# Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029: Implementation Report 2024

# Executive Summary

This is the first progress report of the Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 since the Plan was adopted by the Elected Members of Kilkenny County Council in February 2024. It looks at progress on delivering climate action across five strategic commitments, i.e. leadership and governance, climate mitigation, climate adaptation, delivery across services, and community activation and engagement.

The Plan contains 99 actions, comprising 13% adaptation actions, 34% mitigation actions, and 53% which are both adaptation and mitigation. 82% of actions in the Plan commenced in 2024.

A key focus for 2024 was putting in place and ensuring strong climate action **Governance and Leadership** across the Council. This comprised meetings of the Council-wide Climate Action Steering Committee, and meetings with the Council Plenary, and Strategic Policy Committee 4 (Climate Action, Energy and Environmental Protection). A new South-East Regional Energy Unit was established by the five local authorities in the South East to collaborate on and secure funding from the SEAI Pathfinder Programme to retrofit council buildings. Service Level Agreements and other partnership agreements are in place with Government Departments, and national and local partner organisations to secure funding and resources. Climate action has been integrated into many Council plans, strategies and programme, and also into the budgetary processes. Staff climate action training and capacity building has been delivered. A robust framework of reporting obligations, at EU, national and local level, has been delivered, as well as a communications programme for the public and stakeholders.

 Significant work has been undertaken on **Climate Mitigation** actions across the Council in 2024. The Council achieved an 8.6% reduction in total greenhouse gas emissions since 2023, and a 38.9% reduction since the 2016-2018 baseline. In terms ofEnergy Efficiency targets the Council achieved a 1.3% reduction in energy consumption since 2023, and a 43.7% improvement in energy efficiency compared to the 2009 baseline. The Plan outlines range of key projects which will be undertaken over the next 6 years to further reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in order to meet the 2030 targets.

Progress has also been made on **Climate Adaptation** actions in the Plan, informed by a Climate Risk Assessment of Council services. A range of actions were undertaken in 2024 including Flood Relief Projects, review of Health & Safety Policies and Procedures in relation to impact of climate change on staff welfare; nature-based solutions in Council developments and Severe Weather Emergency Planning.

**Delivery of Climate Action Across Services** has been achieved in 2024. Case studies of some of the actions delivered by Housing (retrofitting social housing), Flood Relief Capital Office (flood relief works), LEO (supporting sustainable businesses), Roads (decarbonisation of the Council fleet), and Climate Action (community climate action) are highlighted.

The Council played a key role in **Community Activation and Engagement** in relation to climate in 2024, in particular, under the Community Climate Action Fund. This new fund, provided by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, and managed by Kilkenny County Council allocated €511,000 in 2024 to 22 communities across Kilkenny to provide energy efficient lighting and heating, insulation, PV panels, rainwater harvesting, bike parking and repair stations, community allotments and nature enhancement measures.

Finally, the report demonstrates how the actions in the Plan align with and deliver on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) at a local level. A total of 13 of the 17 UNSDGs are supported through actions the Plan.