

## 5.0 Structure & Finance

While the development of a plan, or the identification of a set of environmental improvements for any village is important for the future development of any settlement, it is essential that all development, particularly development sponsored and supported by local community groups has regard to the various funding opportunities that exist and the most appropriate means of accessing various financial supports.

The following sections address two key areas that all communities should be aware of. Firstly, there is the structure of the local community body promoting development and secondly, there is the matter of funding.

### 5.1 Structure

Many local or village environmental improvements can be carried out by local groups. However, some of the larger projects which include modifications to roadways and the development of footpaths, will require the support and assistance of the local County Council.

Increasingly however, in order to access funding, many local groups, in order to obtain funding from Central Government, Local Government, EU and other institutional funds in order to support and assist the development of a village and the improvement of buildings, structures and open spaces, require a formal legal structure rather than a community body or group. This is generally to ensure accountability with the transfer of funds and responsibility in instances where insurance for the execution of specific works is required.

Having regard to this, it is important that local community bodies should consider the development of formal legalised structures in order to allow the widest possible range of funds to be accessed. It is likely that local groups will increasingly have to be established companies limited by guarantee in order to access emerging funding opportunities.

### 5.2 Finance

There are a wide range of funding opportunities available for the development and improvement of public areas in villages and towns.

All development and improvements will require concerted actions by local groups and statutory bodies along with the use of a range of funding sources. These funding opportunities effectively represent a 'moving target' with different closing dates for the receipt of all applications. Some of the more common sources are detailed on the following pages.

It is important that all these funding sources, and in particular, their websites, are regularly monitored in order to keep up to date with funding initiatives.

It is important to note that there are many opportunities for cross financing between various funding organisations. For example, Heritage Council funds can be used as matching funding as their funding is derived from the National Lottery.