

**ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**SUMMARY OF SUSTAINABILITY MEASURES January 2012**

Roscommon County Council actively pursues a sustainability agenda through all of its activities and services. As a local authority Roscommon County Council is involved in a wide range of activities and provides an extensive number of services to its customers i.e. those who live, work and visit County Roscommon. Roscommon County Council's Mission Statement as outlined in the **Corporate Plan** is to 'make Roscommon a vibrant place with an increasingly enhanced quality of life, sustained through employment generation, a high quality infrastructure, a strong entrepreneurial spirit and by providing quality accessible services in a sustainable manner in partnership with the community'. The concept of 'development through collaboration' is recognised as a core principle of Roscommon County Council and one of the corporate objectives is to 'promote the efficient use of resources and protect the natural and built environment'.

The concept of sustainable development is central to the **County Development Plan** and each of the **Local Area Plans** that are developed by Roscommon County Council. These plans contain numerous strategies and objectives relating to energy use, climate change, planning for development in an integrated and collaborative manner, future-proofing of local infrastructure and development, water and resource conservation, minimising energy consumption, and encouraging renewable energy.

Specific sustainability initiatives that are already underway within Roscommon County Council include:

An internal **Energy Management Team** was established in 2010 to review Roscommon County Council's energy usage and to develop an Energy Map Programme Plan to increase energy efficiency and implement energy efficiency initiatives.

The 2011/2012 **Energy Map Programme Plan** includes the introduction of a comprehensive review system to ensure that energy use by Roscommon County Council is constantly under review. A review of electricity use identified areas where energy initiatives should be prioritised due to significant energy usage i.e. water and waste treatment plants, public lighting, heating for swimming pools etc. Measures being undertaken include:

- A review of energy costs resulted in Roscommon County Council changing their electricity supplier
- Roscommon County Council is currently preparing to jointly tender for public lighting in conjunction with other local authorities
- The installation of an energy efficient heating system in the leisure centre in Roscommon and carrying out of energy efficiency measures at Castlerea Swimming Pool are currently underway.
- The installation of energy efficient, sensorised lighting in the County Library HQ building was undertaken in 2010
- A review of high energy use operations within water and waste treatment plants has been undertaken and appropriate measures are being introduced to increase energy efficiency in these facilities.
- The installation of night meters has been undertaken at some locations
- Estimated energy bills are being eliminated and increased accountability for energy usage has been introduced
- SEAI training has been undertaken with relevant staff
- A water conservation section has been developed on the Roscommon County Council website
- Council drivers have undertaken Eco Driving Training

Roscommon County Council adopted its **Climate Change Strategy** in December 2010. The strategy was prepared by the Energy Management Team and commits to a range of specific actions including:

- Calculation of the carbon footprint of Roscommon County Council
- Development of an electricity use monitoring system

- Integration of energy considerations in housing stock construction and housing maintenance programmes. A total of 66 houses were upgraded under the DECLG Energy Efficiency Initiative in 2010 & 2011.
- Encouragement of forestry as a land use in recognition of its potential for carbon sequestration and as a source of bio-fuel
- Utilisation of best practice in energy efficient design and build for the new civic offices
- Development of home composting demonstration site and composting initiatives

The **Environmental Awareness and Education Office**, which is part of the Environment Section, works with a range of communities, schools and organisations to introduce energy efficient and sustainability programmes. These include: Green Flags Schools Programme; Community Composting Schemes; Community Recycling Projects; environmental awareness campaigns and competitions; Tidy Schools, Burial Grounds and Estates competitions and awards ceremonies.

Roscommon County Council is currently seeking an intern under the Job Bridge programme to work as a **Community Energy Awareness Officer**. The job involves liaising with communities around the county in relation to energy conservation measures they can undertake to complement work being carried out by Roscommon County Council and other agencies. This is to include an awareness campaign aimed at **local authority tenants** to complement the work being carried out by Roscommon County Council in upgrading energy efficiency throughout the local authority housing stock.

Roscommon County Council works closely with **local communities** to assist them in identifying the facilities they require and in enabling them to provide these facilities. Roscommon County Council may fund or part-fund these projects, provide technical expertise, provide a site, building or other assistance and also works closely with other funding bodies to assist in the development of these facilities. This includes planning the development of playgrounds, parks, amenity areas, community sporting facilities, community tourism facilities etc. Roscommon County Council works with local authority residents associations to provide community resource houses which enables the residents associations to provide a range of local services within the local community. The Council also works with Tidy Towns Associations to improve their performance in the National Tidy Towns Competition and to enhance their local environment.

Roscommon County Council was the lead agency and driver on a **Sustainable Energy Community** application to SEAI during 2010. This involved a partnership approach to the development of a Sustainable Energy Zone in Roscommon town. The project involved working closely with a number of groups and organisations including Athlone Institute of Technology, Roscommon LEADER Partnership Company, Westbic, the Environmental Pillar, Roscommon Community College, Roscommon Business Association, HSE, Lisnamult Residents Association, and Greengrove Wood Energy Cooperative Society Ltd. Although short-listed as one of the five finalists the Roscommon Sustainable Energy Community application did not receive SEAI support in 2011. However, the steering group remains committed to rolling out many of the actions it had agreed to in the SEC application and is exploring the feasibility of implementing the plan in conjunction with the other organisations even though extensive SEAI support is not forthcoming.

Roscommon County Council is involved in the work of the **Sustainable Energy Working Group** which is a subgroup of the Roscommon County Development Board. This inter-organisational group is currently preparing an Energy Action Plan for Co. Roscommon. The Council is also a partner in the **RASLRES** project which is an EU project led by the Western Development Commission. This project is focussing on the wood energy sector in Roscommon and the western region with the aim of identifying how the potential of the sector can best be harnessed by the region.