



Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan

2024 - 2029

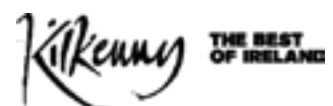


Table of Contents



Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

Our Vision

Table of Contents

Abbreviations

Photo Credits

Foreword

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 Climate Change and its impacts for Ireland

1.2 Background to the development of the Plan

1.3 Role of Local Authorities in relation to Climate Action

1.4 Scope of the Plan

1.5 Local Authority Climate Action Planning

1.6 How the Plan was developed

1.7 Structure of the Climate Action Plan

1.8 Environmental Assessment

2. Climate Policy

2.1 Climate Policy Context

2.2 International Climate Change Policy

2.3 Climate Change Policy in Ireland

2.4 Local Policy

3. Profile of Kilkenny County Council

3.1 County Kilkenny

3.2 Kilkenny County Council

3.3 Positive Climate Action by Kilkenny County Council

4. Evidence-based Climate Action

4.1 Using Evidence-based data in this Plan

4.2 Climate Change Risk Assessment

4.3 Baseline Emissions Inventory

4.4 Emissions Targets

5. Framework of Climate Actions

5.1 Context

5.2 The Framework, Vision and Mission

5.3 Strategic Themes

5.4 Developing Actions

5.5 Climate Actions

6. Kilkenny City Decarbonising Zone

6.1 What is a Decarbonising Zone

6.2 Role of Kilkenny County Council

6.3 The Process of Developing the DZ

6.4 Profile of Kilkenny City DZ

6.5 Summary of the Baseline Emission Inventory

6.6 DZ Plan

6.7 Next Steps

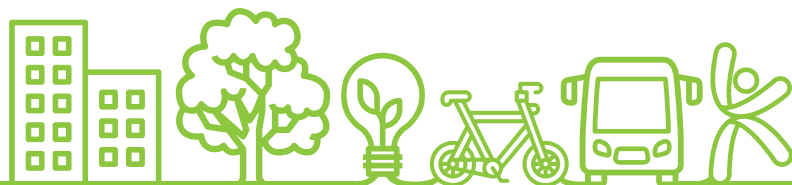
7. Implementation and Reporting

7.1 Planning for Implementation

7.2 Funding and Partnerships

7.3 Tracking Progress on Climate Action

Table of Contents



Figures

Figure 1.1: Scope of Local Authority's responsibility on climate action

Figure 1.2: Guiding principles of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan

Figure 1.3: Service Areas represented on the Climate Action Steering Committee

Figure 1.4: Meetings with Elected Representatives and Strategic Policy Committees

Figure 1.5: The Service Areas which contributed to actions in the Plan

Figure 1.6: Environmental Governance Principles which underpin the Climate Action Plan

Figure 2.1: Legislation and Policy Context for the Climate Action Plan

Figure 2.2: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Figure 3.1: Profile of County Kilkenny

Figure 3.2: Profile of Kilkenny County Council

Figure 4.1: Frequency of Current Hazard Types in County Kilkenny. (Source, Kilkenny Climate Risk Assessment, RPS)

Figure 4.2: Future Projected Impacts of Climate Events on Kilkenny County Council Services

Figure 4.3: Greenhouse gas emissions per sector in County Kilkenny 2018

Figure 4.4: Emissions by sector in Kilkenny County Council 2018

Figure 4.5: Energy Use by sector in Kilkenny County Council 2016 - 2018

Figure 5.1: Framework of Climate Actions

Figure 6.1: Socioeconomic and environmental characteristics of Kilkenny City DZ.

Figure 6.2: Map of Kilkenny City Decarbonising Zone.

Figure 6.3 Total greenhouse gas emissions in the Kilkenny DZ area by sector

Figure 6.4: Register of Opportunities for Kilkenny City DZ

Figure 6.5: Enabling Opportunities for Kilkenny City DZ

Figure 6.6: Kilkenny City Decarbonising Zone Actions

Tables

4.1 Summary of the emissions produced per sector in County Kilkenny

4.2 Total emissions and energy use by Kilkenny County Council 2018

4.3 National Sectoral Emissions Targets

Our Vision

“Kilkenny County Council will be a climate resilient organisation that inspires and supports the county’s transition to a biodiversity rich, sustainable and climate neutral economy by 2050.”

Abbreviations



AA	Appropriate Assessment	HSA	Health and Safety Authority
AILG	Association of Irish Local Government	HPI	House Performance Index
AIPP	All-Ireland Pollinator Plan	HSE	Health Service Executive
BCP	Broadband Connection Point	HVO	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil
BEI	Baseline Emissions Inventory	ISO	International Organisation for Standards
BER	Building Energy Rating	IAT	Institute of Asphalt Technology
CARO	Climate Action Regional Office	ICSMA	Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association
CCMA	County and City Management Association	IFA	Irish Farmers' Association
CFRAM	Catchment and Flood Risk Assessment Management	ICT	Information and Communication Technology
CKCC	County Kilkenny Childcare Committee	IT	Information Technology
CKLP	Kilkenny LEADER Partnership	KCETB	Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board
CLG	Company Limited by Guarantee	KEC	Kilkenny Education Centre
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	KKCC	Kilkenny County Council
DECA	Delivering Effective Climate Action	LACAP	Local Authority Climate Action Plan
DECC	Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	LASNTG	Local Authority Services National Training Group
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	LAWPRO	Local Authority Water Programme
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development	LCDC	Local Community Development Committee
DTTA	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
DZ	Decarbonising Zone	LEO	Local Enterprise Office
EAO	Environmental Awareness Officer	LGMA	Local Government Management Agency
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry
ESB	Electricity Supply Board	MD	Municipal District
ETB	Education and Training Board	NBDC	National Biodiversity Data Centre
EU	European Union	NBS	Nature-based Solutions
EV	Electric Vehicle	NCAP23	National Climate Action Plan 2023
FPS	Flood Protection Scheme	NDCA	National Dialogue on Climate Action
FRS	Flood Relief Scheme	NOAC	National Oversight and Audit Commission
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association	NPWS	National Parks & Wildlife Service
GHG	Greenhouse Gas	NSAI	National Standards Authority of Ireland
GPP	Green Public Procurement	NTA	National Transport Authority
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland	OGP	Office of Government Procurement
		OPW	Office of Public Works
		PL	Public Lighting

Abbreviations



PLEEP	Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Programme	TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
PPN	Public Participation Network	ICT	Information and Communications Technology
PV	Photovoltaic (Solar Panels)	RDO	Regional Design Office
RWMO	Regional Waste Management Office	UMR	Unmetered Reading
SDG's	Sustainable Development Goals	UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment	ZEVI	Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland		
SECAP	Sustainable Energy Climate Action Plan		
SEEA	South East Energy Agency		
SETU	South East Technological University		
SME's	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises		
SPC	Strategic Policy Committee		
SRA	Southern Regional Assembly		
SUDS	Sustainable Urban Drainage System		
SUMP	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan		



Credits



Design and Photos

[Márta Communications](#) produced the graphic design and branding for this Plan.

The photos used in this Plan are courtesy of the following:

- Paul Lanigan
- Vicky Comerford
- Richard Dwyer
- Dave Barnaville
- Ludvig Hedenborg - Pexels.com
- Kilkenny County Council

Images which were not provided by Kilkenny County Council are credited to the relevant photographer, as appropriate. All other images are courtesy of Kilkenny County Council.



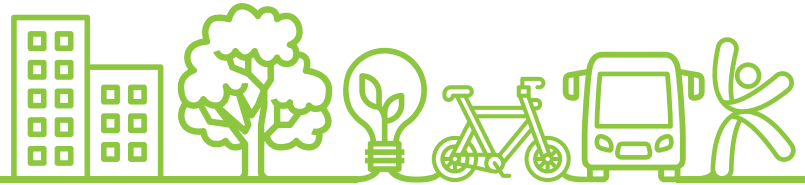


Kilkenny
Going Green

Foreword



Foreword



Kilkenny's climate is changing and this poses significant challenges and risks to all those living and working in the county. Quality of life, economic prosperity, the environment and critical infrastructure are all subject to the impacts of climate change. This Climate Action Plan is a roadmap for how Kilkenny County Council will respond to the challenges, meet our climate obligations and deepen our commitment to climate action.

We recognise that Kilkenny County Council has a significant role to play in tackling climate change. Our services, operations, policies and programmes have a direct impact on all those living and working in Kilkenny. This puts the Council in a unique position to lead by example, in conjunction with influencing other key stakeholders to undertake effective climate action.

Kilkenny County Council will transform how we do business, delivering our Climate Action Plan and achieve emission reduction and energy efficiency targets. We will also support other stakeholders, communities and businesses in the County to take action.

Our mission is to lead by example, inspire and facilitate climate action in the County. We are committed to supporting the transition to a climate resilient, sustainable and low carbon economy.

Delivering this Plan requires collective and ongoing action working with our staff, Elected Representatives, partners, communities and businesses in the County. At a regional and national level, we will collaborate with neighbouring Local Authorities, the Climate Action Regional Offices, Government Departments and agencies.

This Plan is not the starting point for Kilkenny County Council in relation to climate change. We have already delivered and partnered on many initiatives. For example, we have provided the Kilkenny City Flood Relief Scheme and have more schemes in the pipeline for the County. We have reduced emissions and energy use by adopting the ISO50001 Energy Management System.

We have introduced a public electric- bike service in Kilkenny City and are in the process of changing all public lighting to energy efficient LED's. Through this Plan, we commit to scaling up actions and intensifying our efforts.

We don't underestimate the challenge ahead, but are optimistic that by working together with the support of staff, Elected Representatives and stakeholders in the County that we can realise the ambition in this Plan.



Cllr. Michael Doyle

Cathaoirleach



Laurence Power

Chief Executive



Kilkenny
Going Green

Executive Summary



Executive Summary



Climate change is the most critical global challenge of our time. Ireland's climate is changing, and we are experiencing more extreme, unpredictable and damaging weather events. These events highlight the vulnerability of individuals, businesses, communities and infrastructure to climate change and emphasise the need for urgent climate action.

Local Authorities have been tasked to lead on climate action at a local level. They are mandated to prepare and implement a Local Authority Climate Action Plan. The Plan strengthens the links between local, regional, national and international climate policies, and the delivery of effective climate action at local and community levels. It builds on and scales up Kilkenny County Council's existing work on climate action.

The Climate Action Plan is a statutory 5-year Plan which outlines the measures that Kilkenny County Council will take to reduce energy use and carbon emissions, and adapt to the changing climate across its governance, services and operations. In addition, it sets out how Kilkenny County Council will facilitate, support and inspire stakeholder climate action in the County through leadership, collaboration and advocacy.

This Plan has been prepared in close collaboration with the Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Steering Committee, relevant staff from every service area in the Local Authority and Elected Representatives. Input has been provided by Strategic Policy Committee 4 (Environmental Protection, Climate and Energy), the Public Participation Network, the Climate Action Regional Office, adjoining Local Authorities, business and community stakeholders and the public.

The Plan is informed by the most recent scientific data and evidence. Six specialist reports were commissioned as part of the preparation of the Plan and the findings of these have been assimilated into the Plan. The key climate risks facing County Kilkenny, along with the greenhouse gas emissions produced by Kilkenny County Council and the County, are presented.

95 actions were developed, and these will be undertaken by Kilkenny County Council over the next five years. By delivering these actions Kilkenny County Council will reduce its own greenhouse gas emissions by 51% and improve its energy efficiency by 50%. It will also implement measures to prepare for climate change, support resilience, and provide other benefits such as improved health and well-being, enhanced biodiversity, green job creation, sustainable use of materials and the circular economy. Collaboration with stakeholders, including business, the community and other public sector organisations will be vital to the success of the Plan.

As part of the preparation of the Plan, Local Authorities are required to identify a Decarbonising Zone (DZ) – an area within the County which will act as a test bed for trialling what is possible for decarbonisation and climate action at a local and community level. Key characteristics of the DZ are continuous learning and improvement over time, and collaboration with stakeholders. Kilkenny City has been identified as the DZ for County Kilkenny. Building on its socioeconomic and environmental characteristics, the Kilkenny City DZ has a strong foundation of existing assets and services, with the potential to deliver a wide-range of decarbonisation opportunities.

Details of how the Plan will be implemented and the range of mechanisms through which progress will be measured and communicated are outlined.



1  **Kilkenny**
Going Green

Introduction



1.1 Climate Change and its Impacts for Ireland



Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns, mainly caused by human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels.

Climate change is acknowledged to be the most critical, long-term global challenge of our time, and its impacts continue to be felt worldwide. The World Economic Forum “Global Risks Report 2023” identifies global climate action failure to be the dominant risk facing the world in the next 10 years.

[The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC's\) Working Group Sixth Assessment Report](#) provides overwhelming evidence, which confirms that the earth's climate has changed since the pre-industrial era (1850-1900) and that human activities, through greenhouse gas emissions, are the principal cause of that change. It provides evidence that global surface temperatures reached 1.1°C above 1850-1900 levels, in the 2011-2020 period.

Ireland's climate is also being affected by climate change. Met Éireann have confirmed that temperatures have risen in Ireland by 0.7°C and rainfall has increased by approximately 7%, over the last 30 years¹. They have also noted that 2022 was the warmest year to date on record.

A warming climate has caused a rise in sea level, through the loss of sea ice and thermal expansion (the increase in the volume of water due to heating) resulting from the warming ocean. Global mean sea level increased by 20 cm between 1901 and 2018. The trend in global mean sea level rise has been consistently rising since 1901. Ireland has so far seen a similar rise in sea level with an average of 2-3 mm per year.

Ireland has suffered from adverse climate impacts already and recent extreme weather events have highlighted the vulnerability of individuals, businesses, communities, sectors and infrastructure to climate change, emphasising the need for urgency on climate action across all sectors of society.

For example, Storm Babet caused significant flooding in parts of County Kilkenny, Waterford and Cork. The adverse impacts of climate change can often compound wider reaching social, environmental and economic challenges, increasing vulnerability and sensitivity to a changing climate and climate extremes.

Based on observed changes in climate and its impacts, Met Éireann, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other climate scientists, have made the following projections on future climate patterns in Ireland:



Flooding in Thomastown from Storm Babet in 2023

¹Annual Climate Statement for 2022. Met Éireann. 2023.

1.1 Climate Change and its Impacts for Ireland



- Climate trends will continue and intensify over the coming decades
- Temperatures are expected to continue to increase across all seasons
- Increased occurrence of extreme rainfall events, particularly during Winter
- Significant reductions in levels of average rainfall in Spring and Summer
- Frequency of extreme wind conditions expected to increase, particularly during Winter
- Little change in average wind speed and direction
- Increases in the frequency of river flooding
- Increase in the frequency of surface water flooding
- Increase in sea level rise, similar to what has been experienced to date
- Increase in the frequency and intensity of coastal flooding and erosion
- Increase in the frequency and intensity of summer heat waves, extreme temperatures and drought
- Reduction in the frequency of frost and snowfall

- Increase in the duration of the growing season

The state of Ireland's climate today and how it may look in the future can be brought together in one simple conclusion. Ireland's climate has changed relative to the 1900's. It has undoubtedly warmed along with global temperatures, bringing about an array of impacts that are associated with a warmer climate and more extreme weather events.



Storm damage at Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum from Storm Darwin in 2014

1.2 Background to the Development of the Plan



Kilkenny County Council has prepared this Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, in accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, which requires all Local Authorities in Ireland to prepare and to implement a five-year Climate Action Plan.

This Plan is aligned to the Government's overall National Climate Objective, as outlined in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, which seeks to pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy. This Act also frames Ireland's legally binding climate targets, to deliver a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 51% and energy efficiency of 50% by 2030. In preparing this Plan, Kilkenny County Council also takes account of other relevant international and national climate legislation and policy.

Ireland's National Climate Objective is to achieve a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy by 2050.

(Source: Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021).



1.3 Role of Local Authorities in relation to Climate Action



Kilkenny County Council and other Local Authorities across Ireland are already well positioned at the forefront of implementing climate action. Kilkenny County Council plays a significant role in terms of delivering adaptation and mitigation measures at local and community levels.

(See section 3.3 for further details of projects and work undertaken to date by Kilkenny County Council).

The key role Local Authorities play in their administrative areas in relation to climate action can be broadly broken down into four areas of responsibility:

1. Full Accountability

Local Authorities have full accountability for climate action within their organisation and operations. This includes meeting mandated emissions reductions and energy efficient targets across their buildings, facilities, fleet, and public lighting; and also building resilience to the negative impacts of climate change across all services and operations.

2. Influence

Local Authorities, through their example, functions, services and regulatory levers, can influence other sectors, businesses, communities and individuals in the county to deliver climate action and meet their sectoral climate targets.

3. Co-ordinate and Facilitate

Local Authorities can co-ordinate and enhance climate action by facilitating partnerships and collaborations between other sectors, businesses and communities.

4. Advocate

Local Authorities can advocate on climate action by raising awareness, communicating, informing and engaging in dialogue on climate issues.

Local Authority Scope on Climate Action

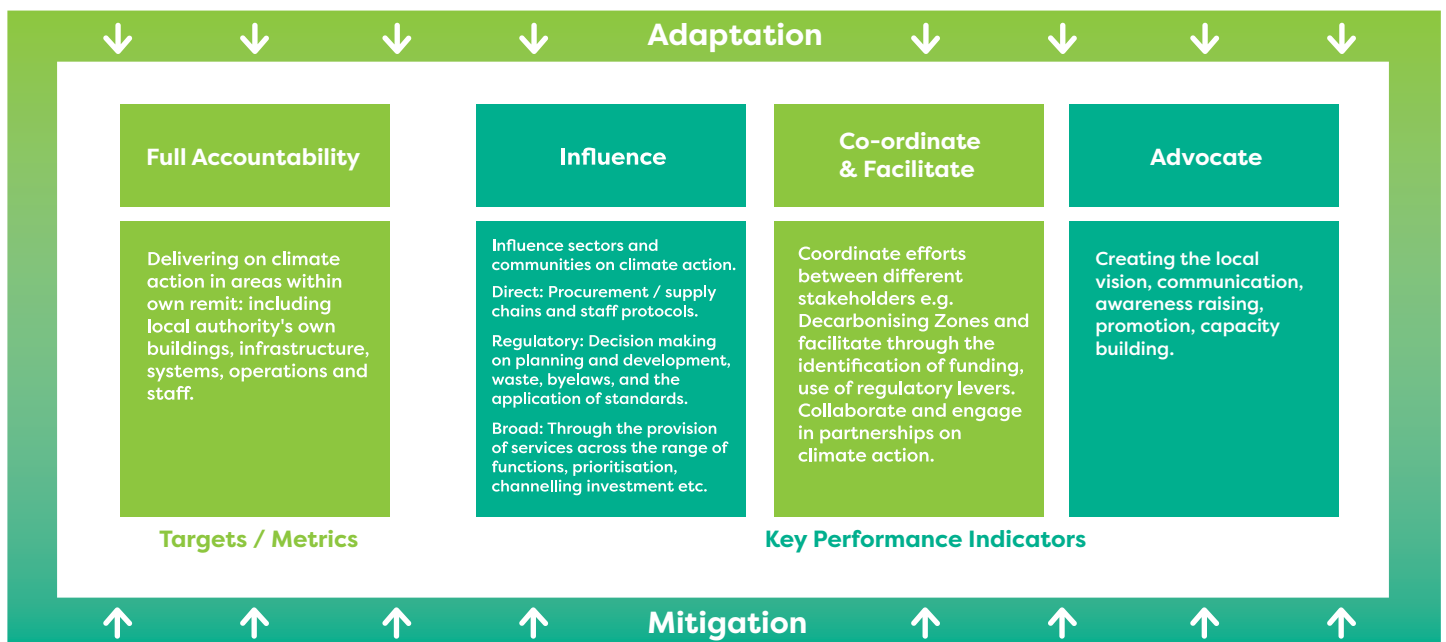


Figure 1.1: Scope of Local Authority's Responsibility on Climate Action (Source: Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines, 2023)

1.4 Scope of the Plan



This Plan adopts a coherent approach to climate action across the administrative and political structures of the Local Authority. It is supported by a range of other Local Authority Plans including Kilkenny County Council's Corporate Plan, the Kilkenny City & County Development Plan and the Local Economic and Community Plan.

This Plan demonstrates how Kilkenny County Council will:

1. Achieve its mandated emission reduction (51%) and energy efficiency (50%) targets across its buildings, facilities, fleet, and public lighting.
2. Embed a climate action and a sustainability approach across its governance, operations and services.
3. Demonstrate leadership and partnership in climate action, by influencing, coordinating, facilitating and advocating for climate action in other sectors, businesses, communities and individuals.
4. Support a "Decarbonising Zone", as a test bed for climate action.

There are five guiding principles in the Plan, as follows:



Figure 1.2: Guiding principles of the Local Authority Climate Action Plans (Source: Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines. DECC, 2023)

1.5 Local Authority Climate Action Planning



The overall national emissions reduction target is 51% by 2030. This Plan outlines the mitigation and adaptation measures which Kilkenny County Council will adopt to support achieving the emissions reduction target of 51% by 2030. It should however be noted that whilst Local Authorities have an important strategic and leadership role to play in their administrative areas, they are not responsible for delivering on the emissions reduction targets for other sectors in the county.

The Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan will also strengthen the links between national and international climate policy and the delivery of effective climate action (mitigation and adaptation) at local and community levels.

The Plan specifically ensures alignment between the high-level visions of the National Climate Action Plan, the Local Government climate strategy and on-the-ground actions.

The Plan also reinforces the commitment by the Local Government sector to lead on climate action at local and national levels, as reflected in the Local Government strategy [“Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030” \(CCMA, 2022\).](#)



What is Climate Mitigation?

Climate Mitigation refers to efforts to reduce or prevent emission of greenhouse gases.



What is Climate Adaptation?

Climate Adaptation refers to actions which prepare for the impacts of climate change



1.6 How the Plan was Developed



The Plan was developed in a collaborative and systematic way, in accordance with the “[Local Authority Climate Action Plan guidelines](#)” produced by the Department of Environment Climate and Communications and the Climate Action Regional Offices (DECC, 2023).

There was comprehensive participation and input from across the Council, and from the general public and other key stakeholders. Below is a summary of the key steps undertaken in the preparation of the Plan.

Step 1: Governance and Staff Resources

The preparation of this Climate Action Plan was preceded by the establishment of two new structures within Kilkenny County Council, namely the Climate Action Office, and the Climate Action Steering Committee.

(i) A Dedicated Climate Action Office

A new dedicated Climate Action Office was established within the Environment Directorate in September 2022. It currently (March 2024) comprises four members of staff as follows:

- Climate Action Co-ordinator
- Climate Action Officer
- Community Climate Action Officer
- Clerical Officer

In addition, as required under the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy², Kilkenny County Council has designated a senior member of staff to assume the role of Energy Performance Officer to drive and coordinate energy management and performance across the organisation.

Additional staff are envisaged for the Climate Action Office by the Local Government Management Association (LGMA) in their climate strategy “Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030” and will be provided in the coming years.

The role of the Climate Action Office is to co-ordinate and mainstream climate action across all services of Kilkenny County Council and to monitor and report on the implementation of the actions in the Climate Action Plan.

It is important to emphasise that, notwithstanding the role of the dedicated team in the Climate Action Office, every staff member of the organisation has a role to play in advancing climate action efforts.



“
The role of the Climate Action Office is to co-ordinate and mainstream climate action across all services of Kilkenny County Council and to monitor and report on the implementation of the actions in the Climate Action Plan.
”

²Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy (Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment, 2017)

1.6 How the Plan was Developed



Kilkenny County Council Service Areas represented on the Climate Action Steering Committee			
Active Travel	Environment	Information Technology	Public Lighting
Architectural Conservation	Facilities Management	Local Enterprise Office	Roads
Arts	Finance	Library Service	Special Projects
Biodiversity	Fire Services	Municipal Districts	Tourism
Civil Defence	Flood Relief Capital Projects	Parks	Town Regeneration
Community	Heritage	Planning	Water Services
Corporate Services	Housing	Procurement	

Figure 1.3: Service Areas represented on the Climate Action Steering Committee

(ii) Climate Action Steering Committee

A new cross-department Climate Action Steering Committee was established, and held its inaugural meeting in January 2023. The Steering Committee is composed of heads of service, key personnel and a representative of the South East Energy Agency. The role of the Climate Action Steering Committee is to provide leadership within Kilkenny County Council to help deliver on their climate targets, and to support the preparation and implementation of the Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan by undertaking appropriate measures within their service areas.

Step 2: Collection of Data

Working in partnership with neighbouring Local Authorities (Carlow, Waterford, Wexford and Tipperary), using a framework prepared by the Eastern and Midlands CARO, Kilkenny County Council commissioned the following independent reports to inform the Plan:

- Climate Change Risk Assessment (2023)**
To identify the main climate risks facing Kilkenny County Council and its service delivery.
- Baseline Emissions Inventory (2023)**
To identify the greenhouse gas emissions produced in the county, including the emissions produced by Kilkenny County Council.

See Section 4 for further information on the Climate Risk Assessment and Baseline Emissions Inventory.

In addition, the Council also commissioned a Baseline Emissions Inventory and a Decarbonising Plan for the Kilkenny City Decarbonisation Zone (2023). See Section 6 for further information.

Step 3: Training

The Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG), in partnership with the Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO), delivered a [Local Authority Climate Action Training Programme](#) for Council staff and Elected Representatives to assist with the preparation of County Climate Action Plans.

The programme comprised six pillars (i.e. leadership, awareness, capacity, policy, action, and change) that serve to underpin the commitments set out in the National Climate Action Plan. It strengthened and empowered Local Authority climate action leadership and built awareness and capacity within the sector to reinforce the delivery of effective climate action.

In Kilkenny County Council 398 attendees took part in 11 of these training courses since 2021, across all service areas, including both outdoor crews and indoor staff. 66% of Elected Representatives also took part in the training programme. In addition, the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) ran specific climate action training for Elected Representatives.

1.6 How the Plan was Developed



Step 4: Consulting the General Public and other interested Stakeholders (Pre-Draft Consultation Phase)

Stakeholder Engagement

Members of the general public and other interested stakeholders were invited to give their views about what they considered to be the climate action priorities and issues for the Council and the county. This pre-draft public consultation phase ran from April to June 2023. It included the following programme of events and engagements:

- Information stand at Earth Day Kilkenny (22nd April 2023)
- Public notice on the Council's Consultkilkenny.ie portal inviting submissions (May 2023)
- Information stand at Kilkenny Bike Week (14th May 2023)
- Presentation to Kilkenny Tidy Towns Network Annual Meeting (24th May 2023)
- Presentation to Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN) Plenary (31st May 2023)
- Interviews on local radio ("Ours to Protect" KCLR, 8th June 2023; "Follow the Leaders" KCLR, 26th May 2023, CKLR 24th August 2023)
- Press releases and social media posts

Engagement with Elected Representatives and Strategic Policy Committees

The Elected Representatives of Kilkenny County Council, along with the Strategic Policy Committees³ (SPCs), have a vital role to play in leading and supporting climate action policy, monitoring implementation and ensuring adequate funding for the Plan. The Climate Action Office met with the Elected Representatives and SPCs to discuss the Draft Climate Action Plan throughout its preparation as follows:

Elected Representatives	No.	Dates
Council Plenary Meetings	6	March 2023 - Feb 2024
Workshops	2	Sept 2023 & Feb 2024
Municipal District of Kilkenny City (DZ)	1	Dec 2023
Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) 4 Environmental Protection, Climate Action & Energy	4	Oct 2022 - Feb 2024
Strategic Policy Committee SPC2	1	Dec 2022

Figure 1.4: Meetings with Elected Representatives and Strategic Policy Committees in the preparation of the Plan

³ Strategic Policy Committees are Local Authority committees whose membership includes elected councillors, representatives of business, farming, environmental/conservation groups, trade unions and community and voluntary members. Their role is to advise and assist the council in the formulation, development and review of policy.

1.6 How the Plan was Developed



Review Plans

In addition to consulting directly with the general public, a review of relevant Plans and reports was undertaken by the Climate Action Office to identify issues which had been raised by the public about climate change in Co. Kilkenny.

This included a review of climate-related submissions made to the Council during the preparation of the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan (2021-2027), the Local Economic and Community Plan (2023-2028), and the Kilkenny City Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP). It was clear from this review that climate was a key issue for the public. It was raised across the public consultations for all plans with a large number of responses raising the issue of climate change received.

An appraisal of the “Climate Conversations” report (DECC, 2022), was also undertaken. This report was a review of responses from public engagement on the ‘National Climate Action Plan 2021’ for the National Dialogue on Climate Action. Of particular interest was the feedback and suggestions from the Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN), provided during a workshop about climate change (31st March 2021), as part of the National Dialogue on Climate Action initiative.

Collectively these submissions provide a useful barometer of the public’s priorities for climate action in the county. They also served to deepen the Council’s understanding of the issues raised.

The submissions and feedback from the public consultation phase were used to inform the Council in relation to its’ influencing, coordinating, facilitating and advocating role on climate action in the county.

The key themes that emerged from the pre-draft consultation and review were as follows:

- Information (about Grants, Case Studies, Ideas)
- Communication (Jargon free)
- Travel (Sustainable, Public and Active Travel)
- Energy
- Circular Economy (Food, Waste, Materials)
- Economic Opportunities
- Nature-based Solutions
- Just and Fair Transition
- Funding

The Plan is subject to approval by the Elected Members of the Local Authority, following public consultation and engagement. It must be adopted by the Elected Members of the Local Authority within a timeframe of 12 months of notification by the Minister, i.e. by 23rd February 2024.



The Sandwich Project Workshop, Bookville, October 2023.

Local primary school children were invited to draw what climate action might look like. (Image courtesy Kathy Conlon)

1.6 How the Plan was Developed



Consultation for the Kilkenny City Decarbonisation Zone

Stakeholder consultations were also commissioned and undertaken within Kilkenny City as part of the preparation of a Plan for the Kilkenny City Decarbonisation Zone (DZ). This included consultation with the following;

- Kilkenny PPN
- Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce
- Kilkenny Leader Partnership Company
- Kilkenny Tourism
- Elected Representatives from Kilkenny City Municipal District
- Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC's) in Kilkenny City

See Section 6 of this report for further information on the Kilkenny City DZ.



1.6 How the Plan was Developed



Step 5: Identifying Actions

In order to ensure robust cross-department collaboration and input in the preparation of the Plan, the Climate Action Office ran workshops with each service area and key personnel throughout the Council. A total of 25 climate action planning workshops were held between July and September 2023.

These workshops were informed by the climate risks and emissions data, and were designed to assist Council staff to identify priority actions from their service area to be included in the Plan. Over 200 actions were identified by staff which were then consolidated into 95 strategic actions under the five themes of this Plan (see Section 5 of this report for further information).

Active Travel	Finance	Information Technology	Planning
Architectural Conservation, Biodiversity & Heritage	Fire Service & Civil Defence	Internal Audit Unit	Procurement
Arts	Fleet Management	Local Enterprise Office & Tourism	Roads & Water Services
Community & Town Regeneration	Flood Relief Capital Projects	Local Authorities Water Programme	Ukrainian Crisis Unit
Corporate Services	Healthy Ireland	Library Service	
Environment	Health & Safety	Municipal Districts	
Facilities Management & Public Lighting	Housing	Parks & Special Projects	

Figure 1.5: The 25 Service Areas who took part in individual workshops with the Climate Action Team to identify actions for the Plan

Step 6: Environmental Assessment of the Plan

Kilkenny County Council is legally obliged to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the environmental impacts of the Plan on the natural environment. Full details of this assessment phase are outlined in Section 1.8.

Step 7: Writing the Plan

All of the information that was gathered during Steps 2-5 above was analysed and collated into the Plan.

Step 8: Statutory Consultation

The Draft Plan was put on public consultation from 16th November 2023 to 20th December 2023, and the public was invited to make submissions. An extensive programme of public engagement was undertaken including drop in clinics in the libraries, a public webinar, engagement in the local press, radio and social media, production of videos and a new webpage.

Thirty two submissions were received on the Draft Plan. Each of these was read, analysed and summarised for a report to the Chief Executive. A small number of modifications were made to the Plan on foot of the submissions received, and approved by the Elected Representatives of Kilkenny County Council. Full details of the statutory consultation phase, including the submissions received and the modifications made to the Plan are detailed in the “Chief Executive’s Report on Submissions Received to the Draft Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029” on the Climate Action page of the Council’s website.

Step 9: Adoption of the Plan

The Elected Representatives adopted the Plan on 19th February 2024 at the Council Plenary.

1.7 Structure of the Climate Action Plan



The Climate Action Plan is divided into eight sections as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Climate Policy
3. Profile of Kilkenny County Council
4. Evidence-based Climate Action
5. Framework of Climate Actions
6. Kilkenny City Decarbonisation Zone
7. Implementation and Reporting
8. Appendices (Supplementary reports which inform and support the Plan, which are available on the council website, including):
 - Kilkenny County Council Climate Change Risk Assessment
 - County Kilkenny Baseline Emissions Inventory
 - Kilkenny City DZ Plan (Phase 1)
 - Kilkenny City DZ BEI
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment Report
 - Natura Impact Report



1.8 Environmental Assessment



Working in partnership with neighbouring Local Authorities (Carlow, Waterford, Wexford and Tipperary), and using a framework prepared by the Eastern and Midlands CARO, the Council commissioned a Strategic Environmental Assessment⁴ (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment⁵ (AA) of the Plan. The Council also consulted with statutory consultees as required under the SEA Regulations. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Report and Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report have been prepared and are available as supplementary documents.

The amendments to the actions in this Plan which were recommended through the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment process, have been incorporated into the final actions. In addition, ten Environmental Governance Principles, which were also recommended have been included in the Plan.

These Principles will underpin and frame all of the actions delivered by this Plan. See Figure 1.6 below.

Ref	Environmental Governance Principles
EG1	Promote climate action projects that support and maximise environmental co-benefits, such as biodiversity protection and enhancement; improved air, water or soil quality; or enhanced recreation, amenity and cultural heritage value, to ensure win-win benefits are gained.
EG2	Support or facilitate climate action related projects and initiatives which seek to make improvements in soil structure, management and health by increasing soil organic carbon - which will create the environmental co-benefits of improving flood resilience by enhancing water holding capacity of soils and increasing the level of GHG sequestration associated with land use functions.
EG3	Ensure local authority development underpinned or supported by plan actions is planned and implemented in a manner that appropriately considers the potential for environmental co-benefits, potential environmental impacts and environmental protection requirements. No local authority climate action related development project that is likely to have significant negative effects on the receiving environment shall be supported.
EG4	Promote - through control or influence as appropriate - the carrying out of flood resilience measures underpinned by plan actions in a manner that supports climate action-biodiversity related co-benefits, and which has due regard for the protection and enhancement of rare, protected or important habitats and species.
EG5	Promote the carrying out of climate action related projects supported by the plan in a manner that supports climate action-cultural heritage co-benefits, and which has due regard to cultural, archaeological or architectural features and sensitivities.
EG6	Promote the carrying out of climate action related projects underpinned by the plan in a manner that supports climate action water quality co-benefits, and the achievement of Water Framework Directive objectives.
EG7	Promote climate action projects that support protected trees, hedgerows and other habitats such as wetlands, flood zones which contribute to green infrastructure.
EG8	Support opportunities to improve and restore ecological connectivity of non-designated habitats and sites (including watercourse connectivity) to improve overall ecosystem resilience and functioning while supporting climate action within the county.
EGP9	Ensure local authority projects supported by plan actions have taken the necessary precautions to identify and manage invasive species, particularly with regard to Schedule III species. No local authority climate action related development project that is likely to cause the spread of invasive species listed in Schedule III shall be supported. All supported projects shall align with the goal of appropriately protecting, restoring and enhancing terrestrial and aquatic habitat and conditions to support the promotion of native species.
EGP10	Support opportunities to promote peatland restoration, rehabilitation and maintenance inclusive of biodiversity enhancement, while achieving climate targets through the implementation of the climate actions within the plan.

Figure 1.6: Environmental Governance Principles which underpin the Climate Action Plan.

⁴ The Plan is subject to compliance with the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (SEA Directive 2001/42/EC) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment

⁵ The Local Authority Climate Action Plan is subject to appropriate assessment under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) to determine if its implementation is likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites

2 Kilkenny
Going Green

Climate Policy



2.1 Climate Policy Context



Climate action is given impetus by the scientific evidence that supports the findings of human influence on climate change and the most recent legally binding international treaty on climate change, which sets the framework for ambitious and strengthened policy responses, the Paris Agreement 2015. Consequently, this Draft Climate Action Plan is set within a broader context of international, EU, national and sectoral climate policy.

This is represented in Figure 2.1 below.

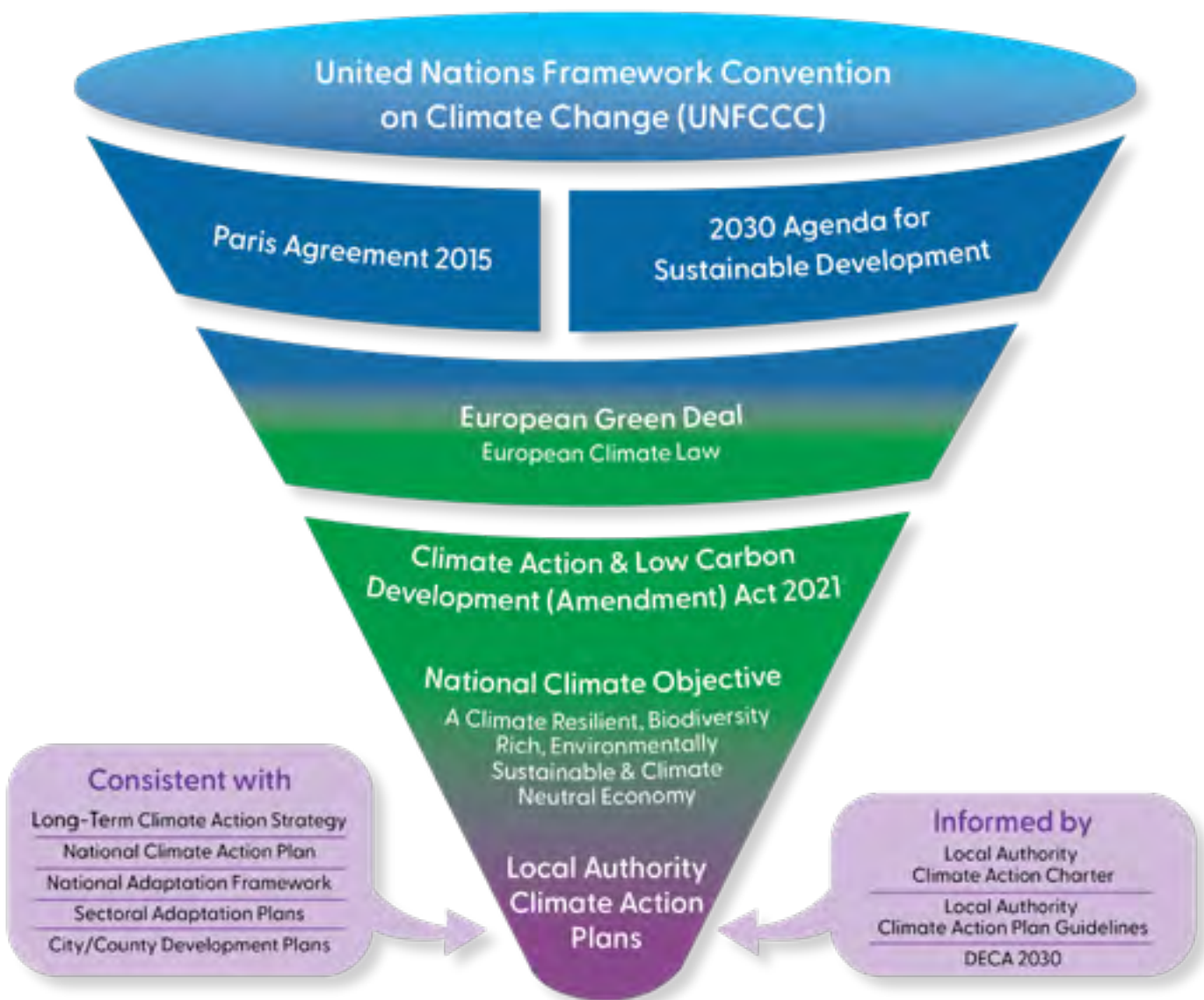


Figure 2.1: Legislation and Policy Context for the Climate Action Plan
(Source: Climate Action Regional Offices)

2.2 International Climate Change Policy



It has been recognised that successfully tackling climate change requires co-operation and ambition on an international level. Since the establishment of the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) in 1994, countries have sought to build international co-operation to limit the increase in the average global temperature and deal with the impacts of climate change which result from these temperature increases.

These efforts led to the signing of the Paris Agreement 2015 at the [Conference of the Parties 21 \(COP21\)](#). The [Paris Agreement](#) 2015 is a legally binding international treaty on climate change which was signed by all 196 member countries, including Ireland, and entered into force on 4th November 2016. Through two clearly defined goals the Paris Agreement strives for progressive and ambitious climate action over time to avoid dangerous climate change by:

- i. Holding global average temperature increases to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels; and
- ii. Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience.

Another international agreement closely linked with the Paris Agreement is the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) which was adopted by UN Member States in September 2015. At the Agenda's core are 17 [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). These goals aim to “end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere.” The 17 SDGs contain 169 targets to be achieved by 2030.

To support greenhouse gas emission reductions under the Paris Agreement commitments, in December 2019 the European Commission developed the [European Green Deal](#) aimed at making Europe the first climate neutral continent. The Deal seeks to achieve no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050, to decouple economic growth from resource use, and to leave no one behind.

The EU introduced a set of proposals to align the EU's climate, taxation, energy, and transport policies to support achieving this aim. [The European Climate Law](#) made these targets legally binding, and also includes a commitment to achieving a reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions of at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Figure 2.2: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

2.3 Climate Change Policy in Ireland



Climate change policy in Ireland reflects the ambition of the EU. Working towards the National Climate Objective, the [Climate Action and Low Carbon Development \(Amendment\) Act 2021](#), promotes a sustainable economy and society where greenhouse gas emissions are balanced or exceeded by the removal of greenhouse gases.

National climate policy is designed to support ambitious and transformative climate action in Ireland up to 2030, and beyond to 2050. It will achieve this through a range of measures including: carbon budgets, sectoral emissions ceilings, adaptation and mitigation strategies, and robust oversight and reporting arrangements.

[The Climate Action Plan 2023](#) sets out a roadmap to 2025 towards taking decisive action to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero, no later than by the end of 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government – Our Shared Future (2020).

Ireland's current [Long-term Strategy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions](#) sets out indicative pathways, beyond 2030, towards achieving carbon neutrality for Ireland by 2050. The Strategy builds upon the decarbonisation pathways set by the carbon budgets, sectoral emissions ceilings and the national Climate Action Plan, to ensure coherent and effective climate policy. It is underpinned by analysis of transition options across each key sector of the economy and provides a crucial link between Ireland's 2030 climate targets and the long-term goal set by Ireland's National Climate Objective and the European Climate Law.

Ireland published its first [National Adaptation Framework \(NAF\)](#) in 2018, which sets out the context to ensure key sectors and Local Authorities, can assess the risks and vulnerabilities of climate change, implement climate resilient actions, and ensure climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into national, regional and local policy making.

[Sectoral Climate Adaptation Plans](#) have been published across Government Departments, in response to the National Adaptation Framework. Each Plan identifies the key risks faced across the sector and the approach being taken to address these risks and build climate resilience for the future. The Plans address the following sectors: Agriculture, Forestry and Seafood, Biodiversity, Built and Archaeological Heritage, Transport infrastructure, Electricity and Gas Networks, Communications Networks, Flood Risk Management, Water Quality and Water Services Infrastructure and Health.

[The Local Authority Climate Action Charter](#), signed by Kilkenny County Council (October 2019), represents a commitment to scale up efforts and play a key role locally and nationally in delivering effective climate action. It tasks all Local Authorities with providing robust leadership in advancing climate action at regional and local levels, with adhering to the UN SDGs, in particular Goal 13 Climate Action, as well as reducing emissions from their own operations and to collaborate and partner with local enterprise, community groups, citizens as well as public, private, and educational sectors on climate action initiatives.



2.3 Climate Change Policy in Ireland



[Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030 \(DECA 2030\)](#) is the Local Government strategy on climate action published in April 2021. The strategy represents an overarching sectoral commitment to ensuring a coherent approach to climate action across the administrative and political structures of all 31 Local Authorities. It is a roadmap for Local Authorities in delivering the required decarbonisation and adaptation within the sector.

[The National Dialogue on Climate Action \(NDCA\)](#) was established by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications to facilitate public engagement in the development of the National Climate Action Plan. The 2022 NDCA “Climate Conversations 2022” suggest that there is a high level of awareness of climate change among the Irish people, and they want to get involved in climate action. It also shows that whilst there is a willingness to engage in climate action, people may not know which actions are most effective or where to start acting. The findings of the NDCA, including the “Climate Conversations” have been considered in the development of this Plan.

[The 2018-2020 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\) National Implementation Plan](#) acknowledged that Local Government “has a crucial role to play in translating national policies into tangible practical actions that can help to concretise the SDG objectives into our individual and communities’ behaviours and goals.”

Local Authorities are recognised by the UN as one of nine “Major Groups”, which play a crucial role in sustainable development.

Alignment of this Plan over its lifetime

The Plan will remain aligned with high level plans and programmes, Guidelines, and legislation over its lifetime. Kilkenny County Council will consider any relevant updated actions, measures or recommendations that may arise in updates to the National Climate Action Plan (or the National Planning Framework) over the lifetime of the Plan.

The SDG’s have been considered in the development of this Plan, in particular SDG’s:

No 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

No 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

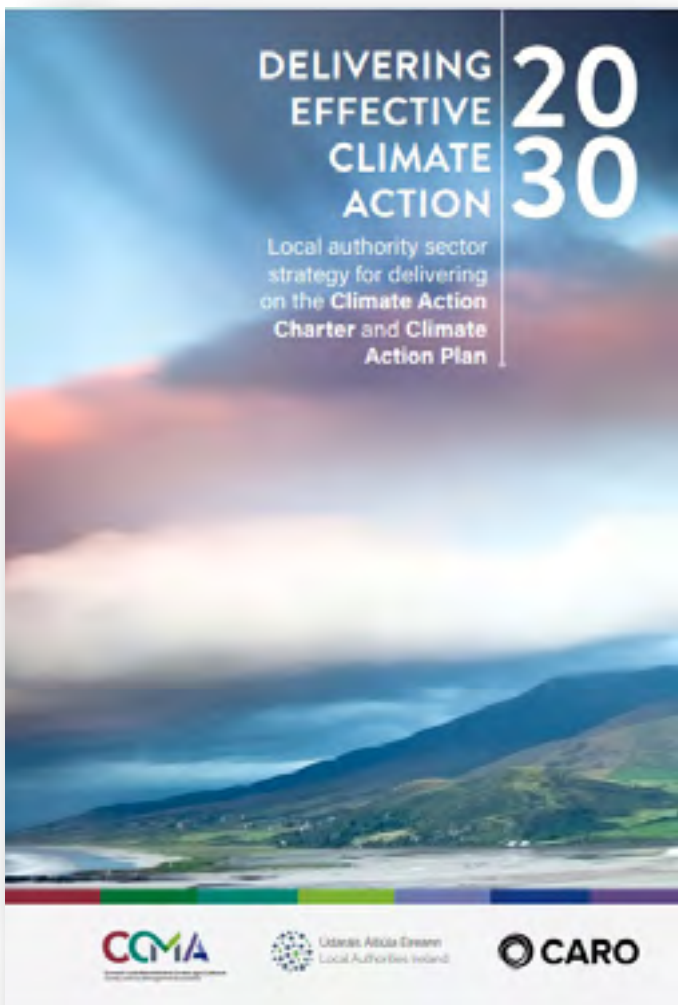
No 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

No 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

No 12: Responsible Consumption and Production,

No 13: Climate Action

No: 17 Partnerships for the Goals



2.4 Local Policy



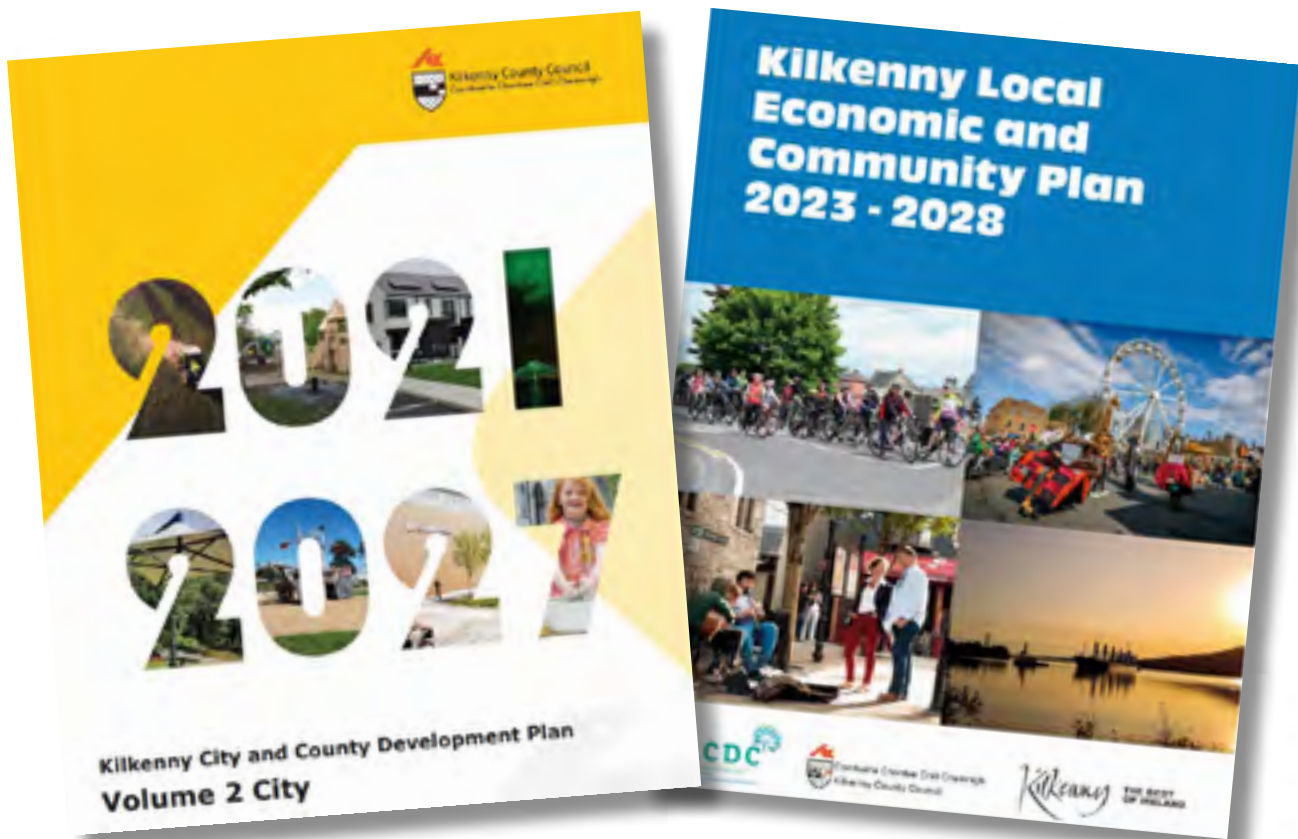
The Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021–2027 sets out the spatial planning framework for County Kilkenny for a period of 6 years, with a framework and vision for how new development will occur across the county in both urban and rural areas. Key components of the County Development Plan are the settlement strategy, housing strategy and renewable energy strategy for the county.

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, includes a new provision in Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) that stipulates that the Development Plan shall include provisions to “(ii) reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and address the necessity of adaptation to climate change, taking account of the Local Authority climate action plan (within the meaning of section 14B of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015), where such a plan has been made for the area in question”.

In this respect, the County Development Plan and the Local Authority Climate Action Plan are consistent with each other and should be considered as part of the overall sustainable development framework for the county.

The Kilkenny Local Economic and Community Plan 2023 – 2028 (LECP) sets out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of County Kilkenny, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. The LECP ensures that Government and other stakeholders can work together to ensure that their initiatives, programmes and projects support an improved quality of life for people living and working in the county.

The LECP and the Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan have been prepared with close consideration to each other, and the economic and community/social objectives of the LECP will be supported by the outward facing actions of the Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan as delivered through the Council services.



3 Kilkenny
Going Green

Profile of Kilkenny County Council



3 Profile of Kilkenny County Council



3.0 Profile of Kilkenny County Council

The physical, social and economic characteristics of the County influence the emissions, climate risks and actions required to reduce the impacts of climate change. The following section summarises the key characteristics of County Kilkenny as a context for this Plan, and the environment within which Kilkenny County Council operates and serves the County. It also provides a profile of Kilkenny County Council, and summarises the initiatives that the Council has undertaken to prepare for climate change.

3.1 County Kilkenny

County Kilkenny is a medium sized County in the south east of Ireland covering approximately 2,100 square kilometres. It adjoins the neighbouring counties of Laois, Carlow, Wexford, Waterford and Tipperary.

The topography of the County consists of a fertile central plain, with uplands in the north-east (Castlecomer Plateau), the north-west (Slieveardagh Hills) and the south east (Brandon Hill).

Three major rivers (the “Three Sisters”) flow through Kilkenny, i.e. the Nore, the Suir and the Barrow. The lower reaches of these rivers are tidal. The County has direct access to the Irish Sea, through Belview Port on the River Suir, and through New Ross on the River Barrow.

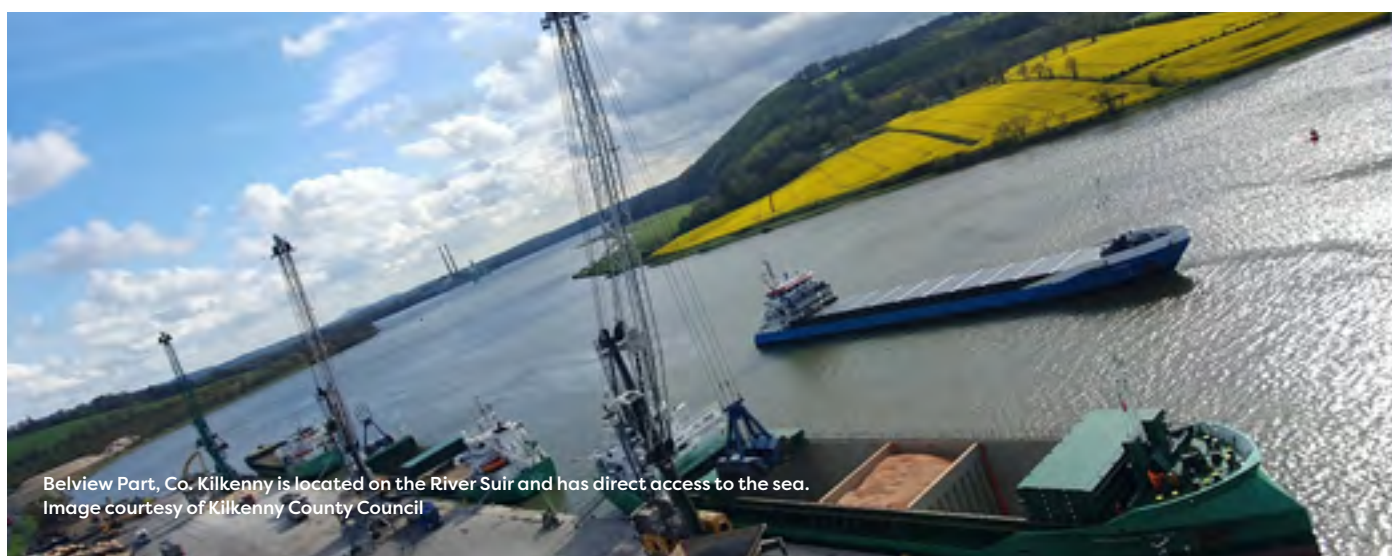
The population of the County is 104,160¹. The main areas of population are in Kilkenny City (population 27,184)², along with the towns of Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh, Thomastown and Ferrybank. Outside of Kilkenny City, and the areas of Ferrybank and Belview Port, the County is largely rural in character.

The public transport network in the County comprises rail, bus, taxi and hackney cabs. There are two passenger railway lines in the County; the Dublin-Waterford line which serves Kilkenny City and Thomastown, and the Waterford-Limerick line which runs in the south of the County serving Waterford. Belview Port is served by rail, connecting to the Waterford line. See Figure 3.1.

There are a number of regional and local bus services serving the County, and a Kilkenny City bus network. The County is served by two motorways (M8 and M9), six national roads (N10, N24, N25, N76, N77, N78) and a significant network of regional and local roads. There is one greenway, the South East Greenway, located in the South of the County.

Notwithstanding the public transport options, the County remains highly reliant on private cars as the primary mode of transport.

The County has a diverse economy comprising the following sectors: Construction (c.26%); Wholesale and Retail (c.19%); Professional, Scientific or Technical (c.16%)³; Public Services (5%); and agriculture (8%)⁴. The County has economic strengths and a reputation for excellence in hospitality, arts, culture, creativity and international financial services. The Fintech/Regtech/Insurtech are growth sectors in the County’s economy.⁵



Belview Port, Co. Kilkenny is located on the River Suir and has direct access to the sea.
Image courtesy of Kilkenny County Council

¹ CSO, Census of Population, 2022

² CSO, Census of Population, 2022

³ Consultation report, Kilkenny Economic and Community Plan (LECP), Dec 2022

⁴ Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027

⁵ Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027

3 Profile of Kilkenny County Council



3.2 Kilkenny County Council

Kilkenny County Council, with approximately 650 employees, is one of the largest employers in the County. The Council delivers a wide and diverse range of services and supports, and also manages a large portfolio of assets. See Figure 3.2.

The services, operations, policies and programmes of Kilkenny County Council have a direct impact on all those living and working in the County.

Services provided by Kilkenny County Council include:

- Roads and Transport
- Housing
- Planning & Building Control
- Environment
- Economic Development/Local Enterprise Office
- Tourism Marketing
- Climate Action
- Water Services
- Fire and Rescue Services
- Civil Defence
- Community
- Parks
- Arts
- Heritage
- Biodiversity
- Libraries
- Veterinary Services

The Council also administers a large number of public grants programmes. In addition to services provided to the public, the Council manages a range of internal operations such as Human Resources, Training, Corporate Services, Procurement and Communications.

Through delivery of these services Kilkenny County Council produces greenhouse gas emissions and uses energy. The Council is required to reduce these in line with national targets by 2030. In addition, given the scope of the services provided, the Council can influence and support emission and energy reductions throughout the County.

Profile of County Kilkenny

KILKENNY COUNTY
2,073km²

MAIN RIVERS
NORE
BARROW
SUIR

PORTS
BELVIEW



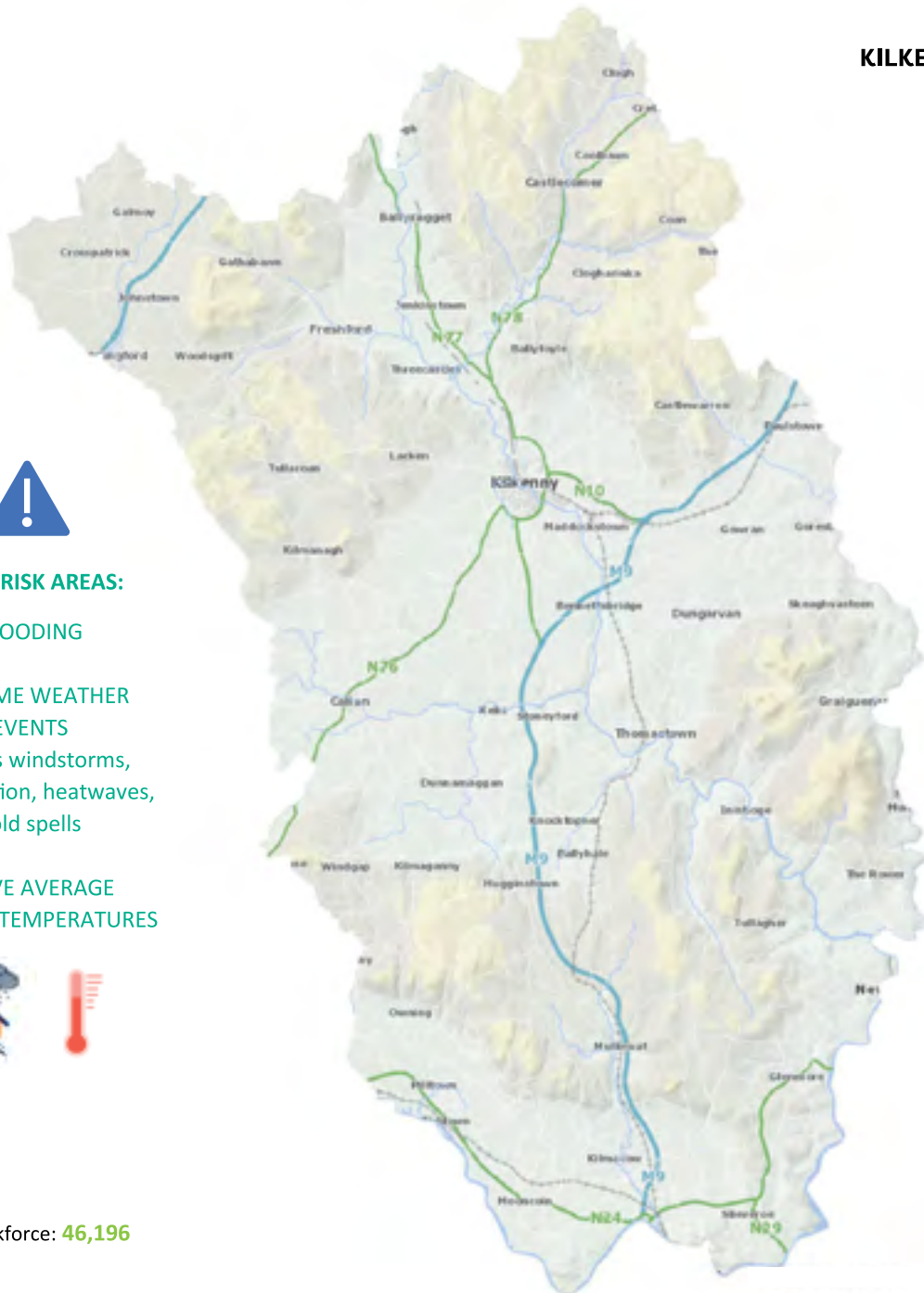
MAIN RISK AREAS:

FLOODING

EXTREME WEATHER
EVENTS

Such as windstorms,
precipitation, heatwaves,
cold spells

ABOVE AVERAGE
SURFACE TEMPERATURES



Workforce: **46,196**

Construction: **26%**

Wholesale & Retail: **19%**

Professional, Scientific or Technical: **16%**

Agriculture: **8%**

**HOSPITALS &
HEALTH CENTRES**
30

SCHOOLS
71

POPULATION
104,160

HOUSEHOLDS
36,787

Figure 3.1: Profile of County Kilkenny

Profile of Kilkenny County Council

GHG Emissions

24 Elected Representatives

258 Fleet
22.90%

Municipal Districts

Kilkenny

Piltown

Castlecomer

Callan - Thomastown

100 Buildings
& Facilities
31.16%

Revenue expenditure 2022

€97 million

Capital expenditure 2022

€63 million

11,400 Public
Lights 45.94%



Corporate Offices: 10



Fire Stations: 7



Libraries: 9



Machinery Yard: 1



Museum: 1



Parks: 1



Playgrounds: 30



Road Depots: 13



Leisure Centre: 1



Social Housing: 2,890



STAFF
Circa 650



BRIDGES >1.8M WIDE
(Managed by Kilkenny County Council)
500



ROADS
(Managed by Kilkenny County Council)
3,400 KMS

Figure 3.2: Profile of Kilkenny County Council

3 Profile of Kilkenny County Council



3.3 Positive Climate Action by Kilkenny County Council

Kilkenny County Council has been preparing and planning for climate change for a number of years, putting in place governance structures and undertaking projects to reduce energy and emissions. The results of this are demonstrated by an improvement of 37.5% in the Council's energy efficiency between 2009 and 2022. The emissions produced by the Council in 2022 have improved by 17% compared with the baseline of 2016-2018.

Below is a summary of some of the initiatives which Kilkenny County Council has undertaken over the last number of years and which provide a strong base for the climate work that is required over the coming decades:

South East Energy Agency

Kilkenny and Carlow County Council, in partnership with the Leader Companies in Carlow and Kilkenny, established the Carlow Kilkenny Energy Agency in 2002 to provide sustainable energy information and services to the community, businesses, and Local Authorities. Since then it has expanded to include Wexford and Waterford, now representing the entire South-east region as South East Energy Agency (SEEA). The SEEA provides advice and support to the Local Authorities in accordance with Service Level Agreements.

Energy and Emissions reporting to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland

Kilkenny County Council has been reporting on its energy and emissions to the SEAI every year since 2012 via the Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) System.

EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy

Kilkenny County Council became a signatory to the EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in 2015. The Covenant of Mayors is a voluntary initiative supported by the European Commission bringing together thousands of Local Governments to commit to implementing EU climate and energy objectives.

Kilkenny County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024

The "Kilkenny County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024" was prepared by Kilkenny County Council and adopted in 2019. It includes a range of actions to adapt to the impacts of climate change across five themes, i.e. Energy and Buildings, Flood Resilience, Transport, Resource Management, and Nature-Based Solutions and Communities.

Climate Alliance

Kilkenny County Council joined the Climate Alliance in 2020, a European initiative which aims to achieve ambitious municipal action in Europe whilst supporting stewardship of the rainforests by the indigenous peoples in the Amazon River Basin.

ISO50001 (Energy Management Standard) Certification

Kilkenny County Council attained ISO50001 (Energy Management Standard) Certification in 2020. ISO 50001 standard is an Energy Management Standard for energy use and consumption and provides a systematic approach for organisations to achieve continuous improvement in terms of energy performance, energy efficiency, energy use and consumption. In order to retain the certification Kilkenny County Council is required to have annual Surveillance Audits, as well as a Certification Audit every 3 years.

Climate Action Office

A new dedicated Climate Action Office was established within the Environment Directorate of Kilkenny County Council in 2022. The role of the Climate Action Office is to co-ordinate and mainstream climate action across all services of Kilkenny County Council and to monitor and report on the implementation of the actions in the Climate Action Plan. The Office currently comprises of four staff – Climate Action Co-ordinator, Climate Action Officer, Community Climate Action Officer, Clerical Officer – with plans for further staff in the coming years.

Climate Action Steering Committee

A new cross-department Climate Action Steering Committee was established in 2023. The Steering Committee is chaired by a Director of Services, and comprises heads of service, key personnel and a representative of the South East Energy Agency. The role of the Committee is to provide leadership within Kilkenny County Council to help deliver on their climate targets, and to support the preparation and implementation of the Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan by undertaking appropriate measures within their service areas.

Local Authority Climate Action Training

Kilkenny County Council staff and Elected Representatives have committed to and participated in the Local Authority Climate Action Training provided by the Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG), in partnership with the Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO). The aim of the training is to assist with the preparation of Local Authority Climate Action Plans. 398 attendees have participated in 11 Climate Action Training courses since 2021, across all service areas, including both outdoor crews and indoor staff. 66% of Elected Representatives also took part in the training programme. In addition, the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) ran specific climate action training for Elected Representatives.

3 Profile of Kilkenny County Council



Flood Relief Programme

Kilkenny County Council has, in partnership with the Office of Public Works (OPW), developed a programme of flood relief works to adapt to the increased impacts of flooding in the County. To date, flood relief works have been completed in Kilkenny City (2006), and funding has been approved by the OPW for six other Flood Relief Schemes in Graiguenamanagh, Ballyhale, Freshford, Thomastown, Inistioge and Piltown.

Brewhouse Redevelopment

Kilkenny County Council, in partnership with the National Treasury Management Agency, developed The Brewhouse, on the site of the former Diageo Offices, into a new state of the art office with LEED Gold Certificate for Sustainability. This is a green building certification that recognises best-in-class building practices across the globe.



The Brewhouse, Abbey Quarter, has achieved LEED Gold rating, the highest rating of green building design



80 Bolt electric bikes are available for public use in Kilkenny City

Active Travel Unit

An Active Travel Unit was established in the Kilkenny Municipal District in 2021 to address sustainable travel and transport including active travel, public transport, traffic management, parking, and mobility. A key objective is to prepare and implement a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for Kilkenny City. The Unit has delivered a number of measures including the following:

E-Bikes: In August 2022, Kilkenny City became host to Bolt E-Bikes, facilitated by Kilkenny County Council's Active Travel Department. The bikes are made from 100% recycled aluminium and currently there are 80 available throughout the city. 3,714 people have used the bikes in their first year alone racking up over 33,000 individual journeys and an overall distance of 68,140 km. Compared to driving, this has added up to a carbon saving of approximately 10,000kg, which is equivalent to heating 2 homes for a year.

Cycling and Pedestrian Infrastructure: Examples of the many cycling and pedestrian infrastructure initiatives undertaken include: 140 bike parking stands and 4 bike repair stations installed across Kilkenny City; Safe-Routes-to-School infrastructure provided at Dunnamaggin National School and Johns Senior School; Bollards installed on Freshford Road/Granges Road and the Waterford Road/Bohernatounish Road to protect cycle lanes and encourage active travel to school; Enhanced pedestrian facilities and junction treatment on Dean St and St. Patrick Church in Kilkenny City; Shared pedestrian and cycle path installed in the Drakelands and Poccocke areas; New laneway to link Willow Close and Bennettsbridge Road; Pedestrian crossings installed/upgraded at multiple locations across Kilkenny City; Strategic cycle network in preparation; Feasibility Report completed on regenerating the laneway and street network to the west of the City Centre; One-way system introduced in Bridge Street, Callan with enhanced pedestrian facilities, One-way system introduced on Ormonde Street, Kilkenny City with additional space provided for wider segregated footpaths and improved public realm and public lighting.

3 Profile of Kilkenny County Council



SMC Net Zero Project for Small and Medium Cities

Kilkenny County Council joined this programme, an initiative of the Southern Regional Assembly, in 2023. The 18-month project offers solutions and services to support decarbonisation in small and medium cities.

Sustainable Energy Communities Programme

Kilkenny County Council supports the national Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC's) programme co-ordinated by the SEAI, delivered locally by the South East Energy Agency, by providing bridge-funding for SEC's in Kilkenny. This funding helps SEC's to prepare energy master plans and undertake energy efficiency measures in the community.

Local Authority Housing

Kilkenny County Council is implementing an energy efficiency retrofitting programme on existing Local Authority housing, in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. In addition, Kilkenny County Council is designing new Local Authority housing to be more energy efficient. An example is Pairc Nua, Castlecomer Road, a stunning one and two bed social housing development which was nominated in the regeneration category of the Irish Council for Social Housings Allianz Community Housing Awards. The houses were developed from a number of existing buildings including a disused former pub and guest-house, in addition to the construction of new units. The development has sustainability at its core by utilizing existing buildings, designing to Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) A rating, incorporating renewable energy solutions such as solar PV panels and planting greenery and trees.



Pairc Nua, Castlecomer Road, is a Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) A-rated housing scheme developed by Kilkenny County Council.

National Smarter Travel Programme

Kilkenny County Council joined the Smarter Travel Programme, a National Transport Authority voluntary initiative, in 2020, to support behaviour change in travel across the organisation.

Mobility Management Plans

Mobility Master Plans have been prepared for Callan, Freshford, Piltown, Fiddown, Castlecomer, Thomastown and Graigueenamanagh by the respective Municipal Districts of Kilkenny County. The Plans provide sustainable and active travel options, and traffic management solutions for the towns.

Community Monuments Fund

Since 2020 Kilkenny County Council, with finance from the Community Monuments Fund, has conserved key archaeological sites in the County, to safeguard them from the effects of climate change for the benefit of communities and the public.

The historic site of Grangefertagh Church and Round Tower which are currently being conserved and repaired by Kilkenny County Council under the Community Monuments Fund, in part to withstand the effects of climate change.



The historic site of Grangefertagh Church and Round Tower which are currently being conserved and repaired by Kilkenny County Council under the Community Monuments Fund, in part to withstand the effects of climate change.

3 Profile of Kilkenny County Council



County Hall

A programme of energy efficiency measures has been undertaken in County Hall, including lighting upgrades, window repairs, attic insulation and a new heating control system.

Libraries

A programme of energy efficiency measures has been undertaken in library buildings in the County. This includes installation of a new high efficiency oil boiler and controls, lighting upgrades and the replacement of the roof in Graiguenamanagh library. The libraries in Castlecomer, Urlingford and Loughboy have upgraded the heating systems and lights, and fitted more insulation. These works combined will save an estimated 11.5 tonnes of CO2 per year.



Artist's Impression of the new Mayfair Library in Kilkenny City opening in 2024.

Fire and Rescue Service

In 2016 and 2022 respectively Kilkenny City Fire Station and Graiguenamanagh Fire Station installed Solar PV Panels. Kilkenny City Fire Station also upgraded doors, lighting and windows. In total these works save an estimate of 8,600Kg of CO2 emissions per year between the two buildings.



Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service has undertaken a range of energy efficiency measures to reduce energy consumption and emissions.

The Watershed Leisure Centre

The Watershed Leisure Centre, owned by Kilkenny County Council and managed by a limited Company, Kilkenny Local Authorities Leisure Complex Limited, is no stranger to using sustainable methods to heat and power their facilities. The Watershed was nominated as a finalist in 2023 SEAI Energy Awards under the Small and Medium Business Category.

Two of the most recent retrofits included installing a new 500kW woodchip boiler and a 150kwp Solar PV system.

The woodchip boiler was installed as part of an Energy Services agreement. This means the Watershed had no capital costs but instead pays for the heat it uses at an agreed price as part of a 15-year agreement, with WoodCo who own and maintain the boiler. The Renewable heat is benchmarked against current gas prices and is guaranteed to be cheaper.

The woodchip is sourced locally and delivered every two weeks. Overall the Watershed requires 500 tonnes of wood chip per annum and this results in savings of up to 300 tonnes of CO2 per annum compared to gas which they had previously used. A Solar PV system was also installed at the Watershed in late 2022 and to date has produced over 103,000kwh.



The Watershed Leisure Centre, nominated as a finalist in 2023 SEAI Energy Awards.

3 Profile of Kilkenny County Council



Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP)

Kilkenny County Council is the lead authority in the Eastern Region for the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP). The PLEEP is a national project for the upgrading of Public Lighting infrastructure from incandescent light bulbs to energy efficient LED lanterns. To date Kilkenny County Council has upgraded over half of the 10,726 lights. The target energy reduction is 70% with even higher results projected through dimming lights outside of peak hours and trimming to refine where the light is focused.



The Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project will reduce energy use in public lighting by at least 70%.

Kilkenny City Bus

A new City Bus Service was established in 2019 under the Transport for Ireland Programme. There are 2 routes in the City. 254,403 passengers used the bus service in 2023.



Kilkenny City Bus carried over 250,000 passengers in 2023.

Machinery Yard

Kilkenny County Council's Machinery Yard, based in Hebron Industrial Park, is responsible for managing a large proportion of the County Council fleet. Solar PV Panels were installed in the yard in 2016, and lighting was upgraded between 2017 and 2021 with an estimated CO2 reduction of 4000Kgs per year. In addition, two new more efficient gas boilers have been installed. One of the boilers runs on bio-methane gas, a renewable source of energy produced in Portlaw County Waterford, and includes a gas decompression unit which allows the storage of gas under high pressure. This system cuts carbon output by 15 tonnes of CO2 per year. The Machinery Yard has also recently (October 2023) started to trial the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) in some of the Council fleet in order to reduce emissions.



Kilkenny County Council is trialling the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as an interim measure in a small number of it's fleet, in order to reduce carbon emissions.

3 Profile of Kilkenny County Council



Kilkenny Going Green

As part of Kilkenny County Council's commitment to climate action and taking the lead, the Council has developed a new 'Kilkenny Going Green' brand. This brand represents positive climate and sustainability action. It will be used as a visual aid in communicating both within the Council and externally with businesses and the general public on the climate and sustainability measures that Kilkenny County Council undertakes.



The design in the Going Green brand comprises of six icons which represent different aspects of climate and sustainability action:



Buildings: Energy efficient homes, public buildings and businesses produce less emissions and use less energy.



Tree: Trees absorb and store carbon dioxide, absorb rainfall, cool urban spaces and support biodiversity, thereby helping to shield us from extreme climate events.



Lightbulb: This bulb with a leaf filament symbolises renewable energy and the journey we will go on to reduce our energy consumption and move away from fossil fuels.



Bicycle: This bicycle represents active and sustainable travel. By travelling more sustainability not only are we improving human health both physically and mentally, we are also creating less noise and reducing air pollution.

Reducing our reliance on private vehicles will also result in fewer emissions being released into the environment and protects our green spaces and natural environment.



Bus: By replacing car journeys with public transport we can reduce traffic congestion and carbon dioxide emissions thereby improving air quality.



Person: Carbon dioxide produced by human activities is the largest contributor to global warming. Putting people at the center of climate action is key to mitigate the worst impacts of climate shocks and negative impacts of climate change. It also empowers people to drive the change toward a green transition.



4 Kilkenny
Going Green

Evidence-Based Climate Action



4.1

Using Evidence-Based Data in this Plan



This Climate Action Plan is informed by scientific evidence and data. Using an evidence-based approach to climate action has helped the Council to identify the specific risks and challenges facing the Local Authority due to climate change, to assess the greenhouse gases produced, and to identify the opportunities and mechanisms most appropriate to deliver effective climate action within the county.

The following reports were commissioned to build the evidence base for this Plan:

- Climate Change Risk Assessment
- County Baseline Emissions Inventory
- Baseline Emissions Inventory for Kilkenny City Decarbonisation Zone (see Section 6 for further details)



4.2 Climate Change Risk Assessment



A key part of the evidence base for climate action is an assessment of the predicted changes and risks posed from climate change. Kilkenny County Council commissioned a Climate Change Risk Assessment¹ to assess these risks. The assessment, a Tier-1 qualitative assessment, was prepared in accordance with the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines and undertaken by RPS Group. The report provides an appraisal of the current and future climate risks and impacts on the operations and delivery of services by the Council.

The assessment included a review of the extreme weather events in County Kilkenny over the past 30 years, and the identification of the main climate hazards such as rainfall, flooding, windstorms, drought, snowfall etc and their impacts on the delivery of Kilkenny County Council services. Using this information, and climate predictions from Met Eireann and other bodies, it assessed the future predicted climate risks and impacts to Kilkenny County Council.



Image courtesy Vicky Comerford

Storm Babet (Oct 2023) led to severe flooding in parts of County Kilkenny, including Thomastown as shown here

¹ Tier 1 Climate Risk Assessment for Kilkenny County Council (2023). RPS Group.

4.2 Climate Change Risk Assessment



Two workshops were delivered as part of the preparation of the Climate Change Risk Assessment report, and were attended by all service areas in the Council. This process not only informed the report, but also helped to raise awareness across the Council of the risks and consequences of climate change, to identify exposures and vulnerabilities, and to inform the actions identified in this Plan.

The Risk Assessment analysed the impacts and the frequency of a range of climate hazards on the current and future provision of Council services, grouped under seven broad categories (Health and Wellbeing, Environment, Social, Financial, Reputation and Cultural Heritage).

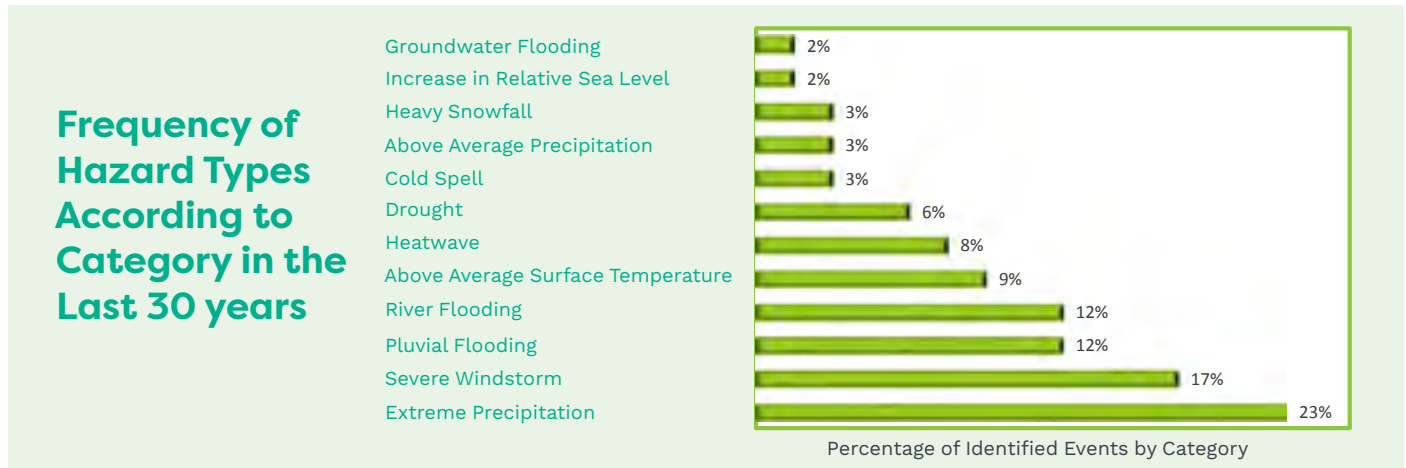


Figure 4.1: Frequency of Current Climate Hazard Types in County Kilkenny. Source: Kilkenny Climate Risk Assessment, RPS, 2023.

The Risk Assessment identified the following as the most significant future risks to the delivery of Kilkenny County Council services (based on predicted frequency and impact):

- River Flooding
- Extreme Precipitation
- Drought

Hazard Type		Projected Frequency	Projected Frequency (Score)	Asset Damage	Health and Wellbeing	Environment	Social	Financial	Reputation	Cultural Heritage	Projected Impact
Future Impacts	River Flood	Frequent	4	Major	Major	Moderate	Moderate	Major	Moderate	Major	3.57
	Drought	Frequent	4	Moderate	Major	Major	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Negligible	3.00
	Severe windstorm	Frequent	4	Moderate	Major	Major	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Moderate	2.71
	Pluvial flood	Frequent	4	Moderate	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Minor	Moderate	2.43
	Extreme precipitation	Very Frequent	5	Moderate	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Minor	Moderate	2.43
	Heatwave	Frequent	4	Minor	Moderate	Major	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Moderate	2.29
	Above average precipitation	Common	3	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Moderate	2.00
	Above average surface temperature	Frequent	4	Negligible	Negligible	Catastrophic	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Moderate	2.00
	Cold spell	Occasional	2	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Minor	1.71
	Heavy snowfall	Occasional	2	Minor	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Minor	1.71
	Increase in Relative Sea Level	Occasional	2	Negligible	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Minor	1.29
	Groundwater flood	Occasional	2	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	1.00

Figure 4.2: Future Projected Impacts of Climate Events on Kilkenny County Council. Services. Source: Tier 1 Climate Risk Assessment for Kilkenny County Council (2023)

Kilkenny County Council will use this information to prioritise the actions and measures it takes to adapt to climate change, e.g. develop a flood forecasting and monitoring system to improve forecasting and warning; continue to work in partnership with the OPW on providing river flood defences (see Section 3.3 for further information on flood relief projects already being undertaken by Kilkenny County Council); implement nature-based solutions/measures such as rain gardens and green roofs to hold and soak excess water; and undertake climate risk assessments of Local Authority owned heritage assets.

² Nolan, P. and Flanagan, J., 2020. High-resolution Climate Projections for Ireland - A Multi-model ensemble approach. Environmental Protection Agency, Wexford.

4.2 Climate Change Risk Assessment



Emerging Risk

The report also identified an emerging risk associated with changes in plant and animal life cycle events due to changes in climate. Phenology, or the timing of the annual cycles of plants and animals, is extremely sensitive to changes in climate. Climate change can disrupt the manner in which species interact and the way that ecosystems function overall, which in turn will impact on the county's biodiversity.

Projected changes in temperature are expected to result in a lengthening of the growing season with the start of the Spring season expected to occur between 15 and 24 days earlier.² This will have implications for the County Council in terms of managing grass cutting, parks and biodiversity, and for the wider county in terms of impacts on farming, horticulture and green infrastructure.

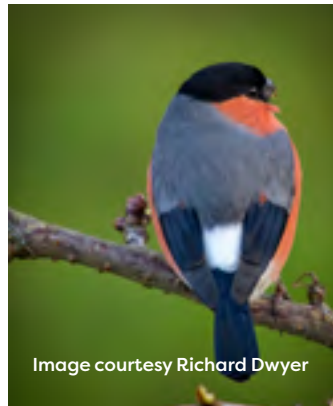


Image courtesy Richard Dwyer



Changes in animal and plant life cycles due to climate change may have a significant impact on biodiversity.

Recommendations

The report identified a number of recommendations including the following:

- Having completed this Tier 1 qualitative assessment, risk assessments for future climate action Plans should adopt a more quantitative approach.
- Adopt a systematic approach to recording all significant climate events in the county, their impacts on service delivery and disruption to the Council, along with the associated costs; and to report on same on an annual basis.
- Identify and collate additional relevant baseline datasets and implement monitoring programmes such as:
- **Pluvial Flooding (flooding due to extreme rainfall)**
Review current drainage maps for urban areas and identify areas for further assessments or updates
- **Groundwater Flood**
Identify and map vulnerable areas at risk of groundwater flooding and put in place monitoring measures.

The findings and recommendations of the Climate Risk Assessment have been used to inform and prioritise the actions in this Plan. (See Section 5 for details of actions to be delivered by this Plan).

The full Climate Change Risk Assessment Report can be accessed as a Supplementary report on either consult.kilkenny.ie or the Council website.



The Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service evacuating students from Inistioge Primary School during Storm Babet, October 2023.

4.3 Baseline Emissions Inventory



In order to understand the sources and volumes of greenhouse gas emissions produced within County Kilkenny, and those within Local Authority control and remit, the Council commissioned a Baseline Emissions Inventory³.

The inventory is a snapshot in time of emissions produced, a starting point against which future emissions reductions or mitigation actions can be measured and evaluated.

The Baseline Emissions Inventory was prepared in accordance with the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines. It was undertaken by the South East Energy Agency. The Baseline Emissions Inventory can be accessed as a Supplementary report on either consult kilkenny.ie or the Council website.

Although Kilkenny County Council is responsible only for those emissions resulting from its own direct activities, emissions from the other sectors in the county were also assessed in order to provide a useful overview and context. Emissions from a range of greenhouse gases were identified and analysed including Carbon Dioxide (CO₂), Methane (CH₄) and Nitrous Oxide (N₂O), and reported in kilo tonnes (kt) of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂eq)⁴. Energy consumption was also assessed.

The following are the sectors for which emissions and energy consumption were assessed:

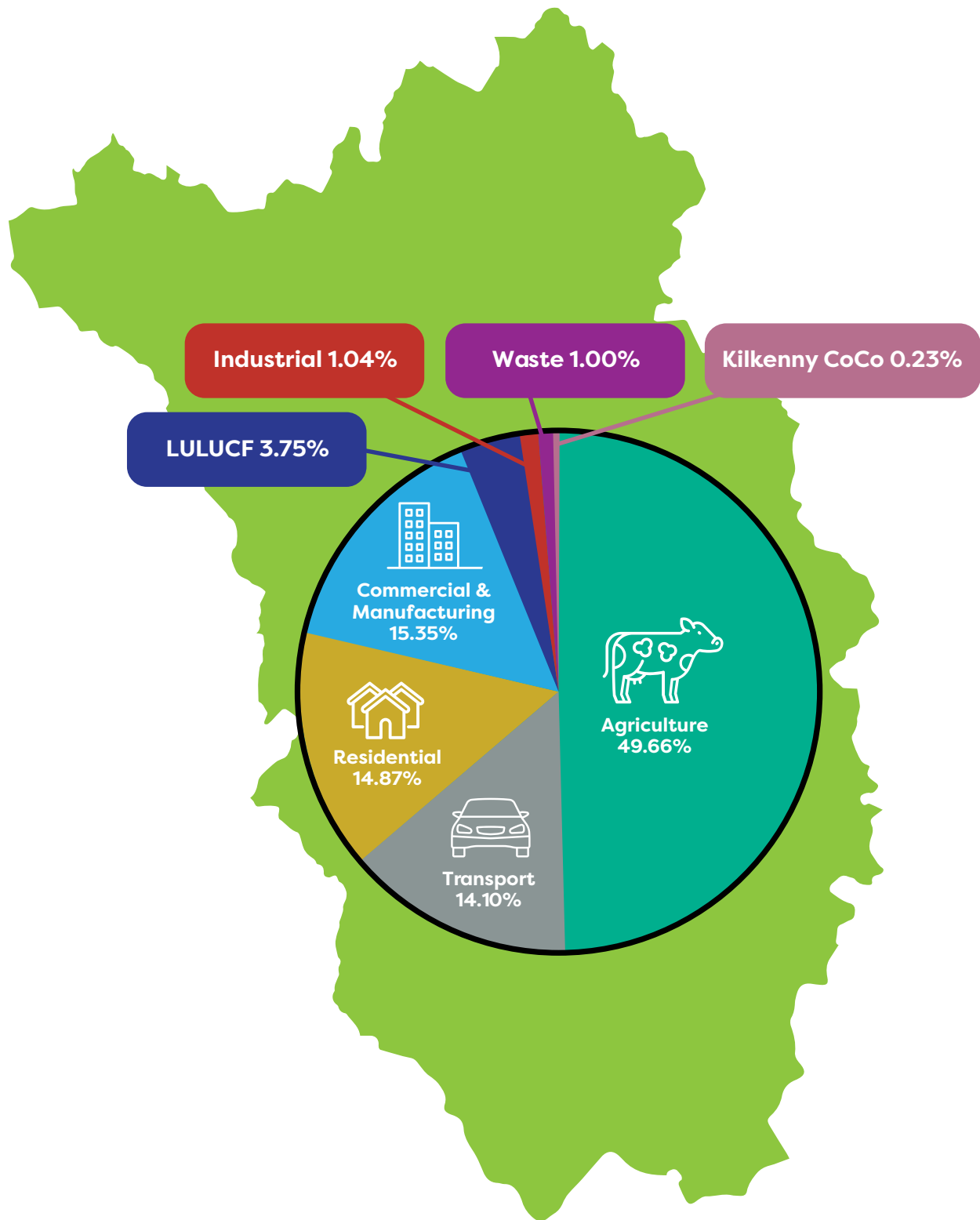
- Kilkenny County Council
- Residential
- Manufacturing and Commercial
- Industrial Processes
- Agriculture
- Transport
- Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)
- Waste
- F-Gases (Fluorinated gases)

The emissions inventory found that the total greenhouse gas emissions produced in County Kilkenny in 2018 were 1,945.45kt of CO₂eq. This is equivalent to 19.6 tonnes per person. Energy consumption in 2018 for County Kilkenny was 3,312.73 Gigawatt hours (GWh).

³ Tier 2 Baseline Emission Inventory. South East Energy Agency 2023

⁴ CO₂eq is a unit of measurement that is used to standardize the climate effects of different greenhouse gases.

4.3 Baseline Emissions Inventory



County Kilkenny Total Emissions 2018

Figure 4.3: Greenhouse gas emissions per sector in County Kilkenny 2018 (Source: Tier 2 Baseline Emission Inventory, South East Energy Agency 2023)

4.3 Baseline Emissions Inventory



Sectors producing emissions in County Kilkenny	Sources of Emissions												Total (ktCO ₂ eq)	% share of county emissions
	Electricity	Fossil Fuels							CH ₄	N ₂ O	CO ₂	SF ₆		
		Natural Gas	Heating Oil	Diesel	Petrol	LPG	Coal	Peat						
Kilkenny County Council	2.90	0.41	0.04	1.12	0.01	0.01	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.47	0.23
Residential	86.63	14.53	121.03	-	-	4.65	25.03	34.24	2.83	0.37	-	-	289.32	14.87
Manufacturing and Commercial	84.54	48.96	112.32	-	-	19.79	32.01	0.30	0.24	0.37	-	-	298.53	15.35
Industrial Processes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.04	12.29	6.99	20.32	1.04
Agriculture	49.88	-	0.08	-	-	-	-	-	660.13	256.04	-	-	966.15	49.66
Transport	0.45	1.14	-	213.93	47.99	-	-	-	0.89	9.91	-	-	274.31	14.10
LULUCF	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.55	5.65	60.66	-	72.86	3.75
Waste	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16.83	1.13	1.51	-	19.48	1.0
F-gases	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total Emissions (ktCO₂eq)	224.40	65.04	233.47	215.05	47.99	24.45	57.03	34.55	687.48	274.52	74.46	6.99	1,945.45	

Table 4.1: Summary of the emissions produced per sector in County Kilkenny, including a breakdown of the source of the emissions. (Source: Tier 2 Baseline Emission Inventory. South East Energy Agency 2023)

4.3 Baseline Emissions Inventory



Kilkenny County Council Emissions and Energy Use

Local Authority emissions and energy use are calculated for three key areas, as follows:

- Buildings and Facilities
- Fleet
- Public Lighting

These are the three areas that Local Authorities are required to report on annually to the SEAI under the “Monitoring and Reporting” (M&R) system (see Section 7 for further details). Other emissions generated from service provision such as Local Authority social housing and staff travel are not currently (Oct 2023) required to be reported on via M&R.

Therefore, the total emissions and total energy use for Kilkenny County Council are calculated by combining the data for the three reportable areas. Table 4.2 below, shows the total emissions and energy use for Kilkenny County Council as reported in the Baseline Emission Inventory:



The Watershed Leisure Centre was shortlisted by the SEAI for an energy award in 2023 in recognition of the initiatives undertaken to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

Kilkenny County Council Emissions and Energy Use					
Total Emissions in Co. Kilkenny (ktCO ₂ eq)	Kilkenny County Council Emissions (ktCO ₂ eq)	Council emissions as % of Total County Emissions	Total Energy Use in Co. Kilkenny (GWh)	Kilkenny County Council Energy Use (GWh)	Council energy use as % of Total energy use in Co. Kilkenny
1,945.45	4.47	0.23%	3,312.73	15.45	0.46 %

Table 4.2: Total Emissions and Energy use by Kilkenny County Council, 2018

4.3 Baseline Emissions Inventory



The Baseline Emissions Inventory provides a further breakdown of the emissions produced and energy used for each of the three areas (public lighting, buildings and facilities, and fleet). Figure 4.3 shows the greenhouse gas emissions produced by each of these areas. Public lighting produces the highest emissions at 1.83 ktCO₂eq, or 41%, followed by Buildings and Facilities (1.51 ktCO₂eq) or 34 %, and Fleet (Transport) at 1.12 ktCO₂eq, or 25%.

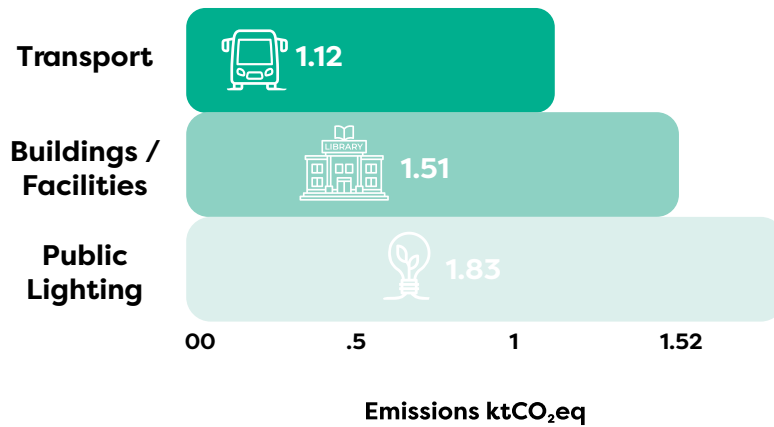


Figure 4.4: Emissions by sector in Kilkeny County Council (2018). (Source: Tier 2 Baseline Emission Inventory. South East Energy Agency 2023)

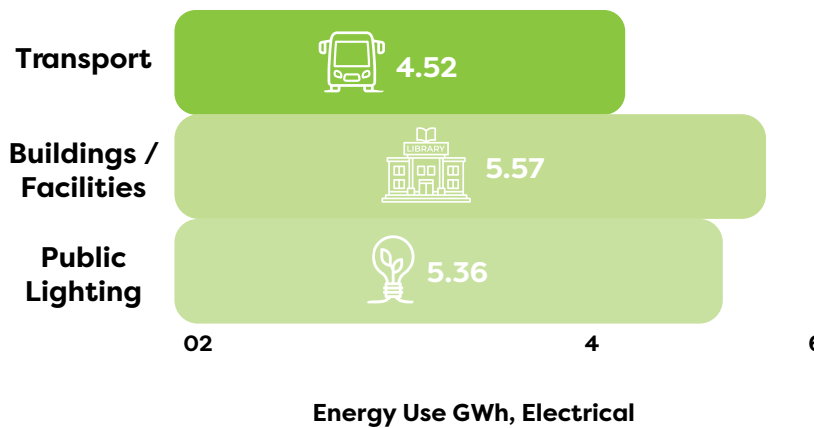


Figure 4.5: Energy Use by sector in Kilkeny County Council (2016-2018).(Source: Tier 2 Baseline Emission Inventory. South East Energy Agency 2023)

Figure 4.4 shows energy use for public lighting, buildings and facilities, and fleet (note: this is an average of the use over the period 2016-2018). Buildings & Facilities were the highest energy consumer at 5.57 GWh or (36.05%). Public Lighting accounted for 5.36 GWh (34.69%) and Transport accounted for 4.52 GWh (29.26%).

Kilkenny County Council is required to meet the following targets for these three areas:

- i. 50% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030
- ii. 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030

This data on the amount of emissions and energy use of each of the areas (public lighting, fleet, buildings and facilities) is very useful to Kilkenny County Council. It, coupled with information on the quantity and nature of these assets, has helped to inform and prioritise actions in the Plan. See Section 3.2 for further information on the numbers of buildings and facilities, public lights and fleet owned and managed by Kilkenny County Council.

4.4 Emissions Targets



National Emissions Targets

The Government has identified an overall national emissions reduction target of 51% by 2030, and the longer-term goal of reaching **net zero** emissions by 2050 (NCAP 2023). In addition, the Government have agreed sectoral emissions targets for key sectors including electricity, transport, residential, commercial, agriculture, waste etc. See Table 4.3 below.

Sector	Reduction in Emissions by 2030 (relative to 2018 baseline)
Electricity	-75%
Transport	-50%
Built Environment – Residential	-40%
Built Environment – Commercial	-45%
Industry	-35%
Agriculture	-25%
LULUCF ⁵	tbc ⁶
Other (F-gases, Waste & Petroleum)	-50%
Legally binding 2030 emissions reductions targets ⁷	51%

Table 4.3: National Sectoral Emission Targets, agreed by Government on 28th July 2022. (Source: National Climate Action Plan 2023).

Kilkenny County Council's Emission Reduction Targets

The public sector, including Local Authorities, emissions reduction target is 51% by 2030. This is an absolute reduction in the tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions produced by 2030.⁸ The total tonnage target will be a 51% reduction of direct energy-related emissions (thermal and transport consumption), plus projected supply side reductions in indirect energy-related emissions from electricity.

Emission Targets for other sectors in County Kilkenny

Each sector is responsible for meeting their own sectoral greenhouse gas emissions targets, as outlined in the National Climate Action Plan. Notwithstanding this, the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines (DECC, 2023) identify that Local Authorities play a significant leadership role in driving the climate agenda

in their administrative areas. The guidelines task Local Authorities to “maximise their regulatory and strategic functions to influence and support the reduction of emissions across all sectors of society at a local level.” Therefore, whilst Kilkenny County Council has full accountability and obligations to reduce only its own greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, it will also endeavor, by working in partnership with business, communities and organisations, to influence, co-ordinate, facilitate and advocate for all other sectors in the county to reduce their emissions and meet their respective targets.

“**The public sector, including Local Authorities, emissions reduction target is 51% by 2030.**”

⁵ Land Use Land Use Change and Forestry.

⁶ Finalising the sectoral emissions ceiling for the LULUCF sector has been deferred for up to 18 months from July 2022 to allow for the completion of the Land-use Review

⁷ As provided by section 6A (5) of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021

4.4 Emissions Targets



A note on the Baseline Years

A baseline year is the year chosen as a starting point against which future emissions and energy use are measured. There are a number of baseline years used and referred to in the Plan, as follows:

National Emissions Baseline: 2018 is the national baseline year for emissions targets, as set out in the National Climate Action Plan 2021.

Local Authority Energy Baseline: 2009 is the baseline year against which Local Authority energy efficiency targets are set, and this is the baseline that is used in the Baseline Emissions Inventory.

Local Authority Emissions Baseline: An average of 2016-2018 is the baseline against which Local Authority emissions targets are set, as set out in the National Climate Action Plan, and this is the baseline that is used for Local Authority emissions in the County Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI). However, all other emissions in the BEI use the national 2018 baseline.



Reducing greenhouse gas emissions will help improve air quality. A healthier environment, as supported by the Healthy Ireland/Healthy Kilkenny Programme, is one of the many co-benefits of climate action.

⁸ Emission reduction targets are based on an absolute tonnage of greenhouse gas emissions. The total tonnage by 2030 will be a 51% reduction of direct energy-related emissions (e.g. from thermal and transport consumption), plus projected supply-side reductions in the indirect energy-related emissions from electricity.

5  **Kilkenny**
Going Green

Framework of Climate Actions

Image courtesy Richard Dwyer



5. Framework of Climate Actions



5.1 Context

Kilkenny County Council has a comprehensive leadership role to advocate for, influence and support climate action within the County. Its services, operations, policies and programmes have a direct impact on all those living and working in Kilkenny.

Through this Plan Kilkenny County Council will adopt a strategic approach to building internal capacity, enhancing public awareness and facilitating climate action and climate change readiness across the County.

The success of the Plan is dependent upon effectively:

- Communicating our vision
- Enabling productive collaboration with all internal and external stakeholders
- Influencing others to deliver positive climate actions
- Delivering and reporting on actions in the Plan

Vision

The vision for Kilkenny County Council's Climate Action Plan is that the Council will be

“A climate resilient organisation that inspires and supports the County’s transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, sustainable and carbon neutral economy by 2050.”

This vision upholds the national vision for climate action in Ireland, known as the National Climate Objective, to pursue “the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich and climate neutral economy by no later than the end of the year 2050 and to thereby promote climate justice, and just transition”. (Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

5.2 The Framework, Vision and Mission

The framework in this Plan creates coherence between the high-level vision, mission, strategic themes, objectives and actions delivered on the ground. It includes tracking measures and timeframes. The framework was developed in accordance with the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines (DECC 2023).



Figure 5.1: Framework of Climate Actions

Mission

The mission of this Climate Action Plan is

“To deliver Kilkenny County Council’s statutory emissions and energy targets, embed climate action in all Council governance and operations, and thereby inspire and facilitate climate action in the County.”



5.3 Climate Action Plan Strategic Goals



The Strategic Goals in this Plan were informed by the issues that emerged during the preparation of the Plan, including data on Kilkenny’s climate risks and emissions, energy use, stakeholder engagement and ongoing Local Authority climate action efforts.

Strategic Goal 1: Governance and Leadership

Objective 1.1: To embed climate action focussed governance in Kilkenny County Council, and through leadership, collaboration, advocacy and communication to support and inspire climate action in the County.

Objective 1.2: To plan for, and protect our assets and infrastructure from, severe weather events.

Strategic Goal 2: Built Environment and Transport

Objective 2.1: To achieve Kilkenny County Council’s emissions reduction target of 51%, and energy efficiency target of 50% in our buildings, fleet and public lighting by 2030.

Objective 2.2: To provide for and facilitate a shift to active and sustainable travel.

Objective 2.3: To improve energy efficiency and sustainable building practices in Local Authority housing and road infrastructure, and facilitate the same in the County through policy and supports.

Strategic Goal 3: Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure

Objective 3.1: To protect and manage the natural environment to support biodiversity, water catchments, carbon storage and urban cooling; and to promote nature-based solutions in development.

Strategic Goal 4: Communities: Resilience and Transition

Objective 4.1: Support and empower communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change and facilitate local climate action through education and awareness initiatives, well-being, cultural and creative programmes, and grants.

Strategic Goal 5: Sustainability & Resource Management

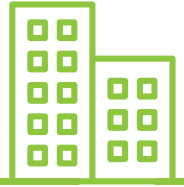
Objective 5.1: To support local business to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to reduce energy use and emissions and to adopt sustainable practises through grants, support, training and shared learning.

Objective 5.2: To adopt a sustainability approach to Kilkenny County Council’s operations and service delivery.



Cycling the New Ross to Glenmore section of the South East Greenway, July 2023

5.4 Developing Actions



The actions in this Plan were informed by the deliberations of a comprehensive engagement programme.

The programme was coordinated by the Climate Action Office and included workshops and meetings with members of the Climate Action Steering Committee, relevant staff from every service area in the Local Authority, and the Elected Representatives. Input was also provided by the Strategic Policy Committee 4 (Environmental Protection, Climate and Energy), and the pre-draft public consultation phase of the Plan. See Section 1 for further details.

A total of 95 actions were identified in this Plan (plus an additional four actions specific to the Kilkenny City DZ). The actions can be grouped into four broad categories, as follows:

- i. Mitigation measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- ii. Adaptation measures to prepare for climate change, support resilience and maximise co-benefits such as enhanced biodiversity, health improvements, green job creation and economic benefits.
- iii. Sustainability measures to support sustainable use of materials and the circular economy.
- iv. Leadership measures to inspire, advocate for and support climate action in the County.

The actions are aligned with the goals of the Local Government roadmap for climate action, “Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030”.

Each action has a Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator to allow for transparent monitoring and reporting, and identifies the lead department in Kilkenny County Council responsible for delivering the action. See Section 5.5 below for the full list of actions. The actions for the Kilkenny City Decarbonisation Zone are presented in Section 6.

Section 7 of this Plan details how the actions will be implemented, monitored and reported on.



Mobility Management works at Bridge Street, Callan

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 1: Governance and Leadership

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
1.1	Establish and resource a Climate Action Steering Committee comprising senior staff across all services, and a dedicated and resourced Climate Action Office in Kilkenny County Council	Ensure strong corporate governance on climate action within Kilkenny County Council	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of Climate Action Steering Committee meetings per year * Staff complement in Climate Action Office in accordance with CCMA and CARO guidance, including appointment of Energy Officer and Green Solutions Officer * Annual budget to support work programme of Climate Action Office 	Management Team Human Resources	DECC, DHLGH, CARO, CCMA	Reviewed annually	SDG13 SDG16 SDG17
1.2	Provide climate action training , capacity building and knowledge sharing to Council staff and Elected Representatives	Support climate knowledge across Kilkenny County Council	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of training and capacity building events * Number of staff trained * Climate Action included in staff Induction Training * Attendance by Elected Representatives 	Corporate (Human Resources)	Climate Action, CARO, LASNTG, CCMA, LGMA, AILG	Annual	SDG13 SDG16 SDG17
1.3	Develop and implement a Kilkenny County Council Green Public Procurement (GPP) Strategy	Roadmap for delivery of green public procurement in Kilkenny County Council	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * GPP Strategy developed and adopted * No. staff trained in GPP * GPP Assessment of LA contracts awarded * Value/No. of GPP contracts awarded 	Finance (Procurement)	Management team, All Service Areas, OGP, CARO, LGMA, Suppliers	2024, and annually thereafter	SDG12 SDG13 SDG16
1.4	Climate proof Kilkenny County Council internal Financial Systems	Ensure that climate action is addressed in Council's financial planning and systems	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Costing system developed to record financial costs to Kilkenny County Council of significant climatic events * Align financial reporting with climate action strategic priorities to assess financial cost benefit analysis of climate action initiatives 	Finance	All Service Areas, LGMA	2024, and annually thereafter	SDG12 SDG13 SDG16
1.5	Internal audit monitoring of the management, reporting and delivery of statutory targets related to climate change /climate action within all relevant Service Areas in the Council	To support effective and efficient governance, risk management and control processes relating to climate change	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Internal audit report complete * Liaise with Southern Region Internal Audit Group and Local Government Internal Audit Network to ensure a consistent approach across the sector. 	Corporate (Internal Audit Unit)	All Service Areas	Q4 2024, and annually thereafter	SDG12 SDG13 SDG16
1.6	Monitor, Report and Communicate on delivery of Kilkenny County Council climate actions and targets	Transparency and communication on meeting the Council's targets and actions	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reporting and monitoring platform identified and adopted * All mandated annual monitoring & reporting completed * Communications Strategy developed and adopted * Annual Implementation Plan produced * Number of internal reports to Council, SPC's, MD's, Chief Executive * Number of social media posts/press releases/videos/radio to community and business networks 	Climate Action Corporate (Communications) Active Travel	IT, All Service Areas, Local media; SEAI; NOAC; LGMA; CARO; EU Covenant of Mayors	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG16 SDG17

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 1: Governance and Leadership

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
1.7	Climate proof Kilkenny County Council grants programmes	Ensure that climate action and sustainability are addressed in funding and grant programmes	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develop climate proofing and sustainability checklist * Disseminate checklist and guidance * No. of programmes climate-proofed * Update Council Grants Booklet to address climate action 	Climate Action Community Town Regeneration Parks	All Service Areas	Checklist developed by Q1 2024, Ongoing	SDG12 SDG13 SDG16
1.8	Collaborate with national, regional and local stakeholders and partners on climate action delivery	To maximise effective climate action delivery by working in partnership	Both	*Number of meetings and collaborative initiatives with public and private sector stakeholders, including neighbouring local authorities	Climate Action	CARO, Govt Depts, public bodies, local authorities, Southern Regional Assembly, local stakeholders	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG16 SDG17
1.9	Deliver Flood Relief Schemes under the Catchment and Flood Risk Assessment Management (CFRAM) Programme, and Minor Flood Mitigation Works , incorporating nature based solutions, where possible, whilst having appropriate regard to environmental protection requirements associated with flood resilience development.	To respond to climate risk by providing strategic flood protection	Adaptation	Flood Relief Schemes (FRS) delivered, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *5 stages of Graiguenamanagh & Ballyhale FRS advanced *Pilot FRS at Piltown & Freshford delivered *OPW approval to commence Thomastown & Inistoirge FRS *Number of Minor Flood Mitigation Works applications per year * Nature based solutions incorporated into FRS's where appropriate 	Flood Relief Capital Office	OPW Municipal District Offices Carlow County Council	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG15
1.10	Develop and implement an enhanced Flood Forecasting and Monitoring System	Improve flood forecasting and warning, and collate data on flood events, including disruptions, mitigations and cost	Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Flood Forecasting: Utilisation of Map Alerter to provide advance warnings of floods to effected communities; * Response time * Flood Monitoring: Multi criteria tool developed to collect data on and assess damage from floods (2025) * No. of flood events recorded per year * Annual summary report of climate events and impacts produced 	IT Flood Relief Capital Finance	Corporate (Communications) Met Eireann	2024, and yearly thereafter	SDG13 SDG15
1.11	Annual review of Kilkenny County Council's Emergency Response Protocol for severe weather events, and Kilkenny County Councils Risk Register	Enhanced preparedness for climate hazards	Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Annual Review of Emergency Response Protocol *Annual Review of Risk Register 	Corporate (Emergency Response Team)	Municipal District Offices	Annual	SDG13 SDG15

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 1: Governance and Leadership

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
1.12	Review and update food baseline data to inform Flood Relief Project Design	Support planning and preparedness for climate hazards	Adaptation	Flooding (i) Pluvial Flood - Review current Drainage Maps for urban areas and identify areas for update/further assessments (ii) Fluvial Flood – Review CFRAM maps and identify areas for update/further assessments ; (iii) Groundwater Flood - Identify and map vulnerable areas at risk to Groundwater Flood and put in place monitoring measures	Roads Planning	Planning, Roads, Flood Capital Office, OPW, DECC, Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG15
1.13	Review the Council's Health & Safety Policies and Procedures to take account of the impact of climate change on the welfare of staff	Minimise Health and Safety risks to staff from climate change	Adaptation	* Review policy & procedures for office temperature & air quality * Number of reported incidents re office temp/air quality * Review policy & procedures for adverse weather * Document reportable near misses/incidents/injury caused by adverse weather events; * Monitor risks & document issues regarding non-native biological species * Provide training and awareness on Eco/Climate anxiety in Health and Wellbeing programme	Health & Safety	Roads, Fire Service, Civil Defence, Facilities, All Service Areas	2024 and yearly thereafter	SDG3 SDG13
1.14	Peer review planning policies regarding climate action	Ensure that planning policies support best practice in Climate Action	Both	* Peer review undertaken	Planning	Planning /Environmental Peers Southern Regional Assembly	2024	SDG13 SDG11
1.15	Incorporate climate and sustainability best practise in Kilkenny County Council developments	Demonstrate leadership in climate climate and sustainability best practise	Both	* Develop best practise checklist * Number of projects subject to best practise	Planning	Housing, Roads, Environment, DHLGH	2014-2027	SDG13
1.16	Review the Kilkenny County Council Development Contribution Scheme to assess the feasibility of incentivising low carbon development	Encourage low carbon development	Mitigation	* Review the scheme in line with statutory timeframes	Planning	Finance	2025	SDG12 SDG13

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 1: Governance and Leadership

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
1.17	Develop and promote a Kilkenny Civil Defence Climate and Sustainability Policy	Policy to reduce emissions, energy and resources	Both	* Policy re office, fleet and operations adopted *Communication about the policy and initiatives undertaken	Civil Defence	Department of Defence; Civil Defence Volunteers	Q4 2024, and annually thereafter	SDG13
1.18	Implement and promote a Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service Climate and Sustainability Programme	Programme to reduce emissions, energy and use of resources , and to communicate with the public on same	Both	* Implement an Environmental Management System e.g. ISO140001 *Number of initiatives to reduce emissions and waste, improve energy efficiency and sustainability, and support biodiversity in buildings, fleet and operations	Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service	SEEA, Coach builders; Parks, Biodiversity	2024-2029	SDG13
1.19	Respond to new priorities and programmes that emerge over the lifetime of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan, having due regard to environmental sensitivities, biodiversity, European sites, human receptors, and the need to promote sustainable practices.	Be prepared to address new national and local climate priorities	Both	*New programmes delivered	Climate	All Service Areas, CARO, DECC, DHLGH	2024-2029	SDG13

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 2: Built and Transport								
No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
2.1	Participate in the national Smarter Travel Mark Programme and Smarter Travel Mark in Kilkenny County Council	Reduce emissions from staff travel to and from work	Mitigation	* Certification level achieved by Council; * Number of businesses who adopt the programme	Active Travel	National Transport Authority, Climate Action	2024 and yearly	SDG9 SDG11 SDG13
2.2	Review Local Authority business travel model and working arrangements to move towards the Avoid-Shift-Improve model, reduce emissions, energy use and reduce office space	Reduce energy and emissions from local authority business travel and office use	Mitigation	(1) Business Travel Model * Review complete * Apply national Travel and Subsistence Rates when available (2) Hybrid/Blended working & Hot-desking * Review office / facilities space and occupation * % of staff availing of hybrid working * Hot-desking trial completed by Finance (Q2 2024)	Finance Corporate Human Resources IT Facility Management	All Service Areas, LGMA, DHLGH	2024-2029	SDG9 SDG11 SDG13
2.3	Develop and implement a Regional EV Infrastructure Strategy in collaboration with neighbouring local authorities. Advocate and exert influence and control, as appropriate, to ensure such development promotes climate action co-benefits and does not contravene relevant environmental protection criteria or cause significant negative environmental effects.	Deliver EV charging infrastructure in the region	Mitigation	* Infrastructure Strategy prepared in accordance with national policy, and adopted * Annual Implementation Plan developed * Increase in the number of charging points	Roads	Planning, ZEVI; Dept Transport; Tipperary, Carlow, Wexford & Waterford County Council's	2024	SDG7 SDG9 SDG11 SDG13
2.4	Develop a Fleet Decarbonisation Strategy for Kilkenny County Council Fleet. Ensure the strategy aligns with sustainability principles.	Reduce emission in Kilkenny County Council fleet	Mitigation	* Strategy developed and adopted to address the following: (i) Audit of vehicle stock (ii) Eco-Driver Training for fleet staff (% Fleet staff trained) (iii) Replacing fossil fuels with renewable/bio fuels (% of fleet using alternative fuels e.g. HVO) (iv) Replacing diesel vehicles with EV's (% of fleet which are EV's) (v) Install PV's (vi) Fuel procurement and payment systems (vii) Route selection % reduction in GHG emissions * Annual Implementation Plan	Roads (Fleet Manager, Machinery Yard)	Climate Action, Finance, Human Resources, Service Areas with fleet; Dept Transport, ZEVI, CARO	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG9 SDG11 SDG13

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 2: Built and Transport								
No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
2.5	Adopt and implement the Kilkenny City Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan and Mobility Management Plans for other towns in the county	Ensure that Kilkenny City and other towns will be accessible with sustainable mobility options for everyone	Both	* Adopt and implement the Kilkenny City Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) to address the following: (i) Integration of land-use and transport planning; (ii) A shift to sustainable modes of travel which improve quality of life; (iii) Collaboration with stakeholders; (iv) Provide transport solutions for all; (v) Support urban life and biodiversity in the city. * Prepare and/or implement new and existing Mobility Management Plans for towns such as Callan, Thomastown, Graiguenamanagh, Freshford, Piltown and Ferrybank.	Roads, Active Travel, Municipal Districts	Climate Planning	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG9 SDG11 SDG13
2.6	Integrate transport and land-use planning to facilitate a reduction in transport demand	Reduce transport demand and provide more sustainable transport options	Mitigation	* kms of sustainable transport infrastructure incorporated into new developments * Reduction in journey times, as recorded in CSO	Roads, Active Travel, Municipal Districts Planning	Public and Private Transport Providers	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG9 SDG11 SDG13
2.7	Reallocate urban space towards the sustainable movement of people, and placemaking having due regard to opportunities to promote nature-based solutions and environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, and cultural heritage. Prioritise roads and streets currently or likely to be used by public bus services. Work towards ensuring network options are developed between active travel options and public transport routes.	Reduce emissions, air and noise pollution, and incorporate nature into the design of public spaces	Both	* Nature-based Solutions Plan developed *Metres of space reallocated to sustainable uses *No. of placemaking schemes installed	Roads, Active Travel, Municipal Districts Planning	Community, Stakeholders	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG9 SDG11 SDG13
2.8	Encourage independent journeys for all	Make routes safer for vulnerable users	Both	* Number of Walkability Audits conducted *Number of recommendations implemented	Roads, Active Travel	Kilkenny Access Group, Disability Organisations, Older People's Council	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13
2.9	Enhance permeability to support active travel having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as traffic and transport constraints and aspects, the receiving water environment, local air quality, biodiversity, and European sites.	Enhance connectivity of walking and cycling routes, thereby enhancing access to services	Both	* Number of permeability schemes delivered	Roads, Active Travel	NTA, Community	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 2: Built and Transport

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
2.10	Work with the NTA to enhance public transport options and connectivity to the surrounding area and regions	Improved public transport and connections to the region	Mitigation	*Provision of additional bus stops and bus shelters in the city and county	Roads, Active Travel	NTA, DTTAS, private bus operators	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13
2.11	Integrate transport modes and enable a shift to sustainable modes through the effective management of parking demand and development of park and ride/stride and multi-modal hubs. Ensure such development promotes climate action co-benefits, including SuDS and nature-based solutions, and does not contravene relevant environmental protection criteria or cause significant negative environmental effects.	Encourage a shift to sustainable modes by increasing the attractiveness, convenience and efficiency of sustainable modes	Mitigation	* Number of multi-modal hubs /park and ride /strides	Roads,	Planning, Shared Services Providers, Public and Private Transport Providers	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13
2.12	Develop a cycle network for Kilkenny City and larger urban areas. Ensure the cycle network is planned in a manner that has due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, local air quality, biodiversity, European sites and cultural heritage.	Encourage cycling by putting in place safe cycling infrastructure	Both	* Number of cycle projects delivered	Roads, Active Travel	NTA, Community	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13
2.13	Implement the " Safe Routes to School Programme ", having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as traffic and transport constraints and aspects, the receiving water environment, local air quality, biodiversity, and European sites.	Encourage walking and cycling to school, reduce emissions, air and noise pollution	Mitigation	* Number of schools with Safe Routes to Schools Programme delivered	Roads, Active Travel	NTA, An Taisce, Schools, Parents, Board of Managements	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13
2.14	Communicate, raise awareness and encourage participation in sustainable and active travel	Encourage more people to use sustainable and active travel	Mitigation	* Number of campaigns delivered *Number of workplaces involved in the Smarter Travel Programme/Mark	Corporate, Roads, Active Travel, Climate Action, Healthy Kilkenny, LEO, Tourism	Schools, Workplaces, Retail and Services Centres, Destinations, Amenities, Sports Clubs	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13
2.15	Explore feasibility of new Park and Ride locations on Regional and National Roads linked to Motorways & public transport	Encourage and facilitate car pooling and connection to public transport, and reduce Emissions	Mitigation	* Feasibility study complete	Roads (Roads Design), Municipal Areas	DTTAS,TII, NTA	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 2: Built and Transport								
No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
2.16	Explore the feasibility of using new low carbon technologies for road reconstruction on regional roads; and for reducing waste through re-use of materials	Reduce emissions and waste from road construction and maintenance	Mitigation	* Undertake feasibility assessment of new technologies, methods and materials, for road reconstruction and sealing; * Undertake audit of waste produced in road construction and maintenance, and potential for use of Materials	Roads, Environment	KKCC, DTTAS, NTA,TII, IAT, EPA, Waste Facilities, Suppliers.	2024 - 2029	SDG9 SDG11 SDG13
2.17	Identify and implement actions to improve drainage on the Regional and local road network, and identify infrastructure at risk from climate events, having due regard to the need to promote nature based solutions and Sustainable Drainage Systems, and environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity and European sites.	Reduce risk of flooding / impact of climate change across road network	Adaptation	* Undertake a survey of bridges and infrastructure at risk from climate events * Identify a suite of feasible actions including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, gulley management programmes etc * Actions identified and implemented	Roads, Municipal Areas	DTTAS,TII	2024 - 2029	SDG9 SDG11 SDG13 SDG14 SDG15
2.18	Develop a policy to reduce energy use in public lighting at pedestrian crossings	Reduce energy and emissions	Mitigation	* Policy developed and adopted (including measures such as installation of PV panels and smart light fittings) * % energy reduction	Roads PLEEP	NTA, TII, DTTAS,	2024 - 2029	SDG11 SDG13
Built Environment								
2.19	Manage and maintain Kilkenny County Council's ISO50001 energy management system certification	Ensure continual improvement in energy efficiency, energy use and consumption	Mitigation	* Annual surveillance audit achieved; *Three yearly recertification audit achieved	Climate and Facilities (KKCC)	SEEA; NSAI	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG13 SDG16
2.20	Develop a Buildings/Facility Management Strategy for Kilkenny County Council buildings and facilities, having due regard to the need to appropriately protect biodiversity, and natural and built heritage.	Coordinated approach to management of Council buildings to reduce emissions and energy use	Both	* Inventory of all buildings and facilities complete * Buildings/Facility Management Strategy complete	Corporate, Facilities Management,	All Service Areas who manage buildings and facilities	2025	SDG7 SDG13 SDG16
2.21	Implement an all-of-Council monitoring programme to track and report on energy use and emissions in all Kilkenny County Council assets	Track and report on energy and emissions	Mitigation	* Review and update data on Council assets on Energy Elephant (virtual energy monitoring platform) * Provide training on Energy Elephant to all Service Areas responsible for managing assets * Disseminate 6 monthly reports on energy and emissions data * Install smart meters to monitor specific buildings as required	Climate Action	All Services areas	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG13 SDG16

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 2: Built and Transport

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
2.22	Continue to deliver the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP) , whilst continuing to use best available technology to suitably minimise potential environmental effects of lighting.	Retrofit public streetlights to LED lights to reduce energy and emissions	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Change streetlights to LED * Measure billable wattage for public lighting using the UMR on an annual basis * Optimise the “dim & trim” profiles of the approximately 50% of the LED Lanterns which are outside of the scope of the PLEEP Eastern Region project 	Roads	PLEEP Works Contractor, PL Maintenance Contractor, UMR; TII, Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Louth, Meath, Offaly, Tipperary, Westmeath and Wicklow County Councils	Change all lights to led Q4 2025.	SDG7 SDG13 SDG16
2.23	Participate in the establishment and support of local authority Regional South East Energy Unit	Assist with resource capability and capital funding support to identify, progress and deliver agreed public sector energy efficiency and carbon reduction projects in the Region	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Funding received annually 	Energy Performance Officer Climate Action	Carlow, Tipperary, Waterford & Wexford County Council's, CARO, SEAI, SEEA	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG13 SDG16
2.24	Identify and implement a pipeline of projects for local authority assets to assist in achieving emissions and energy reduction targets	Prepare a prioritised list of projects to reduce energy and emissions	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Register of Opportunities prepared and updated annually * Amount of funding received annually *% Reduction in baseline emissions and energy use 	Corporate (Facilities Management) Climate	CARO SEEA SEAI All Service Areas with responsibility for assets	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG13 SDG16
2.25	Undertake a programme of energy reduction, retrofitting, and onsite renewable measures on Local Authority buildings, facilities and social housing, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures.	Reduce energy and emissions	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Undertake energy audits, and record energy & emissions data of Council buildings and facilities; * GIS mapping of all building assets * Review building occupancy rate to floor area 	Energy Officer, Corporate, Roads, Housing	SEEA, SEAI (Gap to Target tool), Energy Elephant	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG13 SDG16
2.26	Investigate the feasibility of local authority led/supported alternative heating systems and fuels including District Heating, Geothermal and Bioenergy.	Assess the feasibility of alternative new heating systems	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Feasibility Study complete 	Planning Climate	SEEA SEAI DECC	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG9 SDG11 SDG13
2.27	To develop a policy on Disaster Risk Management and undertake a Climate Risk Assessment of local authority owned heritage assets	Identify and protect heritage assets which are at risk from climate change	Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Pilot baseline inventory of assets complete (2025) * Pilot Climate Risk Assessments of assets complete (2027) * Number of Disaster Management Plans in place (2028) 	Heritage Architectural Conservation Biodiversity	NMS (DHLGH), Architectural Conservation Office, Heritage Council	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 2: Built and Transport

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
2.28	Prioritise, facilitate and raise awareness about the value of retaining embodied carbon in developments	Communicate the value of embodied carbon	Mitigation	* Case study/examplar developed (Q4 2024)	Planning, Architectural Conservation, Housing, Town Regeneration Depts (KCC)	DHLGH; Heritage Council	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG16
2.29	Ensure best practise in energy efficiency retrofitting of traditional/heritage buildings having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures.	Make heritage buildings more energy efficient whilst protecting their character and features	Both	* Number of queries and/or meetings * Number of retrofits completed	Planning (Architectural Conservation & Building Control)	DHLGH Heritage Council	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13
2.30	Deliver sustainable and compact development , having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity.	Build within existing towns and settlements which have existing transport, local services and jobs	Both	* % of development achieved through compact growth	Planning	Housing	Annual	SDG11 SDG13
2.31	Develop a planning policy which supports the re-use of existing buildings , having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures	Reduce waste and retain embodied carbon in existing buildings	Mitigation	* Policy adopted	Planning	Vacant Homes Officer, Town Regeneration Officer	2024	SDG11 SDG13
2.32	Continue to add to the Vacant Sites Register and Derelict Sites Register , having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures.	Reduce vacancy and dereliction in order to maximise the use of land and existing properties	Both	* Number of sites and properties re-developed/used * % reduction in vacancy and dereliction rates	Planning Housing	Vacant Homes Officer DHLGH	2024 and annually thereafter	SDG11 SDG13
2.33	Achieve Home Performance Index (HPI) Gold Standard on all new Kilkenny County Council social housing , 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 in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations.	Achieve a high standard of design, construction and environmental sustainability in social housing	Mitigation	* Staff trained in HPI Standards (HPI assessment, life cycle costing, carbon analysis) * Pilot HPI project undertaken (2024) * Deliver a Modular Housing Scheme (2025) * % increase in use of brownfield / town centre sites, and reuse of existing buildings	Housing (Capital)	-	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13

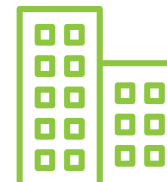
5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 2: Built and Transport

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
2.34	Deliver " Right-sizing Programme " for tenants of local authority housing	Reduce energy use by optimising the use of social housing	Mitigation	* "Right-sizing Programme" developed	Housing (Applications & Allocations, Capital)	Age Friendly Ireland	2024-2029	SDG10 SDG13
2.35	Deliver a retrofit programme for Kilkenny County Council Social Housing , having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures.	Reduce energy use and improve energy efficiency	Mitigation	*Number of homes retrofitted to at least BER B2 rating	Housing (Capital and Operations)	DHLGH	2024-2029	SDG10 SDG13
2.36	Undertake a programme of energy reduction, retrofitting and onsite renewable measures on Local Authority buildings and facilities, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures.	Reduce energy use and improve energy efficiency	Both	* Number of buildings retrofitted *% reduction in energy use * % reduction in emissions	Corporate (Facilities Management)	SEAI, SEEA, DHLGH	2024-2029	SDG7 SDG13

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 3: Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/ Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
3.1	Prepare a Tree Strategy and Policy for Kilkenny City to provide a long term vision for the management of public trees whilst taking measures to promote the use of native species over non-natives and having due regard for water quality and soil stability issues whilst undertaking the planning process.	Increase tree canopy to support urban cooling & carbon storage	Both	*Strategy and policy prepared and adopted	Parks	Biodiversity, Kilkenny City Municipal District	2024	SDG13 SDG15
3.2	Promote and facilitate tree, woodland and hedgerow protection, planting and management on public and private land whilst taking measures to promote the use of native species over non-natives and having due regard for water quality and soil stability issues whilst undertaking the planning process.	Support urban cooling, carbon storage, improved air quality, flood relief and biodiversity enhancement	Both	* Examine Council land bank for suitable sites *Undertake a county hedgerow survey * Review Planning Policy * No. of trees provided to communities and households during National Tree Week * Review how existing hedgerows are maintained in development proposals, and strengthen guidance/policy as required * Number of initiatives to raise awareness about the value of hedgerows	Parks Planning Biodiversity Environment	Coillte National Tree Council Teagasc	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG15
3.3	Develop an Invasive Species Register and Treatment Strategy for Council land. This programme shall be developed by a competent ecology team, and shall have due regard to the need to appropriately manage and prevent the spread of invasive species.	Respond to increased spread of invasive species due to changing climate	Adaptation	* Register adopted * Strategy adopted	Parks Municipal District Offices	National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC)	2026	SDG13 SDG14 SDG15
3.4	Deliver a Pollinator Programme to protect and enhance pollinator habitats on Council owned land and in the wider county, whilst taking measures to promote the use of native plant species over non natives, as appropriate.	Support biodiversity	Adaptation	* Potential pollinator corridors/species rich areas identified and mapped (2024) * Pollinator grass cutting strategy adopted and communicated to staff and contractors (2025) *Community pollinator awareness programme developed and delivered (2023-2027) * Number of participating schools and communities * Number of awareness events held	Parks Biodiversity	NBDC, Municipal District Offices, Environment Green Schools Kilkenny Biodiversity Forum, Contractors	2024-2028	SDG13 SDG15
3.5	Identify and utilise environmentally friendly alternatives to herbicide use on Council land.	Reduce the use of herbicides	Both	* Annual financial contribution to the research project on alternatives to herbicides in local authority public space led by Kildare County Council * Disseminate guidance produced by the project to staff and contractors, and implement guidance (2025-onwards)	Parks Biodiversity	Kildare County Council, Municipal Districts	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG14 SDG15

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 3: Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/ Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
3.6	Identify, map and utilise local authority owned land for habitat enhancement/restoration and nature based solutions, whilst taking measures to promote the use of native plant/animal species over non-natives, as appropriate.	Enhance biodiversity	Both	* Audit complete * Number of sites identified * Measures implemented e.g. trees planted, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) used	Parks Biodiversity IT	NPWS; Coillte, National Biodiversity Data Centre	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG14 SDG15
3.7	Implement Nature-based Solutions and biodiversity enhancement in new Kilkenny County Council developments	Enhance biodiversity, and improve air quality, shading/cooling and reduce run-off from floods	Both	* Guidance developed * Biodiversity policy for new and existing Kilkenny County Council housing estates developed * Number of Nature-based solutions, including Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SUDS), and biodiversity enhancement measures implemented	Planning Housing Parks/Special Projects Municipal Districts Town Regeneration Officer	Funding Authorities, LAWPRO, NBDC, Heritage Council	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG14 SDG15
3.8	Implement Nature-based Solutions and biodiversity enhancement through the planning process	Enhance biodiversity, and improve air quality, shading/cooling and reduce run-off from floods	Both	* Guidance developed * Number of planning approvals requiring a Nature-based solution as part of the design	Planning Biodiversity Environment	LAWPRO	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG14 SDG15
3.9	Provide biodiversity information and awareness on Council land, including at Dunmore Countryside Park	Increase awareness about local biodiversity	Both	* no. of measures/resources in place	Parks	Biodiversity NBDC	2024	SDG13 SDG14 SDG15
3.10	Assess feasibility of identifying waterbodies that are both particularly vulnerable to extreme climate events, and at risk of not meeting the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive.	Identify water bodies at risk	Adaptation	* Feasibility assessment complete	Planning, Environment	An Forum Uisce/ DHLGH/EPA/ Climate Action/ LAWPRO/ Uisce Eireann/GSI	2025	SDG13 SDG14 SDG15
3.11	Assess the need for guidance/ planning policy regarding the impact of new development proposed for areas determined to have a water supply and quality constraint (i.e., from climate related drought, extreme rainfall events).	Protect water bodies at risk	Adaptation	* Assessment complete	Planning, Environment	An Forum Uisce/ DHLGH/EPA/ Climate Action/ LAWPRO/ Uisce Eireann/GSI	2025	SDG13 SDG14

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 4: Communities: Resilience and Transition								
No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
4.1	Deliver the Community Climate Action Fund . Ensure projects supported by this action are delivered in a manner that has due regard to: * All relevant environmental sensitivities (e.g., heritage, biodiversity, European site related sensitivities), and; * Opportunities to promote climate action co-benefits, where possible (e.g., through the use of nature-based solutions or sustainable drainage systems).	Provide funding and support to communities to take local climate action	Both	*Number and value of projects funded * Number of communities supported	Climate Action	DECC PPN Communities Environment (EAO)	2024-2025	SDG10 SDG11 SDG12 SDG17
4.2	Support communities to deliver local climate and sustainability actions, through grant schemes and programmes such as Sustainable Energy Communities, Tidy Towns, GAA Green Clubs, Green Schools and Heritage in Schools, Heritage Week, Heritage Grants, National Biodiversity Week, Creative Ireland and Cruinnui na nOg	Support community climate action	Both	* Number of participating communities/schools/ clubs * No. of initiatives delivered * No. of Energy Master Plans produced by SEC's and bridge-funded by the Council; * Number and value of heritage grants provided to support climate resilience and adaptation under the Community Monuments Fund, Built Heritage Investment Scheme and Structures at Risk Scheme etc.	Environment Community Heritage Biodiversity Arts Creative Ireland Climate Action	Environment (EAO) SEEA, SEAI, GAA, Heritage Council, DECC, Kilkenny Education Centre, PPN, Creative Ireland, Kilkenny Volunteer Centre, Ukrainian Crisis Unit	2024-2028	SDG10 SDG11 SDG12 SDG17
4.3	Work with communities to identify, map and record local cultural heritage sites / areas/ traditions/ practises where loss due to climate change is likely/inevitable	Support communities to record cultural heritage which is at risk due to climate change	Adaptation	* At-risk cultural heritage database created (2024); * Oral history and documentary recording (e.g. Turf Cutting Oral History Project) completed, curated and disseminated (2025, and annually thereafter)	Heritage	Heritage Council, National Monuments Service, GIS, Creative Ireland; Oral History Network of Ireland; Governing bodies/affiliate groups e.g. Turf Cutters Association	2024- 2028	SDG11 SDG13 SDG17
4.4	Support climate awareness and resilience through the Healthy Ireland Programme and other relevant health programmes.	Support climate resilience and active travel through physical and mental health and well being projects	Both	* Climate awareness actions incorporated in programme (2024-2025); * Implement cycling skills programme in disadvantaged communities (2023-2024) * Implement physical activity programmes for older adults in Public Urban Green Spaces (2024) * Number of participants * App developed * Number of participants in programmes	Healthy Ireland	Implementing partners, Community, Active Travel, Parks, HSE UcanACT Project Team	2024-2025	SDG3 SDG11 SDG13 SDG17

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 4: Communities: Resilience and Transition

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
4.5	Provide a sustainable home energy information and awareness programme for local authority tenants	Address fuel poverty and support local authority tenants to adapt to new energy efficiency measures in their homes	Both	* Programme and policy for sustainable operation of local authority homes adopted and delivered to tenants, including tenant satisfaction surveys / feedback where appropriate	Housing (Capital / Operations / Tenancy Management)	Community Environment (EAO)	2024 and ongoing	SDG10 SDG11 SDG12 SDG17
4.6	Design and deliver an arts programmes which supports young people, communities and artists to creatively and positively respond to climate change	Support climate literacy and action for artists, young people and communities	Both	* Consultation with artists completed * Programmes for artists, communities, and young people designed & delivered * Quantitative & qualitative data collated	Arts	Haumea Ecoversity, Ossory Youth, Local charity shops, Arts Council, Creative Ireland	2024 and ongoing	SDG13 SDG17
4.7	Engage with communities on climate change risks through Fire Safety Talks and Primary Schools Fire Awareness Programme	Raise awareness about climate change risks	Adaptation	* Number of participants/% of county population	Fire Service	Primary Schools, Community Groups	Q4 2025	SDG13 SDG17
4.8	Deliver an educational and awareness programme, through the Library Service , on climate action, sustainability, biodiversity and the circular economy, by providing workshops, information clinics, citizen science kits, home energy kits, books, digital resources, educational programmes, and events for festivals/themes (e.g. Science Week, Sustainable Development Goals Week etc)	Address climate literacy for all, and support the community to take action on climate, sustainability, biodiversity and the circular economy	Both	Track the following via the Library Management System: * Number of workshops /seminars /events * Number of participants * Borrow rate of home energy kits and citizen science kits	Library Service	Environment (EAO) Heritage Council, Science Foundation Ireland, Calmast STEM Engagement Centre, local communities and environmental organisations	2024 and ongoing	SDG4 SDG13
4.9	Empower communities, through the Library Service, to reduce consumption and waste by facilitating the borrowing of books, tools and other items; hosting repair and up/recycling workshops; and providing makerspace technology (3D printers and sewing machines) to reuse and repurpose goods.	Provide the community with the tools, knowledge and inspiration to reduce consumption, and reuse and repurpose goods and materials	Both	Track the following via the Library Management System: * Number of events * Number of participants / groups	Library Service	Communities	2024-2029	SDG 4 SDG12 SDG13
4.10	Continue to collaborate with the South East Energy Agency to provide an online home energy information portal/programme	Provide an online one-stop-shop source of information on home energy advice and grants	Mitigation	* Home energy portal available * Track engagement on portal	Library Service, South East Energy Agency	Carlow, Waterford and Wexford Library Services	2024	SDG12 SDG16
4.11	Support and collaborate with the education sector to provide information, training and educational programmes on local climate action, and to undertake research	Facilitate greater awareness and local action in the community	Both	* No. of meetings * No. of initiatives	Environment Biodiversity Heritage Climate	KCETB CKCC KEC Schools SETU	2024-2029	SDG4 SDG13 SDG17

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 4: Communities: Resilience and Transition

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
4.12	Support climate action on farms through local authority policy and programmes	Support farmers and growers to deliver on climate targets and build climate resilience	Combined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Review of planning policies and supports * Develop checklist for farm infrastructure planning applications to support energy and resource efficiency * Meetings with representative bodies * Farm visits undertaken * Promotion of locally produced and / or organic foods 	Planning Environment LEO	Teagasc (Signpost Programme) Kildalton College IFA ICMSA Bord Bia DAFM Climate	2024 and ongoing	SDG13 SDG14 SDG15 SDG17
4.13	Provide information and advice to communities, businesses and other stakeholders to support local climate action, via Council networks	Provide advice and information	Combined	* Number of communications /social media posts etc	Climate Corporate (Communications) Libraries Environment Climate PPN	DECC National Dialogue on Climate Action	2024-2029	SDG13 SDG16 SDG17

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 5: Sustainability and Resource Management

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
5.1	Develop and integrate a new Sustainable Start-Up Business Module to the LEO Flagship 'Start Your Own Business' programme	Support sustainability in business	Both	* Roll out the new module commencing Spring 2024 to all SYOB training courses delivered by LEO Kilkenny - approx. 8 per year.	LEO, Economic Development	CKLP	Q2 2024 and ongoing thereafter	SDG9 SDG13
5.2	Develop and deliver a series of Business Showcase/Conference events, and positive Case Studies regarding decarbonisation/climate initiatives.	Enhance awareness of green matters, showcase best practice, encourage shared learning, and promote grants and supports to take action	Mitigation	* One event delivered per year * Three Case studies showcasing businesses of varying sizes completed * Number of queries * Number of conversations	LEO, Economic Development, Tourism	SEEA Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce	2024-2029	SDG9 SDG13
5.3	Provide climate and energy efficiency advice, training/mentoring and grants to the business sector	Support local businesses to go green (i.e. adapt to climate change, reduce energy and emissions)	Both	* Number of participating businesses * Number SME's supported through grant schemes	LEO Economic Development	Enterprise Ireland, Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce	2024-2029	SDG9 SDG13
5.4	Investigate the feasibility and cost of implementing a climate action focussed financial incentive scheme for the business sector , such as a rates reduction scheme	Encourage local businesses to take energy reduction and sustainability related actions	Both	* Carry out feasibility study	Finance	LEO	2025	SDG9 SDG13
5.5	Support local businesses and social enterprises to optimise opportunities in the green tech and circular/green economy	Support local businesses to adapt to climate change	Both	* Number of businesses supported	LEO, Economic Development, Tourism	Enterprise Ireland, Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce	2024-2029	SDG9 SDG13
5.6	Kilkenny Tourism CLG ' Green team ' will develop sustainability awareness and training initiatives in collaboration with Failte Ireland, and green procurement criteria	Kilkenny Tourism to develop sustainability awareness and training for it's members, and encourage business partners to engage in sustainable business practises	Both	* Kilkenny Tourism Green Team established * Sustainability agenda agreed and actions identified * Green procurement criteria identified	Tourism	Kilkenny Tourism CLG, Failte Ireland Sustainability Team	2024	SDG9 SDG13

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 5: Sustainability and Resource Management								
No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
5.7	Prepare a Sustainable Event Management policy and implementation guidelines for Kilkenny County Council led events, festivals and programmes	Ensure Council events are run sustainably	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Policy and Implementation Guide developed and adopted * Develop a "bank" of shared physical promotional resources for use across the organisation 	Corporate	All Service Areas	2024	SDG9 SDG12 SDG13
5.8	Develop a Digital Strategy for County Kilkenny which optimises and promotes digital solutions	Reduce dependencies on physical resources and inputs, and kms travelled	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develop a digital strategy for the period 2024-2028 * Undertake a pilot baseline audit of the Council's digital footprint to inform data management policy 	LEO, Economic Development, Tourism, IT, Climate	All Service Areas	Strategy developed by Q2 2024	SDG9 SDG12 SDG13
5.9	Continue to transfer public services to online systems	Improve efficiencies, resource use, and kms travelled	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Online portal for Purchase to Pay (P2P) cycle for suppliers developed and trialled (2025) * Move to electronic correspondence with rate payers, tenants and suppliers (2024) * Annual report 	Corporate Finance IT	LMGA ICT Committee, debt Collection, All Service Areas	2024-2025	SDG9 SDG12 SDG13
5.10	Undertake a programme of transferring relevant internal operations to online systems whilst driving down capacity requirements for data storage	Improve efficiencies, resource use, and kms travelled	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Analysis carried out * % of statutory meetings held online * % of training events held online * Review use e-signatures, CORE approval * % Reduction in paper purchased & printing costs * Undertake pilot projects in Corporate Services, HR to move to electronic filing of documents 	Corporate, Elected Representatives, HR, IT	LGMC ICT All Services Areas	2024-2029	SDG9 SDG12 SDG13

5.5 Climate Actions



Strategic Goal 5: Sustainability and Resource Management

No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
5.11	Monitor and report on air quality	Support improved air quality by collecting and publishing data, and highlighting the links to climate change and public health	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * No. of air quality monitors in place; * Baseline survey; * % of days/annum where air quality levels exceeded EU air quality regs * Publish results and communicate 	Environment Active Travel Climate	EPA	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13
5.12	Adopt the Green Teams National Programme within Kilkenny County Council	Develop Green Teams and environmental champions within each Department to address resource efficiency and promote sustainability in the workplace	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * No. of staff participants * No. of training programmes delivered * No. of measures implemented * Annual report 	Environment (EAO)	All Service Areas Waterford Institute of Technology EPA	2024, and annually thereafter	SDG13 SDG16
5.13	Provide, facilitate and promote public drinking water fountains in public spaces	Reduce the volume of plastic water bottles	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * No. of drinking water facilities provided 	Water Services Parks/Special Projects Municipal Area Offices	Uisce Eireann	2024-2029	SDG6 SDG12 SDG13
5.14	Undertake an audit of the waste produced by the Council's operations and services . Updated Council waste management policy with a view to promoting waste prevention, minimization and recycling.	Reduce waste produced by Kilkenny County Council and increase volume of waste which is repurposed and recycled	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Pilot audit of waste * Review of internal waste management policy & procedures * Explore opportunities for repurposing 	Environment Climate Action Facilities Municipal Districts	EPA, DECC, RWMO	2025, annually thereafter	SDG12 SDG13
5.15	Explore the potential to develop alternative sources of energy at the former landfill site at Dunmore . Consider planning and environmental constraints and requirements in relation to such a project at feasibility stage.	Explore options for generating energy at the former Dunmore landfill site	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Carry out feasibility study e.g. feasibility of using heat from the landfill gas flare as a source of energy, PV panels etc 	Environment (Dunmore Site)	SEEA, EPA, Flare Contractor GAA	Initial assessment Q4 2024	SDG12 SDG13
5.16	Explore the potential to repurpose, upcycle and/or to use waste collected at Civic Amenity Sites, and other appropriate locations, to generate new products and enterprises , having due regard to the need to comply with relevant provisions of the Waste Management Act	Find new uses for the waste collected at Dunmore former landfill	Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Carry out feasibility study e.g. feasibility of municipal food composter and other circular economy opportunities 	Environment (Dunmore Site) Climate	EPA RWMO CKLP LEO	2025	SDG12 SDG13



6 Kilkenny
Going Green

Kilkenny City Decarbonising Zone

Image courtesy Paul Lanigan



6.1 What is a Decarbonising Zone?



A Decarbonising Zone (DZ) is a test bed for trialling different decarbonisation and climate action measures at a local and community level. It is a demonstration area for collaboration and for innovative approaches to reducing emissions, preparing for climate change and enhancing biodiversity. DZ's will assist in the delivery of National Climate Objectives.

Local Authorities are required under the National Climate Action Plan 2019 (Action 165), to identify and develop plans for one (DZ) within their respective administration area. Working closely with communities, businesses, and public sector partners in the DZ, the Local Authority will encourage and support creative solutions to climate change, through various demonstrator projects and build on the results and utilise learnings to scale up actions and measures throughout the county.

These projects will address a broad range of themes including travel, energy, buildings, infrastructure, green skills, fuel poverty, health and well-being, the circular economy, land use and co-benefits of climate adaptation. They examine a range of local issues such as climate proofing, green and blue infrastructure, reducing heat island effects, citizen awareness, demographic changes and behavioural change.

Key characteristics of the DZ are the continuous learning and improvement over time, and collaboration with stakeholders.

The mandatory emissions and energy reductions targets for the DZ are the same as those for the wider county.

The actions proposed for the DZ are based on the emissions and climate characteristics of the DZ area.

6.2 Role of Kilkenny County Council



The role of Kilkenny County Council in relation to the DZ is similar to that for the Climate Action Plan. Kilkenny County Council is required to:

- i. Deliver its own emissions and energy reductions targets of 51% and 50% respectively
- ii. Identify a Register of Opportunities and actions
- iii. Support, advocate and influence stakeholders and the community within the DZ to deliver emission reductions and energy efficiencies

The purpose of the DZ is to deliver outcomes capable of meeting the national emission reduction targets of 51% by 2030 and net zero by the end of 2050. Kilkenny County Council is only responsible for delivering its own statutory emissions and energy reduction targets within the DZ, and to support other sectors to deliver theirs. Nonetheless, what differentiates the DZ from the wider Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan, is the ambition that Kilkenny County Council will aim to overachieve on its targets, and support other sectors to do the same.

6.3 How the DZ was Selected



Kilkenny City was chosen as the DZ for County Kilkenny. Building on its socioeconomic and environmental characteristics, Kilkenny City was identified as having a strong foundation of existing assets and services, with the potential to deliver a wide-range of decarbonisation opportunities, along with a strong network of stakeholders to collaborate with.

The selection of the Kilkenny City DZ was overseen by a sub-committee of the Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Steering Committee reporting to the Senior Management Team. In addition, the DZ was addressed in all meetings and workshops delivered as part of the preparation of the Draft Climate Action Plan.

The selection was undertaken in accordance with the criteria set out in the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines (Technical Annex D. Decarbonising Zones).

In accordance with the Guidelines two key criteria were used to select the DZ, as follows:

1. The Spatial Area of the DZ

The DZ had to fall into one of the following three spatial area categories:

- i. Urban areas or agglomerations with a population not less than 5,000 persons, or
- ii. Rural areas with an area of not less than 4km², or
- iii. Other location/areas that can demonstrate decarbonisation at a replicable scale.



The newly developed Abbey Quarter lies at the heart of the Kilkenny City DZ.

2. Potential Opportunities that the DZ presents

The DZ had to demonstrate a wide range of potential climate action opportunities under the following headings:

- Transport
- Buildings
- Green spaces and green infrastructure
- Complementary infrastructure
- Land and environmental value
- Air quality
- Waste Management
- Co-benefits from adaptation, mitigation and biodiversity measures
- Planning policy supports
- Community activation and readiness

A number of settlements and areas within the County were assessed against these criteria, and Kilkenny City was judged to have the most potential as a DZ. The particular socioeconomic and environmental characteristics of Kilkenny City which identified it as having the potential to deliver a wide-range of decarbonisation opportunities are outlined in Figure 6.1 below.

6.3 How the DZ was Selected



Potential Opportunities	Kilkenny City Opportunities and Existing Supports
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Kilkenny Municipal District Active Travel Unit in the DZ area -Programme of active and sustainable travel initiatives planned -Kilkenny City Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) in preparation; - Public Transport Infrastructure, i.e. City Bus Network(KK1 & KK2), Rail Station, Public & Private Bus Networks
Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Large number of Public Sector buildings including: Kilkenny County Council, Health Service Executive, Office of Public Works, Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board, Environmental Protection Agency, Patents Office, Dept of Agriculture, Teagasc, Design and Crafts Council, The Heritage Council, Schools, Revenue Commissioners -The Public Sector is required to show leadership and retrofit building stock, using funding programmes such as e.g. Pathfinder Programme - Large stock (c.1200) of Local Authority housing which is subject to retrofitting programme
Green Spaces / Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Extensive network of green infrastructure including: River Nore, Breaghagh River, Poccocke River, Newpark Marsh, Castle Park, Dunmore Countryside Park, Golf Club - 17% of DZ is zoned mixed green recreation - Report and maps of the green infrastructure and habitats in the DZ already place -Kilkenny City Tree Strategy and policy planned
Complementary Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fibre broadband in place - Growing network of EV charging infrastructure - Potential for District Heating and Anaerobic digester
Land & Environmental value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Natura 2000 network including River Nore Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area
Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -EPA air quality monitoring programme in place -Kilkenny City identified as exceeding World Health Organisation safe air recommendations
Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Dunmore Civic Amenity Site and former landfill located within the DZ -Opportunities to redirect/repurpose waste streams
Co-benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential for carbon sequestration, urban cooling and Nature-based solutions - Dunmore Biodiversity Park & Civic Amenity Site - Healthy Ireland initiatives
Planning & policy supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aligns with the area of the Kilkenny City Development Plan 2021-2027

Figure 6.1: Socioeconomic and environmental characteristics of Kilkenny City DZ.

6.4 Kilkenny City DZ Plan



Kilkenny County Council appointed KPMG to support the Council in the process of gathering the data on the energy use and emissions produced in the area, and preparing a Plan for the DZ.

This process involved four key stages:

1. Baseline Emissions Inventory of the DZ.
2. Best practice review from Local Authorities in Ireland and across Europe.
3. Consultation with key stakeholders including Local Authority staff, Elected Representatives from Kilkenny City Municipal District, Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce, Kilkenny Tourism, the Public Participation Network, County Kilkenny Leader Partnership and Kilkenny City Sustainable Energy Community.
4. Preparation of a DZ Plan.

Profile of Kilkenny City DZ

The Kilkenny City DZ is approx. 20km² in extent. It encompasses Kilkenny City and the Dunmore Countryside Park and Civic Amenity Site, 5km north of the City. See Figure 6.2. Dunmore Countryside Park was included in the DZ because it is in the ownership of Kilkenny County Council, and provides significant potential to trial decarbonisation measures.



Figure 6.2: Map of Kilkenny City Decarbonising Zone.

6.4 Kilkenny City DZ Plan



The population of Kilkenny City is 27,539 (based on 2016 CSO data). It is the 8th largest employment centre in the State with strong performance in agri-business, finance, public services and tourism/hospitality. Kilkenny is host to a sizeable portfolio of international financial services companies and has strong activity in the future growth sectors of Fintech, Regtech, Insurtech and the global payments sector. It has a strong creative industries sector along with a number of national creative and cultural agencies, and a programme of internally renowned festivals and cultural attractions.

The DZ is intersected by the River Nore and its tributaries. Land use within the City is zoned into residential areas (approx. 31%), mixed green recreation areas (approx. 17%), agricultural land (approx. 16%) and a further 35% comprising strategic reserve, commercial/ industrial/enterprise, community services/facilities, mixed-use, general development, industrial, enterprise and employment; office, business/ technology Park and related, and District, neighbourhood centre.

Dunmore Countryside Park is a 6.8ha site, currently being developed by Kilkenny County Council. It includes trails for walking, running, cycling and orienteering. In addition, the Park will allow for the enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity, and educational opportunities. The Kilkenny GAA training grounds are located adjacent to the Park. The River Nore is located adjacent to the Park. The Bleach Road will connect the park to the city. This route is included within the DZ boundary and will serve as a link between the Park and the city as it is more amenable to cycling and pedestrian traffic than the N77 to the east of the Park.

The DZ has a wide range of potential opportunities to decarbonise, or reduce its carbon footprint and reliance on fossil fuels.

These may include for instance:

- **Deliver sustainable tourism**
Building on Kilkenny’s reputation as a key destination for national and internal tourism
- **Public Sector to lead by example**
Harness the climate action objectives and targets of all public sector organisations
- **Deliver Active and Sustainable Travel**
Building on the work of the Kilkenny City Active travel Team, and the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), in preparation
- **Harness our green spaces**
Leverage and enhance the biodiversity assets and green spaces to store carbon, for urban cooling, and support health and well-being of residents and visitors
- **Enhance our Green Credentials**
Build on the strong sustainability credentials of businesses in the city
- **Promote Creative Solutions to climate action and Sustainable Conservation of our Cultural Heritage**
Explore innovative and sustainable solutions with the creative and cultural stakeholders in the City



1. Hospitality, tourism and heritage are key drivers of Kilkenny City's economy.

6.5 Summary of the DZ Baseline Emissions Inventory



The Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI) is an overview of the area's total greenhouse gas emissions, by sector, in the baseline year of 2018. The BEI was prepared in accordance with the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines (Annex D. Decarbonisation Zone). It is a Tier 3 BEI, i.e. it uses local-scale datasets to identify emissions.

Although Kilkenny County Council is only responsible for the emissions resulting from its own direct activities, emissions from the other sectors in the DZ were also assessed in order to provide a useful overview and context.

The following are the sectors for which emissions were assessed:

- Kilkenny County Council
- Public Sector
- Transport
- Residential
- Commercial & Industrial
- Agriculture
- Waste
- LULUCF

The inventory found that the total greenhouse gas emissions in the Kilkenny City DZ in 2018 were 169,878 tCO₂eq (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent). This translates to 6.17 tonnes per person based on 2016 census population data. In 2018, Ireland's national carbon emissions were approximately 12.6 tCO₂eq per capita. While the DZ's carbon emissions per capita is lower than the national equivalent, Ireland is higher than the EU average of 8.2 tCO₂eq per capita.

Kilkenny County Council produced 1% of the total emissions. Transport accounted for 36% of the emissions, followed by Commercial (24%) and

Residential (19%). The Public Sector and Agriculture accounted for 6% and 10% respectively.

In addition to quantifying the emissions from each sector, the data from the BEI helps to identify particular characteristics, challenges and opportunities within the DZ for climate action and reduction of emissions. They have been used to inform the Register of Opportunities and actions.

Vision and Objectives

The Vision for the Kilkenny City DZ is that Kilkenny will be

“A thriving, green and healthy city for all”

This vision is underpinned by six Objectives, as follows:

1. By 2030, Kilkenny County Council to reduce carbon emissions by at least the 51% National Climate Objective.
2. Empower and support residents, the community and business to make positive changes.
3. Maximise the wider benefits to society and the economy of climate and biodiversity actions.
4. Greater provision and use of active and sustainable travel.
5. Prioritise nature-based solutions and building reuse where practical.
6. Innovate, demonstrate and communicate effective climate action.

Register of Opportunities

The Register of Opportunities is a portfolio of projects, technologies and interventions including mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures, to deliver the targets set for energy and emission reductions across the DZ.

The Register of Opportunities comprises (i) a 'technical register', i.e. opportunities which are quantified in terms of emissions reduction (e.g. retrofitting of dwellings, electrification of vehicles); and (ii) 'enabling' opportunities (e.g. behavioural change, awareness, capacity building) which are more difficult to quantify, but which will support the delivery of 'technical' opportunities and will be key levers in meeting emission reduction targets.

The opportunities include those for which Kilkenny County Council has direct responsibility and those that Kilkenny County Council can influence and support.

Total carbon emissions in the DZ area

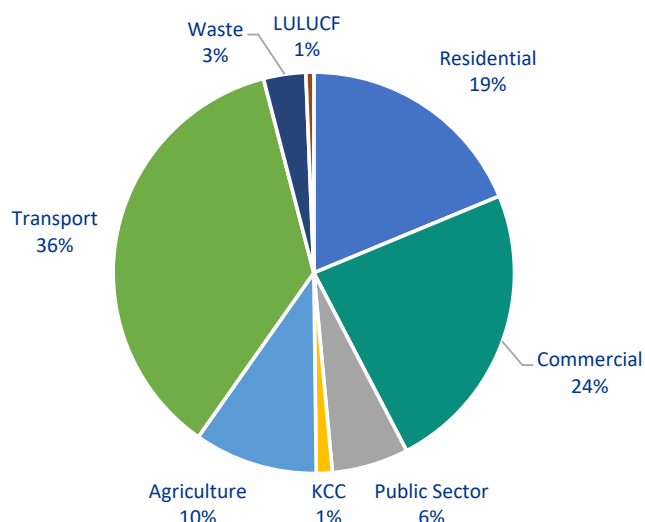


Figure 6.3: Total greenhouse gas emissions in the Kilkenny DZ area by sector. Source, KPMG.

6.5 Summary of the DZ Baseline Emissions Inventory



Sector	2018 BEI (tCO ₂ e)	Sectoral Reduction Targets 2030 (% of 2018 BEI)	Sectoral Reduction 2030 (tCO ₂ e)	Reduction Required to Achieve National Climate Objective 2030 (tCO ₂ e)	Sectoral Reduction 2030, can be met based on the following Opportunities
Residential	31,869	-40%	-12,748	-18,165	This reduction is based on improving BER of 60% of all private residential housing units to B2 and the installation of Solar PV on 60% of all properties. Energy efficiency improves in homes due to insulation.
Commercial	40,068	-45%	-18,031	-24,051	Improving energy efficiency of buildings, installing solar PV and swapping fossil fuels (gas and kerosene) for low carbon alternative fuels in the DZ
Public Sector	10,492	-51%	-5,351	-6,298	
Municipal	2,184	-51%	-1,114	-1,638	Electricity supply for all LA buildings in DZ is procured via renewables sources, fuel switching and energy efficiency measure reduce emissions
Transport	61,486	-50%	-30,743	-36,277	Active travel opportunities decrease the total km travelled by private car in the DZ by 20%. The electrification of 50% of private cars, LGVs and Public Transport are also operating on Low Carbon fuels / electric. HVO is used by 50% of freight in the DZ
Agriculture	16,914	-25%	-4,229	-5,243	Diversification options for farmers to reduce livestock emissions. Alternative fuel sources for farm machinery (e.g. HVO) will reduce agricultural energy related emissions.
Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry	1,082	No national target set	No national target set	-649	Better land management practices and improved soil health leads to land absorbing carbon dioxide instead of releasing
Waste	5,783	-50%	-2,892	-2,295	Improved composting and recycling rates reduce waste emissions
Total	169,878	-44%	75,106	94,616	*numbers are rounded to nearest whole number

Figure 6.4: Register of Opportunities for Kilkenny City DZ. Source KPMG, 2023.

6.5 Summary of the DZ Baseline Emissions Inventory



The Enabling Opportunities can be grouped under four main themes:

- Branding
- Innovation
- Collaboration
- Governance

Sector	Enabling Opportunities
Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Where a SEC has been established, ensure this existing opportunity is maximised in delivering emission reductions across the DZ -Use a DZ launch event and social media (designed in collaboration with community groups) to raise awareness and set a positive tone for action -Have pilot social housing units with pioneer tenants to show the benefits of heat exchangers and create local advocates for their use -Benchmark energy performance of areas of the city to create friendly rivalry and encourage climate action
Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop a Sustainable City Charter with a menu of options for action and ratings to recognise improvements over time -Acknowledge good work through an awards scheme for exemplars (business and community) -Consider adopting a rates discount scheme similar to Waterford where companies with a decarbonisation plan in place receive an 8% rate discount.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Development of a centralised web-based Public Transport Information Hub to promote a modal shift from private to public transport -Secure bike parking and maintenance points at various locations within the city and at all schools. -Expanded bus network with low annual subscription for unlimited trips, and provide free parking at the park and ride facilities -Design a high-quality 'London Tube' style map showing walking and cycling distances
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide more community gardens (with edible forests allowing every household to plant a tree) and explore the need for community gardens and further allotment provision. -Consider a new Millennium Woods, whereby every family in the city has a tree planted in their name. -Increased heritage/nature interpretation across forests and historic parks -Create a network of urban parks linked by green leisure routes
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduce a DIY tools library for communities, or repair cafes to extend the life of appliances. -Website with food suppliers within 10km, 20km & 50km of Kilkenny City -Ban of single-use coffee cups and more bring centres with can crushers on site -Water replenishment points in the city
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Publish a quarterly climate action newsletter for communities and businesses highlighting best practices, tips and tricks and funding access -Establish a Community and Business Sustainability Steering group to focus on DZ actions and implementation -Align SUMP, LACAP and DZ on governance and communications plan to ensure consistent messaging -Establish an annual sustainability festival - building on Bike Fest

Figure 6.5: Enabling Opportunities for Kilkenny City DZ. Source KPMG, 2023.

6.6 DZ Plan



Actions

All of the actions in Section 5 of this Plan will be applied to the DZ. In addition, actions which are only relevant to the DZ have been developed, based on the Register of Opportunities. See Figure 6.6 below.

The first action is to establish a Kilkenny City Decarbonisation Working Group, comprising a range of stakeholders including Kilkenny County Council and the business, community and public sectors. Collaboration with stakeholders will be vital to the success of the DZ. Further actions will be identified by Q1 2024, in consultation with the stakeholders.

Decarbonising Zone								
No.	Action	Aim	Adaptation/ Mitigation/ Both	Tracking Measure/Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Lead Dept	Partners	Timeframe	SDG
DZ1	Establish a Kilkenny City Decarbonisation Working Group	Coordinate implementation of a Kilkenny City Decarbonisation (DZ) Plan	Both	* Working group established * Number of meetings per year	Climate Kilkenny City Municipal District Management Team	Stakeholders (Public sector /Semi-State bodies, Government Depts, Business, Education, Community)	2024 and ongoing	SDG13 SDG 16 SDG17
DZ2	Support Kilkenny City Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC's) in the DZ, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to conserve built heritage.	Enable communities to reduce energy use	Both	* Bridge funding provided for Energy Master Plans as per MOU with SEAI * Meetings with SEEA SEC Mentor to support programme	Climate Communities	SEAI, South East Energy Agency, Communities	2024-2029	SDG11 SDG13 SDG 16 SDG17
DZ3	Building on the findings of the DZ Baseline Emissions Inventory, and the stakeholder engagement and Visioning work, develop a Register of Opportunities and a programme of actions for the DZ	Portfolio of actions, projects, technologies and interventions to deliver on the national climate objective at local level through mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity actions	Both	* Register of Opportunities and actions developed * Number of actions implemented, having due regard for environmental sensitivities	Climate Action	Kilkenny Municipal District, All Service Areas, Stakeholders	Q1 2024	SDG13
DZ4	Implement relevant Local Authority Climate Action Plan actions in the DZ, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to conserve built heritage.	To deliver actions from the LCAP within the DZ	Both	* Number of actions implemented	All Service Areas	Stakeholders (Public sector /Semi-State bodies, Government Depts, Business, Education, Community)	2024-2029	SDG13

Figure 6.6: Kilkenny City Decarbonising Zone Actions

Implementation and Reporting



7.1

Planning for Implementation



The Local Authority Climate Action Plan (2024-2029) will be delivered by Kilkenny County Council. Whilst the Plan requires a whole of Council approach, the ownership of the Plan is held jointly by the Elected Representatives and the Executive of the Council. Delivery and implementation of the LACAP is the responsibility of the Climate Action Steering Committee, with support from the Climate Action Office. See Section 1 for further information on the Steering Committee and Climate Action Team.

Annual Implementation Plans will be developed, commencing in Q1 2024, to support the delivery of the actions included in the Plan. The Implementation Plans will include details of progress on meeting Kilkenny

County Council's mandatory energy efficiency and emissions reductions targets on buildings, fleet and public lighting (see Section 4 for further details), as well as progress on all other actions in the Plan.

The implementation of this Plan will depend on the sourcing and allocation of sufficient resources, including financial and other support from the Executive, and the Elected Representatives.



Many historic buildings such as the Callan Area Office, built in the 1840's, are not very energy efficient. So Kilkenny County Council has commissioned energy audits to identify measures which can be taken to reduce heat loss, whilst respecting the integrity of the building.

7.2

Funding and Partnerships



To lead by example and drive the transition to a climate neutral society, Kilkenny County Council will require access to adequate funding for climate action projects to achieve its 2030 and 2050 targets e.g. Government grants, European Funds, private sector investment and community co-financing. While new climate action targeted funding may become available, it is also expected that established funding bodies such as the SEAI, as well as Government Departments, including Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and the Department of Transport will introduce or increase the level of funding for climate action focused projects.

The Community Climate Action Fund, provided by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, is just one example of a new targeted funding scheme designed to support and build low carbon communities. Kilkenny County Council has been allocated €511,000 through this fund, which will be administered by the Climate Action Office, and applications for eligible community projects may be made under the five themes:

- Community Energy
- Travel
- Food and waste
- Shopping and recycling
- Local climate and environmental action

Kilkenny County Council will also continue to actively pursue new and existing funding opportunities from both European and national bodies, which are aligned with its climate action objectives.

Kilkenny County Council will work collaboratively and in partnership with a range of key stakeholders to support the delivery of this Plan. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to, the following – the neighbouring Local Authorities of Carlow, Laois, Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford, the Eastern and Midlands Climate Action Regional Office, South East Energy Agency, the Local Authority Services National Training Group, Southern Regional Assembly, Local Government Management Agency, City and County Management Agency, Public Participation Network, and other partner organisations.

The Third Level sector is also recognised as an important source of research and development expertise to help Local Authorities, and to implement innovative solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. Kilkenny County Council will encourage and facilitate collaboration with the private sector and Third Level sector where possible. These partnerships can also provide opportunities for collaboration on projects, shared learnings, technical support and leveraging of funding opportunities during the implementation of actions in the Plan.

7.3

Tracking Progress on Climate Action



There are a range of existing mechanisms for Local Authority monitoring and reporting on climate action. These include;

Internal Reporting Mechanisms and Structures

Annual Climate Action Implementation Plans will be developed for the delivery of actions under this Plan, commencing in Q1 2024. Progress on implementation will be reported to a range of internal committees including the following:

- i. Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Steering Committee. Note: The Kilkenny County Council Energy Team, which predates the Steering Committee, has been incorporated into the Climate Action Steering Committee and Energy is a standing item on the agenda.
- ii. Strategic Policy Committee 4 (Environmental Protection, Climate Action and Energy)
- iii. Kilkenny County Council Management Team
- iv. Elected Representatives via the Council Plenary meetings
- v. Monthly Chief Executive's Report. The Chief Executive's Reports are available on the [Council website](#).

ISO 50001

Kilkenny County Council secured ISO 50001 accreditation in 2021. The ISO 50001 standard is an Energy Management Standard for energy use and consumption and provides a systematic approach for organisations to achieve continuous improvement in terms of energy performance, energy efficiency, energy use and consumption.

In order to retain the certification Kilkenny County Council is required to have annual Surveillance Audits, as well as a Certification Audit every 3 years.

Energy Elephant

Energy Elephant is an energy management system used by Kilkenny County Council, with the support and assistance of South East Energy Agency, to monitor and assist us in understanding the energy use and emissions in our building stock, fleet and public lights. This is done by converting our energy bill data into useful insights where we can track our energy consumption, energy costs and carbon emissions produced by each individual asset under our remit. By doing so we can adapt and make the necessary changes, e.g. retrofitting to improve sustainability, save time and reduce costs.



Energy Elephant is an energy management tool used by Kilkenny County Council to monitor and track energy and emissions use throughout the Council.

7.3 Tracking Progress on Climate Change



SEAI Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) System

Kilkenny County Council will continue to report annually to the Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) system managed by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) regarding the delivery of energy efficiency and emission reduction measures on the Council's infrastructure and assets. The annual reports are available, along with all public sector energy performance reports, on the [SEAI website](#).

Local Government Climate Action KPI monitoring

Kilkenny County Council will continue to report annually on its performance on climate action to the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) via the Local Authority Performance Indicators programme. The annual reports are available on the [NOAC website](#).

In addition, the Council will continue to report annually to the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) and CARO on a range of climate themes including:

- Climate Action Resources;
- Climate Action Training for Local Authority staff and elected members;
- Actions delivered;
- Enterprise support in the area of climate action;
- Energy efficiency;
- Emission reductions;
- Active travel measures; and
- Severe weather response.

National Climate Action Plan

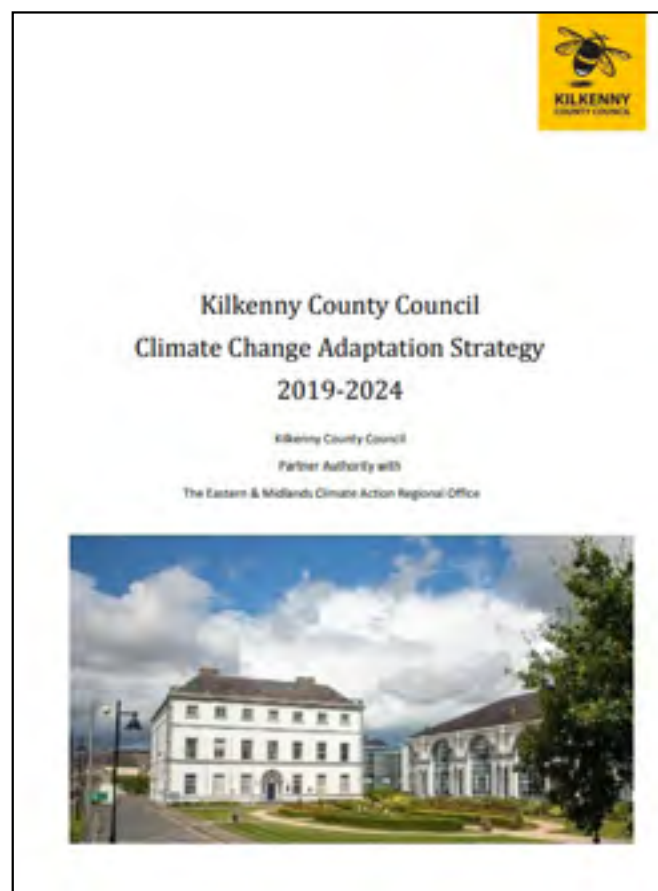
Kilkenny County Council, in accordance with part 3(w) of the [Local Authority Climate Action Charter \(2019\)](#), reports to the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications on progress on climate action at local level as part of the delivery of the national climate objective. A new tool for reporting on the new Local Authority Climate Action Plans is being developed, and co-ordinated by CARO, and guidance is to be issued to Local Authorities in due course.

EU Covenant of Mayors

Kilkenny County Council is a signatory to the European Union's Covenant of Mayors programme for Climate and Energy, and as such commits to the completion and monitoring of a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP). This Plan addresses and supports the requirements of the Covenant of Mayors SECAP and monitoring of this Plan will be issued to the Covenant of Mayors.

Local Authority Adaptation Strategy

Since the adoption of the Kilkenny County Council Adaptation Strategy (2019-2024) the Council has reported annually to the CARO on the delivery of actions. The final monitoring report for strategy was submitted to CARO on 5th October 2023. This Climate Action Plan, which incorporates mitigation as well as adaptation measures, will replace the adaptation strategy.



Communicating and Reporting to the Public

As outlined above, the Council submits data and reports every year to a wide range of reporting mechanisms and organisations. Most of this data is made available to the public via the co-ordinating body's websites. However, Kilkenny County Council recognises the need to, and value of, engaging more closely with the public and stakeholders in relation to our progress in delivering on our climate action targets, as part of our climate leadership role. Therefore, the Council will, as an action of this Plan, identify and adopt a suitable public facing reporting and monitoring system to achieve this.



Kilkenny
Going Green

www.kilkennycoco.ie