



THE 'EASTERN AND MIDLANDS EMERGING ROADMAP FOR A GREEN ECONOMY' (EMERGE)

COLLECTIVE AWARENESS BUILDING

February 16th 2023

#EMERGEMidlands



Stronger Charities.
Stronger Communities.

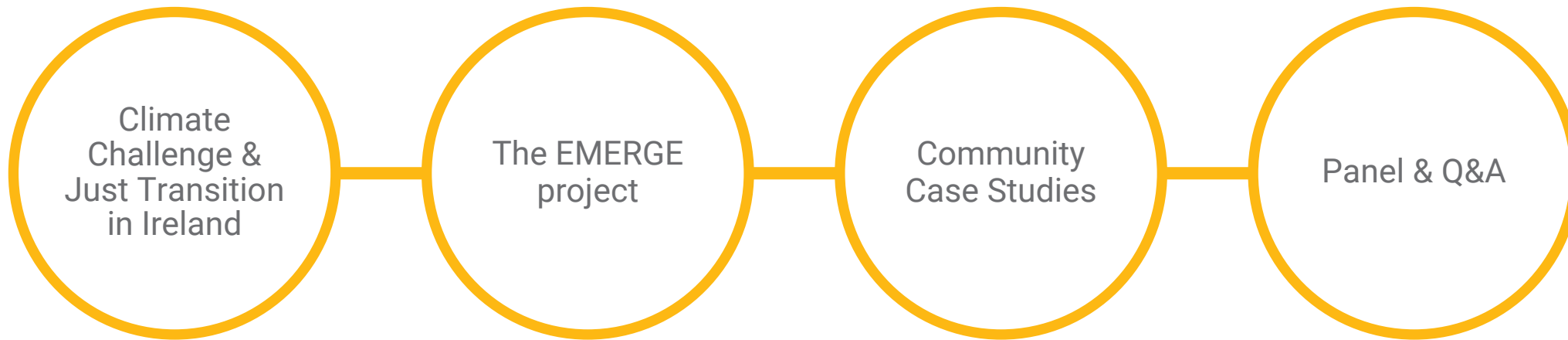


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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Agenda



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INTRODUCING YOUR SPEAKERS



**Dr Graham
Thrower**

Urban Foresight



**Johnny
Sheehan**

The Wheel



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INTRODUCING YOUR PANELLISTS

Patricia Frayne

Portlaoise Enterprise
Centre

<https://enterprisecentre.ie/>

Linda Walsh

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Pat Kennedy

eTownz

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Roisín Greaney

TASC

The People's Transition
Project Case Study

<https://www.peoplestransition.ie/>



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CLIMATE CHALLENGE AND JUST TRANSITION IN IRELAND

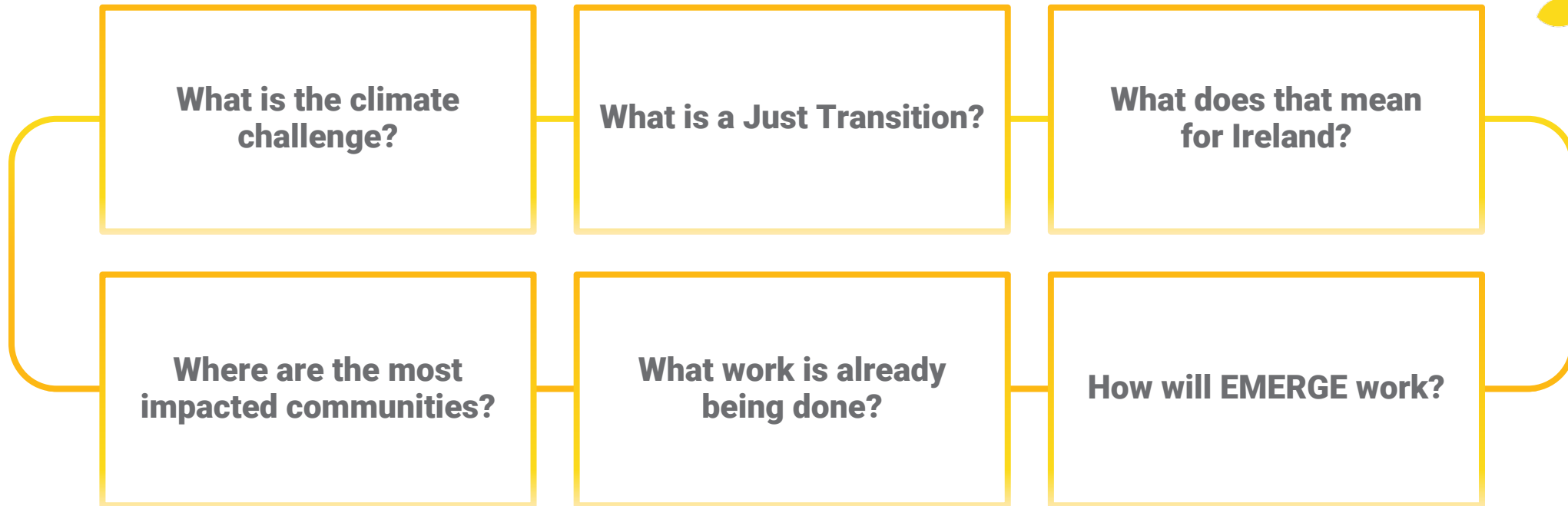
Urban Foresight



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Moving Ireland to a climate neutral economy



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The climate challenge

Global carbon emissions mean that the world is heading to more than 2°C of warming. This would have severe consequences, not only for the environment, but also for our societies and economies.

To respond to this there is a pressing need for countries to decarbonise their economies. In doing so, energy generation is key.

In Ireland, the government has taken a decisive step to cease the industrial harvesting and burning of peat and to invest significantly in renewables.

This both removes the carbon emissions from peat burning but also allows the remediation of bogs, which are a major carbon sink.



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How has this challenge been captured in policy?

The European Green Deal and the European Just Transition Mechanism recognise that regions and communities across the EU require support to transition to climate neutrality by 2050.

The EU Just Transition Mechanism will receive €55 billion in funding between 2021 and 2027. Of this, Ireland will receive €84.5 million, which will be further supplemented by match funding from the Irish Government.

To move towards climate neutrality by 2050, the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 commits the Irish Government to reduce Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions by 51% (from 2018 levels) by 2030.

The consequences of moving to a climate neutral economy for Ireland

- The cessation of industrial peat cutting
- Closure of ESB and BnM facilities in the wider Midlands region
- Loss of employment opportunities in the area
- Social and economic impacts
- Environmental and biodiversity opportunities
- Funding opportunities via the EU and Irish governments to address social, economic and environmental opportunities across the most impacted areas



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The Just Transition opportunity for Ireland

The cessation of peat cutting has had a significant impact on communities across the wider Midlands region.

To make the transition to a climate neutral economy fair for everyone, we must support those counties and communities most impacted.

The Just Transition is about ensuring the low carbon future does not leave these communities behind. It is about enabling communities to decide what their future looks like and to maximise employment opportunities.



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How is the Just Transition being driven locally in West Kildare?

The West Kildare Just Transition Plan (2022), developed by Urban Foresight for Kildare County Council, identified key themes and actions:

Nature and Heritage Based Tourism

- Establishing community owned marinas and facilities.
- Pop-up or touring exhibitions at Bord na Mona infrastructure sites.

Business and Skills

- Encourage new community development groups to emerge.
- Ensuring 'One stop shops' are centres for skills matching, training and remote networking.

Energy Efficiency and Generation

- Establish a community retrofit initiative.
- Establish a Just Transition focussed Community Gain Scheme – ensuring Bord na Mona's development and nature-based projects are aligned.



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How is the Just Transition being driven locally in County Westmeath?

The Westmeath County Development Plan (2021-2027), Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon 2020 – 2030 and communities are driving the Just Transition by:

Green Skills and Creating Smart Towns and Communities

- Utilising green skills expertise from TUS, Maynooth University, Irish Manufacturing Research and support from the European Network for Rural Development.

Green and Heritage Tourism

- Building upon success at Dún na Sí Amenity and Heritage Park in Moate.
- Establishing Athlone as a strategic green tourism hub on the River Shannon.

Upskilling and Capturing Green Economic Opportunities

- MBDP (Midlands Bioenergy Development Project) aiming to create green bioenergy startups.



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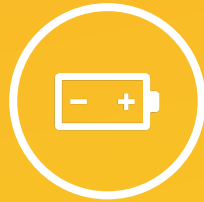


Driving the benefits of a Just Transition for Impacted Communities

How will these 21 communities be able to use the Just Transition as an opportunity for a better future?



**Upskilling/reskilling
in green sectors**



**Community owned
energy**



**Tourism
opportunities**



Sectoral development



Low carbon travel



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What work has already been done to help impacted communities across Ireland?



Community Owned Energy



New modes of tourism – active, environmental and heritage



Sectoral innovation and SME incubation – agriculture, food, manufacturing



Green skills – retrofit, energy, modern methods of construction



Multi-use community hubs



Education, training and upskilling



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THE EMERGE PROJECT?

The Wheel



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EMERGE is...

A **Training & Mentoring programme** designed to empower communities in the wider Midlands region to meet the challenges and opportunities of Ireland's transition to a climate-proofed and resilient economy and society.

The programme will support the **impacted communities** to:



take ownership of the new opportunities created by climate action



create action plans & access funding



own the economic, social and environmental future of the wider Midlands region



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We are working across these Counties & Communities



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What has been done so far?

We held a launch event which introduced the EMERGE project and outlined the social and economic opportunities of climate action in Ireland.

We are now speaking to each of the counties in pairs to show how you can be involved in the Just Transition, the support available to you, and examples of successful community projects in your region.

This session will give you an idea of what communities are already doing and give you a chance to speak to those involved.



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What's next?



Community Transition Dialogues

April – May 2023

Purpose:

To support a group of 21 impacted communities across the wider Midlands region to identify a local opportunity and idea for development.

Format:

- Face-to-Face events in 21 communities
- Facilitated discussion on the key opportunities that each community sees for meeting the challenges in their area
- Case study examples of what is working elsewhere
- Prioritisation of needs, opportunities and ideas



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Community Activation Toolkit

May – October 2023

Purpose:

Help participating communities to turn their ideas, insights and actions into practical projects and realities.

Format:

- Communities will have ongoing support from Urban Foresight & The Wheel throughout this period for advice, guidance and signposting
- Communities will also be put in contact with other communities around the region who have previously carried out similar projects
- Each community will be supported to produce a project Toolkit [incl. Resource Maps; Project lifecycle; Funding plan; troubleshooting etc.]



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Community Activation Plans

October 2023

Purpose:

Showcase and celebrate the plans and projects developed by the communities involved.

Format:

- Online event
- Communities will showcase the planning toolkits they have established by presenting to each other
- Specific projects will be discussed in detail
- This session will offer final evaluations and feedback



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Our approach to helping these communities

We recognise that great work is already being done at a community level across Ireland. So how will our approach add to this?

- We are speaking to other entities also delivering support, such as SEAI, Irish Rural Link, the LEADER programme and Forestry Ireland.
- We are also in contact with local community development companies and county councils.
- Co-creating priority projects with communities
- Focusing on additionality and problem solving
- Creating peer learning networks
- Using real world case studies from other communities
- Creating toolkits which provide practical help to realise projects



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DRIVING ENTERPRISE IN LAOIS



Portlaoise Enterprise Centre can provide your start-up with the support structure that will greatly increase the likelihood that you will succeed over the coming years.

Patricia Frayne

Portlaoise Enterprise Centre

<https://enterprisecentre.ie/>

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

The following programmes are available to communities through County Kildare LEADER Partners

SICAP is the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme supporting disadvantaged communities. Click to view courses and other supports for volunteers and voluntary organisations

Rural Development Programme (RDP) is the LEADER Programme which provides grant aid to individuals

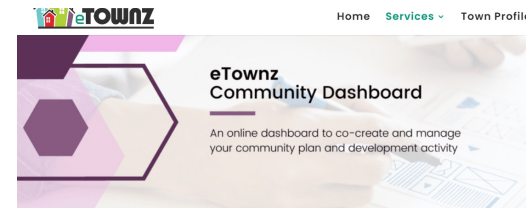
Tús is a 12-month work placement programme for individuals who are on a Jobseekers Allowance or employees for community projects.

Older Voices Kildare (OVK) is a social inclusion initiative which specifically targets older persons at risk of or limited social capital. Click to find out more about OVK.

Linda Walsh

Kildare Local Development Company

<https://www.countykildarelp.ie/>

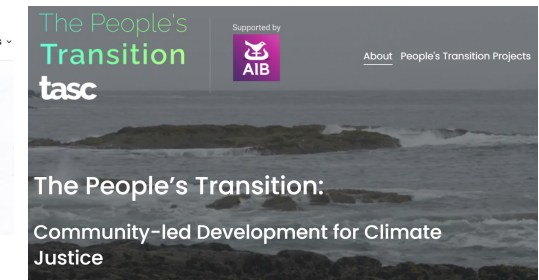


The eTownz Dashboard is designed to support

Pat Kennedy

eTownz

<https://etownz.com>



Roisín Greaney

TASC

The People's Transition Project, Case Study

<https://www.peoplestransition.ie/>

PANELIST'S AREAS OF WORK



THANK YOU!

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