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SDG Information Pack

Content

- ▶ Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- ▶ Understand
- ▶ Act
- ▶ Share

**'THE BEST
WAY TO
PREDICT
YOUR
FUTURE IS
TO
CREATE
IT.'**

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Start getting to know SDG 11 [here](#)
Workshop outlines

- Page 37- [Stepping Stones](#) for the Sustainable Development Goals
- Page 86- [Understanding](#) the SDG's.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

By 2030 the UN want to:

1. Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.
2. Provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.
3. Enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

By 2030 the UN want to:

4. Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.
5. Significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.
6. Reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.
7. Provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

How are the UN going to make this happen?

- A. Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.
- B. By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.
- C. Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilising local materials.

TARGET 11-1



SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

TARGET 11-2



AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

TARGET 11-3



INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION

TARGET 11-4



PROTECT THE WORLD'S CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

TARGET 11-5



REDUCE THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

TARGET 11-6



REDUCE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF CITIES

TARGET 11-7



PROVIDE ACCESS TO SAFE AND INCLUSIVE GREEN AND PUBLIC SPACES

TARGET 11-A



STRONG NATIONAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

TARGET 11-B



IMPLEMENT POLICIES FOR INCLUSION, RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

TARGET 11-C



SUPPORT LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES IN SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT BUILDING

Facts and Figures

Here are only some (of many) interesting and/or shocking facts related to SDG 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities:

- In 2023, the degree of urbanization worldwide was at 57 percent. (Source: [Worldbank](#))
- In 2022, 9.3% of the EU population could not afford to keep their home adequately warm (Source: [EC](#))
- About 900 millions people live in slum today, but actual numbers could be more higher and amount to about 25 percentage of the world's human population. (Source : [Habitat for Humanity](#))
- 5.7 million Live in the world's five biggest slums in South Africa, Kenya, India, Mexico and Pakistan. (Source : [Habitat for Humanity](#))
- Only 17.2 percent of inland journeys within the EU were taken by buses and trains in 2023 (Source: [EEA](#))
- Although the world's cities occupy just 3 percent of the Earth's land, they account for between 60 and 80 percent of the global energy consumption and 75 percent of carbon emissions.
- Stay updated for World Urban Forum In Cairo Egypt in 2024 (Source: [WUF](#))
- About 95 million people are exposed to harmful levels of road traffic noise. At least 20% of the urban population is exposed to levels considered harmful to health. In many cities, this percentage can reach 50% of the urban population. (Source: [EEA](#))
- In 2023, the recycling rate of municipal waste in the European Union (EU-27) was estimated at 48.6 percent. (Source: [Statista](#))
- To learn more, check out the UN's website and their updates on SDG 11 [here](#).



Understand

Challenges:

- [Half of humanity](#) – 3.5 billion people – lives in cities today, and by 2030, almost 60% of the world's population will live in urban areas
- 95% of [urban expansion](#) in the next decades will take place in developing world
- 828 million people live in slums today and the number keeps rising
- The world's cities occupy just 3% of the Earth's land, but account for 60-80% of energy consumption and 75% of carbon emissions
- Rapid urbanization is exerting pressure on fresh water supplies, sewage, the living environment, and public health



UNDERSTAND



SDG Indicator 11.1.1

Urban population living in slums
Definition of the SDG indicator: Indicator 11.1.1 is the “proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing” in the UN SDG framework.

A slum household is defined as a group of individuals living under the same roof lacking one or more of the following conditions: access to improved water, access to improved sanitation, sufficient living area, durability of housing, and security of tenure

Share of the urban population living in slums, 2020

Our World
in Data

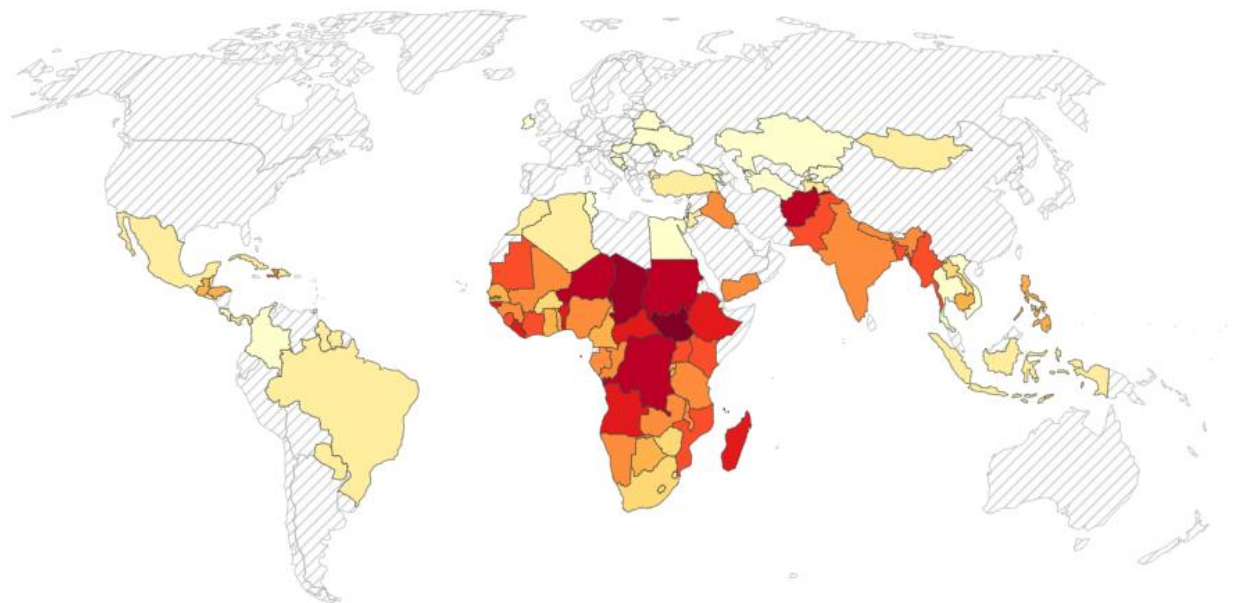
A slum household is defined as a group of individuals living under the same roof lacking one or more of the following conditions: access to improved water, access to improved sanitation, sufficient living area, durability of housing, and security of tenure.

Table

Map

Chart

World



2000

2020

Data source: UN Human Settlements Programme - [Learn more about this data](#)

OurWorldInData.org/urbanization | CC BY



Housing for All: Cost and Environmental Considerations

One sustainable building method that's gained traction in recent years is [modular construction](#). Rather than building a single-family home or apartment complex on-site, modular buildings are constructed at an off-site facility and re-assembled on an existing foundation. Modular housing is a great option for affordable housing, as they are completed nearly twice as quickly as traditional homes, keeping costs down for investors and residents

As well as green materials we need more affordable housing projects like this [one](#) in Ghana to take off around the world. Often zoning regulations can impede the supply of affordable housing and we must look at [rethinking](#) how we regulate the building industry.



The Urban Book Series

Janez Nared
David Bole *Editors*

Participatory Research and Planning in Practice

 Springer Open

[Why should local officials engage the community in the development of the housing strategy?](#)

Create a stronger, equitable strategy.

Community members have information city staff may not know, and listening to community perspectives, concerns, and recommendations can unearth issues and reveal strategies that better meet a city's housing needs. Additionally, inclusive community engagement practices are key to ensuring you have an equitable planning process and outcomes.

Build an inclusive political coalition to ensure that the strategy is implemented by elected officials.

Build support for the housing strategy and can help reduce long-term costs and avoid delays, political opposition, and litigation.

Enhance trust in government, especially in communities that have been intentionally or unintentionally excluded from decision-making processes, and strengthen relationships between city government and community groups for future planning processes.

Lead to a better, shared understanding between government officials and the communities they serve.

Situation in Ireland

According to its 2023 SDG [report](#) for Ireland Social Justice Ireland states

“There have been largely favourable developments concerning the quality of life in cities and communities, whereas the picture is more mixed for sustainable mobility and environmental impacts (Eurostat, 2022, p.13). Our SDG11 is based on 4 indicators. In Ireland, air pollution is less of a problem in urban areas compared to many other EU countries. Ireland is ranked 4rd on this indicator, only out-ranked by Sweden, Finland and Portugal. Our second indicator attempts to capture ‘satisfaction with public transport’ and this indicator ranks Ireland ranks 10th. Our third indicator is a measure of rent over-burden from the OECD; it is an attempt to reflect the ‘safe and affordable housing’ theme of the goal. Households that spend more than 40 per cent of disposable income on housing are considered “overburdened” (OECD, 2019). Ireland does well on this SDG: the overall score for quality of life in our cities and communities shows Ireland in 3rd place. SDG11: Rank = 3

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) published a [report](#) on SDG 11 in Ireland in 2021 (see graphic). In this, they focused on five main policy areas: Housing, Local Government, Heritage, Planning and Water.

Check out where areas of improvement have been identified- would you agree, or is there anything that is missing?

Have you heard of the concept of 15 minute cities? It is explained [here](#) and according this [Irish Time article](#) we may be well suited for the concept.



Understand

SDG and the City - Urbanisation

The majority of the SDG 11 targets and indicators evolves around cities and human settlements, and a lot of the challenges addressed are linked to urbanisation, which is defined as '*the gradual increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas*' (US National Library of Medicine, 1999).

While urbanisation – if managed well – can contribute to sustainable growth, it also brings about challenges. These include but are not limited to:

- How to meet accelerated demand for affordable housing;
- Development of well-connected transport systems and other infrastructure;
- Provision of basic services and jobs for everybody;
- Management of conflicts.

Especially rapid urbanisation is understood to be exerting pressure on fresh water supplies, sewage, the living environment, and public health. (Source: [UN](#))

Read more about

... the link between urban growth and economic growth: this [video](#) aims to provide alternative perspectives by Hans Rosling from Gapminder and The Public Library of Science.

...an optimistic lens on urbanisation, and how it could lead to positive urban transformations- check out the Website [Urban Thinkers Campus 8.0](#)



Understand

Urbanisation Ireland

In Ireland in, almost 65% of the total per cent of the total population live in urban areas and cities ([CSO](#)) which leads to a very high population density in urban areas, compared to a very low density in rural areas, this brings about a variety of challenges, such as overcrowded public transport, and a high rate of homelessness across the urban areas of the country.

Homelessness

According to [Focus Ireland](#), nearly 13, 841 people across Ireland were homeless in February 2024- a number that does not include those sleeping rough, women and children in domestic violence, refugees, or those in “hidden homelessness” arrangements such as sleeping on someone's couch.

SDG 11 calls for access to adequate, safe and affordable housing, for everybody. In Ireland, there is **no legally protected right to adequate shelter and housing**. Under the Housing Act 1988, local authorities have a responsibility to provide housing (directly or through voluntary housing organisations) for adults who are not currently in a position to finance it themselves. For children, the responsibility lies with Tusla (the Child and Family Agency).

In the course of the [Public Consultation](#) on a Referendum on a Right to Housing in 2022, Social Justice Ireland submitted this [document](#)- have read through it, it provides really insightful and important information on the debate and Ireland's situation.

For more information on homelessness in Ireland, have a look at Focus Ireland's [Knowledge Hub](#)!

UNDERSTAND



Understand

Sustainable Transport

“Sustainable transport is concerned with the movement of goods and people in a manner, which improves quality of life and ease of access for all. It also aims to protect the environment for future generations and enhance economic competitiveness” (Department of Transport, Ireland, 2008)

While transport plays a critical role in economic and social development, the transport sector, as one of the top consumers of fossil fuels, is a major contributor to air pollution and generates a variety of emissions that impact the climate. The global car fleet is also continuously growing, and with that, greenhouse gas emissions are growing at a faster rate than in any other sector.

Find out more about challenges, opportunities and ideas for sustainable transport on the website of the UN Environment Programme (Source: [UNEP](#))

More insightful resources:

Factsheet: How will sustainable rural transport aid in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals?
[Slocat](#)

[TED Talk](#): Alex Steffen – The Shareable future of cities



Understand

Sustainable Transport in Ireland – Focus: Cycling

According to the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) the transport sector in Ireland accounted for 19.1% of greenhouse gas emissions in 2023.

The National Transport Authority's (NTA) [National Travel Household Survey \(NHTS\)](#) published on August 16th highlights the dominance of car travel, with almost seven in 10 (69%) trips being made by car across Ireland.

The government's National Sustainable Mobility [Policy](#) Action Plan for 2022-2025 the government aims to

- Improve mobility safety
- Decarbonise public transport
- Expand the availability of sustainable mobility

Trips Taken by Modes of Transport

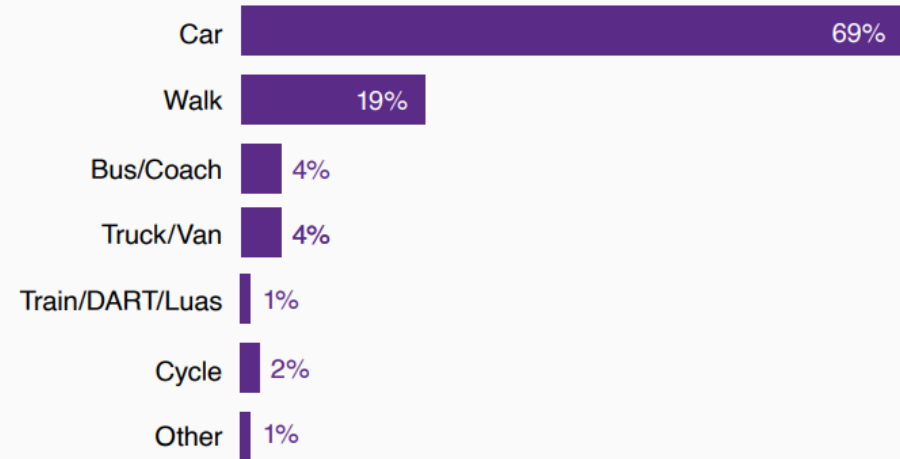


Figure 5: Trips Taken by Modes of Transport: National

The national picture is one of frequent car usage. Almost 7 in 10 (69%) of trips taken nationally are by car. Walking is the next most popular mode of transport, accounting for 19% of trips. Trips taken by bus/coach are at 4% overall, cycling registers at 2% while trips taken by train/DART/Luas are at 1%.



Understand

Sustainable Transport in Ireland – Focus: Cycling

UCD Energy Institute in partnership with UCD Library has launched a [pilot bike lending programme](#) for members of the UCD community to demonstrate the potential for micromobility to transform commuting patterns and reduce transport emissions for universities and organisations of similar size. The UCD Bike Library pilot is the first of its kind in Ireland to offer bike lending through a traditional library service.

Apply for a grant to start a bike library in your community [here](#)



UNDERSTAND



Understand

New Urban Agenda

IN 2016 at Habitat III, the UN states agreed on the [New Urban Agenda](#) a guideline for New Urban Development for the next years

The UN Habitat New Urban Agenda envisages cities and human settlements that *'are participatory, promote civic engagement, engender a sense of belonging and ownership among all their inhabitants, [...] enhance social and intergenerational interactions, cultural expressions and political participation, as appropriate, and foster social cohesion, inclusion and safety in peaceful and pluralistic societies, where the needs of all inhabitants are met, recognizing the specific needs of those in vulnerable situations.'* (§13b).

At the heart of the New Urban Agenda lies the concept of [the Right to the City](#) which is an idea first proposed in 1968 by Henri Lefebvre.

In the New Urban Agenda, it is emphasised that this not only includes the right to live and work in a city but also the right to play - and to make the city your own.

Find out more how the New Urban Agenda and its impact can look in practice on the [Urban Agenda Platform](#).

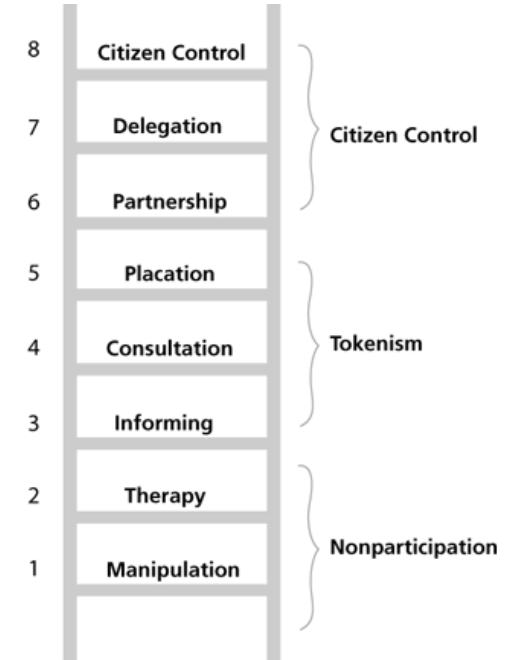
UNDERSTAND



Understand

Co-creating the communities we want

The last 100 years have been characterized by an economic model known as [neoliberalism](#) which is based on de-regulation of business and the idea that competition between individual is the basis of a healthy society. Participative democracy offers an alternative route to cocreating the communities we want. The model in Ireland is known as [Public Participation Networks](#).



Arnstein's Ladder (1969)
Degrees of Citizen Participation

UNDERSTAND



Understand

Jon Alexander has been working in the field to help rewrite this [story](#) and to show us how we can move from Consumer to Citizen whose agency is not limited to their purchases.

Check out this [model](#) of Participative Democracy in Taiwan.

Moving from subject to consumer to citizen

DEPENDENT	INDEPENDENT	INTERDEPENDENT
TO	FOR	WITH
RELIGIOUS	MATERIAL	SPIRITUAL
DUTY	RIGHTS	PURPOSE
OBEY	DEMAND	PARTICIPATE
RECEIVE	CHOOSE	CREATE
COMMAND	SERVE	FACILITATE
PRINT	ANALOGUE	DIGITAL
HIERARCHY	BUREAUCRACY	NETWORK
SUBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE	DELIBERATIVE

Subject Consumer Citizen: Quickfire Concepts — from [This Is The #CitizenShift](#)

UNDERSTAND



Understand

Action for SDG 11

Here are just a few organisations/initiatives that are making a difference for SDG 11, in Ireland and worldwide:

Check out [Home For Good](#) and their campaign to have the Right to Housing enshrined in the constitution
This is a great [resource](#) for anything cycling-related in Ireland.

[UNDP's Accelerator Labs](#) were built in 2019 to change the way UNDP does development by *learning what works and what doesn't* in sustainable development to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in time. Because of the speed, dynamics and complexity of today's challenges, we're not progressing fast enough, and current development practices must keep up with the pace of change.

[Habitat](#) works to ensure countries have the tools, training and data sources that a national government would need to build its capacity for reporting.

The European Commission adopted the [new circular economy action plan \(CEAP\)](#) in March 2020. It is one of the main building blocks of the [European Green Deal](#), Europe's new agenda for sustainable growth. The EU's transition to a circular economy will reduce pressure on natural resources and will create sustainable growth and jobs. It is also a prerequisite to achieve the EU's 2050 climate neutrality target and to halt biodiversity loss.



Reflection

As a Citizen of a local community...

- How can you find a level of connection to a community that works for you?
- How can you make a contribution that you can sustain and that is right for you?
- How can you develop your understanding of where power lies locally — what councils and authorities are there?
- How are they operating and treating people locally? How can you help or perhaps challenge them to do it better?

UNDERSTAND



Act

Action is a key component of Goal #11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities.

Take one or more of this month's #SDGchallenges below to make your contribution.

Get Informed – Engage with articles, blogs, videos and campaigns in this information pack.

Be Political – Write to the Darragh O'Brien, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Educate – Host a workshop, talk or discussion about Goal #11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities.

#15MinuteTown – Explore how many essential services you can reach within a 15-minute walk or cycle from your home.



ACT

Act

Challenge #1 – Get Informed

We are asking you to read up about Goal #11 and to learn about the efforts being made around the world to achieve 'Sustainable Cities and Communities'. You can begin this journey of learning by reading the articles or watching the videos in the 'Understand' section of this info pack.

Challenge #2 – Be Political

Write/email the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien, expressing the need for consideration of environmental impacts and participation in urban planning.

Email: darragh.obrien@oireachtas.ie

Address: Leinster House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2

Challenge #3 – Educate

Enroll in SDG Academy's Sustainable Cities course for free on [edx](#) and share the knowledge with your community

Challenge #4 – Public Participation

Join a [PPN](#) and create a groundswell of Peoples Assemblies to co-create society



ACT

Act

Challenge #5 – #15MinuteTown

For this month's challenge, we invite you to engage with the concept of 15-minute-towns. The idea behind the concept (originally for '15-minute-cities') is that everyone living in a city of town should have access to essential urban services within a 15 minute walk or cycle. Some of possible essential services are listed below.

*WITHIN A 15-20 MINUTES WALK
FROM MY HOME I CAN REACH:*

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCHOOLS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC TRANSPORT |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GROCERY STORES | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CITY SQUARES |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HOSPITAL | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARKS/GREEN SPACES |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CLINIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PLAYGROUNDS |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POSTAL SERVICE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRAIN STATION |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SHOPPING | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LIBRARY |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ATM/BANK | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CULTURAL VENUES |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RESTAURANTS/
CAFES | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SPORTS/
OUTDOOR GYMS |

PEDESTRIANSPACE.ORG

We invite you to **explore the place you live in** (city/town/village...) and see what services you consider 'essential' – and how many you can reach without a car within 15 minutes.

And then reflect on some of these **questions**:

- What does having everything within 15 minutes do to your quality of life?
- Would city/town/village life look different if everything was in fact easily accessible without motorised transport?
- Where do you see room for improvement (if any)?
- How would you design your city/town/village?

Share your ideas/photos/experiences with us, we'd love to hear and see them!

Don't forget to use #SustainableCommunities



ACT

Heather Griffin and Patrick Mulvihill, Alumni of the Saolta SDG Advocate Programme 2018:

Patrick and Heather run a hybrid social enterprise called [Amicitia](#), in Athenry, Co. Galway. Here are two projects they are currently involved in – both of them very closely linked to SDG 11.

1. In Athenry, we have launched a [Sustainable Energy Community](#) project. The first stage of this was securing funding through Galway County Council and SEAI to develop an energy master plan for the town with the support of specialist consultants. We are reviewing the findings of this plan which will be published at a community event later this year. Essentially this will provide a roadmap for Athenry through short-medium and long-term actions ranging from retrofitting homes to renewable energy projects and behavioural changes that reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.
2. We've also been commissioned by Limerick Council through their [Decarbonising Together](#) project to examine how meaningful climate action can become part of the day-to-day lives of residents in urban settings. Over the last three months, we have been working with a group from Limerick Youth Services to explore the topic of a Just Transition in Kings Island, which is one of the most impoverished areas in Ireland. Through imagination, play and co-creation, we are developing games and interventions that challenge existing ideas of decarbonisation as technical problems that can be solved through business-as-usual approaches.



Share

Sharing our actions on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram allows us to raise awareness about Sustainable Cities and Communities in Ireland and around the world and about the Sustainable Development Goals. Please click on the icons below to link to our pages:



No matter which challenge you take, be sure to share it! Check out our Facebook page. You can share your actions here and inspire other SDG advocates!



Or you can Tweet us @devperspectives. Follow us for daily updates and interesting reads on Sustainable Cities and Communities for this month!



Follow us on Instagram @devperspectives and make sure to tag #SDGs and #globalgoals in your posts