

# Annual Report 2022



**YOUGHAL  
BLUE & GREEN**  
Community Network  
*'Together we are Stronger'*

*'Together building a sustainable Youghal and surrounding areas'*

## Introduction

2022 was a great year for the Youghal Blue & Green Community Network in terms of organising events, gaining new membership, resources and starting key important projects. We are almost two years old and due to members working hard and collaborating really well together – we are gaining recognition and credibility.

A special thanks to Cumann na Daoine who have hosted the Blue & Green Community Network for the past two years and taken responsibility for the governance of the Network. This includes all financial management, company and charity regulations, employment and an office base in the Cumann na Daoine building at Catherine Street, Youghal.

This report will give information on:

- Key Events during 2022
- Funding Successes and Structure
- Key Projects
- Strategic Plan (revised) to 2025
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Circular Economy
- Energy Audit for Youghal
- Our Members

While our membership is growing and awareness of climate change & the need to reduce carbon emissions is increasing, we have a long road ahead to make the level of changes required across society. Changes are needed at home and at community level; in business, transport, tourism and farming – in other words across all sectors. We all have a lot to do and we hope that by having the Youghal Blue & Green Community Network in place, it will help facilitate us to work together and support each other to make the transformations required for a healthy and secure planet for future generations.

As well as great work, we have enjoyed events and getting to know each other. Members are committed to taking action and are proactive in the Network and in their own groups.



River trip with Tony Gallagher and Pat Smiddy

### *Our Vision*

To help ensure Youghal is the healthiest, cleanest environmentally sustainable town to live and work in for present and future generations.

### *Aims & Objectives*

- To work together in order to strengthen and support each others work in relation to responding to climate change, enhancing biodiversity, ensuring clean beaches, healthy marine & coastal life while being sensitive and careful of our wild-life, woodlands and green environments.
- To do this through collaborating with each other and with agencies concerned with Youghal.
- To attract large scale resources to deliver on our vision for Youghal.
- To promote the reduction of carbon emissions, use of renewable energy & support the development of clean energy efficient communities.
- To build greater awareness across the whole community of Youghal and bring all citizens with us.
- To explore what is happening to the earth and its people & find constructive ways of responding.
- To share information, work together and agree on priorities for the Network.

### *Our Values*

- We will work together using community development principles of inclusion, empowerment, equality and acknowledging everyone's human rights.
- We will listen with respect to all members' views and the views of others who we come into contact with.
- We will be transparent and honest in our communications and negotiations with others.



*We must all play  
our part to help  
Youghal transition  
into a healthy,  
more sustainable  
community!*

Cumann na Daoine Resource Centre (CnD) plays a vital role in supporting the Network, including providing a home for the Network at its premises in Catherine Street.

The Network operates under CnD policies and administrative, promotional and development support is provided through its Finance Officer and Community Development Worker.

The CnD Community Café at the same premises houses the Information Hub, and the Café has been used as a venue for events and workshops.





# Key Events

## Training/Forages/Tours

- ✓ Wild Works 6-week Nature Training
- ✓ Forages: Seaweed, Salt Marshes, Mushrooms
- ✓ Guided tours: Blackwater River, Shoreline Exploration
- ✓ Supported Clean Coasts group



Above & below: Seaweed foraging & coastal survey at Pilmore Strand

## Roadshows & Workshops

- ✓ Eirgrid Energy Roadshow
- ✓ Sustainable Development Goals
- ✓ Coastal Survey
- ✓ Zero Waste Festival
- ✓ Home & Community Energy



Network staff & Ryan Madden, Plan Energy Consultants at the Eirgrid Roadshow

## Work with Schools

- ✓ Work with the Gaelscoil on Otter Art competition, Energy Audit & Shoreline Survey
- ✓ New relationship built with Pobalscoil na Trionoide; planning for 2023 with students
- ✓ Intergenerational Story Exchange: community elders & TY students talk about extreme weather events. *Weathering The Storm* was recorded in Youghal Library.



Intergenerational event

## Presentations

- ✓ Plan Energy: Youghal Energy Audit
- ✓ Inis Energy: Follow-on Energy Workshops
- ✓ Simply Blue and DP Energy: Offshore Renewable Energy
- ✓ Green Offaly Conference

# Key Terms

**Biodiversity** is the variety of life on earth & includes all the different plants, animals, fungi, and micro-organisms that exist in an area. It includes the variety of habitats & ecosystems that they live in. Biodiversity is essential to maintain healthy ecosystems & provide important resources, such as food, medicines, clean air & water.

An **Ecosystem** is a group of connected elements or species, which form a system through the interaction of these elements with their environment.

**Climate Change** is an alteration in long-term weather patterns due to natural forces, human activity, or both.

**Decarbonisation** happens when a country (or world) stops using fossil fuels. An example of decarbonising your home is to stop using oil, coal or turf for heating.

A **Coast** is an area of land bordered by water: the area between the high- and low-tide lines of the sea. The coastline includes beaches, cliffs, estuaries, wetlands, marine and avian life and is a dynamic environment that is constantly changing due to tectonic, weather and climate changes. It provides important habitats for wildlife and recreation, provides economic benefits and is an important factor in global climate change. Coasts can be affected by activities like coastal development, pollution, over-fishing, coastal erosion and rising sea levels.

**Doughnut Economics** is a system developed by Oxford economist Kate Raworth. It is based on the concept of the circular economy, but emphasises the need for social justice and environmental protection as well. The system proposes that instead of focusing solely on economic growth, governments should strive to meet the basic needs of all citizens while also ensuring that the environment is protected. This system attempts to balance social, economic, and ecological goals with an emphasis on sustainability.

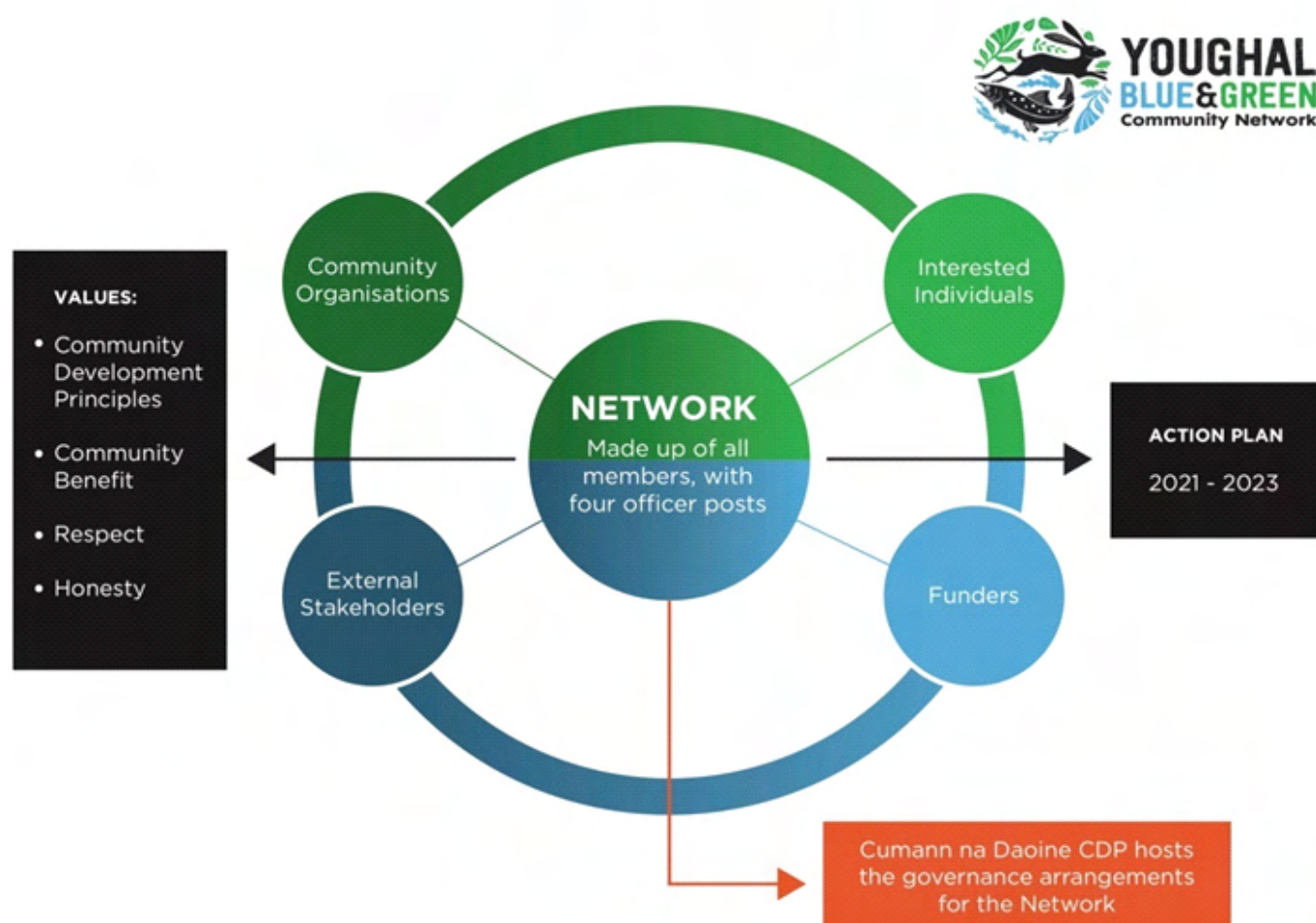
A **Circular Economy** is an economic system in which resources are used and reused in a closed loop, minimising waste and maximising efficiency. It is based on the principles of reducing, reusing, and recycling materials and products in order to reduce environmental impacts and create economic value.

A **Carbon Footprint** measures carbon emissions linked to a particular activity or product, including the emissions involved in all stages of making and using it or conducting an activity. The lower the carbon footprint, the less a product or activity contributes to climate change. For example, walking and cycling create a much smaller carbon footprint than driving.





# Network Structure



The Network is open to representatives of community organisations and individuals who are committed to active engagement in the Network and working collectively on blue and green actions.

Members are those who are committed to the above vision, aims, objectives and in proactively working together.

The need for a "Blue & Green Community Network" has come about because of the realisation that the web of life is being seriously damaged by human beings' unsustainable lifestyle, and the related realization that while this will affect us all, it is already causing enormous suffering for many of the poorest people on earth, people who have done least to bring about the problem. Our work involves helping people gain some knowledge about what is happening and some understanding of how and why it is happening and developing ways of constructively responding to these challenges.

## Funding

The Network received funding from the following agencies and departments during the year:

- ⇒ Dept. Rural & Community Development (DRCD)/ and
- ⇒ Tomar Trust
- ⇒ Cork County Council
- ⇒ South & East Cork Area Development Partnership (SECAD)
- ⇒ Cork Education & Training Board (ETB)
- ⇒ Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (SEAI)

- ⇒ Local Authority Water Programme (LAWPRO)
- ⇒ HSE National Lottery Funds
- ⇒ Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)

The biggest & most significant announcement was the award of core funding for a 3 year period for 2 key workers and a programme of work from the Department of Rural & Community Development and the Tomar Trust.

The first worker, Gráinne Furey, commenced in Jan 2023, with a second worker, Deirdre Lane, starting Feb 2023. Dr Maria Power, who works part-time, is the current co-ordinator of the Network.

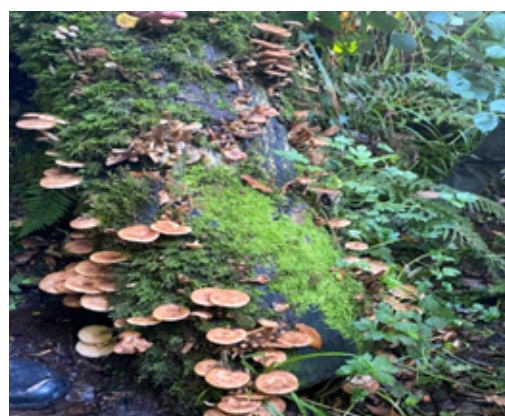
Total funds received by the Network were €50,914. All accounts are audited annually and available to view on the Companies Office website [www.cro.ie](http://www.cro.ie)



Sea Holly on the shoreline



*Creating a labyrinth with Lizet: Redbarn, September*



*Mushroom forage with Andrew, October*



# Key Projects

## Fishing Families Storyboard

This project consisted of working with the fishing families of Youghal, researching their history and stories. It gathered new and old images, engaged a professional writer and proof reader and had a full review by UCC. The end result is a highly finished storyboard, professionally designed and produced in the Irish and English language. These now hang by the Fishing Co-Op building and in the Credit Union. Special thanks to BIM for their assistance with images and funding of the project.

## Youghal Energy Audit

An audit of Youghal's energy usage was commissioned by the B&G Network and carried out by Plan Energy Consultancy. The audit report was launched at the Energy Roadshow, hosted in collaboration with Eirgrid, in November 2022. This audit was funded by SEAI.



## Information Hub

This project commenced in 2022 & will not be completed until March 2023. The Hub will consist of local habitat videos (created by local film-makers) along with sustainable energy information and demonstration models including VR sets for the public to access. This information project also included the running of workshops at the Zero Waste Festival hosted by Youghal Residents Network and Youghal GAA in October. The project was funded by SECAD.

## Zero Waste Family Festival

This was a first for East Cork, bringing Zero Waste ethics to local communities and we hope this will become an annual event.

The day incorporated demonstrations on zero waste food & cookery and workshops included Grow Your Own Veg; Home Composting and Bicycle Repair. A demonstration Refund Trailer was on site and a Clothes Swap stall did great business.

The Zero Waste Festival was hosted by Youghal GAA in partnership with Youghal Residents Network and was supported by Cork County Council.



## Keane Park Pond Restoration

This project delivered a feasibility study and was completed during the last quarter of 2022.

Results give clear recommendations and management plans for the restoration of this very important pond. We hope to progress this project in 2023 with the support of the Municipal District Council.

\* Reports on all events available on our website [www.youghalblueandgreennetwork.ie](http://www.youghalblueandgreennetwork.ie)

## Community Garden

This year saw a significant contribution by Cork ETB in allocating space to the development of Youghal Community Garden. Fencing, tunnels and storage were erected. Tools and equipment were purchased thanks to funds from the HSE and made available for the public to use. 30 members have already signed up and we intend to launch the Community Garden in early 2023 with the assistance of 1 Community Employment Scheme (CES) & 1 Rural Social Scheme (RSS) workers.





## Youghal Blue & Green Community Network

Projects with Network group members 2022	
Group	Activity
Bru na Sí	Tree planting, seaweed pressing workshop, information provision (profile, consultants), energy audit
Gaelscoil Choráin	Seashore exploration, coast watch survey (CEF), ceramic workshops, Pat Smiddy talk, Otter art project (CNN), energy audit
GAA	Partnered on 'Zero Waste' festival
Clean Coasts	Promoted and encouraged volunteers to participate in Beach Clean with Cork Co. Council & CEF
Knockanore CC	Oak project over 2023 carrying out audit of important oak trees, bird and insect life.
Clashmore CC	Partnered in hosting bees wax workshop with Waterford CoCo Environmental Awareness Officer
Pobalscoil	Reviewed plans for green school link with energy audit consultant, link with TCD re Climate Smart Platform for TY students, partnered intergenerational project
Cumann na Daoine	Energy audit, internal organisational practices on-going
YARA	Intergenerational project with TY students
Community Bus	Working on joint application to replace the bus with a new electric/hybrid bus and EV charger
CRY	Airtime on B&G Network actions, planning monthly programme
Youghal Community Health Project	Prepared community garden in their own location
Credit Union	Link with energy consultant



Network Projects	
Group	Activity
Forages	Wild flowers, seaweed, mushrooms, salt marshes, river habitats, slob bank flora tour, hedgerow plant ID
Zero Waste Festival	Food, composting, waste recycling, reuse/return vending machine, clothes swap, grow your own & bike rep demo
Community Garden	In partnership with CETB & HSE polytunnel, fencing, & storage erected. Recruit CE & RSS workers for '23. Wormery & woodwork tutorials, hedgerow planting through 'Trees Please'. Gardening course
Sustainable Energy Comm	Youghal Blue & Green network is the Sustainable Energy Community for Youghal
UCC/MaREI	Hosted workshop on building community resilience pathways. Received support for impact monitoring
Information Hub SECAD	Development of 8 local habitat videos, fully equipped Hub installation, posters and information
Fishers	Research and development of storyboard with fishing families of Youghal
FRC	Engaging with after-school club at community garden
Burren Beo	Heritage keepers project on Tree Trail
Knowledge Exchange	Green Offaly two day conference and report, Dingle Peninsula 2030 exchange
Presentations	Cork CoCo, Eirgrid Roadshow, launch of Energy Mater Plan & Fishing storyboard with Minister Noonan
Admin /Social Media	Monthly & annual reporting, quarterly accounts and grant applications, promoting all events on social media platforms, maintain blog, creating new website and membership database. Recruitment of two climate action community workers funded by DRCD and Tomar Trust. Work closely with Cumann na Daoine on new office.



# Strategic Plan 2021 - 2025

## OVERVIEW - ACTION PLAN 2023

Main pillars of work are shown below

In 2022 the Network's *Strategic Plan 2021-2023* was revised to take account of new additional funding and extended to run until 2025. The Strategic Plan 2022-2025 & 3-year Action Plan are available on our website here: [youghal-blueandgreennetwork.ie](http://youghal-blueandgreennetwork.ie)

### RENEWABLE ENERGY

- **Energy Master Plan: Community Opportunities**
- **Community Organisations: Reduce Energy Usage**
- **Increase Renewable Energy Usage**
- **Decarbonisation Zone / Renewable Energy Town**

### COAST, MARINE & WATER

- **Flooding: Community Resilience Plan and Workshops**
- **Marine Protected Area**
- **New Recycling & Cleaning Equipment for Beaches**
- **Sand Dunes**
- **Fresh Water Monitoring**

### ENVIRONMENT

- **Tree Planting**
- **Community Garden**
- **Zero Waste Festivals / Campaign**
- **Increased Biodiversity**

- Regular hosting of workshops, training, webinars and discussion in relation to all topics i.e. engagement
- PHYSICAL INFORMATION HUB AT CUMANN NA DAOINE with interactive videos and demo models
- All work agreed and steered by the Network - liaise with Community Development Projects re governance



# Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to transform our world. They are a call to action to end poverty and inequality, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy health, justice and prosperity.

It is critical that no-one is left behind.

In 2015, all the countries in the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It sets out 17 Goals, which include 169 targets. These wide-ranging and ambitious Goals interconnect. What's different about the Sustainable Development Goals?

The 2030 Agenda and its Goals offer a comprehensive vision for sustainable development that:

- is global, rather than limited to “developing” countries as was the case with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- is based on values such as equity and respect for human rights;
- relies on approaches such as sustainable financing, scientific research and innovation and monitoring and evaluation;
- requires a new way of working, involving intersectoral action by multiple stakeholders;
- aims to strengthen health systems towards universal health coverage (UHC).

[World Health Organisation: see also <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>]



Youghal Blue & Green Community Network is committed to the *UN Sustainable Development Goals Charter* and its emphasis is on:

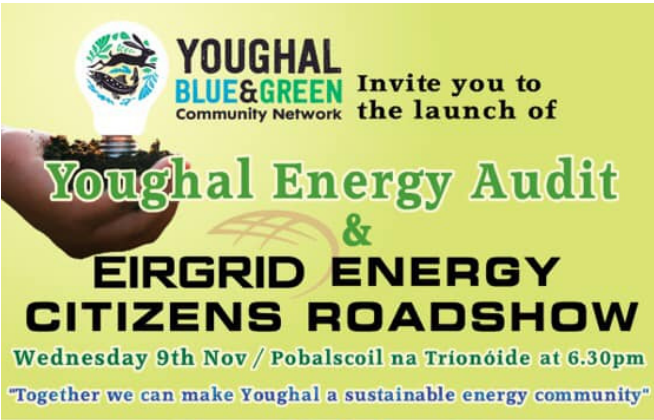
Goal 3: Good Health & Wellbeing  
Goal 6: Clean Water & Sanitation  
Goal 7: Affordable & Clean Energy  
Goal 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth  
Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities  
Goal 12: Responsible Production & Consumption  
Goal 13: Climate Action  
Goal 14: Life Below Water  
Goal 15: Life On Land





# Youghal Energy Audit Findings

Youghal Sustainable Energy Community (Blue & Green Community Network) commissioned the Youghal Energy Audit (*Energy Master Plan* or *EMP*) funded by SEAI, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland to aid the development of a sustainable energy roadmap for Youghal. The recommendations in the audit target 50% energy reduction and 50% renewable energy generation within the next decade. In alignment with the Irish Governments' Climate Action plan & Ireland's long term goals of reaching net zero emissions by 2050, the Energy Audit provides reliable evidence and guidance that speaks directly to homeowners, and business owners in the Youghal community. Grant streams were identified with One Stop Shop services, timelines & assistance to communities by SEAI. Youghal is a heritage town: population of 7,963 (2016 Census) plus 1000+ Ukrainian people; both figures are expected to increase.

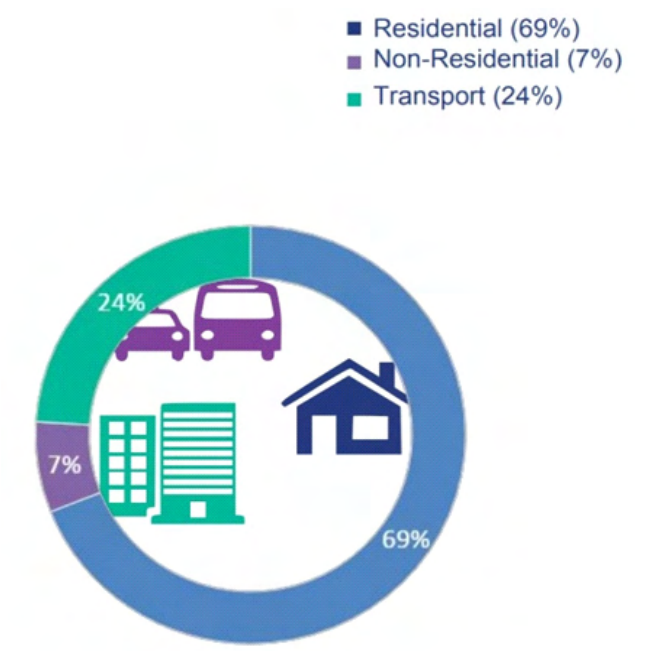


## Results & Analysis

### Youghal SEC Primary Energy Baseline

Total Energy Cost	Kilowatts per Hour	CO2 Emissions
€15,786,808	107,294,000kWh	29,746 Tonnes

## Sectoral Breakdown



## Transport

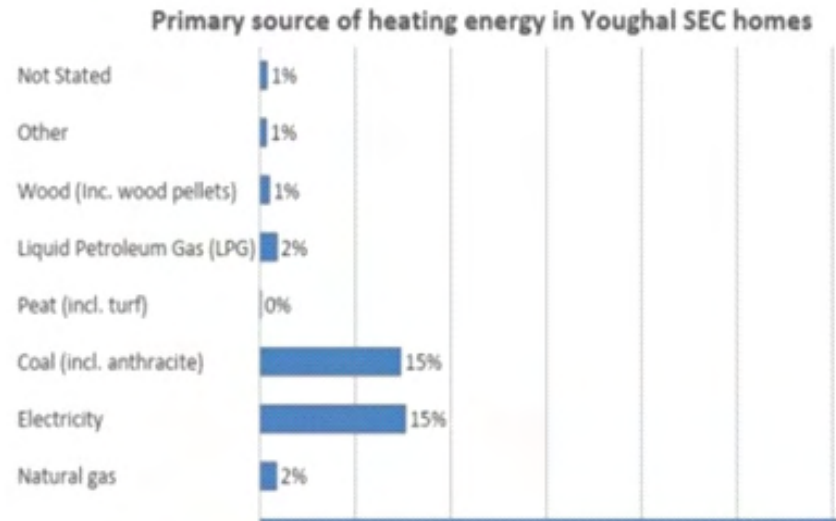
The Climate Action plan stipulates that to meet the 2030 targets Ireland's transport sector emissions must be reduced by 42-50%.

As Youghal lags behind the national average, more active and public transport usage in commuting a focus is needed. We need to encourage bus and car pooling use, and in particular EV transport to work, school and college and to encourage remote working to address reducing transport emissions.

Community readiness and enabling a framework for the RESS scheme and Community Benefit fund journey is ongoing in capacity building, communication and engagement events plus awareness of funding streams.

## Housing

### Residential Fuel Mix



3309

In alignment with the Irish Governments' Climate Action Plan and Ireland's long-term goals of reaching net zero emissions by 2050, the Energy Audit provides reliable evidence & guidance that speaks directly to home & business owners in the Youghal community.

Pillar	Description	Example
Avoid	Avoid or reduce travel or the need to travel	Transitioning to increased remote working. Walking or cycling where possible
Shift	Shift to more energy efficient modes	Using public transport such as bus services
Improve	Improve efficiency through vehicle technology	Moving towards electric vehicles

3,309 homes are registered in our SEC with a D2 average BER for those with BER certificates.

Housing upgrades e.g. insulation, renewable electricity for heating and light, bring the benefits below:

You can read the report here:  
Youghal Energy Audit

More comfort

Money saved

Healthier home

Warmer home

Better for our planet



# Our Members

## Organisation Representatives

Maria Power, Cumann na Daoine / Blue Green Network Coordinator  
Jan Gallagher, Youghal Tidy Towns  
Kevin Walsh, Youghal Active Retirement Association  
Tomás Rickard, Foroige Youth Diversion Programme  
Hayley Fox-Roberts, Cumann na Daoine Development Worker  
Niamh Herbert, Youghal Community Health Project  
Utta Hogan, Youghal Community Bus  
Aoife Connon, Gaelscoil Chorain Green Schools  
Andrew Orr, Eco Congregation Ireland  
Mary Linehan-Foley, Cork County Council  
Danielle Twomey, Cork County Council  
Gráinne Furey, Clean Coasts Group  
Michéal de Buitleir, Bru na Sí Traditional Music Centre  
Richard Torney, Clashmore-Kinsalebeg Community Council  
Ava Farrington, Knockanore Biodiversity Group  
Anto Dillon, Clean Coasts & Green GAA  
Caroline Cooper & TY student, Clean Coasts & Pobalscoil Trionoíde  
Ally Whyte, Links Co-Op & Community Garden  
Pat Deasy, Bee Conservation Ireland  
Yvonne Smith, Community Radio Youghal (CRY104fm)  
Patrick Heaphy, Youghal Credit Union

## Individual Members (Group)

Davis Whyte, Recycling & Business  
Derick Bora, Marine Ecologist  
Teresa Ahearne, Environmentalist  
Martha Cashman, Artist 'Less Plastics Ireland'  
Mary O'Donnell, Artist  
Maureen Jackson, Citizen Science  
Emma Hutchinson, Horticulture & Trees  
Aoife Ryan, Community Garden  
Martina Flavin, Seashore & Environment  
Liz Westendorf, Health & Wellbeing  
Greg Kavanagh, Health & Wellbeing  
Mairead Johnson, Coast Watch & Heritage  
Lizet Mulder, Landscape, Environment & Coast  
Dara McDermott, Community Garden  
Irene Tanner, Biodiversity  
Mags Arnold, Biodiversity  
Ditte Franischtain, Wellness  
Susan Burrell, Energy

More awaiting confirmation!

*Our thanks to Blue & Green Network staff; Richard Torney, Mags Arnold & Hayley Fox-Roberts for their work in creating this report.*

# Contact us!

Send us your feedback, thoughts, or event ideas!

[www.youghalblueandgreennetwork.ie](http://www.youghalblueandgreennetwork.ie)  
[YoughalBlueandGreenNetwork.blogspot.com](http://YoughalBlueandGreenNetwork.blogspot.com)  
Facebook @YoughalBlueGreenNetwork  
Instagram Youghal\_Blue\_Green  
Email: [blueandgreennetwork@gmail.com](mailto:blueandgreennetwork@gmail.com)

# Members' Comments

## *Aoife Connon, Gaelscoil, says:*

"Gaelscoil Choráin is fortunate to be involved with a number of environmental and artistic projects thanks to the Blue Green Network. The Network put us in touch with Cork Nature Network, who were looking for a school to take part in an art competition about otters.

We were sent a presentation about otters to show the pupils, then children from 4th, 5th & 6th class submitted drawings, pictures & poems about otters. We were one of the organisations in Youghal chosen to take part in an Energy Audit. The company involved were very professional & provided a report suggesting a number of ways the school could save money on our energy bills. Our fifth class pupils attended a beach walk organised in conjunction with the Blue Green Network for World Ocean Day".

## *Aoife Ryan (speaking on CRY104fm)*

"My partner & I moved to Youghal between lockdowns...I went into Cumann na Daoine & was put in touch with Maria of the Network. I said I was interested in gardening but only had a tiny back-yard & was delighted to find a community garden being created: I jumped on board."

## *Micheál De Buitleár (on CRY104fm)*

"Last year we got Blue & Green members up to Brú na Sí and together planted 60 trees. It's good to have the Network as a sounding board to talk things through, like our pollinator plan. We were delighted when the Energy Audit (commissioned by the Network) was announced...luckily our building Brú na Sí was one of 3 community buildings selected"



Our 2022 Funders:

