

# **Funding Sources**

A Report on Funding Opportunities for Community Projects

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## Introduction

As the proliferation of environmental degradation and carbon emissions become the focus of EU legislation, the provision of financial support has moved up in the European Union's focus. The European Green Deal seeks to cut down significantly on carbon emissions and turn towards a Just Transition with innovative technology and environmental preservation. With the international prevalence of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the implementation of a Green Deal investment plan, there is a global aim to achieve climate change targets within the coming decades. With €1 trillion going towards sustainability from the EU, there is an international consensus to reach net zero targets. The Green Deal lays out a number of strategies to establish the pathway to reaching a net zero emissions target by 2050.

At a national level, the Carbon Bill sets targets of mitigation and adaption as emissions have continued to flatline over the last decade. Focuses should lie with the change in societal norms as the recent pandemic shows the potential to lower the movement of the labour market and improve transport possibilities in a way to limit carbon emissions as transport accounts for 19.8% of the carbon emissions in Ireland – behind agriculture. Similarly, energy and home-heating accounts for a further 19.3%, showing the significance that could come with limiting these sectors can have on the movement towards climate protection.

This report will look at funding opportunities and cases in which climate mitigation were successful in Ireland. In order to conceptualise and materialise projects, funding is an essential element to completion. As policies give a general guideline through the National Climate Change Adaption Framework and the National Adaption Framework (NAF), Local Authorities must adapt to meet the targets expected at an international level. The setbacks and challenges for those who apply for funding will also be discussed as community involvement is necessary for establishing relevant and mutually beneficial projects for both government targets, and community outcomes.

## Funding Opportunities

The section will establish three levels of funding and where project concepts can source funding opportunities. These levels are local level, national level, and EU level – with case examples to show the types of projects that have been supported previously. A number of sources are not exclusive to just climate-based projects as they support multi-level initiatives and ideas. This report focuses on a few funding sources at each level, but also provides guidance further to the extensive number of funds available for application (see Appendix Table 1).

### LOCAL

At a local level, community groups can seek funding that will help boost regional climate awareness and encourage members in the community to engage in climate-conscious activities. The funds outlined below are based around this concept, with case examples provided to discuss local funding opportunities that have been carried out in Ireland.

### Community Heritage Grant

The Community Heritage Grant is a government scheme that focuses on conservation projects, with up to 80% of funding given up to €15,000. This scheme seeks to enable community groups and NGOs in securing funding for managing heritage sites and conservation/regeneration of areas of cultural significance. This grant could be used in the protection of natural sites and maintain existing areas of biodiversity.

### Community Environment Action Fund

This fund seeks to support communities and local groups working with local authorities to carry out small-scale environmental projects. These projects look at biodiversity, climate mitigation, waste, water and air quality. The grant has a focus on community garden and allotments, education initiatives, and public engagement.

### Healthy Ireland Fund

The Healthy Ireland Fund seeks to encourage people to be more active while helping mental and physical well-being. A major contributor to these activities is climate, as high carbon emissions lead to poor air quality and being active is linked to positive mental states. The Healthy Ireland Fund allows groups to send ideas and innovative projects to encourage community connection and accessibility to nature. This specific funding opportunity shows the crossover possibilities for climate-conscious projects that could be focused on another sector such as sports/active funds (see Case Two) or mental wellbeing funds. With the fund being targeted towards local community groups, this fund provides accessibility and ease of application for groups with possibly less resources or expertise.

## **NATIONAL**

National funding opportunities is larger schemes which look at bigger projects which can be focused towards single-building projects or larger-scale projects. These projects are funded through government schemes which seek to improve communities and businesses through bigger projects.

### Town and Village Renewal Scheme

The Town and Village grant is targeted towards smaller towns and areas who wish to carry out projects of renewal. The grants fund rejuvenating projects that encourage town centre living and attract tourists as well as general footfall into the area. This has been a huge source of funding for Kildare since its introduction in 2016, funding 39 projects and receiving over €2.25 million in 4 years (see Appendix Table 2). The grants usually range between €20,000 to €100,000, with some exceptions of up to €200,000 for larger renewal projects.

### Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

These funds look to grow sustainable development and decrease the carbon footprint of urban and rural areas in their respective schemes. The projects funded range from transport development and greenways, to urban regeneration. These projects are mostly large-scale and are therefore focused towards local authority due to the need for planning permission and high levels of assessment. These projects look to create climate resilient societies and can be created from the culmination of multiple small projects to come together as a larger concept project.

### Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme

The Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme was established by the Irish government to provide funding for developing infrastructure which encourages healthy and active lifestyles while also supporting the economic and tourism potential for local communities. Projects are split into three categories based on cost of the project and fund projects that cost up to €500,000. Projects under this scheme have included the development/maintenance of greenways or trails, as well as marketing or digitisation of trails – all of which could be adapted into future plans for Kildare (See Appendix Table 3). The versatility of the projects funded by ORIS allows for public engagement through the upgrade of existing networks, as well as providing funding for the creation of new cycling and walking trails [Blueways and Greenways].

In 2019 Wicklow received over €200,000 in the funding of 6 separate projects (see Case Six) with the development of trails, trail infrastructure, production of informative videos on trails, and notably, the establishment of a network for cycling trails (see Case Six). This specific example, as well as video production on the Barrow Blueway being established through Kildare, could be of great significance in Kildare as creating a viable network system between towns. Using the new greenway as a means for a cycling network could be a great boost in both the tourism sector, as well as encouraging more sustainable means of transport. In a similar way, the development of bog-walks and improving disability access of existing paths<sup>1</sup> could also be looked into moving forward.

### IDA “Go Green”

IDA “Go Green” funds look to increase level of environmental awareness, and drive environmental efficiencies through a number of schemes. Green Start looks at funding the hiring of consultants in environmental activity advice; establishes baseline assessment, and possible savings. Green Plus focuses on embedding environmental management practices through training - process improvements towards sustainability and applying international standards and practices. Lastly, the Environmental Aid Programme funds renewable energy technologies [solar panels], energy-saving [LED lighting], non-energy environmental initiatives [waste reduction/recycling]. Projects must have payback above 2 years and must exceed EU expectations. Also, all projects up until 2015 had been energy-based; mostly gas based CHP or Tri-Generation. Decarbonisation infrastructure, emerging decarbonisation

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<sup>1</sup> Clogher bog walk development, Mayo and redevelopment of paths at Island Wood, Cork  
<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/f6651-minister-humphreys-and-failte-ireland-announce-32-million-in-funding-for-outdoor-recreational-amenities/>

technologies, smart mobility, green finance, strategic value chains are all focuses and could be a support for the implementation of innovative projects such as green or blue roofs (see Case Five).

### Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA provides a number of funds and grants towards projects and research surrounding human interaction with the natural world and seeks to better this relationship and finding innovative technologies and methods to improve this. Under their research pillars: climate, water, and sustainability, they target policy-driven projects that are implemented in a cost-effective way. Their funding is focused towards research, however, they have multiple secondary funding resources that are co-funded programmes or are for supporting climate-focused projects, educational concepts, and events<sup>2</sup>.

### National Transport Authority

With transport accounting for one-fifth of carbon emissions nationally, tackling the issue of single-occupant cars and limited sustainable options is vital. The National Transport Authority provides funding and measures grants towards projects that improve infrastructure and safety for pedestrians, commuters, and cyclists in order to provide viable sustainable alternatives. With Kildare having a high amount of commuters in their labour force (both inward and outward), providing safe and feasible options could hugely tackle the carbon emission issue and allow for individual climate mitigation. NTA projects can be both local level, as well as national level – providing improvement for community transport as well as inter-county transport networks.

Projects semi-funded by the National Transport Authority include LED public lighting upgrades, replacing on-street car parking with cycle parking spaces, improvement/instalment of cycle lanes, and the installation of pedestrian/cyclist-only bridges<sup>3</sup> which significantly increase cycling and walking while creating an inter-city network and connection. Access improvement (see Case One) and safety for pedestrians and cyclists are a huge focus for NTA-funded projects, with 55% (or €14.4 million) of NTA's regional cities financial outturn going to walking and cycling schemes.

### Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) are energy efficiency-focused, giving assistance in developing projects to reduce energy consumption and costs. Funding is provided based on 'feasibility studies' [up to 50% of maximum fund of €15,000], and final project delivery support of up to 75% of maximum of €15,000. SEAI has established the Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) network with over 400 SECs in Ireland. The Better Energy Communities project support community-based NFP organisations by providing 50% of funds for energy-efficiency projects and the SEAI has

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/research/epafunding/>

<sup>3</sup> Dublin Dockland Bridge and the Mary Elmes Bridge, Cork [[https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Sustainable\\_TM\\_Grants\\_2019.pdf](https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Sustainable_TM_Grants_2019.pdf)]

promised to support more projects moving forward with increased funding in the 2021 Budget<sup>4</sup> [to be called the Community Energy Grants from 2021]. This funding is retrospective however, and so upfront costs must be covered beforehand. Between 2015 and 2019, the SEAI helped fund the upgrading of over 6,600 homes and supported over 2,000 non-domestic projects (see Case Four). These projects include improvement of insulation, upgrading lighting efficiency, and increasing thermal efficiency, leading to the improvement of buildings' carbon footprint, as well as lowering annual energy costs<sup>5</sup>.

Upcoming funds from the SEAI for 2021 include One Stop Shop and Community Housing Strand, National Housing Retrofit Scheme, Community/Local Energy Action Fund, and the Community Activation Fund (see Appendix Table One). Regarding the Community Activation Fund, the SEAI are looking to streamline the application process for communities with a €220,000 grant limit and would involve inter-year funding.

## **EUROPEAN UNION**

EU schemes support large projects that cross over county borders and seek to innovate and support research across the entirety of the EU Member States. The funding goes towards pilot schemes, as well as bringing modern ideas and technologies to EU countries.

### *European Regional Development Fund*

The European Regional Development Fund seeks to prioritise innovation and research moving towards a low-carbon economy. Projects funded look to mitigate environmental issues and economic and social issues occurring as a result of climate change. It focuses on regional imbalance and is dependent on organisations such as Enterprise Ireland to implement the grants. The fund is allocated according to a regions capabilities and can finance between 50% and 85% of a project, dependent on the regions level of development. In a similar realm, the EU Cohesion Fund and Social Fund look to rebalance economic disparities in struggling regions.

### *LIFE and Horizon programmes*

LIFE and Horizon 2020 are funds that ran from 2014 to 2020. Both contributed approximately €3.4 billion and €80 billion respectively towards climate action project over 7 years<sup>6</sup>. Although the programme calls have closed, there are signs that the EU will be either continuing on with these projects or similar funding opportunities for the next phase to continue boosting the EU climate agenda. There are a number of related funds that are not directly funding climate action projects but some projects can build off previous examples to help Ireland and Kildare reach a their carbon targets.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/f8c2f-minister-ryan-announces-28-million-government-funding-call-for-community-energy-projects/>

<sup>5</sup> The Fair Play Café in Dublin saving €1,300 annually and The Rediscovery Centre in Dublin saving €6,300 per annum in energy costs [<https://www.seai.ie/publications/Community-Case-Studies-.pdf>]

<sup>6</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls_en)

### Interreg Europe

Interreg is a source for project funding that looks to boost sustainable energy, transport, research, and other topics towards climate change mitigation. It is funded by the ERDF [see above] but Interreg alone contributes circa €1 billion towards EU programmes. Interreg looks to fund larger projects such as coastal system resilience building<sup>7</sup>. This fund does require a collaboration between two or more organisations and go across borders to endure is is an international project. The focus of the HeatNet NWE focuses on district heating projects within EU Member States (see Case Three) and is a prime example of these transnational level projects.

## **NEW SOURCES**

There are a number of upcoming funds and existing funds that have not been ‘tapped into’ that could provide grants towards climate projects. With changing ways of living, these opportunities could lead to altering our cities and villages to suit these new ways of life. With working from home leading to potentially lower levels of travel and commuting, as well as car prices and the removal of fossil-fuelled cars. With the movement towards exclusively electric modes of transport and potential increase in working from home, use of public transport and vehicle-sharing may grow in popularity and necessity.

### Climate Action Fund

In 2018, the Irish government announced a new, upcoming fund that would be made available for groups seeking to proliferate climate change mitigation. This €500 million fund is included in Project Ireland 2040<sup>8</sup> and is a Climate Action fund that will allocate funding for a decade from 2019. The funds will be granted to local governments, businesses, and other stakeholders that fight towards Ireland’s energy and climate targets. Included in Project Ireland 2040 will be funding towards rural development, urban development, and innovation technology that could help with climate mitigation. This fund will next open in early March 2021 with a community-focused aspect in its project funding.

### Climate Innovation Fund

The EU have promised €10 billion towards supporting commercial innovation in low-carbon technologies over the next decade. This fund will financially support new green energy and methods of lowering carbon emissions in intensive industries<sup>9</sup>. The fund will go towards both small-scale as well as large-scale projects and will be based on effectiveness, cost efficiency, and level of innovation. This fund covers up to 60% of a project’s costs and is not considered State aid, thus can be financially supported with public support.

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<sup>7</sup> CCAT operation <https://irelandwales.eu/projects/coastal-communities-adapting-together-ccat>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.climatechange.ie/state-announces-e500-million-funding-for-climate-action-under-project-ireland-2040/>

<sup>9</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/innovation-fund\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/innovation-fund_en)

## Local Property Tax

In 2021, Kildare County Council yielded just under €19 million in Local Property Tax<sup>10</sup>. Local Authorities receive 80% of LPT collected to allocate towards specific areas decided by the Local Authority themselves; usually this money is put towards housing and infrastructure. With just 0.5% of the Kildare County Council's funding going towards 'Climate Change and Flooding' (averaging at €3.37 per person)<sup>11</sup>, there is a large amount that lies in the money gained from LPT that could be put towards projects such as those listed in this report that could cover multiple bases. There is promise as a section of the money from LPT was sectioned off for climate projects and shows promise towards the increase in climate-conscious activity. Such projects could improve existing infrastructure, while lessening the impact upon the climate, saving money for house dwellers/business owners, and proliferate Kildare's fight towards lowering carbon emissions.

## Case Studies

### TRANSPORT

#### Case One:

##### Clondalkin Bawnogue Permeability

In a project costing just over €425,000, South Dublin County Council carried out a scheme which provided 900m of a cycle track and 276m of a footpath which increased accessibility to the Grand Canal as well as Fonthill Road. The creation of these pathways linking major roads reduced a 12 minute travel time to 1 minute. This led to a major reduction of travel time for residents and school children and with the opening of these lanes as well as new openings, there is more encouragement to use public transport/sustainable transport methods for commuters due to enhanced accessibility and safety.

*Other projects:* Sandyford to Clonskeagh Cycle Route, Dublin<sup>12</sup>

#### Case Two:

##### EcoFil, Limerick

The Healthy Ireland Fund provided financial support towards the installation of 'no touch' bottle filling stations around Limerick City. As of December 2020, four stations have been installed (with a fifth due to be placed in Athea). These stations allow for the community to refill bottles in public places,

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9cb38-local-property-tax-final-allocations-to-local-authorities-for-2021/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://localauthorityfinances.com/spending/14/>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Sustainable\\_TM\\_Grants\\_2019.pdf\\_page\\_13](https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Sustainable_TM_Grants_2019.pdf_page_13)

significantly reducing plastic waste significantly<sup>13</sup>. This could also help encourage walkers and cyclists to use Greenways and Blueways as means of long-distance commuting or recreational travel as they have access to water along travel routes, should these be installed nearby to these travel routes.

#### Case Three:

##### Electric fleet, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown

The Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council introduced electric cars and vans into their driving fleet while also installing charging points in the county hall and multiple depots in the area<sup>14</sup>. This project was to assess how feasible electric vehicles would be in the movement towards sustainable transport. 125 staff members signed up to this initiative to modernise the county council's fleet; with 40% of cars owned being over 10 years old. This project estimated fuel costs would be cut by 90% while also dropping maintenance costs and carbon emissions. This project also creates a need for the installation of more charging stations and thus provides the infrastructure and services required along with an electric vehicle.

## **ENERGY**

#### Case Four:

##### HeatNet District Heating, Tallaght; EPC Dublin

District heating is growing in popularity across Ireland and gains funding from across multiple sources – both national and EU funding. District heating is a method of providing thermal opportunities on a local-level which decarbonises heat and integrates renewable electricity with the installation of heat pumps. The project will save 15,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per annum via the district heating networks across 5 European countries. The Tallaght District Heating Scheme, outlines a Dublin example of the scheme in which just under €4.5 million of funding was received from the Irish Government through the Climate Action Fund and Interreg. This project supplies the heat network with a centralised heat pump that will seek to reduce emissions by 60% throughout areas covered by the South Dublin District Heating System.

With this project, Codema supported a contractual agreement [Energy Performance Contract] in which energy services providers are required to meet expected targets. Dublin City Council received support from the SEAI to mitigate risk and ensure success through contract assistance. Two energy performance contracts aim to save €2.5 million and work towards highly reducing energy-based carbon emissions. EPC-based building retrofits saves DCC up to €129,000 per annum on energy costs and reduces carbon emissions by 321 tonnes.

#### Case Five:

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.limerick.ie/council/newsroom/news/innovative-contactless-water-bottle-filling-stations-unveiled-limerick>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.evsummit.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/10.MarcellaMurphyDunLaoghaire.pdf>

## Energy Upgrades, Bewley's Manufacturing

The Bewley's manufacturing facility in Dublin received a grant covering 35% (€18,835) of expenses on a project costing €53,000 which aimed to replace lighting in the Bewley's manufacturing facility to a more efficient system. This involved installing sensor control fluorescents with low-wattage and high-frequency induction, providing insulation in air handling unit ducts to rebalance thermal energy efficiency, and having gas meters installed on central heating system and boilers. This project led to a €22,800 (7.8%) annual cost saving on energy.

### Case Six:

#### Carpark lighting, Dublin Airport

The EXEED certification programme has had projects focused on lighting retrofitting; with one project being carried out in Dublin Airport. The Dublin Airport carpark lighting was improved with 304 LED lights in multi-storey and 386 in surface carparks which are less maintenance and have longer life. This retrofit led to financial savings of 80% of carpark lighting costs. As part of the SEAI funds, the Energy Efficiency Obligation Fund provided support to projects that: lasted for less than a year with a maximum budget of €250,000, or a project up to 4 years that cost less than €1 million. Similar lighting projects have been carried out in water treatment plants and could be applied to large buildings within Kildare, making a large impact on carbon emissions and cutting energy costs.

## **BIODIVERSITY**

### Case Seven:

#### Green Roof/Blue Roof

Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council implemented Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in order to lessen the significance of flood risk. These are alleviation schemes of which sedum moss or similar materials are installed on roofs and can be used for planting shrubs/flowers. This method of flood risk mitigation also can lead to biodiversity enhancement as wildflowers and native flora can be planted. Green roofs also act as an insulating material and can absorb heat during hotter months. They act as an affordable SuDS that also provides a system with self-sufficient biodiversity.

### Case Eight:

#### Greenways upgrades, Wicklow

In 2019, Wicklow received the following list of funding from ORIS:

- €152,560 ~ Development of Bray → Woodenbridge trail
- €7,200 ~ Development of walking trail infrastructure

- €14,720 ~ Production of informative videos of Wicklow Walks\*\*
- €20,000 ~ Upgrade of 10 trail boards/signage for Wicklow Way
- €7,840 ~ Development of Knockanna walking trail infrastructure
- €8,800 ~ Network establishment of cycling trails Baltinglass

Wicklow Partnership received €17,640 and €19,080 on marketing and usage monitoring respectively. Most interesting and relevant is the upgrade of existing greenways and production of videos. In order to boost public engagement to a maximum with the new Barrow Blueway, Kildare could seek to engage in these fund sources to gain maximum traction on this project.

### Case Nine:

#### Preservation Projects, Longford

Multiple county councils have carried out smaller projects in order to boost biodiversity – such as lowering the amount of ‘maintenance’ carried out in parks to encourage native wild flora growth, and carrying out education programmes to encourage public engagement. Longford holds excellent examples of projects carried out to protect endangered species and save wildlife habitats and species<sup>15</sup>. A number of initiatives are pollination projects and seek to encourage citizens to get involved with either planting native plants in their own private gardens or being more conscious of the natural wildlife in their areas.

## Challenges

### COMMUNICATION

Another cause of limited development can be due to the level of communication between the multiple levels of actors in the community-government structure. Miscommunication or complete lack of communication between stakeholders, local authority representatives, and community members can lead to misconception of issues, underwhelming projects, and/or unnecessary development. There must be a method of consulting the general public and boost to the level of dialogue and communication between local authorities and the communities they are representing when it comes to potential projects. As some funding is targeted directly to community groups, support from Kildare County Council would lead to recognition by national and potentially international funding resources and accelerate Kildare as a climate-based innovation centre.

### EXPERTISE

There are a number of setbacks and barriers-to-entry when it comes to funding opportunities, especially when smaller community groups are seeking support. The accessibility to information can be

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.caro.ie/projects-research/case-studies/preserving-biodiversity>

excessively convoluted and unclear, deterring involvement and leading to underdevelopment of community regions. The need for certain levels of expertise and knowledge when it comes to project analysis and the research required prior to application and submission can lead to underwhelming results with developments. The need for easing the process for under-resourced community groups could help lead to successful project outcomes that have high levels of public support. Some form of support system for community groups that need certain branches of knowledge or resources to point community groups in the right direction may help patch this issue.

## **COST**

The financial burdens of applying for grants and need for existing funds can lead to huge levels of project failure/rejection. The need for, as discussed, experts in certain fields, as well as existing finances that must match the grant request can often be extremely difficult to reach and time-consuming. A way of solving some of this issue may be looking at trans-discipline projects and seeing if multiple groups and stakeholders could band together to achieve a mutually-beneficial outcome. Such examples may be the instalment of smart bins. Waste management would benefit highly as research shows how these bins save on the number of times they need to be emptied and are therefore less time-consuming for bin-collectors<sup>16</sup>. While they work towards the climate agenda, they reduce pollution and help waste management and therefore multiple sectors may be able to come together in order to look into certain projects.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

The sourcing of funding was flagged as a setback for community groups. In circumstances where there is a required loan or ‘match funding’ is required, it is difficult for volunteer groups who are already looking at issues to be addressed, solutions, and seeing where they are applicable in a Kildare context to simultaneously fundraise/source starting financial resources. In many cases, contractors expect to be paid before funding is acquired and thus, bridge funding can be a huge boost to project applications. The structure of the funding system between community groups and the County Council may need an increase in support in order for both to garner the best outcomes from community and county-wide projects. A foundational structure for communities to go about sourcing funding or creating a support system regarding funding application that requires a baseline money pool may give an acceleration and government support to ‘grassroots’ plans that seek to work towards a county and nationwide goal of climate mitigation. There are existing community grant schemes given through application to the Kildare County Council, and increasing this or encouraging it further may help community groups bypass the challenges they are met with. The best methods of finding community solutions is to get ideas and support community projects and so, accessibility or providing resources may be extremely beneficial in creating an innovation hub in Kildare.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://dublinclimatechange.codema.ie/success-stories/smart-bins-dun-laoghaire-rathdown-county-council/>

## Lessons from other jurisdictions

Further routes into funding is through mainstreaming and adapting projects in order to have a climate conscience. Funding for climate adaptations to existing projects, as is discussed above, can be further implemented and push the climate agenda. Projects in other sectors of the Local Authority can potentially gain further funding should it be adapted to proliferate climate protection and involve climate innovation. Focusing on large-scale projects that can benefit and provide both short-term *and* long-term solutions towards climate change mitigation. Looking at the plans set out through case studies discussed above allows us to see how projects can interlink and work together in order to reach mutually beneficial outcomes.

By improving safety for cyclists and pedestrians, implementing bike-sharing schemes, and increasing park+ride capacities near transport stations, the community is more encouraged to use climate-conscious forms of transport for commuting. Providing easy access to beneficial amenities such as water bottle-filling stations lessens single-use plastics being purchased and provides a service to walkers/cyclists. Encouraging public engagement and providing educational services on biodiversity provides people with the knowledge to adapt their lifestyles in more ‘ecologically-friendly’ ways. A list is provided (see Appendix Table 4) to establish potential projects that could act as inspiration for future Kildare innovation and could also build upon existing projects.

Targeting carbon emission-heavy sectors in a similar way to major cities such as Dublin can significantly decrease county-wide emissions and easy access to both knowledge and services allows for communities to adapt their lifestyles. Through major schemes such as retrofitting houses to be more energy-efficient as well as district heating schemes with EPCs, major reductions can be made on carbon-emissions while also providing long-term savings for community members and local businesses.

The importance lies in adapting existing projects to encourage public engagement with climate-conscious infrastructure as was shown in Wicklow’s high volume of projects and modifications being funded by the Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme in 2019 alone. Building a scheme such as the Dublin Region Energy Master Plan has gained traction in public and government support by giving set goals and voluntarily signing up to schemes such as the Covenant of Mayors so as to create accountability gives a layout as to how these climate mitigation goals can be reached. Kildare community groups and Kildare County Council should strive towards not only new innovative projects, but also innovative modifications towards a more climate aware lifestyle.

## Appendix

Table 1: Further funding opportunities

Fund Source	Title	Areas Covered	Funds (€)/Deadline	Projects Funded
SEAI	Better Energy Communities	Energy savings for homes, communities, and private sector	30% up to 80% costs covered [private vs public]  January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18,856 homes upgraded</li> <li>2,810 non-domestic buildings upgraded</li> </ul>
	Home Energy Grants	Insulation, solar electricity, solar water heating, heat pump systems [Homeowners]	400 - 6000  <i>dependent on grant being applied for</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free upgrades on energy efficiency of homes of vulnerable people</li> <li>Warmth and Wellbeing scheme</li> </ul>
	National Home Retrofit Scheme	Energy efficiency upgrades to homes [decarbonise heat, improve ventilation, adopt smart technology]	100,000 to 2 million  February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Housing Retrofit</li> <li>Midlands Retrofit</li> <li>Private homes integration</li> </ul>
	Electric Vehicle Grants	Grants on electric vehicles and charger units for private and commercial use. [chargers for LAs only]	2,000 – 5,000  <i>For brand new cars costing over 14,000</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant on cars over the cost of €14,000</li> <li>No second-hand vehicles</li> </ul>
	Business Grants	Investment into energy saving technologies and renewable heat sources: EXEED, EEOS, and ACA	Energy credits/tax incentives  All year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dublin Airport Lighting refitting</li> <li>Brownfield and Greenfield design</li> <li>Residential and non-residential retrofitting</li> </ul>
The Heritage Council	Community Heritage Grant Scheme	Conservation, restoration, and protection of areas of cultural significance. Funds development that increases accessibility [e.g. ramps]	Up to 15,000  March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation reports</li> <li>Improvement of disabled access</li> <li>Preservation and restoration of heritage sites [churches, castles, etc.]</li> </ul>
	County Heritage Plan	County-wide projects that raise awareness on historical significance and fund research [with LAs]	Up to 25,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Production of map/ guide of heritage trails</li> <li>Virtual events to raise awareness of heritage</li> </ul>
Pobal	LEADER	Analysis and development, capital, large-scale, marketing, training Carried out through LAs <sup>17</sup>	2014-2020 deadline extended to March 2021; next programme in April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transitional LEADER Programme: Kildare received €478,000</li> <li>Kildare youth climate camp in the National Stud</li> </ul>
	Healthy Ireland Fund	Projects focused on mental and physical wellbeing of community members	Closed in 2018; <i>future reference in Healthy Ireland Framework by govt.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EcoFil water refill stations</li> <li>Multiple sports facility upgrades</li> </ul>
	SICAP	Social inclusion and moving towards eradicating polarisation and moving towards social cohesion	1,500 <i>for local community group projects</i>  Running until 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upskilling and training of community</li> <li>Youth projects</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.countykildarelp.ie/programmes/rural-development-programme/> ~ Expression of Interest for rural development project

<b>IRDG</b>	Energy and Environmental Funding	Carbon Management, Cleaner Greener Production Programme, Eco-Label Initiative, IEE	Case-by-case decision of grant amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy efficiency and introducing technology to the EU energy market</li> <li>Eco-design and provision of green services/products</li> </ul>
<b>EPA</b>	Green enterprise	Support on innovation for consumers and businesses to lower environmental impact	Up to 100,000 August [2020]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green teams training</li> <li>Green jobs [Simon community]</li> </ul>
	Event support	Up to €3,000 to support workshops and other events that showcase environmental research	600 – 3,000 <i>per event</i> Quarter 2, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional fund of ESAI</li> <li>Grassroots workshop support scheme</li> </ul>
<b>European Commission<sup>18</sup></b>	Innovation Fund	Funding projects to get to support low-carbon projects and technologies	Small-scale projects 2.5 mi. -7.5 mil. Large-scale projects Above 7.5 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lisam environmental health and safety innovation</li> <li>InOpsys: wastewater treatment</li> </ul>
	investEU	Supports EU countries in transition to cleaner energy, decarbonisation, and improving biodiversity	In discussion for 2021 to 2027 phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rooftop Greenhouses [GROOF]</li> <li>City Tree, Germany</li> <li>Green Care Farms</li> </ul>
<b>Government of Ireland</b>	Just Transition Fund	Energy and transport decarbonisation project support; infrastructure, heating networks, and renovation	50,000 – 1,000,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baylin Bog Trail, Westmeath</li> <li>Green HQ, Offaly</li> <li>Longford Greenway</li> </ul>
	Public Service Innovation Fund*	Support of innovative public services projects that look at improving how activities are carried out	25,000 – 60,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of online climate action hub</li> <li>MaaS; Smart Dublin ~ car-sharing/e-mobility</li> </ul>

\* Public Sector Innovation Fund requires project to be part of local authority operations as projects must be applied for through a public sector body.

**N.B:** Dates and funding amounts based on previous years and may change and/or be rebranded

<sup>18</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/funding-opportunities\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/funding-opportunities_en) ~ List of funding opportunities from EC

Table 2: Town and Village Renewal Scheme-funded Kildare projects

<b>Town</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Grant Allocated (€)</b>
<b>Ardclough</b>	2017	Multicultural and Craft educational centre	76,680
	2018	Town Centre Health Check	20,000
<b>Athgarvan</b>	2018	Town Centre Health Check	20,000
<b>Athy</b>	2015	*Develop a major tourist activity hub along the Barrow	112,000
	2016	Upgrading of Town Square	95,000
	2017	Town safety and enhancement (CCTV)- Athy Enterprise	67,723
	2020	Support for the School Street pilot scheme	25,000
<b>Ballitore</b>	2016	*Refurbishment of Ballitore	100,000
	2016	Tanyard Project facilities for young and old to meet	25,000
	2019	Engage consultants to assess and draft a restoration plan for the second Tanyard building	20,000
<b>Ballymore Eustace</b>	2016	Landscape enhancement	45,000
	2017	Walking trail 5k	92,000
	2020	Cycle Café	21,600
<b>Bigstone Crookstown</b>	2020	Creating Digital working and learning hubs	9,900
<b>Castledermot</b>	2018	Town Centre Health Check	20,000
	2020	Cycle Café	21,600
<b>Celbridge</b>	2020	To create a series of parklets along Celbridge Main Street & to designate, develop and market The Slip laneway as a multi-use social and trading space	40,000
<b>Derrinturn</b>	2018	Town Centre Health Check	20,000
<b>Kilcock</b>	2019	Enhance Kilcock town gateways on four principal approach roads	100,000
<b>Kilcullen</b>	2018	Redevelopment of Kilcullen Market Square	200,000
<b>Kildangan</b>	2019	Repair and improve access to Kildangan Village Hall	92,164
<b>Kildare Town</b>	2016	Team consultants, Framework for Town centre, Health check	95,000
	2020	Removal of existing car-parking spaces in the Market Square to facilitate social distancing, recreational use by the community and, outdoor eating and queuing of patrons for businesses on the square	40,000

<b>Leixlip</b>	2020	To create a duo of parklets on Captain's Hill, Leixlip as a pilot scheme in the town centre & to roll out further interventions such a parklets to facilitate a greater level of outdoor dining, engagement, socialising, community & economic activity	40,000
<b>Lowtown</b>	2020	Support the establishment of a 'Cycle Café' to promote cycling and provide cyclists and cycling groups with a 'pit stop'	25,000
<b>Maynooth</b>	2020	Implementation of COVID-19 related tactical urbanism interventions in the public realm.	40,000
<b>Monasterevin</b>	2017	Enhancement Works and Community Centre Refurbishment	100,000
	2018	Town Centre Health Check	20,000
	2020	Support for the School Street pilot scheme in Monasterevin	25,000
<b>Naas</b>	2020	Implementation of COVID-19 related tactical urbanism interventions to include Parklets, pavement improvements etc	40,000
<b>Narraghmore</b>	2017	To Develop a Community space	80,000
<b>Newbridge</b>	2020	Installation of parklets, removal of existing on street car parking spaces. Use of public realm to allow for social distancing along with market stalls, outdoor eating & queuing of patrons for businesses in the proposed Cultural Quarter (URDF funded) specifically; to the front and rear of the Town Hall, crossing the main street and to the top of the pedestrianised Georges Street and Market Square	40,000
<b>Prosperous</b>	2016	Landscape enhancement, and car park	100,000
	2019	Enhance Prosperous town gateways on three principal approach roads	100,000
<b>Punchestown</b>	2020	Cycle Café	21,600
<b>Rathangan</b>	2018	Redevelopment of Rathangan Market Square	200,000
<b>Sallins</b>	2020	Support the establishment of a 'Cycle Café' to promote cycling and provide cyclists and cycling groups with a 'pit stop'	25,000
<b>Straffan</b>	2018	Town Centre Health Check	20,000
<b>Timolin</b>	2016	Feature at entrance to town, Research, Information, & publicity. Public realm for additional works	20,000

All grants from Town and Village scheme; exceptions marked with Asterix (\*) which were sourced from REDZ [Rural Economic Development Zone] scheme

Table 3: *ORIS-funded projects ~ potential project ideas for Kildare to look at*

<b>County</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Grant Allocated (€)</b>
<b>Cavan</b>	2018	Castle Lake ~ upgrade link from town to trails with footpaths and marker posts	7,760
<b>Clare</b>	2019	Doora Remediated Landfill ~ signage, benches, picnic tables, fairy trail, etc.	15,922
<b>Cork</b>	2019	Harbour View Beach ~ develop eco walking trail along existing trail and provide signage	16,000
<b>Galway</b>	2016	Installation of steel bike rails	138,950
<b>Kerry</b>	2018	Bonane Heritage Park ~ improve signage	3,180
	2019	Listowel Cycling ~ installation of covered and uncovered bicycle stands	16,000
<b>Kilkenny</b>	2019	Linagun Valley Website ~ development of website on various locations and production of promotional material	18,400
<b>Mayo</b>	2016	Kiltimagh ~ development of a velo rail	180,000
<b>Offaly</b>	2019	Grand Canal loop ~ creation of 10 additional car park spaces and new mapboard/signage	5,840
<b>Laois</b>	2018	Slieve Bloom Area ~ marketing and promotion	16,000
<b>Leitrim</b>	2017	Lough Allen ~ education centre	10,000
<b>Sligo</b>	2017	Coolaney ~ national mountain biking centre	840,285
<b>Tipperary</b>	2019	Garrykennedy ~ replacement of decking and footbridges, improvement of wheelchair access	45,540
<b>Westmeath</b>	2019	Mullingar ~ recreational hub with 3km of new greenway	500,000
	2017	Mullingar ~ public lights on Pipers Boreen	10,000
<b>Wexford</b>	2017	N11 ~ provision of cycle lanes along N11	100,000
	2018	Ramsworth Wood ~ increase length of existing trails	20,000
<b>Wicklow</b>	2017	Vartry Reservoir ~ construction of boardwalk bridge	76,000

Table 4: List of existing/potential projects

**List of existing projects that could be adapted to suit a Kildare context/project and garner funding through KCC application or community group application.**

**Trailway Improvements**

- Signage [through ORIS]
  - Encourage public engagement and knowledge
  - Children camps/art competitions to design signs – funding opportunity for public engagement
  - Education of local wildlife encourages public awareness surrounding biodiversity and endangered species [research funding]
- Parking
  - Bicycle parking stations to encourage use of walking trail or cycling for commuting or recreation → improves public health
  - Encourages tourists to use trailways if strong connectivity and networks between ‘landmark’ areas [e.g. parks, bridges, etc.]
- Publicity
  - Videos/digitisation
  - Mapping
  - Potential for tourism; close proximity to Dublin and GDA means tourists have easy access → leads to potential stop-off in Kildare if strong transport network is established

**Sustainable Transport**

- Pedestrian/cycle bridges
  - Shortens travel time, encouraging sustainable travel  
[<https://councilmeetings.dublincity.ie/documents/s11238/Proposed%20amendment%20to%20North%20Lotts%20Grand%20Canal%20SDZ%20Relocation%20of%20Pedestrian%20Bridge.pdf>]
- Solar powered cycling point [Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown]
- e-bike/e-car sharing scheme ~ Smart Mobility Hub [DCC]
- Car-park improvements
  - Solar panels [Wicklow County Council]
  - LED lighting in car parks [Dublin Airport]
- Increase park+ride
- Improvements of cycle lanes [Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown]

**Weather Adaption**

- Dublin City Council
  - Fabric Upgrade Programme to improve social housing efficiency
  - Compliance of new builds to reach nZEB (nearly Zero Energy Buildings) standards
  - Green roofs and SuDS to reduce flooding risks

**Waste Management Projects**

- SmartBins
- Wastewater treatment plants improvements: Ringsend energy → CAW wastewater stream

**Renewable Electricity Support Scheme**

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/08388-solar-wind-and-community-energy-projects-set-to-deliver-14bn-in-investment-and-1000-jobs-after-government-approves-renewable-energy-auction-results/>

- Solar
  - Kilkenny, Galway/Mayo, Wexford, Clare, Cork
- Onshore Wind
  - Galway, Mayo

**Public Engagement/Awards**

- Educational Projects: butterfly house/biodiversity farms – Fingal
- Innovation events to improve public knowledge on biodiversity [<http://www.anurgentenquiry.ie/events-and-updates.html>]
- European Green Leaf Award; Limerick and Galway have won
  - Green Capital => €600,000
  - Green Leaf => €200,000

**Further Online Resources:**

- <https://smarcitiesireland.org/current-projects/>
- <https://codema.ie/projects/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/KildarePPN>