# Climate Conversations 2022
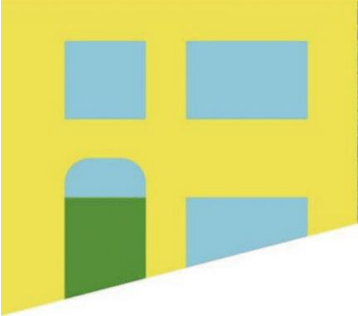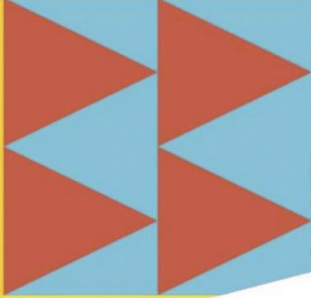
## Kildare Public Participation Network

**Monday 20th June 2022**

# Kildare Public Participation Network (PPN) Report

The purpose of this document is to gather information and data from the PPN discussion sessions.

This document provides suggested questions and guiding topics only to provide PPN facilitators with discussion topics. However, it is important that your discussion is participant-led and is capturing what is important to your members and locality.

Please fill in this document and provide information regarding the date the discussion took place, the number of attendees, profiling information on the attendees, and any other further information you deem relevant.

By identifying the core concerns brought up in PPN discussions, we can better understand what issues are pertinent to specific areas or populations.

The PPN sessions are intended to be self-led, but the facilitators will be asked to consider the following themes and to try and ensure they are discussed throughout the conversation.

1. Climate Literacy
2. Just Transition
3. Transport and travel
4. Energy – a) Homes and Retrofitting and b) Offshore Generation
5. Circular Economy

Please complete

**PPN Name:** Kildare Public Participation Network

**Date**: 20th June 2022

**Facilitator:** Cliona Kelliher

# of Attendees: 9

# Profiling

Please provide an overview of the demographic of the people you had at your meeting.

We are particularly keen to know what communities, groups, or demographics they represent.

Details to include:

1. Age
2. Gender
3. County
4. Organisation/charity/community group names

**Age:** 30s – 50s

**Gender balance:** 89% Female 11% Male

**County:** Kildare

**Community Groups that participated:**

- Maynooth Sustainable Energy Community
- No Planet B Club
- Kildare Sustainable Energy Community
- Moorefield Crescent Residents Association
- Shamrock Spring
- Kilcullen 4 Climate Action
- Lakelands Residents Association

# Guiding Questions for Discussion

**The following questions can be used as a guide for your discussion**. However, we are very keen that this is participant-led and that they discuss whatever they feel is most relevant and important to them with reference to climate change.

- **What factors are influencing your views on climate change?**

- **What consequences do you most associate with climate change?**

- **As an individual or as an organisation, do you know what you can do, what are you doing and what are you willing to do to address climate change?**

- **Have you or your organisation been impacted by climate change? How?**

- **What actions have you and/or your organisation taken to date to combat climate change?**

- **What are your views on the Government's ambitions to reduce our carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and make Ireland carbon neutral by 2050?**

- **What policy areas do you think the government should be focusing on to help combat climate change?**

- **What are the barriers/challenges your community faces when trying to act on climate change?**

- **What would you like the Government to do to support you to act?**

- **How could your Local Authority support you more in your efforts to tackle climate change?**

- **Where do you get your information on climate change?**

- **How do you think we could get more people involved in the debate about climate change and motivated to act?**

**Please summarise your discussion below.** Please try to place a heading over the points raised to help us identify the themes that emerge such as energy, circular economy, cost of living, etc.

## Climate Literacy

The conversation is all about bringing people along. People are still believing that Climate Change is a long time away and it's not going to effect us.  People who are intelligent people are still continuing on business as usual and not doing anything. We can't tell a majority what to do as it is anti-democratic, and it doesn't work. We have to challenge the populist approach and we have to figure out how to get people thinking and improve Climate Literacy.

### Events

Hosting a COP21 really helped people see the future and how things can be done with practical examples,  maybe Kildare can host a great sustainable event?

### Arts

Incorporating Sustainability / Climate Action through the arts to spread the message in a creative medium. Example: Through creative writing incorporating sustainable living in the main character's life and encouraging Climate Action through art, crafts etc.

### Media Coverage

The current coverage on Climate from the National Broadcaster and the media is inadequate. There have been some good quality coverage in the past for example Climate Week during Science week.
Over the last and a half years, the government's multi mullion euro advertising campaign for Covid 19 played consistently on all local and national media to promote vaccinations and encourage behaviour change from the public.  To further strengthen climate literacy and encourage behavioural change amongst the population, media coverage and campaigns similar to this should be rolled.

### Youth

We need to increase the conversation with the younger generation. Young people have a critical role in encouraging action and behavioural change, and can make a massive impact on those listening. Example: No Planet B Club demonstrations.


## Energy

An investment option to put money to good use to pay for the roll out of EV and renewable energy as the cash is losing money in the bank and Ireland is being fined. Can we have a good green investment vehicle so we can choose better and help finance the roll out.

## Just Transition

### Financial Incentives
- Adequate financial incentives should be offered to ensure a just transition. In relation to peatlands, we should pay people for their bog and put a valuable price on them to reflect their worth and to make people not want to cut turf.
- Lack of Kildare links to Just Transition solutions with Bord na Móna engineers in the area they could be deployed to work with SEAI SEC locally as they have the energy, engineering and bog protection skills yet its not happening and left to the hands of volunteers
- Cross silo government conversations e.g NPWL and SEAI on supporting just transition SEC supports for bog communities with a trained person to do the work to scale it swiftly and copy paste to other turf cutting areas. That Kildare be a pilot and help Bord na Móna to meet their targets too

## Transport and Travel
- Cheaper bus and public transport options
- EV charges from a mix of wind at night + solar so a small fraction of energy any other vehicle uses
- Solar panels over Luas, DART and Train stations for energy
- Improved infrastructure for cycle and bus lanes

## Circular Economy

### Funding Allocation
Government/local authority funding for things like festivals and events should only be allocated if the event is green and adopting sustainable practices.  This should also be streamlined/considered in all applicable funding scheme conditions for future projects.

### Green Public Procurement
Local Authorities and Government Departments need to ensure that Green Public Procurement is mandated and streamlined through each section. Local Authorities could work with Social Enterprises with expertise in that specific area or in the locality to source green/locally.

## Views on the Governments ambitions on making Ireland carbon neutral by 2050
While there are a number of policies in place,  there is a **lack of implementation** of actions within policies, or actions that are being implemented are taking too long. For example, decommissioning bogs and peatlands rehabilitation has been something that was flagged for quite some time.
Aggressive targets change the conversations.

## Individual Actions
While everybody need to be undertaking actions from Government, local authorities, businesses and  individual actions are also important to encourage change.
For example:
- Organising Climate Action initiatives in the community e.g. Naas Cycle Campaign (public way of bringing people together to try and encourage sustainable transport)

- Individuals need to continue to ask questions to encourage change, for example asking where our food comes from to encourage transparency of food miles, tracing etc.
- People have to feel empowered and that their action makes a difference whether that is their vote or their consumer decision making.
- If there are enough people or individuals pushing for action, the local authority and the government will then listen.
- It's very hard to keep people sustained, people are getting tired and fatigued and feel like they're hitting their head against a while.

## What the government / local authority could do better

<span style="color:orange">Leadership</span>

Elected members in local authorities need to show leadership in relation to Climate Action instead of going with the flow or what is popular in the area.

The Government and Local Authorities need to be implementing changes with more speed and urgency. There seems to be endless consultations, but real change is taking long to implement.

Radical changes need to be made even if there is pushback from certain groups. There was opposition and criticism when the plastic bag levy and the smoking ban were implemented, but people adapted very quickly and now everyone can see the benefits very clearly.

## How do you think we could get more people involved in the debate about climate change and motivated to act?

- Mixed opinion on certain protest demonstrations as a means of motivating people to act. Some feel that the protests tactics don't reflect to the average person busy with work and family. You can see the protests, but it can feel very removed as an ordinary person and almost seen as a luxury that certain people can spend their day protesting instead of working. Blocking of roads during these demonstrations can be very disruptive and inconvenience people greatly.
- Protests can be a useful tool but there needs to be a balance not be destructive and inconvenience people too much.
- Student demonstrations great to generate momentum and media attention, along with a providing a great positive atmosphere.