

# Community-Led Energy Efficiency Retrofit

Energy Retrofitting Ireland - one  
parish at a time

*[bit.ly/tippeec](http://bit.ly/tippeec)*

**Energy Communities Tipperary**

*[www.energycommunities.wordpress.com](http://www.energycommunities.wordpress.com)*



# Steering Group of Energy Communities Tipperary (ECT)

Reps from 4 participating communities



# Development of Energy Communities

## Tipperary - Community Retrofit

### What

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Community run  
energy  
conservation  
scheme

### How

Developed out of Drombane village community planning process facilitated by Gearóid Fitzgibbon, (North Tipperary LEADER Partnership), with Support from LIT and TEA.



Project Co-ordination by Marcella Maher Keogh since 2012 - overseeing delivery of the project with volunteer steering group.

# Progress 2011 -2014

## Outcomes:

**2012:** 22 homes in one community.

**2014:** 110 homes across 4 communities.

## From:

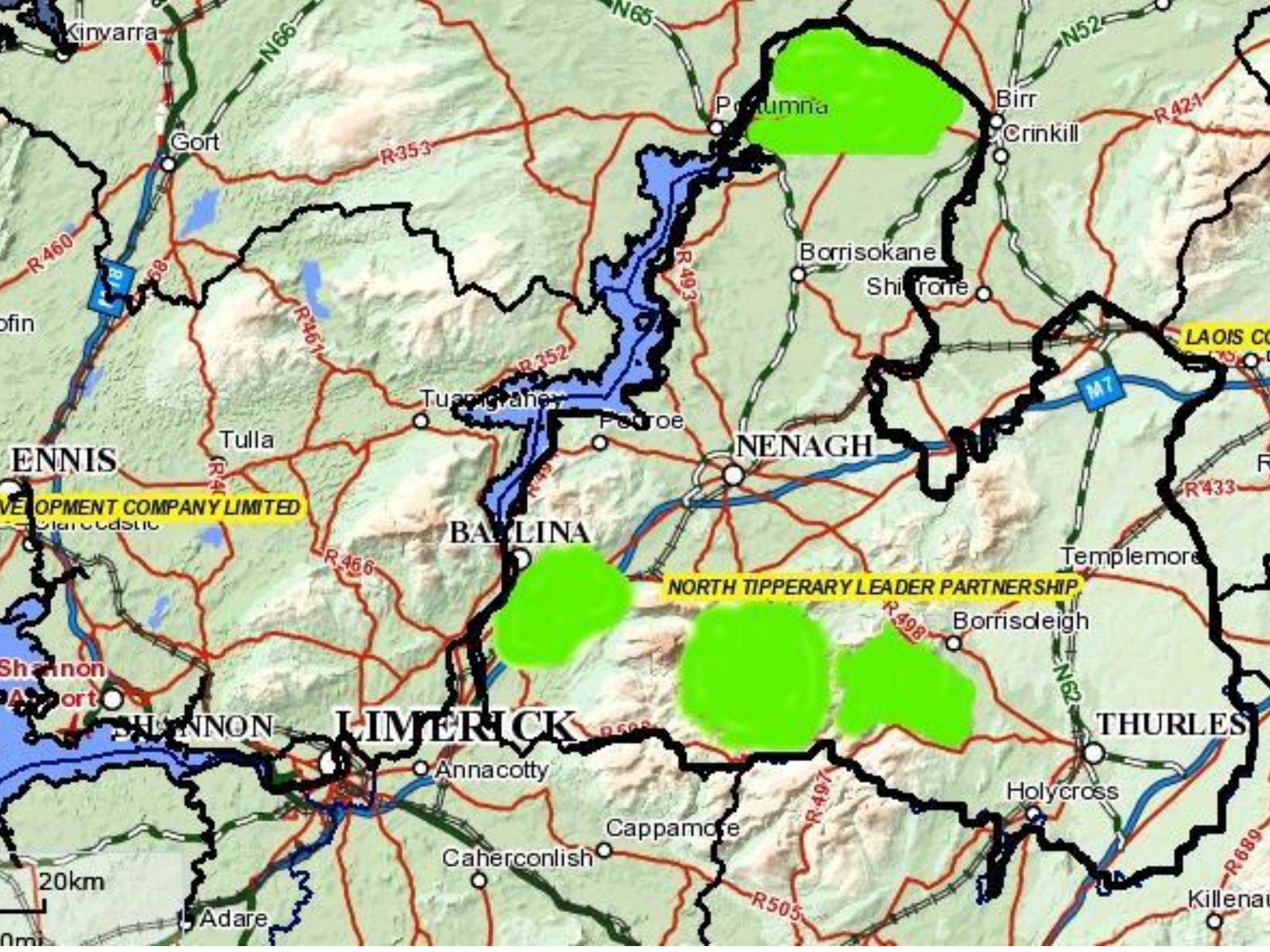
a conversation in Drombane Village Hall

## To:

set up of Drombane Upperchurch Energy Team (DUET)

## To:

set up of Energy Communities Tipperary (ECT) an umbrella organisation of 4 community Energy Teams



# Project Elements

## SAVING ENERGY

110 homes  
- 64 Fuel Allowance homes,  
- 46 Can Pay Homes,  
2 community buildings

**Total Energy savings in 2014 is 941,636 kWh across 4 communities**

## LEVERAGING INVESTMENT INTO RURAL COMMUNITIES

Initial project application of €1.3 million.

€902,000 was secured in funding from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)

Bridging finance facility of up to €250,000 secured by **each** participating Energy Team

## CREATING EMPLOYMENT IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

*One Co-ordinator/Project manager*

*65 people employed in LOCAL SME's*

Metro Utilities: 26 employed.  
Ecosy insulation: 15 employed.  
Carr Construction: 24 employed.

# Win/Win for Local & National Partners

## Benefits for Householders

- Householders gain through the improved comfort and energy efficiency of their homes.

## Reduces national carbon emissions

- 90% of householders would not have availed of grants offered by SEAI but for the community scheme.

(cf. Retrofitting the Local Economy – Case Study of a Community Retrofit Scheme)

## Improving the local economy

- Ethos of Cooperation & Self Help: Projects creates co-operation between communities to develop their local economies – reducing fossil fuel use and harnessing local fuel sources
- Success of project attracting other communities to model that creates investment and employment in rural communities during a recession.

- Partnership with Ireland's main utility - sale of energy credits to **Electric Ireland** has enabled successful finance of this years project. Energy savings in 2014 is 941,636 kWh across 4 communities.

# Project Partners

## Local Energy Teams

- Drombane Upperchurch
  - Kilcommon Rearcross
  - Lorrha Rathcabban
  - Birdhill
- 4-6 volunteers on each local steering group

## Local Development Companies – North Tipperary LEADER Partnership

- Assistance with:
- Project planning
  - Capacity Building
  - support with the application

## Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland – SEAI

- €902,000 was secured in funding from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)
- support and advice from the SEAI Better Energy Communities Team

## Contractors

- Metro Utilities
- Ecosy insulation
- Carr Construction

## SOCIAL FINANCE

### Clann Credo

- Bridging finance facility of up to €250,000 secured by **each** participating Energy Team

**MEM-BER/Marcella Maher Keogh**  
Project Manager

**Tipperary Energy Agency – TEA**  
Advice and Support



# Future Challenges for ECT

- In the process of setting up as a community owned company -  
Development of a business model that allows project to grow while meeting community & funder requirements
- The financial challenge for communities is significant -  
bridging finance, financial management, community costs.
- Continuing marketing campaign to encourage house holders avail of the scheme in their area.
- Exploring the potential for Local Energy Generation

# Finally - Community Engagement

- Ownership – for community engagement to be real, it must involve real ownership & decision making by local volunteers - Community Development Values
- Clear Benefits - Communities want to see near term gains. At least, in newer projects, nearer term benefits will help them gain traction – Deeper retrofit – need for local buy in
- Don't overhype Community Energy - Agencies shouldn't expect miracles from local volunteers. Agencies must value volunteer time and be prepared to offer support and financial assistance: e.g. **admin Support, Start up Grants, mentoring, secretarial support**

# Partnership & Teamwork



THE SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND  
ESTABLISHED 1996



nntp

North Tipperary  
LEADER Partnership



SUSTAINABLE  
ENERGY AUTHORITY  
OF IRELAND



TIPPERARY  
energy  
AGENCY



# Further Information



- Website for Energy Communities Tipperary [energycommunities.wordpress.com](http://energycommunities.wordpress.com)
- Drombane/Upperchurch Energy Survey Report (Oct 2011) [bit.ly/tippenrg](http://bit.ly/tippenrg) The community survey that began this scheme
- “Retrofitting the Local Economy – Case Study of a Community Retrofit Scheme” 2014 [bit.ly/duetstudy2014](http://bit.ly/duetstudy2014)
- Drombane Upperchurch Energy Team [facebook.com/DUenergy](https://facebook.com/DUenergy)
- Lorrha Rathcabban Energy Team - [facebook.com/LREnergyTeam](https://facebook.com/LREnergyTeam)

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