

Sustainable Energy Communities Network



Introduction

The Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) **Programme Vision** is to stimulate a national move towards sustainable energy practices through demonstration of best practice in exemplar communities, which in turn will inform and build capacity through a Sustainable Energy Community Network.

Recognising the important role of communities in leading Ireland to a sustainable energy future, SEAI has designed the SEC Network in response

to research undertaken and opportunities and challenges presented during the competitive process conducted to select the exemplar SECs.

The SEC Network is a voluntary network, facilitated by SEAI, allowing community champions to connect, build technical and project management capacity and assist their communities to achieve local sustainable energy targets. This local action will significantly contribute to the achievement of national targets.

Benefits of the SEC Network

Activities of the SEC Network will evolve but will work on the following:

- Assist in meeting national targets in the face of economic challenges.
- Share best practice, allowing members of the Network to make informed decisions and progress towards the development of strong sustainable energy infrastructure.
- Leverage resources to address the ever-increasing stresses from resource constraints through shared services and pooling of resources.
- Assist local authorities in identification of opportunities for future economic development of their counties based on sustainable energy enterprise and innovation.
- Seek synergies in planning policy and sustainable energy development that can provide the right conditions to unlock the potential for better energy management.
- Promote the leadership of Irish local authorities and communities in their approach to the structured development of sustainable energy infrastructure to national, European and International fora.
- Establish a culture of innovation and facilitate the emergence of new sustainable energy technologies and approaches.

The SEC Network will engage through workshops and working groups focused on resolving challenges faced by communities in implementing sustainable energy projects.

SEC Network Connections

Louth Local Authorities in partnership with SEAI developed the first SEC in Dundalk and together participate with other international partners in the CONCERTO initiative which is part of the EU Framework Program for Research and Technological Development, supervised by DG Energy of the European Commission. The Dundalk SEC is a demonstration community in an international consortium (HOLISTIC) coordinated by SEAI and has developed strong links with Newry City (Northern Ireland) - an observer community in this consortium. In March 2011 Newry launched the Newry Low Carbon City Charter formally adopting the SEC process and they will provide strong links to other communities in Northern Ireland. The rural community of Cloughjordan in Tipperary is also a participant in another

CONCERTO consortium (SERVE) co-ordinated by Tipperary Institute and will actively participate in the SEC Network.

The links that have developed between DG Energy and SEAI have strengthened as a result of the involvement in CONCERTO. As DG Energy also has responsibility for delivery of wider European platforms such as Smart Cities and the Covenant of Mayors, this communication avenue will benefit the Network.

As well as the international links mentioned above, the Network will also have the potential to connect to technology companies innovating in the smart technology and smart grid field and to develop opportunities for testing their products.

Membership of the SEC Network

The membership is open to all interested community stakeholders with the initial membership formed from the communities that have engaged in the SEC 2011 competition. Following the initial expressions of interest,

14 communities submitted full applications as part of the SEC competitive call and have agreed to act as the initial members of the Network. The following pages contain a brief outline of these ambitious communities willing to take the lead.

The SEC Network...
the founding members...
leading by example





Cavan Sustainable Energy Community

Addressing the challenges of sustainable energy use in a rural county.

The Cavan SEC team is led by Cavan County Council, and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Cavan County Enterprise Board, Chambers Ireland, HSE, Abbott Ireland, Galetech and Cavan Institute.

The SEC presents an opportunity to develop best practice in a rural county, disseminating energy information through a **community based approach** that includes the participation of the farming sector. Cavan will explore opportunities to reduce car usage through a **smarter travel programme**, including use of electric vehicles.

Clonakilty Sustainable Energy Community

Supporting communities to achieve energy neutrality by 2020.

The Cork SEC team is led by Cork County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Clonakilty Town Council, Sustainable Clonakilty, West Cork Development Partnership, South Western Regional Authority, West Cork Enterprise Board, Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce, Cork Institute of Technology, Teagasc College and Greenworks.

The SEC through adopting a bottom-up approach, aims to realise economic opportunities which exist for community-based sustainable energy projects, using indigenous resources to generate production of renewable energy. The **renewable energy roadmap model** was created for communities by the Cork SEC and has the potential to be a blueprint for others. This is aligned with Cork County's commitment to the development of a Sustainable Energy Action Plan for Covenant of Mayors.



Dublin City Sustainable Energy Community

Creating a test-bed for research, development and deployment of sustainable energy best practice in an Irish and international context.

The Dublin SEC is led by Dublin City Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Codema, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd, Siemens, Trinity College and Dublin Institute of Technology.

Dublin City is a sustainable energy **test-bed**; it **connects citizens and researchers with the public and private sectors** to re-engineer a sustainable energy future for the **city**. This inclusive approach strengthens Dublin's position internationally, with an impact beyond the city boundaries through engagement with industry, informing policy development, and through initiatives such as the Green IFSC, An tSlí Ghlas and **Covenant of Mayors**.

Dungarvan Sustainable Energy Community

Addressing fossil fuel energy dependency in a regional town and environs.

The Dungarvan SEC team is led by Waterford County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Dungarvan Town Council, Dungarvan and West Waterford Chamber of Commerce, Waterford Renewable Energy Cooperative, Waterford Leader Partnership, GSK Dungarvan and Waterford County Enterprise Board.

Waterford County Council recognises the fossil fuel energy dependency of this regional town and plans for **100% sustainable energy generation** through partnership between Dungarvan and its hinterland. The project plan promotes the utilisation of natural resources for energy supply, incorporating the activities of **Waterford Renewable Energy Co-operative Society**. There will be a consequent reduction in CO₂ emissions through energy conservation and the use of **renewable energy technology**. It aims to assist in the elimination of fuel poverty with potential to develop an eco-tourism industry within Dungarvan.



Kilmallock Sustainable Energy Community

Making the transition to self-sufficiency in an historic town and hinterland.

The Kilmallock SEC team is led by Limerick County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from the Regional Waste Management Office, Limerick Clare Energy Agency, Kilmallock Tidy Towns, Kilmallock Partnership, Ballyhoura Development Ltd, Colaiste Iosef and Macra na Feirme.

The Kilmallock SEC links the **rural and historic urban** environment to achieve symbiosis in energy demand and supply. Kilmallock will achieve energy conservation in the community through work with SMEs, community groups and schools, leading to a reduction in the carbon footprint of the town.

Letterkenny Sustainable Energy Community

A multi-agency approach to energy efficiency and development of renewable energy.

The Letterkenny SEC team is led by Donegal County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Letterkenny Town Council, Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce and Tidy Towns Committee, Letterkenny Institute of Technology, FÁS, Donegal Community Forum, Donegal Hotel Federation, Donegal VEC, IBEC, HSE, An Taisce and Pramerica Corporation.

The SEC will develop renewable energy sources including the use of **local biomass fuel sources**, energy generation from solar, wind and micro-hydro, energy supply companies and district heating networks, generating economic benefits and **informing future policy in the County** with potential synergy with Northern Ireland. Activities within the SEC can be aligned with eco-tourism ventures in the county and region.





Roscommon Sustainable Energy Community

A community-based collaborative approach to deliver sustainable energy in a rural context.

The Roscommon SEC team is led by Roscommon County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Roscommon Integrated Development Company, Greengrove Wood Energy Cooperative Society Ltd, Lisnamult Residents Association, Athlone Institute of Technology, WESTBIC, Environment Pillar of Social Partnership, Roscommon Community College, Roscommon Business Association and HSE West.

The SEC takes a strong **community-based collaborative approach** amongst stakeholders, representing a balanced mix of sectors, reflective of Roscommon and indeed Irish rural communities. Roscommon will build on core principles of energy efficiency and **renewable energy utilization, providing leadership through project and finance integration**. This will ensure long term benefits for all in the community, such as creation of jobs in the local economy and less dependency on imported fossil fuels.

South Dublin Sustainable Energy Community

Integrating people, policy and place to realise the benefit of energy efficiency in a forward thinking SEC.

The South Dublin SEC team is led by South Dublin County Council, and members of the Steering Group include representatives from South Dublin Chamber of Commerce, Tallaght Institute of Technology, the Square Tallaght, Respond Housing Association, Allied Foods, HSE, St. Mark's Junior School, Scoil Maelruan, Tallaght Leisure Centre, and Circle Housing Association.

The South Dublin SEC includes a broad range and profile of stakeholders and projects, with **a strong evidence base** already in place and a range of funding secured and identified. South Dublin will **prioritise** increasing energy efficiency, lowering the county's carbon footprint and improving the economic profile. This will generate savings for both public and private users, maintain **competitiveness** and will create community networks that can meet energy targets into the future to serve as a valuable template to other communities.



Shannon Sustainable Energy Community

Shannon Town – Fossil Free; Promoting Ireland's role in the transition to the new Low Carbon Society and Economy.

The Shannon SEC team is led by Clare County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Shannon Development, Shannon Town Council, Shannon Airport, Shannon and District Chamber of Commerce and Clare Community Forum.

Shannon is committed to establish a Low Carbon Centre of Commerce in the County by 2020, through a reduction in energy consumption and an increase in renewables to reach 50% self sufficiency by 2017, and **full energy independence by 2020**. The technology to support the low carbon economy will see the creation of skilled employment and that renewable energy can be exported.

Tralee Sustainable Energy Community

Through the establishment of an energy efficient self-sustaining region, continuing to transform the local economy.

The Kerry SEC team is led by Kerry County Council and Tralee Town Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Tralee Institute of Technology, Lee Strand Cooperative, Kerry Group, FÁS, Teagasc, Aquadome Tralee, Malachy Walsh & Partners, North and East Kerry Development Co., Shannon Development, Enterprise Ireland, Tralee Chamber of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, County Enterprise Board and Saorgus Energy Ltd.



The SEC includes **local cooperative harvesting and marketing ventures** that will ensure **security of supply** of energy for the Town into the future, and a viable business for farmers. The indigenous supply of renewable energy has the potential to replace €8 M of annual oil imports from the Kerry market and also the potential to provide up to 112 sustainable and permanent jobs. Increasing energy efficiency through retrofitting and investing in energy saving solutions will result in more competitive business activity in the region, and a reduction in fuel poverty in marginal households. The retrofitting and upgrading programme is to be primarily financed by a 'pay as you use' or 'pay as you save' scheme. The innovations will improve the attractiveness of the region for investment into the future.



Tuam Sustainable Energy Community

A Greener Way; A Better Place: Activates the community to address broader sustainability practice.

The Tuam SEC team is led by Galway County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Tuam Chamber of Commerce, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, NUI Galway, Bus Eireann, Irish Rail, Galway Rural Development, Galway County VEC, Enterprise Ireland, Galway County and City Enterprise Boards, West Regional Authority, IDA Ireland, HSE West and Galway Energy Agency.



The Tuam SEC will engage all members of the community, **elevating individuals to change agents** and catalysts for action, engaging with public bodies and private organizations along the Atlantic Corridor and other Hub towns. The Tuam SEC will promote the **integration of energy projects with existing infrastructure works** including smarter travel initiatives, and demonstrate an **energy monitoring** system that will provide live data on selected buildings.



Tullamore Sustainable Energy Community

Wexford Green Model... working towards a less energy dependent society.

The Tullamore SEC team is led by Offaly County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Offaly County Development Board, Offaly Local Development Company, Tullamore Town Council, Offaly Library Service, Tullamore Heath Campus, County Enterprise Board, Offaly County Development Board (Environment Pillar), Flanagan Group Developments and Aura Leisure Centre.

Offaly County Council's leadership of this project will **enable the learning** from the SEC to be rolled out to other locations within Offaly. This sharing of knowledge will build on the strong relationship Council Services has with the community sector and other agencies. Learning will also be communicated throughout the Midlands through the existing structures of the **Midlands Gateway**.

Wexford Sustainable Energy Community

Wexford Green Model... working towards a less energy dependent society.

The Wexford SEC team is led by Wexford County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Wexford Chamber of Commerce, Eircom, Teagasc, Wexford Opera, Enniscorthy Town Council, Wexford Local Development Ltd, An Taisce and Drinagh Large Energy Users.

Through the SEC, Wexford County Council aims to make Wexford a **better place to live**, create new sustainable employment opportunities, sustain existing jobs, and reduce the number of people living in fuel poverty. The SEC will support the large energy users at Drinagh who are working together on a plan to provide a **price-stable renewable low carbon energy source** for the future. The proposed miscanthus boiler at Johnstown Castle, the museum and the Teagasc research centre will allow further research to be carried out on miscanthus and its use as a fuel and the potential energy yields.



Wicklow Sustainable Energy Community

Supporting a bottom-up approach to reducing energy demand and optimising green energy sources.

The Wicklow SEC team is led by Wicklow County Council and members of the Steering Group include representatives from Ballynagran Energy Plus + Community and Mosart.

The SEC takes a **holistic approach** to support and connect rural communities of different size conurbations. **It will build on existing work** in energy auditing, conservation, education and awareness, with development of new ideas and enterprises based on sustainable energy.



In addition to the 14 communities who submitted a proposal to Stage I of the SEC application process, the following local authorities registered an interest in the SEC Programme

- Carlow County Council
- Kildare County Council
- Kilkenny County Council
- Mayo County Council
- Meath County Council
- Monaghan County Council
- Sligo County Council
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council



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