip on gaining a better understanding around Autism and the needs Autistic people.

## Healthcare & Public Services

- Train staff in communicating using alternative communication systems
- Allow autistic people to select preferred modes of communication
- Provide the opportunity for familiarisation visits

## Education

- Develop self-advocacy training for young autistic people
- Ensure every student receives autism awareness training whilst in school

## Employment

- Develop a work experience and internship programme for autistic people who are still in education
- Grow employment opportunities for autistic people and their carers



## **Retail & Business / Hospitality**

- Develop a webpage "Autism Friendly Town in Clonakilty"
- Agree a weekly/monthly autism friendly evening, standard across the town

## **Performance Review**

- Prepare an Annual Report
- Monitor adherence by participating members
- Grow number of participating organisations