

# Discussions to capture key directions for the preliminary feasibility studies for the Loop Head Energy Action Partnership (LEAP)

A community carousel on the 1st February 2020 in the Kilkee Bay Hotel.

The questions guiding the discussions were:

1. What are the main energy-related problems and opportunities on the Loop?
2. What areas do we want this program to focus on?
3. What challenges are in our way to implement energy projects?
4. What are your recommendations to increase support and benefits from energy projects for all in our community?
5. What do we need to do to enable as many people as possible in our community to be actively involved in energy projects?

Feedback per question:

## 1. What are the main energy-related problems and opportunities on the Loop?



Question 1a: What are the main energy-related problems on the Loop?	Rank
Cost of electricity is high, (Some people think this is because of the high prices of oil and gas)- (R)(SB)	
Many residential buildings have problems with efficiency and insulation (R)	
Lack of knowledge on how to make house smart using internet (R)	
There is no gas pipeline in Loop Head.	
Energy supply is limited because sources have to be imported.	
Most of the buildings are summer houses, how we can involve people that own summer houses in community energy projects?	
The community has issues with slurry storage, especially during wintertime.	

Lack of public transport.	
There are no chargers for electric vehicles in public places (fast chargers).	
People are concerned about batteries lifetime (T).	
People are against the wind because it has a visual impact and it affects their health.	
Lack of knowledge about wind, solar and waste management.	
Lack of pilot projects in different sectors (examples).	
Lack of knowledge regarding grants in different sectors.	
Technologies are always improving, and it is hard to know when to invest.	
Too many choices or energy ideas and it is hard to identify the most suitable.	
The local grid has problems.	
There are many small family farms, they cannot afford big investments.	
The small size of the population in Loop Head doesn't allow the implementation of big projects due to high cost.	
Lack of communication between Loop Head community and ESB (electricity supply board) and therefore, Loop Head is not part of the national plan.	
How can we balance different renewable projects without affecting the wildlife?	

<b>Question 1b: What are the main energy-related opportunities on the Loop?</b>	Rank
Loop Head has the capability to produce Hydrogen and Biofuel, which alternative is most suitable?	
Electrical vehicles for public transport can be provided.	
Smart meters can be installed in households and small businesses, but people are concerned about investments, payback period & regulation.	
Electricity can be produced from waste (anaerobic digestion).	
Money Point will be shut down in the upcoming years, excess of energy produced by the community (waste, wind & solar) can be sold to the national grid using the existing infrastructure of Money Point.	
ESB has implemented a smart grid project in Dingle, Loop Head community would like to know the outcome of this project.	
What if Loop Head generates electricity from renewables, store it and use it locally? (using a smart local grid)	
The geographical self-containment of Loop Head is an advantage, how we can make use of it?	
Greenway is an upcoming project for constructing a pedestrian road from Kilkee to Kilrush. Inserting energy supporting infrastructure and green solutions can be proposed for this road.	
Implementation of new projects can lead to the creation of new jobs.	

## 2. What areas do we want this program to focus on?



Question 2: What areas do we want this program to focus on?	Rank
Upgrading/integrating heating system in old building	
Solar & wind farm development	
Optimization of installed residential solar system for heating	
Pre-FS of Anaerobic Digester for energy (heat & electricity)	
Pre-FS on energy efficient community public transport (bus & ferry)	
Study on nitrogen absorber plants/grass	
Pre-FS on integrated small-scale wind and solar with independent mini-grid	
Pre-FS on waste to energy	
Energy optimization to reduce CO2 emission on buildings	
Optimizing Money Point existing infrastructure for energy related projects.	
Counterbalance measures of energy efficiency practices vs emission from cattle farming.	
Community setups to access available grants for all sectors.	
Recommendations on energy efficiency practices on currently existing energy/heating systems.	
Education and workshop on energy related matters.	
Study of job-opportunities/social impacts on the project.	
Explore wave energy options.	
Smart energy management system on residential.	

Feasibility studies for renewable energy system implies providing information on the following points:

- best location for the AD, Solar plants and wind turbines

- best technologies that work best for Loop Head
- full information on all the pros and cons of the technology
- information on optimization practices for already existing solar rooftops for other purposes like heating
- investment cost and profits.

### 3. What challenges are in our way to implement energy projects?



Question 3: What challenges are in our way to implement energy projects?	Rank
Lack of communication between different community members (G)	
Lack of knowledge and awareness (Potentially from lack of education & training for energy related topics) (G)	
Lack of interest (G)	
High investment costs and long payback period for energy systems (A) (R) (B)	
Lack of concrete examples (Case studies?) (G)	
Complex and time consuming to deal with planning regulation	
Difficult to identify and quantify the resources and location for implementing energy related projects (A)	
No Public Transport (T)	
Grants schemes are sometimes not sufficient (G)	
Climate exposure (Vapor and salt in the air can potentially lead to equipment damage)	
Population is spread out, living scatter therefore difficult to deploy centralized systems (R)	
Most building are very old, making retrofit expensive to do (R)	
Difficult and time consuming to identify suitable solutions (Technology wise) in the housing sector (R)	

Transporting slurry can potentially increase the traffic and current roads are not sufficient to transport it. There may not be enough equipment for slurry transportation (A)	
Misleading information and bad consultation (Mostly with wind turbines in the past) has resulted into resistance toward new Renewable Energy projects (G)	
Lack of best practices on how to retrofit houses and to operate houses to be more energy efficient (R)	
Conflict of interests regarding land coverage between energy related projects and tourisms/agricultures, etc. (G)	
Lack of expertise on how to finance and manage energy related projects (Especially community owned) (G)	
Lack of unbiased/reliable information. (G)	
Difficult and time/money consuming to adapt current technology to the new systems (e.g. Tractors, grinders, etc.) (A)	
Difficult to communicate new solutions to make them locally relevant and gain public interest (G)	

**4. What are your recommendations to increase support and benefits from energy projects for all in our community?**



<b>Question 4: What are your recommendations to increase support and benefits from energy projects for all in our community?</b>	<b>Rank</b>
The facts and details of community energy projects should be open and transparent to everyone at any time.	

The project should engage youth by school and college engagement programs.	
The project should have a clear structure and pathway and should present different options for implementation.	
The existing organizations of farmers, tourists etc. should be preferably engaged for developing community energy projects.	
The easy and more efficient energy projects should be targeted with proven technologies. (targeting low hanging fruits)	
The goals of the project should be clear.	
The community projects should be marketed properly on social media, national TV and radio for better engagement and support.	
The project should be flexible which can be modified any time according to needs and demands if needed.	
The project should have milestones and progress must be tracked with constant reporting to everyone to maintain momentum and interest.	
The community should have major share and control of the project.	
The project should be financially self-sustaining and must demonstrate cost savings or increase in income.	
The community should be engaged with other communities having successful community energy projects to know pros and cons.	
The project must create jobs for youth and diaspora may be engaged for technical assistance.	
The project should be able to get support and grants from local/ national government.	
The project may involve local university students for better research.	
The project should have a diverse steering committee with youth, farmers, and other community members.	

**5. What do we need to do to enable as many people as possible in our community to be actively involved in energy projects?**



<p><b>Question 5: What do we need to do to enable as many people as possible in our community to be actively involved in energy projects?</b></p>	<p>Rank</p>
<p>Tailor-made information for specific stakeholders that with simplified wording for example Biomass simply for it so that it becomes understandable (Providing the information about energy, to different parties</p>	
<p>Spread the word (tell your friends and the others) so that individuals from the workshop could talk about the initiative and how good it is to have a higher turn up in the next workshop.</p>	
<p>Talk more about the benefits of being involved in Renewable Energy projects for example it will be a good cause for your children’s future as you will lead the energy transition in Loop Head.</p>	
<p>In order to get more people involved talk more about the cost benefit (Savings) of Renewable Energy projects and how it is beneficial for one’s house bills etc.</p>	
<p>Grants support in terms of paperwork (Facilitator to help fill in the forms as it is a daunting process)</p>	
<p>Local pride in community Loop Head becomes a first mover in creating a sustainable community thus others can always learn from them and they become known in other communities.</p>	
<p>Support the community to be a sustainable Eco-tourism destination.</p>	

Media coverage: Radio, Facebook, Twitter, snapchat, Instagram, local and national papers, parishes, churches, pubs.	
Keep it simple so that people won't be afraid to be involved. Do not dwell much on technical stuff.	
Children involvement (for example make competitions to motivate them)	
Benefit for population maintenance (job creation by RE projects)	
Talk more about community income and ownership from energy projects	
Possibility of employment for the community by the community.	
Local education system should adapt to the RE movement on Loop Head's energy transition so that youngsters see what is happening in the community.	
Help us understand how community energy projects work.	
Enabling the youth to be involved - create a space for them	
Construct a clear long-term vision (energy projects) that keep running into the future.	
How to engage the older community (out-reaches, talk about a reliable sustainable transport system, benefits of E. Cars)	
Make it relevant to everyone so that they become involved.	
Energy projects that solve transport issues.	
Identify what relevant changes are happening in the transport sector (as technology keeps changing).	
Come up with new community representatives that are specific to age, geographic location and sector.	
Use the current networks to bring people in from existing organisations.	
Talk more about Human benefits: (Future of children, job opportunities, green houses, circular economy, cost saving).	
Tap into elderly people's knowledge and experience (we can learn a lot from the past and from the experience in the community - this can help us decide what we have to do).	
How to engage and bring in new people for community representative committee.	
Finding out ways to bring in people who wouldn't normally get involved - this can be done through social meetings that are not always formal, we find the things that they enjoy doing and take that opportunity to convince them to get involved	
Farmers showcase a sustainable farm with Anaerobic Digester (AD) demonstration.	
Bring the meetings to the Pubs, a social center could be conducive for gatherings. The social center should be equipped with Wi-Fi, warm in other words enough amenities to make people want to be involved.	
Community center to engage people and to enhance communication within the community.	

Communication to enable us to educate ourselves - information is power.	
Short questionnaire that documents the importance of implementing RE projects, something that gets people to think about their ideas.	
Encourage community members to bring a Buddy or +1.	
Adult education Centre caters for different ages 15-20 etc.	
GAA sports group which has a strong network, this would be a good platform to involve the youth as most people are active in this sports association as it is popular even in UK, America etc. (to inform people who are currently outside the community).	
Talk about money - what income opportunities they will get	
Showing the incentives involved in being involved e.g it will heat up our home in a much cleaner way.	
Tell them how involvement benefits the community.	
Talk about the entrepreneurship opportunities available in the sector, start-ups etc.	
Continuity is important for the projects thus talking about how it will go on and benefit future generations is important for community involvement.	
Collaboration with Irish universities to create a stronger network	
Teagasc could be collaborated with (Government advisory for farmers)	
Showcase the benefits of RE Projects.	
Talk about this event- Share photos to make people more excited about It.	
This event could be captured on local and national news.	