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K-Climate

This eZine is brought to you from Kildare County Council's
Climate Action Office



Highlights in this Issue:

- ⇒ **Climate Action & Sustainable Development to be introduced as Leaving Cert subject**
- ⇒ **Local Just Transition Plan for West Kildare**
- ⇒ **Climate Innovation Fund 2022**
- ⇒ **Funding Awarded & Online / In-Person Training Opportunities**

A quarterly update from the Climate Action Office on external climate and energy-related news, internal updates and happenings from within the council and other resources to support your engagement and learning on climate action.



Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council

A quarterly update from the Kildare County Council's Climate Action Office



1. News: The war in Ukraine and the energy crisis

Russia's unprovoked invasion in Ukraine has created mass human suffering, displacement and loss of life. Unfortunately, one of the mechanisms facilitating this war is the revenue generated from Russia's fossil fuel exports to Europe. In the last two months, Russia has nearly doubled its revenues – receiving about [€62 billion from exports on oil, coal and gas](#). Europe has a large dependency on Russia's fossil fuels, with 40% of natural gas, 25% of its oil, and 50% of its coal being sourced from Russia. While Europe aims to ween its fuel dependency from Russia by [two-thirds by the end of the year](#), in doing so, this may leave us vulnerable to short-term reliance on other fossil fuels such as coal and liquified natural gas (LNG), both of which have severe environmental and climate implications both at home and in their country of origin. From an Irish context, we import about [70% of our energy needs, but only about 6% of this imported fuel is oil from Russia](#).

However, it's important to consider these figures in the context of the geo-political landscape that is unfolding across Europe; as other, more reliant European countries transition away from Russian fuel exports, our current energy supply chain will face uncertainties. To achieve energy independence, indigenous renewable energy generation needs to be accelerated in the country, coupled with energy efficiency measures. The central government partly outlines this, among other measures in its [National Energy Security Framework](#), in addition to how lower-income households can be protected from further price increases. In the face of war, the rising cost of living and an energy and climate crisis, taking action on an individual level is overwhelming. Using energy more efficiently in our homes and places of work, is an immediate and concrete way for individuals to [reduce their energy bills, reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels, demonstrate solidarity with the Ukrainian people, and support climate action](#). The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland has some great [resources and materials](#) to support individuals acting on this front.

2. News: Circular Economy Bill, Waste Management (Amendment) and Minerals Development Bill 2022

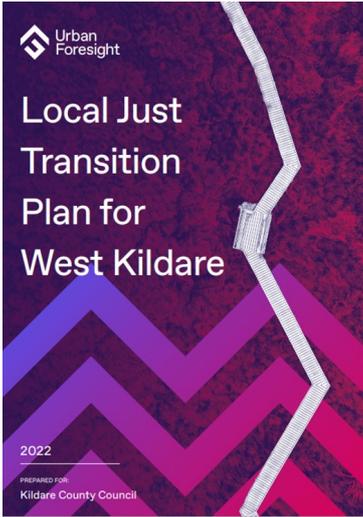
The Circular Economy Bill, Waste Management and Minerals Development Bill 2022 is currently under review by the Oireachtas Committee. If passed, the Bill will be significant in progressing Ireland as a circular economy, with notable highlights including: establishing a Circular Economy Fund, provisioning for the Environment Fund, introducing levies and prohibiting certain single-use plastic items, and introducing mandatory segregation of waste bins and incentivized charging for the commercial sector to name a few items. Currently the amendments made by the Committee are under consideration and the bill will pass to the Seanad shortly after. For updates, please refer to the Oireachtas website [here](#).

3. News: Climate Action & Sustainable Development to be introduced as Leaving Cert Subject in 2024

In March 2022, the Minister for Education Norma Foley [announces the department's plans](#) to reform the Senior Cycle's education system. Among many things, this includes revised curriculums in addition to the introduction of new subjects including Climate Action & Sustainable Development. The introduction of the subject hopes to better reflect the range of interests of students today and equip them with a wide range of skills. From 2024, fifth year students will be eligible to take the subject and more information on its curriculum will be released in due course.



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4. News: Local Just Transition Plan for West Kildare

As part of concerted efforts to support communities impacted by the cessation of peat extraction activities, Kildare County Council commissioned a local plan on request from the three Municipal Districts of Athy, Kildare-Newbridge, and Clane-Maynooth using LPT funding. Kildare County Council are pleased to announce the publication of Local Just Transition Plan for West Kildare. The focus of the Plan identifies projects to support and advance sustainable social, economic, and environmental development in the transition to a low carbon future in the West Kildare region. The plan aims to enhance opportunities to engage the €84.5 million fund allocated to Ireland under the EU [Just Transition Fund](#) with matched funding from the exchequer available. Read more about the plan [here](#).



5. News: Launch of the Climate Innovation Fund 2022

Following the success of the inaugural Climate Innovation Fund in 2021, Kildare County Council's Climate Action Office is pleased to announce the launch of the Climate Innovation Fund 2022. The aim of this fund is to foster innovative climate solutions in the county of Kildare. Specifically, the fund is aimed at community groups, SMEs, entrepreneurs, tradespeople, early-career researchers, education institutions and individual citizens active in Kildare. A total funding pot of €25,000 is available per Municipal District to support climate innovation projects. The minimum funding request will be €5,000 and the maximum request will be €25,000. Local Property Tax has been allocated by the following Municipal Districts to support this fund: Athy, Celbridge-Leixlip, Clane-Maynooth, Kildare-Newbridge & Naas. A special thanks to the Councilors from each Municipal District who made this fund possible. For full details and to apply, please visit Kildare's Consultation Portal and [here](#).



6. News: Podcast Series: Understanding the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

In alignment with the release of the draft County Development Plan for 2023-2029, Kildare County Council's Communication and Planning Team have created a podcast introducing the County Development Plan's objectives, purpose and relevance to the citizens of Kildare. The Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 is the key strategy document which structures the proper planning and sustainable development of land-use across County Kildare over the six-year period. Climate action features heavily in the plan and is outlined in its core strategy, making it an important document to understand and review to ensure we build low carbon, climate resilient communities. The latest podcast episode features Breda Maher, the Regional Climate Action Coordinator for the Eastern & Midlands Climate Action Regional Offices and Amy Granville, Senior Planner at Kildare County Council. Together they explore the area of climate change and the strategic alignment of the County Development Plan along with the Local Authority Climate Action Plan for making Kildare climate responsive. Listen to the podcast [here](#) or on Spotify and be sure to [have your say](#) in the County Development Plan during its consultation period.



7. News: Funding Awarded – 'We Hold the Power' Collaborative Community Art Project

Local Artist Marta Golubowska & Allenwood Community Development Association have secured just under €10,000 funding from Creative Ireland to create a collaborative community art piece for Allenwood Playground. The art piece will tie in themes around heritage, climate & energy, history and ecology of the area. The Climate Action Office will support in the facilitation of educational workshops during the project that will inform the art piece, along with other experts in the fields of history, energy and ecology.

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8. News: Funding Awarded - ‘Stitching the Community Together’

The Community, Libraries and Climate Action Office’s application to the Creativity in Older Age Scheme was successful in securing €30,000 for the project ‘Stitching the Community Together’. The project is centered around the medium of wool and knitting and comprises of three elements:

- 19 nursing homes in Kildare will be matched with schools to deliver an intergenerational workshops on wool and knitting by the facilitators ‘Wool in School’
- a virtual reality piece will be created to explore the Farm to Fleece process of wool
- an exhibition phase displaying the knitted projects and virtual reality piece

9. Update: Alternative Maintenance of Open Spaces

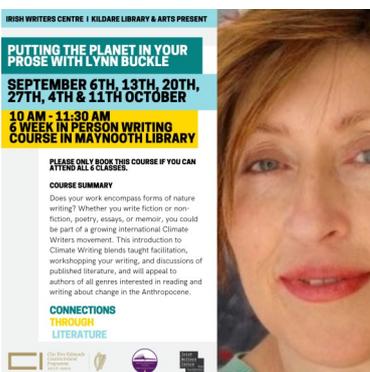
The Alternative Maintenance of Public Amenity Open Spaces research project is being carried out by Kildare County Council and in collaboration with Maynooth University, Trinity College Dublin, National Biodiversity Data Centre and Teagasc. As you may be aware already, this research project aims to produce a practical guide for the maintenance of open spaces using alternatives to pesticides that are **efficient, effective, labour saving, sustainable and economically viable**. Currently, the project is testing these alternative methods of maintenance and their effectiveness on the Millennium Link Road in Naas. We are also using a greenfield site in Kinsealy to see if these alternative methods of maintenance will have any effect on the soil microbiome over time.

10. News: Go Wild for Ireland’s National Biodiversity Week 13th May – 22nd May

Ireland’s National Biodiversity Week is all about connecting people with nature, communicating the importance of biodiversity and motivating people to play their part in protecting it. The week aims to do this by hosting several free events all over the country from Friday 13th May to Sunday 22nd May. At a county-level, Kildare’s BirdWatch Ireland will lead a Dawn Chorus at Castletown House & Parklands and a Day of Action will be held on Lullymore West Bog at Bog of Allen Nature Centre on Saturday 14th May. For full details on the week’s events, please visit the National Biodiversity Week’s [website here.](#)

11. News: ‘Putting the Planet in your Proses’ with Lynn Buckle, Climate Writing Workshops at Kildare County Council’s Libraries

The Irish Writer Center, Kildare Library & Arts are hosting several writing and literature events over the next few months as part of the ‘Connection to Literature’ initiative. ‘Putting the Planet in your Proses’ is part of the series and will help attendees incorporate climate writing into their prose over a 6-week course in Autumn with the author and activist Lynn Buckle. For more details and to book tickets please click [here.](#)



IRISH WRITERS CENTRE | KILDARE LIBRARY & ARTS PRESENT

PUTTING THE PLANET IN YOUR PROSE WITH LYNN BUCKLE

SEPTEMBER 6TH, 13TH, 20TH, 27TH, 4TH & 11TH OCTOBER

10 AM - 11:30 AM
6 WEEK IN PERSON WRITING COURSE IN MAYNOOTH LIBRARY

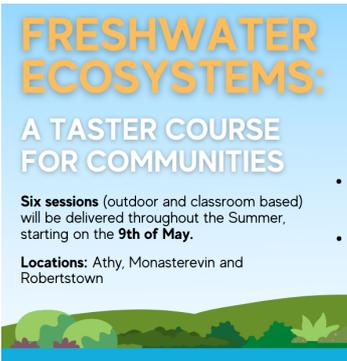
PLEASE ONLY BOOK THIS COURSE IF YOU CAN ATTEND ALL 6 CLASSES.

COURSE SUMMARY
Does your work encompass forms of nature writing? Whether you write fiction or non-fiction, poetry, essays, or memoir, you could be part of a growing international Climate Writers movement. This introduction to Climate Writing blends taught facilitation, workshoping your writing, and discussions of published literature, and will appeal to authors of all genres interested in reading and writing about change in the Anthropocene.

CONNECTIONS THROUGH LITERATURE

Logos for Kildare County Council, Irish Writers Centre, and other partners.

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FRESHWATER ECOSYSTEMS:
A TASTER COURSE FOR COMMUNITIES

Six sessions (outdoor and classroom based) will be delivered throughout the Summer, starting on the 9th of May.

Locations: Athy, Monasterevin and Robertstown

13. Free In Person Course “Freshwater Ecosystems: A Taster Course for Communities”

County Kildare LEADER Partnership in collaboration with course facilitators JBA Consulting are hosting a series of free in-person training courses around freshwater ecosystems for communities in May. These workshops are being rolled out in **Robertstown, Monasterevin, and Athy**, and involve six training sessions per town, four of which will be delivered indoors and two which will be delivered outdoors. The course hopes to allow communities to learn more about their local waterbodies, water quality, freshwater biodiversity, and its management along with having opportunities to become involved in citizen science opportunities. Full details and the link to sign up can be found [here](#). As this eZine has been released after the course has commenced, please email coflynn@kildarecoco.ie to see if there is any available space on any upcoming dates.



14. Free Online Training: Gardening for Biodiversity Training for Residents Associations

Kildare County Council are hosting free biodiversity training for interested resident groups across the county. The training will introduce biodiversity, why it is important, and explore practical actions that you can do to make your estate better for wildlife and residents. The training will take place online, with several workshops being held for municipal districts across the county over the month of June. For more information and to register, please click [here](#).

15. Citizen Science: National Biodiversity Data Launches New Pollinator App



The National Biodiversity Data Centre have [launched a new app](#) for capturing pollinator data using the Flower Insect Timed counts (or FIT for short!). It's a simple process that involves watching a patch of flowers for 10 minutes, and recording what pollinators come along (bees, butterflies, flies etc.). It's an extremely useful tool for monitoring and recording biodiversity levels for the National Biodiversity Data Centre, in addition to being a fantastic way to engage communities and individuals with citizen science. Once you've [downloaded the app](#), feel free to conduct as many 10-minute FIT counts as you like between 1st April and 30th September. The app will give you a step-by-step guide on how to conduct the FIT count, and it can be done anywhere - from your local park to office car park!



16. Small Changes – Refilling

‘Small Changes’ is a section where we shine a light on what small sustainable changes citizens are making in their daily lives. May's contribution is as follows: “I have started going to the Refill shop on Kilcullen Road in Naas. I refill my cleaning product bottles – fabric conditioner, washing up liquid, all-purpose cleaner. There are lots of other products available. It is also possible to bring your own containers for dried food products. I have also had a glass candle holder refilled so I get a new candle.” Have you made a small change recently? Let coflynn@kildarecoco.ie know and we can share your idea with others!