



Energy Pathfinder project, Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme

**Green Skibbereen Conference
on Climate Action & Sustainability**

Date: 01 February 2021

Location: Online Zoom Event

Presentation title: Climate Action & Sustainability in West Cork

Delivered by: Green Skibbereen



**Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme**
2014–2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund

Event Summary:

The first day of Spring 2021 saw the launch of Green Skibbereen’s ambitious plans for Myross Wood House at their inaugural online Conference, Climate Action & Sustainability for West Cork. Over 280 people had registered to attend, 100 attended via zoom and the remaining people watched the live feed on Facebook.



Promoting Climate Action and Sustainability in West Cork Recorded live
Promoting Climate Action and Sustainability in West Cork
Webinar – 7pm, Monday 1st February 2021
Programme

Facilitator/ Host	Ana Ospina, Director, Green Skibbereen	
1 Welcome and Introduction	Jim O’Donnell, Chairman, Green Skibbereen	5 mins
2 Promoting Climate Action and Sustainability in West Cork	Noel Casserly, Director, Green Skibbereen	10 mins
3 The Vision for Myross Wood House Centre for Climate Action and Sustainability	Angela Brady OBE, Brady Mallalieu Architects	15 mins
4 Green Skibbereen - Resources and Funding	Brendan McCormack, Director, Green Skibbereen	10 mins
5 Available supports for energy retrofit within communities	Caitriona Courtney, Energy Hub Manager, NCE Energy Hub	10 mins
6 Discussion - Questions & Answers	Facilitated by Trish Lavelle, Director, Green Skibbereen	15 mins
7 Next steps and concluding remarks	Jose Ospina, Director, Green Skibbereen	10 mins

Fig. 1 Agenda for Green Skibbereen Conference

Green Skibbereen is a not-for-profit community organisation, set up in 2020 by a number of friends who were disillusioned with progress on climate action in their local area in West Cork. Director Jim O’Donnell opened the event, outlining the group’s vision to “go after carbon”, to reduce or eliminate it in the greater Skibbereen area. And by coming together and doing so, the group hopes to be an inspiration to other towns around Ireland.



Fig. 2 Anna Ospina Chairs the Green Skibbereen Conference

Bringing the Community together to plan for climate change is key, Noel Casserly, Director, explained. Discussions with other groups in Skibbereen and around Ireland led the group to commence plans for a Centre for Excellence for Climate Action & Sustainability (CECAS) and discussions with the owners of Myross Wood House began. An application to the Horizon 2020 (H2020) fund, if successful, will see Myross House receive significant funding from the EU “for building & renovating in an energy and resource efficient way” and inclusion as one of 3 H2020 Demonstrator sites in Europe.

Myross Wood House

- House of historic value - mature wood coastal setting
- Currently owned by Missionaries of Sacred Heart
- Consultants engaged by Green Skibbereen for feasibility Study: Exodea & BMA
- Maintain as a resource for local community








Fig. 3 Noel Casserly introduces Myross Wood House

Core Funding Sources

- 2021 Membership Scheme
- Eco-tourism accommodation
- Events
- Donations
- EU & State Funding
- Wellness services
- Ambition to become financially sustainable
- Achieve Charitable status in 2021



Fig. 4 Core Funding Sources, Noel Casserly

EU Funding

- Developing Innovative Technologies
- Promoting Community Awareness
- Exchanging Ideas with other EU sites
- Sources
 - EU Green Deal Horizon District Chameleon Application
 - Decision due in Autumn 2021
 - Amount = €750,000+



Fig. 5 EU Funding Sources, Noel Casserly

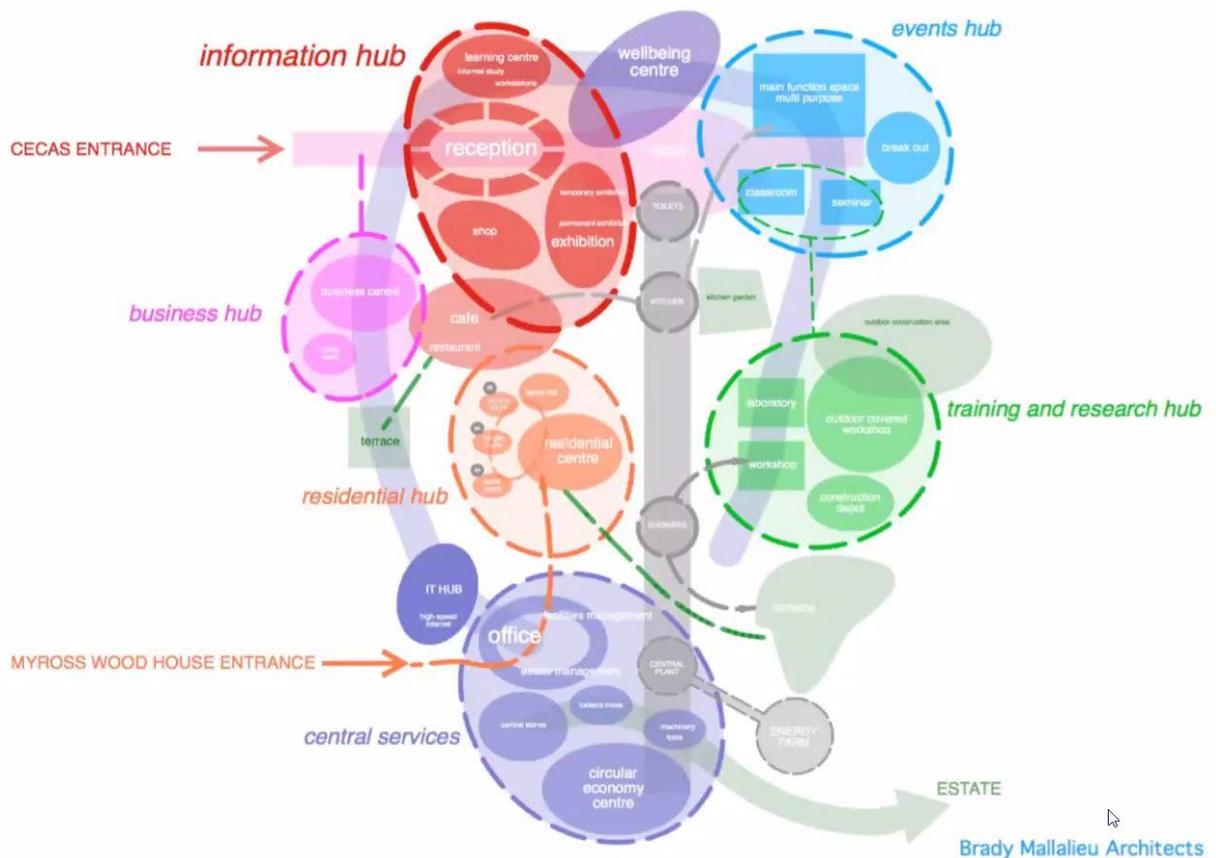


Fig 6. Brady Mallalieu Architects Outline Vision for Myross Wood House

Myross Wood House, is a historic building, owned by the Irish Missionaries Society. Set in 100 acres of beautiful woodland with walled gardens and access to the sea, it's located outside Leap in West Cork and had been used as a community centre and religious retreat centre since the 1970's.

Myross Wood House is currently a demonstrator building with the Energy Pathfinder Project, and is a pilot for developing the co-design process, consulting with residents and future users on proposed energy works and energy management

Angela Brady of Brady Mallalieu Architects outlined the short- and long-term vision for Myross Wood House as a CECAS – Fig. 6. An education centre where students could come and learn about the environment, business hub, accommodation centre, training & research hub, events centre (green weddings/concerts), well-being centre were just some of the ideas outlined which could be developed at Myross.

The retrofitting of the building itself and the elements involved i.e., heat recovery system, water re-use, natural ventilation, insulation etc. can all be studied as the project develops. Green Skibbereen will set up base and use the space as a gathering place to develop ideas and get it up and running. Links with UCC's School of Architecture and schools will all assist in the development of a place where people can come to learn and help change the environment for the better.

Funding options were outlined by Brendan McCormack, Green Skibbereen Director. EU & State funding will be tapped into, including applications to SEAI. Use of the residential facilities will be a priority to generate an income stream. Donations and fundraising events will all contribute to the start-up. The project is hoping to achieve charitable status in 2021 and the initial target for fundraising in 2021 was set out at €100,000.

Eco-Tourism

- Launch subject to Covid
- Simple AirBnB accomodation
- Eco-tourism ethos
- Targetted at market sympathetic to Myross House objectives
- Residential training and seminars
- A living project



Fig. 7 Eco Tourism Opportunities, Brendan McCormack

Caitriona Courtney, NCE's Energy Hub Manager and Energy Pathfinder Partner, gave some background on NCE's Energy Hub and outlined SEAI's Community Energy Grant, explaining how it is designed to get Communities working together to achieve energy savings across a range of projects.

Caitriona outlined the key measures covered and the grant funding for residential and non-residential projects. Three Energy Hub case studies (Baltimore Pool, Drinagh Co-Op and O'Donnell Furniture) from the West Cork Area were outlined. Grants drawn down and the expected payback for each of these projects in terms of savings were explained.

NCE INSULATION & the ENERGY-HUB

- In June 2018 we **opened the NCE Energy Hub** a community energy support office in St Finbarr's Farranferris.
- Our aim is to **provide clear paths & support** for people, communities and businesses when it comes to energy efficiency upgrades.
- We will advise on suitable contractors and grants that are available and guide you through the application process.



Fig. 8 Caitriona Courtney outlines how NCE's Energy Hub supports Communities

Trish Lavelle, Green Skibbereen Director & Treasurer, facilitated a Question & Answer Session with questions relating to agriculture/land use, transport, ownership of Myross and consultation with the local community addressed.

Jose Ospina, Green Skibbereen Director & Project Manager for Energy Pathfinder, brought the event to a close and explained the next steps for Climate Action in West Cork. He gave some background on his role in Carbery Housing Association and the work he had done in conjunction with NCE's Energy Hub retrofitting houses. He explained how his Project Management role for the Energy Pathfinder Project had led him to Myross House and to him questioning how a historic building can be kept in community ownership and given a new community role.

The next steps for the Green Skibbereen CECAS project include

- Green Skibbereen moving into Myross Wood House
- Results of two Feasibility Reports being published
- Generation of funds commencing with donations
- Looking for partners for joint use of the centre and preparation of EU funding proposals with same
- Secure income from the rental of space and sale of services
- Look at how local groups can contribute, as this must be done in partnership with the local community.



In the short term the plan is to develop a Sustainable Energy Community, applying for funding for a Masterplan in order to identify energy retrofit opportunities and renewable energy opportunities in the region, whilst working with NCE's Energy Hub to access SEAI funding for Better Energy Community grants.

Green Skibbereen aims to develop an effective, community-based response to climate change in West Cork and will work in close partnership with Cork County Council and the Department of the Environment, Climate & Communications in helping implement a Climate Action Plan.

CECAS will be an inclusive, effective, practical and innovative centre for investigating and demonstrating practical solutions to Climate Change.

The event concluded at 8.45pm. Exciting times lie ahead for Myross Wood House and we look forward to future updates and involvement with Green Skibbereen on this project.

The Energy Pathfinder Cork Partners ([NCE Energy Hub](#) [University College Cork](#)) are delighted to be working with such an ambitious user group for the Irish demonstrator site at [Myross Wood House](#).

If you would like to find out more about Green Skibbereen and their developments at Myross Wood please visit their website [here](#).

Contact Details:

Name: Cliona Kearney, Communications Coordinator

Email: ckearney@energy-hub.ie

Website: www.energypathfinder.eu

