

# ACT WATERFORD

## FINAL REPORT




PRESENTED BY WATERFORD CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL (WCCC) & SOUTH EAST TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY (SETU) FUNDED BY THE CREATIVE IRELAND CLIMATE ACTION FUND



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## 1. Executive Summary

Presented by Waterford City & County Council (WCCC) & South East Technological University (SETU); Funded by the Creative Ireland Climate Action Fund.

ACT Waterford was the first interdisciplinary event of its kind that brought together 5 different communities in Waterford City and County with 5 creatives to help Waterford become a decarbonised zone by 2040. Waterford is one of Ireland's first recipients of funding to support creative projects in building awareness around climate change that will lead to meaningful behavioural change around climate issues.

## 2. Introduction

Progress towards the ambitious target for the County to become a decarbonised zone by 2040 will require action from industry, business, government, and individuals. To build greater understanding, ACT Waterford worked with five Waterford communities, through the engagement of five creative facilitators (one for each community), to address a range of climate change themes including, suburban transport, domestic energy use, horticulture, biodiversity and responsible consumption.

These communities were the focus of this project and explored how individuals and their communities could take meaningful climate action, and how these experiences and learnings could be brought to a wider audience. Communities were encouraged and supported to consider barriers to climate action and to explore local solutions. While the project ran from Jan - Dec 2022, as a direct result of Covid-19, access to communities was delayed by a number of months.

Social media channels and the ACT Waterford website facilitated idea sharing on an ongoing basis. A series of public workshops and performances, some aligning with various local cultural events, took place. Using these new creative approaches, the ACT Waterford project helped to build capacity and understanding about the challenges of climate change and stimulating climate action.

This project was supported by Creative Ireland under the Creative Climate Action Fund and was driven by Calmast - the South East Technological University's STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) Engagement Centre.

### 3. Outline of team and key participants

#### Project Team

##### Katherine Collins - Project Director, Waterford City and County Council

Katherine Collins is Waterford Cultural Quarter (WCQ) Project Manager and Creative Waterford Coordinator. She has a specific remit to connect people and places through creative community engagement. In her Creative Waterford role, she oversees projects such as ACT Waterford, the annual Open Call, local authority projects as well as social, economic and well being programmes.

##### Eoin Gill - Project Director, Calmast SETU

Eoin Gill is a director of Calmast STEM engagement centre at SETU Waterford (previously WIT). Calmast's programme includes all areas of STEM with a particular emphasis on sustainability and extensive experience working at the STEM/art/culture intersection. Activities are delivered for all ages, with a particular effort to include underserved groups, engaging 30,000 each year. Eoin has over 25 experience in developing and delivering STEM and STEAM activities. He is also coordinator of Maths Week Ireland, which is a partnership across the island of Ireland and takes place every October reaching around 500,000 people. An environmental engineer by profession, he has broad knowledge of sustainability and climate action.

##### Nollaig Healy - Project Manager, Calmast SETU

Nollaig is a cultural project manager with over 16 years' experience. She has worked with arts festivals such as Kilkenny Arts Festival, Clonmel Junction Festival, Dublin Fringe Festival and TradFest. She has also worked with numerous theatre and cultural organisations such as the Gate Theatre, Pavilion Theatre, Visual Centre for Contemporary Art and Broken Crow Theatre Company.

##### Conleth Teevan - Publicity

Conleth has worked in the entertainment industry for almost 20 years, specifically in Arts PR since 2002. Working with a broad range of established clients managing international publicity campaigns for the RDS, St. Patrick's Festival, Irish National Opera, and Dublin Fringe Festival. Conleth has been running his own arts PR company for the past 17 years, working on a broad range of projects from dance, theatre, music, visual arts to multi-disciplinary festivals.

### Sinead Begley -Independent Research Consultant

Sinéad Begley and Associates provides consultancy services in environment, STEM, arts, heritage and community-based initiatives for a range of clients. As Director Sinéad has gained extensive experience in strategy development, management, delivery and evaluation of a range of projects. The company has undertaken projects for many government departments and agencies, and for Local Authorities all over Ireland. Sinéad has worked on strategic planning, research & evaluation in relation to environmental, heritage, STEM education, arts and community-based initiatives and has extensive experience of data gathering, analysis and report writing.

### Creative Facilitators

#### Joanne Donohoe - The the Bus for a Change


Joanne is an artist, Theatre Director and Set Designer living in New Ross Co. Wexford. She studied Fine Art in Dun Laoghaire College of Art Design and Technology and Carlow IT and has studied craft in Grennan Mill Craft School, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny. Her expertise in theatre has been developed through training with Youth Theatre Ireland and on the ground experience.

Joanne has been the Artistic Director and set designer for WACT youth theatre for the past ten years and has worked on over twenty plays starring young people from all over County Wexford. Currently Joanne is teaching set design online as part of the JCT Play Create Perform initiative in collaboration with Youth Theatre Ireland and she co-directed two one act plays that members of WACT youth theatre performed in May 2022.

#### Kieran McBride - For the Love of Water

Kieran McBride is an interdisciplinary artist based in Waterford whose arts practice incorporates film making, set design, script writing, performance, and the visual arts.

His theatre training took place at the Samuel Beckett Centre in Trinity College, Dublin and he followed this with an MFA in Art in the Digital World at NCAD. His recent theatre work includes an acclaimed set design for Heather by Thomas Eccleshare and performance in the award-winning show Men at Play by Brian Burns. He is currently developing a documentary theatre project with ex-Debenhams workers entitled An Injury to One is an Injury to All. This aims to give voice to the struggle of the workers as well as the political and legal context of their fight for justice. He exhibited work in the group show Cycling Through the Rages, curated by Kelly Ratchford, at the Olivier Carnet Gallery, Dublin which explored the issues of urban transport and the challenges faced by cyclists.



Kieran's arts practice has organically gravitated towards the field of participatory and community based arts and he is committed to the production of work that is socially engaged. Prior to the pandemic he studied community development under Amel Yacef at the CDETB. He has developed a series of voice and movement workshops for elderly women at the St. Andrews Resource Centre in Dublin and is currently a volunteer at Manor Chillout, a social space for LGBT+ youth run by Waterford Youth Services.

#### Slí Waterford - Responsible Consumption and Recycling

Slí is an organisation focused on driving sustainability through education and inspiring action at a community level. Slí, founded as the Waterford Sustainable Living Initiative (Slí) provides a range of education and awareness raising programmes to schools, youth groups and community organisations to raise the profile of sustainability within the community. All of the organisations work takes place within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals and covers a variety of issues including single-use plastics, waste, fair trade, child and forced labour, ethical fashion, water, and transportation.

Slí's vision is of a global community working together to ensure an equitable and sustainable future for all and their mission is to educate and empower the people of Ireland to act on issues of sustainability, responsible consumption and climate change.


#### The Walls Project - Energy Use and Efficiency

The Walls Project CLG is a social enterprise which delivers large scale public artworks and outreach projects. Bloom | The Art Project were appointed creatives on the Energy Use and Efficiency Strand of ACT Waterford. Bloom | The Art Project was founded by Fiona Brady and Aisling Corcoran after discovering their shared vision to bring joy and happiness to people and communities through art. The project aims to show that you do not need to be a professional or have a degree in fine art to benefit greatly from doing something creative. The artists encourage all skill levels and the more 'mistakes' the better! The belief is that art can be a powerful tool to tap into our thoughts, feelings and emotions. It can give us a better understanding of ourselves and the world around us. Through murals and online workshops, the artists aim to empower people to grow, to overcome and to look forward to a happier future.

#### Rebecca Cappucini - Greening the City

Creativity and design in its various forms have always been at the core of Rebecca's professional interests. Rebecca has found a lot of joy in the process of making things happen and it has led her to becoming a project coordinator very naturally. One of her latest achievements as a co-founder of the 'top of the city' garden is a total transformation of a





landfill into a little green paradise for local communities, where vegetables are grown and summer events happen. As a committee member of the community gardens Ireland, Rebecca commits her time and energy to support forming and networking of the community growing spaces in Ireland.

## 4. Goals

### Suburban Transport - Take the Bus for a Change

- To raise commuters' awareness of the positive impact they can make to climate change by taking the bus.
- To raise commuters' awareness of the social and personal benefits of taking the bus for a change.
- To facilitate the coming together of commuters through the common interest of creativity and climate action.
- To design innovative, engaging, quality art workshops that are easy to participate and engage with.
- To ensure that the participants feel like they are contributing to the project in a meaningful way.
- To design workshops with clear artistic outcomes To engage with Waterford County Council, Grow HQ and JJ Kavanaghs when necessary.
- To leave the participants with a different frame of mind as to the impact that one person can make when it comes to climate change and that small choices and creative choices do make a difference.

### Greening the City

- To connect with the Ballybricken community and find out what they wanted to see in the area and how they saw the topic of climate action.
- To encourage local people to use Ballybricken Green for a variety of events.
- To figure out creative ways to tackle the vast conversation and get others to interact with this topic while staying central to the inner city.
- To create space during workshops and events where participants could openly discuss their understanding of and fears about climate change.

- To hold events that would benefit the community and highlight the beauty of the area in question, the green itself, this beautifully underused treasure, show people its versatility and importance.
- To help people understand the beauty around them and also how to be greener for a brighter future.
- To find like minded people who wanted to take part in this unique project and contribute their mark on climate action (artists, bystanders, local business).
- Understand the local community and their needs, connecting different people to one another for the great good of the project with the hope that all would attend and speak of the many different events on the green.
- To use the medium of art to push forward a complex theme to a broad audience in simple fun creative ways.

#### Energy Use and Efficiency - Mural Project

- Promote a better understanding of energy use and efficiency, and the impact of wasteful energy use.
- Disseminate simple, practical ideas for efficient energy use domestically.
- Create an enhanced pride of place.
- Greater community spirit and social cohesion.
- To create a lasting artwork that will be there for the future, and will act as a reminder of the work done and its themes of energy use and efficiency.
- Public recognition of the project and its collaborative nature between the local community, artist and science teams.

#### Responsible Consumption - Call to Action Video Series

As the overarching goal of the ACT Waterford project was to identify the obstacles and impediments to taking action, the aim of Slí's contribution to the larger ACT Project was to produce a video series, Call to Climate Action, to help people overcome those impediments.


Slí's Goals -

- To produce 6 videos with a total boosted reach of 39,000

- To inspire action within the Waterford region i.e., tangible actions people from all walks of life can take.
- To develop an online community of climate learners who are willing to become multipliers of information.
- To build the capacity of ACT social media.

#### Biodiversity - For the Love of Water

- To explore the geographical area surrounding the river Mahon and to do this as much as possible on foot or bike. The intention was to become as intimate as possible with the landscape in order to know it and connect with it on a visceral level. This local environment included the areas surrounding the river Mahon from its source in the Comeragh Mountains, through Kilmacthomas, and down into Bunmahon. The aim was to have this connection to the landscape deeply inform the creative output of the project.
- To connect with local communities – both individuals and groups and to access their local expertise and discover their passions and interests about the river Mahon.
- To utilise local expertise and local interests in the shaping of the project as it developed. The hope was that the community would lead the creative development of the project.
- To further the artist's understanding of the river and water systems in and around the river Mahon. This was done through deep immersion in the local environment as well as carrying out academic research. The aim was to discover how climate change was effecting this river system and what impact that was or is having on its biodiversity.
- To work with members of the community who had interest and enthusiasm in the project to become collaborators on a series of art works that would be process driven and originate in the series of different workshops offered.
- To communicate key conceptual ideas framing the project at events and workshops. This included the concept of 'reciprocity' as described by indigenous botanist and poet Robin Wall Kimmerer and the concept of 'inter-being' as outlined by Buddhist monk and poet Thich Nhat Hanh. These are key concepts in the deep ecology movement and for these concepts to inform the project. The aim was to have these concepts enrich the creative output of the project.

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- To develop and maintain a group of local people that was as diverse as possible. Groups included the Comeragh Sheep farmers, local hiking club members, the LGBTQ+ community, the wastewater protest group in Bunmahon, other artists and guardians of the copper coast. The more diverse an ecosystem is, the stronger it is. The aim was to create an artistic ecosystem that was as diverse as possible.
  - To hold a series of workshops and events in a large tipi tent culminating in a festival of water. Collaborative artistic work and research discoveries would be displayed at the festival alongside music, poetry, song and feasting. The heart of the project's aims was to celebrate the beauty, preciousness, and supreme importance of water.
  - To help highlight how gravely serious climate change issues are both to participants and audience.
  - To become connected to other artists who believe in the need for transformative changes if we are going to seriously tackle issues related to climate change.
  - To create space during workshops and events where participants could openly discuss their understanding of and fears about climate change.
  - That the project would, in the long term, be part of broader community development efforts. The hope was that new friendships would be forged across diverse communities in and around Kilmacthomas.
  - To create a renewed sense of wonder and respect for the incredible natural resource of water.

## 5. Outcomes and Outputs - Creative Outputs

### Take the Bus for a Change

**Artist: Joanne Donohoe**

**Location: Dunmore Road Area**

**(153 participants in total)**

#### Bus Shelter Posters



Co-created with the community, displayed on local Bus Shelters (2 posters for 3 months)

Working with Dunmore Road Communities, Joanne's aimed to explore alternatives to car journeys and to encourage people to take the bus for a change. Joanne's first port of call was to talk to residents on the Dunmore Road about their positive and negative bus stories. As an engagement tool, Joanne brought an inflatable globe beach ball with her. She asked residents to submit their stories alongside a picture of the beach ball on a place along the Dunmore Road that had special significance for them. These images were collated onto a poster and 2 bus shelters on the Dunmore Road had the posters up for 3 months (July - Sept)

#### Dolce Far Neinte - Do Nothing For Climate Change workshops

That section of the project brought Joanne to look at 'why' we would take the bus at all. The car is so quick and convenient, despite the traffic. This led to the question of why we feel the need to be so quick and efficient and productive all the time. Is an efficient life a life worth living? Taking time out and being ok with slowing things down took Joanne down the road of

hanging out in the estates along the Dunmore road and asking residents to engage in a bit of Dolce Far Niente or the Art of Doing Nothing.


The artist explains: The issue of time is at the centre of this project. The bus may never be as convenient as hopping in the car. Can we view slowing down in a positive light? Everyone has one positive story from the pandemic. We can appreciate it in hindsight but now that we are getting back to "normal" we accept busyness as "normal". Why does every minute have to be productive? I wanted to find a way to show that taking longer to do something can be a positive thing and not a negative thing. What I wanted was to sit and do nothing and for the random conversations, if they happened to be enough. I smiled when the thought "Do Nothing For Climate Change" came to my mind for the first time. I began to take it seriously after all, if we sit and do nothing, no boiling kettles for tea, no lights on, no flushing the toilet, no driving, no plastic cups of coffee, we are already doing more for the planet than if we were doing something.

This mindset as it turns out is already a movement. The Art Of Doing Nothing. It is giving value back to spending time for spending time's sake. Stare at the clouds, sit on a wall and chat with a friend. In Italy, it exists as Dolce Far Niente. In Dutch it is commonly referred to as Niksen, "a stress relief practice based on just being, rather than being present". It is not mindfulness. It has been explored as a method to combat work-related health problems such as stress and burnout. This was the inspiration for the next round of workshops in the project.

#### Do Nothing For Climate Change - Spraoi Festival

Cathedral Square, Waterford City Centre | Saturday 30 July | 3 - 4.30pm | FREE EVENT





Participants were invited to experience Dolce Far Niente. A fun, light hearted and creative theatre workshop that allows the experience of spending time in a fun unquantifiable way. Take the guilt away from 'doing nothing' and watch your brain reap the rewards of it. The aim was to associate the benefits of dolce far niente with choosing more sustainable transport options such as taking the bus, cycling or walking. It's a way to re-evaluate how we live and how we travel.

#### Activities in Dunmore Road Estates

Viewmount Park | Friday 19 August | 2 - 4pm | FREE EVENT

Farmleigh | Saturday 20 August | 2 - 4pm | FREE EVENT

Ballinakill Downs | Friday 28 August | 2 - 4pm | FREE EVENT

Grow HQ | Saturday 29 August | 2 - 4pm | FREE EVENT

Grantstown Park | Friday 19 August | 5 - 7pm | FREE EVENT

Collins Avenue | Saturday 20 August | 5 - 7pm | FREE EVENT

Earlscourt | Friday 28 August | 5 - 7pm | FREE EVENT

Powerscourt | Saturday 29 August | 5 - 7pm | FREE EVENT


Tree wrapping and poi in the estates led to engaging with residents in the real world which was much better than trying to reach out to people online. The more Joanne thought about trying to do something "on the green" the more she felt that the best thing you could do is simply spend time in the space. Sit on the green for a few hours and in doing so attracted the attention of residents who would come and engage in a real one to one way, creating an impression, a memory, igniting curiosity.

#### Light In The Darkness workshops

Grow HQ | Saturday 24 Sept, Saturday 1, 08, 15 Oct | 2 - 4pm | FREE EVENT

Joanne invited residents of the Dunmore road to examine motivations for change and action through a series of three Batik workshops titled 'A Light in the Darkness'.

According to the native Javanese people where Batik originated, the syllable 'tik' of the word 'batik' means: a point of light in the dark. When thinking about climate change and taking care of the planet Joanne pictured the world as a point of stunning light and blue green and white light floating in a vast Universe of inky blackness. By taking part in these workshops the participants learned the art of batik and explored their own personal point of light in the darkness and celebrated that by making a piece of art about it. Through the process



participants took time to connect with what we hold dear and created space to consider the valuable nature of taking care of our planet, the greater home that makes all life possible.

### The Art of Poi at Harvest Festival

Georges Court Shopping Centre | Saturday 10 September | 2 - 4pm | FREE EVENT

An interactive workshop that allowed conversation to take place about creative climate action while making traditional Māori Poi (an art that increases flexibility and strength in the hands and arms as well as coordination). The workshop was based on recycled art and aimed to change the way the participant thought about how we move through space. This workshop was open to the general public and acted as a way of spreading the word about the project.

### Events in St. Patrick's Nursing Home

Waterford Residential Care Centre | Thursday 27 October | 11 - 12.40pm | FREE EVENT

Waterford Residential Care Centre | Thursday 08 December | 11 - 12.40pm | FREE EVENT

Using cardboard boxes, little realistic decorative birds, craft flowers and leaves and markers, Joanne worked with residents of St Patrick's Nursing Home to make birdhouses and Christmas decorations. From an artist's point of view a bird house is beautifully symbolic of how we are taken care of when we are older and can no longer build and take care of our own nest. These events took place as part of Imagine Festival and Winterval Festivals.

## Greening The City

**Artists: Rebecca Cappucini & Maurice Caplice**

**Location: Ballybricken**


**(593 interactions)**

Ballybricken Green is in the inner city and the emphasis of the project was on re-energising the space for use as a civic arts space. Research was conducted in the community to inform project development. The lead artist consulted closely with local businesses in the area to get their feedback and ideas. General feedback was that all local businesses were very supportive and wanted the space to be used again with the heart of the community as it's basis. The survey had to be manually delivered to as many houses around the green as well as circulated online to get the maximum input and gain ideas of what to do next.

This survey was circulated in June 2022.

**Headline Findings**

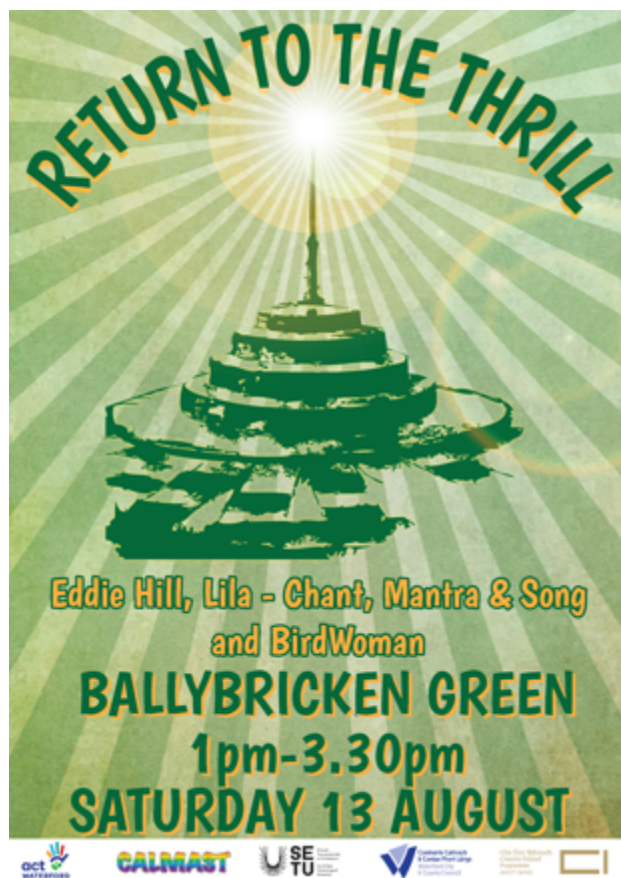


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- 132 respondents
  - 53% from Ballybricken
  - 75% had a garden
  - 30% male, 68% female, 2% prefer not to say
  - 72% between the ages of 25 - 64
  - 24% had taken part in a community arts project before
  - 27% were familiar with the ACT Waterford project
  - 53% were either extremely familiar or very familiar with climate change and environmental challenges
  - 66% were extremely or very concerned about how climate change will affect future generations
  - 67% were interested in learning how small steps can make a difference
  - 76% would like to see events for families on the green; 65% events for children; 60% events for adults; 80% music events; 41% grow your own vegetables
  - 85% would like to see more planting around the Ballybricken area

Full survey report [HERE](#)

## Return of the Thrill

Ballybricken Green | Saturday 13 August | 1 - 3.30pm | FREE EVENT



One of the biggest missing community events was Thrill on the Hill, a music festival that took place on the Green in the 80's. An homage to the Festival 'Return of the Thrill', a one day event featuring live music in the band stand took place in August. This included performances from Ed Hill, a musician from Kilmacthom; Lila - Chant, Mantra and Song, based on the idea of kirtan, which is the musical arm of yoga; and Birdwoman aka, Kellie Marie Reynolds, a singer songwriter, performance poet and improviser.

The event was held on the 13 August which coincided with the hottest day of the year! In 31 degrees heat, audience numbers were lower than expected as people came and listened for a while and then moved out of the scorching sunshine.

Red Flag - A life size Bull installation interactive workshop with the community

Ballybricken Green | Sat 29 & Sun 30 October, Sat 12 & Sun 13 November | 1 - 4 pm | FREE EVENT



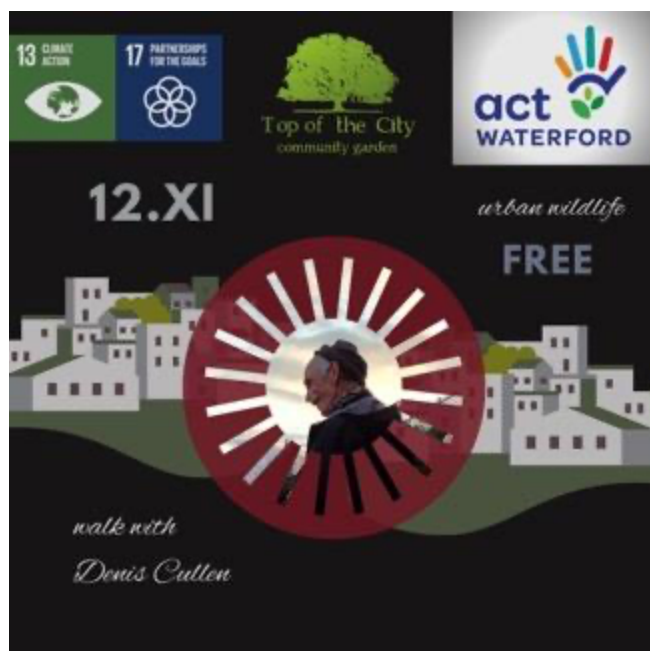
South East Technological University | Fri 11 November | 10am - 2 pm | FREE EVENT

Ballybricken was once the heart of Waterford city with the cattle market. This gave the artist the idea to create a life size bull to serve as a connection to the past and an engagement tool for locals. Passers-by were invited to decorate the bull and leave a message of hope for the future.

This participatory art installation attracted a large number to the green and was a major talking point of the project.

Inner City Nature Walk

Ballybricken Green | Sat 12, Sat 19, Sat 26 November | 10am - 12 pm | FREE EVENT



A nature walk through the inner city with Denis Cullen took participants from Ballybricken to the Marina Hotel, through the People's Park, following John's Pill river to the Inner Ring Road and finishing at bus stop by SuperValu's car park.

Participants learnt about the many hidden treasures nature holds within the city limits.

### Christmas Decoration Making - "Oh Holey Night!"

Library | Sat 26 Nov & Sat 03 Dec | 2 -

4pm | FREE EVENTS



Learning to look at old objects in a new light, participants made Christmas tree decorations with old holey socks and scrap fabric. Everything has a use, even if it's no longer cut out for its intended purpose! Materials were supplied.

## Energy Use and Efficiency

**Artist: The Walls Project,**

**Location: Ballybeg**

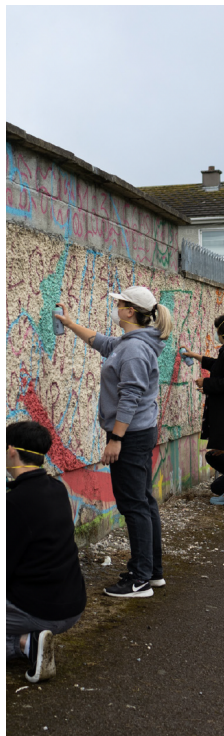
**(30 participants)**

The Walls Project CLG through murals and online workshops about energy efficiency in the home, aimed to empower people to grow, to overcome and to look forward to a happier future.



June/July 2022

- 5 Community Workshops with artists Bloom the Art Project and Magdalena Karol
- 30 local community members took part
- 4 days of Painting activities

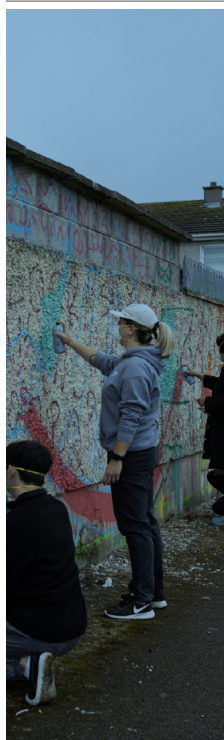


## Testimonials

I enjoyed the most being able to brighten up the area and meeting new people aswell as creating awarness.  
In one word ACT was brilliant.

I enjoyed the equal level of learning together and then sharing ideas before we painted, and gathering new information about savings, like boiling only the amount of water I need at a time. In one word ACT was fun.

7



## Testimonials

A very enjoyable experience and lots of fun.  
Meeting more of the community in the area made it very special.

I've learnt so much about paint and also got some tips about how to save money on my energy bills. Really appreciate the artists being so kind and encouraging.

6



July/August 2022

Dissemination - offline

- 2 In person events 100 attendees
- July 27 Waterford Walls Festival Launch, Fitzwilton Hotel, Waterford City
- August 25 Art and Climate Change, Italian Institute of Culture, Dublin

## For the Love of Water

**Artist: Kieran McBride**

**Location: Kilmacthomas and surrounding area**

**(307 participants)**

Kieran spent four months meeting with groups such as

- Kilmacthomas Tidy Towns
- Kilmacthomas Social Enterprise Group
- Comeragh Development
- Sean Corcoran, Sand Artist
- David Power, Uilleann Piper
- Local Choir

- Teagasc Comeragh Sheep Project
- Rainbow Hall Kilmacthomas
- Gilian Norris, Dancer
- Community Engagement Officer
- Bunmahon School
- Tramore Eco Group
- LGBTQ group
- Ceramist
- Geo Park in BunMahon
- Walking Group
- Brothers of Charity

#### Nature Walk with Paddy Dwan

Anne Valley | Thurs 19 May | 10am - 12 pm | FREE EVENT



Well known naturalist, author and photographer Paddy Dwan, led a nature walk along the much loved Anna Valley wetlands with a group of local school children and ACT creative Kieran McBride. Paddy and Kieran guided a group of young people from Kilmacthomas Primary school and explained the value of the wetlands and showed the school children how to be a wildlife detective along the way.

#### Slogans on Slates

Workshops on biodiversity, rivers and climate change talk and art workshop



Coach House, Kilmacthomas | Mon 06 June | 2 - 4 pm | FREE EVENT

Dungarvan | Sat 18 June | 2 - 4 pm | FREE EVENT

Georges Court Shopping Centre | Sat 10 Sept | 2 - 4 pm | FREE EVENT



Slogans on Slates was a fun workshop that linked the Kilmacthomas strand of the ACT Waterford project to the LGBTQ+ community in rural Waterford and took place as part of Pride. Kieran gave a short talk about the importance of biodiversity in all ecosystems, including human centred ecosystems, and also discussed the River Mahon and how climate change is affecting its biodiversity. Participants at the workshop were given pieces of slate and markers and asked to respond to some of the themes discussed by writing slogans on their pieces of slate. No artistic ability was required for this workshop. Participants expressed themselves through text or drawings or used the materials in any way they were most comfortable.

Participants had their portraits taken with their pieces of slate. This workshop was very successful and was repeated during the course of the project as a fun way of engagement.

### Seaweed Foraging

Stage Cove, Bunmahon | Sun 03 July | 2 - 4 pm | FREE EVENT

The coast of Waterford has a rich diversity of seaweed and some of the most interesting rocky shores in the country. With Marie Power, the Sea Gardener participants explored the shore at the Stage Cove in Bunmahon, where dilisk and other seaweeds have been foraged by local families for generations. Close to the mouth of the Mahon river, which runs its short course from the Comeragh Mountains, through Mahon Bridge and Kilmacthomas. The goodness of the sea and coast, including seaweeds with their rich complement of iodine and other nutrients, curative properties and high soil enrichment value, was traded in this county centuries ago. On the forage, participants reconnected with this part of our past, as they



foraged for edible seaweeds, identifying and sampling the most tasty varieties, learning how to use them in everyday cookery.

### Water Warriors Craft Workshop at All Together Now and Harvest Festivals

Curraghmore Estate | Fri 29 - Sun 31 July | FREE EVENT

Georges Square | Sat 10 Sept | FREE EVENT



Kieran ran a fun filled, crafts workshop and invited participants to make their very own water warrior mask from nature based biodegradable materials. The moment you put on your mask you became a water warrior and were asked to take an oath to protect water.

### For the Love of Water Festival

Tipi, Rainbow Hall, Kilmacthomas | 5 - 7, 12 - 14, 19 - 21 August | Free events

Kieran McBride hosted a festival of water called 'For the Love of Water' in August where we constructed a large Tipi tent and base camp, which were used for art making, discussions, and workshops around the themes of the project. All members of the community were welcome to participate and there were events to suit a wide variety of interests.



Activities included:

- **The Beat of the River** With John Barron Drumming workshop
- **Water Warriors Workshop** with Kieran McBride
- **Nature Mandalas** With Edel Ní Nualláin
- **Water is Life** Permaculture Workshop With Suzie Cahn
- **Crough Woods** and Mahon Falls Walk With Brenda Cummins

- **Life Beneath the Rapids** with Alan Walshe
- **'Be Water'** Yoga With Kieran McBride
- **Music by the river** with Naoise and Aisling
- **For the Love of Water Closing Ceremony** with Katie McShane

## Responsible Consumption and Recycling

**Artist: Slí Waterford**

**Location: Online with an 18 - 30 year old audience**

**Project reach: 75,000 Reach**

BEAT FM were brought on board as a media partner to ACT Waterford as they boast a market share of 42.6% among 15-34-year-olds & a share of 32.1% among 20-44-year-olds. These figures are significantly ahead of Today FM & 2FM in those demographics across the South East.

The first step in this project was to conduct a survey that was circulated via BEAT FM to figure out what are the concerns of the 18 - 30 year old age cohort in relation to climate change.

In response to the survey, Slí Waterford created a series of videos based on these topics. 188 people responded to this survey.

The Responsible Consumption arm of the ACT Waterford project has released 4 out of 6 videos encouraging people to take positive action for climate change. The videos feature Waterford people in Waterford locations. To date, we have addressed the impacts of climate change, food waste, sustainable transportation and single-use plastics. Upcoming videos include ethical fashion and our water footprint. Each video is released on the social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube) of ACT and Slí Waterford as well as being promoted on BEAT.

Intro Video

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jm2\\_njXoQyo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jm2_njXoQyo)

Transportation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yx2A3Z7V584>

Single Use Plastics

<https://youtu.be/0w0S6m142y4>



Food Waste

<https://youtu.be/8K7xEWG8DyQ>

Hidden Water Footprint

<https://youtu.be/CXRvhidcWs>

Fast Fashion

<https://youtu.be/tgMHtB2TF1Q>

## 6. Audience Engagement & Participation

### Take the Bus for a Change

Name of event/workshop	number of attendees
Bus Shelters - Positive and Negative Bus Stories	25
Dolce Far Niente (Tree wrapping and The art of Poi)	32
Spraoi	50
Harvest Festival	22
St Patricks - Bird House & Christmas Decorations	24
Batik Workshops	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>165</b>

Greening the City

Name of event/workshop	number of attendees
Audience Survey	133
Thrill on the Hill	150
Red Flag	250
Urban Walks	45
Christmas Decoration	30
<b>TOTAL INTERACTIONS</b>	<b>608</b>

  
Energy Use & Efficiency

Name of event/workshop	number of attendees
5 workshops	30
4 Painting days	30
<b>Total Participants</b> (please note the same participants that took part in the workshops, took part in the painting days)	<b>30</b>



Responsible Consumption

<b>Name of event/workshop</b>	<b>Thruplays</b>	<b>Reach</b>
Video 1 - Intro	14,260	11,472
Video 2 - Transport	16,475	11,787
Video 3 - Single Use Plastic	11,406	9,707
Video 4 - Food Waste	14,189	10,944
Video 5 - Hidden Water Footprint	11,020	8,944
Video 6 - Fast Fashion	11,005	7,837
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78,355</b>	<b>60,691</b>

For the Love of Water

Name of event/workshop	number of attendees
Seaweed forage and picnic with Marie Power, Strand Beach, Bunmahon	15
Guided Nature Walk with Paddy Dwan	80
Slogans on Slates @ Rural Pride, The Coach House, Kilmacthomas	60
Slogans on Slates @ Dungarvan Pride, Walton Park, Dungarvan	30
Presentation to the local community about ACT Waterford/For the Love of Water at the Rainbow Community Hall, Kilmacthomas	13
Water Warrior Workshops and Tipi installation at All Together Now, Curraghmore House, Waterford (over 3 days)	100 attendees 20 became Water Warriors

The Beat of the River 1 - Drumming Workshop with John Barron, at the Tipi at the Rainbow Hall, Kilmacthomas	12
The Beat of the River 2, Drumming Workshop with John Barron, at the Tipi at the Rainbow Hall, Kilmacthomas	7
Nature Mandalas Workshop with Edel Ni Nuallain, @ the Tipi at the Rainbow Hall Kilmacthomas	8
Water is Life Workshop with Suzie Cahn, @ the Tipi at the Rainbow Hall Kilmacthomas	20
Curragh Woods and Mahon Falls Walk and picnic with Brenda Cummins as guide, Curragh Woods	8
Water Warrior Workshop, @ the Tipi at the Rainbow Hall Kilmacthomas	16 attended and 8 became water warriors
Be Water Yoga with Kieran McBride, @ the Tipi at the Rainbow Hall Kilmacthomas	10

Life Beneath the Rapids with Alan Walshe, walk in and around Kilmacthomas and the River Mahon	Cancelled due to illness
Music by the River with Naoise and Aisling, @ the Tipi at the Rainbow Hall Kilmacthomas	15
For the Love of Water Ceremony with Katie McShane, @ the Tipi at the Rainbow Hall Kilmacthomas	8
<b>TOTAL INTERACTIONS</b>	<b>307</b>

## 7. Summary of Project Evaluation

### Introduction and methodology

Sinéad Begley and Associates were contracted to assist with evaluation of ACT Waterford and assisted the client in developing an evaluation plan to facilitate reporting on progress toward programme goals/objectives, activities completed, project reach/output. The evaluation also explored impact on attitudes in relation to climate action and associated behaviour change and the potential for models of engagement used by creative practitioners to be replicated and scaled. The following methods were used to gather feedback from communities and to explore the experiences and views of creative practitioners leading the five projects:

- An online survey for project participants was designed and promoted through social media and by those leading the five projects in November 2022.

- A focus group was conducted with creative practitioners to explore what worked well, what they would change, lessons learned and their views on the appetite among the community for sustained engagement.
- Other data gathered while researching community needs and co-creating projects through surveys with participants, was reviewed and integrated into evaluation findings as appropriate (Greening the City conducted pre-project research to determine what the community wanted in Ballybricken in terms of climate change initiatives; Slí Waterford gathered data on the most popular actions people were already taking to address single use plastics, fast fashion, fossil fuel use, food waste and water consumption; A post-project survey was conducted by Waterford Walls to explore what participants felt they had learned about using energy more efficiently in their homes as a result of taking part in the project).

### Insights from post project survey of participants in ACT Waterford

A total of 38 responses were received to a survey of the key core participants in the five ACT projects through an online survey, with two thirds from the Kilmacthomas and Ballybricken projects.

- 35% - Biodiversity - Kilmacthomas - Kieran McBride
- 32% - Greening the City - Ballybricken - Rebecca Cappucini
- 14% - Energy Use & Efficiency - Ballybeg - Waterford Walls
- 14% - Responsible Consumption - Online Community – Slí Waterford
- 8% - Take the Bus for a Change - Dunmore Road - Joanne Donohoe

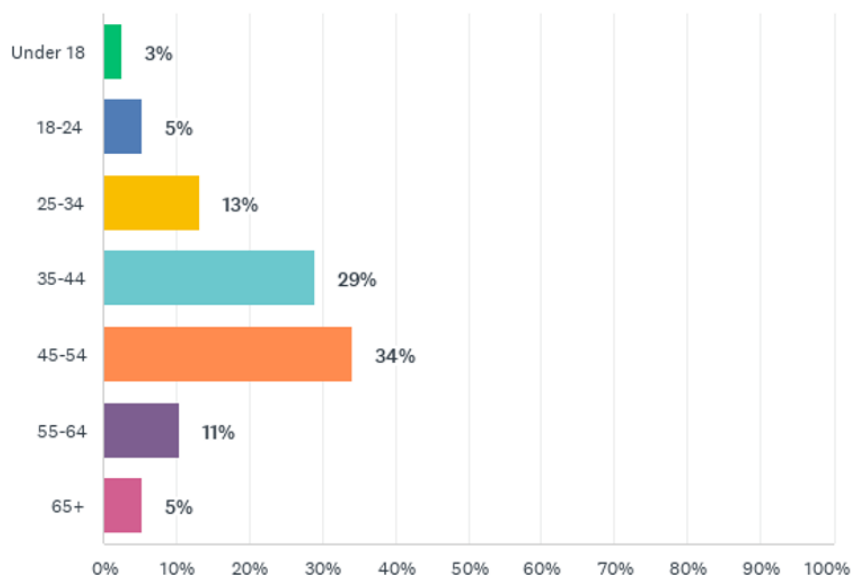
### Respondent profile

The majority (71%) of respondents identify as female, 18% as male, 3% as other and 8% would prefer not to say. In terms of ethnicity 89% are white Irish, 5% are from another white background and 5% would prefer not to say.

#### **Graph 1. Respondent age profile**

The majority (74%) of respondents had not previously taken part in any other climate action projects (24% had, 2% weren't sure). Almost two thirds were aged between 35 and 54.

## Q9 Want age are you?



### How respondents described the project

Respondents were asked to describe the project in one word and interesting (11%), inspiring (11%), and creative (9%) were the most frequent responses. Other positive terms including enlightening, eye-opening, worthy, memorable, brilliant, fun, engaging and insightful were also used.

### What respondents learned

Respondents were asked what they learned from the project and the majority (97%) gave examples, most frequently reflecting increased environmental awareness in relation to water, trees, waste, biodiversity and energy use.

*"Learned about nature on the doorstep."*

*"Our street trees are so important to support nature."*

*"To keep looking up and down as I walk in the city."*

*"The importance and resilience of wild flowers."*

*"What a small forest can do."*

*"How precious water is."*

*"What's happening our cherished water networks all around us."*

*"Water is very important to our existence and we need to keep it clean."*

*"Mahon River is magical."*

*"Industry has unexpectedly high water usage."*

*"That most water supply in Ireland are in poor condition."*

*"What a big impact food waste has on the environment."*

*"How to Save/Use Energy efficiently."*

*"Useful sustainable tips."*

Other comments reflect realisations around the importance and efficacy of the action of the individual/community taking at local level in addressing sustainability issues.

*"One person can make a difference."*

*"If you engage in local projects, you can make a difference."*

*"The amount of secondhand shopping options in Waterford."*

*"How important this topic is for everybody at an individual and community level."*

*"To continue to spread the message."*

*"Local community action has regional impact."*

*"Small changes matter."*

*"How important it is to take care of our city, and to embrace our roots."*

A small number of comments also mentioned developing art and craft skills such as sewing and spray-painting.

## Taking climate action

70% say they have already taken climate action steps as a result of taking part in the project giving examples ranging from planting trees, mowing less and recycling to rain water harvesting, using fewer plastic bottles and food containers, cycling, car sharing, and walking instead of driving when possible.

### **Water**

*"Conserving water."*

*"More conscious of how much water I use and not wasting it."*

*"Installed rain water catcher for use to water garden."*

### **Biodiversity**

*"Allowed some of our garden to not be mowed."*

*"I've joined a neighbourhood garden."*

*"Taken more notice of the green areas in the city and the plant life in the old walls."*

*"Planted trees."*

### **Avoiding waste and more mindful consumption**

*"Avoiding plastic packaging."*

*"More thought to purchasing decisions."*

*"...not buy from fast fashion outlets."*

*"I now buy drinks in a can rather than a bottle."*

*"We use less plastic bottles and food containers."*

*"Increased recycling."*

*"Reducing the amount I use."*

*"Use what's needed, despite design."*

### **Greener travel**

*"Using the TFI city bikes."*

*"It was just this week, but I'll be taking more walks in and around the city."*

*"Walk or busses to town whenever possible."*

*"Look for public transport options more often."*

*"Questioned my use of travel more. Taught me to speak up more."*

*"I have started to try to car share when possible and walk to the shop rather than drive when possible."*

When asked if they plan to take action in the future in any of the following areas 60% of respondents indicated that they do, particularly in relation to home energy efficiency, biodiversity and greener travel, all of which were topics covered in ACT projects:

- 60% - Avoid wasting heat and energy in my home.
- 53% - Planting for biodiversity or working towards better green spaces.
- 47% - Making more environmentally conscious decisions around my travel and transport.



- 47% - Plan, buy and prepare food to reduce climate impact and avoid waste.
- 42% - Shop in a climate conscious way, buying less or products that can be recycled or reused.
- 40% - Be involved with groups focused on climate action and supporting the environment.
- 32% - Taking action to address water waste or flood prevention.

Other actions respondents say they plan to take include promoting cycling and cycling infrastructure, installing solar panels, and raising awareness of climate change by teaching others and by promotion through social media.

- 58% of respondents agreed that the creative aspect of the project made them feel more engaged with climate action (5% disagreed, and the remainder felt neutral or did not express an opinion).
- 32% of respondents agreed that they feel more empowered to take action as a result of taking part (3% disagreed and the remainder felt neutral or did not express an opinion).
- 18% agreed they were more informed about climate change as a result of taking part (the remainder felt neutral or did not express an opinion).

Additional comments were positive overall, and further reflect the positive experience that participants had. Respondents enjoyed working outdoors.

*"I like the relaxed atmosphere meeting outdoors creates."*

*"Fantastic and engaging project."*

*"Really great day, met lots of interesting people and it opened up a forum to have great discussions. Due to the location, there were people from all walks of life in the audience. Great community project."*

*"The bull is an amazing addition to Ballybricken."*

*"Lovely event. Sometimes hard to hear the guide."*


Some respondents expressed an interest in extended engagement.

*"Would love to engage with more projects lead by Joanne. She was so welcoming to all."*

*"Would love to see more of this available for schools to book."*

*"I really hope the bus app comes! It would make a huge difference."*

*"Look fwd to 2023."*



One comment reinforced the views of artists in the focus group - engaging the community in short term projects is easier if there is an existing relationship with the community or a network / contact that can be leveraged to reach the wider population.

## Insights from pre-project community surveys

### **Responsible Consumption Online Community, Slí Waterford**

In total 188 responses were received to a survey of the Slí Responsible Consumption Online Community in August 2022, 82% of whom were in the 19-30 age group. The majority expressed willingness to take climate action (99%) and indicated that they consider themselves informed about climate change (88%). This cohort indicated that they were already taking a range of action to reduce use of single plastic, fossil fuels, reliance on fast fashion, food waste and water consumption.

### **Greening the City, Ballybricken**

Three quarters of respondents (134 responses) to a survey of the community in Ballybricken (between June August 2022) indicated that this was the first time they had taken part in a community arts project, 72% were not familiar with ACT, two thirds were extremely or very concerned about climate change and were interested in learning how small steps can make a difference.

### **Energy Use & Efficiency, Ballybeg, Waterford Walls**

Following the project, a survey of participants (7 responses) explored learnings in relation to using energy more efficiently at home. Respondents mentioned measures including turning the thermostat down, turning off lights and not overfilling the kettle and reflected on enjoying learning about energy efficiency, meeting likeminded people, sharing ideas, brightening up the area and raising awareness.

## ACT Waterford, Creative Practitioners Focus Group Report

The five creative practitioners involved in the ACT projects were invited to participate in a focus group (over Zoom) to discuss their experiences of the project. Discussion centred on what worked well, challenges faced and suggestions for the future.

### What worked well?

#### ***Community engagement, local people as ambassadors for climate action***

Artists engaged with new audiences and established great connections and some described receiving great verbal feedback.

*“So we had people out during I think four or five days, and they all came to help... and so many people walked by as well, asking about it and learning more about it...”*

*“We chatted further about being concerned really about the environment and the importance of slowing down, and community... A couple of the participants were very good and took the bus to the workshop, and that alone, like they were very proud of themselves and having a chat about that.”*

The people that enjoyed and attended the project could potentially be ambassadors for future engagements with their communities.

*“I am sure that like after the event, like if we had to do it again next year, there would be an already easy and open path there because the people that attended and that enjoyed the process will know, and they will be the ambassadors themselves, to spread how good it is, and you know, how proud they are to be living in that place that they walk by and they recognise themselves... their ideas, they did it.”*


One organisation described having to rethink the project plan and take a different approach than initially intended. They found that featuring local people in videos as spokespeople on climate change worked really well (people respond better to locals). Similarly, in another project having local people feature in posters on the bus shelters, with their stories about taking the bus caused a buzz and engaged the local community. Using local people in highly visible ways to promote the project works well.

*“What was really, really key I think is that they were real people from Waterford... that has boosted all of the positives really within the part of the project that we were doing in terms of like people are more likely to listen to people, they are more engaged... they were more interested seeing people that were, like around their age and stuff... there’s a lot of room for growth in that particular aspect of being able to work with people that are from Waterford and having them featured as essentially the spokes people for taking action on climate change and things that they care about...”*

## Challenges - What would you change?

### ***Making connections and engaging people***

A number of creative practitioners described the challenge of getting people involved and forming a cohesive project group on the ground in a community, particularly if they had no existing connections. This can be time consuming and difficult to achieve within the overall project timescale. Leveraging established interest groups as a conduit to engagement is recommended.



Keeping people engaged with the process was raised by a creative practitioner; a lot of people sign up through online calls but don't turn up for the workshops (this is similar to the experience of other projects and not unique). A physical presence in the area would help, where people have to sign up face to face and commit.

At the start of the projects the artist (who was not from the area) met a wide range of local groups, called into shops and businesses, distributed fliers, made presentations, and worked hard to make connections. It was difficult to form a cohesive group and get them involved in the actual project. Where possible starting with an established following or local group(s) who have an interest in the area e.g., a walking group, is easier than trying to connect individuals, who have no connection and establish a group from scratch. This point was reinforced by a comment from the participant survey. *"Sending a stranger into a small community for such a short period of time was never going to work. [artist] had no connection with [area] and no contacts, an extremely difficult place to start with this project. Under the circumstances [artist] did extremely well."*

One artist spoke about gradually establishing a new group from a set of unconnected individuals who are now interested in doing more projects. This project group worked with a community of senior citizens (in a care setting) that were already established and would love ongoing engagement.

One organisation already had a following or online community (in Waterford) of people interested in sustainability and this was leveraged to engage people.

In disadvantaged areas, the topic of climate change may seem less relevant - it can be harder for people to take action or make changes.

More time to plan and conduct research among the community about their needs / interests / preferences would better enable co-creation.

Getting participants to complete feedback forms is hard.

## Looking forward

A number of meetings with the community before the project starts might help to 'seed' the relationship between the individual local community members to establish a group.

Build on success to date - people could engage with more than one strand of ACT Waterford. Climate action heroes from one project could feature in videos that could be used across all strands. More collaboration across the project strands could leverage wider community engagement.



The creative practitioners involved in the five projects would value a community of practice, which could be facilitated through meetings, practice sharing and collective showcasing of projects.

Access to physical community space as a hub for the project would really help. Local libraries are a brilliant resource in this regard and artists commented in the fantastic support received from librarians at local level e.g., promoting the projects, sharing social media posts. Some artists have used the libraries for workshops.

The Library service could be approached at the outset of future projects to secure and optimise support for projects at local level.

### Aspects of the project that are replicable in other communities

Analysis of creative practitioner focus group data indicates that there are a range of learnings in relation to project design that can be used to inform the development of models of community engagement in climate action that can be replicated and scaled. The approaches used to engage people with the five different project strands could be rolled out across subsequent projects with the five communities - the creatives could be interchanged to offer a broader view on climate action and solutions. Outputs such as murals can enrich and sustain engagement and create a legacy for the community. The projects could be staggered to build momentum and engagement. Some people might be willing to travel between communities to take part. Specific project elements that could be replicated include:

- The cocreated mural/ Waterford Walls project. The climate action aspects could be developed further – murals and street art are a great way to communicate to the wider community.
- The workshop area in Grow HQ is a great venue for climate change related initiatives and the organisation is sustainability based.
- The ‘take the bus’ project model could be used to engage young people or older people.
- The water warrior workshops could be done as a roadshow for schools and at festivals.

### The value of collaboration and leveraging existing initiatives or networks

There has been a lot of cross pollination between ACT and existing initiatives such as Waterford Walls, Spraoi Festival, All Together Now and the Harvest Festival. This offered the artists additional opportunities for collaboration and synergy, and access to audiences which support public engagement by leveraging existing models and processes for community engagement in the County. Festivals and cultural events also offer opportunities for showcasing or promoting the climate action

projects. Stakeholders including libraries and the local Community Officer was a key contact in engaging the community.

- The people that enjoyed and attended the project could potentially be ambassadors for future engagements with their communities.
- Leveraging existing groups or networks supports community engagement. Where possible starting with an established following or local group(s) who have an interest in the area is easier than trying to connect individuals, who have no connection to establish a group from scratch (e.g., a walking group, tidy towns group, sustainability organisations online followers, senior community in a care setting).
- Collaboration with stakeholders such as the library service and community officers at local level provides valuable support and promotion for projects, access to physical community space, and connections with the community.

There are also opportunities to:

- Leverage the learnings from the ACT project to develop a community of creative practitioner.
- Showcase and share practices.
- Build collaboration and networking between projects to support creative approaches to climate action in the county.

## Key findings

- **ACT Waterford appears to have engaged new audiences in climate action projects (self-reported)** - the majority (74%) of respondents had not previously taken part in any other climate action projects (24% had, 2% weren't sure), 70% said they had made changes or taken climate action steps as a result of participation.
- **Those consulted had positive experiences of taking part in projects and learned new things (self-reported)** – survey respondents described the projects as interesting, inspiring and creative and the majority of respondents gave examples of learning. These most frequently related increased environmental awareness, and an enhanced understanding of the importance and efficacy of individual and community action taken locally to address sustainability issues.
- **The projects resulted in the majority of people taking climate action (self-reported)** - the majority (70%) of respondents have already taken climate action steps as

- a result of taking part in the project in relation to water, biodiversity, sustainable consumption and greener travel. 60% plan to do so in future (particularly in relation to home energy efficiency, biodiversity and greener travel). Over half of respondents agreed that the creative aspect of the project made them feel more engaged with climate action and one third agree they are more empowered to take action as a result.
- **There are useful learnings arising from ACT Waterford** in relation to project design that can be used to inform the development of models of community engagement in climate action with potential to be replicated and scaled.
  - **The people that enjoyed and attended the project could potentially be ambassadors** for future engagements with their communities. Featuring local people in a visible way works well.
  - **Leveraging existing groups or networks supports community engagement with climate action.** Where possible starting with an established following or local group(s) is easier than trying to connect individuals, who have no connection to establish a group from scratch.
  - Pre project surveys were a valuable tool in tailoring projects to the needs of the community and establishing their pre-existing knowledge and the climate action they are already taking. More time to plan and conduct research among the community about their needs / interests / preferences would better enable co-creation.
  - Collaboration with stakeholders such as the library service and community officers at local level provides valuable support and promotion for projects, access to physical community space, and connections with the community.

Opportunities exist to:

- Leverage the learnings from the ACT project to develop a community of creative practitioners.
- Showcase and share community arts practices aimed at stimulating climate action.
- Build collaboration and networking between projects to support creative approaches to climate action in the county.
- Further embed an evaluation framework in projects at the planning stage of the next phase and define the creative practitioner's role in data collection and other aspects of evaluation.

## 8. Media Coverage

### ACT Waterford 2022 :: Media Log

DATE	SHOW	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION
Jan			
17 Jan	Munster express		Round up piece on ACT Waterford
06 -Jan	The Irish Times	Sylvia Thompson	Feature story in the Science Pages on ACT Waterford - interviews with Michael Walsh, Sarah Kernaghan, Catherine Dower, Joanne Donohue and Susan Lee
Nov			
11-Nov	I Am Waterford	n/a	Images of the Ballybricken Bull
8-Nov	Waterford News and Star	Leon Farrell	Photocall coverage in news pages announcing Joanne Cappuccini "Greening the city" Project and Ballybricken Bull
3-Nov	Irish Examiner	Leon Farrell	Photocall coverage in news pages announcing Joanne Cappuccini "Greening the city" Project and Ballybricken Bull
2-Nov	RollingNews.ie	Leon Farrell	Photocall pics of the Ballybricken Bull
Sept			
10-Sep	WLR FM	Maria McCann	Interview with Nollaig Healy and Joanne Donohoe
August			
26-Aug	Newstalk - Pat Kenny Show	Anton Savage	Interviews with Nollaig Healy, Kieran McBride and Joanne Donohue about ACT Waterford
21-Aug	Irish Examiner	Nina Massey	Climate news article on ACT Waterford
12-Aug	WLR	WLR News	Nollaig Healy gave an update on activities taking place in August



July			
7-Jul	RTE News	Conor Kane	They shot a segment on ACT Waterford with interviews with Eoin and creatives but unfortunately was bumped off by Boris Johnson resignation
7-Jul	SliWaterford	n/a	News piece in Slí Waterfords involvement in ACT Waterford
5-Jul	Waterford News and Star	Mark Stedman	Photocall coverage in news pages announcing ACT Waterford 2022
June			
29-Jun	The Irish Times	Mark Stedman	Photocall coverage in news pages announcing ACT Waterford 2022
29-Jun	Irish Independent	Mark Stedman	Photocall coverage in news pages announcing ACT Waterford 2022
29-Jun	Irish Examiner	Mark Stedman	Photocall coverage in news pages announcing ACT Waterford 2022
29-Jun	Waterford Today	Mark Stedman	Photocall coverage in news pages announcing ACT Waterford 2022
24-Jun	Beat FM	Dean Egan	Interview with Rebecca Cappuccini re the Ballybricken Project
24-Jun	Beat FM	Dean Egan	Interview with Kieran McBride re the Kilmacthomas Project
24-Jun	Beat FM	Dean Egan	Interview with Joanne Donohoe re the Dunmore Road Project
24-Jun	Beat FM	Dean Egan	Interview with Emma Loo of Waterford Walls
22-Jun	Beat FM	Dean Egan	Interview with Nollaig Healy talking about ACT Waterford in general

## Sample Media

Irish Times

<https://www.irishtimes.com/science/2023/01/05/waterford-city-building-a-decarbonisation-zone-for-others-to-follow/>

NewsTalk Interview

<https://www.newstalk.com/podcasts/highlights-from-the-pat-kenny-show/highlighting-climate-change-though-art>

BeatFM Podcast

<https://www.beat102103.com/podcasts/waterford-climate-change/>

WLR Interview

<https://www.wlrfm.com/listenback?date=10-09-2022>

Examiner article

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/munster/arid-40944524.html>

Irish Times



**Scene and herd** Pupils visit farm as part of climate action project

■ Sam Condon, Carla Hallinan, Holly Lonergan, Stephen Coffey and Aoibhe Burke, pupils from St Mary's National School, Tournaneena, Co Waterford visit Shane Whelan's farm in the Comeragh Mountains as part of a creative climate action project called Action Climate Target Waterford. PHOTOGRAPH MARK STEPHENS

Irish Independent

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News



## Shepherding the way towards climate action

Caoimhe O'Dwyer (right) and Doireann Power, pupils from St Mary's National School, Tournaneena, Co Waterford, visit a farm in the Comeragh Mountains as part of the Action Climate Target (ACT) project. The project brings communities in Waterford city and county together with creatives to help Waterford become a decarbonised zone by 2040. Climate change themes addressed by ACT include transport, energy use, horticulture and biodiversity.

PHOTO: MARK STEDMAN.

Examiner

## Feeling bullish



Maurice Caplice wheels the bull sculpture he and fellow artist Rebecca Cappuccini created into the historic Ballybricken Green area of Waterford City, once the centre for the livestock industry in the city. The Black Bull is an interactive arts project running as part of a creative climate action project ACT Waterford. Picture: Leon Farrell/PhotoCall

Examiner



## 9. Online Engagement

Website Engagement

[www.actwaterford.ie](http://www.actwaterford.ie)

	Views	Users	Avg Engagement time
Followers	6,147	561	1 min 32 secs

Social Media Analytics

ACT Waterford Social Media Channels

	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter
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Followers	178	321	145
Impressions			37,612
Reach	78,215	10,359	

## 10. Images

Link to dropbox images [HERE](#)

## 11. Additional Findings

a. Please outline any learnings from the internal project team

i. what worked/didn't work

Creating a community group takes a lot of time and work. Creative Joanne Donohoe's tactic of physically being on the ground, getting the bus with her 'world', going into housing estates etc enabled her to make fantastic connections in the community and created a small engaged group. This is very time consuming however very rewarding when it works.


For the energy project, a vital link with a community officer was made and this really helped spread the word amongst the Ballybeg community.

The Bull in Ballybricken worked really well to get people's attention, and was a great icebreaker. The reaction from people as the bull was transported everyday with the pallet truck led to many conversations.

The nature walks worked really well to draw attention to the inner city nature range and gave the artist a platform to speak to people about the project as a whole.

The fact that Slí had an existing online following or community was a very useful starting point for community engagement.

There was a great deal of creative ideas and enthusiasm generated from the project remit. The project sounded very exciting and incredibly important for the artists.



Many of the events were well attended and many participants expressed how much they enjoyed and benefited from the events.

Linking For the Love of Water and ACT Waterford to All Together Now gave a great profile at one of Ireland's best music festivals.

It was difficult to get sustained interest from local people in Kilmacthomas. It was hoped a core group would form and this group would become creative collaborators and co-design the creative outputs of the project. Many people came to only a couple events and not others so this core group never formed. In the end, the creative designed the programme of events. It would have been helpful to go into the community with an 'offering' in order to start the co creation process. Approaching a community when you have nothing concrete to offer was difficult.


The marketing and communication to wider audiences was difficult to establish as there had been no direct prior links to the community in Kilmacthomas and surrounding areas. It might have worked better to have more emphasis on local news and media at the start of the project. The artist put in a lot of effort on the ground for the first few months and feel that different strategies would be more effective in the future.

Many times individual artists ended up doing all the set up for events alone. More hands-on support on the ground on the day is required.

The 5 projects all worked independently and the artists felt that it would have benefited them to have them better connected. This would have meant sharing media and communication about the projects, giving each other support, helping generate new ideas, and the sharing of other resources.

A longer lead in time to events would allow for increased marketing and promotion opportunities.

Collaboration is key when facilitating creative climate action projects. Connecting with participants in a location and with staff already committed to Climate Action is very beneficial. Doing workshops in Grow HQ ensured an instant welcome, support and understanding. They were willing to promote the workshops on their established social media sites and tag posts that were shared. In turn the artist was able to take inspiration from the place. Participants sketched plants in the grounds and learned about growing their own food. They ate and drank sustainably and many participants took the bus from their home up the Dunmore road in the spirit of the project. The Bus Shelters were a great success in stating the intention of the project, showing that creative climate action can be brave, quirky, fun and engaging. It encouraged participation of local residents and illustrated loudly



and publicly that their opinions matter. The bus shelters also reached the target audience for the project well and drove traffic to the social media site where the artist could continue the conversation of taking the bus for a change.

The Batik classes hit the right note by engaging curiosity to an artform that is niche and difficult to access but is well known enough to attract participants. It is also very sustainable and has a very low impact on the environment so it was a happy partner to expressing climate concerns and it is relaxing and fun enough to allow room for discussion to take place while being creative.

Working with the elder members of the community worked very well in engaging discussion and gaining insight and wisdom around how best to live a sustainable life and get the balance right in the modern World. A lot can be learned from working with this section of society and Joanne believes that it should be noted.

Having a project manager making sure things were on track is essential and very beneficial.

Having two artists collaborating together would have a range of benefits as explained by Joanne: While I was able to manage the project I think the project would have been stronger if there were two artists collaborating on the project together. There could have been a greater effectiveness I think. Meeting up with Kieran to discuss his project proved to be beneficial to me having confidence in my approach and we realised too late that sharing findings or contacts would have been beneficial. It would have been less isolating. Two heads are better than one. Also from a practical point of view it would have been helpful to have one lead facilitator in a workshop and a support facilitator who could also take charge of documenting the process. I would have had more time to lead climate action discussions around taking the bus for a change during artistic workshops if my assistant was simply ensuring participants had all they needed for example.

ii. What other partners did you connect with or learn from

The projects connected to multiple partners including:

- Comeragh Mountain Sheep Project
- Local Area Waters Programme
- Library Network
- Spraoi Festival
- Harvest Festival
- Imagination Festival
- Active Travel Unit in Council
- Heritage Officer

- Allen Troy from Grow HQ
- Elaine Mullen from Waterford Area Partnership
- The TFI Bikes Scheme
- Various Residents Association Committees on the Dunmore Road
- Karen Kehoe TY Coordinator from Newtown School
- Treacy McEneaney from Waterford Libraries
- Laura Kavanagh from JJ Kavanaghs
- Tom Myskell Lantern Artist
- Sinead Hehir Waterford Artist who studied under Tom Myskell.

Using these connections we were able to gain knowledge on the various themes and communities. They were also beneficial in helping us spread the word of the project.

A media partnership was brokered with BEAT FM. This was very advantageous to us in helping connect with a younger audience (18 - 30).

ii. What was the key moment of impact for your project

**Rebecca Cappucini:** Bringing a bull back to Ballybricken; the simplicity of that action but the vast message, the action of reminding people of the historical value of the space all the while opening up a discussion on the topic of climate action all of it seemed to marry together perfectly on this incredible time lapse of meetings with so many people all creating art together for the same cause. Such a simple idea made powerfully beautiful by community. Having the bull in this space made a big impact and was a super talking point. This opened up a conversation with people about the Green, how to improve it and it's importance to the community.

**Kieran McBride:** The key moment of impact for me were the series of Water Warrior workshops held at the All Together Now music festival and in the Tipi tent in Kilmacthomas at For the Love of Water. These workshops brought together many of the aims of the project and were also creatively very satisfying. Participants were asked to commit to taking the oath of the water warrior if they wanted to make masks entirely sourced from organic materials. Whilst the masks were being made discussions were had about the themes in the project and when they were completed each participant chose some extra costume and posed for their water warrior portraits. Participants of various ages really enjoyed this process and when they took the oath and had their portrait taken it became an incredibly meaningful experience. These portraits, are for me, the most successful creative output of




the entire project and I sincerely hope we can exhibit them in an exhibit titled 'The Water Warriors are Coming' in early 2023.

**Joanne Donohoe:** A key moment from the project was after the bus shelters went up. I reflected on why a resident would leave the car at home and the Dolce Far Niente idea came to light. We need to do less to help the planet. Spend more time in Nature and stop trying to fill our days with efficient productivity. By taking time out to spend time in nature appreciating the planet we create an intimate relationship with her. When we have an intimate relationship with something and really value it we will do all we can to help if that something or someone gets sick or needs help. This approach formed the basis of how I would connect with participants and explain how making art and creating space to chill out and be creative is as valuable to ourselves as it is to the planet. Creating the space to have the important conversations about the planet has to be a conscious decision. And once we make that time and have those conversations the actions happen. As long as we remain busy and ignore it nothing will change. I think the final impact of the project will be the exhibition of work created from the series of batik workshops. Participants will have the chance to really reflect on the meaning behind the work. The exhibition will pull together the other ACT Waterford projects too and the conversations around creative climate action will grow to include other aspects of concern. I believe this is where Art can inspire action in everyday lives. And once you begin to change how you see and live your life and see how much better it is for yourself and the planet there is no outside motivation needed. The motivation comes from within.

b. Creative Reflections

- i. Explain how you balanced the goal of climate action with the creative process and the value of the artistic output

**Rebecca Cappucini:** This developed very organically, once the ideas came from the community for what they would like to see happen it became clear what areas to focus on and all of it tied in beautifully with my own ever changing vision. For my project I wanted to highlight other artists and their beauty while collaborating with them and not just focusing solely on me. From start to finish I treated this project as a community of artists coming together for the greater good and showcasing their many talents and art while ensuring the community of Ballybricken got what they wanted, which was more usage of the beautiful space and events for all. I found the balance easy to find once I had a better understanding of what the area and community expected from me.



**Kieran McBride:** I think it was very difficult to strike a balance between these different elements of the project. Once again, one of the biggest weaknesses for all these areas was the lack of a sustained core group of local community members. I think that in future it might be better to work with a pre-established group who might have an interest in the project's themes. For example, I think great work might have come out of the hiking group or the sheep farmers group.

I think that discussions that were had at the various events prior to the festival and during the festival might have made participants think more deeply about the issues connected to climate change but I can't say to what degree this will make an impact on climate action.

Academic research and on the ground delivered a lot of fascinating data about the river Mahon and surrounding areas. A key thing to consider is that this river is considered one of the better/cleaner ones and it has multiple serious problems which will most likely only get worse in the years to come. Also, by exploring the entire area on foot and bicycle I became very intimate with the landscape and developed a deep reverence for it.

**Joanne Donohoe:** The project grew organically using every resource I had available to me. It began with the original idea of simply gathering peoples positive and negative memories around taking the bus. I reflected on what was being revealed and connected it to climate change. Each step of the way I kept the focus of three elements. How to engage with residents who were choosing taking the car over the bus, how to engage with them the benefits of taking the bus or what could be done to encourage them to take the bus more and how to facilitate these conversations through a meaningful creative process. Each attempt revealed some new insight or connection to a person or place or philosophy and the project evolved. Careful evaluation and reflection was essential to making the project work. Feedback from my project manager and many artist friends was also helpful in keeping the intention of the project on track.

ii. Outline the role of the artistic / creative practitioner of the project

- Worked with the project manager in establishing local contacts and groups, they played an important role in making links into the community.
- Worked with the community to develop the programme of events based on the interests and concerns of the group.
- Helped promote the project via social media and other press opportunities.
- Delivered regular reports to the project manager.
- Devised and reported on their individual materials budget.




iii. Artist Feedback or Reflection

**Rebecca Cappucini:** The project allowed us to go in any direction we felt we wanted. I loved that it allowed me full creative scope and allowed my ideas to change and grow with the needs of the community. I truly enjoyed this project and all the events I did for it. I found it to be a wonderful creative endeavour. I do wish that all the branches had had more interaction with one another to grow and help the project further. I really believe we could have benefited from one and other as we each grew our areas and creations. Thank you so much for the opportunity to work on my homeground and to see ballybricken flourish with events, I really wish going forward that this often forgotten area of our city be used more often so that the wonderful community up there can have continued support and help

**Kieran McBride:** The project had many aspects to it that I found really engaging and fascinating. I deepened my knowledge of many issues that I only had minimal understanding of. This also meant that I was more alarmed at the state of our water and river systems than when I started and I truly believe that we will be facing much more serious problems in the near future. This is why I feel the 'Water Warriors' exhibition could really have a strong local impact. I really hope that in future if I have a similar opportunity that I can work with a core group on a regular basis over a sustained period of time. I am absolutely sure that this would generate more interest in the project and that the artistic output would be more reflective of diverse voices in the community.

**Joanne Donohoe:** I truly was perplexed when I began this project how it was that I was going to connect climate action to working with a community with the main focus being a creative artistic outcome. At the end of the project I am convinced that the only way to solve the great problems of humanity is to approach it from a place of Art. A place of play, human connection and creativity. At one of the first meetings I remember a member of the community in Ballybeg expressing his utter confusion as to what art has to do with the Climate Crisis. The answer came to me immediately. It was an AHA! moment for sure. I turned to him and told him that every artwork is created to express something important. Art is never made about nothing. All Art that is considered important is inspired by an injustice, a frustration, a dream or a vision of a new and better World. Art can say what words cannot express. This is why we can look at the journey of humanity by looking at the Art that was created at the time. Art is inclusive and can accommodate all abilities and opinions and collaborative Art can solve the greatest of problems in the most creative of ways, with a resourceful, open minded and imaginative facilitator at the helm and the resources to support them.



**Waterford Walls** We believe that the decision to include this project as part of the Waterford Walls festival programme was a positive step forward and made a big difference in terms of promotion, engagement and creating a participatory atmosphere for the artists and community.

## 12. Conclusion

ACT Waterford set out to work with 5 creatives in 5 communities on 5 separate climate action themes in a bid to create awareness and stimulate behavioral change on a personal and community level. The project took longer to get off the ground than originally planned, the effect of Covid 19 whether through restrictions and waves of new variants in the community, impacted the project timeline. Various community groups had disbanded since the first lockdown and these groups had to be reactivated or new groups made entirely. This was very time consuming. However, the project proved to be a great success with over 1,000 different people taking part directly in the 40 various activities and workshops over the course of the year.

Results of the participant survey indicate that 70% of respondents say they have already taken climate action steps as a result of taking part in the project giving examples ranging from planting trees and recycling to rain water harvesting, using less plastic bottles and food containers, car sharing, and walking instead of driving when possible. Terms like brilliant, creative, memorable, inspiring and interesting to describe the projects the participants took part in.

Some valuable learnings were made from the project in terms of community engagement and activation that will assist future project design. Engaging with existing groups and networks who have an interest in the area (e.g. a walking group, tidy towns group, sustainability organisations and online followers) is a quicker and easier way to connect to the community; the library service and certain key community figures were invaluable to the project.

Cross pollination between ACT and existing initiatives such as Waterford Walls, Spraoi Festival, All Together Now, Imagine and the Harvest Festival offered artists additional opportunities for collaboration and synergy, and access to audiences. There was particularly high visibility at festivals such as All Together Now (22,000 in person attendees and ACT presence on the ATN app) and Spraoi Festival (50,000). In addition, the Ballybeg mural (on the main Waterford Cork road), Bus Shelter posters on the Dunmore Road and the Bull project all benefitted from being in prominent locations and were certainly seen by thousands however these tertiary audiences cannot be measured accurately.

The groundwork and learnings from this project have given the team an invaluable insight into community engagement and activation, we feel confident that this project could be replicated and scaled up in other communities in Waterford.