



The Climate Action Regional Offices are an initiative of Local Government, funded by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment, as a shared service for Local Authorities.



Annual Report 2025

Oifigí Réigiúnach um
Gníomhú ar son na hAeráide
Rialtas Áitiúil

Climate Action
Regional Offices
Local Government



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland





Mission Statement

The mission of the Climate Action Regional Offices is to coordinate and support Local Government to lead transformative change and measurable climate action across our cities and counties.



Atlantic
Seaboard
North CARO

caro@mayococo.ie



Dublin
Metropolitan
CARO

caro@dublincity.ie



Atlantic
Seaboard
South CARO

caro@corkcoco.ie



Midlands &
Eastern
CARO

caro@kildarecoco.ie

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Foreword

The Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO's) Lead Authorities are delighted to present the publication of the 2025 CARO Annual Report which outlines details of the many activities and accomplishments undertaken and delivered by the CAROs during the year. The role of the CAROs is to support Local Authorities in the implementation of their Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAPs), to bring added value at a regional level through sharing and capacity building, and to provide a coordination function to achieve consistent outcomes.

This year, the CAROs continued to strengthen our reputation and relationships with both internal and external stakeholders and particularly by working in partnership with all 31 local authorities and the Department of Climate, Environment and Energy (DCEE). We are particularly proud of the work carried out to progress the Decarbonisation Zones, the approval of the revised Climate Charter and

the awarding of the "Mission" label to Dublin and Cork Cities.

Significant progress was made during the year, in supporting the establishment and implementation of Energy units and bureaux, the progression of new funding agreements with SEAI (Public Sector Retrofit Pathfinder programme), the establishment of an all-island Beaches and Dunes Forum, the continued roll out of the Climate Training Programmes and the work to support decarbonising of the Local Authority Fleet.

The achievements outlined in this Annual Report have been made possible because of the collaborative effort, initiative, and support from all our staff and stakeholders, and particularly the 31 Local Authorities and the staff in the four Climate Action Regional Offices. Their contribution and engagement is very much appreciated as it has enabled our accomplishments in 2025.

Ann Moore

Acting Director of Service – Lead Authority ASBN CARO

Ann Moore



Emer O'Brien

Acting Director of Service Lead Authority ASBS CARO

Emer O'Brien



Patricia Reidy

Director of Service Lead Authority DM CARO

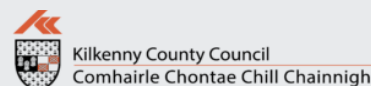
Patricia Reidy



Fiona Deegan

Director of Service Lead Authority E&M CARO

Fiona Deegan



Marian Higgins

Director of Service Lead Authority E&M CARO

Marian Higgins



CARO

2025 Highlights

8,496

Training Places
Delivered



12

Sectoral Adaptation
Plans Responses
Submitted

4

Videos
Published



3

New funding
sources for DZs

3

Reports
Produced



12

Workshops
delivered

14

CARO Projects
Delivered



3

Successful Funding
Applications

43

Engagements
with Regional
Stakeholders
(RSGs)



4

EU Funded projects
progressing

Executive Summary

This is the sixth annual report for the Climate Action Regional Offices, (CAROs) which were established under a Service Level Agreement between the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (now the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment) and a Lead Authority from each Region for a six-year period from 2023 to 2029. Local Authorities are key players in implementing adaptation and mitigation measures at local and community levels through their Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAPs).

They will help to put Ireland on a trajectory to achieve climate neutrality by no later than the end of 2050. The CAROs help to drive Ireland's Climate agenda by supporting all 31 Local Authorities in the implementation of their Climate Action Plans and Decarbonising Zones by building partnerships, capacity and sharing learnings.

The Annual Work Programme for 2025 was approved by the Strategic Implementation Group in January. It is organised into seven Work Packages, each with specific actions and sub-actions showing how the programme will be delivered throughout the year. Each chapter in this report, tracks a Work Package and identifies what was achieved, and the obstacles that were encountered during the year. The report has also been assessed against

the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the SDG assessment profile is included.

Work Package 1 relates to Governance and partnerships. Key achievements in this Work Package include the sharing of learnings, co-ordinated decision making, cross border engagement, connecting with the Northern & Western and Eastern and Midlands Regional Assemblies to gain access to funding, developing two additional KPIs, the review of Local Authority Climate Action Charter, developing business cases for additional funding and participating in the CARO Review. Obstacles under this Work Package were funding and finding a mechanism to work with a broad governance network in a cohesive manner.

Work Package 2 relates to Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAPs). Advancing the Decarbonising Zones (DZs) was a highlight under this Work Package. The DZ Advisory Group had its first full year in existence, and the impact could be seen as the year progressed through increased visibility and support for the DZs including the identification of three separate funding sources to support projects. Capacity building events included the annual CARO Networking event showcasing many important projects and initiatives in the Wexford area, and events in Carlow and Fermanagh demonstrating rain gardens and a sustainable factory respectively. One obstacle under this Work Package is the need for a standardised approach to reporting on the actions in each LA CAP through the CARO website. Also, while additional funding sources for DZs were identified, including the funding of staff for Mulranny Community Futures (Mulranny DZ), Staffing and funding for DZs remains a challenge.



Work Package 3 focuses on Adaptation. Significant events at a national level were the publishing of the National Climate Change Risk Assessment (NCCRA) and the drafting of the second round of Sectoral Adaptation Plans (SAP's) by thirteen Government Sectors. These are significant documents that will influence the 2026 and future CARO Work Programmes. The CAROs supported the LGMA and the CCMA by making submissions to the draft SAP's. The NCCRA is being utilised to update the semi-quantitative Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment methodology developed by ASBN CARO for Local Authorities. Other highlights include the establishment of the Beaches and Dunes Forum and the National Nature-Based Solutions working group, the Urban Heat Island research project, the ongoing work on Climate Adaptation for Regional and Local Roads, the all-Island Sand Dune Gathering and promoting the EU Mission on Adaptation. Obstacles under this Work Package relate to the complexity and long roll out period for adaptation projects along with the unpredictability of the events, planning issues, costs, environmental protection and ownership of lands.

Work carried out under **Work Package 4**, Mitigation included all CAROs engaging with the Local Authorities in their Region and SEAI to support the establishment and implementation of Energy agencies, units or bureaux, to advance funding agreements under the Pathfinder programme, and to commence the development of template documents to assist in the governance and guidance of these projects. This year also saw the advancement of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy, the Final Report and recommendations of the Decarbonising the Local Authority Fleet Working Group, the Bioeconomy deep demonstration project, the

retro-commissioning pre pilot, and the start of the Green Flag Award for Local Authorities. The significant obstacle here was the ability to procure energy expertise due to the limited pool of professionals available.

Work Package 5 focused on capacity building through Training and Education led by E&M CARO. The highlights included the delivery of over 8000 training numbers (more than target), the roll out of a new learning management system, the establishment of three thematic training programmes, and the annual review of third level courses.

2025 saw a lot of networking events under **Work Package 6** Communication & Citizen Engagement. The highlights included successful projects under the National Community Climate Action Programme, namely the Beaches and Dunes Project and Climate Connected. The Climate Connected project brought together partners ASBN CARO, University of Galway (UG), Local Authorities in the ASBN region, Energy Cooperatives Ireland and Volunteer Ireland to work on developing a range of tools, case studies, and a sharing platform to support decarbonised communities to reduce their carbon footprint.

Other events supported by CARO included the GAA Green Clubs Programme, the Mary Robinson Conference, the Cork Summer show, a Climate Careers Day and Dublin Climate Action Week. In the background work commenced on streamlining communications processes including the Communications Strategy, Register and Control of Documents, accessibility for reports, work on the website and a consistent approach to Communications.

This work will continue in 2026. Obstacles under this Work Package are the need to

upgrade the CARO website and associated funding, the need to maintain the website with up to date and easily accessible content and associated resources.

Work Package 7 relates to Knowledge Development a key requirement for the CAROs. Highlights under this Work Package included being successful on the EU Horizon research project GRACE – Growing Climate Resilience in Remote Rural Areas through Community

Empowerment, championing sustainable leadership with ATU, the EU Mission label being awarded to Dublin and Cork Cities, the green roof Pilot Project, and strengthening Knowledge on Renewable Energy for Island Communities.

Obstacles here relate mainly to the time-consuming nature of these projects and the limited staff available.



Image: Cliffs of Moher. Photo credit: Saad Chaudhry (Unsplash).



01

About CARO

The CAROs

Coordinating and supporting local government to lead transformative change and measurable climate action across our cities and counties.

SUPPORT

The CAROs have a critical role in supporting Local Authorities in the implementation of national climate change policy at local level.

CARO REGIONAL OFFICES

There are four regional CARO offices, namely: Atlantic Seaboard North, Atlantic Seaboard South Eastern & Midlands, Dublin Metropolitan

The regional approach targets specific climate risks, making the CAROs key players in Ireland's shift to a low-carbon future.

GUIDANCE

The CAROs provide guidance, advice and support to Local Authorities to effectively address climate change across Ireland.

COLLABORATION & COORDINATION

CARO plays a key role in uniting different groups to tackle climate change: They share knowledge and help Local Authorities to work together.

STRATEGIC ROLE

CAROs focus on major climate priorities by identifying and addressing cross-sector climate challenges, strengthening cooperation between Local Authorities and the Government and supporting the implementation of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

IMPLEMENTATION

The CAROs support Local Authorities in the implementation of their Climate Action Plans and De-carbonizing zones.

Figure 1: CARO at a Glance

About CARO

Established by the CCMA in 2018, CARO supports all 31 Local Authorities to act on climate by providing guidance, tools and coordination. The CAROs connect councils, stakeholders and communities to scale solutions.

The CAROs provide guidance, advice and support to all 31 Local Authorities to leverage the capability, reach and resources of the sector to effectively address climate change. By bringing together Local Authorities, stakeholders, and local communities, the CAROs make policies easier to implement and help to scale up impactful solutions.

The regional approach targets specific climate risks, making the CAROs key players in Ireland's shift to a low-carbon future.

A Service Level Agreement signed in 2023 with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), (now the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment, (DCEE)), has secured a total allocation of €12 million to support CAROs for the period 2023–2029. This support and funding have been instrumental in the establishment, development, and ongoing success of the CAROs. The CAROs support Local Authorities in achieving their climate goals by effectively addressing the challenges of climate change and contributing to Ireland's journey toward a sustainable and climate-resilient future. The CAROs also promote the sharing of information, ideas, and knowledge, and the collaborative development of actions of scale between Local Authorities.

A Summary of the CARO Finances for 2025

CARO Finances 2025

The combined budget and spending across the four CARO regional offices

Total CAROs Budget allocation	€2,000,000
Total Claimed by CAROs	€1,690,062.48

Figure 2 Summary of CARO Finances

There are four regional CARO offices, namely:

- Dublin Metropolitan
- Atlantic Seaboard North
- Atlantic Seaboard South
- Eastern & Midlands

Each of the Regional CAROs have a specific focus and develop knowledge hubs based on their geographical characteristics, vulnerabilities and shared climate risks experienced across the Local Authority areas in their region. The Regions are led by a Regional Coordinator, supported by a technical and administrative team. The profile of each region and their specialised knowledge hub is shown overleaf.

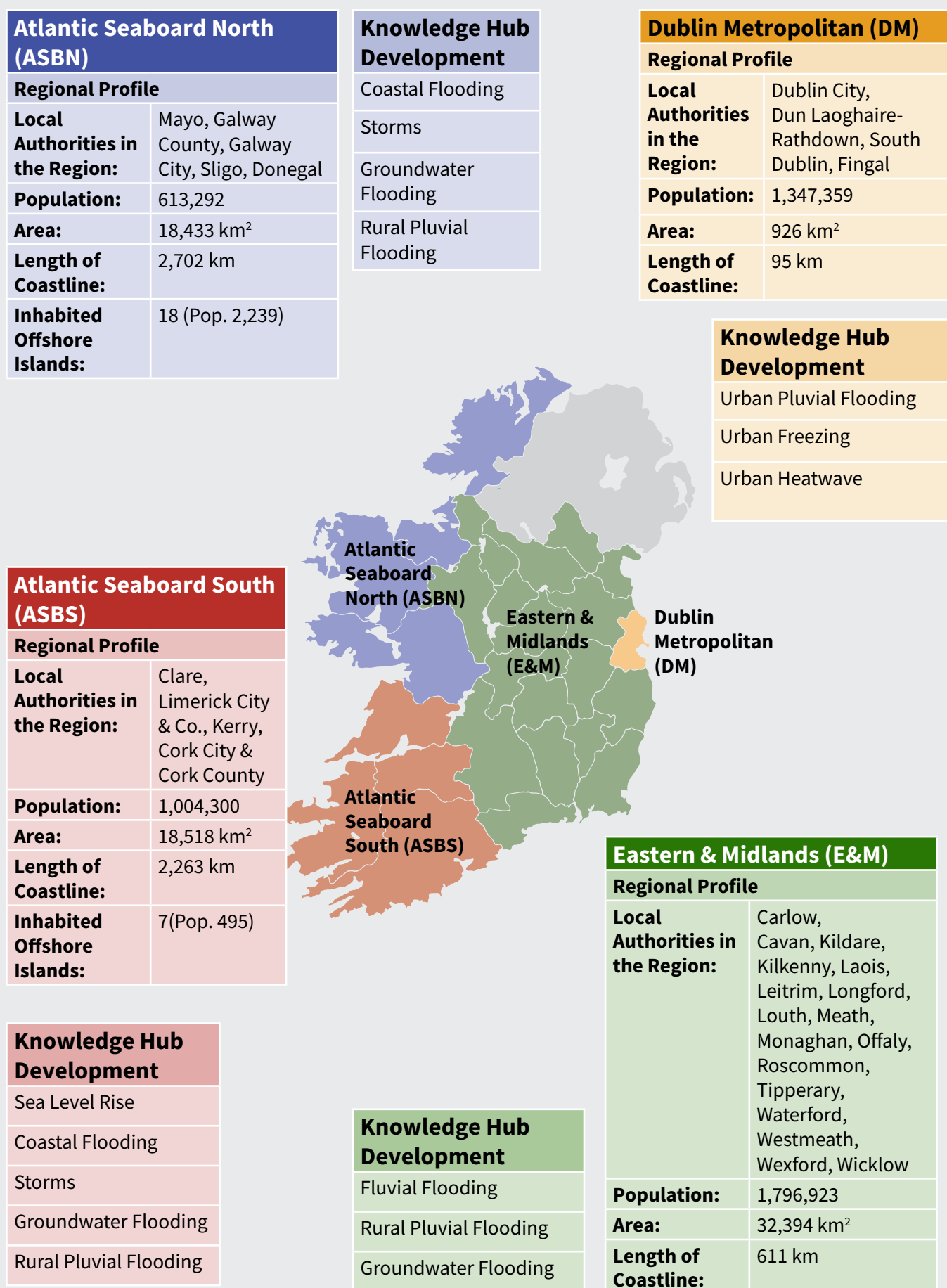


Figure 3 Regional Structure of the CAROs



02

CAROs Work Programme

CAROs Work Programme

The Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs) help drive Ireland's climate agenda. Each year, all four regional offices develop a shared Annual Work Programme, under the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and with input from:

- The County and City Management Association (CCMA)
- The Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment (DCEE)
- The CARO Management Group (CMG)

The Work Programme:

- Identifies key actions to improve delivery of climate policies.
- Supports Local Authorities in their climate efforts.
- Builds partnerships with government agencies.
- Encourages local climate initiatives.

The work programme is approved annually by the Strategic Implementation Group (SIG) to ensure alignment with national and regional climate goals and with the Service Level Agreement. Progress is reviewed through quarterly CMG meetings and bi-annual SIG meetings. The programme is organised into seven Work Packages, each with specific actions and sub-actions showing how the programme will be delivered throughout the year. (See Figure 4 and Appendix for details.



Figure 4: The seven Work Packages

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Assessment Profile of 2025 CARO Work Programme

In 2025, the Climate Action Regional Offices made strong progress in climate mitigation, adaptation, governance, training, community engagement, and knowledge development, reinforcing CAROs role as a key driver of climate action across local government. The SDG Assessment shows clear alignment with national climate policy and highlights contributions to SDGs 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 16 and 17.

SDG	Performance	Summary of 2025 Contribution
1 NO POVERTY	•	Indirect resilience, community capacity benefits
2 ZERO HUNGER	•	Limited direct contribution; minor community links
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	• • •	Strong: UHI research, mobility/health co-benefits, resilience
4 QUALITY EDUCATION	• • •	Extensive training delivery (8,000+), LMS, thematic programmes
5 GENDER EQUALITY	•	Indirect inclusivity through equal training access
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	• •	Strong NbS, LAWPRO partnership, flood/water resilience
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	• • •	Energy Bureaux, Pathfinder, renewables, fleet decarbonisation
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	• •	Green skills, Just Transition engagement
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	• • •	Carbon tools, EV strategy, infrastructure adaptation
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	•	Foundational inclusion via engagement tools
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	• • •	Strongest area after SDG13: LA CAPs, DZs, community projects
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	• •	GPP, greening events, waste prevention alignment
13 CLIMATE ACTION	• • •	Core mandate; major progress across adaptation & mitigation
14 LIFE BELOW WATER	• •	Coastal adaptation, Dunes Forum, erosion management
15 LIFE ON LAND	• •	NBS, biodiversity actions, pollinator plan support
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	• • •	Governance structures, KPI reporting, cross-border cooperation
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	• • •	Deep collaboration with SEAI, EPA, LAWPRO, RAs, EU missions



Performance Scale	
• • •	High Contribution – Strong measurable delivery and leadership
• •	Moderate Contribution – Clear delivery, partial impact or enabling role
•	Foundational Contribution – Indirect impact or enabling structure

Figure 5 SDG Assessment Profile of the 2025 Work Programme

Purpose of the 2025 Annual Report

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate CAROs progress in 2025 across all seven Work Packages by highlighting key achievements, identifying challenges and sharing examples of successful projects.

Structure of the report

The report focuses on each of the seven Work Packages in turn, giving an overview, the key aims and priorities, the key achievements, and the obstacles encountered under this Work Package during the year. Case Studies exhibit the projects carried out in the delivery of the programme and a summary table is provided on the spend per Work Package across all CAROs.



Image: Michael Devereux, Chairperson Enniscorthy Community Allotments, speaking at the CARO Networking Event in April



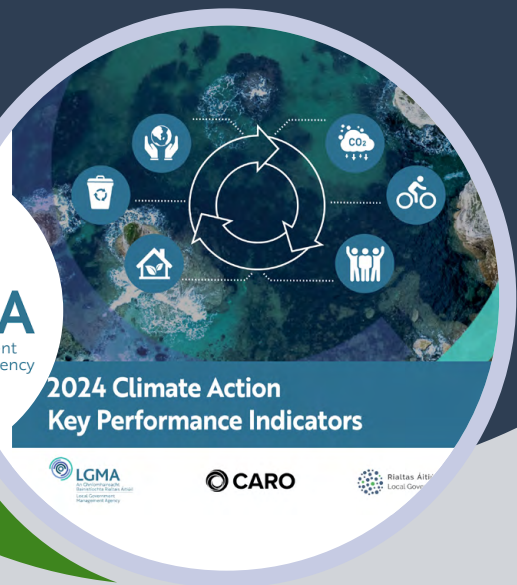
Governance & Partnerships



Case Study



LGMA
Local Government
Management Agency



**2024 Climate Action
Key Performance Indicators**



WP 1 Governance & Partnerships

Local Government Climate Action KPIs - E&M CARO

Background

The Local Government Climate Action (LGCA) KPI Working Group reviews climate action indicators annually to ensure they remain relevant within an evolving policy and implementation context. The group provides the rationale for any revisions or additions to the KPI suite for consideration by the Climate Action Committee of the CCMA. The KPI framework supports a standardised, evidence-based assessment of Local Authority progress aligned with national climate policy and delivery responsibilities. The **E&M CARO** acted as project lead, working with the LGMA Research Unit to provide coordination, technical oversight and support across the reporting cycle.

Action Taken

- Nine structured and minuted meetings were convened.
- Data templates were developed to support consistent reporting.
- An information webinar for Local Authorities on data collection was hosted on 15 January.
- Data collection was coordinated by the LGMA Research Unit, with input from Local Authorities and external stakeholders during January and February. Data verification was completed by E&M CARO.
- CAROs contributed to a draft KPI report, which was endorsed by the Environment, Climate and Circular Economy (ECCE) Committee.
- Two new KPIs were introduced in 2025 to track implementation of Local Authority Climate Action Plans and delivery of the Community Climate Action Programme.
- A coordinated communications strategy was developed by LGMA Research with LGMA Communications and E&M CARO, to support dissemination of the report.

Results / Outcome

In September, the working group published the third annual Local Government Climate Action KPI Report, at a hybrid launch event, presenting a national overview of Local Authority progress during 2024. The reporting cycle focused on ten KPIs, with all data validated and analysed prior to approval by the Environment, Climate and Circular Economy (ECCE) Committee of the CCMA. Findings are presented across four thematic areas: mainstreaming climate action within organisational processes; mitigation actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; adaptation and resilience; and internal behavioural change and capacity building.

Governance & Partnerships

Key Aims & Priorities

- Ensure adherence to governance structures at National, Regional and local level.
- Provide support to the CCMA in implementing the *Delivering Effective Climate Action, 2030 Strategy*, by maintaining local climate action structures recruitment of additional resources etc.
- Maintain relationships with strategic partners such as DCEE, SEAI, EPA, OPR, Irish Planning Institute, Energy Agencies, Office of Public Works (OPW), Regional Assemblies, etc.
- Continue to support LAs in the implementation of the Climate Action Charter (as amended).
- Provide additional support as requested by CCMA and / or DCEE through relevant committees and channels.

Overview

The governance structure of the CAROs is shown in Figure 4. The Strategic Implementation Group (SIG) is the key decision-making body for the CAROs, whose purpose is to consider high level, strategic matters relating to the CAROs, to agree the Annual Work Programme, and to resolve any issues brought forward by the CARO Management Group.

The CARO Management Group (CMG) oversees activities, works closely with Local Authorities, and leads the development and operational delivery of the Annual Work Programme. The core membership of the CMG comprises the Directors of Services and CARO Regional Co-ordinators from the Lead Authority of each Region and senior staff from DCEE.

Regional Steering Groups have been established by DM, ASBN and ASBS CAROs. Four Regional Steering Groups have also been established in each of the sub-regions of E&M CARO. The purpose of the Regional Steering Groups is to refine, prioritise and deliver key climate action strategies, policies and programs in line with national legislation, and to monitor the delivery of the CARO Work Programme particularly activities in their Region. The core membership of the RSG's comprises the Directors of Service (DoS) from the LAs in that Region and CARO Regional Co-ordinators from the Lead Authority of each Region. Regional Steering Groups are chaired by the DoS in the Lead Authority in that Region.

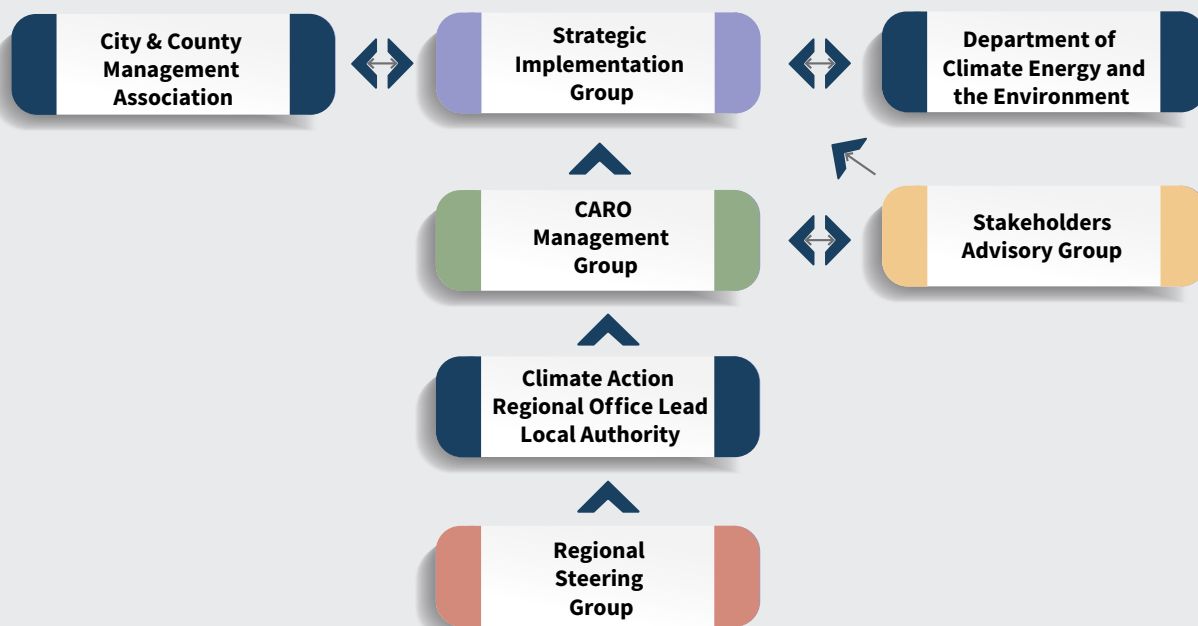


Figure 6: Governance Structure of the CAROs

This provides a strong governance structure at National, Regional, and Local levels, ensuring effective coordination and alignment with key stakeholders in climate action initiatives. By fostering strong relationships with the CCMA and DCEE and supporting Ireland’s Climate Action Plan (2025) (the third Climate Action Plan under the Climate Action & Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021) and the Local Authority sector Strategy “Delivering effective Climate Action 2030” (DECA 2030), CARO plays a vital role in driving sector wide engagement.

Additionally, maintaining close collaboration with the Regional Assemblies and strategic partners such as DCEE, SEAI, EPA, Regional Waste Management Planning Offices (RWMPO) and OPW has been instrumental in advancing climate governance. Quarterly meetings of the CARO Management Group facilitate ongoing monitoring and progress assessment, while biannual Strategic Implementation Group meetings provide a platform for refining strategies and adapting to emerging challenges.



Picture Title: Members of the Clew Bay Partnership at first TalX2 project meeting



Achievements 2025

Strengthening Governance Structures and Oversight

Throughout 2025, the CAROs supported coordination and alignment with key stakeholders across the regions. A total of 43 structured Regional Steering Group meetings were held, ensuring supported consistent communication, shared learning and coordinated decision making. Information from these meetings was actively shared to support collaboration and continuous improvement.

CAROs also contributed to governance at national level through active attendance and engagement at meetings including the:

CARO Management Group (CMG).

Strategic Advisory Group (SAG)

DZ Advisory Group

National Adaptation Steering Committee (NASC)

Climate Ireland Adaptation Network

National Environmental Research Coordination Group

Energy Performance Officer (EPO) Events

These forums enabled progress monitoring, issue resolution and alignment with national climate action priorities.



Business Case for Funding for projects in the annual CARO Work Programme.

Each year the CAROs develop a work programme to deliver on the requirements of the SLA and to support the work of the Local Authorities. The delivery of projects is an essential part of implementing this programme. See case study.



Business Case for Funding the implementation of Local Authority Climate Action Plans.

A Service Level Agreement (2023 to 2028) is in place between the Department and each of the thirty-one Local Authorities to provide funding for the implementation of the Local Authority Climate Action Plans. The funding provides for a fixed sum associated with two staff positions but does not provide any funding for projects. There are almost 4,000 actions to be delivered across all 31 Climate Action plans some of which require project funding. In addition, the fixed amount of funding is not sufficient to cover all the staff costs for some LAs. For the Local Authorities to be able to deliver the



implementation of all actions in their Climate Action Plan, it was recognised by CARO CMG that additional funding was required to cover the costs of staff and project work.

ASBN CARO led out on this project to try to secure additional funding and worked with the CARO CMG, the LGMA, CCMA and SIG to deliver a business case in time for the Departments preliminary budget estimates in April.



Supporting the transition to a climate neutral Bioeconomy

Ireland's transition to a circular, climate-neutral bioeconomy requires coordinated action across national, regional, and local levels. CAROs supported this by:

- E&M CARO liaised with the three Regional Assemblies on emerging bioeconomy opportunities.
- E&M and ASBS CARO facilitated Bioeconomy thematic workshops held in Clonmel, Portlaoise and Sligo.

This work helped strengthen regional coordination and awareness of bioeconomy opportunities. See Case Study.

Cross Border and All Island Engagement

The CAROs continue to support cross border collaboration. This included E&M CARO participating in an event, launched by the CEO of Co-operation Ireland, held at Kilkenny Castle on May 8th, entitled HEIs (Higher Education Institutes) and Local Government: Partnering for Planetary Solutions hosted by the All-Island Local Authority Forum.

The event brought together university researchers and educators, Local Authority leaders, policymakers, and sustainability networks to strengthen cross-border collaboration on climate action and the SDGs. E&M CARO participated in this event through:

- Engagement with event organisers
- Participation as a speaker
- Contribution to a themed panel

The focus of the event was on strengthening cross border collaboration, sharing strategic perspectives and highlighting how higher education institutes can support evidence based local climate action and long-term partnerships.

CAROs are also engaged in the TalX2 Living Lab Development Project and the Beaches & Dunes Forum which are all Island collaborations.





Northern & Western Regional Assembly's Decarbonising Zone Scheme.

E&M CARO and ASBN CARO and DCEE have engaged with the Northern & Western Regional Assembly to develop a new funding source for DZs. The Decarbonising Zone Scheme (DZ Scheme) is a new Grant Scheme for Local Authorities in the Northern and Western Region and is delivered under the Northern and Western Region's ERDF Regional Programme: 'Northern and Western Regional Programme 2021-2027'.



EU Just Transition Fund

CAROs also engaged with the Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) on:



- EU Just Transition Fund (JTF) implementation through the Midlands Regional Enterprise Programme
- Development of potential projects for a new Priority 4 JTF call, including collation of project concepts and ideas to inform funding scope.



Climate Action KPIs

E&M CARO continued to provide leadership for climate action performance monitoring through the Climate Action KPI Working Group. See case study.



Business Case for creation of permanent Climate Action Posts in LAs.

Currently the majority of contracts for Climate positions in Local Authority and CAROs are fixed term contracts. This has led to significant turnover of staff in the sector. E&M CARO are leading on the preparation of a business case to assess the numbers of Climate Staff required and to justify the creation of permanent positions.

Progress made to advance the Business Case included:

- Endorsement to commence business case by ECCE on 25 March, as Project sponsor.
- Development of a Project Initiation Document which was endorsed by PSROG on 12 June.
- Identification of Project Board members which was convened in October.



Collaboration with SEAI on State Aid Assessments for Pathfinder

ASBN CARO and SEAI consulted with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment's State Aid Unit to ensure Pathfinder programme funding complies with State Aid rules.

- ASBN CARO and SEAI developed an assessment template which was trialled in Waterworld in Bundoran, Co. Donegal to assess if Pathfinder funding could constitute State Aid, examining activities, visitor profiles, public-service roles, local demographics, economic impact, and potential competitive effects.
- ASBN CARO & SEAI are developing similar templates for other building types, including county buildings, fire stations, libraries, leisure centres, community centres, and theatres.
- This will enable local authorities to assess at an early stage in the project whether State Aid applies.



Members of Community and County Council outside Waterworld, Bundoran

Collaboration with LAWPRO and Nature-based Solutions (NbS)

ASBS CARO worked closely with LAWPRO at national and regional level. Key achievements included:

- CARO presentation at a LAWPRO Nature-based (NbS) Solutions event in Dundalk, in June.
- LAWPRO were invited to become a member of the NbS thematic Training Group established by E&M CARO.
- CARO assisted LAWPRO in the design of training and mentoring programmes for 2026 to assist local authorities in delivering NbS capital projects funded by DHLGH.



Reed bed installation outside Wexford County Council offices, example of NbS





Ruairí Ó Conchúir (LAWPRO), presenting at the 3rd Annual Sand Dune Gathering, Salthill, Galway



Review of the Local Authority Climate Action Charter

Following workshops with the Local Government sector in early 2025 and engagement with DCEE:

- A revised draft of the Local Authority Climate Action Charter was prepared.
- The revised Charter was approved by the CCMA (ECCE Committee) in March.
- Approval was received from Minister O'Brien's office.
- Arrangements are being progressed between CCMA and DCEE to formally launch the updated Charter.



2024 Annual Report

The 2024 CARO Annual Report was delivered in a new, more accessible format and published on CARO.ie, supporting transparency, accountability and public engagement.



CARO Review

The Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment (DCEE) commissioned a review of the CAROs as a proactive measure to address any potential shortcomings and to enhance the effectiveness of the CAROs. Through this review, the DCEE aim was to ensure that the CAROs are well-equipped to support local authorities in their critical role of implementing climate action at the local level and to help to achieve consistent and impactful outcomes across Ireland. The four Regional CARO offices participated in this review, one of the CARO Regional Coordinators was a member of the Project Steering Group along with representation from the ECCE committee. The final report was completed in July, and it reaffirmed the critical role of the CAROs in enabling local authorities to deliver effective climate action. It acknowledges that CAROs have provided coordination, technical expertise, and strategic support across adaptation and mitigation efforts, contributing significantly to the development of Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAPs) and building capacity within the sector. It has also made several recommendations to support the CAROs and to improve the service being delivered.

Accountability, Reporting and Governance Alignment

- DM CARO completed a review of the National Climate Action Plan (2025), and this was shared among all CAROs.
- All Regional CARO Coordinators participated in the Expert Reporting Group, supporting improved Local Authority reporting of LA CAPs. The Group (LA CAP Monitoring & Reporting Working Group) was established to develop and agree an appropriate monitoring and reporting system for the implementation of Local Authority Climate Action Plans. The group was administered by the LGMA, Co-Chaired by the CCMA and DCEE, and members included the four CAROs, LA representatives, DCEE, industry experts and academics. It was established for a three-month period from January to March and while progress was made, there was no agreement at the final meeting, and the group was disbanded until further engagement occurred between the CCMA and DCEE.

Tracking of Actions

- All actions under this Work Package were on track by year end. Please see Appendix 3.

Obstacles

Delivering the objectives of this Work Package -Governance and Partnerships requires engagement across a broad governance network and this can present challenges. The CARO review highlighted several operational and structural opportunities to strengthen and enhance the CAROs' overall capabilities. The remit of the CAROs has expanded since its initial conception and some lack of clarity has emerged regarding roles and responsibilities. The review also acknowledged that the short-term contracts for staff in the CAROs undermined the ability to build and retain expertise.

The CARO funding model also creates challenges. While funding is adequate for covering immediate staffing costs, it does not support project work or the long-term commitments required for effective climate action. In addition, as all staff vacancies are filled, the amount of funding for staff may become an issue if staff are appointed at higher levels of the pay scales.

Spend for Work Package 1

Governance & Partnership = €3,858 (excluding staff costs and expenses)



Case Study



WP 1 Governance & Partnership

Bingo and Cookery Team Building – DM CARO

Background

A key objective of CARO is ensuring collaboration across Local Authorities to support the delivery of their climate action plans. **DM CARO** sought to find a novel way of encouraging Dublin Local Authority (DLA) Climate Action teams to work together by creating an opportunity for people to learn more about each other and facilitate team building

Action Taken

- In December, DM CARO organised a two-part workshop at Spade Enterprise Centre's Shared Kitchen.
- The first part of the workshop focused on a challenge facing the Local Authorities – decarbonisation zones. Exercises for this portion of the workshop introduced the teams to “15- minute City Bingo” and the Daily Clocks (from Minority Report). The objective of 15 Minute City Bingo was to have people go out in pairs and notice what is or isn't in the neighbourhood. Both exercises informed a discussion about how quality of life and well-being are linked to the places in which we live, and how this focus might support climate action.
- The second part of the workshop involved a cookery class with Sweetie from Happy Hut, who specialises in using local ingredients in global cuisine. As a trained chef who has worked in Michelin Star restaurants in Dublin, she shared her knowledge on the food system with the DLA teams and gave us new skills to help reduce food waste.

Results / Outcome

The event was extremely successful in terms of team building, networking and collaboration between climate teams. Both exercises generated valuable insights into place-based wellbeing and food system sustainability, helping to develop a deeper understanding of how food system are a key part of climate action. This may prompt participants to replicate the events/learning in their own decarbonisation zones and other climate action projects.





Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAPs)



Case Study



WP2 LA CAPs

CARO Local Authority Climate Action Networking Event - ASBS CARO

Background

In April staff from 31 Local Authorities gathered in Wexford for a 2-day event organised by **ASBS CARO**. The event brought together Climate Action Coordinators, Climate Action Officers, Community Climate Action Officers, Directors of Service and senior staff from DCEE and community stakeholders to take stock of the first full year of implementation of Local Authority Climate Action Plans, with 135 attendees.

Action Taken

On Day one of the event CARO led a fieldtrip to Adaptation and Mitigation Projects throughout Co Wexford, demonstrating actions being taken by the local authority and communities supported by DCEE.

Day two comprised speakers from Local Authorities, DCEE, the Climate Change Advisory Council, the EPA, community groups and the GAA Green Clubs Programme. Speakers not only discussed policy, functions and actions, but outlined case studies and lessons learned. The event had significant opportunities for staff to network with peers

Results / Outcome

This was a very successful event. There were just under 100 attendees on the Field trip and 135 full attendees on day two of the event. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive about the fieldtrip, the venue and the balance of content of the conference, with meaningful networks formed and maintained. The event was effectively self-funded with the high attendance covering all costs.

Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAPs)

Key Aims & Priorities

- Support all local authorities to implement their Climate Action Plans in compliance with the Climate Action & Local Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021.
- Support coordination and engagement with national and regional stakeholders.
- Ensure regional and national coordination in the implementation of plans and reduce duplication of effort in this process.

Overview

The CAROs supported the Implementation of the Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAPs) which was the primary focus of Local Authority Climate Teams as the plans moved into their second year (since they had been adopted). With almost 4,000 actions to be implemented across all 31 Local Authorities, over a five-year period, all local authorities presented to their Elected Members on their first year of progress. CARO assisted in developing templates which were used by some Local Authorities for reporting purposes.

CAROs also focused on strengthening capacity within local authorities, promoting shared learning, supporting access to funding and technical expertise, and enhancing coordination across regions and sectors. The CARO Annual Networking Event in April was a capacity building event showcasing what Local Authorities have achieved in their first year of implementation of their LA CAPs and an opportunity to share these learnings.

Activating the Decarbonising Zone (DZ) Implementation Plans was also a major success story. The CAROs are actively engaged with the DZ Advisory group, proactive on the core DZ Group and have worked with DCEE to secure funding from various sources to facilitate the implementation of the DZ actions. CAROs play a coordinating and support role in assisting local authorities to implement their plans. This included engagement with national departments and agencies, participation in advisory and expert reporting groups, development of shared tools and databases, and delivery of targeted training, site visits and networking events while ensuring alignment with national policy, regional priorities and sectoral actions.



Achievements 2025

Supporting Implementation of LA CAPs and Decarbonising Zones

CAROs supported the ongoing implementation of LA CAPs across all local authorities by providing advice, guidance and coordination with Local Authority Climate Action Teams. This work focused on building and maintaining local capacity to deliver both Climate Action Plans and Decarbonising Zone Implementation Plans.

- DM CARO, in collaboration with the OECD, organised a workshop entitled “Towards a shared narrative focused on health to rethink the public realm for sustainable mobility” in November. This workshop was open to local authorities and key active travel stakeholders, government officials, NGOs representing civil society, professionals (doctors, engineers, journalists), and academia. The workshop examined the importance of active communication efforts with a health angle to accelerate sustainable mobility, and it also examined the redistribution of public space in favour of active and shared modes with a focus on the health benefits. The workshop was well received with over 50 attendees, and the insights will be used to inform continuing work on climate and health to be carried out by DM CARO in 2026.



Attendees at the OECD Climate and Health Workshop

Framework Contracts to Support LA CAP Delivery

E&M CARO maintained frameworks to assist local authorities in procuring specialist support for LA CAP implementation.

- E&M CARO engaged with local authorities on a need's basis.
- One Local Authority availed of the framework during 2025 to procure support services and was supported in the preparation of mini tender documentation and using the eTenders platform.
- Reporting and coordination were overseen by Kildare County Council Procurement Office, ensuring governance and procurement compliance.





LA CAP and Decarbonising Zone Database Management

CARO managed and maintained the 2024 LA CAP and Decarbonising Zone database to:

- Identify key priority areas
- Promote coordination in implementation
- Inform structured engagement with national and regional stakeholders

The robust database was developed by E&M CARO in 2024 and remained operational and actively used throughout 2025. All requested reports were completed, and further data requests can be delivered as needed. The database was demonstrated to DCEE officials in February.



Photo: Enniscorthy Community Allotments



Guidance, Training, Workshops and Site Visits

CAROs supported the development and rollout of information, guidance and learning opportunities for local authorities at national, regional and sub-regional level.

E&M CARO organised and facilitated two site visits for local authorities including;

- A visit to Carlow to examine a rainwater garden design and functionality.
- A visit to Mannok Cement, Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh to learn about sustainable cement production.

These site visits supported practical, peer to peer learning on innovative climate action solutions.



Decarbonising Zones Advisory Group

The Decarbonising Zone Advisory Group met on three occasions during the year. It was established in 2024 as a joint initiative between DCEE and the Sustainable



Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to provide a collaborative and structured approach at a national level to support local authorities in implementing their DZs.

Three sources of funding for DZs were also identified through this group. All four CAROs are also represented on the newly formed “DZ Core Group” which has a focus on driving implementation.

Funding for Projects in Decarbonising Zones

The Decarbonising Zones Scheme has been co-designed by the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, DCEE, with input from ASBN and E&M CAROs to address European, national and regional policy objectives.

The Scheme comprises two action areas:

- Action 2.4.1: Climate Adaptation and Disaster Risk and Resilience and
- Action 2.7.1: Biodiversity and Green infrastructure.

The total value of the Scheme is €2.5 million, and it is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union. The fund will be divided evenly across both actions with each action being eligible for €1.25m in funding. ASBN and E&M CAROs worked closely with the NWRA to develop the scheme which opened on the 28 November, inviting applications from the nine local authorities in the region. Applications will close in February 2026, and it is intended that successful projects which will be 100% funded will be implemented during 2026 and early 2027.



ESPON – Irish Targeted Analysis for DZs (ITADZ)

DM CARO attended the kick-off meeting for European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion (ESPON) – Irish Targeted Analysis for DZs (ITADZ). The Department of Climate, Environment and Energy applied to ESPON’s call for projects under the Targeted Analysis programme in late 2024 for a DZ research project to provide new European territorial evidence (the “ITADZ” project). The Irish proposal was selected within the framework of “Climate neutral territories”. This will be a large-scale spatial research and analysis project, with a project budget of approx. €230,000 to gather valuable information on the DZ initiative and put forward recommendations to inform DZ policy. A tenderer was selected in late 2025, the kick off meeting took place in December, with the project due to conclude in early 2027.



Networking and Sector Wide Learning

In April, ASBS CARO organised a two-day national networking event in Wexford, bringing together:

- Staff from 31 local authorities including Directors of Service.
- Climate Action Coordinators and Officers





- Community Climate Action Officers
- Staff from all CAROs
- Senior officials from DCEE and community stakeholders.

The event attracted 135 attendees and marked the first full year of LA CAP implementation.

- Day 1 involved site visits to climate action projects across County Wexford, many supported through CCAP funding.
- Day 2 consisted of a conference featuring speakers from DCEE, LAWPRO, EPA, the Climate Change Advisory Council, community organisations and local authorities.

The event was self-funding and incurred no net cost to the CARO budget. See Case Study.



Sectoral Themed Reporting

ASBS CARO produced seven high level sectoral LA CAP reports which were shared with stakeholders, including government departments.



LA CAP Reporting

While the majority of Local Authorities delivered comprehensive reporting to their Elected Members, the CAROs supported the promotion of best practice through alternative methods.

Four short videos were produced highlighting innovation and best practice, including:

- FT3 Forestry initiatives in Wexford.



- [Electric fleet deployment in Cork City Council.](#)
- [New near zero emissions building in Kerry County Council.](#)
- [Cork County Council Solar Panels on Laboratory Roof.](#)

See Case Study.



National Climate Stakeholders Forum

ASBS CARO presented on the LA CAP implementation progress at the 6th National Climate Stakeholders Forum organised by DCEE in Cork in May.

Obstacles

While a lot of progress in the implementation of LA CAPs was made, several challenges were identified:

- The need for agreement on a standardised approach to LA CAP progress reporting.
- The need to develop the CARO website as a national digital reporting platform for LA CAPs.
- Funding for projects to assist Local Authorities with the implementation of actions.
- While it is acknowledged that additional funding sources for DZs were identified, including the funding for staff for Mulranny Community Futures, the requirement for staff to support communities remains a challenge which is outside the remit of the CAROs.
- The action to identify best practice and innovative examples and disseminate these across the sector was not completed due to a delay in LA CAP reporting. However, the four videos referred to above outlined best practice.
- While some engagement happened with Regional Assemblies in relation to spatial planning and LACAP's, this item did not progress as far as was anticipated.

Spend for Work Package 2

Local Authority Climate Action Plan = €1,124 (excluding staff costs and expenses)



Case Study



WP2 LA CAPs

Business Case to Support the Funding of projects in the CARO Annual Work Programme

Background

As part of the preparation of the CARO Work Programme 2025, **ASBN CARO** advised the Department that when staff positions were filled in all the CAROs, funding would not be available to carry out projects and certain large projects required a significant spend. This issue was raised for discussion at the CMG Meeting on the 10/12/24 in Oweninny, Co Mayo.

Action Taken

- The CMG agreed that a business case would be prepared for the Department and submitted in April in time for the preliminary budget estimates for 2026.
- ASBN CARO as Lead Authority engaged with the LGMA and prepared the first draft of the business case and consulted with all regional CAROs.
- The draft was agreed at the DOS/Regional Co-ordinators meeting on 18th March and submitted for approval to the ECCE Committee on the 25th March.
- The draft was approved at the ECCE meeting subject to minor changes.
- The draft was reformatted into the template required for the PSROG Committee meeting in April.
- On 4 April, the DoS for ASBN CARO wrote to the Assistant Secretary of the Department outlining the figures for this business case and one for additional LA CAP funding.
- The business case was submitted to the PSROG Committee.
- The business case was discussed at the SIG meeting on the 15th April and it was brought forward by the Department into the preliminary budget estimates.

Results / Outcome

The business case has progressed through all stages of the 2026 budget process in DCEE and it is anticipated that an announcement will be made early in 2026.



Case Study

WP2 LA CAP



EU Mission Cities - Moonshot for Neutrality by 2030 – DM CARO

Background

The Missions are an initiative that fall under Horizon Europe (2021-2027), the EU’s research and innovation (R&I) policy. Dublin and Cork are EU Mission Cities. Galway City is also a Mission City and is participating independently of CARO, in the EU NetZeroCities Pilot Cities Programme. The aim of the mission is to strengthen capacity and ensure finance of climate action through awarding of the “Mission Label”. To receive the Mission Label, cities were required to submit a climate city contract that sets out the ambition of the city to co-create with local stakeholders and citizens to achieve neutrality.

Action Taken

Climate City contracts, action plans and investment plans were produced for Dublin and Cork Cities which included:

- Building a strong mandate within local government, and the local city ecosystem and all stakeholders.
- Developing a Transition Team to build collaborative governance structures and networks and to strengthen buy-in.
- Setting a GHG emissions baseline, current state assessment, system mapping, and an analysis of the gaps that stand in the way of the 2030 ambition.
- Co-creating an action portfolio, including impact pathways and co-development of climate actions, as well as a selection of indicators to monitor, evaluate and learn from.

Results/ Outcome

Dublin City and Cork City both received their Mission Labels in May, at a ceremony in Vilnius, Lithuania. A key outcome has been the recognition that, although the Climate City Contract process was challenging, it enabled a thorough review of Ireland’s climate policy landscape and highlighted the difficulties Local Authorities face with data collection, access, analysis, and translating data into effective policy measures.



05

Adaptation



Case Study



WP 3 Adaptation

UHI and Vulnerable People – DM CARO

Background

Recognising that heat is a climate risk facing Dublin, and Ireland, **DM CARO** initiated a short research project to understand how other jurisdictions are responding to the impacts of heatwaves, particularly in relation to vulnerable members of society. The intent of this project is to inform policy recommendations for Local Authorities in relation to heat risk.

Action Taken

- A desk-based research project was undertaken by Karen Gill, a DCU undergraduate interning with DM CARO.
- The research focused on the vulnerability created by heat, who is vulnerable, and what is currently being done to mitigate risks locally and internationally.
- A Report was generated outlining the findings.

Results/ Outcome

The desk-based research has drawn attention to the challenges ahead and risks faced by vulnerable individuals (older persons, pregnant women, premature infants, infants, children and persons with disabilities). Each of these groups face specific risks that may be further complicated by their socio-economic status, and other demographic characteristics. This work has highlighted the value of a vulnerable persons register and information being provided that is tailored to specific groups. This work will be further developed in conjunction with in depth research being undertaken by UCD researchers on the effects of the urban heat island in Dublin.



Case Study



WP 3 Adaptation

Beaches & Dunes Forum – ASBN CARO

Background

Ireland's beaches and dunes are under pressure from climate change and growing public use. Earlier projects including the Beaches and Dunes Climate Adaptation Training Project (2024) and the Protect Our Dunes Campaign (2021–ongoing) showed strong community interest but also highlighted gaps. Groups were working separately, resources were not shared, and there was no organised place for guidance or collaboration. This created a clear need for a coordinated, national forum to bring people together, share good practice and support sustainable dune management.

Action Taken

In 2025, the National Beaches and Dunes Forum was formally established to strengthen awareness, improve coordination and support restoration efforts. Key actions included:

- Improving the Dunes.ie website to become a central hub for dune science, guidance and practical tools.
- Hosting the National Dune Gathering, connecting existing and new members.
- Expanding membership to include communities, Local Authorities, academics and state agencies.
- Establishing three working groups on:
 - protocols for works on dunes
 - sustainable sand fencing
 - planning for the 2026 Dune Gathering

Results / Outcome

By the end of 2025, the Forum had established an accessible and coordinated approach to dune management. Key outcomes included:

- Creating a national platform that brings stakeholders together to support joint action.
- Developing a Forum Committee, supported by clear Terms of Reference (TOR), to drive work on dune care, restoration and consistent practice.
- Building a peer network to share knowledge, tools and practical experience.
- Supporting member led initiatives through shared learning and peer support.

Adaptation

Key Aims & Priorities

- Promote Adaptation throughout the LA sector, recognising that many actions are captured in the LA CAPs.
- Support the work of the National Adaptation Steering Committee (NASC).
- Continue to engage with [Climate Adaptation Sectoral Plans](#) and partake in associated national working groups coordinated by central government.
- Provide annual progress reports on the implementation of the climate change adaptation strategies / Action Plans to CCAC.

Overview

Climate change adaptation is a critical component of the local government response to climate impacts such as flooding, coastal erosion, extreme weather events and rising temperatures. A significant development nationally was the [National Climate Change Risk Assessment \(NCCRA\)](#), which was published by the EPA in June which identifies the priority climate risks for Ireland to help prioritise action and direct resources. The NCCRA was a key resource in supporting the development of Round 2 of the [Sectoral Adaptation Plans](#) under the National Adaptation Framework. Nationally the CAROs support local authorities to integrate adaptation considerations into planning, investment and service delivery, while ensuring alignment with national adaptation policy and Sectoral Adaptation Plans.

In 2025, CAROs focused on strengthening coordination with sectoral partners, improving Local Authority capacity, advancing nature-based solutions, and contributing to national adaptation reporting. This included active participation in working groups, input into national strategies and risk assessments, development of practical guidance, and delivery of targeted adaptation initiatives across regions - based solutions and contributing to national adaptation reporting. This included active participation in working groups, input into national strategies and risk assessments, development of practical guidance, and delivery of targeted adaptation initiatives.



Photo: Attendees at the 3rd Annual Sand Dune Gathering



Achievements

Support for Consultation on the Draft 2025 Sectoral Adaptation Plans (SAP)

CAROs worked with national and sectoral partners to support the development of the 2025 Sectoral Adaptation Plans across 13 Sectors, namely Agriculture, Biodiversity, Built and Archaeological Heritage, Communications Networks, Electricity and Gas Networks, Flood Risk Management, Forestry, Health, Seafood, Tourism, Transport Infrastructure, Water Quality and Water Services Infrastructure.

The CAROs supported the LGMA/ECCE committee of the CCMA in making submissions to the various draft plans as follows: (maybe use table)

- ASBN CARO - Biodiversity, Communications Networks and Agriculture Sectoral Adaptation Plans.
- E&M CARO - Tourism and Flood Risk Sectoral Adaptation Plans.
- ASBS CARO - Water Services Infrastructure, Water Quality, Forestry and Seafood Sectoral Adaptation Plans.
- DM CARO - Electricity and Gas Networks, Transport Infrastructure, Built and Archaeological Heritage and Health Sectoral Adaptation Plans.



Photo: Minister Darragh O'Brien - Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plans



Risk and Vulnerability Methodology for Local Authorities

ASBN CARO, in collaboration with Climate Ireland, developed a semi-quantitative Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment methodology in 2022 to enhance resilience planning. This work allows risk identification and adaptation capacity. ASBN CARO consulted with the EPA on required updates to the methodology to align with the National Climate Change Risk Assessment (NCCRA) published in

June. This identified that minor updates were required to focus primarily on updating references to climate projections and placing a greater emphasis on social vulnerability rather than purely physical exposure and vulnerability.

Building Adaptation Networks and Stakeholder Engagement

CAROs supported network building and collaboration among key adaptation stakeholders, including engagement with the Climate Ireland Adaptation Network (CIAN).

- DM and E&M CARO supported and contributed to the CIAN event in November focusing on key adaptation challenges for and strategic developments within local government.
- ASBN CARO delivered a presentation and facilitated a panel discussion at the Mary Robinson Climate Conference. The theme of the Conference was Courage in Crisis -our courage to think and act differently to unlearn/relearn previous habits, pathways, and behaviours in terms of both everyday life and wider policy and governance change. The conference was attended by LAs, members of the public and academics.
- E&M CARO represented the Local Authority sector on the Climate Ireland Technical Advisory Group, attending and contributing to three meetings.



Photo: Laura Dixon with Mary Robinson and Dr. Aoibheann Ní Shuilleabhán at the Mary Robinson Climate and Nature Conference 2025, Ballina

Supporting Severe Weather and Emergency Planning Alignment

CAROs supported Local Authority Severe Weather Assessment Teams (SWATs) to align with national emergency planning requirements.

E&M CARO progressed this work through Adaptation training programmes, engaging with the National Directorate for Emergency Management and Met Éireann. A training brief was agreed, and a Technical Training Group was established to support delivery.





National Adaptation Reporting

CAROs supported statutory reporting requirements by providing annual progress reports to the Climate Change Advisory Council (CCAC).

- E&M CARO gathered adaptation information from local authorities, completed a draft scorecard and submitted it to LGMA for final sign-off through ECCE in April.



Photo: ASBN CARO & Galway County Council Climate Team with Marie Donnelly, Chair, Climate Change Advisory Council

TalX2 Living Lab Development

The TalX2 project is an Irish EPA funded initiative led by MaREI/UCC with Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL) as partners. It establishes a 'living lab' model that brings communities, stakeholders, and government agencies together as equal partners to plan for an uncertain climate future and broaden adaptation solutions. ASBN CARO and DM CARO serve on the advisory board supporting the Clew Bay Living Lab, led by Mayo County Council, and the Sheriff Street Living Lab, led by Dublin City Council, respectively.



Photo: Members of the Clew Bay Partnership at first TalX2 project meeting



Promotion of EU Mission on Adaptation

CAROs supported awareness and uptake of the EU Mission on Adaptation across the local authority sector.

- DM CARO worked with Climate Matters to examine challenges associated with financing adaptation, producing a case study report focused on the Camac River.
- E&M CARO supported Louth and Tipperary local authorities on CLIMAAX climate risk assessments and facilitated a focused webinar as part of adaptation mission training.

Coastal Change Management

CAROs supported implementation of the National Coastal Change Management Strategy (NCCMS) in partnership with OPW, GSI and other state agencies through participation in Pillar 2 working groups.

- ASBS CARO provided support for an OPW trial of a data gathering tool on past coastal erosion events with several local authorities.
- ASBS CARO engaged with stakeholders including Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), OPW, Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA), NPWS, Heritage Council and local authorities to inform the development of “Coastal Change Management: A Practical Resource”. The document text was completed in late 2025, with graphic design scheduled for January 2026.

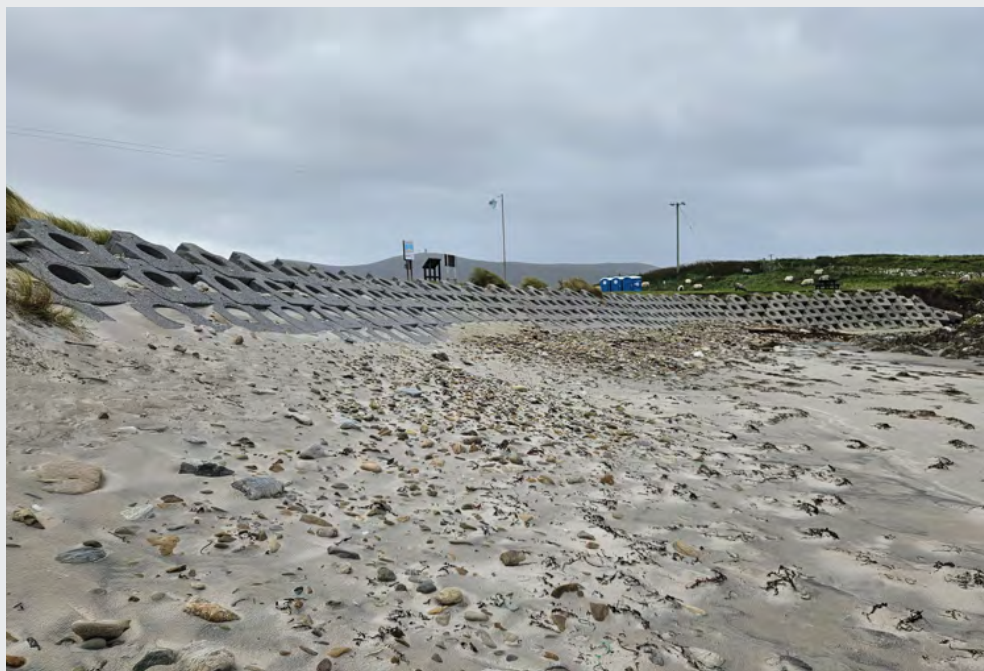


Photo: Concrete “seabee” units at Rinroe Beach, Co. Mayo -protection against coastal erosion



Beaches & Dunes

For Climate Adaptation

The Beaches and Dunes Forum:

ASBN CARO played a key role in supporting the establishment of the Beaches and Dunes Forum. The Forum is a national collaborative body focused on raising awareness and promoting sustainable management of beaches and dunes in Ireland, by connecting stakeholders at local, regional, and national levels to ensure a coordinated approach. ASBN CARO is a founding member and currently serves as Chair. See case study.

Protect Our Dunes:

The ASBN CARO-led “Protect Our Dunes” social media campaign took a new direction in 2025 to increase visibility and strengthen its national profile. A campaign toolkit was circulated to all 18 coastal Local Authorities and adopted by 10 of them, as well as by Public Participation Networks (PPNs) and Forum partners.

The toolkit included:

- Pre-made social media posts for easy sharing of Images to support campaign messages.
- A campaign schedule to guide content rollout.



Sand Dune Gathering 2025:

ASBN CARO co-hosted the 3rd Annual Sand Dune Gathering in Salthill, Galway, bringing together 44 participants from community groups, researchers and public bodies to discuss the protection and future of Ireland's sand dune systems. The event included expert presentations on ground-nesting birds, communication and community engagement, scientific dune monitoring and best practice in conservation and visitor management.



Photo: Community members in attendance at the 3rd Annual Sand Dune Gathering

Participants shared practical solutions such as improved signage, community science projects, sand-trap fencing and creative awareness campaigns. A field visit to the Grattan Beach dune project showed how nature-based solutions, including chestnut fencing, are helping to reduce erosion, support biodiversity and improve community understanding of coastal change. The Gathering highlighted strong public interest in dune conservation and the value of collaboration between local groups, researchers and Local Authorities.



Photo: Field Trip to Grattan Beach, during 3rd Annual Sand Dune Gathering

Beaches & Dunes for Climate Adaption Training Course 2.0 Scaling for all Ireland Impact:

ACT (Accelerating Change together) received €235,000 from the SSE Airtricity Generation Green Community Fund to upscale the project through “Beaches & Dunes for Climate Adaption Training Course 2.0 Scaling for all Ireland Impact”. The Project builds on the outputs of the original project which included training, workshops and a website, namely Dunes.ie which provides monitoring tools, conservation guides, community materials, and best practice beach management resources. ASBN CARO is a Project Partner and Steering Committee Member, involved in project decisions.

ACT
Accelerating Change Together



Photo: ASBN CARO presenting Beaches & Dunes project at the Pabal event in Dublin

Nature-Based Solutions & Biodiversity Initiatives

ASBN CARO carried out an initial scoping exercise with NPWS on a conservation measures pilot initiative to support the implementation of the EU Habitats Directive in Ireland by enhancing the monitoring, reporting, and public understanding of sand dune habitats.



Photo: Green wall NbS part of Cascade urban rainwater project Ballina, Co. Mayo

The scoping exercise focused on Annex I sand dune habitats in Mayo and Galway to assess if a signage project could be developed to empower coastal communities and visitors to act as

stewards of these vital ecosystems by integrating education, citizen science, and emerging technologies to strengthen coastal resilience.

Site assessments were completed on pilot locations across Mayo. The assessments looked at suitability based on criteria such as existing signage, accessibility for visitors and for installation, environmental stressors, unique geographical characteristics of the location and opportunities for QR engagement and citizen science installations. ASBN CARO will continue to engage with NPWS to develop this project and secure funding.



WIRE – Weather Impacts Register

- The Weather Impact Register, or WIRE App, was developed by CARO to help meet the need to gather and organise data on the impacts of weather events locally to inform climate adaptation planning into the future. It is targeted at those Local Authority staff that will be on the ground responding to weather events as part of the emergency response teams. The system provides a GIS based tool to record and review the impacts of weather events and climate trends in LAs. To test the functionality of the app, a pilot project was initiated by ASBN for winter 2025/26, with Mayo County Council participating as a pilot authority. Training and support were provided to relevant Council staff, which included staff that attend at incidents and super users who support these staff and monitor the data input. While work has progressed on the WIRE app, and this pilot is underway, progress on this item has been slower than anticipated.

Groundwater Forecasting and Climate Change Impacts

ASBS CARO supported the Groundwater Forecasting and Climate Change Impacts Project led by the GSI and attended technical meetings and reviewed project documentation.

Climate Adaptation of Regional and Local Roads

ASBS CARO delivered the 2023 Climate Adaptation Strategy for Regional and Local Roads to support Local Authorities in delivering on climate adaptation. This was supported by the Department of Transport (DoT).



*Photo: Cascade urban rainwater project
Ballina, Co. Mayo*



Photo: Aerial image of flooding of farmland

In 2025 the implementation of this Strategy included:

- Adoption of the Critical Infrastructure Route (CIR) Identification Methodology by DoT and practical identification of CIRs for all 31 Local Authorities.
- Completion of a pilot project for gathering an inventory of climate related Common Failure Types (CFTs). A list of 21 CFTs were identified in the Strategy.
- Development of new geotechnical asset management guidance and assessment tool.
- Commencement of integration and enhancement of the MapRoad Asset Management System for the management of climate related CFTs.

These actions will support a more climate resilient road network, with further implementation planned for 2026.

Urban Heat Island Research

DM CARO progressed research on the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect in Irish urban areas. They commenced work on UHI impacts and appointed a researcher to assess impacts in urban centres. This work will continue into 2026 and inform future adaptation interventions. See case study.

Nature Based Solutions Working Group

The Interdepartmental Steering Group set up to implement the Coastal Change Management Strategy have established a Pillar 3 Working Group on Nature based Solutions to implement the three tasks under Recommendation 11 of the Strategy which is for the development of management responses and the promotion of Nature-based Solutions with three specific tasks:

- to build a suitable body of knowledge of the application of nature-based solutions as a means for managing coastal change through assessments of national and international work to date, research and pilot studies as necessary
- to identify locations around the coast of Ireland where nature-based solutions may provide solutions and benefits in the areas of potentially significant risk from coastal change

- to promote a multi-sectoral approach to the application of nature-based solutions in the coastal environment to achieve multiple benefits in conjunction with local communities

ASBN and ASBS CAROs are members of this working group. The focus of the group is on coastal erosion and the identification of suitable nature-based solutions. The group will identify suitable sites to carry out pilot studies on nature-based solutions. However, other initiatives on nature-based solutions and biodiversity are progressing at a slower rate.

Obstacles and Challenges

While meaningful progress was achieved, several challenges impacted adaptation delivery:

- The scale and complexity of national adaptation planning processes placed significant demands on CARO and Local Authority capacity.
- Delays in the formation of some NCCMS working groups slowed progress on certain coastal change actions.
- Limited progress was achieved on some cross-departmental initiatives where delivery was dependent on external partners or funding decisions.
- Adaptation initiatives such as data pilots and research projects require longer timeframes to deliver measurable outcomes, extending delivery into 2026 and beyond.
- Several challenges have been identified in relation to coastal erosion, such as private land ownership, planning constraints, managed retreat options, and environmental protections under the Habitats and Birds Directives. The key challenge for CARO is to provide Local Authorities with the relevant assistance needed to navigate these issues.
- Co-ordinating work with external agencies caused some delays such as working with LAWPRO/DoT/DHLGH to progress a Stormwater Management Appendix to the 2023 Non-National & Regional Roads Guidance which is behind schedule.

Spend for Work Package 3

Adaptation = €64,468 (excluding staff costs and expenses)



Case Study



WP3 Adaptation

Assessing the Costs of Doing Nothing– DM CARO

Background

The EU Adaptation Mission is one of five missions established by the European Commission to address ‘grand challenges’ facing Europe. Support was received by Dublin City, for Type 2 Technical assistance which allowed for analysis of a specific challenge. The project aim was to assess the costs of addressing the challenge of protecting existing properties, as fluvial flooding posed a significant risk and had resulted in the Local Authority embedding buffer distances into the city’s development plan.

Action Taken

- **DM CARO**, along with the Dublin Local Authorities explored the cost of inaction for properties located along the Camac River focus area which are impacted by fluvial flooding risk.
- The insurance implications for homeowners located near the river and the measures they can take to protect against flood damages were explored.
- Responsibility of ownership for flood damage and implementing any river restoration projects and NbS enhancement measures were discussed and identified.
- Case studies were provided to highlight the range of small to large scale river restoration and NBS projects that have been implemented across Europe through various funding mechanisms including the potential for community collaboration.

Results/ Outcome

A key result of the work is the need for financing of adaptation projects to be accelerated. The costs of doing nothing increases with time. Early intervention is necessary to minimise the economic and social costs of people losing homes, businesses and livelihoods.



Case Study



WP 3 Adaptation

Minority Report – Workshops to Improve Climate Resilience – DM CARO

Background

Minority Report is an EU Funded Project under Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Innovation. The project aims to mitigate environmental disruptive events using people-centric predictive digital technologies to improve disaster and climate resilience. The case study site for this project is Dublin City's Ringsend Poolbeg Decarbonisation Zone. This project is vital and timely, with this DZ being home to Ireland's key critical infrastructure on the Poolbeg Peninsula. **DM CARO** is undertaking this project on behalf of Dublin City Council to ensure the lessons for adaptation in DZs can be shared to a wider audience.

Action Taken

- In 2025 workshops with community and end users were held to develop the digital tool.
- The end-user's workshop was held on the morning of Wednesday May 14th at the Ringsend Irishtown Community Centre (RICC).
- The objective to the project was presented to end-users which included HSE, Academia, Department of Transport and Local Authority staff.
- The workshop was facilitated by project partners Prospex Institute, IES and UCL.
- A community event was held in the RICC in the afternoon, which sought to engage people living in the area to develop a persona of the neighbourhood.
- This aspect of the event was led by project partners Trinity House.

Results/ Outcome

The end-user workshop provided valuable insights into the risks facing the area. It confirmed the importance of early engagement with experts who have knowledge of risks and responses. The outputs will be used to develop a suite of people-centric digital tools that will support the development of climate change and natural risks mitigation, and resilience enhancing strategies for a vulnerable building stock within our cities, using novel digital methodologies and technologies originating from several fields of building technology, urban climatology, social science, and disaster management.



06

Mitigation



Case Study



WP4 Mitigation

Fleet Manager Networking Opportunities – E&M CARO

Background

The local government sector is the largest fleet owner in Ireland, with approximately 7,658 vehicles (SEAI M&R reporting, 2024). Decarbonising these fleets is critical to achieving local climate action targets. While programmes such as PLEEP and Pathfinder have successfully supported decarbonisation in public lighting and buildings, fleet emissions remain a significant challenge.

Local Authority fleets are still heavily reliant on fossil fuels and represent one of the greatest challenges for meeting 2030 CO₂ reduction targets. Transitioning to low carbon alternatives is complex and resource intensive, requiring coordinated action, knowledge sharing and strategic planning.

Action Taken

- **E&M CARO**, in partnership with the LGMA, facilitated the Annual Fleet Managers Networking Event in October.
- This provided fleet managers with updates on policy, emissions targets and practical decarbonisation options.
- Contributions included policy updates from E&M CARO; governance and fuel reduction case studies from Louth County Council, fleet performance monitoring tools from South Dublin County Council; EV procurement and staff training approaches from Kildare County Council; and industry perspectives from DHL and Irish Rail.
- Further meetings organised by E&M CARO enabled a more detailed discussion of implementation challenges and opportunities. All sessions supported knowledge sharing and practical learning to accelerate fleet decarbonisation.

Results / Outcome

Over 60 participants attended, representing all Local Authorities. Feedback indicated high satisfaction with content, structure and networking opportunities, with new connections established across the sector. Participants gained practical insights into policy developments, fleet management tools and real-world decarbonisation strategies and learnings that could be rolled out in their Local Authorities.



Case Study



WP4 Mitigation

Carbon Tool Development (CTD) Pilot Project – ASBS CARO

Background

The Carbon Tool Development (CTD) Pilot Project is delivered as part of the Development of Guidance for Local Authorities on Climate Adaptation of Regional & Local Roads. The project addresses the need for Local Authorities to measure, and report embodied carbon emissions from regional and local road works in a consistent, standards-based manner.

ASBS CARO led the coordination of the pilot, building on recommendations from the Phase 3 Scoping Report on Carbon Management and Green Public Procurement. The Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Carbon Tool was selected as the most appropriate starting point for the LA sector and was tested on live Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance programmes in accordance with international standards.

Action Taken

ASBS CARO:

- Coordinated, managed and technically supported all stages of the project.
- Gathered pilot project LA participants and prepared the TOR.
- Liaised with TII on tool access.
- Developed LA-specific supporting datasets to address gaps in the existing tool database.
- Provided guidance to participating LAs on data collection, lifecycle boundaries and consistent application of assumptions.
- Monitored progress and consolidated feedback.

Results / Outcome

The pilot confirmed that the TII Carbon Tool can be effectively applied within the Local Authority Roads sector when supported by structured coordination and data preparation. It validated an internationally aligned approach to carbon measurement, identified opportunities for data standardisation, enabled indicative carbon intensity benchmarking for common treatments, and demonstrated that alternative fuels and lower-carbon construction options can be captured and reported. The pilot also produced clear recommendations to support sector-wide roll out.

Mitigation

Key Aims & Priorities

- Continue to engage with SEAI in the review of opportunities available to local authorities to achieve energy efficiency and CO2 emission reduction targets
- Continue to liaise with Local Authorities in the development and implementation of Energy Units
- Continue to coordinate and collaborate with existing Energy Agencies to pursue capital projects

Overview

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021 (“Climate Amendment Act”) frames Ireland’s legally binding climate ambition to deliver a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 51% by 2030 to place the country on a trajectory to achieving climate neutrality by no later than the end of 2050. Local authorities play a significant role in delivering mitigation measures at local and community levels and are committed to delivering the 2030 Public Sector targets to:

- Reduce GHG emissions by 51%.
- Improve energy efficiency by 50%.
- Increase the deployment of renewable technologies to replace fossil fuels by 2030.

CARO continues to support Local Authorities to develop innovative solutions to meet their 2030 emissions reductions and energy efficiency targets. These efforts align with the principles of the Pathfinder programme, enabling Local Authorities to:

- Develop projects that improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the public sector.
- Prioritise comprehensive building retrofit approaches, achieving BER B ratings and incorporating renewable heating solutions.

CAROs have worked closely with Local Authorities and SEAI in the establishment and development of Energy Units and collaborating with established Energy Agencies and Energy Bureaux. A significant work item this year was the implementation of the new SEAI Funding agreement in respect of the Public Sector Retrofit Pathfinder programme for the Lead Authorities 2025 – 2028 and governance in accordance with the Infrastructure Guidelines.



Achievements

Progressing the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy:

CARO has helped to advance EV infrastructure development, through participation in ZERO Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI) working groups, including the Public Sector Energy Group, Public-Private Infrastructure Group, and Public-Private Vehicles Group. Through these groups, CARO has supported Local Authorities in the deployment of EV charge point (EVCP).

DM CARO initiated a conversation with the European Investment Bank (EIB) who are working with ZEVI and Fingal County Council to identify financing and funding for EV infrastructure. DM CARO has also supported Dublin's four Local Authorities to develop, issue and assess tenders for the procurement of EV Charge Points across the city.

Progressing the decarbonisation of the Local Authority Fleet



Photo: Mayo County Council Begins Transition with First HVO Fuel Delivery

The final report and recommendations of the Decarbonising Local Authority Fleet working group were submitted to the ECCE committee on 25th March. E&M CARO organised a series of events with Fleet Managers including:

- Progress update meetings with Local Authorities.
- A national Fleet Manager event with the LGMA (16 October).



Photo: Kilkenny County Council vehicles powered by HVO

- Development of an updated survey issued in December.
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement on finance and funding.

See Case Study

Advancing Energy Bureau / Climate Action Units

Several Pathfinder Projects have progressed in partnership with SEAI and supported by the CARO namely the Border Energy Unit, North-West Energy Bureau, Mid-east Energy Unit, ASBN Energy Bureau, Midlands Energy agency and the South-East Energy Unit. Highlights included:

- ASBS CARO have continued to foster and assist in the development of the Pathfinder programme with the Mid-West Energy Agency (comprising Clare County Council as lead, Kerry County Council and Limerick City and County Council) and established as a Pathfinder Partnership in early 2025. ASBS CARO are a member of the Steering Group.
- A letter of intent was sent to the SEAI in June from the CE of Cork County Council, outlining that a Cork Energy Unit would be formed with Cork County Council as lead in Pathfinder Partnership with Cork City Council.
- ASBN CARO supported Mayo County Council (as Lead Authority) together with SEAI to finalise a new funding agreement for €47.1 million (the planned total indicative level of funding for 2026 to 2028) and associated Service Level Agreements with the five Local Authorities in their Region. The funding agreement with SEAI and the SLAs with the LAs were signed in December to provide for the recruitment of a Regional Energy Team to drive mitigation at a regional level. ASBN CARO chaired a fortnightly working group meeting to discuss progress of projects and address any issues and share learnings within the region.
- In the ASBN region, the Pathfinder 1 programme has 11 projects, with 12 in Pathfinder 2 and 11 projects in Pathfinder 3. Design teams are at an advanced stage for several of these projects.
- ASBN CARO established a working group to carry out a Pre Market Consultation process via eTenders to gather market feedback on the availability of energy advisory services for the ASBN Region. See case study





- ASBN CARO and SEAI have worked on standardised governance guidance documents, in compliance with the Funding Agreement terms and conditions, that will be finalised in Q1 2026 and rolled out to other regions as required.
- E&M CARO supported all 17 LAs to work within four sub-regions to progress Pathfinder support through direct engagement with the SEAI. This included:
 - Establishment of a Forum for Regional Energy Managers within the region.
 - Establishment of a working Group with SEAI, Regional Energy Managers and LAs focusing on the standardisation of measurement and verification (M&V) and Energy Efficient Design (EED) Documentation and guidance which will provide for a consistent approach by local authorities to the M&V and reinforce ISO 50001 standards.
 - Supporting the Mid-East (Kildare, Meath, Wicklow and Louth), in progressing projects with design teams and undertaking feasibility studies for district heating opportunities.
 - Supporting the Midlands (Laois, Offaly, Westmeath, Longford, Roscommon), to continue to work on their project pipeline, whilst progressing towards the new funding agreement with SEAI and refining Governance arrangements.
 - Supporting the Border (Cavan, Monaghan, Leitrim) to work with project manager assistance from SEAI to build a project pipeline for 11 no. Significant Energy Users and to progress projects through Approval Gate 1.
 - Supporting the South-East (Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Wexford, Waterford City & County) to sign a funding agreement with SEAI, establish supporting governance arrangements across the five LA regions and to progress projects through Approval Gates.



Photo: Mayo County Council & ASBN CARO at ISO 50001 certification celebration



- DM CARO supported the four Local Authorities and Codema with SEAI Pathfinder projects in their region. The SLA was signed in 2025. Dublin City Council is the lead Local Authority on Pathfinder.
- ASBN CARO attended the SEAI Energy Show, which was also attended by key sector stakeholders.



Retro commissioning/ Building Optimisation

ASBN CARO and SEAI commenced work on a retro commissioning / building optimisation pre-pilot programme with the aim of maximising energy performance in each of the buildings. The purpose of retro-commissioning is to have all systems in the building working at an optimum level and identifying the areas that need to be redesigned. This will inform future Pathfinder programmes. The learnings of the pre-pilot will enable a larger pilot programme to be rolled out in 2026 subject to funding allocation. The following actions have been carried out:

- A working group was formed in Q4 2025 consisting of representatives from each of the LAs for the selected buildings, SEAI and ASBN CARO.
- ASBN CARO developed a template document to carry out the initial assessment on the buildings for inclusion in the pre-pilot. When completed, this was used by SEAI to select the buildings to be included in the pre-pilot.
- The selected buildings are Waterworld in Donegal, two Community Centres in Galway City and the County Hall in Wexford.
- A scoping document for the pre-pilot and TOR for the group were agreed.
- Work on the pre-pilot will progress throughout 2026 with completion expected in Q4.



Green Flag Award for Local Authorities

ASBS CARO has agreed a Memorandum of Understanding with ABBAE (the Portuguese Green Flag Operator) who award a Green Flag to municipalities in Portugal; and An Taisce (who operate the Green Campus award to 3rd level institutions), to explore the possibility of a voluntary “Green Flag Award” for local authorities. A kick off meeting of the Implementation Group and the Technical Group was held to approve the Work Plan for the trial. The group undertook selection of potential participating LAs and initial discussions were held, which will allow the trial to commence in Q1 2026.



This award focuses on the overall sustainability of Local Authority campuses and the actions/behaviour of staff, including any in-house “Green Teams/ Sustainability teams”. The award will consider criteria including, energy, water usage, in-house sustainability measures, canteen food waste, facilities to encourage active travel, pollinator protection, habitat creation, nature-based



solutions for storm water, community engagement etc., some of which Local Authorities already gather data and report on.

Bioeconomy Deep Demonstration Project

In collaboration with Climate – KIC, E&M CARO and ASBS CARO organised and held three workshops in April and May with ten identified local authorities and the Regional Assemblies. The local authorities included Donegal, Fingal, Kildare, Offaly, Tipperary, Kerry, Waterford, Cavan, Monaghan and Roscommon. This will boost employment, business opportunities and community gains on the ground. A workshop and field trip event was held on 16th October at the Anaerobic Digester facility at Teagasc Grange, Meath. See Case Study.



Photo: Members of CARO in attendance at the Bioeconomy Event in Grange, Co. Meath



Piloting of the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Carbon Tool in the Local Authority Sector

ASBS CARO are managing a pilot project to assist LA Roads Departments in carbon reduction. See case study.



SEC Programme

Ireland's Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) Programme, run by the SEAL, empowers local groups to take control of their energy future by improving efficiency, using renewables, and reducing carbon, offering mentorship, funding for Energy Master Plans (EMPs), and access to resources. Context Studio, a Dublin-based service design consultancy, led the "From Plan



to Do” project, using service design to help SECs move from planning to implementing their climate actions.

This project involved research, workshops, co-design with communities, and prototyping tools such as the renters’ energy-efficiency booklet. DM CARO supported and disseminated the work undertaken by Context Studio to the four Dublin LAs through the “From Plan to Do”

platform (fromplantodo.ie). The work was funded through Creative Ireland’s Creative Climate Action Fund (Spark Strand). SEAI are continuing engagement with Context Studio. However, there are some issues regarding SEC’s such as clarification on the role of the LA’s. A working group has been established by the LGMA to address these issues and CARO participates in this group.



Greening of Festivals

ASBN CARO met with Wexford County Council to gather information on their learnings from the Fleadh in 2024. A number of meetings were also held within Mayo County Council to assess the potential of engaging in pilot projects. This item has progressed slowly and further action will be taken in 2026.



Minister Darragh O'Brien, CARO & DLA staff at the launch of Dublin Climate Action Week

Obstacles and Challenges

One significant challenge encountered this year was procurement of Energy Bureau services. Demand for these services has surged due to the national focus on energy efficiency and decarbonisation, but the market has a limited pool of skilled professionals with the required expertise. This shortage has led to delays in establishing Energy Bureaux and progressing Pathfinder projects at the desired pace. CARO continues to work with SEAI and Local Authorities to explore solutions, including capacity-building initiatives and various Energy Bureau models.

This was particularly an issue for ASBN CARO as their Energy Bureau Service Contract ended in April when the expectation was that this would be extended for a further year. Another obstacle was the lack of standardisation of governance, compliance with the Infrastructure Guidelines and State Aid Assessments across all the regions in relation to the implementation of the Pathfinder programme. It is intended that the work being carried out by SEAI, ASBN and E&M CAROs will address these issues and allow a roll out nationally.

The planned project to establish the feasibility of bioenergy fuels on a wider scale particularly on remedial lands, was not progressed as well as was expected. The next step will be to engage with suitable academic partners.

Time Commitments, due to the large number of parties to engage with, was an obstacle to advancing renewable energy projects such as large scale solar power projects, district heating and grid resilience.

Spend for Work Package 4

Mitigation = €6,429 (excluding staff costs and expenses)



Case Study



WP4 Mitigation

New Funding Agreement under the Pathfinder programme between SEAI and ASBN Region – ASBN CARO

Background

An energy bureau had been established in the **ASBN Region** with all five Local Authorities in 2022 for an initial three-year period. The Energy Bureau Contract ended in April. During 2022- 2025 period, a Memorandum of Understanding was in place between Mayo County Council as the Lead Authority for the Region and SEAI regarding funding under the Pathfinder programme. SLAs had also been established between Mayo (as lead) and the other four Local Authorities. A new funding agreement was proposed by SEAI to fund projects over the 2025 to 2028 period whereby 50% of the costs of carrying out an energy retrofit of Local Authority buildings in the Region, would be funded.

Action Taken

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SEAI issued a draft funding agreement to Mayo Co Council as Lead Authority and commenced engagement with ASBN CARO.”• ASBN CARO organised three workshops with the CARO Regional Steering Group to agree the best way forward for the region including the funding agreement, Energy Bureau model, staffing required and governance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ASBN CARO worked with SEAI and all five Local Authorities to identify and cost projects to be included in Pathfinder 1, 2 and 3 over a three-year period.• ASBN CARO worked with SEAI to develop a set of governance proposals in accordance with the requirements of the funding agreement and the Infrastructure Guidelines. |
|---|---|

Results / Outcome

A funding agreement valued at circa €47 million, for projects in Pathfinder 1, 2 and 3 was agreed across all five Local Authorities. A revised governance process was developed with SEAI and incorporated into an updated SLA, which has now been formally signed. These will be fully enacted in 2026, providing a clear and coordinated structure for delivering the 2025–2028 energy retrofit of Local Authority buildings in the region and future energy bureau services.



Case Study



WP4 Mitigation

Irish Deep Demonstration on the Bioeconomy E&M and ASBS CARO

Background

Ireland's transition to a circular, climate-neutral bioeconomy requires coordinated action across national, regional, and local levels. The National Bioeconomy Action Plan 2023–2025 recognises that Local Authorities and regional assemblies play a critical role in enabling bioeconomy action.

Through the Irish Deep Demonstration on the Bioeconomy, the **E&M and ASBS CAROs** worked in partnership with EIT Climate-KIC, working on behalf of the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) and the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment (DCEE), to deliver a targeted capacity-building and engagement programme designed to support local and regional authority staff in understanding, shaping and enabling bioeconomy action.

Action Taken

- Facilitating three interactive workshops with Local Authority and Regional Assembly staff. Programme content of the workshops included systems thinking, the circular bioeconomy and Ireland's bioeconomy policy landscape; climate pathways such as Reduce, Substitute and Regenerate; practical planning tools including Inform Bio data; and real-world bioeconomy solutions such as anaerobic digestion, biochar and biorefineries, highlighting co-benefits for climate, waste, water quality and rural development.
- Organising a follow-up national webinar to capture learning and impact.
- Organising awareness raising activities during National Bioeconomy Week, including a webinar and site visit to the Teagasc Anaerobic Digester plant in Grange, Co. Meath.

Results / Outcome

The Irish Deep Demonstration on the Bioeconomy strengthened capacity across local and regional government by increasing understanding of the bioeconomy and its relevance to organisational functions; supporting a shared, systems based approach to climate and bioeconomy action; enabling identification of region specific opportunities grounded in local data; and enhancing collaboration between Local Authorities, Regional Assemblies, CARO and EIT Climate KIC. This collaboration has established strong foundations for continued learning, action and impact at local and regional level, supporting DAFM and DCEE in the implementation of bioeconomy policy.



Case Study

WP4 Mitigation



PMC for Regional Energy Services - Planning the next phase of energy support for the ASBN Region

Background

ASBN Region, supported by ASBN CARO, took the opportunity to reassess the Energy Bureau (EB) resources and expertise that would be required to meet 2030 targets when the existing contract (EB) came to an end. Given the scale, complexity and specialist nature of energy and retrofit delivery, it was agreed that a Preliminary Market Consultation (PMC) would be carried out. The purpose of the PMC to better understand market capacity, delivery models and best practice approaches from other regions to inform the most appropriate way forward for the Region.

Action Taken

- ASBN CARO established the Regional Energy Services Tender Working Group, with representatives from all five Local Authorities and CARO.
- Agreed a document for consultation purposes.
- Issued a PMC via eTenders to gather feedback from the energy services market.
- Received eight supplier responses, followed by in-depth follow-up meetings with four suppliers.
- Established a subgroup to carry out follow-up discussions with, 1.) Other Regional Energy Units, 2.) Energy Agencies and 3.) SEAI.
- Held a series of working group workshops to review market feedback, compare delivery models used in other regions and assess options for ASBN region.
- Developed and assessed several possible delivery models, with a focus on building in-house capacity, ensuring value for money, and reducing dependency on a single external provider.
- Considered the limits of market capacity to deliver all required energy services through a single provider.
- Examined the importance of building in-house Local Authority expertise, supported by external services where needed.
- Incorporated the approaches being successfully used in other regions, particularly the use of regionally employed energy managers combined with framework-based specialist supports.

Results / Outcome

The PMC process provided a clear, evidence-based understanding of energy bureau delivery model options for the ASBN Region. These delivery model options were agreed by the Working Group and presented to the RSG. The RSG selected the preferred model and formally ratified the approach for the region. As a result, a mandate was secured to progress with procurement of future energy bureau services for the ASBN Region.



07

Training & Education



Case Study



LOCAL AUTHORITY
Climate Action
Training Programme

WP5 Training and Education

Learning Management System - Training Delivery – E&M CARO

Background

As part of the DCEE funded Local Authority Climate Action Training Programme, there was a clear requirement to efficiently expand access to high quality, consistent climate action training across local government. The scale and diversity of Local Authorities, roles and geographic locations limited the effectiveness of traditional engagement and in-person training models alone. To address this, E&M CARO, in collaboration with the LASNTG, identified and progressed the development of a dedicated digital learning platform to support flexible, scalable and accessible training delivery through a well-designed Learning Management System (LMS). The objective was to embed climate action knowledge and skills across all levels of local government, from elected members and senior management to operational and technical staff, while supporting ongoing learning aligned with national climate objectives.

Action Taken

A specification was developed with the following key requirements:

- A user friendly LMS prioritising accessibility, intuitive navigation and multi-device compatibility.
- Structured climate action content, including self-paced modules, resources- and assessments to support flexible learning.
- Robust user management and reporting to monitor participation, completion and engagement.

- A future-proofed platform capable of scaling to accommodate new programmes, policy updates and evolving learning needs.

Following a procurement process, specialist IT consultants were engaged to design and develop a bespoke LMS tailored to the needs of the training programme.

Results / Outcome

The LMS went live in July and has delivered significant benefits, including efficient learner engagement, expanded access for staff and elected members, Increased participation across disciplines, consistent user experience and quality assurance, Improved monitoring and reporting, long term sustainability through reduced reliance on resource intensive delivery models, Strengthened climate action capacity, broader participation and standardised training delivery.

Training & Education

Key Aims & Priorities

- Maintain the multi-annual service level agreement with DCEE to govern funding for Local Authority climate action training.
- Implementation of the LA Climate Action Training Plan.
- Continue to engage with strategic partners in the delivery of training such as: CCMA, LGMA, SEAI, Climate Ireland, IPA, OPW and Met Éireann, etc.
- Continue to work closely with the LASNTG to design, develop and deliver training and obtain training accreditation as required.

Overview

CARO, with funding from the Department Climate, Energy and Environment (DCEE), continues to lead the development and delivery of Local Authority Climate Action Training. This initiative supports capacity building across the sector through the implementation of the Local Authority Climate Action Training Programme (LACATP) 2024- 2027 Training Plan. The Eastern & Midlands CARO (E&M CARO) acts as the project lead for the training programme in close collaboration with strategic partners including the CCMA, LGMA, Association of Irish Local Government (AILG), SEAI, Climate Ireland, Institute of Public Administration (IPA), OPW, and Met Éireann to ensure the delivery of high-quality training. They also work very closely with the Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG) on training delivery. This is supported by way of an SLA between Kildare and Tipperary County Councils. Funding for the training programme is provided by DCEE and approved annually through voted expenditure. This funding is distinct from the core funding allocated to the CAROs. A dedicated Service Level Agreement (SLA) between DCEE and Kildare County Council, as host authority for the E&M CARO, governs the training programme. Under this SLA, €500,000 is allocated annually until the end of 2027.



Photo: Breakout group discussion at 3rd Annual Sand Dune Gathering



Achievements

Climate Action Training Plan 2024- 2027:

LACATP Training Plan 2024 -2027, was approved by the CCMA in May 2024. The target training number for 2025 was 8,000 and training numbers exceeded this. The final training numbers will be validated by end of January 2026. The Climate Action Training Programme for 2026 was developed and agreed in Q4 2025 by Executive Training Group (ETG) and SIG with the target training numbers of 9,450.



LOCAL AUTHORITY
Climate Action
Training Programme

Training Delivery 2025

Following approval of the LACATP Training Plan 2024 -2027, an Executive Training Group was established to oversee the delivery of training under the new plan and the procurement of a Learning Management System. Governance



Photo: Field trip to Anaerobic Digester at Bioeconomy event in Grange, Co. Meath



Photo: Presentation at Fleet event in Kilkenny.



procedures were established overseen by the ETG which was convened with representatives from CCMA, Association of Irish Local Government (AILG), EPA, SEAI, Met Eireann, Heritage Council and LASNTG. This group met four times and established reporting channels to the Environmental Service Training Group (ESTG), LASNTG, CMG, CARO SAG & SIG.



Photo: Dr. Eugene Farrell giving a presentation at the 3rd Annual Sand Dune Gathering



Learning Management System

To expand access to consistent climate action training under the training programme, E&M CARO and the LASNTG developed a bespoke digital Learning Management System. See case study.



Thematic Training Programmes

E&M CARO established three thematic training groups, each convened with defined TOR and relevant stakeholders, including representatives from Green Public Procurement (GPP), Emergency Response and Climate Change and Nature-based Solutions (NbS).

- GPP: Bespoke Green Public Procurement training was delivered across 15 training sessions for Local Authority staff who are directly or indirectly involved in procurement processes.
- Fire Services Staff training delivery was ongoing with continued engagement between the LASNTG and each respective Fire Service. E&M CARO engaged with the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management and the Corporate and Emergency Planning committee to scope out training for Senior Management on response to severe weather events. A thematic training group was convened in December to explore content and delivery.
- A Webinar series commenced on 21st March aimed at Climate Action staff with various subject matter related to climate action. Fourteen webinars were delivered.
- Nature Based Solutions Webinar: CARO hosted a webinar on 25th and 27th of November with speakers from DHLGH, LAWPRO and the Heritage Council. The Webinar was aimed at Chief Executives and Senior Management teams



to introduce the technical training programme to be delivered to staff and to highlight funding opportunities for projects such as the installation of rain gardens and pilot NbS capital works. The Webinar was well attended with good interaction between the speakers and participants in the Q&A.

- All thematic training groups will continue in 2026.



Other Training

E&M CARO facilitated the design and development of the second iteration of the Raising Awareness (of climate change issues) Programme (online) for all indoor LA staff which is being delivered through the Learning Management System (LMS). A tender process for audio-visual services support for this was also completed.



Local Government Sectoral Training

E&M CARO supported and facilitated DCEE training for local government staff, focusing on strengthening community engagement. The team also contributed to the Local Government Roads Programme training delivered in partnership with South East Technological University (SETU). In addition, E&M CARO collaborated with the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) and the Heritage Council on their training programmes for Local Authority staff and contributed to the AILG's training strategy to guide future learning opportunities for elected representatives.



Review of Third Level Courses

DM CARO completed an annual review of the inventory of third level courses that relate to climate action i.e. in the areas of Climate, Environment, Energy, Transport, Planning and Sustainability. This has been updated on the CARO website.

Obstacles

- No obstacles were encountered as all planned activities for 2025 were delivered and the numbers of training places delivered exceeded projected training numbers for the year. All actions under this Work Package were on track by year end.

Spend for Work Package 5

Training & Education = Nil (excluding staff costs and expenses)

The E&M Training budget is managed under a separate SLA and is reported independently from this WP spend.



08

Communication & Citizen Engagement



Case Study



WP 6 Communication & Citizen Engagement

Strategic Partnership – GAA Green Club Orientation Event (E&M CARO)

Background

The GAA Green Club Programme is a national partnership between the GAA and the CCMA that supports community led climate action. The programme uses the GAA's strong community network and Local Authority climate expertise to help clubs take practical steps across themes such as energy, waste, biodiversity, water and travel. As Phase 3 began in 2025, participation continued to grow, and a national orientation event was planned to support clubs starting their sustainability journey. The programme uses the GAA's strong community network and Local Authority climate expertise to help clubs take practical steps across themes such as energy, waste, biodiversity, water and travel.

Action Taken

In March, E&M CARO helped deliver a national Green Club orientation event at Croke Park for more than 180 GAA clubs. The event introduced clubs to Phase 3 of the programme and set out the key aims, tools and supports available.

The event included:

- presentations and expert inputs
- group activities and peer learning sessions
- guidance on using the Green Club Portal and milestone framework
- a dedicated CARO session outlining Local Authority supports

Clubs used the day to identify priority action areas and plan their next steps. E&M CARO and the GAA also completed an updated 2026–2030 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in December, extending the partnership for five more years, with formal signing planned for early 2026.

Results / Outcome

The Croke Park event successfully mobilised Phase 3, giving clubs a clear understanding of the programme and the tools needed to take practical climate action. Clubs reported increased confidence and clarity on how to start or advance their sustainability work.

A separate recognition event in Croke Park celebrated more than 90 clubs that had already completed Green Club actions, highlighting progress across the country.

The renewed MOU strengthens the partnership between Local Authorities and the GAA, supports ongoing club engagement, and embeds community level climate action and resilience in the programme for the next five years.

Communication & Citizen Engagement

Key Aims & Priorities

- Maintain communications between CAROs and all relevant stakeholders at county, regional, national and sectoral levels.
- Maintain and keep CARO website up to date including regular news items, LA case studies, review of knowledge hub and general maintenance.
- Support National Dialogue, Community Climate Conversation and Climate Literacy initiatives.
- Support Local Authorities with provision of content and branding to assist them in their communication of the implementation of their climate action plans.

Overview

Strategic communication and stakeholder engagement have an integral role to play in the overall success of the CAROs and in delivering climate action through the local government sector. Managing communication by positioning the CAROs as a reliable source of information on the impacts, actions, events, and developments on Climate Change in each region is vital to the success of the CAROs. The CARO's will strive to raise awareness through communications and to turn that awareness into meaningful actions locally, regionally, and nationally.

This includes stimulating and promoting case studies and research and by providing toolkits / protocols to facilitate collaboration, best practice, and leadership

CARO remains committed to strengthening communications with key stakeholders at county, regional, national, and sectoral levels, ensuring continuous engagement and alignment with climate action initiatives. Maintaining and updating the CARO website plays a crucial role in this effort, providing regular news updates, LA case studies, and a knowledge hub to support Local Authority staff. Additionally, CARO actively supports the National Dialogue, Community Climate Conversation, and Climate Literacy initiatives, promoting climate awareness and policy engagement. Assisting Local Authorities in branding and communicating progress on the implementation of their Climate Action Plans remains a priority to ensure effective outreach and public engagement.



Achievements

GAA Green Club Programme

Phase 3 of the Green Club Programme commenced early this year to expand on clubs participating. Approximately 230 clubs signed up for phase 3 in addition to the 240 clubs already involved. See case study.



Photo: Attendees at the Green Clubs Event.



Photo: Green Clubs Event



Photo: GAA Green Clubs - Ballinderreen GAA Club, Galway



Fostering Stakeholder Engagement

ASBN CARO facilitated a keynote session as well as giving a presentation at one of the breakout sessions at the Mary Robinson Climate Conference, strengthening the CAROs communications impact. Participation at this event raises awareness of the Local Authority climate action agenda and provided an opportunity to showcase ongoing work to a broad audience of policymakers, academics, community groups, and sectoral partners.



The Economic Opportunities from Climate Action Conference was held in the Tullamore Court Hotel in March and was developed in conjunction with the Midlands Regional Enterprise Offices, E&M CARO, Midlands LAs, Failte Ireland, Midlands Regional Skills Forum and Laois/Offaly ETB, as part of the Midlands EU Just Transition Programme. It highlighted projects being delivered under the various strands of the EU JTF including Enterprise Sustainability, Climate Action responses, regenerative place-making and tourism and skills for the future.

The Economic Development Committee (EDC) re-established the Economic Opportunities from Climate Action Steering Group in July and endorsed their new Terms of Reference (TOR). The Steering Group was convened in December and presented a report to the EDC outlining how the group will support the integration of climate action into the Local Authority economic and enterprise development functions.



Monitoring, Reporting and Communications

The CARO Communications Working Group was re-established to develop a coordinated approach to all communications from the CAROs. Work carried out included simplifying the preparation process of this Annual Report, the establishment of a Register of all CARO documents, agreement of a new TOR, agreeing an approvals process for the Annual Report and starting a critical review of the Communications Strategy.



Supporting the Community Climate Action Programme



Photo: Launch of the second round of the Mayo County Council Community Climate Action Programme



ASBN CARO attended the National Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP) Strand 2 Research Launch and Project Showcase, in Dublin on 24th June which promoted all projects funded by Pobal under Strand 2. ASBN CARO, were successful in two projects, Beaches & Dunes and Climate Connected, when this strand was launched in 2022. This was administered by Pobal on behalf of DCEE. ASBN CARO hosted a stand to showcase the Beaches & Dunes Project. The Climate Connected Project also had a stand at the event showcasing this project.

E&M CARO are an active member on LGMA CCAP working group with DCEE to support programme administration and implementation through LAs. Phase 2 was formally launched on 28 October. Engagement with communities has now begun across the sector as local authorities progress the next phase of programme delivery.



Photo: Solar Panels Annaghdown GAA Club

The Connected Project, a Toolkit to Drive Co-Creation & Climate Action

The Climate Connected project brought together partners ASBN CARO, University of Galway (UG), Local Authorities in the ASBN region, Energy Cooperatives Ireland and Volunteer Ireland to work on developing a range of tools, case studies, and a sharing platform to support decarbonised communities to reduce their carbon footprint. See case study.

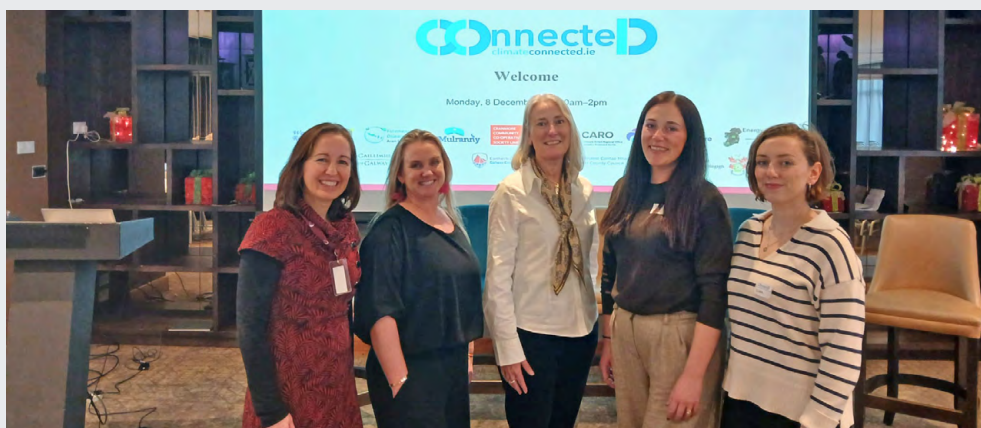


Photo: Galway County Council & Aran Islands Energy Co-Op at Climate Connected event



Photo: Panel discussion at Climate Connected event

Cork Summer Show

ASBS CARO, together with the Cork County Council Climate Action Team, hosted a joint stand at the Cork Show 2025, which welcomed more than 40,000 visitors over two days. See case study.



Photo: ASBS CARO stand at the Cork Summer Show

CARO Website

Work on the CARO website continued during the year, with work commencing on several improvement areas. Early steps were taken to:

- Plan for a rebuild of the website platform.
- Review technical issues.
- Update content.
- Explore options for a suitable monitoring and reporting tool for LA CAP actions.
- Improve the search function.



A full redevelopment of the website, including a platform rebuild and a new monitoring and reporting tool for LA CAP actions remains a priority, but it cannot

move forward without dedicated funding and clear direction. The funding requirement for this was identified in the Business Case for Funding for projects in the annual CARO Work Programme and further progress is expected following the CARO Review, the Communications Strategy Review and the outcome of this Business Case.



Climate Careers Day

DM CARO created Climate Careers Day to show that climate action can be part of any job. DM CARO organised a panel event with experts from different sectors. Invitations were sent to third-level colleges. The session included a Q&A, a creative discussion exercise, and small round-table chats so attendees could speak directly to panel members about careers in Climate action. An expert Panel was established consisting of Georgia Cameron, Lead for Policy Innovation Support with EU 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission, Richard Fitzpatrick, Climate and Environmental Awareness Coordinator for DLRD County Council, Catherine Joyce-O'Caollai, Policy Leader at ESB Group, Alvar Geener, Associate at Bankers without Boundaries, Dr Seán O'Leary, Irish Planning Institute, Ed Synnott, Innovator and urban strategist. Audience questions were facilitated after the panel discussion and an innovative, interactive session called the animal question (If your career were an animal what would it be and why?) provoked a lot of discussion and interaction. This was a very successful event which stimulated people in non- climate careers to consider how their skill set could work in this area.



Photo: Attendees at Climate Careers Day event in Dublin.



Dublin Climate Action Week

DM CARO, in partnership with Fingal County Council, Dublin City Council, South Dublin County Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, and Codema – Dublin's Energy Agency, successfully organised a programme of events for Dublin Climate Action Week (May 12 -18). The primary objective was to strengthen connections between community groups, businesses, and organisations while showcasing Local Authority-led climate initiatives across the Dublin region. Key events facilitated by DM CARO included Climate Careers Day, where climate professionals were interviewed by students and collaborated with staff from each of the four Dublin Local Authorities to address specific climate challenges, Net Zero Cities Workshop with Dublin LA Staff, Workshop with experts and community for Minority Report, Pedal Party Parades across the four Dublin LAs, a Climate Cabaret and shared mobility operator discounts. The learnings from this will feed into the planning of sectoral Climate festivals.



Photo: Launch of Dublin Climate Action Week 2025

Obstacles

CARO continued to face communications challenges during the year. Maintaining digital platforms, keeping the website updated, and having skilled staff to manage this work remained an ongoing issue as does a process to ensure accurate and timely updates. Moving to a new website platform & providing an associated LA CAPs reporting tool remains a priority but will require significant funding. The CARO Review along with the Communications Strategy Review are expected to help progress this work in 2026.

Other challenges encountered including engaging with multiple partners on initiatives that are common to many organisations such as waste segregation, prevention and green procurement in terms of logistics.

Spend for Work Package 6

Communication & Citizen Engagement €33,153 (excluding staff costs and expenses)



Case Study



WP6 - Communication & Citizen Engagement

Climate Connected - A Community Toolkit to Support Local Climate Action – ASBN CARO

Background

Many communities want to act on climate change but find it difficult to know where to start and often lack practical tools, clear guidance and examples of what has worked elsewhere. This can lead to uncertainty and reduced confidence in taking climate action at local level. The Climate Connected project was developed to address this gap. Funded under Strand 2 of CCAP, the project focuses on climate education, capacity building and learning by doing. It supports communities to organise themselves, reduce their carbon footprint and become more resilient to climate change. The project was developed by the University of Galway, in partnership with the ASBN CARO, Energy Cooperatives Ireland, Climate Action Co-ordinators/ Officers and community groups. It was tested in communities in Mayo, Sligo and Galway.

Action Taken

The project developed an online Climate Action Toolkit using a co-design approach, where communities and practitioners worked together to shape practical and accessible tools. Key actions included:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated Decarbonising Zone (DZ) Officers were employed, providing on the ground support to participating communities and strengthening delivery and engagement at local level. • Development of a Community Structure Tool to support good governance and organisation at community level. • Creation of a Carbon Footprint App to help communities measure and manage local emissions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of community engagement tools, case studies and success stories to inspire action. • Development of a DZ Action Plan Guide to support structured local climate planning. • Establishment of a central web hub to bring all resources together in one accessible platform. |
|---|---|

Results / Outcome

By the end of 2025, the Climate Connected project was fully delivered, with the online toolkit launched and actively used by participating communities. The project was showcased at two national events: the CCAP Strand 2 Research Launch in Dublin (24 June) and a final showcase event in Galway (8 December). The website now hosts a wide range of case studies and tools, including the Carbon Footprint App, Community Structure Tool and engagement resources, all of which are supporting ongoing local climate initiatives.



Case Study



WP6 - Communication & Citizen Engagement

CARO Stand at the Cork Show - ASBS CARO

Background

ASBS CARO shared a stand with Cork County Council at the Munster Agricultural Society's "Cork Show 2025". The themes of the stand were 'Coastal Erosion', 'Enhancing Biodiversity at home' and promotion of the 'Community Climate Action Fund'. The effects of coastal erosion and flooding were demonstrated along with engineered solutions such as rock armour and nature-based solutions including marram grass and groyne fencing. This presented an opportunity to discuss coastal erosion issues across the county. The biodiversity display included pollinator friendly plants, a selection of bug hotels, bat and bird boxes.

Action Taken

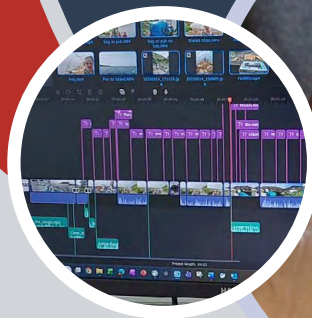
- Staff constructed several "Coast in a box" models that demonstrated how coastal erosion occurs and how engineering measures and nature-based solutions can protect our coastline.
- A selection of appropriate pollinator plants and micro-habitats including bat boxes were on display along with advice on how householders could create habitats in their gardens.

Results / Outcome

The Cork Show was attended by more than 40,000 visitors with several hundred members of the public and stakeholders engaging with staff at our stand over the two days, with follow up queries and feedback very positive. Applications to Cork County Council for Community Climate Action Fund grants which closed in December were also over-subscribed by a factor of 4. It is believed that the stand was a significant factor in this.



Case Study



WP6 - Communication & Citizen Engagement

Production of Video Content Case Studies – ASBS CARO

Background

CARO saw a need to communicate good practice and case studies to other Local Authorities as well as provide content that Local Authorities could use to demonstrate to elected members, stakeholders and the public the type of Climate Actions they were engaged in.

Action Taken

ASBS CARO purchased video equipment and editing software and staff upskilled in video design, filming, editing and production. CARO engaged with Local Authorities to scout out potential stories and came up with a short list of relevant videos showcasing innovative actions. 4 videos were filmed (between late 2024 and in 2025), completed and uploaded to the CARO YouTube channel in 2025.

Results / Outcome

The videos were showcased at the CARO Local Authority Climate Action Conference Event in April and were well received. The videos logged 493 views collectively on the CARO YouTube Channel in 2025. The video on a Near Zero Emissions Building built by Kerry Co. Co. was shown at a number of energy events including a meeting of Energy Performance Officers and SEAI staff. The videos have also been viewed by key funders and stakeholders in the Local Authority sector and have been effective at highlighting the work of the sector.



08

Knowledge Development

Knowledge Development

Key Aims & Priorities

- Collaborate with 3rd level Institutions on behalf of the Local Government sector in areas relevant to climate action research and initiatives.
- Participate in relevant research projects, steering groups, working groups and evaluations, as appropriate.
- Participate in the EPA Climate Research Co-ordination Group.

Overview

Keeping up to date on Climate Knowledge and Policies and disseminating this information is a key value of the CAROs. This requires a continued focus on climate action efforts by fostering collaboration, research, and strategic engagement to drive impactful change.

Through partnerships with third-level institutions and participation in key research initiatives, the aim is to ensure that the local government sector remains up to date and at the forefront of climate action. Active involvement in steering groups, working groups, and evaluations further strengthens the knowledge base and decision-making process in this space.



Photo: Demonstrator and Replicator sites at kick off event for GRACE project



Achievements

Accessible Funding Inventory

DM CARO has completed an annual review of the inventory of available funding for climate action research and projects, and this was updated on the CARO website, ensuring stakeholders have the most relevant and up-to-date information to support informed decision-making on climate action initiatives.



GRACE: Strengthening Rural Climate Resilience

ASBN CARO are participating in the EU Horizon research project GRACE – Growing Climate Resilience in Remote Rural Areas through Community Empowerment, a four-year initiative focused on developing climate change adaptation measures in rural regions using nature-based approaches.

- As a replicator region, ASBN CARO attended the project kick-off meetings in Venice, Italy from 27–29 October alongside consortium partners.
- €120,000 Project funding has been allocated to develop guidance documents to trial solutions, developed in the five demonstrator regions (Portugal, Italy, Austria, Denmark, Sweden).
- Replication activities will be developed and shared at agreed sites within the five Local Authority areas in the ASBN region.

The GRACE project aims to empower rural communities to take transformative action against climate change, delivering social and economic benefits through nature-based solutions.



Championing Sustainable Leadership

“Mayo Rising” a collaborative event was held in ATU Mayo in June, aimed at charting a sustainable future for the county. The event was designed by participants on the ATU Sustainability Leadership postgraduate programme and highlighted not just the challenges but the great work that is happening throughout communities in Mayo. A wide range of stakeholders were involved on the day including ASBN CARO, Mayo County Council, ATU Mayo, Foróige, Leave No Trace, and Mayo Community Initiatives. The event featured two core sessions, with a morning panel featuring a presentation by ASBN CARO and the afternoon session saw attendees participate in a World Café format, a facilitated dialogue designed to generate practical ideas and actionable steps to progress the county’s sustainability journey. Dr. John Molloy captured the themes and ideas of the day on a visual graphic.

The event followed on from the successful completion of the Level 9 Sustainability Leadership Certificate course, run by ATU. ASBN Regional Co-ordinator and the Acting DOS and the Mayo County Council Climate Action Co-ordinator were successful in completing this course.



Photo: Attendees at Mayo Rising Event



Photo: Visual representation of themes captured during Mayo Rising

EU Mission for 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities

The EU Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission is one of 5 Missions across Europe. It aims to deliver 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030. It also aims to ensure that these mission cities act as experimentation and innovation hubs to enable all European cities to follow suit by 2050. Dublin City and Cork City are actively engaged in the EU Mission for 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities, with strategic support from DM CARO. Galway City is also a Mission City and is independently participating in a NetZeroCities pilot project on building energy efficiency. In May this year, a Mission “label” was awarded to Cork and Dublin. This was to acknowledge that their Climate City Contracts, setting out how they will lead their cities to being climate neutral by 2030, were approved by the European Commission and the European Investment Bank. The award ceremony was held in Vilnius, Lithuania, attended by all 3 cities, DM CARO and the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment (DCEE). See Case Study.



Photo: Mission Label Ceremony, Vilnius, Lithuania



Green Roof Pilot Project: Enhancing Urban Resilience

The Green Roof Pilot Project, led by DM CARO in collaboration with University College Dublin (UCD), AquaRoot Technologies Ltd, and Energy Harvesting Solutions Ltd, explored nature-based solutions (NbS) for urban runoff management. The initiative aimed to assess the effectiveness of green roof systems in reducing flood risk and enhancing urban resilience. Insights from this pilot will be disseminated across Local Authorities, informing future urban planning and climate resilience. The report was finalised in April.

Strengthening Knowledge on Renewable Energy for Island Communities

ASBS CARO actively contributed to international knowledge exchange on sustainable energy. Through Nordic Energy Research, ASBS CARO contributed to an online seminar in October, providing an overview of the current energy status of Irish offshore islands and highlighting emerging opportunities for Anaerobic Digestion as a renewable solution.



Obstacles

Capacity: CARO teams are small and engaging with third-level institutions often requires significant time for applications, meetings, and Steering Groups, which can be very time-consuming for small teams with limited capacity. Students' placements are being used where possible to support this work. This is why the IKC3 project, linking climate action with bioeconomy with partners MTU, TCD and UCD is behind schedule.

Funding: The CAROs funding model supports staff costs, leaving very limited resources for project delivery or supporting smaller research projects. While third level colleges can apply for funding some applications may require match funding or may not be successful as demonstrated in the UCC/MTU Project on the development of LA-relevant Coastal Research Project on repairs for Coastal Defences.

Procurement: Procurement rules restrict CAROs' ability to direct funds to third-level institutions and other partners, which can slow or block research collaborations. Research: There is a large and growing volume of research activity and funding opportunities. Keeping up with these and identifying what is most relevant requires dedicated staff time.

Spend for Work Package 7

Knowledge Development = €1,824 (excluding staff costs and expenses)



10

Appendices

Appendix 1:

Abbreviations

	Full Name
AILG	Association of Irish Local Government
ASBN	Atlantic Seaboard North
ASBS	Atlantic Seaboard South
ATU	Atlantic Technological University
BER	Building Energy Rating
CARO	Climate Action Regional Office
CATCEN	Climate Action, Transport, Circular Economy and Networks Committee
CCAC	Climate Change Advisory Council
CCAP	Community Climate Action Programme
CCMA	County and City Management Association
CFT / CFTs	Common Failure Type(s)
CIAN	Climate Ireland Adaptation Network
CIR	Critical Infrastructure Route
CMG	CARO Management Group
DCEE	Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DM	Dublin Metropolitan
DOS	Director of Services
DZ	Decarbonising Zone
E&M	Eastern & Midlands
EED	Energy Efficient Design
EIB	European Investment Bank
EMP	Energy Master Plan

	Full Name
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESPON	European Spatial Planning Observation Network
ESTG	Environmental Services Training Group
ETG	Executive Training Group
EU	European Union
EV	Electric Vehicle
EVCP	Electric Vehicle Charge Point
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
GPP	Green Public Procurement
GSI	Geological Survey Ireland
HEIs	Higher Education Institutes
HVO	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil
ITADZ	Irish Targeted Analysis for Decarbonising Zones
JTF	Just Transition Fund
KCC	Kildare County Council
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LA / LAs	Local Authority / Local Authorities
LA CAP	Local Authority Climate Action Plan
LASNTG	Local Authority Services National Training Group
LAWPRO	Local Authority Waters Programme
LGMA	Local Government Management Agency
LMS	Learning Management System

	Full Name
MaREI	Marine Renewable Energy Ireland
MARA	Maritime Area Regulatory Authority
M&V	Measurement & Verification
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
NCCMS	National Coastal Change Management Strategy
NCCRA	National Climate Change Risk Assessment
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NOAC	National Oversight and Audit Commission
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NWRA	Northern & Western Regional Assembly
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPR	Office of the Planning Regulator
OPW	Office of Public Works
PPN	Public Participation Network
PSROG	Public Service Reform Oversight Group

	Full Name
Q&A	Questions & Answers
QR	Quick Response (Code)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland
SETU	South East Technological University
SIG	Strategic Implementation Group
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SWAT	Severe Weather Assessment Team
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
TOR	Terms of Reference
UCC	University College Cork
UCD	University College Dublin
UG	University of Galway
UHI	Urban Heat Island
WIRE	Weather Impacts Register
ZEVI	Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland

Appendix 2:

Links to Reports, Websites & Reference Documents

Reports & Policies Referenced

- 2024 Local Government Climate Action Key Performance Indicators Report
[Climate Action Key Performance Indicators](#)
- 3rd Annual Sand Dune Gathering Report
[Report-3rd-Sand-Dune-Gathering-2025.pdf](#)
- CARO Annual Report 2024
[CARO 2024 Annual Report](#)
- CARO Annual Work Programme 2025
Structured into seven Work Packages, see appendix 3
- Climate Action & Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021
[climate-action-and-low-carbon-development-amendment-bill-2021-9b4a53e3-083a-4ee7-819c-.pdf](#)
- Climate Adaptation Strategy for Regional and Local Roads (DoT 2023)
[Strategy Document V10 ISSUED FOR PUBLICATION](#)
- Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030 (DECA 2030)
[delivering-effective-climate-action-2030.pdf](#)
- Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2025
[DECC Climate Action Plan 2025 Main Report - Final Web.pdf](#)
- Local Authority Climate Action Charter 2019
[climate-action-charter-for-local-authorities.pdf](#)
- National Climate Change Risk Assessment (NCCRA) (EPA)
[EPA_NCCRA_Main-Report_Published_June_2025.pdf](#)
- National Adaptation Framework

[national-adaptation-framework-2024-0fa761a3-84e5-4bcf-ac40-0f91f6431ae8.pdf](#)

- National Coastal Change Management Strategy (NCCMS)
[92bc0e9a-report-of-the-inter-departmental-group-on-national-coastal-change-management-.pdf](#)
- Northern and Western Regional Programme 2021-2027
[Northern and Western Regional Programme 2021-2027 - Northern & Western Regional Assembly](#)
- Sectoral Adaptation Plans (2025)
[Sectoral Adaptation Planning](#)

Project Websites

- CARO Website
[Home - CARO](#)
- Climate Connected Project
[www.climateconnected.ie](#)
- Climate Ireland Adaptation Network
[EPA Climate Ireland | Climate Ireland Adaptation Network](#)
- Cork Summer Show
[Cork Summer Show 2025 - Cork Summer Show](#)
- Decarbonising Zone Scheme (NWRA / ERDF)
[Decarbonising Zone Scheme - Northern & Western Regional Assembly](#)
- ESPON ITADZ Project
[\[ITADZ\] Ireland – Targeted Analysis of Decarbonising Zones | ESPON](#)
- EU Just Transition Fund
[European Just Transition Fund - EU Funds](#)
- EU Mission Cities

City Advisors: Connecting the Dots for the Climate Transition - NetZeroCities

- EU Mission of Climate Adaptation
https://mission-adaptation-portal.ec.europa.eu/index_en
- GRACE – EU Horizon Project
[Grace project - Growing Climate Resilience in Remote rural Areas through Community Empowerment](#)
- Green Clubs Programme
[Green Clubs Programme](#)
- Green Roof Pilot Project
DLRD - Green Roofs - CARO
https://mission-adaptation-portal.ec.europa.eu/index_en
- Local Authority Climate Action Plans
[LA CAPs 2024 - 2029 - CARO](#)
- Local Authority Services National Training Group
[Local Authority Climate Action Training – LASNTG](#)

- LAWPRO NBS Conference
[Nature-based Solutions Conferences - Local Authority Waters Programme](#)

- Minority Report
[Minority Report | Home](#)

- Protect Our Dunes Campaign
www.dunes.ie

- TalX2
[Trans-boundary Adaptation Learning Exchange](#)

Videos:

- [Wexford Co Council FT3 Forestry:](#)
- [Cork City Council EV Fleet](#)
- [Kerry Co Council Near Zero Emissions Building](#)
- [Cork Co Council Solar Panels on Laboratory Roof](#)

Appendix 3:

Annual Work Programme 2025 – Traffic Light

Work Package 1: Governance and Partnerships		
Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 1. Governance & Partnership		
No.	Action	Progress
1	Continue to support CARO governance structure	On Track
1.1	- Drafting and inputting into reports, minutes, presentations etc. - Strategic Implementation Group (CCMA-DECC) x 4 - Stakeholder Advisory Group X2 - CARO Management Group meetings x 4 - Regular Coordinator Meetings - Regional Steering Group meetings as per CARO region - Local CARO team meetings internal - Working Group meetings (e.g. Comms Working Group). - Local Authority governance requirements LA Update Meetings with DECC (as agreed)	On Track
1.2	Reporting to host LA on finance and work progress on CARO activity as required	On Track
1.3	Submission of Financial claims to DECC	On Track
1.4	Maintain Financial Management & Reporting Oversight for CAROs centrally	On Track
2	Actively engage with the external review of CARO and work towards implementation of recommendations of the review	On Track
3	Provide input to government and sectoral consultations where relevant and when requested by the SIG/CCMA	On Track
4	Develop and maintain relationships with strategic partners (inter alia as below)	On Track
4.1	Liaise with LAWPRO on delivery of their National Work Programme and Water Action Plan 2024	On Track
4.2	Liaise with Regional Assemblies	On Track
4.3	Liaise with WERLA on Circular Economy.	On Track
4.4	Liaise with the Bioeconomy Implementation and Development Group (BIDG) to further the development of the bioeconomy in Ireland.	On Track
4.5	Liaise with HSE (National) on climate action related work programme	On Track

Work Package 1: Governance and Partnerships		
Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 1. Governance & Partnership		
No.	Action	Progress
4.6	Maintain cross-border relationships and promote cross-boundary climate action projects such as: - Develop relationship with Solace NI incl. assist in delivering the Cooperation Ireland Climate Action Conference - Examine connecting with CCAP Strand 1A projects - Support the Donegal/Derry Strabane partnership on climate action. - Shared Island Fund	On Track
4.7	Continue to maintain strong links with Regional Assemblies including engagement in relation to participation in relevant research projects, particularly those funded through ERDF, Interreg and EU JTF.	On Track
5	Project Manage the development and implementation of climate action outcome indicators with the Climate Action KPI Working Group	On Track
5.1	Project Manage the development of KPIs and data collection, in collaboration with research unit of LGMA, to examine and support the performance of Climate Action across key functional areas of Local Authorities, in line with DECA 2030.	On Track
5.2	Report on DECA KPI's at regular intervals to CCMA CATCEN committee, for endorsement and to inform future data collection.	On Track
6	Provide the Department with all reasonable requested information and updates in a timely manner, including parliamentary questions, preparing briefing materials, or to comply with international, EU and national reporting requirements.	On Track
7	Draft and agree 2026 Work Programme and secure agreement at SIG in Q4 Coordinated through ASBS	On Track
8	Advance business case for permanency of LA and CARO CA resources to ensure consistent delivery of Climate Action work programme throughout Local Government.	On Track
9	Annual CARO Report on work programme delivery	On Track
10	Prepare and keep updated a CARO Register of Documents including Advisory Notes, Guidance Notes, Presentations, Reports, Strategies and Training Materials.	On Track
11	Review and update the Local Authority Climate Action Charter	On Track

Work Package 2: Local Authority Climate Action Plans

Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 2 Local Authority Climate Action Plans

No.	Action	Progress
1	Support the implementation of LA CAPs. Help to build and maintain capacity within LAs to deliver LA CAPs and the DZ Implementation Plans. This will include providing support, advice and guidance to LAs and coordinating with Local Authority Climate Action Teams.	On Track
1.1	Support the continued development and rollout of information, guidance, training and workshops (national, regional, sub-regional and local) to local authorities on implementation, reporting and funding activation.	On Track
1.2	Maintain framework contracts to assist Local Authorities in the implementation of LA CAPs.	On Track
1.3	Organise and host networking and capacity building events on relevant subject areas relating to national climate policy and local government, LA CAPs and DZs implementation, reporting and funding activation etc.	On Track
3	Manage LACAPs (incl DZs) 2024 Database to establish key priority areas, promote coordination in implementation and inform engagement with stakeholders	On Track
3.1	Complete sectorally themed reports and stakeholder reports on actions contained in LA CAPs and respond to queries.	On Track
3.2	From the review of LA CAP reporting, identify best practice, innovation examples and disseminate these across the sector through peer-to-peer engagement	Behind/ May be at risk
4	Contribute to the DZ Advisory Group established by DECC	On Track
5	Work with DECC to support coordination and engagement with national and regional stakeholders in the implementation of the LA CAPs	On Track
5.1	Support regional and National coordination for shared/ similar actions to promote alignment of, and synergies between, LA CAPs.	On Track

Work Package 2: Local Authority Climate Action Plans		
Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 2 Local Authority Climate Action Plans		
No.	Action	Progress
5.2	Engage with Departments/agencies in the development and delivery of their Sectoral Adaptation Plans, the National Adaptation Framework and CAP to consider how the implementation of LACAPs could support relevant actions.	On Track
5.3	Engage with Regional Assemblies and other key stakeholders to support the interaction between spatial planning and LA CAPs in the context of the Planning and Development Act (2024), NPF Review and Review of RSES.	Behind/ May be at risk
6	Help identify and interpret national & sectoral actions for LAs to consider in the implementation of LACAPs	On Track
6.1	Identify and document LA actions in CAP2025 (and annual revisions) which LAs are responsible for in accordance LA Scope on Climate Action Matrix: Full Accountability/Influence/Coordinate & Facilitate/ Advocate	On Track
6.2	Work with LAs to establish how their LA CAP Actions might correlate with actions in their LACAP (2024-2029)	On Track
7	Support the development of Local Authority Reporting of LACAPs	On Track
7.1	Identify and agree reporting scope and parameters, with relevant stakeholders,	On Track
7.2	Develop a monitoring and reporting system and collaboration platform for LA CAP, hosted on the CARO.ie website platform:	Behind/ May be at risk

Work Package 3: Adaptation

Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 3. Adaptation

No.	Action	Progress
1	Support the sector to build capacity and integrate climate adaptation into LA functions and services	On Track
1.1	Work with sectoral partners to support the integration of Sectoral climate adaptation plans and actions throughout the local authority sector	On Track
1.2	Support the sector with network building across key climate adaptation stakeholders including expanding LA involvement in the Climate Ireland Adaptation Network (CIAN) run by EPA	On Track
1.3	Provide input into the development of, and to support local level input as required for: - the National Climate Change Risk Assessment (NCCRA) - Sectoral Adaptation Plans (x8 current, up to 13 possible for all sectors) - Climate Action Plan 2025	On Track
1.4	Support LA SWATs in their alignment with National Emergency Planning for severe weather events, in line with strategy due to issue Q2/2025 from DHLGH	On Track
2	Support the sector with national reporting requirements	On Track
2.1	Report on adaptation progress under the National Adaptation Framework and integrate with reporting from the LA CAP. Coordinate LA input to draft sectoral adaptation plans to cover priority areas of actions for the local authority sector.	On Track
2.2	Provide Annual progress reports to CCAC as requested	On Track
3	Participate in various Adaptation Working Groups that support adaptation planning and development for the sector	On Track
3.1	Represent LA sector on Climate Ireland Technical Advisory Group, including meeting with the EPA quarterly to discuss work programmes	On Track
3.2	Represent LA Sector on Sectoral Adaptation Plans WGs and provide LA relevant data and input to planning teams where relevant.	On Track
3.3	Help promote and communicate activities of the EU Mission on Adaptation across the LA Sector with the aim of increasing uptake of the mission among local authorities.	On Track
4	Deliver various CARO Climate Adaptation Projects/Initiatives	On Track

Work Package 3: Adaptation		
Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 3. Adaptation		
No.	Action	Progress
4.1	Support the development of Annexes to Climate Adaptation Strategy for Regional and Local Roads and related tasks in partnership with Dept. of Transport	On Track
4.2	Engage with the EPA regarding the National Climate Change Risk Register published in 2024 and other relevant stakeholders to further develop and pilot the climate change risk and vulnerability methodology for local authorities developed in 2022 in each CARO region and work with all stakeholders to agree next steps.	On Track
4.3	Continue to roll out the learnings from the CAF Strand 2 Project through training and identification of new demonstration sites for coastal nature-based solutions	On Track
4.4	Engagement through the Sand Dune Awareness Working Group in ASBN region to facilitate community groups in preservation and restoration of sand dunes and roll out the learnings to other regions.	On Track
4.5	Explore the potential for wider use of the WIRE app and the potential for EU funding to fund the expanded use of the app within the local authority sector. Explore the potential role of Climate Ireland to host data collected by the app and roll out to other Local Authorities in each CARO region as an exemplar project for improving the collection of climate relevant data. Explore the opportunities to have a single system which incorporates WIRE and SWEMs.	Behind/ May be at risk
4.6	Support Technical Adaptation Committee for Groundwater Forecasting and Climate Change Impacts Project: GSI	On Track
4.7	Progress work with LAWPRO/DoT/DHLGH on potential Stormwater Management Appendix to 2023 Non-National & Regional Roads Guidance	Behind/ May be at risk
4.8	Support Local Authorities in developing nature based solutions and sustainable urban drainage systems for roads particularly in housing estates, and identify best practice example to be used as exemplars for the sector.	On Track
5	Coastal Change Management	On Track
5.1	Assist with implementing the National Coastal Change Management Strategy (NCCMS). In association with state agencies, particularly OPW and GSI. Assist them with carrying out research and evidence gathering to inform the establishment of a long-term programme of response to coastal change.	On Track

Work Package 3: Adaptation

Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 3. Adaptation

No.	Action	Progress
5.2	As per the NCCMS and 2022 CARO Scoping Report identify and scope requirements for additional guidance and training for technical, environmental and administrative capacity at LA level and participate in relevant NCCMS WGs. Potential Pilot Programme in ASBS + Selected Counties	On Track
5.3	In consultation with stakeholders progress short guidance and training requirements for local authorities in the area of coastal erosion and coastal change to bridge gap until NCCMS delivered.	On Track
5.4	AA- Agora Horizon Project: Support the ongoing project to develop Nature-based solutions to coastal erosion with EU partners/MaREI/Cork Co Co	On Track
6	Management of Urban Heat Island Effect	On Track
6.1	Under take research with academic partners to assess impacts of UHI on urban centres in Ireland	On Track
7	Nature Based Solutions & Biodiversity	On Track
7.1	Support the Heritage Council and Local Authorities in the implementation of the climate-related aspects of their Biodiversity Work Programmes and Nature Based Solutions including those contained within the LACAPs and DZ plans	On Track
7.2	Promote alignment between drafting and implementation of LACAPs and Biodiversity Action Plans in relation to Climate Action-related measures	On Track
7.3	Engage with Local Authorities, WERLA, National Parks & Wildlife and other key Stakeholders to support the implementation of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan particularly in the management of green areas on Local Authority Lands and in housing estates.	On Track
7.4	Minority Report: , Mitigating environmental disruptive events using people-centric predictive digital technologies to improve disaster and climate resilience is the focus of this project. The case study site for this project is the Dublin City's Ringsend Poolbed Decarbonisation zone being home to Ireland's key critical infrastructure on the Poolbeg Peninsula this project vital and timely. DM CARO is undertaking this project on behalf o DCC to ensure the lessons for adaptation in DZs can be shared beyond.	On Track

Work Package 4: Mitigation		
Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 4. Mitigation		
No.	Action	Progress
1	Support the development of Energy Agencies/Bureaux/Units	On Track
1.1	Support the development and assist in the coordination of Energy Agencies/Bureaux/Units across the CARO regions namely: Border, Mid-east, Midlands, Southeast, ASBN, Mid-West, Cork.	On Track
1.2	Provide regional supports to assist LAs in progressing SEAI Pathfinder programme projects in each region.	On Track
1.3	Assist Local Authorities to comply with the infrastructure guidelines and establish a Preliminary Business case template.	On Track
2	Support the role of local authorities in implementing the national Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy 2022-2025	On Track
2.2	Participate and provide input to Local Authority sector on a regional basis to develop and implement joint EV Infrastructure strategies.	On Track
3	SEAI/Energy Related Work	Behind/ May be at risk
3.1	Work with SEAI to develop the role of local authorities in the delivery of Sustainable Energy Communities and Renewable Energy Communities, including in DZs.	Behind/ May be at risk
3.2	Support SEAI in the implementation of the SEC Programme	Behind/ May be at risk
4	Deliver various CARO Climate Mitigation Projects/Initiatives	On Track
4.1	In partnership with the CCMA and LGMA, advance support to the fleet manager network on fleet decarbonisation through building capacity, sourcing funding for capital investment and collaboration with key stakeholders.	On Track
4.2	Support Local Authorities in the decarbonising of their fleet through sharing learnings nationally.	On Track
4.2	Explore feasibility for the development of a "Green Flag" award for Local Authorities	On Track

Work Package 4: Mitigation

Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 4. Mitigation

No.	Action	Progress
4.3	In partnership with the Department of Transport, progress the scoping of decarbonising roads project	On Track
5	Work with DECC to examine options for coordinating action to help progress Green Public Procurement implementation in the local authority sector	On Track
6	Develop and roll out Pilot Projects on Greening Events including the elimination of single use items, minimising waste, reducing energy particularly from carbon sources etc. in conjunction with RWMPO and other relevant Stakeholders	Behind/ May be at risk
7	Renewable Energy Projects	on track
7.1	Support and encourage the use of Solar Power as a renewable energy source through engagement with key Stakeholders (and potential investors).	Significant Risk See page 67
7.2	Engage with Researchers and other relevant Stakeholders to establish the feasibility of bioenergy fuels on a wider scale particularly on remedial lands.	Behind/ May be at risk See page 67
7.3	Explore with Local Authorities, Energy Bureaus, Energy Agencies and other key Stakeholders the feasibility of District Heating Projects building on the feasibility briefing note prepared by Codema	Significant Risk See page 67
7.4	Work with the Regional Assemblies and Local Authorities in relation to grid resilience. Promote of alignment' and engagement with the Regional Assemblies in relation to Regional Renewable Energy Strategies and capacity allocations for local authority areas in relation to solar and onshore wind per revised NPF and Planning and Development Act 2024.	Significant Risk

Work Package 4: Mitigation		
Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 4. Mitigation		
No.	Action	Progress
8	Bioeconomy	on track
8.1	Bioeconomy policy development: Support local and regional authorities to participate in the development of the national bioeconomy strategy.	On Track
8.2	Bioeconomy governance: Support local authorities to participate in the testing of the Open Call for Participation: Beta Testing of the ROBIN Toolbox – ROBIN (robin-project.eu). The ROBIN consortium will invite regional and local authorities across the European Union to participate in the beta testing of the ROBIN Toolbox. Selected authorities will have the opportunity to be among the first to use innovative tools and methodologies that can enhance policy implementation regarding bioeconomy.	On Track
8.3	Bioeconomy activation: Undertake a co-creation / co-design activity to support regional and local bioeconomy development pathways (from bioresources to biobased products). Examine national, EU cofunding and EU funding opportunities to support regional and local bioeconomy development pathways.	On Track

Work Package 5: Training & Education		
Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 5. Training & Education		
No.	Action	Progress
1	Work closely with the Local Authority National Services Training Group to deliver climate action training plan 2024-2027	On Track
1.1	Establish governance arrangements for oversight and delivery of training plan (as per training plan) in conjunction with ESTG and LASNTG	On Track
1.2	Implement Training programme 2025 and engage strategic partners as required.	On Track
1.3	Establish thematic training working groups to support training programme: Leadership, GPP, NBS & others as necessary in 2025	On Track
1.4	Embed climate action modules across pre-existing/ established /scheduled LG sectoral training provided	On Track
1.5	Draft 2024 (part thereof) training activity report for submission to DECC Q1 2025	On Track
1.6	Report training delivery progress as necessary to DECC, ESTG, LASNTG, CARO	On Track
1.7	Develop training programme for 2026 in Q4 2025	On Track
2	Support the development and implementation of the Training Programme/workshops and learning events as requested.	On Track

Work Package 6: Communications & Citizen Engagement		
Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 6. Communications		
No.	Action	Progress
1	Carry out regular reviews of the Strategy and facilitate at least two meetings of the Communications Working Group annually to include updating Appendices on branding guidelines and engagement with the Public.	On Track
2	Maintain and update the CARO website as an information repository and collaborative forum for local authority teams	Behind/ May be at risk
2.1	Update content with news items, research communication tools, case studies, events, training etc.	On Track
2.2	Carry out a review of current website structure to incorporate a reporting tool for LA CAP actions and implement recommendations	Behind/ May be at risk
3	Support the development and implementation of the CCMA / GAA Green Clubs Project: Green Club Steering and Working Group membership	On Track
3.1	Convene and Contribute to GAA GC steering group to promote engagement between local authorities and GAA clubs to promote uptake of programme	On Track
3.2	Advance planning and implementation of phase 3 of GAA green Club Programme	On Track
3.3	Review, update and organise signing of MOU for continuation of strategic partnership between CCMA and GAA on GCP	On Track
4	Assist local authorities in rolling out the Community Climate Action Programme.	On Track
5	Provide support to the National Dialogue on Climate Action and the Climate Conversations: e.g. attending relevant events, providing updates, disseminating information to the sector and collating information, employing the Climate Action Works resources developed by DECC/DCU.	On Track
6	Deliver various CARO Climate Communication Projects/ Initiatives/Events, employing the Climate Action Works resources developed by DECC/DCU.	On Track

Work Package 6: Communications & Citizen Engagement

Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 6. Communications

No.	Action	Progress
6.1	CAF Strand 2 - In partnership with UoG and the 5 LAs in the ASBN support the development and implementation of the Climate Connected Project toolkits for the 6 DZs in the region and roll out to all other Regions. This involves the development of a website to communicate with Communities on various toolkits to get started on their carbon reducing journey and to show case many case studies of successful Community Projects.	On Track
6.2	Attend and support and contribute to Local Authority and other stakeholder Climate/outreach/public events as requested	On Track
6.3	Support the dissemination of Government climate action branding and information to promote its uptake across the sector	On Track
7	Develop Communications Resources and content for LAs	On Track
7.1	Develop standard slide decks and templates on various climate action themes for use by all local authorities	On Track
7.2	Pursue credible and reliable sources of data and media content with key stakeholders such as Met Eireann and EPA/Climate Ireland, for use by Local Authorities.	On Track
7.3	Collate and draft climate action case studies for use by LAs in public communications to promote climate action and as an educational tool	On Track
7.4	Explore with CCMA possibility of coordination/planning and development of sectoral Climate Week/Festivals.	On Track
7.5	Work with the Bioeconomy Ireland Week communications team to share news, resources and events.	On Track
8	Support and amplify communications from compatible public sector partners such as DECC and RWMPO; including initiatives on waste prevention, waste segregation, textiles, plastics, household hazardous waste and Green Procurement	Behind/ May be at risk

Work Package 7: Knowledge Development		
Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 7. Knowledge Development		
No.	Action	Progress
1	Funding	On Track
1.1	Maintain an inventory of available funding for climate action research and projects and make available on the CARO website	On Track
1.2	Develop a database of all funded projects including all LA's involved, expected outcomes, timeframe and develop a method of sharing learnings.	On Track
1.3	Promote the availability of EU and other Funded Projects and develop a protocol for assessing projects when approached by funding partners. Assessment to include considering the best fit Nationally and benefit of rolling out the findings	On Track
2	Engage with relevant partners within EU/International context to share learning from the Irish local government climate context, access best practice, and for peer to peer learning e.g. Climate NI, Covenant of Mayors, EU Missions	On Track
2.1	Support Dublin City and Cork City in EU Mission for 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities	On Track
3	Engage working partners to support the CCMA Business Tourism Enterprise Innovation Urban Economic Renewal (BTEIUR) and Economic Opportunities from Climate Action SG to promote communications on economic opportunities arising from climate action, and the delivery of outputs.	On Track
4	Continue to support relevant 3rd level/partner research projects and to disseminate relevant information across local authorities (inter alia below:) and as opportunities are presented	On Track

Work Package 7: Knowledge Development

Key Aims & Priorities - Refer to Chapter 7. Knowledge Development

No.	Action	Progress
4.1	Assist with the Green Roof Pilot Project, working with UCD to test nature based solutions on roofs across the Dublin region.	On Track
4.2	ASBS: Cork Co Co Flooding & Coastal Unit / UCC Engineering x 2 PhD students working on coastal erosion vulnerability.	On Track
4.3	Collaborate with UCC/MTU on development of LA-relevant Coastal Research Project (UCC/SFI Project on RA on repairs for Coastal Defences pending) to feed back into NCCMS WGs	Behind/ May be at risk
4.4	Nordic Energy Research: Participation in Nordic/Scotland/Canada/Ireland group to develop sustainable energy and water resources use for Islands green energy transition.	On Track
4.5	Collaborate and work with the Rediscovery Centre and BiOrbic on EPA funded research on the opportunities for the development of a sustainable bioeconomy within Ireland's urban areas that can help to mitigate climate challenges.	On Track
4.6	Continue working with MTU, TCD and UCD on the IKC3 project, linking climate action with bioeconomy, building on the pilot course focusing on the Portlaoise Low Carbon Town Project.	Behind/ May be at risk
5	Represent the sector on National Climate Research Coordination Group -	On Track

Appendix 4:

Report Images		
Page	Image	Title
Cover		Welcome Sign to CARO Conference, Wexford, April
2 & 3		Environment teams' day trip to Moore Hall and Lough Cara Life Project, October
11		Environment teams' day trip to Joyce Country & Western Lakes Geo Park, October
15		Volunteers erecting rope fencing to protect the dunes on Bertra Beach, July
19		CARO team members in attendance at the CARO Networking Event in Wexford in April
30 & 31		Peatland Restoration event, part of Climate Action Week 2025, October
41		Impact of coastal erosion on Seafield Beach, Co. Wexford, April

Report Images		
Page	Image	Title
57		Field trip to Tullabeg Solar Farm, Co. Wexford, in April. Source: Power Capital Renewable Energy (2025)
71		Local Authority, Fleet Managers Event, Kildare, October.
77		ASBN CARO at the 3rd Annual Beaches and Dunes Gathering, Salthill, Galway in May
89		DM CARO at the Mission Label Ceremony, Vilinius, Lithuania, in May
95		Chestnut Fencing erected on Keel Beach, Achill, Co. Mayo, in July



The Climate Action Regional Offices are an initiative of Local Government, funded by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment, as a shared service for Local Authorities.

