

Skills Assessment and Opportunity Mapping

Building on your skills and availing of wider expertise and opportunities is essential to moving through the Learn, Plan, Do Stages. Take some time to assess your skills as a group and identify areas for development.

You can then look outward for opportunities in your wider community for the skillset or expertise to support you.

When completed it will simply identify areas of strengths and areas where you can avail of support.

This document provides templates and guidance to support you to:

- Assess your strengths - take some time to assess the key skills you have as a group and areas of strengths you can leverage on.
- Identify areas for development - key areas where you may need to access support or build upon.
- Map opportunities - such as resources, skills, knowledge from your wider community to support your sustainable energy initiatives.
- Build your purpose - assess what you would like to achieve and draft your community charter.



Sustainable Energy Communities Programme



Skills Assessment

These areas cover the essential skills for a thriving SEC, from engaging your community to managing finances and understanding the technical aspects of renewable energy.

- **Partnerships and Community Engagement:** Building relationships with residents, businesses, and organisations.
- **Planning and Development:** Creating roadmaps, managing projects, and understanding policies.
- **Leadership and Governance:** Guiding the Sustainable Energy Community and being an energy champion for the wider community, making decisions, and ensuring accountability.
- **Sustainable Financing:** Securing funding, managing budgets, and ensuring financial sustainability.
- **Communications:** Effectively conveying your message through social media, websites, and traditional media.
- **Technical:** Knowledge of renewable energy technologies, grid integration, and project implementation.

The skills wheel is a useful tool to provide a picture of your group's strengths and opportunities for development.

Discuss the six core skills areas on the skills wheel with your committee. Score how good you are in these skill areas on a scale of 1 -10, (1 – Not very strong - 10 – Very strong)

Top Tips:

- **Be Visual:** Use post-it notes, markers, and a large print-out of the resources to make the process interactive and engaging.
- **Document Thoroughly:** Take notes of the discussions and outcomes of the Skills assessment and the mapping exercises.
- **Stay Flexible:** Skills assessment and opportunity mapping are ongoing processes. Revisit and update them as the community evolves and new opportunities emerge.

Communications and Outreach

Managing social media, IT and website development, photography and videos, media spokesperson



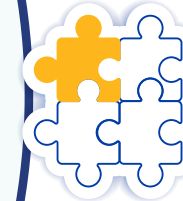
Partnerships and Community Engagement

Organising events/meetings, giving presentations, facilitating meetings, networking



Leadership and Governance

Inspiring people to get involved, obtaining agreement on vision and goals, running effective meetings, encouraging teamwork and accountability



Planning and Development

Project management, business planning, policy development /alignment, administration



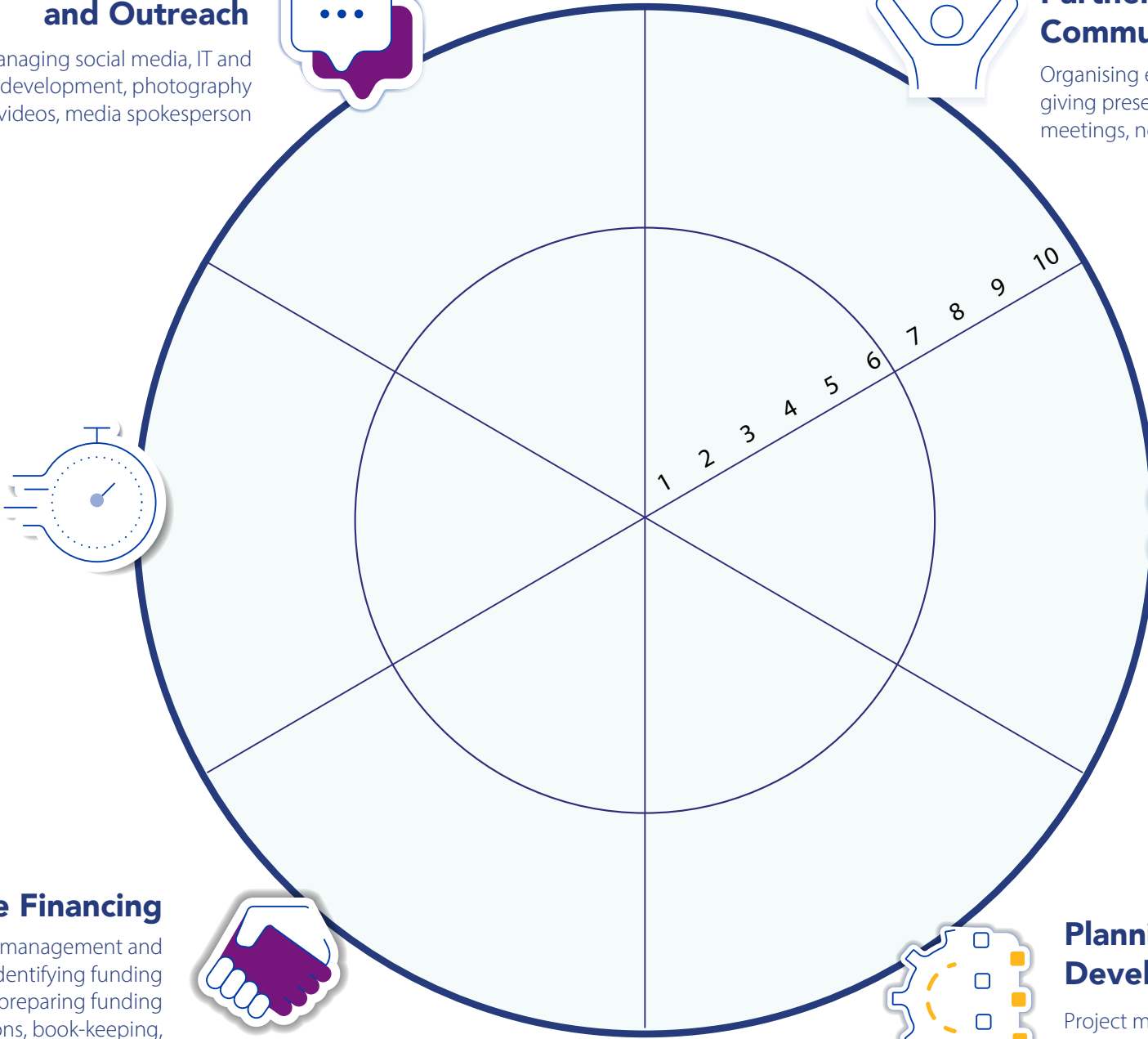
Sustainable Financing

Finance management and modelling, identifying funding sources, preparing funding applications, book-keeping, accounting and reporting, dealing with insurance, procurement



Technical

Renewable electricity, planning process, grid connection, feasibility studies, procurement, construction, and maintenance, risk management and health and safety



Community Opportunity Mapping

Having identified some skills areas that you are strong in will allow you to know your strength areas that you can build upon as a committee. However, you will have also identified areas that you are not so strong in or need support or additional expertise.

Community Opportunity Mapping supports you in identifying the resources, skills, and knowledge available within a community that can be leveraged on to support community development sustainable energy initiatives.

By following these steps, you will gain an understanding of where you want to go as a group, and what projects will benefit the entire community. Opportunity mapping is a useful tool to:

- **Find local expertise:** Communities may have skilled tradespeople, engineers, or individuals with knowledge of sustainable energy practices who can contribute to project development.
- **Engage community members:** Opportunity Mapping can uncover social and cultural opportunities, organisations, and groups interested in participating in or supporting sustainable energy initiatives.
- **Build partnerships:** Mapping can help identify potential partners for collaboration, such as local businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organisations.
- **Empower communities:** It can empower communities to take control of their energy future by identifying and using their own resources to create a more sustainable and resilient energy system.
- **Leverage existing infrastructure:** It can identify existing infrastructure that can be used to support sustainable energy projects, such as buildings, land, and grid connections.
- **Develop community led projects:** Understanding the specific needs and opportunities of the community can help tailor sustainable energy solutions.
- **Secure funding:** Opportunity mapping can strengthen funding proposals by demonstrating community support, resources, and a well-planned approach.
- **Identify renewable energy resources:** Identifying potential sites for renewable energy generation, such as solar, wind, hydro, or biomass.

Here's a step-by-step guide on how to use it:

1. Gather Participants

Bring together a diverse group of community members, including residents, business owners, local leaders, and representatives from community organisations. Different perspectives are crucial for a comprehensive opportunity mapping.

2. Brainstorm



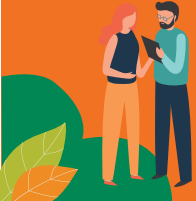
The table is divided into three categories: People, Community, and Place. For each category, discuss and fill in the following rows:

- **Strengths:** What opportunities already exist and are working well in the community? Are there policies and strategies you could align with? For example, local government climate action plans, regional energy agencies, relevant legislation
- **Weaknesses:** What opportunities are lacking or need improvement? What resources or skills need to be developed or accessed? Discuss any underlying challenges or potential barriers to your SEC's success?

3. Review

Assess the key themes, opportunities and outcomes from the discussion. These will provide a basis for developing your Community Charter in the next step.

Sustainable Energy Community Opportunities

Our Community Opportunities	People <div>Focus on individual skills, knowledge, talents, and aspirations within the community (e.g., electricians, engineers, passionate advocates for sustainability)</div>	Community <div>Identify social relationships and networks within the community, organisations, institutions, and groups that can contribute (e.g., environmental NGOs, tidy towns, GAA, schools, local businesses with sustainability initiatives, active neighbourhood groups or resident associations, youth groups, faith-based groups).</div>	Place <div>Look at the physical places and buildings in your community such as; sports clubs, parks, libraries, community buildings, active travel routes or local businesses.</div>
<div>  <div> <div>Strengths</div> <div>What do we currently have / do well?</div> </div> </div>			
<div> <div>  <div> <div>Weaknesses</div> <div>What do we need to improve or access?</div> </div> </div>  </div>			



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