



Community Climate Action Fund

Guidance Document



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council



**WE'RE
TAKING
CLIMATE
ACTION**

THE COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME

The Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP) was developed by the Department of Climate, Energy and Environment (DCEE) to support communities wishing to take climate action at a local level, with €60m made available from the Climate Action Fund.

Dublin City Council (DCC) will administer Strand 1 – Building Low Carbon Communities, and provide advice and support to sports clubs, community gardens, community centres, resident associations and a host of other not-for-profit organisations across its administrative area, to enable them to take climate action. With almost €4m available across the two phases of this programme, we look forward to accelerating the drive towards a more climate resilient Dublin.

BACKGROUND

Ireland has committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 51% by 2030 and becoming a net zero and climate neutral economy by 2050. Dublin City is a member of the EU Mission for 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities, each striving to reach climate neutrality by 2030. For Ireland and Dublin City to make this transition, we need to work together to address how we power our buildings, work, travel, consume goods and services, deal with our waste and protect our wildlife.



Beaumont Community Garden – Raised beds made from recycled plastic

Theme 3 Food and Waste and Theme 4 Circular Economy

THIS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

This guide has been prepared for groups in the operational area of DCC to better understand the Community Climate Action Fund. The Community Climate Action Officer is also available and can be contacted should you require advice and support in relation to the fund, your action project or the application process, using this email communityclimatefund@dublincity.ie

Our Community Climate Action Fund webpage, linked below, is regularly updated and is a valuable source of information in relation to the fund.

<https://www.dublincity.ie/residential/environment/environmental-awareness/community-climate-action-fund>

OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME

The overall objective of this Programme is to support and empower communities, in partnership with their local authorities, to shape and build low carbon, sustainable communities in a coherent way which contributes to local and national climate and energy targets.

Your projects should aim to:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Increase climate resilience
- Help transition to a lower carbon economy

It will be of benefit if it also seeks to:

- Strengthen community
- Inspire others to take climate action



Bonnybrook Parish Care for the Environment Group – Pocket Forest and Native Hedge

Theme 5 Nature Based Solutions with a strong emphasis on strengthening community

OVERVIEW OF STRAND 1 AND STRAND 1A

Strand 1 – Community Climate Action Programme: Building Low Carbon Communities

In 2023 Dublin City Council (DCC) was allocated €1,938,000 for projects under strand 1 of the Community Climate Action Programme: Building Low Carbon Communities, to assist local communities to develop and deliver projects which have a direct climate action impact. Fifty (50) projects were selected from across the city, to demonstrate how they can contribute towards the delivery of local and national climate objectives.

In addition, €57,885 was allocated under Strand 1a Shared Ireland Fund, which saw a partnership approach to climate action between a Dublin based community farm and a community farm in Belfast.

Phase II of this fund will launch during 2025, with a further €1,938,000 available to local community groups wishing to demonstrate climate action.

ELIGIBLE COMMUNITIES

Community groups are required to self-certify that they do not have the funding available to undertake the work without support **OR** (alternatively) the support will enable them to undertake more work which they otherwise would not be able to afford.

Groups must also be able to demonstrate their ability to carry out the proposed works.

COMMUNITIES ELIGIBLE FOR STRAND 1

To be eligible to apply under strand 1, community organisations must be:

- A not-for-profit organisation
- Located in the operational area of DCC
- Registered with the PPN or connected with other collectives such as the Wheel or Tidy Town
- **and /or** a community group with Articles of Association or a Constitution, which hold an AGM, and for which approved minutes are available.

The following types of organisations are not eligible to apply for strand 1:

- Private individuals
- Commercial undertakings (including sole traders)
- Schools, third levels institutions etc.
- National organisations
- Financial institutions



Killester Blooms Community Garden

Theme 3 Food and Waste

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Projects should aim to:

- Meet the overall objective “to shape and build low carbon, sustainable communities in a coherent way to contribute to local and national climate and energy targets.”
- Address one or more of the five Programme themes and national climate action targets, as set out below.
- Comply with all statutory requirements in relation to planning, building regulations, Health and Safety, and Fire Codes etc., where applicable.

FIVE PROGRAMME THEMES

Projects can address one or (preferably) multiple themes. Below is a breakdown of each theme and some suggested projects. These are only examples and communities are encouraged to be as innovative as possible with their projects.

Groups should also consider how their projects contribute to progress in relation to relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals. A brief summary guide is available on DCC's website.

THEME 1: COMMUNITY AND ENERGY

Many Irish buildings have very low energy ratings and high running costs, mainly due to heat loss. How we build, heat and run our buildings can play a big part in reducing Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions. Heat loss accounts for 10% of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions. We can make our buildings more energy efficient through retrofitting.

Projects of interest under this theme would reduce the climate impact of buildings in communities by using less energy, utilising renewable energy and avoiding heat loss, which should also save your community money.

Those communities who are interested in applying for Community Energy projects are recommended to get an energy audit. Having an energy audit will strengthen your application because it will highlight the cost saving measures of each action you wish to undertake and how long each would typically take to pay for itself. By way of example, solar panels typically take approximately 7 years to repay the investment.

Below are examples of Community Energy projects delivered under the first phase of funding:

- Energy efficient buildings through retrofitting (e.g. insulation),
- Switching off and using low energy lights/ appliances using smart controls.
- Small community renewable energy projects (solar, hydro, wind)
- Retrofitting community buildings
- LED community lighting, including floodlights
- Sensor lighting
- Heating/building controls
- Heat pump
- Electronic garden tools



Ballyfermot Family Resource Centre - Theme 1 Community Energy

THEME 2: COMMUNITY TRAVEL

Transport accounts for approximately 20% of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions. Changing our means of travel is not simple and is often dictated by previous planning and housing choices. How we travel is one of the main areas where behaviour change can have a rapid and real impact on achieving our climate goals. Projects focusing on this theme should contribute to the reduction in emissions from transport.

Below are examples of Community Travel projects delivered under the first phase of funding:

- Bicycle parking and shelters, including bike lockers
- Bike repair stands
- Bike library
- Community cargo bikes
- Family bike hire scheme
- Community EV charging point(s)



Artane Beaumont Family Resource Centre

Theme 2 Community Travel – Supporting a healthy, active community

THEME 3: FOOD AND WASTE

Growing, processing and transporting food requires large amounts of energy and materials. It is estimated that one third of the food we grow is wasted and accounts for 10% of global emissions. There is a national commitment to reduce food waste by 50% by 2030.

While being mindful that different situations such as the culture, religion, health, abilities and tastes can affect the decisions individual people can make; at a systems, community and lifestyle level there are opportunities to connect and engage people in action on food, waste and climate change.

Below are examples of Food and Waste projects delivered under the first phase of funding:

- Community garden development
- Food markets
- Community/dispersed orchard
- Polytunnels (including re-skinning)
- Greenhouses/sheds
- Community composting facilities
- Raised beds
- Shredder/woodchipper, composters and wormeries
- Water refill stations
- Repair hubs/ recycling facilities
- Community fridge
- Compostable toilet



Killester Blooms - Dispersed orchard

Theme 3 Food and Waste and 5 Nature Based Solutions

THEME 4: SHOPPING AND RECYCLING (CIRCULAR ECONOMY)

What we buy has a major contribution to emissions in how they are produced, transported, used, reused and recycled. If we keep on using resources as we do now, by 2050 we would need the resources of three Earths to satisfy demand. Ireland is moving towards creating a circular economy - making products that last longer, can be repurposed, reused and eventually recycled more easily.

As shoppers we have the power to influence production. People are changing their shopping habits by buying products that last longer or repurposing items, planning what they will do with things when they are finished using them, recycling as much as possible, actively segregating their waste for collection and using recycling centres and services near to them.

Projects of interest relating to this theme would increase the variety and number of recycling facilities in the local community and initiatives aimed at reducing, reusing and recycling.

Below are examples of Circular Economy projects delivered under the first phase of funding:

- Community repair hubs
- Swap shops
- Sewing machines
- Paint reuse facilities
- Water filling stations
- Single use plastics elimination in the community
- Green your festival kits
- Returnable coffee cups
- **Swap shops**



Tog Hackerspace – A Repair Café in a Box

Theme 4 – Circular Economy

The Repair Café is available for community groups across Dublin to borrow, saving them having to buy their own equipment to run repair events, thereby reducing costs and waste.

THEME 5: LOCAL CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Ireland has an abundance of natural resources, from our bogs and forests to our rivers and oceans. These natural resources need to be protected from climate change, and in return, they will help us by absorbing carbon, reducing the risk of flooding, increasing plants and wildlife (biodiversity), and acting as places for us all to reconnect with nature.

Below are examples of Nature projects delivered under the first phase of funding:

- Mini forests
- Forest schools
- Ponds
- Dispersed orchards
- Roof gardens/ green roof
- Pollinator projects
- Water harvesting
- Climate resilience projects
- Invasive species removal
- Wetland conservation
- Rain gardens/ rain planters



Raheny Tidy Village Group

Theme 5 – Nature Based Solutions

NATIONAL CLIMATE ACTION TARGETS

Apart from the Programme themes, projects should seek to demonstrate the following delivery of national climate action at a local level:

- a) Reducing or supporting the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
- b) Increasing the production, or use, of renewable energy
- c) Improving energy efficiency
- d) Increasing climate resilience, such as slowing rainfall during high rainfall events, using stored water during drought conditions.
- e) Identifying nature-based projects that enhance biodiversity and seek to reduce, or increase the removal of, greenhouse gas emissions or support climate resilience in the State, by contributing towards the reduction of the Urban Heat Effect.
- f) Assisting regions in the State (including communities in those regions) and within sectors of the economy impacted by the transition to a low carbon economy.
- g) Involving potentially innovative solutions to address the above asks.

PROJECT LOCATIONS AND PERMISSIONS

It is essential that projects are available to the community, where applicable. If the group do not own the land/ building(s)/ floor space, then they must have a minimum of a five-year lease or agreement in place from date of project completion. Groups may be asked to provide proof of ownership, lease or access agreements.

For DCC owned buildings and land, you will need permission from DCC Property Management to make any improvements or alterations. You will also need written permission from Parks for alterations on public land managed by the Parks team.

FUNDING/ GRANT SIZES

Funding is available for 100% of the project costs. Approximately 50% of our funds will support **Large projects**, 40% for **Medium Projects** and 10% for **Small Projects**. The value of each project category is detailed below:

Project Scale	Project Value
Small Scale Projects	€10,000 to €20,000
Medium Scale Projects	€21,000 to €50,000
Large Scale Projects	€51,000 to €100,000

ELIGIBLE COSTS

The Programme will primarily cover capital costs. Below is a guide to the eligible and ineligible costs for projects. Eligible costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, the following general conditions will apply:

Eligible costs	Ineligible costs*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the sole purpose of implementing the project, be necessary for the project and not used for other purposes • Verifiable and reasonable • No duplicate funding • Funding must comply with state aid requirements • Other funding may be leveraged for the project, but the CCAP funding component must stand on its own merits and be independent from other funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects which solely benefits an individual or generated income • Training, staff cost etc. • Equipment, unless directly related to project • Overheads, travel, operating, subsistence, notional, legal, insurance, loan etc. • Cost incurred before letter of offer • Costs where more appropriate funding exists

*These are some examples of ineligible costs and is not an exhaustive list

VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT)

Where a community group is VAT registered and can claim VAT, they should exclude VAT from their costs when making an application and from their drawdown requests when seeking reimbursements. Claimable VAT should be claimed from Revenue.

Where an applicant is not VAT registered and VAT cannot be claimed, groups should **include** VAT costs in their application and drawdown requests.

VAT is payable on solar projects for community buildings and is typically charged at 13.5%



Raheny Tidy Village – Heritage Tree Planting

HOW TO APPLY

Interested community groups are required to complete an Expression of Interest (Eoi) application. These can be accessed via DCC Citizen Hub – ‘Apply for It’ section, see here <https://citizenhub.dublincity.ie/apply>.

The Community Climate Action officer will review your Eoi and either approve the proposal ready for full application or recommend additions/changes. The advice offered by the Community Climate Action Officer is intended to improve your chances of receiving funding, it does not guarantee funding, in this competitive grant process.

Should you have any queries please contact Dublin City’s Community Climate Action Officer communityclimatefund@dublincity.ie. The Community Climate Action Officer is available to offer guidance to groups looking to develop their projects and completing the application process.

FULL APPLICATION PHASE:

Groups making a successful Eoi application will receive a notification once phase II moves into the application phase. This phase will require additional information which you are required to supply in support of your application.

Please note: No applications will be considered after the deadline and groups can only make one application per organisation.

Documents to submit with the application form:

- Governance Documents for the organisation e.g. terms of reference, constitution, AGM minutes etc.
- Costings breakdown i.e. written proof of quotes
- Any relevant supporting documentation, e.g. biodiversity reports, energy audits etc. These are not compulsory but may improve your chances of receiving funding.
- Gantt Chart



CLG Na Fianna GAA Club – Theme 2 Community Travel – Bicycle Repair Facility

COSTS AND BUDGETING

As part of the application community groups will need to prepare a budget detailing everything that they will need to pay for during the project. To ensure an application represents value for money, the applicant must provide 3 written quotes with the submission for goods and services valued between €1000-€20,000, for goods and services above €20,000, 5 quotes are required. Communities must also consider green procurement where possible. DCC must be satisfied that the application represents value for money and that the applicant has engaged with suppliers in developing their proposal.

Where three quotes for a particular product/service is not possible or is overly burdensome in the case of multiple project components, this requirement may be waived, and the application may be evaluated on the quotes available. Groups should consult with the Community Climate Action Officer prior to submitting their application if this situation arises.

For goods and services below €1000 a screenshot of goods from websites will suffice. Showing examples of shopping around for the best product will benefit your application.

When drawing up costs it is advised to include a contingency to address any unforeseen changes to costs or inflation. This would be especially important for bigger projects.

When getting quotes from suppliers, groups should try to ensure that quotes will be valid for when they are carrying out the work, otherwise procurement may need to be repeated if groups are awarded funding. Please note that successful applicants will need to follow public procurement guidelines and depending on the type of work and cost, may need to get further quotes. The Community Climate Action Officer can advise groups on this.

Projects are anticipated to move to implementation phase by Q2 of 2026

STATE AID AND DE MINIMIS

Public funding is deemed to be 'State Aid' where it provides the recipient, whether an enterprise, not-for-profit organisation, or an individual, an economic advantage over others. To comply with State Aid rules, the level of funding provided to a project promoter must not exceed €200,000 - this is known as the De Minimis ceiling, which sets a limit on how much assistance can be given to organisations (to the aforementioned limit) during the previous three-year fiscal period.

In simple terms, if your group does not offer **goods or services** to other EU member states, your application is not considered State Aid.



Liffey Partnership – Theme 3 Food and Waste – Re-skinning Polytunnels.

EVALUATION, SELECTION AND APPROVAL

For a project to be successful and receive funding they need to first pass the evaluation stage, then the selection stage and finally the approval stage.

1. EVALUATION:

All applications will be evaluated by DCC to ensure they align with the objectives and eligibility of this Programme and will be marked against the selection criteria below. Applications must meet a minimum score of 50% or above and meet the minimum scores, to be considered for selection by DCC.

2. SELECTION:

Following evaluation, DCC will then select the final projects taking account of the highest scores and:

- the geographical distribution of projects
- the desirability to fund a variety of different projects and across multiple themes
- the contribution of the projects to the climate action objectives of DCC

3. APPROVAL:

DCC will submit the selected projects to the Minister of the Climate, Energy and Environment for final approval. Success at the evaluation, and selection stages is not a guarantee of funding.

The Minister will decide what projects are ultimately approved and any specific conditions of funding.



Darndale Football Club – Theme 2 Community Travel – Bicycle Library

EVALUATION CRITERIA

To ensure projects are selected in a transparent and fair manner, applications will be first evaluated on the following criteria. The maximum score is 100. Applications must meet a minimum score of 50% or above and meet the minimum score required under selected criteria to be considered for a project partnership with the DCC.

Selection criterion for strand 1	Description	Maximum score	Minimum score requirements
Relevance and impact	The project meets the objectives to build a low carbon community, contributing to Irelands climate action targets	30	15
Innovation and scalability	The project contains a practical approach and innovation with the potential to be scaled up or replicated by other groups and has lasting impacts post funding.	20	10
Value for money	The cost applied for are reasonable, represents efficient use of resources and are commensurate with the quality and nature of the activities proposed. Realistic, specific and relevant outputs and outcomes are identified and commensurate to the level of investment	20	10
Achievability	The organisation/partnership has the appropriate expertise to deliver the proposed project. The proposal is clear, coherent and deliverable within the timeframe with key milestones being monitored	10	5

Partnership approach	Any partnerships, including roles of partner group, are clearly listed with an agreement in place. The proposal should demonstrate stakeholder involvement	10	10
Governance of project	Any necessary governance and financial management processes are in place and meet the program requirements (with evidence of tax compliance where applicable)	10	10
total	100	50	

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE EVALUATION OF SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS

Small projects will be evaluated under the same criteria listed above however consideration will be given to the smaller scale of the project. Projects should still be relevant and demonstrate impact. Thought should be given to the potential for replication by other communities, but they do not need to be innovative or scalable.



Beechwood Parish – Theme 1 Community Energy – Solar Panels

WHAT TO EXPECT IF YOUR APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL

Following the Minister's approval, DCC will issue a Letter of Offer to the successful communities setting out the terms and conditions. Groups are responsible for carrying out their projects within 18 months from receiving the Letter of Offer to complete their projects. DCC reserves the right to withdraw from a project if all requirements are not met within a reasonable period. If an applicant is awarded a lower funding allocation from what was initially sought, the applicant may submit a revised programme of works to the satisfaction of DCC. In signing their funding agreements, each community will agree to the following:

- Compliance with the Climate Action Fund Financial Guidelines.
- Compliance with Circular: 13/2014, from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.
- Compliance with Public Procurement guidelines in relation to the purchase of all goods and services.
- Agree to retain all documentation for 7 years.
- The provision of data and information on the actions funded as may be requested by DCEE and/or the local authority.
- The maintenance of separate accounting records for its projects.
- The funding is subject to audit by DCEE
- Vouched receipts, photographs of completed works (where appropriate), and other documentation as necessary may be sought by DCC and DCEE.
- Site Visits: The Department and/or DCC may carry out unannounced site visits to verify compliance with Programme terms and conditions.
- The contribution of the 'Government of Ireland, and "Department of Climate Energy and Environment." must be acknowledged in publicity, promotions and signage, and other relevant matters as appropriate.
- The Community Climate Action Officer will be developing case studies on projects and groups will be asked to provide details about their works and experiences.



Killester Donnycarney FC – Theme 5 – Native Trees

Slowing the hydropath and reduce the urban heat effect

PAYMENT AND REPORTING

Successful applications for funding under this Programme will only be paid to the applicant group/organisation's Bank Account.

Groups will submit the following paperwork to receive reimbursement of funds:

- Before image of sight works are to be undertaken
- Quote from preferred supplier
- Invoice from preferred supplier
- Proof of payment (from your bank account to the contractors account)
- Invoice receipt (or email confirmation of receipt of funds) from preferred contractor)
- After image showing the work undertaken

All payments are subject to:

- Evidence of compliance with the public procurement guidelines. If the grantee does not comply with the public procurement guidelines, financial sanctions may apply e.g. expenditure will be deemed ineligible and will not be reimbursed
- Evidence of compliance with Climate Action Fund Guidelines.
- Eligibility of the costs as per the guidelines for the Programme and Letter of Offer.

PRE-FUNDING

This is a reimbursement grant (groups pay for the works and are refunded by DCC) however funding is available for groups who are not in a position to pay for the works and wait to be refunded. Groups will be asked when applying if they require pre-funding/ bridge financing.

Pre-funding will be given out in instalments (e.g. 25% of the total project cost). Only when groups have fully spent their first prefunding instalment (i.e. vouched expenditure has been submitted and approved by DCC) and have met the milestone criteria will the next instalment be released, and so on.

Prefunding should only be used for the payment of eligible costs approved by DCC. Prefunding that remains unspent at the end of the project must be returned/repaid to DCC immediately. Groups will be liable for unspent funds or ineligible costs.



Darndale Belcamp Newlife Centre – Theme 3 and 5 - Raised beds crafted by local people using treated timber

DATA PROTECTION INFORMATION

Provided by applicants and those who receive funding will be utilised for the purposes of evaluating and administering this Programme, and to facilitate reporting, auditing and any site visits. When evaluating the applications and during the lifetime of the projects, DCC may share information with the Department of Climate Energy and Environment

KEY DATES ASSUMING A SEPTEMBER LAUNCH

MILSESTONE	DATE
Application phase	8 weeks – September and October 2025
Evaluation and selection	8 weeks – November and December 2025
Approval by DECC	4 Weeks – January 2026
Results announced/ Letter of Offer made	February – March 2026
Implementation phase begins	Anticipated March/April 2026

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Kingfisher Project – Theme 3 Food and Waste and Theme 5 Nature Based Solutions

Pixel Project – 100 local people are being provided mini raised beds to help them grow food and provide plants for nature. Support/advice provided by the volunteers of the Kingfisher Project.

Building community, improving food security and building climate resilience.