

Pathways: Community Climate Resilience



Appendix 2: Evaluation Report



Contents:

Background	P3
Youghal Town	P3
Youghal Blue & Green Community Network	P3
Reflective Learning and Co-Creation	P3
Project Description	P3
Aims and Objectives	P4
Project Team	P4
What Happened	P6
The Creative Process	P6
Project Process	P6
Project Activities	P7
Community Feedback	P7
Methods Used	P7
Community Data Feedback	Appendix 3
Project Team Learnings	P8
What Worked Well	P8
Challenges And Learning	P11
Evaluation Summary	P14
Project Achievements	P14

Background

Youghal Town

Youghal is the most easterly town in Co. Cork, located on the estuary of the River Blackwater. It is one of the best examples of a Norman walled port in Ireland. It used to be a busy textile centre and, fronted by two long Blue Flag sandy beaches, remains a popular seaside resort. There are a number of historic buildings and monuments within the town's walls, and Youghal is among a small number of towns designated as an Irish Heritage Port.¹ The name originates from the Irish word for 'yew wood', *Eochaill*, after the yew forests which were once common in the area. Recent violent storms and tides have exposed evidence of a vast forest floor dating back thousands of years beneath Claycastle beach.² In the 2022 census the population was 8,564.

Youghal Blue and Green Community Network

Youghal Blue and Green Community Network (YB&GCN) is a community-driven initiative that is working towards building a more sustainable future for Youghal. By promoting sustainability and protecting the town's natural and cultural heritage, the Network aims to create a cleaner, healthier, and better living environment for everyone in the area.³

Youghal Blue and Green Community Network is open to individuals and representatives of other organisations who wish to work together on blue and green actions. Currently the Network has 21 group representatives from diverse organisations such as Clean Coasts, Tidy Towns, Youghal Active Retirement Association. The goals are to work together in order to strengthen and support each other's work in relation to responding to climate change; enhancing biodiversity; ensuring clean beaches, healthy marine and coastal life while being sensitive and careful of our wildlife, woodlands and green environments. This is done through collaborating with each other and with agencies concerned with Youghal.⁴

Reflective Learning and Co-Creation

This report is the culmination of a short reflective learning process led by Clare Watson⁵ with the Pathways project management group (Maria, Hayley and Gráinne) and two artists (Veronica and Daniel), during October and November 2024. The written content has been co-created and reviewed by all five members of the team and drawn together in this report by Clare.

Project Description

Youghal Pathways: Building Community Resilience to Climate Change was one of twenty-four projects selected nationally under the Spark Creative Climate Action Fund 2023 by the Creative Ireland Programme in collaboration with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. It ran from November 2023 until November 2024 and involved a series of workshops and art workshops, and other creative events.

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Youghal>
<https://www.cork-guide.ie/youghal.htm>
<https://watteraleighhotel.com/things-to-do-in-youghal>

² <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-30907533.html>

³ Youghal Blue & Green website

⁴ Revised proposal for Mall Arts Centre: 7th May 2024 [changed tense]

⁵ www.clarewatson.ie

Aims and Objectives

The project aim⁶ was:

- to increase community involvement in addressing rising sea levels and in coordinating responses to local flooding.

The project objectives were to engage the local Youghal community in:

- connecting to the biodiversity crisis: through shared learning, species and site identification, visual interpretation.
- understanding the changing climate: through identifying responses and exploring routes to change.
- creating a community response: through shared action and participation, informing a Community Resilience Plan for Youghal, in development with Youghal Blue & Green Community Network.

Project Team

Maria Power, Chair of Blue and Green Community Network

Maria is a social scientist and has been involved with the Blue & Green Community Network since its inception in 2020. Maria also offers consultancy services specifically related to community development, community engagement and community-based projects. This work can be with groups, academic institutions or state agencies.

Maria is passionate about climate action being community based and led, in order to ensure changes are appropriate to people's lives and sustainable, long into the future. Living in a coastal community facilitates local residents to engage, understand and protect nature, biodiversity and the coast.

Hayley Fox-Roberts, Project Manager

Hayley is the Community Development Worker with Cumann na Daoine and an experienced Project Manager (Seeding the County 2019-, LGBT Diversity 2010-13, Northwest Pride 2006-16) and also a freelance consultant on strategic planning, rural development and minority inclusion. Her previous experience in community arts stretches back over many years, including the development of the Artist in the Community Scheme (CREATE). She has worked with the Blue & Green Community Network on a number of projects, reports and strategies which has enabled her to develop greater commitment to addressing climate change whilst her community development work enables links between this project and local community groups.

Gráinne Furey, Community Engagement Lead

Gráinne joined Youghal Blue & Green Community Network at its inception as a volunteer Network member in January 2021, representing Youghal Clean Coasts group. The pandemic afforded her time to further connect her already deep relationship with nature, utilising social media platforms to demonstrate its beauty, importance and need for protection. Responses from community helped confirm that many in her community had similar concerns as well as the will to learn how best to do so. This inspired her to not only get more involved in Blue & Green projects but to change her career path as a holistic therapist and study a degree in Family Youth & Community Practice in NUIG Galway. Gráinne was successful in gaining a position as Community Climate Action Worker for the Blue & Green Community Network in January 2023 and has enjoyed leading various environmental focused projects leaning on the core principles of community development for guidance.

⁶ Youghal Blue & Green website

Veronica Santorum, lead artist

Veronica Santorum is visual artist with a socially engaged practice, informed by a background in ecology. Her mission is to help people reconnect with the natural world, for healing and the wellbeing of both. She uses creative means with groups to *explore* current issues, open up alternative ways of thinking to *problem solve*, *build connection* and *capacity build*. She works in mixed media, favouring natural fibres, incorporating time outdoors, observing and in community conversation. Previous projects include: Decarbonising Together with Limerick City and County Council and Garryowen in 2022; in 2021, a place-making and biodiversity project in the Ballyhouras which led to an outdoor earth installation and biodiversity planning; Strawberry Days, a large-scale Citizen Science Pollination experiment in 2015; and the Limerick's Buzzing Project 2014-2015 which helped inform the development of the All-Ireland Pollinator Strategy and was a catalyst for many communities' engagement with bee conservation.

Daniel Clancy, artist

Daniel works as a creative practitioner primarily in the fields of audio, film and community arts. He collaborates with community groups and organisations to explore and develop the stories and conversations that are important to them. Through audio stories, films, workshops and events he helps amplify people's voices and bring them to a wider audience. Working as producer & video editor with the pioneering St. Brigid's Green Schools Committee on Green Shoots (2018, Cork Community TV) shone a light on the potential of community-led initiatives in addressing the climate and biodiversity emergencies. Daniel has subsequently shifted focus to projects and collaborations that explore community-level participation in climate action and the natural world, including Decarbonising Together Garryowen (2022), Living Heritage (Good Day Cork 2024).

Jackie Nevin, artist⁷

Jackie is a sculptor living and working in West Cork. Following a career working with young people, she embarked on her career as an artist in 2017, with a particular interest in casting and exploring new sustainable materials. Inspired by environmental change, she is passionate about taking art out of the gallery and into a community setting, encouraging an engagement that is tactile and inclusive. The primary focus of her practice is to use art to awaken our inherent responses and connections to the natural world. She is the recipient of the Jane Anne Rothwell Award 2023. Unfortunately, Jackie withdrew from the project in June 2024.

⁷ <https://www.corkmidsummer.com/news/jackie-nevin-announced-as-recipient-of-jane-anne-rothwell-award-2023>

What Happened

The Creative Process

Veronica and Daniel see their role as seeds or catalysts for developing new understanding, relationships and change through a shared creative research process. Their work is socially engaged. They begin as 'outsiders' and aim over the first few months of a project to become embedded within the organisation and community. They work in a participatory way with a core group and, as understanding and capacity build, the project expands to a broader engagement with the wider community. The thematic space that they work in is determined by a combination of the core group's interests, Veronica's affinity for the 'more-than-human' and Daniel's deep empathy for people and interest in social dynamics. The process begins with a variety of creative exploratory engagements, often outdoors, utilising natural materials and tailored to place, people and problems. A mix of modalities such as spoken word, visual and land art and soundscapes are used. Audio recording is part of the iterative process, used as notetaking and for analysis and sharing these 'community conversations'. Reflection and adjustment are fundamental. Thus, ideas arising are revisited in the next round of investigations, giving a deeper understanding and an indication of its importance to the community. Veronica uses an 'analysis through making' approach in both her personal and participatory practice to examine and build on what is emerging from the project. Audio and images captured in earlier stages and other information found in the research process, serve as prompts or 'data' for the analysis phase. Simple, accessible textile art methods such as printing, stencilling, collaging are used, so that everyone can participate without feeling anxious about being 'artistic'. The aim is for the themes that have arisen, dynamics and social responses to be considered through textile art. Finally, this creative response is shared, often in an installation format, in an informal, outdoor setting. The use of non-traditional art venues is to encourage wider engagement with a more diverse audience and to emphasise the importance of place and the local environment.

Project Process

Initially the artists spent time understanding the motivations, goals and context of the project with the Youghal Blue & Green Community Network, and how they could best serve those. Through a variety of creative exploratory activities and events they explored ideas around flooding, rising sea levels and climate action, first with the Network and then with the wider community. The 'analysis through making' stage was intended to be participatory but had to be adjusted towards more solo work and an 'artist response' to the themes that had emerged during the exploratory phase. At the project end it was evident that combining embedded artist and community development approaches worked well, albeit challenging at times. The project's penultimate action was a textile trail and outdoor audio exhibition installed temporarily at Claycastle beach. Threads that arose early in the process and wound through the project manifested in this audio and visual work. Walking the trail, people were invited to slow down, become aware of their environment as they engaged with the imagined words of a fossilised Yew tree buried on the beach. Time and urgency, coexistence with other life forms and the community's search for a map or pathway to deal with climate change are themes that Veronica explored with natural dyes, stitch and the written word. The audio element transported people from the timeframe of the tree through sound, back to the present day and challenges facing Youghal. It used Youghal's voices of all ages and attempted to reflect the variety of perspectives, sometimes contradictory, that make up such a 'community conversation'. The intention was to highlight the care and urgency already within Youghal to address climate issues and to evoke the power of co-operation and collective action. It is hoped that these opportunities for learning, reflection, connection-making and relationship building have supported the work of the Youghal Blue & Green Community Network in building a community resilient to the effects of climate change and rising sea levels.

Project Activities

In January 2023, a “call” for artists was put out via YB&GCN and interested artists were interviewed and asked to compile proposals for the project which were then assessed and voted on by a Working Group of three Network members and the management team. A total of six artists submitted applications. Veronica Santorum, Daniel Clancy and Jackie Nevin were chosen as lead artists and the application for funding from Creative Ireland (in the Spark category) was compiled by the management team after many meetings to further explore climate action themes relevant to Youghal’s needs as a coastal community. The application was submitted in March 2023.

In July 2023, the Youghal Pathways project was chosen as one of Creative Ireland’s one-year creative climate action projects (Spark) and received a grant of €48,559.24.

Over the year, the project dedicated time to the issue of flooding and normalised conversations around rising sea levels and flooding. It provided new perspectives through external and creative inputs and provided the opportunity for members of the community to ask different questions, and to have different conversations with different people. It also gave the Youghal Blue & Green Community Network the scope to expand their reach within the local community.

On 12 November 2023, the first activity was held on Youghal Strand and brought Network members, representing different community organisations, together to introduce the project and consider flooding in Youghal and the community response. It involved a two-hour interactive experience, with a range of creative activities. The project was then officially launched by Councillor Mary Linehan-Foley at the Youghal Blue and Green Community Network’s Christmas party on 13 December.

Between January and November 2024, the project team facilitated or were involved in another twelve events - a second walkshop, a public interview (with two Coast Guard members and a tour of Coastguard Station), an art workshop, two textile workshops (including a sandbag discussion), a stencilling workshop (with members of the migrant community), a sandbag filling workshop (using a prototype designed by the local Men’s Shed), a Sandcastle Challenge (involving c. 200 people), a Textile Trail and Soundscape (incorporating audio interviews gathered throughout the year) and the project had a presence at two local festivals (Moby Dick and Spirit of Youghal). On 14 November, the project culminated in a public Town Hall Event entitled: *Community Response: Planning for Future Flood Events*.

For more detail, please see the Activity Table and Media Table (Appendices 1 & 2)

Community Feedback

Throughout the year the fourteen events engaged over 400 people in creative climate action, across the generations. Feedback was sought at all events, although it was not always given by all participants. However, from a review of the feedback received, a high proportion of participants expressed high levels of satisfaction with the activities and events, climate literacy improved and there is certainly more discussion and awareness about rising sea levels and flooding. This is a high level of impact for a one-year project. More importantly, more people feel that the community can play a role in preparing for flood events, many of the participants are engaging in more climate actions, the Network has gained new members, and 32 people have signed up to continue the work of building community resilience in the coming year.

For more detail, please see Community Feedback Data: See Appendix 3

Project Team Learnings

This section is the culmination of a process of reflective learning whereby each team member responded in writing to a number of questions around what they each thought had worked and hadn't worked in the project. These responses were then collated and synthesised by Clare and reviewed by the team.

What Worked Well

Art-based community research approach (group workshops/workshops, meeting people, interviews and creative events)

This approach helped to develop a stronger understanding of the issues regarding rising sea levels, flooding, climate change and loss of biodiversity in Youghal. It developed an understanding of what resilience planning involves and the role that community can take at different stages. It also developed an understanding of the role of different agencies and began creating connections (OPW, Local Authority, HSE, Coastguard, MaREI UCC).

The workshop/workshop structure (small groups) made conversation easy and, for the most part, the social and creative dimensions of these helped to reduce any conflict, fear and anger amongst participants and encouraged a sense of 'working together'.

Capturing and recording oral testimonies from local people, particularly those who had experienced flooding, was very effective. Local feedback at the Textile Trail and Soundscape on Claycastle beach focused heavily on the fact that local voices were used. People listened attentively to figure out who was featured. There was also feedback that it was powerful to hear 'non-experts', i.e. 'regular' local people, telling the story. As the project progressed, using audio captured earlier in the project worked well to bring new people up to speed with what the project was about.

The Sandcastle Challenge worked very well as a fun, educational event and communicated scientific information about the OPW's models of local flooding to a local, public audience. The enthusiasm and engagement on the day was captured very effectively in a short video.

The pop-up Textile Trail and Soundscape installation on Claycastle beach looked and sounded beautiful, was provocative and people had strong visceral responses to it. In both events the atmosphere was informal whilst focused.

The 'Town Hall' event was very successful in bringing scientific information and community experiences to the collective development of a pathway to planning for future flood events.

Engagement approach

The personal approach used by Network members and artists, speaking directly with people about issues, topics and project activities, rather than relying exclusively on online and social media methods was very effective. The Project Lead's local connections and her breadth of knowledge of Youghal and its people, and pre-existing familiarity and trust with them, was invaluable in identifying people to speak with, as well as offering artists a foot in the door. The Project Manager's other role as Local Community Development Worker also promoted the project at community level through local groups. This was in addition to posterage, door to door leafleting and regular radio shows by the Network on CRYfm.

Refreshments were provided in a space (e.g. gazebo and community café) so people could gather and chat before, during and after events. This helped members and non-members to mix and talk more freely and it also helped ensure that participants felt valued.

Broad range of participants

The 14 events engaged over 400 people throughout the programme, most of whom were local residents, which significantly exceeded targets. Most events were intergenerational, spanned a wide age range and brought a rich diversity of experience to the project overall. The inclusion of local refugee and asylum seeker communities was valuable both in promoting social inclusion and by bringing the participants' considerable experience of flooding into the project findings and future work. Many of those who engaged had not done so before and they continue to engage in Youghal Blue & Green Community Network events. Over the year, ten people signed up to join the Network.

Working with different groups

The creative aspect of the project was initially designed so that the first four workshops would build capacity within the Youghal Blue & Green Community Network with a small group of people (10-12) so that participants had a firm understanding of resilience planning around flooding, the role of community within it, and the questions and discussions they wished to have with agencies and others involved in flood management. However, it was agreed at the outset that the Network uses a variety of approaches to reach and engage with a range of target groups in the community. Using different approaches, e.g. creative workshops, workshops, beach events, town hall and radio all contributed to reaching different cohorts of the community and widening the climate action taken across Youghal. This approach has been very effective for the Network over the past number of years.

Employing a flexible & adaptable approach

Project activities and events were designed to be informed and shaped by what emerged from the research and initial public engagement stages. For instance, the themes and topics explored at the Coast Guard visit and discussion reflected the confusion around roles and responsibilities expressed by participants in Walkshop 1 and Walkshop 2. We recognised there was a strong desire for people to understand the mechanics of how the emergency services respond to a flooding event, which the Youghal Coast Guard members ably talked us through at the event.

The exhibition of project artwork was a major element that required adaptation. While the artistic output and its exhibition was important, it was secondary to the process and outcomes of engaging with the community, and not an end goal of the project. However, the exhibition of the artwork was still important and a valuable opportunity to reach a wider audience. As the project progressed the initial desired venue, The Mall Arts Centre, had to be discarded as an option. This required a re-evaluation of the project goals and in mid-summer of 2024 the project team met and agreed to host the exhibition outdoors at Claycastle beach, and to also incorporate an additional event - a Sandcastle Challenge. While the outdoor venues were not perfect and subject to accommodating weather conditions, they provided a unique and suitable public space that fitted better with the topics and themes of the project.

Finding the right talking points and messages to reach people

It was important to keep messaging positive, despite the difficult topics. Talking points and prompts were provided to facilitate conversation at each event. The sandbags were a great conversation starter and piqued people's interest which was especially helpful when interviewing new people for the first time. Sand artist Sean Corcoran, was selected to lead on the Sandcastle Challenge focusing on the 477 homes & buildings in Youghal that are at risk of flooding. This concept especially resonated with people. Many of the participants came for the fun day out but most of the people spoken to on the day grasped the idea very quickly. This was an effective way of speaking about data and information that has been publicly available since 2018 but is not well known. Videographer, Peter Grogan, documented the event and produced a short video which was then showcased on YB&GCN social media pages, website and YouTube channel in order to disseminate the message further.

Adapting to allow more space for people to air the psychological impact of flooding

The final activity for the second workshop was to be a summing up of what people learned on the day. Instead, people who had already been devastated by flooding explained in detail the impact flooding had had on their mental wellbeing and why it was so important to get things right in the future. It also became clear that most people had minimal or no professional counselling or psychological support in the aftermath. Obviously, the workshops didn't solve these deeper issues, but participants said it was at least cathartic to share their experiences.

Using the beach as a creative space

While there were some downsides to using Claycastle beach as a venue, such as distance to the town, ease of access and visibility (and potential weather problems), it proved to be a fitting venue to exhibit the work, using an outdoor public space connected with the natural aspects of the town. With sea, drowned forest and town visible, it placed everything immediately in context. It is a space where people feel comfortable and can relax, and which is not owned by any group. It is used regularly for climate action events/activities. The audio installation of deck chairs kitted out with comfortable blankets and cushions was described as a "lovely outdoor cinema". Thankfully the weather was very clement.

A range of useful tools and approaches were developed

The Emergency Services workshop was particularly powerful. This was run like an intimate podcast event with Coastguard volunteers speaking to a small audience about their experiences during flooding. This really moved participants, some of whom signed up to the Network that evening and remained involved with the project. The Coastguard was a new connection for the Network. The Resilience Mandala on the beach was effective at exploring and communicating a lot of information around resilience planning in a creative, non-confrontational way. Visual and audio materials were created for indoor use at the Town Hall meeting which added to the accessibility of information for participants.

Listening to the experiences of people who have been flooded was valuable for those not directly affected by flooding and evoked strong altruistic responses.

An improvisation exercise using social media quotes and creating a flooding soundscape worked very well at returning people in their minds to the experience of flooding. One of the problems that we encountered, and which our conversation with the OPW corroborated, is that people are intensely focused and wish to discuss solutions to flooding in the immediate aftermath of flooding but that this fades within weeks. This exercise was useful for returning people (safely) into that headspace (and will be used by the Network again).

The Sandcastle Challenge was an additional output that worked very well as a creative communication of scientific data about climate change and flooding – visualising the number of houses at risk as outlined in the OPW floodplan. It could be repeated in any coastal town at risk of flooding that has the data available.

The local Men's Shed built a Sandbag Filling Station. The trail created a prototype, which allows two people to fill six bags in five minutes and could be used in the future, and it showed how easy it would be for the community to help filling sandbags. It also identified important considerations like health and safety, space required, access issues, permissions, etc.

A range of other resources are also now available for use including: flood maps, video footage and photographs; audio recordings and oral testimonies; activity plans; the sandbag artwork; graphic harvesting and 'transitional' art piece; climate action stencils and other graphics.

Network staff and members were present at each event along with the artists and this created opportunities to chat with participants and passers-by about the project as well as promoting YB&GCN and its other projects.

First step has been taken in developing a community response/community resilience plan

The theme is in the public eye and can be built on, the desire for action is evident and community members are now engaged in developing this response.

The discussion around community flooding resilience has expanded beyond just 'response' to include recovery after the flooding event, and prevention.

The relationship with Cork County Council improved in the last stage and can be developed further in the coming year. Some preliminary connections were established between the Network and staff in other agencies.

The emotional and mental health impacts of flooding were made apparent by conversations with the HSE and with flood survivors. This could be something that the Network will work to support in the aftermath of flooding.

Nature-based solutions were a popular discussion topic and were explored with MaREI and the OPW. The Network could facilitate work in these areas (e.g. raising awareness of the importance of Sustainable Urban Drainage and alternatives to paving gardens for parking, planting marram grass, etc.).

The Town Hall event was attended by approx. 55 members of the public. Scientific input was given by UCC, Met Eireann, OPW and community input was given by a local Councillor, Midleton Flood Forum and the Pathways artist. Following inputs, workshops were held around four key themes: Prevent, Prepare, Respond and Recover with approx. 13 people in each group. There were clear suggestions emanating from the four groups and these form the basis of a report: see Appendix 5. 32 people from the Town Hall event signed up to continue the work of developing a community resilience plan for Youghal in relation to future flood events, with the support of Cork County Council

Environmental activist and artist Hazel Hurley was brought onboard to document the Town Hall event via 'graphic harvesting'. Additionally, the original 'Periwinkle Art Trail' was replaced as a 'legacy' piece by a 'transitional' art piece created by Hazel to map the 'Pathways' journey and the co-creation of a community resilience plan

The project has influenced future creative practice

Veronica will continue to explore forests, and other habitats flooded by rising sea levels in the past, as a theme in future work exploring climate change.

Links have been established with additional artists who wish to work with the Network on future projects, including woodland and freshwater themes.

Challenges And Learning

Lack of shared understanding around how embedded artists work within a community development network

Youghal Blue & Green Community Network is a young organisation and is guided by community development principles. This was the first time the Network had run an embedded artist project. While the embedding of artists was discussed at the outset of the project, it was not fully explored, nor were community development approaches fully explored with the artists. How these processes were working was not regularly reviewed throughout the year. Misunderstandings inevitably arose, particularly around how the Network works, the level of involvement of Network members and the availability of volunteers to help at events. The co-creation element of the project could also have been explored in more depth.

Learning

- It is important to fully explore the different approaches at the outset and for practitioners on both sides to understand each other's expectations and ways of working, and to find common ground even where approaches differ. Whether the initial discussions have achieved their full impact should be assessed through ongoing review.

- Additional time should also be allocated to helping the artist(s) embed within the community and understand the nature of community development and the culture of the organisation.

Resource priorities

Most of the project budget went into the fees of the original three artists plus fees for an additional three artists (total 84 days/588 hours) and materials. A project manager was paid for one day per week. The project lead was allocated one day per week from the YB&GCN budget. There were significant time constraints on the project management side, so two other staff members (community climate action worker and strategic development manager) also provided significant time to the project.

Learning

- Bearing in mind the amount of funding available for each one-year Spark project (c. 50K) it might be better to involve fewer artists. This would then allow more of the budget to be spent on project management, PR, administration and support.
- Events and activities could be condensed to within six months to allow time to build internal relationships and agree structures, processes, responsibilities and plans at the beginning, and to allow more time for reporting, reflective learning and evaluation at the end. However, the length of this project did enable the slower process of community development around climate change issues.

Lack of clarity around:

- **Roles, responsibilities and time commitments**

There was not a full understanding of everyone's roles (artists, project lead, project manager) and each person's time allocation to the project. This sometimes resulted in over-communication and duplication of effort.

- **Expectations around decision making**

Although there were strong longer-term structures in place to ensure financial management and project reporting there were different expectations between YB&GCN staff and artists about how they should work and how week-to-week decisions were made.

- **Unaired frustrations**

Issues are likely to arise in any project, particularly if it involves people who are working on a limited, part-time basis, and on difficult issues such as climate change. While some concerns were adequately addressed in this project, others remained unaired and unresolved.

Learning

- Initial workshops (not just meetings) should be held at the outset with the full project team (management and artists) to develop trust and relationships and to explore and agree roles, responsibilities and time commitments; where administrative responsibility lies, methods of internal communication and decision making (including regular meeting times); and ways of addressing concerns. This is particularly important when the roles are all part-time.
- These processes should be revisited, reviewed and refined periodically.

Securing Cork County Council support & use of The Mall Arts Centre in Youghal Town Hall

It was not possible to obtain Cork County Council support and to secure the use of the Town Hall for the final art event/exhibition. This required a restructuring of some of the programme of work and, while the project continued to achieve its aims and objectives, the creative and logistical methodologies for some aspects had to change. The uncertainty and necessary changes caused stress and took up valuable time. However, ultimately, the alternative venue of Claycastle beach proved to be more appropriate and effective for the final installation and recent staff change over within the Council has opened up new avenues of communication.

LEARNING

- Involving the Council in the development of the project at application stage may enable it to participate more fully in the project and to take a stronger position.
- Ideally, if a venue is required as an exhibition space, permission should be secured in advance of making the project funding application, or an alternative option should be found.
- It would be useful if Creative Ireland could provide advice and guidance to projects on how best to engage and involve key stakeholders like the Local Authorities/Councils.

PR and media coverage

It proved difficult to maintain a high social media and general media presence, and to keep the project in the public eye for a year. There was limited sharing by Network members of prepared posts and data analysis was unavailable for some periods. This highlights challenges for community workers and volunteers across the board in terms of time and availability, and the need for increased funding for marketing and communications expertise/skills required to ensure effective messaging and promotion.

LEARNING

- More of the budget should be allocated to ensure that staff has time to deliver and oversee media/social media coverage and promotions, and to make better use of media and materials gathered to promote the project (e.g., photos, clips of audio / video, written posts etc).

Gathering feedback

Feedback was gathered from participants after every event and, while reviewing this feedback was very insightful and facilitated adjustments and improvements, gathering and administering it was time consuming and challenging, particularly at larger public events, and it required more administration time than anticipated by the team.

LEARNING

- More time and resources are required to stay on top of data collection and analysis.
- The structure of feedback mechanisms should be reviewed at intervals during the project.

Engagement with Creative Ireland

Creative Ireland has to be applauded for delivering such a ground-breaking programme for creative climate action, and for providing networking and support events, which we found very beneficial. However, the management team had underestimated the amount of time needed to work in partnership with the embedded artists and the administrative support offered by Creative Ireland was limited due to their own limited resources. Additionally, the early deadline for the final financial drawdown hindered an organic approach to final actions.

LEARNING

- Guidance on the embedded artist process at application and contracting stages would be useful.
- The final drawdown stage should be moved closer to the grant end date.

Evaluation Summary

Project Achievements

- Greater engagement, awareness and reach into the community.
- Greater awareness of rising sea levels and reasons for flooding.
- Increased engagement and increased conversation around climate change issues.
- Cohesion between Network member organisations and other local community/NGO groups towards creating a sustainable response.
- Increased presence of community networks and climate-related actions.
- Community members' commitment to planning sustainable responses.
- Increased ease in talking about climate change, which continues to spread awareness through word of mouth.
- Greater engagement in climate action activities (numbers exceeded targets)
- Wider social media reach.
- Softened the ground for Blue & Green Community Network to do more actions – it is getting easier to engage community members.
- Opened ground for Community Resilience Plan.
- Raised awareness – more opportunities for engagement.
- Increased visibility of climate change.
- Better understanding of the causes of flooding.
- Deeper understanding and increase in capacity to identify community needs and responses, and how to engage effectively with diverse communities.

APPENDX 1: ACTIVITY TABLE

Pathways: Community Climate Resilience

DATE	ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY TYPE	WHERE	DESCRIPTION	OUTPUTS	NO. PARTICIPANTS (EXCL. STAFF & ARTISTS)	BREAKDOWN OF ATTENDANCE NUMBERS		
							1. Network members	2. Members of public	3. Staff/artists
							1	2	3
Sun 12 Nov 2023 11am-3pm	Walkshop 1 Followed by soup, sandwiches and cakes and more discussion in the Community Café at Cumann na Daoine	Walkshop led and facilitated by artists Veronica Santorum (VS) and Daniel Clancy (DC) and organised with project team	Youghal Town Beach and Strand	This event brought Network members, representing different community organisations, together to introduce the project and consider flooding in Youghal and the community response. It involved a two-hour interactive experience, facilitated by sound artist Daniel Clancy and eco-artist Veronica Santorum with a range of creative activities, such as improv, using clips harvested from local social media during a recent flooding event, and a soundscape, at each pre-planned stop along the route, structured to provoke thought and conversation about flooding. This included alert systems, community supports, local		17	7	10	4

				cause, agencies that could assist and the lack of a plan. Audio recordings were made to assist with note taking.					
Fri 13 Oct 2023	Audio Interviews	Interviews organised and conducted by DC	Green Park Beach, Youghal Town Centre	Vox pop interviews around Youghal with local people Material used as artist research, workshop talking points and audio composition.					
Tues 21- Fri 24 Nov 2024	Creative Ireland Sparks Residential Programme	Capacity building, skill sharing and networking event for Spark project teams, funded by Creative Ireland.	Borris House, Borris	Three-day capacity building, skill sharing and networking residential event for two reps of each Spark project, organised by Julie's Bicycle and partners (MCo, Green Arts Initiative and Native Events) for Creative Ireland. Afterwards, DC shared learning regarding evaluation and connections made with other groups working on flooding with the Pathways team.					1
Weds 13 Dec 2023	Youghal Pathways to Community Climate Resilience Project Launch	Launch event organised by project team.	Youghal, Cumann naDaoine building	Councillor Mary Linehan-Foley officially launched project at the Youghal Blue and Green Community Network's Christmas party. VS was introduced to Network members		28	28	0	6
Sun 18 Feb 2024 2.30-4.30	Walkshop 2 Creative Exploration of Community Resilience	Walkshop led and facilitated by VS and DC and organised with project team.	Youghal, Green Hole Beach	An exploration through creative exercises of what is community resilience with regards to flooding. The group began by identifying the strengths of the community and the role it could play at each stage of a flooding resilience plan, considering		17	3	14	3

				Prevention, Preparing, Responding and Recovery after a flooding event. The two-hour workshop culminated in the creation of a Community Resilience Mandala in the sand.					
Mon 11 March 2024	Meeting with Peter Newport, Office of Public Works (OPW), Hydrometry	Meeting organised by VS.	Online	Discussion of causes of flooding in Youghal, OPW's role in flood prevention and purpose of hydrometric measurements at the quay, which was shared with project team and led to contact with a Nature Based Solutions specialist within OPW. Attended by: VS		1		1	3
Weds 13 March 2024	Audio Recordings	Audio recordings & soundscapes carried out by DC	Youghal	Recording of non-speech sounds and atmospheres for use in audio composition e.g. storms sounds: wind, rain, waves, etc.					
Mon 26 March 2024	Presentation and discussion on Nature Based Solutions led by MaREI	Capacity building event organised by and attended by project team and artists.	Online– Zoom	Dr Emma Verling and Mélanie Biaisque from the MaREI research centre in UCC gave a presentation on Nature Based Solutions and participated in Q&A and discussion. Attended by: VS, DC, Grainne Furey (GF), Hayley Fox-Roberts (HFR) and Maria Power (MP)					5
Thurs 4 April 2024	Meeting between HFR and Aileen Murray and Susan Fysh of Mall Arts Centre	Meeting organised by HFR	Youghal	Discussion of project and to address issues with the proposal for the installation which had been refused by Mall Arts Centre. The issues were identified for the preparation of a follow-up application.		2		2	2

Tues 23 April 2024	Creative Ireland Event, IMMA	Shared learning event organised by Creative Ireland.	IMMA, Dublin	Attended by: VS, Jackie Nevin (JN). Learnings were shared afterwards with Pathways group.					2
Mon 29 April 2024	Meeting with Ian McDonagh (Cork Arts Officer)	Instigated by the local authority manager	Online	Meeting to discuss project and installation, and to understand the second refusal of the Mall Arts Centre. Attended by: GF, VS and DC					3
Weds 1 May 2024	Audio interviews	Interviews organised by DC	Youghal town centre	DC interviewed local people on the streets by the quays, including a number of people who had experienced flooding; residents, fishermen, business owners. Audio snippets were used in future workshops and final audio composition.					1
Weds 1 May 2024	Research and engagement meetings	A 'happenstance' informal chat outside Townhall.		VS and GF met with council staff from the Town Hall and the Council yard and explored the system for accessing sandbags during flooding events (the information was very contradictory). Also visited and considered alternative venues for workshops and installation, worked on a new submission to Mall Arts Centre and planned Walkshop 4 and its route.				7	2
Thurs 2 May 2024 7pm	Public Interview with Emergency Services	Public podcast style event for an intimate group. Led by DC with support from VS and GF	Youghal Coast Guard Station	Network members were shown the Coastguard Station and were a 'live audience' for an interview with Coast Guard members Billy Farrell and Ian Walsh at Youghal Coast Guard base. Followed by an audience Q&A. The purpose was to build connection between		12	8	4	3

				the Network and the Emergency Services and to understand their role and how the community can best support them.					
Tues 7 May 2024	Creative Ireland One to One Session	Project review with Kate Cunningham and VS and DC	Online	Meeting with Creative Ireland at which the difficulties finding a venue for the summer's work and the installation were discussed.					3
Mon 13 May 2024	Three Art Workshops	Workshops led by artist Jackie Nevin and organised by project team	Spring Chickens Group at Cumann na Daoine, Youghal	Art workshops and conversations on flooding, supported by survey on climate awareness	Two art pieces created and used in Climate Action Week display (Oct 2024).	27	0	27	3
Wed 22 May 2024 7-9pm	Textile Workshop 1	Workshop led by VS and DC and organised by project team	Cork College of FET, Youghal Campus	This workshop was intended to expand the project beyond the Network to the wider community. After familiarising people with the project so far using audio clips, the aim was to consider and visually represent actions that the community can take to support people during flooding in simple designs that can be stencilled on to sandbags.	Audio clips – DC	5	5	0	3
Wed 29 May 2024 7-9pm	Textile Workshop 2: Sandbag Discussion.	Workshop led by VS with GF and organised by project team	Cork College of FET, Youghal Campus	Project audio clips were used to immerse people in the themes. The clips and sandbag trivia prompts were used to initiate discussion around the use of sandbags and the community's role. A small amount of stencil cutting was also carried out.		6	6		2

Sat 1 June 2024	Moby Dick Festival	Information stand, organised and run by GF & Mark Falvey (artists unavailable)	Market Square, Youghal	Raised awareness of Pathways project, upcoming events and Blue & Green Community Network. Distributed events calendar and sandbag fact sheet.		50 engagements	2	50	2
Tues 18 June 2024 11am	Walkshop 3 with Cork County Council staff <u>CANCELLED</u>	This was intended to be a knowledge sharing workshop.	Collegiate Gardens, Youghal	The Walkshop with creative activities was designed to build connections between local council and the Network. Staff with responsibilities related to flooding were to be invited and the aim was to have six representatives of the Network and six of the Council present and to use creative exercises to work together in a non-confrontational way to understand and explore roles and supports needed during flooding events. This event had to be cancelled.					
Weds 3 July 2024	Meeting between VS and Liam Power, Youghal Men's Shed	Meeting organised by VS	Youghal	A discussion on the design of a sandbag filling stand		1		1	1
Weds 3 July 2024	Youghal B&G Network coastal erosion walk	Capacity building, outdoor event organised by Youghal B&G Network	Youghal, Claycastle beach	Follow on from the MaREI talk on 26 th March. Dr Mélanie Biaisque led an information evening for Network members considering coastal erosion and Nature Based Solutions. A citizen science, mapping and photography of coastal erosion initiative is emerging from this		10	6	4	3

Sat 13 July 2024	Youghal storytelling festival – Spirit of Youghal	Input organised by project team, with audio supplied by Daniel Clancy	Mall Arts Centre	Played sound installation of flood stories by local residents as a pilot. Engaged participants in their own stories of flooding. Not sure this festival was suitable for our project. However, GF had conversations with attendees and promoted the Sandcastle Challenge		8		8	1
Sat 27 July 2024	Sandcastle Challenge Promotion	Organised by project team with CRY FM and artist Seán Corcoran (SC)	Claycastle Beach Youghal, CRY FM Studios Youghal	DC, VS and SC developed a Sandcastle Challenge plan with project team and developed an event promotion strategy. An interview was recorded with the local radio CRY FM.					5
Fri 2 Aug 2024	Meeting between VS and Aurelien Burlot, archaeologist	Organised by VS	Youghal	The meeting arose from background research by VS regarding the ancient tree stumps now clearly visible on the beach. Aurelian explained historic sea level rises and evidence of previous communities and their interactions with the ‘drowned’ forest and bog on the beach in Youghal. This fed into the artwork for the beach installation.					
Weds 14 Aug 2024	Manual Handling Workshop	Training event provided by SECAD for artists and project team	Online	The aim was to learn the risks and their management for sandbag filling with the community. The sandbag filling workshop was adjusted following this training, for example limiting the weight of sandbags to 10kg, and providing personal protection equipment. Manual Handling Certs were received.					3

				Attended by: VS, Mark Falvey (MF) and GF					
Sat 17 Aug 2024	Sandcastle Challenge	Public event organised by artists: VS, DC, Sean Corcoran (SC), Peter Grogan (PG)	Claycastle beach	The event used sand art to raise awareness of the number of properties at risk from rising sea levels. Forecast data from OPW's 2018 flood plan for the region was presented as a sandcastle built for every home and business at risk if sea level rises by 1 metre. The event was photographed, videoed and audio recorded by the team. This was intended as a large-scale public engagement event to compensate for the changes made in the project plan.	Link to Video	200	10	190	5
Tues 27 Aug 2024	Meeting with Conor Galvin, OPW	Meeting organised by VS	Online	Meeting to build connections between the B&G Network and the OPW and create greater understanding of each other's roles with regards to flooding and the possibility of a working relationship in the future. Conor Galvin made a presentation on the National CFRAM programme and Nature Based Solutions and the OPW. It was followed by a Q&A and Maria invited him to the Townhall Meeting. Attended by: MP, GF, VS, DC, MF, and two Network members.		2	2		5
Fri 6 Sept 2024	Stencilling Workshop	Creative Workshop organised by VS, DC, GF and interpreter	Quality Hotel, Redbarn	This workshop was held with a group of migrant women (five Ukrainian, one Georgian and one translator) who had initially been engaged by artist Jackie Nevin. Stencils with		7	0	7	2

				the word 'Flood' in every language spoken in Youghal (35 languages) were used to decorate project sandbags. The concept emerged from Walkshop 1 when it was recognised that messaging during emergency events may miss some members of the community, including migrants that make up nearly 20% of Youghal's population in the 2022 census. Through an interpreter, the women talked of their experience of flooding, including landslides, back in their home countries.					
Fri 6 Sept 2024	Audio Interview	Audio interview between DC and GF		The interview provided an overview of Youghal, pick-ups and additional narrations for audio composition					
Sat 7 Sept 2024	Sandbag Filling Workshop	Workshop organised by VS, GF, DC, MF	Community Garden and Market, Youghal	This workshop aimed to build on the discussion and ideas raised by Network members in previous workshops to fill or distribute sandbags to community members who are unable to do so themselves. It was therefore a 'dry run' using the sandbag filler made by the Men's Shed, which allows six bags to be filled at one time. This demonstrated how quickly bags could be filled and the space, health and safety and equipment considerations if the community were to assist with or even provide sandbag filling stations.		3	1	2	4

Tues 17 Sept 2024	Meeting with Anthony O'Reilly Community Climate Action Officer and Sean Corcoran, Climate Action Officer for Cork County Council	Information sharing meeting organised by GF	Online	This meeting aimed to share the project with the local authority and help build a working relationship between the Network and the Climate Officers. Information about future funding opportunities and community engagement were shared. The two Climate Action Officers committed to attend the Town Hall event. Attended by: DC, VS, GF					
Sat 21 & Sun 22 Sept 2024	Textile Trail & Soundscape	Event organised by project team and artists	Claycastle beach, Youghal	A pop-up art installation was created on the beach to which passers-by and Network members were invited. It incorporated a 'textile trail' which encouraged the visitor to slow down and read the imagined words of the fossilised forest buried by the rising sea in Youghal. The fabric was dyed with tree bark, leaves and oak galls representing the forest while metal salts; iron, copper and aluminium, were used to symbolise ages of human history that the forest has witnessed. Time and urgency and the community's search for a map or pathway to deal with climate change were explored with natural dyes, stitch, the written word and the physical effect of walking on sand with the sea coming in. This led people to a 'listening booth', a cosy set-up of deckchairs looking out to sea and to Youghal, with blankets and an audio piece.		50	8	42	4

Sat 12 – Sun 20 Oct 2024	Climate Action Week Window Display	Event organised by B&G staff	‘Kathleen & May Experience’ Main St. Youghal	A montage of artwork created in project, including background and reference pieces, to provide public information and promote engagement with Town Hall event.				c. 200	2
Mon 21 Oct 2024	‘The Gathering’ Creative Ireland event showcasing and celebrating Creative Climate Action Fund II projects	Shared learning and networking.	Aviva Stadium, Dublin	DC and GF presented the Pathways project in a panel discussion at this event.					2
Thurs 14 Nov 2024	Town Hall Meeting with textiles, sound, scientific and community input	Public event to engage people in development of Community Resilience Plan	Mall Arts Centre	Public event with input from three scientists (UCC, Met Eireann, OPW and) and three community representatives followed by four break-out workshops.	Report on the evening including workshop findings.	53	8	45	7
Thurs 21 Nov 2024	Journey & Transition Discussion	Organised by team with artist Hazel Hurley		GF is liaising with Hazel to provide all information on project. The aim is to produce transitional display piece, mounted for public viewing					5

Pathways: Community Climate Resilience



Appendix 3: Feedback Summary (Main Events)



While feedback through surveys was sought at each event, not everyone completed feedback forms, however sufficient numbers were reached to give an overall sense of the event.

WALKSHOP 1 (12 Nov 2023)

There were 17 participants - 7 Network members and 10 members of the public.

13 feedback forms were filled out.

11 respondents thought the workshop was 'very good', two thought it was 'good'.

Q.1 What will you try post workshop?

Talk to others about climate change – 9

Reduce your carbon emissions at home – 10

Reduce your carbon emissions from travel – 8

Work with B&G Network to help reduce carbon emissions in Youghal – 9

Work with B&G Network to create a community plan for flooding – 10

Q.2 Which of the following would you like information on?

Facts and figures around climate change – 6

How to protect my home/business in case of flooding – 8

Practical suggestions on how to reduce my carbon footprint – 10

Home energy and electric car grants – 7

How I can get involved at community level on reducing carbon emissions – 12

How I can get involved in preparing for and offering help during emergencies - 13

WALKSHOP 2 (18 Feb 2024)

17 people participated, three Network members and 14 members of the public.

10 feedback forms were filled out.

All 10 respondents thought the workshop was 'very good'.

Q.1 Describe feelings in workshop

(Options: happy, interested, tense, excited, neutral, inspired, shy, confused, optimistic, unhappy, bored, engaged, angry)

Interested - 10

Engaged- 10

Inspired- 8

Happy – 5

Optimistic 5

Excited - 3

Shy - 3

Confused - 2

Unhappy -1

Angry - 1

Additional Comments

'Great to share ideas and realise there is a wealth of ideas to address climate change.'

'Variety of participants, activities raised relevant conversations.'

Q.2 What could we do to improve the workshop?

'Get a microphone so people can hear the speakers.'

'Accessibility to all for locations.'

'It was wonderful, no improvement.'

'Nothing, as it all worked really well.'

Q. 3 Were there words/phrases you didn't understand?

The 10 respondents said no.

Q. 4 Post-workshop, will you be willing to?

Talk to others about climate change – 9

Help create a community resilience plan for flooding - 9

Help our community to prepare for, and assist during flooding emergencies - 9

Participate in other actions as part of this project - 9

Q. 5 What would you like more info on?

Facts and statistics about climate change - 7

How to protect my home/business in case of flooding - 8

How to access sandbags during floods – 8

How are local and emergency flood responses coordinated - 10

Q. 6 Would you like to join the Blue & Green Community Network?

Two respondents were already members, three joined and three said they would like to join.

Q. 7 Have you visited our website?

Four respondents said yes, three said no, two of these said they would now visit the site.

Q. 8 Do you follow us on social media?

Four respondents said yes, four said no, two of these said they would now do so, two said they don't use social media.

PUBLIC INTERVIEW WITH EMERGENCY SERVICES (2 May 2024)

12 people attended.

13 feedback forms were filled out.

Q.1 Describe feelings in workshop

Interested – 12

Inspired - 6

Happy - 5

Optimistic – 5

Excited - 4

Engaged - 4

Neutral - 1

Additional Comments

'Excellent insight and information.'

'Clear open discussions, questions and answers.'

'Excellent insights and informative talk.'

'Excellent tour and talk.'

'Perfect length of time and number of people.'

Q.2 What could we do to improve the workshop?

'Perhaps publish a summary on website to further spread the word.'

'Nothing, it was very well organised.'

Q. 3 Were there words/phrases you didn't understand?

All 13 respondents said no.

Additional Comment

'Climate change was not mentioned.'

Q. 4 Post-workshop, will you be willing to?

Talk to others about climate change – 7

Help create a community resilience plan for flooding - 11

Help our community to prepare for, and assist during flooding emergencies - 11

Participate in other actions as part of this project - 8

Q. 5 What would you like more info on?

Facts and statistics about climate change - 10

How to protect my home/business in case of flooding - 6

How to access sandbags during floods – 7

How are local and emergency flood responses coordinated - 9

Q. 6 Would you like to join the Blue & Green Community Network?

One respondent is a member, one a 'p/member'.

Five respondents said yes.

Q. 7 Have you visited our website?

Three respondents said yes, four said they would now.

Q. 8 Do you follow us on social media?

Two respondents said yes, three said they would now, five said they wouldn't.

ART & BIODIVERSITY WORKSHOP 'SPRING CHICKENS' GROUP (13 May 2024)

27 people participated in the workshop.

19 feedback forms were filled out.

Q.1 Are you confident that you understand what "Biodiversity" is?

Yes - 6 No - 11 Don't Know - 2

Q. 2 Do you believe you have a contribution to make to improve Biodiversity?

Yes - 12 No - 0 Don't Know – 7

Q. 3 Do you feel like you have made a positive contribution to protecting wildlife and nature?

Yes - 12 No - 2 Don't Know - 5

Q.4 Have you changed your behavior in recent years to protect nature?

Yes - 12 No - 2 Don't Know - 5

Q.5 Are you interested in knowing more about how you can improve Biodiversity?

Yes - 17 No - 0 Don't Know - 2

TEXTILE WORKSHOP 1 (22 May 2024)

Five people participated in the workshop.

Four feedback forms were filled out.

Two respondents thought the workshop was 'very good', two thought it was 'good'.

Q.1 Describe feelings in workshop

Happy - 2

Engaged - 2

Interested - 2

Inspired - 1

Q.2 What could we do to improve the workshop?

'Time should be longer.'

'More time for practical work.'

'More time for workshop.'

'More time.'

Q. 3 Were there words/phrases you didn't understand?

All four respondents said no.

Q. 4 Post-workshop, will you be willing to?

Talk to others about climate change – 3

Help create a community resilience plan for flooding - 4

Help our community to prepare for, and assist during flooding emergencies - 3

Participate in other actions as part of this project - 3

Q. 5 What would you like more info on?

Facts and statistics about climate change - 0

How to protect my home/business in case of flooding - 2

How to access sandbags during floods – 3

How are local and emergency flood responses coordinated - 2

Q. 6 Would you like to join the Blue & Green Community Network?

Three respondents said they would join.

Q. 7 Have you visited our website?

Two respondents said yes, one said no.

Q. 8 Do you follow us on social media?

Two respondents said yes, one said no.

TEXTILE WORKSHOP 2 (29 May 2024)

Six people attended the workshop.

Four feedback forms were filled out.

One person thought the workshop was 'very good', three thought it was 'good'.

Q.1 Describe feelings in workshop

Interested – 4

Engaged - 1

Happy – 1

Inspired - 1

Q.2 What could we do to improve the workshop?

'More active participation by all.'

Q. 3 Were there words/phrases you didn't understand?

All four respondents said no.

Q. 4 Post-workshop, will you be willing to?

Talk to others about climate change – 4

Help create a community resilience plan for flooding - 4

Help our community to prepare for, and assist during flooding emergencies - 4

Participate in other actions as part of this project - 4

Q. 5 What would you like more info on?

Facts and statistics about climate change - 3

How to protect my home/business in case of flooding - 4

How to access sandbags during floods – 4

How are local and emergency flood responses coordinated - 4

Q. 6 Would you like to join the Blue & Green Community Network?

Three respondents said yes.

Q. 7 Have you visited our website?

Two respondents said yes

Q. 8 Do you follow us on social media?

Two respondents said yes, one said no.

SANDCASTLE CHALLENGE (17 August 2024)

There were approx. 200 participants.

35 feedback forms were filled out.

32 respondents thought the event was 'very good', three thought it was 'good'.

Q.1 Did you know that 477 properties are at risk of flooding in Youghal town?

27 respondents live locally. Of these, 11 people already knew that 477 properties in Youghal town are at risk of flooding, and 24 did not. None of the eight non-residents were aware.

Q. 2 Do you see a role for the community in responding to flooding?

All 35 respondents said yes.

Q. 3 What would this look like?

Their views on how this looks included:

More events like this

More events

More events like this

Everyone do something/zero waste

Helping when it floods, supporting green policies

Create more awareness

More awareness, activities for children

More children's involvement

Getting young people involved

Mind environment, awareness
Awareness, travel, spend local
Public awareness
Place for older people, online, more awareness
Organising sand bags
Fill sandbags, raise awareness
Comm meets, help out
Help people
Help people out, join network
Sharing info, help out
Comm info, coastal erosion
Protecting maram grass
Facebook
Planned investment
IT

Q. 4 Would you get involved with the Network to take climate action?

26 respondents said yes, six said no, one said 'online', one said 'maybe', one didn't answer.

Q.5 Would you attend a Town Hall event?

26 respondents said yes, five said no (not local residents), two said maybe.

TEXTILE TRAIL AND SOUNDSCAPE (21 & 22 September 2024)

Approx 50 people participated over the two days.

16 feedback forms were filled out.

13 respondents thought the event was 'very good', one thought it was 'good', two didn't answer this question.

Q.1 Did you know that 477 properties are at risk of flooding in Youghal town?

Eight respondents live locally. Of these, six already knew that 477 properties in Youghal town are at risk of flooding and two did not. None of the eight non-residents were aware.

Q. 2 Do you see a role for the community in responding to flooding?

15 respondents said yes, one didn't answer.

Q. 3 What would this look like?

Help with cleaning up
Help as volunteer
Coming together
Community work
Community work
Promote awareness, flood
Know the risks and responses
Create awareness
Communicate more
Consult community about flooding
Consultation events
Flood prevention plans
Giving out sandbags, answering phones
Not here in winter

Q. 4 Would you get involved with the Network to take climate action?

11 respondents said yes, five said no.

Q.5 Would you attend a Town Hall event?

Nine respondents said yes.

Additional Comments

'Brilliant.'

'Learnt a lot.'

'Excellent emersive experience.'

'Happy to volunteer.'

'Absolutely brilliant'

'Heart touching exhibition.'

'Very powerful audio piece.'

INVOLVEMENT IN OTHER EVENTS

Moby Dick Festival (1 June 2024)

Approx. 50 passers-by engaged with the stand.

Spirit of Youghal – Youghal story-telling festival (13 July 2024)

Played sound installation of flood stories by local residents as pilot. 8 people were engaged.

Feedback – engaged participants in their own stories of flooding. Not sure this festival was suitable for our project.

Youghal Climate Action Week Window Display (12-20 October 2024)

A montage of artwork created in project, including background and reference pieces, to provide public information and promote engagement with Town Hall event.

This was viewed by approx. 200 people.

Youghal Town Hall Event (14 November 2024)

Approximately 55 people attended this event. Simple colour discs were used at the end of the evening to indicate if the evening was useful & worthwhile (green disc) or if it could have been better (red disc) – dropped into a bucket as people were leaving the venue. There were no red discs in the bucket.

Pathways: Community Climate Resilience

Appendix 4: Media Table

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	FORMAT	DESCRIPTION	LINK TO COVERAGE
24/09/24	YB&GN web	Text + images	Installation review	https://bit.ly/4dcpl2k
24/09/24	FB x 4pp (BG + 3 associated pages)	Link to BG web	Installation review	https://www.facebook.com/100083060782535/posts/514962637949091/
21/09/24	FB x 1p	Text + images	Installation invitation	https://www.facebook.com/100083060782535/posts/512771694834852/
09/09/24	FB x 4p	Text + images	Stencil workshop review	https://www.facebook.com/100083060782535/posts/504607868984568/
06/09/24	FB x 1p	Text + images	Sandbag filling / call to participate	https://www.facebook.com/100083060782535/posts/502579029187452/
SOCIAL MEDIA N/A FOR PERIOD				
03/05/24	FB x 4p	Link to YB&GN web	Review Walkshop	https://www.facebook.com/100083060782535/posts/424434390335250/
24/04/24	FB x 4p	Link to YB&GN web		
25/04/24	FB x 1p	Text + images		
26/04/24	FB x 1p	Text + images		
27/04/24	FB x 1p	Text + images		
13/09/24	Cumann na Daoine (CnD) website	Post	Reschedule Textile Trail	https://www.cumannnadaoine.com/rescheduled-blue-green-pathways-textile-trail-soundscape/
07/08/24	CnD website	Post	Sandcastle Challenge	https://www.cumannnadaoine.com/8480-2/
06/12/23	CnD website	Post	Launch event	https://www.cumannnadaoine.com/blue-green-network-video-project-celebration-launch/

SOCIAL MEDIA N/A FOR PERIOD				
INSTAGRAM DATA N/A				
17/10/24	YB&GN web updates	Text & gallery	Event review / next action	https://www.youghalblueandgreennetwork.ie/projects
24/09/24				
10/09/24				13 updates to date 2024
09/09/24	CRY104fm	YB&GN Radio Show	Targeted sections of monthly pre-recorded show	https://www.cry104fm.com/podcasts/
12/08/24				
13/06/24				
	CRY104fm	Interviews on air	With artists	
In week preceding each event	CRY104fm	Daily mentions in Community Notices	Details of each event and project contact details	
12/23	Press	Press release + image	Launch event, project overview	Youghal News www.facebook.com/youghalonline
04/24		Press release + image	Project overview, call to participate	Youghal News www.facebook.com/youghalonline
08/24		Post-event press release + images (sent to Youghal News, Dungarvan Observer & Cork Examiner)	Sandcastle Challenge	
09/24		Press release + images (sent to Youghal News & Dungarvan Observer)	Textile Trail & Soundscape	Youghal News www.facebook.com/youghalonline
14/08/24		Advertisement	Sandcastle Challenge	Youghal News 14/08/24
11/09/24		Advertisement	Textile Trail & Soundscape	Youghal News 11/09/24
28/08/24	YouTube	video	Sandcastle Challenge	https://youtu.be/yyp_6X-8HYI?si=ynSZ24kZ20FU9QgM
12/11/24	Press	Advertisement	Town Hall event	Youghal News 12/11/24
12/11/24		Press release + images	Town Hall event	Youghal News 12/11/24

		(sent to Youghal News, Dungarvan Observer & Cork Examiner)		www.facebook.com/youghalonline
	Facebook 1p	14 posts	Town Hall event / flood facts	
	FB 4pp	3 posts	Town Hall event / flood facts	
	BG web	2 page updates	Pre event	
12/11/24	CnD web	1 page update	Pre event	
26/11/24	press	Press release	Post Town Hall event + images	Youghal News 11/12/24 www.facebook.com/youghalonline
26/11/24	BG web	1 page update	Post event	www.youghalblueandgreennetwork.ie/projects
Similar pattern for December, including release of sound files, web galleries, report et al				

BUILDING COMMUNITY
RESILIENCE TO
FLOODING

TOWN HALL REPORT 2024

| Presented By

**Youghal Blue and
Green Community
Network**



**YOUGHAL
BLUE & GREEN**
Community Network



Community Resilience
Planning for Future

Town Hall

Thursday 14th May

Mall Arts Centre, Youghal

Refreshments for all

Join us for a Q&A with a panel of experts
preparing Youghal for rising sea levels

Booking Essential

info@youghalblueandgreen.com

Introduction

On November 14th 2024 an open town hall public meeting was organised to explore and discuss community needs and responses to future flood events. This event was organised by the Youghal Blue & Green Community Network. The meeting was attended by approximately 55 people and allowed time for networking at the outset, Creative Ireland Pathways Project Youghal art display, presentation of local flood maps, a sound installation to open the event and graphic harvesting by an artist who captured the essence of the meeting. The meeting itself was divided into two parts; one giving scientific and community inputs in relation to flooding and the second part was organised around thematic focus groups. Here is a summary of the evening:

Chairperson: Aoife Deane, MaREI, UCC

Panelists:

Professor Robert Devoy, UCC

Jordan Delmar, Met Eireann

David Moran, Office of Public Works

Veronica Santorum, Youghal Creative Ireland project

Caroline Leahy, Middleton Flood Protection Group

Mary Linehan Foley, Local Councillor

Panelists and Volunteers

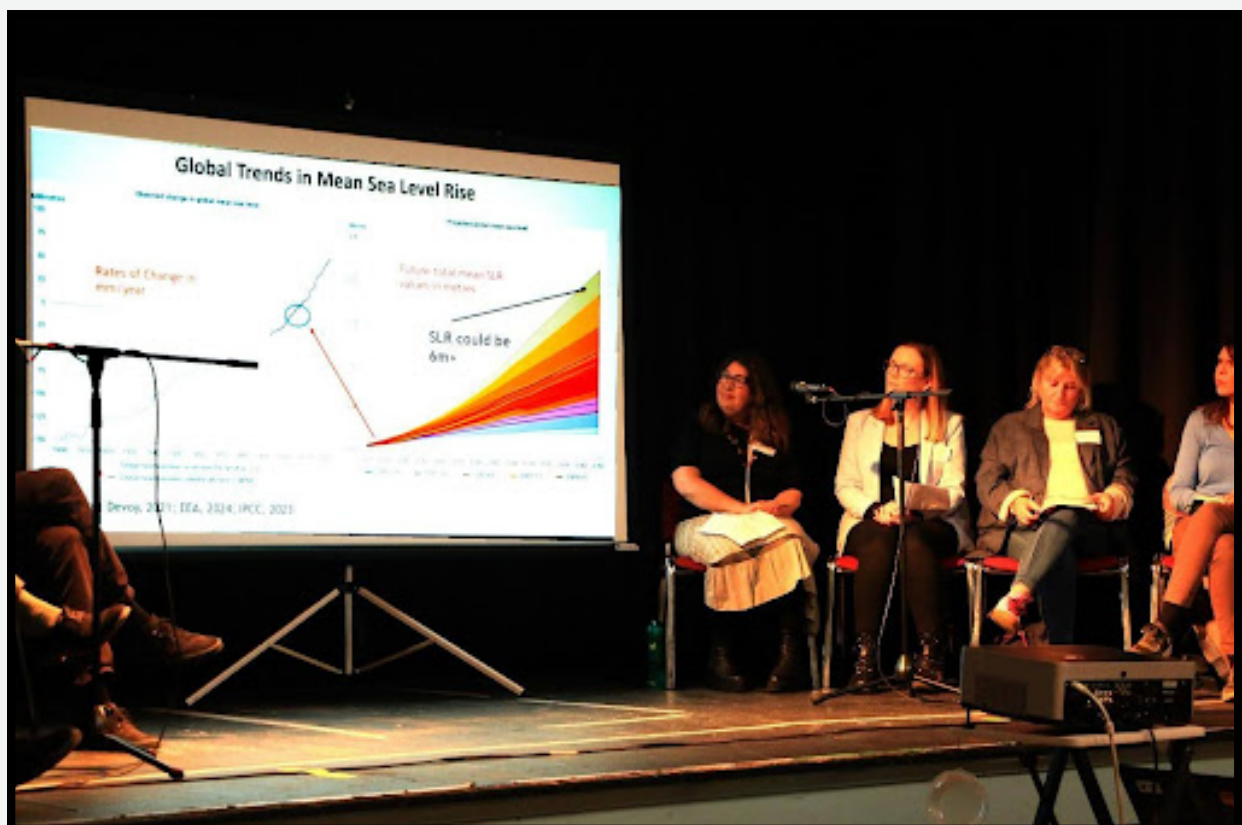


Powerpoint presentations where used are available from all speakers at <https://www.youghalblueandgreennetwork.ie/>

The second half of the evening had four thematic focus groups, each group had its own facilitator and notetaker, provided by volunteers of the Network. The themes chosen for discussion were: Prevent, Prepare, Respond, Recover.

Below are the main discussion points from each focus group. The evening ended with a short summary of the findings and with 32 people signed up to continue the work of developing a community resilience plan for flooding in Youghal, in 2025.

Presentation on rising sea levels



Thematic Focus Groups – summary of findings:

1. Prevent

What does Community Action look like?

- Put up flood barriers at individual houses
- Build flood wall along quays – tranche 2 in OPW plan i.e. Buttimers Quay, (aka Green's Quay/Macdonalds Quay)
- Plan to put drain on Buttimers Dock. This is in court at the moment, as concern over pollution of muscle beds.
- Increase dykes on farm land
- Keep drains cleared - fine sand blocks the drains, e.g. on Strand Street and Mall
- Quay needs dredging
- Future developments need risk assessments for flooding
- Allow marshes to absorb water
- Don't tarmac front and back gardens - allow soakage
- The streets have been tarmacked many times over the years so that the level of the streets are now higher, potentially increasing risk to houses
- Move and to live somewhere else?
- Repair groynes at Claycastle beach. The sand from the beach is moving to market dock, if this is slowed down then dredging would be less necessary
- Sand in the Mall Dock is acting like a sponge - should not be taken out
- Sandbag collection and delivery at several well-advertised locations

What community supports are needed?

- Local group to identify measures and feed into Cork County Council
- Help needed in putting up flood barriers
- Grant for the purchase of flood barriers
- Council need to clear drains, review and maintain drains regularly
- Neighbours could take turns to clear drains
- People to report on the state of blocked drains
- People need to know who to call
- Ask the immigrant communities to help in return for a stipend

“Prevent” breakout group



2. Prepare

What does Community Action look like?

- Being ready in your own home
- Fishermen have good knowledge of the sea, they give advice to those passing i.e. Credit Union, Cumann na Daoine, when they suspect a flood is coming
- Localised information on rising levels and risks of flooding
- Local knowledge
- Direction of winds is a big factor in flooding
- River gauges online can be monitored to see height of rivers
- Transfer of information between Youghal - Mogeely - Middleton etc., surrounding areas and experiences
- Being vigilant - knowing the signs of flooding – increasing awareness
- Being educated on what to do
- Unique response needed for each area
- Put a plan together and get it out to the community
- Practical preparation, access to sandbags
- Leaflet info on access to sandbags
- Have sandbags accessible, make sure they are stored properly i.e. under a cover
- Emergency pack at home - an emergency bag and an emergency plan
- Emergency response - Drains reporting system - Alert system for flooding
- A Flood response group in Youghal
- Local radio
- Social media
- Support/Emergency plan
- Citizens monitor levels of sea and river
- Creative events as a lighter way of introducing/learning about flooding

What community supports are needed?

- Midleton Group would support a Youghal group
- Creation of community sandbag depots, a few around town. Credit Union would have one in their yard - would need the council to provide the sandbags.
- Ask the Council to work with key community group to develop a joint plan
- Important to act now prior to a flooding event
- Tips and advice on a leaflet - keep on fridge

“Prepare” breakout group



3. Respond

What does Community Action look like?

- Take action yourself so you are available to help others
- Making emergency numbers available in every household
- Create local networks (online/physical) to share flood warnings & support strategies
- Use multiple warning systems to support people who are deaf or vulnerable
- Local people keeping drains clear in their own area – not enough Council staff to do this
- Know your neighbours and keep them in mind during floods
- Support leaders in local communities (estates/streets) who know where resources can be found
- In the longer term, abandon properties - sacrifice areas
- Forward planning for the next flood
- Identifying community locations where people can go if flooded out
- Roads need to be closed as soon as possible to prevent people driving through floods and pushing water into houses

What community supports are needed?

- Support for those who have to abandon their homes
- Places at risk should have sandbags delivered
- Need to see ourselves and local citizens in partnership with our local council
- Everyone should have contact emergency numbers and understand the role of various emergency services
- Clarify how to get sandbags
- Knowing each other and building support networks within local communities.
- Having someone to call if a person is away from their home or on holiday during a flood

4. Recover

What does Community Action look like?

- Create Flood Action Group for Youghal to plan, prepare and help out
- Need skips to dump destroyed carpets etc
- Help cleaning and clearing
- Stop cars going through flooded areas - driving water back into homes
- Close roads
- Clear plan to know what has to be done especially as people will be in high levels of stress
- Local coordination
- One stop shop for flood response + one phone number
- Community centre open - volunteers gather here to coordinate response, where to go
- Multi layered approach - different organisations, different roles
- Audit in advance what needs to be done - carry out drills
- Register of houses in danger of flooding - contact details for these to central group

What community supports are needed?

- Drains to be cleared regularly
- Sluices/drain wardens
- Docks need to be dredged
- Installation of groynes
- County Council support with local community coordination group
- Town hall can be contacted about warnings, Crisis team in council 24/7, HSE emergency services, OPW - info leaflet needs to collate all relevant info.
- Community Radio can be used to communicate alerts etc
- Pest control in aftermath
- Counselling and support group services
- Firsts Aid Services
- Response time is critical

“Respond” breakout group



“Recover” breakout group



Other points raised by attendees

- Lift Manhole covers
- Sewage comes up in back gardens after rain
- Concern about solar farm 1000 acres covering current drainage in banks of Tourig River
- Sign up for warning system
- Stop/reroute traffic

Recommendations

There are several key themes emerging:

1. Initially:

- Need for one plan to highlight the responses required for future flood events by the Council and by the Community – need buy in by all including one local co-ordination group
- Need for one alert system that people can sign up to
- Need for guidelines/instructions on what to do if preparing for floods and if flooded
- Need to know where to get sandbags/other resources
- Need to know where to get help and support

2. Subsequently:

- Need for a plan which incorporates prevention and mitigation measures (most of which are the responsibility of state agencies) e.g. clearing drains, widen wetlands, maintain groynes, build hard flood defences, etc.

3. Next Steps: Invite all those interested to attend a meeting end of January/early February to:

- Agree the findings of this report
- Agree the key themes emerging above
- Agree the steps required to develop a community resilience plan for Youghal
- Seek commitment to bi-monthly meetings by local volunteers and Council departments
- Secure resources to coordinate the development of a plan – this will take a number of months/year to achieve

Acknowledgements

This event and report would not have been possible without the the efforts of our volunteers and everyone who gave their time on the evening.

A special thank you to Aoife Deane MaREI, Professor Robert Devoy, UCC Jordan Delmar Met Eireann, David Moran Office of Public Works, Veronica Santorum and Daniel Clancy Youghal Creative Ireland Pathways Project, Caroline Leahy Midleton Flood Protection Group, Mary Linehan Foley Local Councillor, Hazel Hurley, Lorraine Hogan, Noreen Brennan, Angela Glen, Hayley Fox-Roberts, Irene Tanner, Julie O'Shea, Yvonne Smith, Ithel McKenna, Martina Flavin, Living Youghal, Cork County Council, Le Gourmet Café, Cumann Na Daoine, and all network members of the Youghal Blue and Green Community Network

Attendees in breakout groups



Feedback from breakout groups to the room



Pathways Artwork Hanging in the Town Hall Atrium



Graphic Harvesting from the Town Hall



Useful links

<https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/>
<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/environmentandhealth/severeweatherevents/flooding/>
<https://www.met.ie/warnings-today.html>
<https://www.rte.ie/player/series/10-things-to-know-about/SI0000000009?epguid=All0006667-10-0005>
<https://www.youghalblueandgreennetwork.ie/>