

Carlow Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

Implementation Report for Elected Members & Stakeholders

Year 2 Review 2025



COMHAIRLE CONTAE
CHEATHARLACH
CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



CARLOW
CLIMATE
ACTION

Investing in our future

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Governance & Reporting	3
Reporting Structures.....	5
Performance Monitoring and Reporting	7
LACAP Actions Progress Report - 2025	14
Strategic Goal 1. Governance & Leadership	16
Case Study 1.....	18
Case Study 2.....	19
Strategic Goal 2. Built Environment & Transport	22
Case Study 3.....	24
Case Study 4.....	26
Strategic Goal 3. Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure	28
Case Study 5.....	29
Strategic Goal 4. Communities': Resilience & Transition	32
Case Study 6.....	34
Case Study 7.....	35
Strategic Goal 5. Sustainability & Resource Management	37
Case Study 8.....	38
Case Study 9.....	40
Decarbonisation Zones (DZs)	42
Case Study 10.....	44
UN Sustainable Development Goals	46

Acknowledgments:

Carlow County Council Climate Action Office extends its sincere appreciation to the various service areas within Carlow County Council for their commitment and support in advancing climate action, under the leadership of the senior management team. We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our Elected Members and the Climate Action, Transportation & Environment Strategic Policy Committee.

We wish to express our gratitude to the Eastern and Midlands Climate Action Regional Office (CARO), South East Energy Agency, South East Regional Energy Unit, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment, and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for their continued support in embedding climate action across our organisation and in shaping and implementing our Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024–2029.

Our communities in Carlow demonstrate a strong awareness of the importance of progressive and positive climate action and its role in enhancing social and economic wellbeing. Carlow County Council greatly values the engagement and support of the wider community and the stakeholders we serve.

Message from the Cathaoirleach



"Climate action is not just a statutory obligation—it is a shared responsibility and an opportunity to safeguard the future of our communities. Carlow County Council is proud of the progress achieved to date and remains steadfast in its commitment to reducing emissions, improving energy efficiency, and building resilience across all sectors. This journey requires collaboration, innovation, and leadership, and we will continue to work closely with our partners, stakeholders, and communities to deliver meaningful change. Together, we can create a sustainable Carlow for generations to come."

Cllr. Ken Murnane, Cathaoirleach Carlow County Council.

Introduction

Following the adoption of the Carlow Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024–2029 in January 2024, this Year 2 Review provides an overview of the implementation and progress achieved between January and December 2025. The review is presented to the Elected Members of Carlow County Council and our associated stakeholders.

The Climate Action Plan sets out Carlow County Council's commitment to enhancing climate resilience, improving energy efficiency, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions across its assets, services, and infrastructure. In addition to meeting these obligations, the Council continues to play a leadership role in inspiring and supporting other sectors to achieve their own climate targets.

A Tier 3 Baseline Emissions Inventory, commissioned in 2023 by the South East Energy Agency, established the following targets for all public bodies by 2030:

- 50% improvement in energy efficiency (baseline: 2009, 8.16 GWh)
- 51% absolute reduction in carbon emissions (baseline: 2016–2018, 2,808,667 kg CO₂)
- Electricity aligned with grid decarbonisation (approx. 77% reduction)
- 51% reduction in thermal and transport emissions

For Carlow Local Authority, this equates to an overall 70% reduction in CO₂ emissions, reducing emissions from 2,808,667 kg CO₂ to 832,670 kg CO₂ by 2030.

This report outlines progress toward these mandatory reductions and is structured around the five strategic goals of the Climate Action Plan:

1. Governance & Leadership
2. Built Environment & Transport
3. Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure
4. Communities' Resilience & Transition
5. Sustainability & Resource Management

The plan also incorporates the Carlow Town Decarbonising Zone, which includes the District Electoral Divisions of Carlow Rural, Carlow Urban, and Graiguecullen Urban.

Carlow County Council remains committed to delivering on these objectives and working collaboratively with communities and stakeholders to ensure a sustainable and climate-resilient future for Carlow.

Governance & Reporting

Carlow Climate Action Team

Carlow Local Authorities Climate Action Team is cross functional and comprises of 17 members from the following departments:

- Environment & Climate Action
- Corporate services
- Fire Services
- Information Technology
- Library & Museum
- Local Enterprise Office
- Special Projects
- Infrastructure and Transportation
- Housing
- Planning Community
- Finance

The team formally meets a minimum 6 times per year and the cross-functional composition of the Climate Action team reflects the widespread impacts of climate change across the organisation and underscores the need for a comprehensive organisational approach to the implementation of the plan.

Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs)

The Local Authority is supported by Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs) who provide guidance, advice and support to Local Authorities to leverage the capability, reach and resources of the sector to effectively address climate change across Ireland. Carlow County Council are members of the Eastern & Midlands CARO who support the seventeen Local Authorities of Carlow, Cavan, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Leitrim, Longford, Louth, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly, Roscommon, Tipperary, Waterford, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow.

Carlow County Council Energy Team

The cross functional Carlow Local Authority Energy team are supported by South East Energy Agency and meet 4 times per year. The energy team monitor progress of energy reduction throughout the organisation and evaluate energy reduction opportunities that present throughout the year.

South East Energy Agency (SEEA)

The South East Energy Agency (SEEA) is a key strategic partner supporting Carlow County Council in delivering its climate and energy objectives. SEEA provides expert guidance, technical support, and project management services to help the Council achieve its statutory targets for energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction.

Carlow Town Decarbonising Zone Working Group

The Carlow Town Decarbonising Zone Working Group is a multi-agency, multi-stakeholder team established to oversee and direct the implementation of Carlow Town's Decarbonising Zone (DZ)—a dedicated spatial area identified for piloting innovative climate strategies in line with the 2024–2029 Climate Action Plan.

Reporting Structures

Internal Reporting

To support the effective delivery of the Climate Action Plan, Carlow County Council implements a structured reporting framework designed to monitor progress and ensure timely communication with key stakeholders.

Chief Executive's Report:

The Chief Executive's monthly report serves as a vital internal communication mechanism, providing regular updates to the management team and Elected Members. In addition, quarterly departmental progress reports enable the Chief Executive to engage directly with each department, promoting accountability and facilitating detailed discussion of challenges, progress, and achievements.

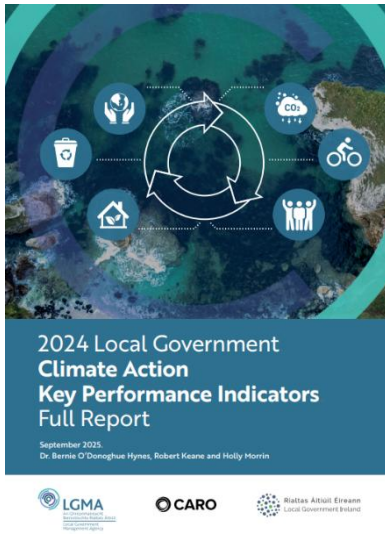
Strategic Policy Committee:

Elected Members receive annual updates through the Transportation, Environment, Emergency Services & Capital Projects Strategic Policy Committee. In addition, Members are regularly provided with progress reports and remain actively involved in the decision-making process.

However, reporting frequency can be increased if more frequent or relevant data becomes available, ensuring decision-makers remain well-informed and responsive to evolving climate action needs. This multi-tiered reporting structure fosters transparency, accountability, and collaboration, ensuring that climate action remains a priority across all levels of the local authority while allowing flexibility to adapt to new developments and emerging opportunities.

External Reporting

Sectoral Performance



Carlow Local Authority continues to report annually on their performance on climate action by way of KPIs to inform the performance of the local government sector on climate action, as part of the local government DECA 2030 Strategy. In September 2025 the 2024 Local Government Climate Action Key performance Indicators was published summarizing the climate efforts and progress of Irish local authorities during 2024. [Climate Action Key Performance Indicators](#)

Data for 2025 will be collected over the period January 15th - January 31st 2026 and will be published in summer 2026 by the LGMA.

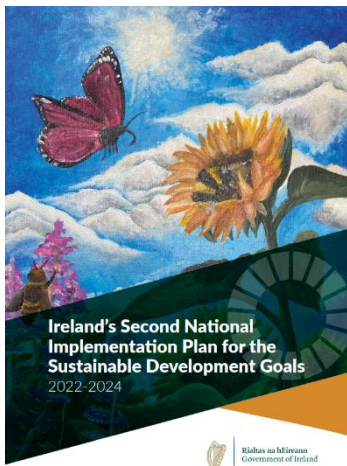
National Climate Action Plan

Carlow Local Authority in accordance with Part 3(w) of the Local Authority Climate Action Charter continue to report annually to the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment on progress on climate action at local level as part of the delivery of the national climate objective. Data is collated in an annual Climate Action Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) report by the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA).

EU Covenant of Mayors

Carlow County Council is a signatory to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and as such commits to the completion and monitoring of a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP).

UN Sustainable Development Goals



Local authorities are recognised as one of the Agenda 2030's nine 'Major Groups', which play a crucial role in sustainable development and Agenda 2030 also highlights the particular role of local authorities and communities in sustainable urban development. As SGD Ambassadors, Carlow County Council play a key role in promoting and advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Sustainable Development Goals

[sdg-national-implementation-plan-2022-2024-20a604ba-4c92-4fb5-adaf-8efedefbf072.pdf](#)

Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Annual Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) report is mandated under the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) regulations, which require public sector bodies to report their energy performance directly to SEAI – in accordance with SI 426 of 2014 (previously SI 542 of 2009).

The M&R report focuses on the following key points: analysis of energy consumption and GHG emissions; comparison with efficiency and emissions targets for 2030; data presented by Carlow Local Authority; tracking progress towards 2030 targets; focus on achieving energy efficiency goals; improvements and innovation.

Monitoring and Reporting data published by SEAI is subject to an annual completion and assurance cycle and is therefore reported in arrears. Local authority energy consumption data is finalised on a calendar-year basis, reviewed and validated by SEAI, and subsequently aggregated for national reporting purposes. Accordingly, the most recent year's data is not available for publication until the following year.

Annual reporting is prepared in conjunction with our energy partners, South East Energy Agency and the M&R reporting 2024 data is now available on the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) website. [Annual Energy Statement | Public Sector Energy Performance | SEAI](#)

Progress Made to 2024

In 2024, total CO₂ emissions for Carlow County Council was 1,716,525 kgCO₂, 38.9% below the 2030 baseline of 2,808,667kgCO₂. To achieve the 2030 target, Carlow County Council Co₂ must reduce by another 51.5% from 2024 level within 6 years.

Green House Gas Emission's:

The figure below provides a detailed overview of Carlow County Council total GHG emissions (electricity , transport & thermal) reduced by 1,085,750 kgCO₂ or 39% in 2024 from the baseline period 2016 to 2018.

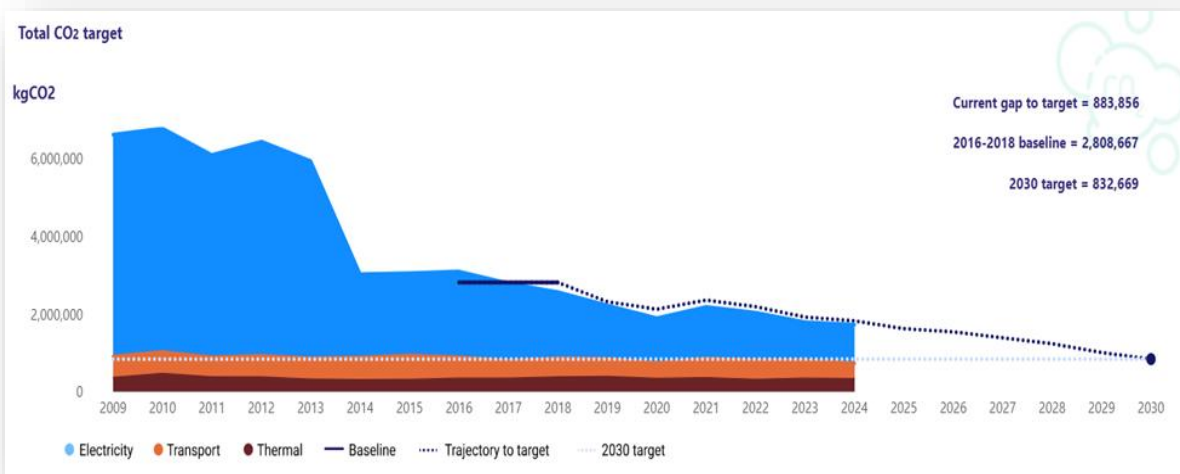


Figure 1. Total GHG Emission – 2024

Carlow County Council has improved its energy efficiency by 41% from the baseline year (2009) and is therefore on target to meet 2030 targets, which is a 50% improvement in energy efficiency.

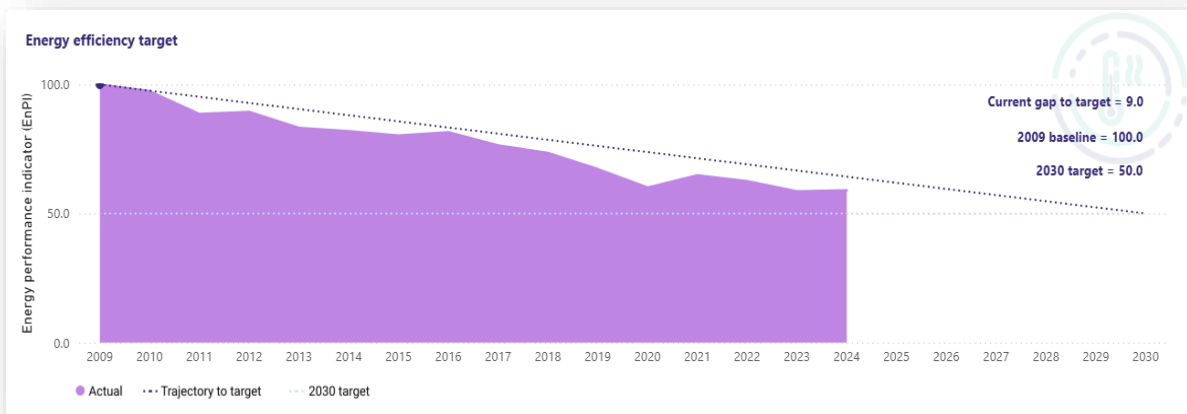


Figure 2. Energy Efficiency – 2024

As shown in 3, the non-electricity (thermal + transport) related emissions have reduced by 117,241 kWh or 14% from baseline (2016-2018). In 2024 0% of the thermal demand was produced by renewable energy sources. The target is 50% of heat is to come from renewables by 2030.

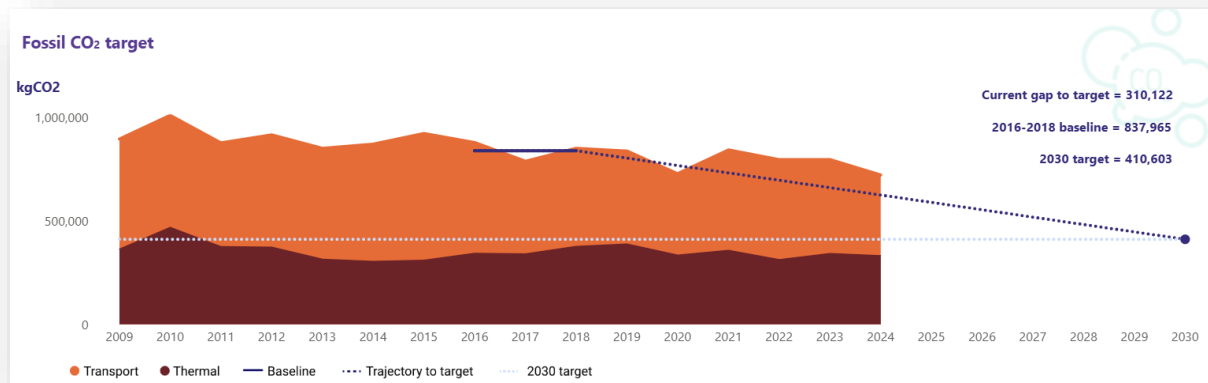


Figure 3. Non-Electricity GHGs (thermal and transport) – 2024

Carlow County Council is currently on track to meet the 2030 energy efficiency targets; however, progress must continue in the form of decarbonisation of the building and services provided by the council to meet the GHG emission targets

As it stands at the end of 2024, a further reduction in overall GHG emissions by 32% or 918,174 kgCO₂ from the baseline is needed to achieve 2030 overall emissions target. The overall emissions include emissions associated with electricity grid, thermal and transport sectors. Most importantly, the non-electrical thermal and transport emissions should reduce by another 37% or 310,122 kgCO₂ from the baseline by 2030 compared to 2024 levels. This sector has so far recorded a low reduction of 14% from baseline till 2024, while the target is an absolute 51% reduction by 2030.

Non-electricity-related emissions (thermal and transport) have decreased by 117,241 kWh, representing a 14% reduction from the 2016–2018 baseline. While this reflects meaningful progress toward the 2030 target of a 51% reduction, achieving this ambition will require continued and enhanced action. Significant further reductions are expected through projects delivered under the SEAI Pathfinder programme; however, more ambitious and targeted measures will be required in the transport sector to accelerate progress. If the organisation maintains its current energy consumption until 2030, it will improve its energy efficiency by 50.4% from baseline year and reduce its total GHG emissions by 63% from baseline period. Carlow County Council would reach its energy efficiency target but will miss the GHG targets.

Building Energy Users

In 2024, the council buildings consumed 2,494,502 kWh of energy, which accounts for 36% of the organisation Total Final Consumption (TFC) or 34% of the organisation primary energy consumption (TPER). 62% of the energy consumed by the buildings was thermal energy.

Figure 3 shows the top 10 energy consumers which represent 88% of the council building energy consumption as shown below. Electricity and gas information were extracted from the SEAI M&R system. Unmetered thermal fuel data were extracted from Display Energy Certificate (DEC) data collected from county council and energy audits.

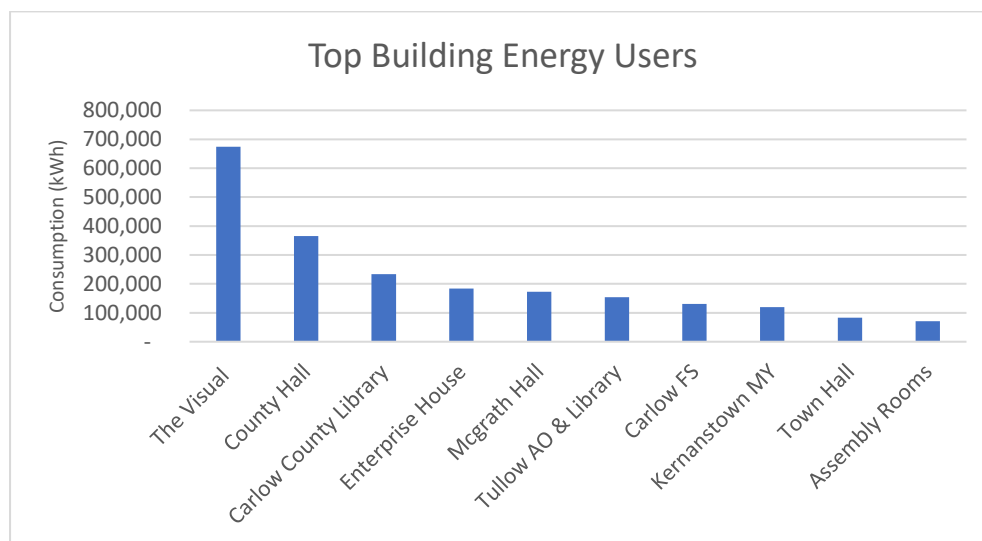


Figure 4: Buildings Energy Consumption - Top 10

SEAI Pathfinder Programme

Carlow Local Authority has engaged with the SEAI pathfinder programme. The SEAI Pathfinder Programme is an initiative led by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to support public sector organisations in improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions. It provides technical and financial support for retrofitting and upgrading public buildings, aligning with Ireland's Climate Action Plan and 2030 energy efficiency targets.

Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford and Tipperary County Councils have established the South East Energy Unit and a funding application has been approved under the Pathfinder programme.

Carlow County Council completed a register of opportunities identifying priority retrofitting projects that will yield the greatest energy and CO₂ savings at the lowest cost.

This structured approach ensures that resources are directed towards high-impact projects, maximizing both environmental and financial benefits.

Carlow County Buildings, Athy Road Carlow R93 E7R7

Carlow County Buildings was constructed and renovated in phases and completed in 1998. The building is a 3-story facility housing the motor tax and planning offices, the council chamber and public sector offices.

This building is ideally positioned to participate in the SEAI Pathfinder Programme due to its significant energy demand, operational complexity, and strategic importance, accounting for approximately 12% of Carlow County Council's total energy consumption.

As a large, publicly accessible office building with mixed-use spaces and legacy heating and ventilation systems, it offers strong potential to demonstrate innovative, scalable retrofit solutions, including the elimination of fossil fuel heating, improved fabric and services performance, and a clear pathway to BER B)

VISUAL Centre of Contemporary Art & The George Bernard Shaw Theatre, Old Dublin Rd., Carlow, R93 A3K1.

The VISUAL Centre of Contemporary Art and the George Bernard Shaw Theatre is selected to participate in the SEAI Pathfinder Programme due to its scale, complexity and significant energy demand, accounting for approximately 25% of Carlow County Council's total energy consumption. As a landmark public building with energy-intensive uses including performance spaces, galleries, air handling systems and extensive glazing, it presents a strong opportunity to deliver deep retrofitting measures that address legacy heating, ventilation and building fabric challenges. The project will enable the Council to significantly reduce reliance on fossil fuel heating, improve building energy performance, and clearly demonstrate a phased pathway towards achieving a BER B rating, supported by robust measurement and verification and post-occupancy evaluation.

The inclusion of both Carlow County Buildings and the VISUAL Centre of Contemporary Art and George Bernard Shaw Theatre in the SEAI Pathfinder Programme allows Carlow County Council to address a substantial share of its overall energy use across two distinct public-sector building types. Together, these projects demonstrate scalable and transferable retrofit solutions for both cultural and administrative buildings, delivering measurable reductions in energy use and carbon emissions. The projects will support progress towards BER B standards, generate robust measurement and verification data, and directly contribute to achieving the Council's Climate Action Plan targets for 2030.

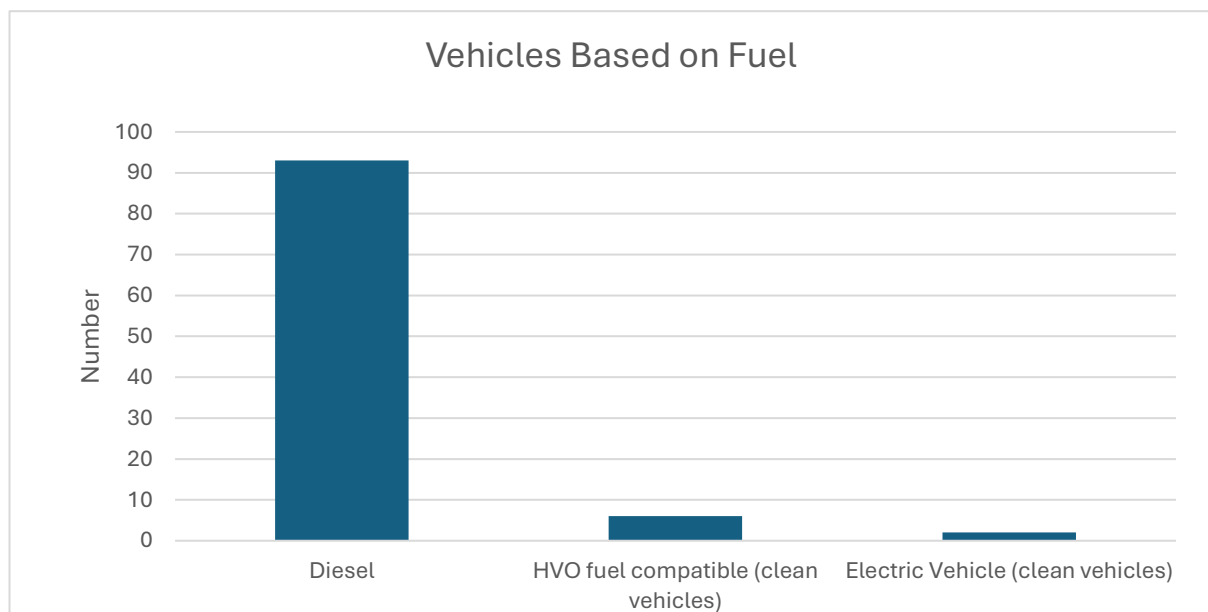
Transport

The Tier 2 baseline emissions inventory carried out by South East Energy Agency in 2023 established that Transport is responsible for Transport 0.47ktCO₂eq (23%) of Carlow Local Authorities CO₂eq emissions and 1.9 GWh (24%) of energy use respectively. In 2024, County Council's fleet vehicles consumed 1,558,307 kWh of energy which equates to 23% of the organisation total final consumption (TFC) or 17% of the organisation primary energy consumption (TPER).



Electric Vehicle used by County Carlow Library Service.

As per 2024 M&R reporting, the fleet consists of 101 vehicles with 93 diesel vehicles, and the remaining 8 nos. are clean vehicles (6 Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) compatible vehicles and 2 electric vehicles). Figure 4 shows the fleet breakdown based on fuel type of vehicles. Road diesel accounts for 77% of the energy consumed by transport vehicles.



In 2025, Transportation progressed a number of measures aligned with the objectives of the LACAP in relation to fleet decarbonisation and fuel transition.

A public procurement process was completed for two large road sweepers (16Tn) and one (3.5Tn) compact sweeper. These vehicles were tendered to be HVO compliant, and the process is now at the award stage.

There is a planned procurement of three electric vans, which will be deployed across the three Municipal Districts.



Electric vehicle used in Carlow CMD

The Carlow County Council Decarbonisation Strategy is currently being drafted. Pending its completion and formal adoption, an interim measure is all new vehicle procurement/leasing is required to be HVO compliant or an EV. This ensures continued alignment with decarbonisation objectives during the transitional period.

At present, approximately 16% of fleet fuel consumption relates to agricultural diesel, the vast majority is associated with a tractor currently within the fleet. This tractor is scheduled to be removed from service by the end of the year, which will result in a substantial reduction in Agri-diesel usage and associated emissions.

A key action in 2026 is the need for greater engagement and lobbying of fuel suppliers, particularly Circle K, to facilitate the installation and availability of HVO at forecourts used by staff through the fuel card system. Once wider HVO availability is achieved, a significant shift away from conventional diesel consumption is anticipated.

Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP)

The Tier 2 baseline emissions inventory carried out by South East Energy Agency in 2023 identifies Public Lighting as Carlow Local Authorities highest energy consumer, accounting for 3.27 GWh of the total energy consumption (40%) and the highest contributor for CO₂, accounting for 1.21ktCO₂eq (40%) of these total emissions.

Carlow Local Authority is actively participating in the National Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP), aiming to enhance energy efficiency and reduce costs associated with public lighting. Completion of this project will see significant reduction in our energy use and CO₂ emissions contributing greatly to achieving our 2030 targets.

Surveys

Location	Numbers
Carlow L.A	7290
Carlow Town M.D.	3832
Muinebheag M.D.	1569
Tullow M.D.	1889

(This includes Luminaires and micro pillars.)

Retro fit progress to 19th December 2025

Location	Numbers
Carlow L.A.	2354
Carlow Town M.D.	1130
Muinebheag M.D.	669
Tullow M.D.	555

PLEEP work programme	Current programmed completion date
Carlow Town	March 2026
Muinebheag	March 2026
Tullow	March 2026

The National Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP) aligns with Carlow Local Authority commitment to sustainability and energy efficiency, contributing to the reduction of carbon emissions and operational costs.

LACAP Actions Progress Report - 2025

Carlow Local Authority's Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 is a comprehensive framework aimed at achieving the targets set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development

(Amendment) Act 2021. The suite of 73 actions contained in the plan provides a structured pathway to reduce emissions, enhance climate resilience, and support a just transition for the wider Carlow community.

Actions contained in the plan are categorised as follows:

- Mitigation - New ways of preventing climate change
- Adaptation – Working with existing structures to reduce our impact on climate change.
- Combined – combination of Mitigation and Adaptation Measures

The LACAP includes both Single-Implementation Actions, which are delivered once within the plan’s timeframe, and Recurring Actions, which are carried out on multiple occasions. Together, these action types ensure the plan delivers one-off foundational projects as well as ongoing activities that maintain momentum and support continuous climate action.

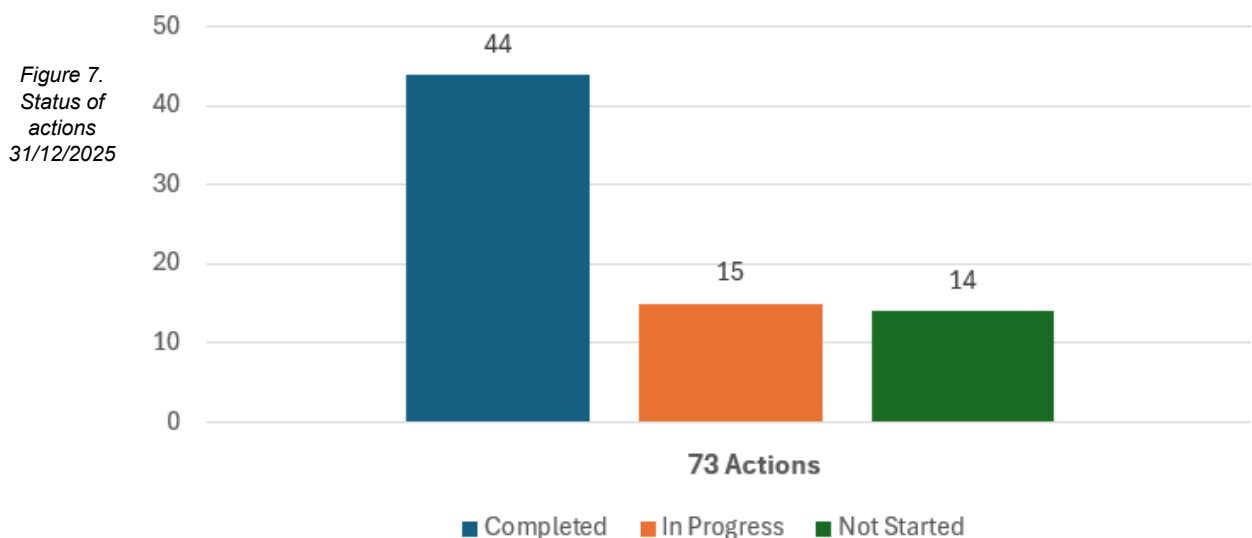
40 Single-Implementation Actions: *Actions delivered once during the LACAP period that do not require repetition.*

33 Recurring Actions : *Actions that will be implemented on more than on occasions during the lifetime of the LACAP.*

As at 31st December 2025

- 44 actions have been completed
- 15 are in progress
- 14 have not started

Carlow County Council LACAP Actions 2024-2029



Strategic Goal 1. Governance & Leadership.



Objective: Support the development and implementation of positive climate action across all operations of Carlow Local Authority, collaborating with others to lead, influence and assist in their endeavours to reduce their negative climate impact.



Figure 8. Progress report of Governance & leadership Actions at 31/12/2024

Action No.	Action Details	Action Type (Adaptation, Mitigation or combined)	Is this Action Recurring? Definition: A recurring action is one that will be implemented on more than one occasion during the lifetime of the LA CAP	Action Status (as between 1st Jan 25 - 31st Dec 25)
G 1.1	Carlow County Council will include the reduction of its carbon emissions by 51% by 2030 as mandated in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 as a key objective of the Corporate Plan, the Annual Service Delivery plan and Municipal District Plans.	Combined	Yes	Completed
G 1.2	Resource and fund dedicated Climate Action Staff to facilitate adaptation against and mitigate for the effects of Climate Change, to include a Climate Co-Ordinator, Climate Action Officer and a Climate Community Officer.	Combined	No	Completed
G 1.3	Maintain a cross functional Climate Action Team to ensure the embedding of Climate considerations and actions across the range of services provided by Carlow County Council.	Combined	Yes	Completed
G 1.4	Implement Climate Action engagement programme in the workplace for all staff and Elected Members.	Combined	Yes	Completed
G 1.5	Implement and report on the actions in the Climate Action Plan at local and national level.	Combined	Yes	Completed
G 1.6	Mainstream climate mitigation and adaptation considerations into all new policies adopted by Carlow County Council.	Combined	Yes	Completed
G 1.7	Develop a Green Public Procurement (GPP) tracking tool to measure the use of green procurement in tenders issued by Carlow County Council.	Mitigation	No	In Progress
G 1.8	Prepare a Green Procurement Strategy for Carlow County Council to ensure GPP is considered in all tenders.	Mitigation	No	In Progress
G 1.9	Prepare Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) guidance document to support the inclusion of the global goals in all plans & strategies published by the local authority.	Combined	No	Not Started
G 1.10	Develop & implement a Financial Management resource for recording the cost of major climate/weather events	Combined	No	Completed
G 1.11	Complete annual energy consumption reporting to the national energy Monitoring and Reporting system (M&R) operated by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)	Mitigation	Yes	Completed
G 1.12	Provide match funding to enable climate, energy, biodiversity action projects - which promote climate action co-benefits and do not contravene relevant environmental protection criteria or cause significant negative environmental effects.	Combined	Yes	Completed
G 1.13	Become a Partner in the National Transport Authority administered Smarter Travel Programme and apply for the Smarter Travel Mark which recognises employers who are committed to active & sustainable travel for their workforce	Combined	No	In Progress

Case Study 1

G1.3 Maintain a cross functional Climate Action Team to ensure the embedding of Climate considerations and actions across the range of services provided by Carlow County Council.

Carlow County Council Climate Action Team was established in 2023 in order to facilitate the production of the Carlow Local authority Climate action Plan 2024-2029.

The Climate Action Team meetings are chaired by Padraig O Gorman; Director of Services Transportation, Environment and Climate Action, Capital Projects, Building Control & Emergency Services. All departments of Carlow County Council are represented which ensures that climate action is embedded across all services. The internal Local Authority climate action team collaborates effectively as all departments work from a shared vision, communicate openly, and understand their specific roles in delivering climate goals. Clear leadership, structured meetings, and accessible information channels help maintain alignment, while involving all relevant services early prevents siloed decisions and ensures actions are practical and coordinated. Building climate knowledge across teams and fostering a culture of trust further strengthens cooperation, enabling the group to work collectively and efficiently toward the delivery of the LACAP.



The Climate Action Team convened six times in 2025, supported by the Energy Team sub-committee, which held a further four meetings during the year. Beyond these formal meetings, all members of the Climate Action Team work collaboratively throughout the year

to drive projects forward, troubleshoot challenges, and ensure that the actions set out in the Climate Action Plan are actively progressed and delivered.

Schedule of meetings 2025		
Date		Team
January 15th		Climate Action Team
March 25th		Energy Team
April 29th		Climate Action Team
May 27th		Climate Action Team
June 24th		Energy Team
July 29th		Climate Action Team
August 26th		Climate Action Team
September 30th		Energy Team
October 28th		Climate Action Team
November 25th		Climate Action Team
December 16th		Energy Team

Case Study 2

G 1.4- Implement Climate Action engagement programme in the workplace for all staff and Elected Members.

Implementation of Action G 1.4 is supported through participation in the national Local Authority Climate Action Training Programme, coordinated by the Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG) in collaboration with the Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs). This programme has been developed under Action 150 of the national Climate Action Plan to build climate leadership, awareness and capacity across the local government sector.

The LASNTG programme provides a structured and scalable engagement framework for both Elected Members and staff at all organisational levels, directly supporting the objectives of workplace climate engagement under LACAP Action G 1.4.



Elected members, Staff from Carlow County Council and strategic partners visit Kildare County Council Sustainable Living Eco Home in Maynooth.

Key elements relevant to delivery of this action include:

- **Championing Leadership training** for Elected Members and senior management, supporting climate governance, leadership and informed decision-making. This training strengthens political and senior-level engagement with climate action and supports consistent leadership in the implementation of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP).
- **Raising Awareness training**, delivered primarily online, provides baseline climate awareness for all staff. This supports organisation-wide understanding of climate change, the role of local authorities, and how individual roles contribute to LACAP objectives, forming the core of a workplace climate engagement programme.

- **Building Capacity training** for Climate Action Teams supports Climate Officers in coordinating engagement across departments, ensuring that climate action is embedded within day-to-day operations and supported by informed and engaged staff.
- **Empowering Change training** supports staff whose roles involve engagement with colleagues and communities, strengthening behaviour-change approaches and enabling staff to act as internal climate champions within the organisation.

Training is delivered through a combination of online modules, webinars and in-person regional training, enabling flexible participation by Elected Members and staff and supporting ongoing engagement throughout the lifetime of the LACAP. Regular themed sessions on priority climate topics further reinforce awareness, skills development and organisational culture change.

Further training opportunities are provided to Elected Members and Staff during Climate Action week.



Site visit to Teagasc Anaerobic plant in Grange, Co Meath.

Strategic Goal 2. Built Environment & Transport.



Objective: Reduce Carlow Local Authority's impact on Climate Change by increasing energy efficiency, reducing reliance on fossil-based fuels, and positively influencing the actions of others within our community.

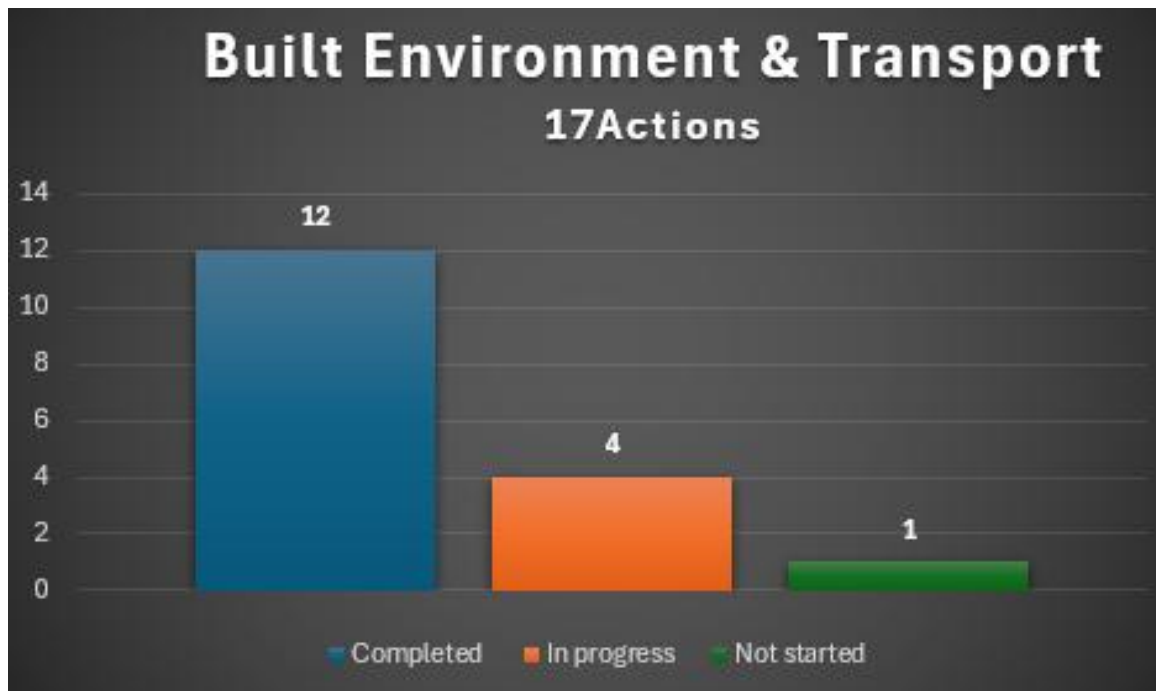


Figure 11. Progress report of Built Environment & Transport Actions at 31/12/2024

Action No.	Action Details	Action Type (Adaptation, Mitigation or combined)	Is this Action Recurring? <small>Definition: A recurring action is one that will be implemented on more than one occasion during the lifetime of the LA CAP</small>	Action Status <small>(as between 1st Jan 25 - 31st Dec 25)</small>
B 1.1	Conduct Energy Audits across Carlow County Council's Significant Energy Users (SEUs)/Facilities to create a Gap to Target (51%) analysis to inform spending on projects to reduce carbon.	Combined	Yes	Completed
B 1.2	Prepare and implement a carbon savings programme of measures for Council buildings/facilities to assist in achieving a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures.	Combined	Yes	Completed
B 1.3	Pursue national/regional funding programmes to attain funding for emission reduction measures for Carlow County Council, e.g. Pathfinder	Mitigation	Yes	Completed
B 1.4	Complete the National Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project in County Carlow to reduce the GHG emissions and energy usage of public Lighting, while ensuring the lumen levels and spectral range are maintained or reduced/controlled to avoid effects to biodiversity.	Mitigation	No	In Progress
B 1.5	Develop planning conditions with specifications and standards to minimise energy use and light pollution from outdoor lighting in all new developments, ensuring the lumen levels and spectral range are maintained or reduced/controlled to avoid effects to biodiversity.	Mitigation	No	Completed
B 1.6	Ensure all new build social housing units provided by Carlow County Council meet a minimum A2 Building Energy Rating Standard to reduce GHG emissions, energy consumption and address fuel poverty for vulnerable residents.	Mitigation	Yes	Completed
B 1.7	Upgrade existing social housing units using the worst first principal to B2 or cost optimal to reduce GHG emissions, energy consumption and contribute to alleviating of fuel poverty for vulnerable residents, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures	Mitigation	Yes	Completed
B 1.8	Facilitate the upgrade of existing vacant & derelict residential and commercial properties in Carlow Town and County through schemes such as Towns Centre First, Croí Conaithe, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures.	Mitigation	Yes	Completed
B 1.9	Identify derelict properties throughout the County and use legislative powers such as Compulsory Purchase Order and compulsory acquisition order to facilitate their reuse; having due regard to the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations, and the need to not negatively impinge on any protected species.	Mitigation	Yes	Completed
B 1.10	Target brownfield, vacancy and dereliction as part of the housing for all programme through repair and lease, buy and renew and SHIP programmes; having due regard to environmental sensitivities, the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations, and the need to not negatively impinge on any protected species.	Mitigation	Yes	Completed
B 1.11	Review the Major Emergency Plan & Flood Plan to ensure incorporation of climate risk	Adaptation	No	Completed
B 1.12	Prepare Carlow County Council guidelines for nature based sustainable drainage solutions, ensuring the guidelines have appropriate regard to environmental protection requirements, including requirements to protect European sites.	Combined	No	Not Started

Action No.	Action Details	Action Type (Adaptation, Mitigation or combined)	Is this Action Recurring? Definition: A recurring action is one that will be implemented on more than one occasion during the lifetime of the LA CAP	Action Status (as between 1st Jan 25 - 31st Dec 25)
T 1.2	Investigate options for a sustainably sourced renewable fuel alternative to diesel and the electrification of Council fleet vehicles including delivery of a pilot scheme, while ensuring sustainability criteria is appropriately considered during procurement processes and appropriate end-of-life vehicle management practices are in place.	Mitigation	No	In Progress
T 1.3	Develop and Adopt Electric Vehicle Strategy to support the transition to electric vehicle use in the wider community for County Carlow and for the South East Region; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, cultural heritage etc.	Mitigation	No	In Progress
T 1.4	Deliver active travel projects across the County to encourage use of active travel modes such as walking or cycling; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, and cultural heritage.	Mitigation	Yes	Completed
T 1.5	Complete Transport Plans for Carlow Town, Tullow & Muine Bheag, having due regard to the potential to create climate action co-benefits, and environmental protection requirements, including the requirement to protect European sites.	Mitigation	No	In Progress

Case Study 3

B 1.10 Target brownfield, vacancy and dereliction as part of the housing for all programme through repair and lease, buy and renew and SHIP programmes; having due regard to environmental sensitivities, the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations, and the need to not negatively impinge on any protected species.

Carlow County Council is actively targeting vacant, derelict and brownfield properties to deliver social housing under *Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030*, with a strong emphasis on reuse of existing buildings, town-centre regeneration and environmental protection.

The completion of CPO schemes in 2025 on Main Street Hacketstown and Woodlawn Park, and the commencement of schemes on Burrin Street, Kennedy Street, JKL Avenue and Staplestown Road in Carlow Town, as well as Shangarry and Myshall, supports climate objectives by prioritising the reuse of existing buildings and serviced land rather than greenfield development.

This approach:

- Avoids embodied carbon emissions associated with demolition and new construction materials such as concrete and steel
- Makes use of existing infrastructure (roads, water, wastewater, energy networks), reducing the carbon cost of extending services
- Supports compact growth and town-centre living, reducing car dependency and transport-related emissions
- Revitalises underused urban areas, strengthening the viability of local services and active travel

In 2025, the Housing Department:

- Delivered 125 new housing units, exceeding the target of 99
- Upgraded 78 existing housing units, exceeding national targets

From a climate perspective, this is significant because:

- Upgrades to existing homes (including fabric and energy improvements) reduce operational energy demand and household emissions
- Improved energy performance enhances climate resilience, reducing fuel poverty and improving thermal comfort during extreme weather events
- New housing delivery under current standards delivers higher energy efficiency and lower lifetime emissions than older stock

The combination of new build delivery and upgrades ensures both immediate housing supply and long-term emissions reduction across the social housing portfolio.



The Green Drake, Borris , Co. Carlow.

Case Study 4

T 1.4 Deliver active travel projects across the County to encourage use of active travel modes such as walking or cycling; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, and cultural heritage.

Active Travel is “travelling with a purpose using your own energy”. Generally, this means walking or cycling as part of a purposeful journey and can also include the use of non-motorised scooters which are increasingly being used for urban transport, especially by school children. So, walking as part of a commute to work, cycling to the shop or scooting to school are all considered active travel, whereas walking or cycling for purely leisure purposes is not.

Active Travel is a positive climate action and is seen as a critical component of Ireland’s Climate Action Plan. The delivery of Active Travel projects will contribute to tackling climate change by providing the opportunity to use “green” and sustainable transport options. Walking or wheeling instead of travelling by car is a great way to reduce our impact on the climate.



Active Travel Pathfinder - Carlow to SETU Pedestrian & Cycle Scheme under construction

In 2025 Carlow County Council received funding of €3.1m from the National Transport Authority's (NTA's) Active Travel Investment Programme for the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure. This funding was used to progress a number of projects through the various delivery phases from options development to construction. Highlights for the year included the commencement of construction on Carlow County Council's Active Travel Pathfinder Project – Carlow to SETU Pedestrian & Cycle Scheme along with the delivery of the Dublin Road Pedestrian & Cycle Scheme in Carlow Town and the St. Brigid's National School Safe Routes to School Scheme in Bagenalstown.



Dublin Road Pedestrian & Cycle Scheme, Carlow Town



St. Brigid's National School Safe Routes to School Scheme, Bagenalstown

Strategic Goal 3. Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure



Objective Carlow Local Authority will facilitate and support protection, management and enhancement of the natural heritage, biodiversity, landscape and environment of County Carlow in recognition of its importance as a non-renewable resource, a unique identifier, and as a natural resource asset.

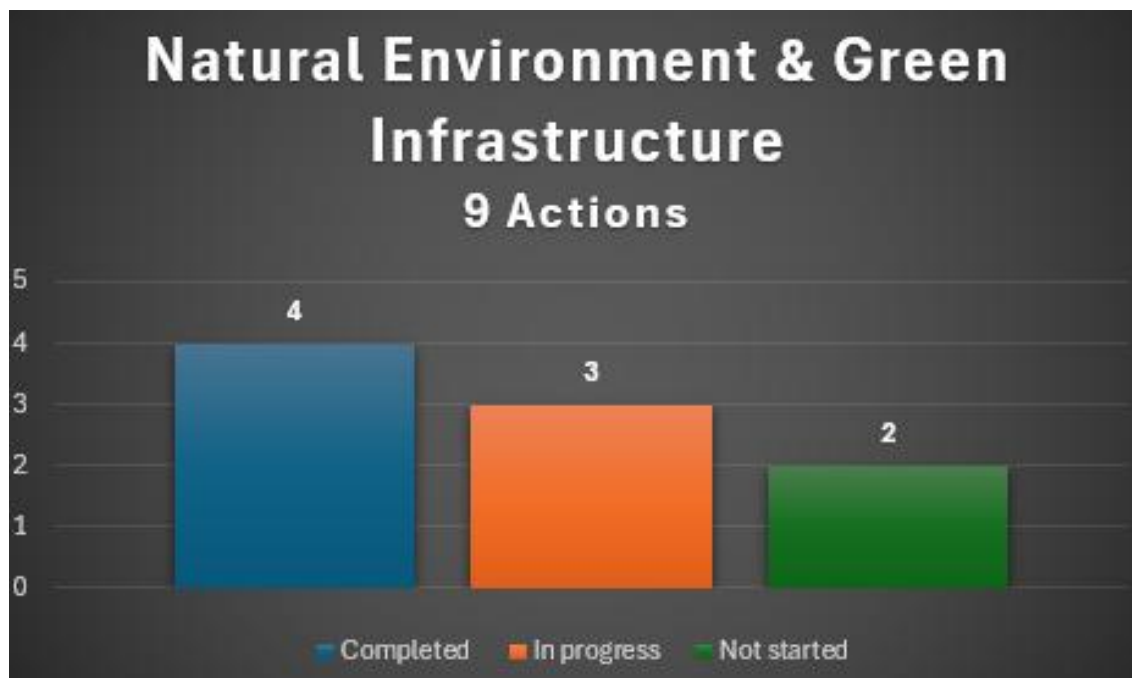


Figure 15: Progress report of Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure Actions at 31/12/2024

Action No.	Action Details	Action Type (Adaptation, Mitigation or combined)	Is this Action Recurring? <small>Definition: A recurring action is one that will be implemented on more than one occasion during the lifetime of the LA CAP</small>	Action Status <small>(as between 1st Jan 25 - 31st Dec 25)</small>
NE 1.1	Appoint a Biodiversity Officer for Carlow County Council and implement actions contained in the County Carlow Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2025	Combined	No	Completed
NE 1.2	Implement the actions set out in the County Carlow Green Infrastructure Strategy; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as archaeology, European sites, biodiversity and amenity value.	Combined	Yes	Completed
NE 1.3	Prepare guidelines for Invasive Alien Species Management	Combined	No	Completed
NE 1.4	Develop and implement a policy for the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides for areas managed by Carlow County Council, ensuring these substances are only used to a degree that does not cause significant effects on the receiving environment, such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity or European sites.	Combined	No	In Progress
NE 1.5	Prepare a Hedge and Road Verge Maintenance Strategy for Carlow County Council, having due regard to hedgerow conservation requirements.	Combined	No	Not Started
NE 1.6	Develop and implement a Heritage Plan to record, conserve, and raise awareness of all aspects of built natural and cultural heritage in County Carlow having regard to increasing challenges stemming from climate change.	Combined	Yes	Completed
NE 1.7	Undertake a planned programme of risk assessments of the Heritage and Cultural Assets under the remit of Carlow County Council to assess the vulnerability and the risk to the historical environment from the impacts of climate change and to help build resilience to these important assets.	Combined	No	In Progress
NE 1.8	Develop a Native Tree Strategy to provide the vision and direction for long-term planning, planting, protection and maintenance of native trees, hedgerows and woodlands within Carlow Town and County	Combined	No	Not Started
NE 1.9	Investigate the feasibility of developing a Carlow County Council Garden nursery facilitating self-sufficiency by providing all new plants for public realm enhancement.	Mitigation	No	In Progress

Case Study 5

NE 1.2 Implement the actions set out in the County Carlow Green Infrastructure Strategy; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as archaeology, European sites, biodiversity and amenity value.

Progressing action on the County Carlow Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Carlow Urban Pollinator Foraging Network, Carlow County Council launched the “Lawns into Lunch” initiative. This initiative follows on from the mapping exercise undertaken in 2024, when community green spaces with pollinator potential across Carlow's main towns and villages

were mapped. For 2025, the focus switched to encouraging a change in their management – to move away from regular mowing (saving time and labour and reducing carbon footprint), and towards long-flowering meadows in these areas (significantly improving conditions for biodiversity and enabling enhanced ecosystem services). A number of demonstration sites were identified as outlined below.

In April and September, working with the Old Irish Goat Society, a herd of goats visited sites across 5 towns and villages (Carlow Town, Bagenalstown, Tullow, Leighlinbridge and Hacketstown), with engagement of over 3,500 people, outlining the Urban Pollinator Foraging Network policy of Carlow's Green Infrastructure Strategy, and encouraging groups and residents to "turn lawns into lunch".



Turning "Lawns to Lunch" biodiversity project in Leighlinbridge.

Working with the County Carlow Environmental Network, two sites were used for scything demonstration workshops in September, assisting local groups with the challenges of "cutting and lifting".

Arising from this project, a Carlow version of the “Three Billy Goats Gruff” fairytale was produced, with an evil lawnmower cutting all the wildflowers replacing the evil troll. A video was produced with local children’s character Wibbly Wobbly Wendy, and posted on the Heritage Council Social channels, and a hard-copy children’s book was published.



Launch of the 3 Billy Goats Gruff of Carlow at Tinryland community hub.

Carlow Farming for Nature Celebration held in 2025, recognising the contribution of four local families to our local landscape. Eric & Catherine Osborne (Rathanna), Leonie Baldwin & Andrew Llyod (Knockroe), Richard & Geraldine Brennan (Leighlinbridge), and Michael & Margaret Purcell (Lacken), were shortlisted, following collaboration between Carlow County Council, Carlow IFA, Carlow ICA, Teagasc, ACRES, NPWS, and partner organisations operating in the county, with the intention of having a Carlow representative in the National Farming for Nature Ambassador Awards in 2026.

Strategic Goal 4. Communities': Resilience & Transition

Objective: Carlow Local Authority will inform, influence, and empower the community



of County Carlow to develop and implement their local climate action measures.



Figure 18. Progress report of Community Actions at 31/12/2024

Action No.	Action Details	Action Type (Adaptation, Mitigation or combined)	Is this Action Recurring? <small>Definition: A recurring action is one that will be implemented on more than one occasion during the lifetime of the LA CAP</small>	Action Status <small>(as between 1st Jan 25 - 31st Dec 25)</small>
C1.1	Develop countywide climate-related educational and awareness programme to include information events, communication campaigns and guidance documentation	Combined	Yes	Completed
C1.2	Implement the Community Climate Action Fund to engage communities in localised Climate Action Projects	Combined	Yes	Completed
C1.3	Include 'Sustainability and Climate Change' assessment on applicable grant assessments to ensure that community groups/stakeholders consider and incorporate Climate Mitigation and Adaptation in all their grant funded activities.	Combined	Yes	Not Started
C1.4	Ensure that all residents of Carlow, young and old, have opportunities to meaningfully engage in and shape the development of climate action policies and projects delivered by Carlow County Council	Combined	Yes	Completed
C1.5	Develop a Green Festivals & Events Strategy, ensuring these are carried out in accordance with sustainability guidelines, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, cultural heritage etc.	Combined	No	Not Started
C1.6	Develop Community Garden Guidelines to promote sustainable community gardening in Carlow	Combined	No	Completed
C1.7	Develop and adopt a community Garden & Allotment Policy for Carlow County Council	Combined	No	Completed
C1.8	Partner with research institutions such as SETU and Carlow College to explore innovative climate adaptation and mitigation research projects.	Combined	Yes	Completed
C1.9	Provide a point of contact to assist local organisations collaborating to implement projects which contribute to the objectives of a National climate initiative. E.G GAA green club programme.	Combined	Yes	Completed
C1.10	Provide dedicated Climate Action information on Carlow County Council's website www.Carlow.ie	Combined	No	Completed

Case Study 6

C 1.7 Develop and adopt a community Garden & Allotment Policy for Carlow County Council

On the 14th February 2025, Members of Carlow County Council adopted Carlow County Council's Community Garden & Allotment Policy. This document is a landmark for Councils across the Country as it is the first dedicated, legally aligned framework aimed at fostering sustainable, inclusive, and community-driven green spaces. It focuses on five pillars: provision of sites, administration support, high-quality design, environmental sustainability, and resource allocation.

The policy, developed in collaboration with local communities, council departments, and through participation in the European URBACT Project, recognises a wide variety of growing models—from community orchards and therapeutic gardens to biodiversity and educational spaces. It formally acknowledges gardens not only as places of food production but as vital sites of healing, learning, and environmental stewardship.

Significantly, the policy aligns with national legislation, including the Planning and Development Act 2024, which, for the first time, recognises community gardens in Irish law. It also complements Carlow's County Development Plan 2022–2028 and Climate Action Plan 2024–2029.



Launch of Carlow County Council community garden & Allotment policy in May 2025.

The strategy is structured around five key pillars:

1. Provision – Identifying suitable spaces across the county.
2. Administration – Supporting well-organised, sustainable garden groups.
3. Quality – Delivering safe, accessible, and high-standard growing environments.

4. Sustainability – Promoting biodiversity, native planting, and climate-conscious practices.
5. Resources – Enabling community access to guidance, support, and funding opportunities.

The policy is accompanied by the Community Garden Guidelines promoting sustainable community gardening in Carlow

Case Study 7

C 1.8 Partner with research institutions such as SETU and Carlow College to explore innovative climate adaptation and mitigation research projects.

Working with UCD

In 2025, research was undertaken by Chris Fren, an MSc student at University College Dublin (UCD), and carried out in collaboration with Carlow County Council. The study assesses the performance of rain gardens and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in Carlow Town as innovative climate adaptation measures for flood risk management, while also identifying wider mitigation, biodiversity, and public amenity co-benefits.



Chris Fren: UCD School of Agriculture and Food Science

The results indicate that Carlow Town’s rain gardens are performing effectively as climate adaptation measures, with consistently low soil bulk density, high porosity, and high-water infiltration rates recorded across most sites. These characteristics demonstrate strong capacity for stormwater attenuation and rapid infiltration, reducing surface runoff and flood risk during heavy rainfall events. Variability between sites highlighted the influence of design, size, connectivity, and soil composition on performance, with larger and better-connected rain gardens delivering the strongest outcomes. Overall, the findings confirm that nature-based solutions such as SuDS provide measurable adaptation benefits alongside co-benefits for biodiversity and urban amenity.

Working With SETU Carlow



4th Year BSc (Hons) Pharmaceuticals and Drug Formulation student at South East Technological University, Carlow Campus Wangeci Gitahi, undertook a research project in collaboration with Carlow County Council to characterise incoming water quality at a selected rainwater garden over the period October 2024 to March 2025. It was anticipated that the project would provide a time series of data on the quality of incoming runoff into the rainwater garden over the winter and early spring period.

Wangeci Gitahi BSc (Hons) Pharmaceuticals and Drug Formulation, SETU, Carlow

The results show that urban runoff entering the rainwater garden in Carlow Town contains highly variable pollutant loads, strongly influenced by seasonal conditions and human activities. Elevated concentrations of chloride, sodium, and calcium were recorded during winter sampling, particularly following snowfall events, indicating a clear link to road de-icing practices. Heavy metals, including iron and lead, were consistently detected, with lead reaching elevated levels in post-snowmelt samples, raising concerns for downstream water quality. While pH remained generally neutral, significant fluctuations in turbidity, conductivity, and chemical oxygen demand highlight the episodic nature of urban runoff pollution. Overall, the findings demonstrate the importance of rain gardens and SuDS as interception points for polluted runoff and underline the need for ongoing monitoring to inform effective climate adaptation and water management measures.

Strategic Goal 5. Sustainability & Resource Management



Objective: Carlow Local Authority will implement and monitor a range of policies and practices to reduce our environmental impact, enhance resource efficiency, and create long term environmental, economic and social benefits .



Figure 21. Progress of Sustainability & Resource Management Actions at 31/12/2024

Action No.	Action Details	Action Type (Adaptation, Mitigation or combined)	Is this Action Recurring? <small>Definition: A recurring action is one that will be implemented on more than one occasion during the lifetime of the L.A. CAP</small>	Action Status <small>(as between 1st Jan 25 - 31st Dec 25)</small>
SRM 1.1	Develop and Implement an annual environmental awareness campaign incorporating the objectives of the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy	Combined	Yes	Completed
SRM 1.2	Develop sustainability guidelines for corporate events supported, facilitated and organised by Carlow County Council	Combined	No	Not Started
SRM 1.3	Regulate and enforce the National Enforcement Priorities (NEPs) which focus on delivering positive environmental outcomes for air quality, water quality and waste management. This includes over 2,000 different environmental inspections in Carlow annually. Ensure sustainable transport modes are used to travel to and from inspection sites, where feasible.	Adaptation	Yes	Completed
SRM 1.4	Develop and provide a series of green & climate-based workshops for owner managers of indigenous Carlow companies	Combined	Yes	Completed
SRM 1.5	Provide assistance to Enterprises in their investment in equipment & technologies to reduce their impact on the environment	Mitigation	Yes	Completed
SRM 1.6	Provide Energy Management Training programmes to businesses in Carlow to help them reduce their carbon footprint	Combined	Yes	Not Started
SRM 1.7	Deliver programmes to assist businesses in Carlow improve the environmental profile of their business in the marketplace	Combined	Yes	Completed
SRM 1.8	Increase awareness and practice of regenerative tourism in our County, to enable visitors to have a positive impact on their holiday destination.	Combined	No	Completed
SRM 1.9	Increase the range of Carlow County Council services available on an online platform.	Combined	Yes	In Progress
SRM 1.10	Carry out a feasibility study to identify the logistical, financial, planning, environmental and market challenges of a proposed district heating project in Carlow; ensuring the study has appropriate regard to planning and environmental protection considerations.	Mitigation	No	Not Started
SRM 1.11	Assign the role of Energy Officer for Carlow County Council	Mitigation	No	Completed
SRM 1.12	Conduct a review of all Local Authority offices to maximise use and reduce carbon footprint	Mitigation	No	In Progress
SRM 1.13	Incorporate Climate Action in the Library Development Plan 2024-2029	Combined	No	Completed

Case Study 8

SRM 1.1 Develop and Implement an annual environmental awareness campaign incorporating the objectives of the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy.

In 2025, food waste was identified as the central theme of the Environmental Awareness Programme, reflecting EPA findings that Ireland generated approximately 162 kg of food waste per person in 2023—significantly higher than the EU average of 132 kg per capita. The year’s activities placed a strong emphasis on circular economy principles and community capacity building.

During late winter and spring, a series of introductory food-waste workshops were delivered to four diverse groups as part of an initial testing and engagement phase. Building on this momentum, a countywide Master Composting Programme was rolled out during the summer in partnership with Composting Ireland. Twenty-two volunteers from eleven community groups received training on food waste prevention and composting practices. This initiative led to the establishment of master composting demonstration areas in seven locations—including tidy towns groups and schools—with more than 80 community volunteers participating overall.



Master Compost programme participants in Tullow Co. Carlow.

In July, the first of three planned *Embracing Change* events was held in collaboration with the Community Department. The Food Cloud food truck engaged attendees on the issue of food waste and served surplus-food meals—main course, dessert, and drinks—to over 50 participants across the municipal districts.

From September to November, County Carlow Environmental Network delivered a highly successful series of three fermenting workshops aimed at individuals growing food at home, in allotments, and in community gardens. Demand for the course was more than double the available places, and its success has encouraged the Network to progress future environmental training opportunities with KCETB.

To mark Climate Action Week in October, a regional *Plate to Planet* conference was held with a dedicated focus on the hospitality sector. Sixty-five participants attended the event, which featured internationally recognised speakers who provided practical insights and clear calls for action to reduce food waste within the industry.



Plate to Planet presenters with Elected Representatives, Carlow County Council CE and staff

Case Study 9

SRM 1.13 Incorporate Climate Action in the Library Development Plan 2024-2029

Carlow libraries provide accessible, trusted community spaces that support people of all ages, income levels, and abilities, offering resources to help them “live, learn and work” effectively. This positions them as ideal venues for climate literacy, enabling the public to understand sustainability, energy use, and environmental challenges.

Incorporation of climate Action into the Library Development Plan 2024 -2028, which was adopted by Elected Members at their February 2025 meeting, strengthens Carlow County Council’s capacity to inform, engage and empower residents, ensuring no group is left behind.

Home Energy Saving Kits (All Library Branches)

Carlow County Library has partnered with the Environment Department of Carlow County Council to offer Home Energy Saving Kits for loan.

These kits help households understand and reduce their energy use. Each kit includes tools such as:

Community Energy Hubs (in partnership with South-East Energy Agency)

Carlow libraries participate in the Community Energy Hubs initiative, which was nationally showcased. Delivered with the South-East Energy Agency (SEEA) and library services across Carlow, Wexford, Kilkenny, and Waterford, the programme helps:

- Households
- Community groups
- Local businesses

...to understand, monitor, and reduce their energy usage, contributing to community-level climate action.

Support for Climate Action Week

As part of Carlow County Council's Climate Action Week, Carlow libraries support public engagement by providing space, information resources, and community-focused climate displays and conversations, encouraging countywide participation.



Switching to an electric vehicle in 2025 further demonstrates that the library is actively supporting the county's wider Climate Action Plan 2024–2029.

Decarbonisation Zones (DZs)

In response to Action 165 of the Government's Climate Action Plan 2019, Local Authorities were required to 'identify and develop plans for one Decarbonising Zone' within their respective administrative area, for submission to the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), as action lead, in Q2 2021, Circular Letter LGSM01-2021.

The spatial area of the Decarbonising Zone comprises of the District Electoral Division's (DED's) of Carlow Rural, Carlow urban and Graiguecullen Urban.

The Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI) for the DZ reported total greenhouse gas emissions of 108,122.86 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. The transport sector was the largest contributor, accounting for 41.5% of emissions, followed by the residential sector at 30.3%, and the commercial/industrial sector at 22.8%

Total energy consumption by Carlow Local Authority within the Decarbonisation Zone use in the baseline year of 2018 was 4,420 MWh (4.4 GWh) with building & facilities the highest energy consumer, accounting for 2,236.1 MWh (51%)

Total Green House Gases for Carlow Local Authority in the Decarbonising Zone in the baseline year amounted to 1,320 tCO₂eq (1.3 ktCO₂eq) with building & facilities accounting for 44% at 580.3 tCO₂eq.



Figure 24. Progress of Decarbonising Zone Actions at 31/12/2024

Action No.	Action Details	Action Type (Adaptation, Mitigation or combined)	Is this Action Recurring? Definition: A recurring action is one that will be implemented on more than one occasion during the lifetime of the IACAP	Action Status (as between 1st Jan 25 - 31st Dec 25)
DZ1.1	Establish a Decarbonising Zone working group comprising of representation from Public Bodies/ Government Agencies, Business, Utility/ Infrastructure providers, Transport providers, Education Facilities, Private Sector.	Combined	No	Completed
DZ1.2	Prepare a register of opportunities outlining projects that will aid carbon reduction in the Decarbonising Zone, ensuring integrated environmental protection requirements are appropriately considered.	Combined	No	Not Started
DZ1.3	Carry out a geothermal feasibility study in Carlow Town to determine the technical, financial, planning and environmental viability of a geothermal energy project, ensuring the study has appropriate regard to planning and environmental protection considerations.	Combined	No	Not Started
DZ1.4	Provide a central location, Mobility Hub, which facilitates linkages between various low carbon transport options from Carlow Town centre; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, and cultural heritage.	Combined	No	Completed
DZ1.5	Reduce private car dependency through the expansion of sustainable shared mobility infrastructures and schemes for Carlow Town; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, and cultural heritage.	Combined	No	Completed
DZ1.6	Provide improved pedestrian and cycle links to Carlow Bus Park and Carlow Train Station; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, and cultural heritage.	Combined	No	In Progress
DZ1.7	Increase spacial awareness of town centre through the development of a town map highlighting journey times using various modes of transport to include walking, cycling, bus, car and others.	Combined	No	Not Started
DZ1.8	Implement and monitor a pilot anti-idling campaign to enable improvement in air quality	Combined	No	In Progress
DZ1.9	Develop and execute pilot rain water harvesting scheme on Local Authority owned buildings	Combined	No	Not Started
DZ.10	Promote the awareness and understanding of the UN Sustainable Development Goals through thematic designs in public realm projects, e.g. roundabouts scheme.	Combined	Yes	Not Started
DZ1.11	Advance Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) projects to achieve the Carlow 2040 plan; having due regard to environmental sensitivities, the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations, and the need to not negatively impinge on any protected species.	Combined	Yes	In Progress

Case Study 10

DZ1.1 Establish a Decarbonising Zone working group comprising of representation from Public Bodies/ Government Agencies, Business, Utility/ Infrastructure providers, Transport providers, Education Facilities, Private Sector.

In response to Action 165 of the Government's Climate Action Plan 2019, Local Authorities were required to 'identify and develop plans for a Decarbonising Zone' within their respective administrative area, for submission to the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), as action lead, in Q2 2021, Circular Letter LGSM01-2021

A Decarbonising Zone (DZ) was defined as: "Spatial area identified by the local authority, in which a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures and action owners are identified to address local low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions and climate needs to contribute to national climate action targets".

Decarbonising Zones provide a test bed of what is possible for decarbonisation and climate action at local and community levels, to help support and realise national climate objectives. The DZ is the focus for a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures including the identification of projects and outcomes to assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective. Carlow Town was selected as the Decarbonising Zone for County Carlow

In 2025 Carlow County Council established a Decarbonising Zone working group. The DZ working group comprises of stakeholders who can effect change of the community who live, work, learn, do business and visit the Decarbonising Zone.

The objective of Carlow Decarbonising Zone Working Group is to develop Carlow Town as one community, working in partnership, sharing our knowledge, skills, and experiences to deliver effective climate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the area by 51% by 2030, based on 2018 levels, in line with the National Climate Objective.

The Decarbonising Zone working group will engage Stakeholders and build partnerships to

- Identify and promote low-Carbon technologies and practices.
- Foster economic transition through the identification economic opportunities arising from decarbonisation, such as investment in clean technology.
- Enhance community awareness and participation through campaigns, workshops, and community programs.
- Document and share best practices
- Collaborate with other regions to exchange knowledge and innovations.
- Encourage pilot projects and research initiatives that contribute to decarbonisation goals.
- Foster collaboration with academic institutions and technology developers to test and

scale solutions.

- Identify funding opportunities for decarbonisation projects.



Carlow Decarbonising Zone Working Group

Organisations represented on the Carlow Decarbonising Zone include:

- Carlow County Council
- HSE
- Carlow Kilkenny ETB
- Carlow Chamber of Commerce
- IDA Ireland
- Enterprise Ireland
- TFI Local Link Carlow Kilkenny Wicklow
- Gas Networks Ireland
- Teagasc
- South East Technological University
- Merk Sharpe & Dhome

UN Sustainable Development Goals

Carlow County Council is explicitly recognised as an SDG Ambassador, having been part of the Government’s inaugural SDG Champions Programme. The Council continues to hold this ambassadorial role.

Carlow County Council participates in SDG localisation at national level through the National SDG Localisation Working Group, which helps embed SDGs across local authority governance and reporting. The Council is represented on this group through Director of Services Padraig O’Gorman, representing the CCMA.

SDGs - the Local Perspective



Carlow County Council Annual Report 2024 includes a dedicated section titled “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”, which demonstrates that the Council has formally embedded the SDGs into its reporting structure.

The Annual Report includes detailed sections on climate action, sustainable transport, regeneration, and community development—each of which inherently aligns with specific SDGs.

Carlow County Council Annual Report 2024

The report lists SDGs prominently before the sections on Environment & Climate Action, Economic Development, Community, Recreation & Amenity, Library Services, Heritage Services

—indicating that the SDGs act as a cross-cutting framework informing these service areas.

SDG Week 2025,

During SDG Week 2025, Carlow County Council shared a series of short, food-focused information sessions across its social media platforms, highlighting how growing and sourcing local food supports and advances the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Supporting SDG's by Growing & Sourcing Local Food

SDG 2.3: by 2030 double the agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale food producers, particularly women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment

SDG 2.4: by 2030 ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality

SDG 2.5: Maintain the Genetic Diversity in Food Production



Dee Sewell - Environmental Awareness Officer
with Carlow County Council



Information Sessions hosted by Carlow County Council during SDG week 2025.

OECD Policy Coherence Scan of Ireland

As part of the OECD Policy Coherence Scan of Ireland (PCSD), designed to strengthen SDG implementation at national and local levels, Carlow County Council was required to present on the Local Authority experience of integrating SDGs across their functions. Input was also requested as follows:

- How can Irish local governments translate SDGs into concrete cross-sectoral actions?
- What mechanisms are needed to better enable SDG localisation?
- Are current national frameworks enabling the localisation of the SDGs? What can be improved?
- How can local data and indicators be strengthened to track SDG progress

Carlow PPN

Carlow PPN continue to play a pivotal role in the promotion and understanding of the SDGs.

Carlow PPN hosted an introductory SDG workshop focused on helping community groups understand how to translate the Sustainable Development Goals into practical, local actions. This session—delivered by the national SDG education programme Siolta—aimed to build SDG capacity among PPN member groups. Following the SDG workshops, Carlow PPN received SDG promotional materials from Saolta and distributed these to community groups across County Carlow to support local awareness and engagement.



PPN members attending a SDG workshop in 2025.

Carlow PPN included regular SDG updates in its 2025 bulletins, ensuring that community and voluntary groups remained informed about SDG opportunities, training, and resources.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE
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CARLOW
**CLIMATE
ACTION**

Investing in our future

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