

# *STEAM POWERED ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES*



BLOIC DON ATHRÚ  
BLOCKS 4 CHANGE

*Blocks4Change: Results and  
Reflections from a STEAM Approach to  
Sustainability*

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## **Introduction**

The Blocks4Change project forms part of the STEAM Powered Action for Sustainable Futures initiative, delivered through the Rethinking Engineering Education in Ireland (REEdI) and Ireland's Knowledge Centre for Carbon, Climate and Community Action (IKC3) projects at Munster Technological University (MTU). Funded by Research Ireland through the Discover Programme, the project is grounded in a commitment to public engagement, community empowerment, and the practical application of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) to real-world challenges.

At its core, Blocks4Change aims to support community groups and not-for-profit organisations in identifying, understanding, and responding to sustainability and climate action challenges within their local contexts. By combining data-driven insight with creative facilitation methods, the project enables participants to move beyond awareness towards tangible, community-led action. A key feature of the approach is the use of LEGO® Serious Play®, an inclusive and highly participatory methodology that supports storytelling, shared understanding, and collaborative problem-solving across diverse groups.

The project was delivered through three distinct but interconnected phases, each building on the previous to create a robust, evidence-based and action-oriented process: Phase 1: Public Consultation; Phase 2: Blocks4Change Workshops; and Phase 3: Research and Dissemination. Together, these three phases present a cohesive and replicable model for engaging communities in sustainability and climate action.

The Blocks4Change project illustrates how structured consultation, creative facilitation, and evidence-based dissemination can empower communities not just to envision change, but to take an active role in driving and delivering it.

## Phase 1- Public Consultation

The purpose of conducting public consultation prior to commencing the workshops was to establish the level of knowledge and understanding in the general population around Kerry in relation to STEAM and Sustainability, and to gather responses to serve as guidance for thematic areas in subsequent Blocks4Change workshops.

The research team developed a survey comprised of 10 concise, sustainability and STEAM related questions and delivered these surveys in person, to maximise participation and accessibility and to ensure the questions were explained effectively prior to seeking a response. The team delivered the survey in towns and villages across the 5 Kerry Municipal Districts (Castlesland–Corca Dhuibhne MD · Kenmare MD · Killarney MD · Listowel MD · Tralee MD). Over 1,000 members of the general public were approached to achieve the target 600 responses to the survey. The demographics of respondents were divided by their residence, grouping them into towns, cities, villages and countryside. Respondents were also divided by age group with brackets of 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64 and 65+. This was enforced to analyse if these factors played a role in the knowledge of sustainability or STEAM, to understand regional access and availability issues along with generational patterns.

Human Research Ethics approval was granted by MTU for this research project (MTU-HREC-MR-25-028-A). The following section of the report will illustrate the main findings of the survey. All findings are available on [www.reedi.ie/public-consultation-results/](http://www.reedi.ie/public-consultation-results/)

### Key Findings:

- **Understanding of Sustainability:** *When you think about 'sustainability'—such as reducing plastic use, conserving energy, or using public transport—which of the following best reflects your feelings & behavior?* 69% of respondents said they understand sustainability and try to act accordingly, understanding was highest among 55–64-year-olds (78%) and lowest among 18–24-year-olds (59%).
- **Pressing Sustainability Issues:** *Rank these sustainability issues based on what concerns you the most within your community 1 being your top concern and 7 being your lowest concern.* Across age groups and locations, the top concerns were climate change, waste/recycling, and energy use, with 25–34-year-olds prioritising transport over energy.
- **Knowledge of STEM and STEAM:** 61% of participants replied yes to “*have you ever heard of STEM,*” but only 28% of all respondents knew that the “A” in STEAM stands for Arts; STEAM awareness was highest among 35–44-year-olds (34%) and lowest in 65+ (12%).
- **Age Group Insights:** Adults aged 18–24 showed lower sustainability understanding, while adults aged 55–64 had the highest knowledge of sustainability.



Participants were then required to choose from a list of responses to the question “When you think about ‘sustainability’ which of the following best describes you?” The options were:

- I understand it and try to do these things
- I kind of get it, but I’m not always sure
- I’ve heard it, but I don’t really know what it means
- I don’t know what it means at all

Overall, 69% of respondents selected “I understand it and try to do these things,” 23% stated “I kind of get it, but I’m not always sure” and the remaining 8% of respondents selected “I’ve heard it, but I don’t really know what it means” or “I don’t know what it means at all.” The age group with the highest level of understanding of sustainability was **55-64-year-olds** with **78%** choosing the first option, and the age group with the least understanding was **18-24-year-olds** with just **59%** claiming they understand the concept of sustainability and try to participate in it.

The respondents were required to rank sustainability issues based on what concerns them the most in their community. Issues listed were climate change, food and agriculture, energy use, waste and recycling, biodiversity and nature, transportation and sustainable infrastructure. A pattern was established with climate change, waste and recycling and energy use being the top three issues selected from each geographic location and age group, with an exemption of 25-34-year-olds who chose transportation over energy use.

The next section of the questionnaire focused on introducing the concept of ‘STEAM.’ The first question set out to establish if they had heard of STEM. 61% of respondents claimed they had heard of STEM with a similar level of knowledge amongst geographical locations, but a noticeable difference in the degree of understanding amongst age groups, as presented in Table 1.

Age Group Percentages for knowledge of STEM	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	72%	53%	66%	68%	58%	45%

Table 1: STEM understanding amongst age groups

Participants were asked to select what they believe the ‘A’ in STEAM stands for out of a list of Arts, Agriculture, Awareness or Action. Out of the 61% of people who had heard of STEM, only 37% knew what the A stood for in STEAM. There was a significant drop in correct responses for this question, with just 28% of total respondents choosing the correct answer, Arts.

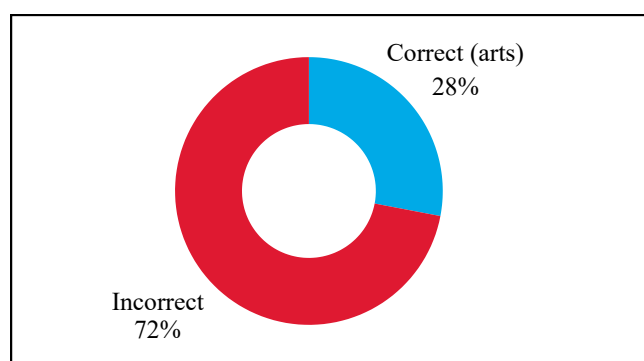


Figure 3: Percentage Knowledge of STEAM



## Phase 2- Workshops

Phase 2 of the project focused on workshop delivery, building on insights from the Phase 1 public consultation and shifting from data gathering to meaningful engagement and action. The workshops created a structured, creative space for participants to explore sustainability and climate challenges, interpret them locally, and co-develop practical, community-led responses—fostering ownership and collective responsibility.

Ten community and voluntary organisations participated. Workshops, approximately 3.5 hours in duration, were delivered between September and February 2026 in accessible local venues, with formats tailored to each group. Participants reflected a diverse cross-section of society, including groups working with adults with intellectual disabilities, community volunteers, and care home residents, demonstrating the adaptability and inclusivity of the approach.

The methodology is underpinned by LEGO® Serious Play®, enabling participants to express ideas through hands-on model building, metaphor, and storytelling. Structured “builds” move from individual reflection to shared understanding and future-focused visioning, guided by themes from the consultation but grounded in local context.

Participation was designed to be both inclusive and safe at individual and group level. Contributions were anonymised as part of the research process, ensuring participants could share openly and honestly with the understanding that insights would inform published outputs. This approach supported deeper engagement and authentic dialogue. In recognition of participants’ time and contribution, all participants received a €50 One4All voucher.

Rooted in the principle that everyone has an equal voice, the approach removes traditional barriers and creates a safe, collaborative environment. Framed within a STEAM context, it encourages interdisciplinary thinking and creative engagement with sustainability challenges.

Evaluation is embedded using the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLO) framework, capturing changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and intended behaviours. Workshops conclude with a call to action—“Add one piece to show the role you can play”—supporting the translation of ideas into tangible next steps.

Following the workshops, each group received a tailored workshop write-up, which could be shared and used to guide future development, planning, and funding applications.

## Workshop 1

### Group Description:

Empowering adults with intellectual disabilities to take active roles in environmental sustainability, creative enterprise, and community contribution, this initiative supports participants to make meaningful contributions to society while building confidence, self-worth, and personal pride. The project promotes self-advocacy and inclusive participation while exploring models of long-term and sustainable employment. In doing so, it fosters economic and social participation and reinforces a strong sense of identity, achievement, and belonging.

### 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

This LEGO-based workshop built on the strong environmental and community ethos already present within the group. Participants explored what climate action means in their everyday lives and imagined what a greener future for their community could look like. Through creative building, guided storytelling, and accessible STEAM activities, the group reflected on existing positive actions, generated new environmentally focused ideas, and co-created potential next steps.

A central focus was recognising each person's strengths—what they enjoy doing, the skills they bring, and the activities that give them a sense of pride and achievement—and how these can contribute to future sustainability goals.

### 2. Build Observations

#### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

*“Build something that shows an environmental achievement you are proud of.”*

Participants worked individually to create models that reflected environmental actions they have been involved in and felt a sense of pride in contributing to. The build provided space for personal reflection, storytelling, and recognition of individual strengths and achievements. Several consistent themes emerged across the individual models.

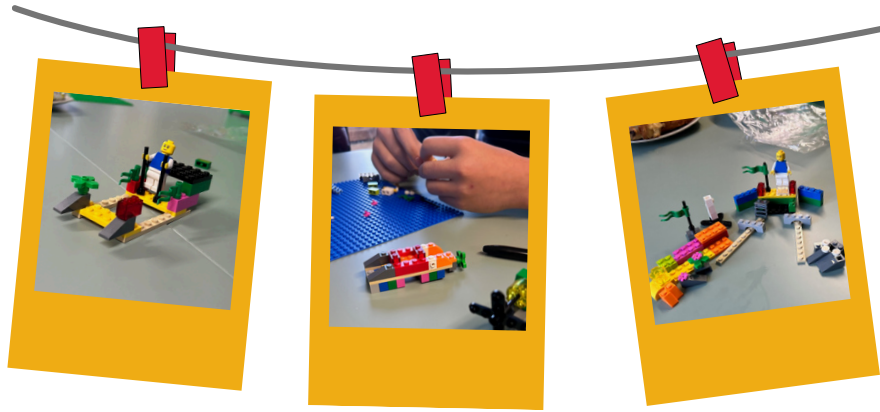
A strong interest in alternative energy was evident, particularly in relation to electric vehicles. Participants spoke about their involvement in, or awareness of, cleaner transport solutions and the importance of reducing environmental impact through everyday choices.

Horticulture featured prominently, with builds representing planting, gardening, and harvesting activities. These models reflected a deep connection to nature, enjoyment of outdoor work, and pride in growing and caring for plants and food produce.

Participants also highlighted their contribution to social enterprise and community wellbeing, expressing pride in being part of initiatives that support others while contributing positively to society.

Artistic expression emerged as another key theme. Several builds incorporated art, particularly the creation of artwork from recycled or waste materials. Upcycling was discussed not only as an environmental action but also as a creative outlet that supports wellbeing, identity, and self-expression.

Overall, the individual builds revealed a group with strong environmental awareness, creativity, and practical experience. The models illustrated both the diversity of activities participants engage in and the genuine sense of pride and achievement associated with their contributions to nature, sustainability, and community life.



## GROUP BUILDS

*“Build what we could do next to help the environment”*

Participants worked in small groups to combine ideas and develop shared models that represented future environmental ambitions for the facility and wider community. The builds moved thinking from individual achievements toward collective action and scaled impact. Across all group models, several consistent themes emerged:

- There was a strong focus on renewable energy, with solar and wind solutions featuring in every build. Participants explored how the facility could generate its own clean energy and reduce reliance on non-renewable sources, signalling a clear ambition for long-term environmental sustainability.
- Sustainable transport also featured prominently. Groups discussed the importance of moving people, materials, and goods in greener ways, reflecting awareness of transport-related emissions and the need for more environmentally responsible systems.
- A further theme centred on community connection. Groups expressed a desire to increase the number of people visiting and engaging with the service, alongside creating more opportunities for integration with the wider community.
- Environmental concerns around plastic waste were also evident. Participants demonstrated strong interest in recycling and upcycling, exploring creative ways to repurpose materials and reduce environmental impact.

Overall, the group builds reflected a shared commitment to environmental responsibility, future planning, and strengthening connections between sustainability initiatives and community engagement.



## SHARED BUILD

*“Create one big, shared Green Future Map.”*

Participants came together to combine their ideas into one collective model, mapping out a shared vision for a greener, more sustainable future. The build brought together themes from the individual and group stages, moving from ideas into a unified picture of ambition and possibility.

The shared model placed people at the heart of the vision, highlighting the importance of connection, collaboration, and active participation in shaping the future. This central positioning reinforced the belief that environmental progress is driven by people, relationships, and shared ownership. Building outward from this core, participants developed several key ideas:

- There was strong interest in establishing a permanent social enterprise, creating meaningful roles and opportunities for economic participation while supporting long-term sustainability.
- Participants also envisioned art exhibitions that would showcase creativity, celebrate identity, and highlight upcycling and environmental awareness through artistic expression.
- Horticulture featured prominently, with ambitions to expand planting and growing activities. The land was described as something that could “grow alongside us”—a metaphor capturing the idea of mutual development, where both people and place flourish through care and investment.

The group further emphasised the importance of sustainable land use, recognising its environmental, social, and economic value as a shared community asset.

Overall, the shared build captured a collective vision grounded in creativity, sustainability, inclusion, and community development, bringing together practical ideas and long-term aspirations into one unified “Green Future Map.”



## STEAM CONNECTIONS

Participants naturally incorporated STEAM principles throughout the builds:

- Science: renewable energy, nature, ecosystems, food growth
- Technology: EVs, energy systems, tools that support sustainable living
- Engineering: transport design, infrastructure ideas, planning and organisation
- Arts: creativity, upcycling, visual storytelling, future exhibitions
- Maths: resource use, logistics, spatial planning, sequencing and growth

STEAM was embedded across the workshop, demonstrating how participants apply these concepts intuitively in their daily activities.

## OUTCOME / PROGRESSION

The group identified three priority themes for future development:

1. Sustainable energy production and expanding alternative energy sources
2. Increasing the number of people accessing and engaging with services
3. Creative recycling and reducing plastic waste

Potential next steps included exploring new funding streams, establishing partnerships with external organisations (including education providers and community groups), and identifying opportunities to expand ongoing projects or test new initiatives. Participants expressed strong enthusiasm for progressing these ambitions.

### 3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)

#### KNOWLEDGE

Participants deepened their understanding of STEAM and recognised how art, nature, technology, and problem-solving already feature in their everyday environment. They demonstrated clear awareness of environmental issues and sustainable practices.

#### SKILLS

The workshop strengthened skills in building, prototyping, and visual communication. Many participants rediscovered LEGO after decades and quickly saw how it can be used to express ideas, systems, and future visions.

#### ATTITUDES

Confidence, openness, and engagement grew significantly throughout the session. Participants shifted from initial uncertainty to enthusiastic participation, offering ideas more freely as the workshop progressed.

#### ENJOYMENT

The session generated high levels of enjoyment and creative energy. One participant spoke about the calming, focused experience of building, describing how their mind felt clear of other distractions. Many expressed pride in what they created and in the ideas developed together.

#### BEHAVIOUR / PROGRESSION

The group concluded with a clear set of shared priorities and a readiness to explore next steps. Their discussions demonstrated constructive thinking about progression, partnerships, and future opportunities.

## Workshop 2

### Group Description:

This workshop group consisted of a combination of interested stakeholders, community leaders, and representatives from community development, the arts, and social enterprise sectors. Each brought a shared commitment to enhancing sustainability, strengthening community wellbeing, and supporting the long-term environmental and social development of the town.

Working collaboratively, the group reflected a diverse mix of perspectives and expertise, united by a common mission to deliver practical, inclusive actions that benefit both the local environment and the wider community.

### 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

This LEGO workshop was designed to support the group in exploring a shared question: *What will it take to make this town the greenest town in Ireland?* The brief focused on creating space for reflection, idea generation, and collaborative problem-solving, using a creative, participatory approach to identify practical actions that could strengthen environmental quality, pride of place, and community ownership. A core objective was to harness the collective knowledge, experience, and energy within the community and its wider stakeholders, recognising that achieving ambitious environmental goals requires collaboration across sectors.

The workshop brought together a diverse and well-balanced group, reflecting the broad ecosystem that shapes the town. Representation in the room included the group's volunteers alongside local development organisations, private business owners, local community centre staff, arts and cultural representatives, and social enterprises. This mix ensured that environmental considerations were explored alongside economic, social, cultural, and place-based perspectives. The diversity of voices enriched the discussion and LEGO builds, allowing participants to consider the town's green ambitions in terms of environmental action and also in relation to community life, visitor experience, local identity, and long-term sustainability. The presence of multiple sectors created a strong foundation for shared ownership of ideas and reinforced the importance of partnership in delivering meaningful change.

### 2. Build Observations

#### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

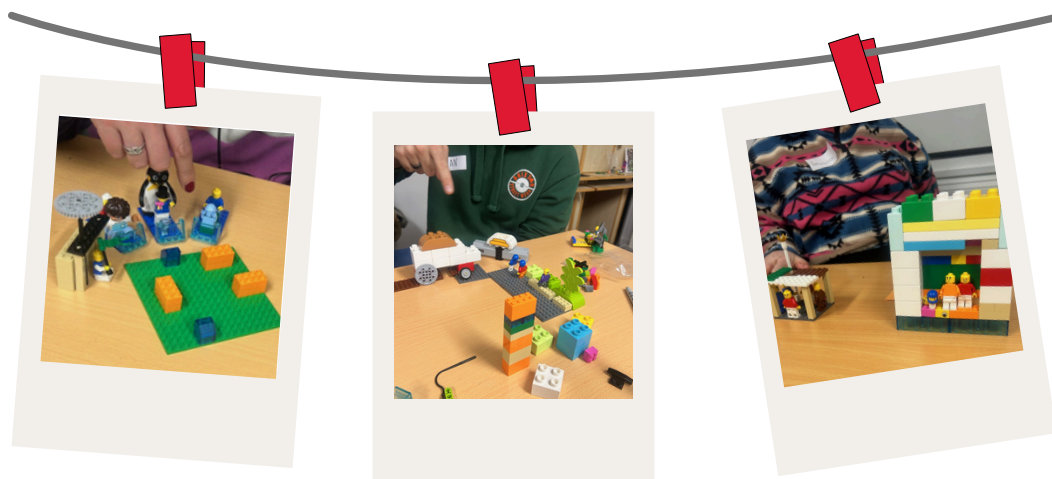
Participants were invited to build something that represents what they value most about their town today - its identity, landscape, people, and places, and to reflect on the challenges or obstacles that prevent the town from being as green, clean, or sustainable as it could be.

The LEGO builds strongly reflected the town's natural assets, with recurring themes including the cliffs, ocean, beach, and wider natural beauty. These features were consistently described as central to the town's character, sense of freedom, and pride of place. People and community also featured prominently, highlighting the importance of connection, welcome, and shared ownership in shaping the town's identity.

Alongside these strengths, participants used their builds to surface a number of challenges that threaten or limit their green ambitions. A sense of separation between the town and its natural environment emerged, particularly around access, connectivity, and how people move between the town and the coast. Seasonality was highlighted as a significant obstacle, with fluctuations in population, engagement, and maintenance affecting sustainability efforts.

More subtle or “invisible” barriers were also identified, including communication gaps and a lack of shared understanding around existing initiatives. Coastal erosion featured as a key environmental concern, reinforcing the need for long-term planning and protection of the town’s most valued natural assets.

This combined focus on values and obstacles provided a strong foundation for the workshop, ensuring that subsequent builds were grounded in what the community wants to protect, improve, and sustain as it works towards becoming Ireland’s greenest town.



## GROUP BUILDS

Participants were invited to work collaboratively on a shared build in response to the prompt: *“Build an idea, project, improvement, or change that would move the town closer to becoming the greenest town in Ireland.”*

This group build encouraged participants to move from reflection to action, integrating STEAM thinking—science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics- to explore innovative, place-based solutions that were creative, practical, and achievable.

Through the group LEGO build and facilitated discussion, participants identified a number of priority actions to support their ambition to become Ireland’s greenest town. Central to this was the need to strengthen collaboration and communication across community groups and local stakeholders, helping to reduce duplication, increase impact, and develop a shared vision for the town.

Participants highlighted the importance of removing barriers to engagement by actively connecting with enterprise stakeholders who may not have been involved in the past. Involving local schools and young people was identified as a key action to build long-term environmental awareness, leadership, and pride of place.

Improving infrastructure and connectivity also emerged as a priority. This included clearer signage, stronger physical and visual links between the town and its natural assets, and practical supports such as the provision of a bus shelter to encourage sustainable movement and improve everyday accessibility for residents and visitors. The potential development/identification of a shared community hub was identified as an enabler for coordination, education, communication, and project delivery.

Finally, protecting and enhancing the town’s natural environment, particularly the beach, cliffs, and coastal walk, was seen as essential to the town’s green ambition. Participants emphasised the importance of ongoing environmental stewardship and coastal defence measures to safeguard these assets for future generations.



## SHARED BUILD

Participants were invited to combine their individual and group models into one shared build, responding to the question: *“If these improvements happened, what could the town look like in 3–5 years?”*

The shared model emphasised the importance of open communication and transparency, with participants highlighting the need for clear communication and collaboration. The future town envisioned through the build was strongly people-centric, placing residents, families, and community well-being at the heart of environmental and placemaking initiatives.

Key stakeholders identified as essential to delivering this vision included parents, schools, community groups, community leaders, politicians, and local representatives, alongside Tidy Towns and partner organisations. Participants stressed the importance of engaging those with influence and decision-making capacity early and meaningfully, while ensuring that community voices remain central.

The build reflected a shared belief that progress depends on “all heads together”—a coordinated approach where community insight, leadership, and political support are aligned around a common goal.



## STEAM CONNECTIONS

- Science: coastal systems, biodiversity, erosion, climate impacts, composting and soil health
- Technology: communication tools, information sharing, environmental monitoring, data to support funding applications
- Engineering: infrastructure, connectivity, transport, coastal protection
- Arts: placemaking, visual storytelling, public art, pride of place, creative engagement
- Maths: planning, sequencing, spatial layout, resource use, measuring impact and outcomes

## OUTCOME / PROGRESSION

The group identified a number of priority areas to progress the town’s ambition to become Ireland’s greenest town. These centred on strengthening community-wide engagement, advancing sustainability initiatives, and improving infrastructure and connectivity.

Immediate actions include hosting a town-wide event in the next quarter to bring the community together around a shared sustainability agenda, with a Sustainable Energy Forum identified as a potential driver for collective action.

Short-term priorities include reviewing, sharing, and applying the findings of the Town Health Check document to inform planning, decision-making, and funding applications, as well as strengthening community communication channels to improve transparency and engagement.

Medium-term actions focus on addressing key infrastructure needs, particularly prioritising the provision of a bus shelter and improving access and connectivity links.

Longer-term ambitions include the development of a community-led climate adaptation plan, progressing strategic infrastructure such as a Greenway, and co-creating an Eco Charter to guide future development, behaviour, and partnerships.

### 3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)

#### KNOWLEDGE

Participants demonstrated clear awareness of environmental issues, coastal challenges, and sustainable practices, and showed an increased understanding of how these elements are interconnected within the town’s context.

#### ATTITUDES

Confidence, openness, and engagement grew steadily throughout the session, with participants moving from initial uncertainty to enthusiastic participation. A strong sense of trust, shared ownership, and optimism about the town’s potential emerged, balanced by a realistic acknowledgement of challenges linked to the town’s history, and a clear respect for differing views and shared outcomes.

#### SKILLS

The workshop strengthened skills in building, prototyping, and visual communication. Many participants discovered or rediscovered LEGO and quickly recognised its value as a tool to express ideas, systems, and future visions. Participants also demonstrated strong collaboration, listening, and problem-solving skills as ideas were shared, adapted, and combined.

#### ENJOYMENT

The session generated high levels of creative energy. The group remained actively engaged for over 3.5 hours, with strong participation and discussion sustained throughout.

#### BEHAVIOUR/PROGRESSION

The group concluded with a clear set of shared priorities and a strong readiness to progress next steps. Participants expressed commitment to continued collaboration, engagement, and involvement in upcoming community events, signalling momentum towards tangible action and long-term impact.

## Workshop 3

### Group Description:

This locally led, volunteer-driven organisation dedicated to supporting the social, cultural, and environmental wellbeing of the area. Operating within a unique rural and natural landscape, the group plays an important role in sustaining community life, promoting local heritage, and enhancing shared amenities for both residents and visitors. The group's work spans a wide range of activities, including community development initiatives, environmental care, local infrastructure advocacy, and the coordination of events and projects that strengthen connection and quality of life. With strong reliance on volunteerism and collective effort, the group reflects a deep sense of local pride, resilience, and commitment to place.

### 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

The purpose of the Blocks4Change workshop was to explore ways to meaningfully engage the local community in the group's newly acquired hub, formerly the local school building. The session focused on identifying inclusive opportunities to activate the space for all age groups, ensuring the hub becomes a shared focal point for community connection, participation, and wellbeing. Particular emphasis was placed on fostering intergenerational engagement and creating activities that encourage people to come together in a purposeful and sustainable way.

Aligned to the ethos of the Blocks4Change programme, discussions also centred on the development of environmental and nature-based initiatives linked to the hub and exploring how the space could support biodiversity activities, outdoor learning, sustainability awareness, and community-led environmental action.

### 2. Build Observations

#### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

*"Build something that represents you and your connection to your community."*

Participants began with an individual build, creating models that reflected their personal relationship with the area and what it means to them. Strong themes of connection to nature emerged throughout the builds. Participants represented the landscape through elements such as trees, mountains, water, and walking routes, highlighting the importance of the natural environment in everyday life, recreation, and wellbeing.

A powerful sense of home and family was evident across the models. Builds reflected generational roots, shared memories, and the valley as a place where families have lived, grown, and remained connected over time. Alongside this deep heritage, there was also a strong sense of new beginnings. For many, the area represents not just where they live, but a deep familial bond to place, one that honours the past while offering opportunities for life in the future.

Themes of **history and heritage** were also prominent, with participants referencing traditions, stories, and the importance of preserving the character and legacy of the area for future generations.



## GROUP BUILDS

*“What sustains life in this community—environmentally, socially, culturally, and economically?”*

Working independently at first and then collectively, the group developed shared models exploring the foundations that sustain life in the area across multiple dimensions. Farming and the land featured strongly, recognised as central to both environmental stewardship and local economic sustainability. Participants reflected on the deep relationship between people and landscape, and the role traditional practices continue to play in shaping the area’s identity and resilience.

Tourism was also identified as a key sustaining force, supporting the local economy while creating opportunities to share the area’s natural beauty, heritage, and way of life with visitors.

The importance of bridges and connection emerged as another core theme, both in a physical and social sense. Physical infrastructure supports movement and access within the area, while advanced technological connection enables communication, coordination of activities, and promotion of the area more widely, supporting sustainable livelihoods and unlocking wider potential for this rural community.

As the build evolved, participants were invited to add challenges or obstacles that may prevent the area from being as sustainable as it could be. Key issues identified included traffic pressures, particularly during peak tourism periods, and the impact this has on safety, mobility, and environmental quality. Participants spoke about the practical realities of congestion within a rural road network, alongside feelings of being physically constrained or “trapped” during high visitor periods when movement in and out of the valley becomes difficult.

This led to wider reflections on the tension between sustaining tourism-based livelihoods and protecting quality of life for residents. While tourism is recognised as economically important, participants discussed the challenge of balancing visitor access with environmental preservation, community wellbeing, and daily living needs. A broader lack of communication and information sharing was highlighted as a barrier to coordination, engagement, and community participation, both within the valley and externally.



## SHARED BUILD

*“Bring your table’s model into the centre and work together to build one shared community that protects what matters and supports future generations.”*

Participants combined their table models into one collective build, creating a shared vision for the future of their area, grounded in protecting its environmental, cultural, and community assets while supporting long-term sustainability.

Farming remained central within the shared model, reflecting its role in sustaining both landscape and livelihoods. This was expanded through ideas such as a sustainable farm shop/community pantry, supporting local producers, short supply chains, and community-based economic activity.

Community connection featured strongly. Proposals included strengthening communication structures, such as the creation/resurgence of a local WhatsApp group to support information sharing, coordination of activities, and community updates. A communal garden also formed part of the shared vision, seen as a space

that could support biodiversity, local food growing, education, and intergenerational participation, while also enhancing the use of the community hub and surrounding land.

Infrastructure and land management actions were also incorporated, including fencing projects, improved local routes, and small-scale infrastructure enhancements to support access, safety, and land stewardship.

Energy sustainability emerged as an important consideration within the rural context. Participants explored opportunities for local energy generation, with discussion focusing on the most appropriate and feasible methods given the landscape, location, and infrastructure constraints. Renewable options were considered alongside the practical role of a community generator to support resilience, energy security, and continuity of service within the hub during outages or extreme weather events.

Cultural sustainability formed another key pillar of the shared build. Participants highlighted the importance of heritage preservation, including creating opportunities to capture and relive local stories, traditions, and lived experiences. Ideas such as storytelling initiatives, archives, and heritage events were discussed as ways to strengthen identity and intergenerational connection.

A community calendar of events was proposed to coordinate activities, encourage participation, and maximise use of the newly acquired hub as a focal point for engagement.

Overall, the shared build presented a connected vision of environmental care, cultural preservation, economic resilience, and strengthened community communication, designed to protect what matters most while supporting future generations.



## **STEAM CONNECTIONS**

- Science: Biodiversity, land stewardship, farming practices, composting, soil health, environmental conservation
- Technology: Communication tools, information sharing, digital connectivity, promotion, and future funding applications.
- Engineering: Rural infrastructure, transport access, routes and connectivity, land management, energy generation solutions
- Arts: Placemaking, storytelling, heritage preservation, community identity, creative engagement
- Maths: Planning, sequencing, resource allocation, and measuring participation and impact

## **OUTCOME / PROGRESSION**

Discussion focused on how priority actions could be progressed in practical terms, with a strong emphasis on partnership working and shared responsibility across the community.

Key partners were identified to support next steps, spanning local volunteers, sectoral expertise, and external agencies, alongside recognition of the need to undertake feasibility planning to strengthen future funding applications for the community centre. This includes scoping, costing, and identifying the most appropriate delivery pathways for priority projects.

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There was strong emphasis on establishing a calendar of inclusive events and activities within the community hub, designed to engage all age groups, strengthen social connection, and maximise use of the space as a focal point for community life. Other focus areas included the development of a communal garden and the exploration of energy-related initiatives, both viewed as achievable, high-impact projects capable of delivering environmental, educational, and community wellbeing benefits. In addition, there was also recognition of the need to strengthen communication and coordination with tourism partners, particularly to support more sustainable visitor management, shared messaging, and alignment between community priorities and tourism activity in the area.

### 3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)

#### **KNOWLEDGE**

Participants demonstrated strong awareness of environmental sustainability, rural challenges, and the importance of land, heritage, and biodiversity. The workshop deepened understanding of how environmental stewardship, tourism, infrastructure, and community development are interconnected in sustaining life.

#### **ATTITUDES**

A strong sense of pride, care for place, and collective responsibility was evident throughout. There was clear respect for differing experiences and a shared commitment to protecting the valley's future.

#### **BEHAVIOUR / PROGRESSION**

Participants demonstrated readiness to progress actions collaboratively, with momentum building around communication, environmental projects, and partnership opportunities, signalling positive progression towards tangible, community-led outcomes.

#### **SKILLS**

The workshop strengthened skills in building and visual communication. Participants engaged confidently with LEGO® Serious Play®, using models to express their ideas and local knowledge. The builds were rich in detail, with thoughtful elements that reflected the landscape, heritage, and lived experience of the valley. Collaboration and listening were evident throughout, as ideas were shared and combined into collective models.

#### **ENJOYMENT**

The workshop was characterised by a warm, homely community atmosphere, reflective of the valley itself. The diverse age range and demographic mix created an inclusive and welcoming environment, enabling participants to get to know one another, strengthen connections, and welcome newer members into community dialogue.

## Workshop 4

### Group Description:

This workshop was conducted with a public environmental and educational facility located on the edge of Tralee town, operating as an open-access public amenity for both local residents and visitors. The centre offers an immersive experience of the rich natural heritage of Tralee Bay, combining interactive exhibitions, wildlife habitats, and outdoor trails to showcase the area's biodiversity and the importance of conservation and climate awareness. As a publicly accessible space, it provides opportunities for people of all ages to explore, learn, and connect with nature and the surrounding area, while also functioning as a valued recreational space for walking, exploration, and outdoor engagement. Serving as both a visitor attraction and a learning resource, the facility promotes environmental stewardship, sustainability, and appreciation of Tralee Bay's distinctive character. This public amenity is managed by Kerry County Council and supported by Fáilte Ireland.

### 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

This workshop was designed to support strategic reflection and forward planning for the organisation, building on over a decade of successful operation as a leading environmental, educational, and visitor attraction since opening in 2012. The session aimed to facilitate collective agreement on future priorities to help shape organisational direction over the next 3–5 years. Key areas of focus included the future emphasis of ecological work, the development of activities and public programmes, and the operational and staffing resources required to support delivery. The workshop also created space to reflect on current strengths, explore emerging opportunities and challenges, and align organisational ambition with staff capacity and expertise.

A participatory LEGO® Serious Play® methodology was used to ensure inclusive engagement across all levels and functions of staff. Through a series of individual and group builds, participants used models to explore lived experience, organisational strengths, operational challenges, and future direction.

This hands-on, non-hierarchical approach supported open and constructive dialogue, enabling contributions beyond formal roles or titles. It helped surface shared priorities, differing perspectives, and collective insights, establishing a strong foundation for the development of a shared, future-focused organisational strategy.

### 2. Build Observations

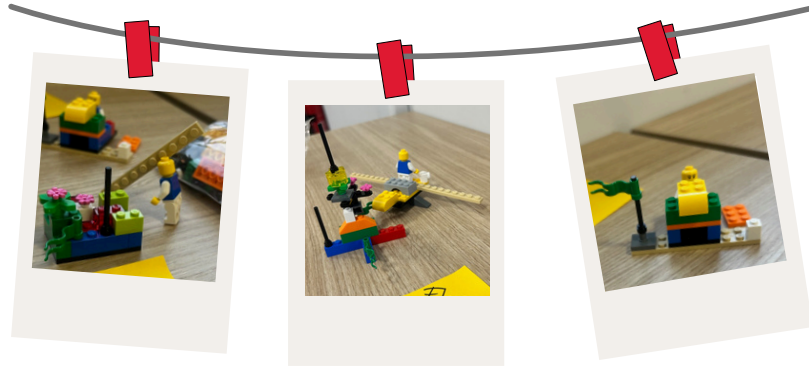
#### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

*“Build a model that shows your role and what you care most about in your work.”*

Across the individual builds, the front ecology park featured strongly, reflecting its importance as both a working environment and a key point of interaction with visitors. Participants consistently placed people at the centre of their models, emphasising the role of engagement, education, and interaction as core to their work.

Strong themes of teamwork and mutual support emerged, with builds highlighting how staff help one another, collaborate across roles, and work together to deliver the visitor experience and environmental outcomes. Flora, fauna, and natural resources were prominently represented, alongside pride in the achievements made to date in protecting, managing, and showcasing the site's ecological value.

Participants also used their models to reflect future opportunity, particularly in relation to learning, development, and career progression. This suggested a strong alignment between personal motivation, professional growth, and the long-term success of the facility.



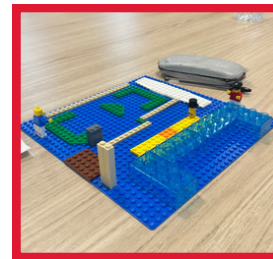
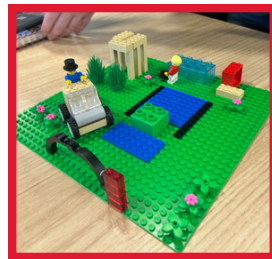
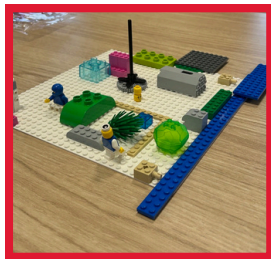
## GROUP BUILDS

*“Build what makes it so special through the lens of our key areas”*

The group builds highlighted the distinctive combination of place, people, and accessibility that makes the facility unique. Strong emphasis was placed on the contrast and connection between the front area and back area, with participants recognising how each serves different but complementary functions—from welcoming visitors and education to conservation, ecology, and quieter engagement with nature.

The lake featured prominently as a central natural asset, symbolising biodiversity, learning, and the immersive experience of the site. Accessibility was consistently referenced, reflecting the importance of the facility as an inclusive space that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities.

People and community were woven throughout the models, reinforcing the natural environment and shared community resource. Participants highlighted the role of staff, volunteers, and visitors in bringing the space to life, underlining that the interaction between natural assets and human connection is central to what makes it so special.



## SHARED BUILD

*“Add an idea, project, improvement, or change that would strengthen the facility over the next 3–5 years”*

Participants initially worked at table level, combining individual ideas into shared models that captured what they believed should be protected, strengthened, or developed over the next 3–5 years. These table builds were then brought together into a single group build, allowing the full staff team to collectively review, refine, and agree priorities.

Across this process, there was an overwhelming acknowledgement that the back area of the site requires greater strategic focus over the coming years. The group consistently identified this as both a current challenge and a significant opportunity, with strong potential to support new markets, expanded activities, and enhanced visitor experiences, including opportunities to extend the season and support more year-round use of the site.

Ideas centred on developing new and diversified activities, particularly those linked to education, ecology, and leisure, with a strong emphasis on sustainability as a guiding principle.

Strengthening education facilities emerged as a clear priority, with opportunities identified to better support schools, community groups, and corporate groups. Participants also highlighted the importance of energy considerations, including efficiency and long-term operational sustainability, alongside accessibility, ensuring that the facility continues to be an inclusive space for all users.

Alongside these themes, participants emphasised the need for clearer and more strategic messaging and communications to better articulate the value of attraction and to reach new and broader audiences. As part of the group build, participants removed duplication, set aside non-priority areas, and made explicit connections between ideas, assets, and actions.

This collaborative approach resulted in a shared, prioritised understanding of what makes the facility so special, what must be protected, and where targeted investment, communication, and programme development should be focused over the next 3–5 years.



## **STEAM CONNECTIONS**

- Science: green spaces, planting, biodiversity, habitats, bird hide, water quality, lake ecology, waste reduction, climate resilience,
- Technology: communication tools, information sharing, visitor engagement, educational technology, coordination of activities
- Engineering: infrastructure, site layout, footpaths and lighting, parking, wastewater and drainage systems, accessibility, transport and connectivity, visitor flow management
- Arts: placemaking, visual storytelling, interpretation, signage, pride of place, community identity, creative engagement, age-friendly
- Maths: planning, resource use, prioritisation, capacity planning, measuring participation, impact and outcomes, visitor data analysis

## **OUTCOME / PROGRESSION**

In the final stage of the workshop, participants worked collectively with the shared group model to identify what needs to happen next to progress agreed priorities, as well as the obstacles that may need to be addressed. This discussion focused on translating ideas into action and understanding the practical requirements for delivery.

Key needs identified included planning and research, particularly to inform future development and investment decisions, alongside careful resource and staff management to ensure capacity aligns with ambition. Time was consistently highlighted as a constraint, reinforcing the importance of prioritisation and phased delivery. Participants also identified the need to strengthen digital assets, including photography and visual content, to support communications, engagement, and funding applications.

Additional requirements included investment, both financial and in-kind, ongoing support and training for staff, and the importance of writing a clear plan or strategy to guide development over the coming years. Overall, this final step helped clarify the enabling conditions required to move forward, ensuring that future action is realistic, coordinated, and aligned with available resources.

As a result of the workshop, clear and defined next steps were identified and assigned across the staff team to ensure momentum is maintained and priorities progress. These include the development of a 3–5 year strategy to provide an overarching framework for future direction and decision-making. A key focus will be the development of the back area of the site, with particular emphasis on progressing plans for the bird hide as a flagship asset for education, ecology, and visitor experience.

Further actions include enhancing communications and digital assets, including photography and other visual content, to better tell the story of the organisation and support engagement, marketing, and funding applications. In parallel, the team will scope best practice in eco-education facilities, drawing on relevant national and international examples to inform future investment and programme development.

Together, these next steps provide a clear pathway from workshop insights to practical action and support a coordinated, strategic approach to the continued development of the facility over the coming years.

### 3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)

#### KNOWLEDGE

Facilitator observation and participant feedback indicated that staff recognised they are more aligned than previously realised, with common views emerging across roles and functions on priorities for the next 3–5 years.

#### SKILLS

The LEGO® Serious Play® methodology supported structured dialogue and collaborative thinking, helping participants articulate ideas clearly and integrate different perspectives into shared understanding.

#### ATTITUDES

The overall tone of the workshop was positive, open, and supportive. Facilitator observation noted a strong sense of optimism, with participants describing the experience as “positive” and “happy.” There was clear collective buy-in to the future direction, underpinned by shared values of collaboration, trust, and respect.

#### ENJOYMENT

High levels of enjoyment and engagement were observed across the group. The creative, hands-on approach supported a relaxed and inclusive environment, enabling participants to contribute openly and creatively. The positive energy in the room was a notable feature of the session.

#### BEHAVIOUR / PROGRESSION

Participants demonstrated clear readiness to move from discussion to action. Feedback reflected strong alignment around future priorities, with a shared understanding that the direction is clear and the next step is to formalise it into a written plan or strategy.

## Workshop 5

### Group Description:

This long-established GAA club has deep roots in its local community and is recognised for its sustained contribution to Gaelic games and community life. With a strong tradition of volunteerism and grassroots development, the club has played an important role in fostering sporting participation across all age groups while also acting as a social and cultural hub. Its history reflects on-field achievements and a continued commitment to youth development, community engagement, and the provision of facilities that support both members and the wider locality. This legacy positions the club as a key community anchor, balancing respect for tradition with a focus on future growth and sustainability.

### 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

The workshop brought together committee members, volunteers, and clubhouse staff, representing those involved in governance, daily operations, and member engagement within a local GAA club.

Titled “Building a Greener Club Together,” the session used LEGO® Serious Play® as an inclusive engagement methodology to enable participation across generations and abilities. The approach supported equal voice, shared storytelling, and collaborative problem-solving, ensuring that a broad range of perspectives could inform the club’s sustainability planning.

The workshop sought to align existing plans, experience, and ideas while ensuring focus on practical, achievable priorities in line with the club’s commitment to the GAA Green Clubs Programme. In particular, discussions centred on the key action areas of Energy, Water, Waste, Biodiversity, and Travel & Transport.

The group dynamic was collaborative and forward-looking, supporting constructive dialogue on how the club can continue to build on its community impact while embedding Green Clubs principles into its ongoing development through realistic and measurable actions.

### 2. Build Observations

#### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

*“Build a model that shows what this GAA club means to you.”*

Participants created individual models that reflected the personal and collective significance of the club in their lives. Strong themes of community and belonging emerged throughout the builds, with many participants depicting the club as a central gathering place - somewhere that extends beyond sport into social connection and shared identity.

Several participants referenced the symbolism of open gates, representing accessibility, welcome, and inclusivity - a club that is open to all. This linked closely with representations of different nationalities and backgrounds, reflecting the club as a diverse and welcoming space and, for some, a true “home away from home.”

Models frequently highlighted players and teams across age grades, illustrating the lifelong journey from youth participation through to adult involvement. The importance of youth development was particularly evident, with builds representing underage pathways, mentorship, and the role the club plays in shaping confidence and life skills.

The club’s legacy of success, both on and off the field, also featured strongly. Builds acknowledged not only sporting achievements but also volunteerism, leadership, and community contribution passed down through generations.



## GROUP BUILDS

*“Choose one area where you think the club could or is already doing well.”*

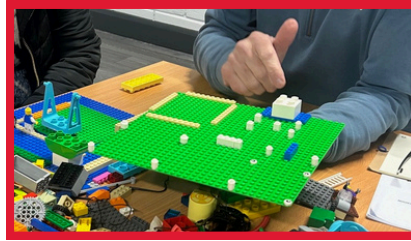
Participants began with an individual build, creating models that reflected where they felt the club was demonstrating strength, particularly in the context of environmental sustainability and the GAA Green Clubs pillars. Initial builds highlighted positive actions already underway, including work around grant applications and club development, recognised as critical in enabling sustainable facility upgrades. Participants also referenced grass cutting and lawn management practices, acknowledging the care taken in maintaining pitches and green spaces, alongside growing awareness of biodiversity opportunities. A recurring theme across individual models was the club’s culture of listening and openness to ideas, seen as an important foundation for future environmental progress. Recycling was discussed across a number of builds. While efforts in this area were acknowledged, participants noted that actions to date have not been substantial and identified waste management as an area with clear scope for development under the Green Clubs framework.

A particularly inclusive idea to emerge was the development of a Sensory Biodiversity Sideline to support the club’s GAA4All group for children with divergent needs. Participants discussed creating a dedicated, nature-based space incorporating sensory planting, textures, colours, and wildlife features that would provide a calm, engaging environment alongside pitch activity. This initiative was viewed as an opportunity to align biodiversity enhancement with inclusion, ensuring that sustainability actions also deliver social and wellbeing benefits. The space would support sensory engagement, outdoor participation, and a stronger sense of belonging for children of all abilities within the club setting.

Participants then moved to a table share, where individual builds were presented and discussed. This storytelling phase enabled members to explain the meaning behind their models, identify common themes, and explore how individual ideas could connect or expand. Through this collaborative reflection, participants began incorporating additional ideas that could strengthen the club over the next 3–5 years. Emerging opportunities included a planned tree planting initiative, the creation of a biodiversity garden, and exploring solar energy production as a renewable energy solution. Concepts such as rainwater harvesting and water collection systems were also discussed to support both pitch maintenance and biodiversity initiatives.

Wider community wellbeing links were also identified, including opportunities to promote family fitness through stronger connections to the nearby Greenway. Participants noted the potential to encourage active travel, for example, supporting parents to walk or cycle while children train, alongside a need to strengthen communication and awareness of the club’s proximity to this amenity.

This Individual Build and Table Share process enabled participants to recognise existing good practice while collectively shaping a practical and achievable vision aligned to the GAA Green Clubs Programme.



## SHARED BUILD

*“Combine your models into one group build.”*

Participants worked collectively to merge individual and table models into a single shared build, agreeing the priority themes that mattered most for the club’s environmental future. The emphasis at this stage was not on generating new ideas, but on aligning existing ones and identifying what actions were most important—particularly considering what may be at risk if key areas were not addressed. Each element of the model was labelled to reflect its thematic focus.

An important part of this discussion was assessing what would be practical and achievable, as well as identifying initiatives that may not be suitable within the club’s context. For example, while renewable energy featured in earlier builds, wind energy was ruled out due to the club’s residential location and associated planning and community considerations. This enabled the group to focus on more viable energy solutions.

Recycling emerged as a key priority, with particular focus on plastic bottle recycling and the management of paper and cardboard waste generated through clubhouse activities. Achievable waste reduction measures were discussed, including the installation of water refill taps to reduce single-use plastics.

Environmental enhancement actions included tree planting initiatives and the development of biodiversity spaces. There was also interest in linking planting projects to the legacy of the club, for example recognising past teams or milestones through commemorative planting.

The shared build also incorporated the concept of a sensory biodiverse sideline to support the club’s GAA4All group for children with additional support needs. Participants recognised the value of this initiative in linking biodiversity action with inclusion and wellbeing, ensuring that environmental enhancements also support accessibility, participation, and positive experiences for children of all abilities within the club.

Active travel and wellbeing were reflected through ideas such as local walking routes, mapped trails, and stronger connections to nearby amenities, supporting healthier and more sustainable transport choices. Energy efficiency also featured, particularly exploring smart energy grant applications to enable initiatives such as LED retrofit of pitch lighting.

Overall, the shared build balanced ambition with realism, identifying practical environmental actions aligned to the GAA Green Clubs pillars and grounded in the operational context of the club.



## **STEAM CONNECTIONS**

- Science: Biodiversity, tree planting, green spaces, pitch ecology, and environmental stewardship.
- Technology: Communication platforms, information sharing, and digital coordination of club activities and sustainability actions.
- Engineering: Club infrastructure, pitch lighting (LED retrofit), water refill points, waste systems, and site planning.
- Arts: Club legacy installations, commemorative tree planting, placemaking, and visual celebration of club history.
- Maths: Grant planning, budgeting, resource allocation, participation tracking, and measuring environmental impact.

## **OUTCOME / PROGRESSION**

The final phase of the workshop focused on identifying what would be required to turn ideas into reality, and the role participants themselves could play in progressing actions.

Through group discussion, participants mapped the practical steps, supports, and resources needed to advance priority initiatives. There was strong recognition of the importance of collaboration, both within the club and externally, as essential to delivering sustainable change. Participants acknowledged past and ongoing opportunities for funding, guidance, and expertise through Kerry County Council, while also identifying future collaboration opportunities with Munster Technological University to support planning, innovation, and sustainability initiatives. Another key outcome was the identification of club parents, members, and volunteers who could contribute specific skills or time to support implementation, reinforcing a shared ownership approach to delivery. This discussion moved the workshop from ideation to action, establishing early responsibility, volunteer capacity, and realistic next steps aligned to the club's Green Clubs ambitions.

### **Next Steps**

Clear leadership roles emerged as the group considered how priority actions could be progressed in practical terms. The clubhouse team committed to taking a lead role in advancing recycling initiatives, particularly in relation to plastic bottle recycling and the management of paper and cardboard waste, with support from wider committee members. The club's Biodiversity Officer also outlined plans to progress environmental enhancement actions, including tree planting initiatives and the development of biodiversity spaces within club grounds. These actions will align closely with Green Clubs objectives while also offering opportunities to recognise club heritage through commemorative planting. The proposed development of a Sensory Biodiversity Sideline for the club's GAA4All group was also agreed upon to progress

Progression of several larger actions, including energy upgrades, biodiversity projects, and infrastructure improvements, remains dependent on the outcome of grant applications currently submitted or in development. This group reached clear agreement on priority focus areas to guide planning and funding efforts. This shared clarity ensures that, as funding opportunities arise, the club is well positioned to move forward in a coordinated and strategic way, aligned to its Green Clubs commitments.

### 3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)

#### **KNOWLEDGE**

Facilitator observation and participant feedback indicated strong alignment across the group. Discussions reflected clarity from big-picture vision through to operational detail, with participants demonstrating a common understanding of the club's direction, particularly in relation to sustainability, biodiversity, and community wellbeing.

#### **SKILLS**

The LEGO® Serious Play® methodology supported structured dialogue and collaborative thinking. The process enabled committee members and volunteers to translate concepts into practical actions, including planning, funding pathways, and delivery considerations.

#### **ATTITUDES**

The overall tone of the workshop was positive, open, and supportive. Facilitator observation noted a strong sense of optimism. There was clear collective buy-in to the club's future direction, underpinned by shared values of collaboration, trust, and respect, alongside a genuine commitment to biodiversity, sustainability, and member wellbeing.

#### **ENJOYMENT**

The creative, hands-on approach supported a relaxed and inclusive environment, enabling participants to contribute openly. The positive energy in the room, combined with pride in club identity and legacy, was a notable feature of the session.

#### **BEHAVIOUR / PROGRESSION**

Participants demonstrated clear readiness to move from discussion to action. Feedback reflected strong alignment around future priorities, supported by a motivated committee and a focused funding pipeline to progress key initiatives. There was shared recognition that direction is clear, with the next step centred on formalising actions into structured plans and funding applications.

## Workshop 6

### Group Description:

Tidy Towns plays an active role in advancing environmental protection, biodiversity, waste reduction, climate action, and strengthening pride of place across communities. A core area of interest for the co-leads is supporting and enabling local housing estates to engage meaningfully in environmental initiatives and community-led action. This workshop group consisted of a volunteer-led community organisation working in partnership with local residents, local authority representatives (including tenancy management), and elected members, all sharing a common focus on enhancing the appearance, sustainability, and quality of life of town housing estates for residents and visitors alike.

### 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

This facilitated workshop brought together representatives from Tidy Towns, the local authority, elected members, and two local housing estates comprising a mix of social and private housing. The session created a shared space for open discussion, reflection, and collaborative problem-solving on how best to engage, support, and empower estates to participate in environmental initiatives and strengthen pride of place. The workshop recognised that local housing estates are central to the town's overall environmental quality and community wellbeing, and that sustainable progress relies on strong relationships, practical supports, and shared ownership between residents, voluntary groups, and local authorities.

A LEGO® Serious Play®-inspired, participatory approach was used to ensure all voices were heard equally. Participants worked through a series of individual and group builds, using models as prompts for discussion around lived experience, community dynamics, and environmental action at estate level.

This hands-on approach supported open dialogue between residents, volunteers, and local authority representatives, helping to surface shared challenges and opportunities in a constructive, non-hierarchical way.

### 2. Build Observations

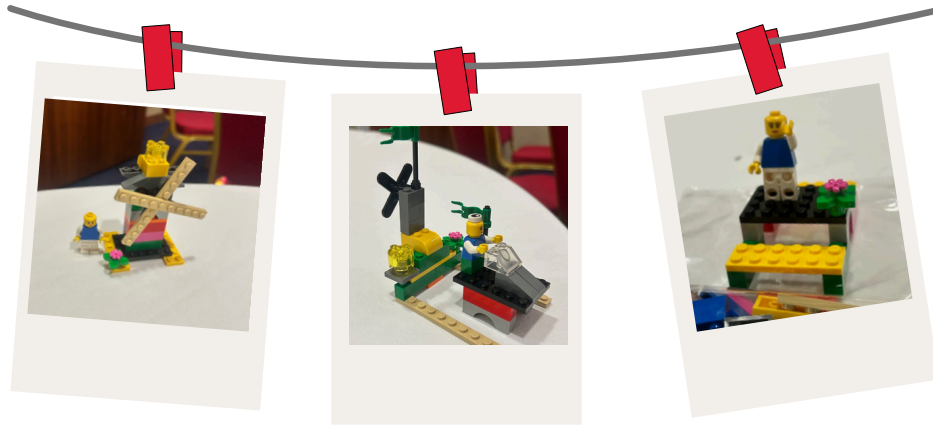
#### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

*“Build a model that shows something your estate does well, something you are proud of or appreciate in your estate.”*

Across the individual builds, participants consistently highlighted people, community, and connection as the strongest assets within their estates. Many models centred on relationships between neighbours, informal support networks, and opportunities to meet and connect with others, alongside a strong sense of pride in the place they live. Connection was expressed through access and mobility, with the local bus and transport links referenced as important enablers of inclusion, independence, and connection to the wider town. Together, these elements were closely linked to feelings of safety, belonging, and familiarity, suggesting that social cohesion is a key strength underpinning pride of place.

Nature and the local environment also featured prominently. Participants referenced green spaces, trees, shared outdoor areas, and the wider natural beauty of the town, often positioning these as places of calm, interaction, and shared enjoyment. The presence of nature was closely tied to wellbeing and community identity.

Several builds reflected an appreciation of the town's built heritage and sense of place, with models representing familiar landmarks, established estates, and the character of the town. These elements were associated with continuity, shared history, and a sense of rootedness within the community.



## GROUP BUILDS

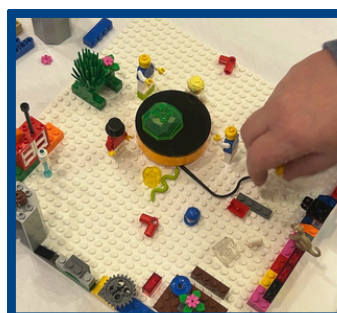
*“Build what is happening in your estate when things are going well”*

Participants began with individual builds, reflecting on their own experiences of estate and/or community life, both past and present. Many drew on childhood memories, recalling what it felt like growing up in their estate, including play, neighbourliness, safety, and everyday social connection. These personal reflections created an emotional and experiential foundation, capturing both nostalgia and a desire to sustain positive community spirit into the future.

These individual insights were then brought into the group builds, where shared themes began to emerge. Builds emphasised inclusion, participation, and volunteering, with residents contributing in different ways depending on their time, interests, and capacity. A strong sense of shared pride and ownership was evident, with participants expressing that positive momentum builds when people feel their contribution matters. Belonging and empowerment emerged as closely linked themes, with builds showing that when people feel welcomed, supported, and trusted, they are more likely to get involved. Several models highlighted the importance of family-friendly spaces and activities, with play, shared events, and everyday social interactions reinforcing connection across generations. An element of fun was also captured, suggesting that enjoyment is a key driver of sustained participation.

Participants were then prompted to explore what gets in the way of positive change in their estate. Across the builds, a recurring challenge related to perceived unfair or unequal treatment, which was seen to undermine trust and confidence. Participants expressed that when decisions, supports, or outcomes are viewed as inconsistent or unclear, it can create disengagement among residents, reducing willingness to participate and limiting momentum for positive change.

There was also strong emphasis on the importance of delivering early, visible improvements. Practical issues such as parking, illegal dumping, and waste removal were highlighted as priority concerns. Addressing these tangible challenges was seen as critical in building trust, demonstrating responsiveness, and reinforcing the value of resident engagement at estate level.



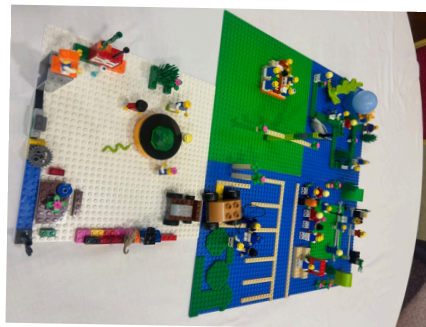
## SHARED BUILD

*“Suggest an idea, project, improvement, or change that residents could realistically take forward to strengthen their estates over the next 6–12 months.”*

The builds focused on small, achievable actions that residents felt confident could be delivered within existing capacity. A strong emphasis was placed on working closely with Tidy Towns, particularly around estate clean-ups and coordinated planning initiatives, ensuring efforts are supported, visible, and aligned with wider town priorities.

Ideas included community-led activities motivated by positive competition, such as friendly challenges between estates, alongside practical environmental improvements that deliver quick, visible wins. Participants highlighted the importance of talking to neighbours as a first step - building momentum through conversation, encouraging wider participation, and forming or rejuvenating estate committees where needed. Committees and informal organisers were represented not as controllers, but as enablers, creating opportunities, removing barriers, and supporting residents to take ownership.

Ensuring that estate priorities are clearly identified and aligned was seen as key to sustaining engagement. Participants also emphasised the importance of local representatives and public authorities working together to ensure internal systems and processes actively support resident associations, where appropriate. This included clear points of contact, responsive processes, and practical support that enables residents to progress ideas without unnecessary barriers.



## STEAM CONNECTIONS

- Science: green spaces, planting, waste reduction
- Technology: communication tools, information sharing, resident engagement, coordination of volunteers, data to support funding applications
- Engineering: infrastructure, estate layout, footpaths and lighting, parking, wastewater systems, accessibility, transport and connectivity
- Arts: placemaking, visual storytelling, signage, pride of place, community identity, creative engagement, family-friendly activities
- Maths: planning, resource use, prioritisation, measuring participation, impact and outcomes, waste management and illegal dumping patterns

## OUTCOME / PROGRESSION

The workshop identified a clear set of priority actions to strengthen estate-level engagement and environmental action. A strong emphasis was placed on empowering residents to take ownership of local initiatives, supported through practical guidance, clear points of contact, and collaborative planning with Tidy Towns and the Local Authority. Activities should be inclusive and enjoyable, recognising that fun and positive experiences are important drivers of participation and pride of place.

In parallel, the need for improved communication and internal alignment was highlighted, particularly in relation to tenancy and estate management processes, to ensure systems effectively support resident associations and community-led action. Participants also stressed the importance of early, visible improvements such as parking and illegal dumping and waste removal to build trust, demonstrate responsiveness, and reinforce the value of engagement at estate level.

### Next Steps

The immediate next step identified by the group is the formal establishment of the pilot estate engagement initiative, involving three housing estates. Tidy Towns will work with the Local Authority and resident representatives to confirm participating estates, agree roles and points of contact, and identify priority actions for each location.

The pilot will be structured around the core principles identified through the workshop—engagement, empowerment, fun, and pride—and will focus on delivering small, visible actions that build trust and momentum. Early activities may include coordinated estate clean-ups, targeted responses to parking and illegal dumping issues, and support for the formation or strengthening of resident committees.

Alongside estate-level action, coordination will be explored to ensure tenancy, estate management, and environmental services are aligned to effectively support the pilot, with the goal of strengthening communication channels and reducing barriers to resident-led initiatives.

Learning from the pilot will be captured on an ongoing basis to inform refinement of the approach and support a phased expansion to additional estates over time.

### 3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>KNOWLEDGE</b></p> <p>The workshop highlighted that many residents care deeply about their local areas and are motivated to improve them, reinforcing awareness of collective responsibility and potential.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SKILLS</b></p> <p>The hands-on approach supported exploration of complex issues in an accessible way and enabled participants to articulate ideas, listen to others, and build shared understanding.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ATTITUDES</b></p> <p>Participants reported feeling more positive and optimistic following the workshop. The process helped shift perspectives from focusing on barriers to recognising possibilities, reinforcing values of cooperation, empowerment, and shared ownership. The experience increased confidence that meaningful change is achievable when people work together.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ENJOYMENT</b></p> <p>The LEGO® Serious Play® approach was widely valued for making the session enjoyable, inclusive, and engaging. Participants found the creative process both motivating and energising, with many noting that the sense of fun supported openness, participation, and sustained engagement.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BEHAVIOUR / PROGRESSION</b></p> <p>The workshop increased willingness to engage in future estate-level action and collaboration. Participants left with a stronger intention to talk to neighbours, contribute ideas, and participate in initiatives that improve their estates, supported by local groups and agencies.</p>

## Workshop 7

### Group Description:

This charity-led residential care facility provides long-term and respite care services to older persons within the community, as well as others requiring additional living supports. The home is grounded in values of dignity, person-centred care, and community connection, supporting residents through holistic health, social, and wellbeing services. The facility serves as both a care environment and a social living space, where quality of life, comfort, and belonging are prioritised alongside clinical and daily living supports. Staff and leadership bring extensive experience across nursing, care provision, activities coordination, and operational management, ensuring a compassionate and supportive setting for residents. Participants in the workshop included a cross-section of staff involved in the day-to-day life of the home, alongside those engaged in planning, resident engagement, and service development, as well as residents of the care facility. This breadth of representation enabled discussions to reflect both operational realities and lived experience, while also capturing future aspirations for the home.

### 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

The workshop was designed to create a structured space for staff and home residents to reflect on the residential home as it exists today, while also exploring how it can continue to evolve to meet the needs of residents into the future, in an efficient and sustainable manner.

Framed under the theme “*Our Home Today, Tomorrow & for Future Generations*,” the session focused on strengthening shared understanding of what makes the home a positive living environment, considering physical space, sustainable developments, and activities provision. Participants were invited to reflect on current strengths, lived experiences of residents and staff, and the elements that contribute to comfort, dignity, and quality of life. A key aim was to explore future opportunities across areas such as environmental enhancement, sustainability practices, intergenerational connection, and the continued development of inclusive, engaging spaces and activities. The workshop also sought to align staff perspectives on priorities, ensuring that future planning reflects both operational realities and collective aspiration.

Using a LEGO® Serious Play® participatory methodology, the session enabled contributions from across roles and functions, supporting open dialogue, shared reflection, and collaborative vision-building around the future of the home. Assistance was provided to participants during the build process where required, with appropriately sized LEGO® pieces selected to support ease of handling and ensure accessibility for all.

### 2. Build Observations

#### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

*“Build what makes this home feel special and like a good place to live.”*

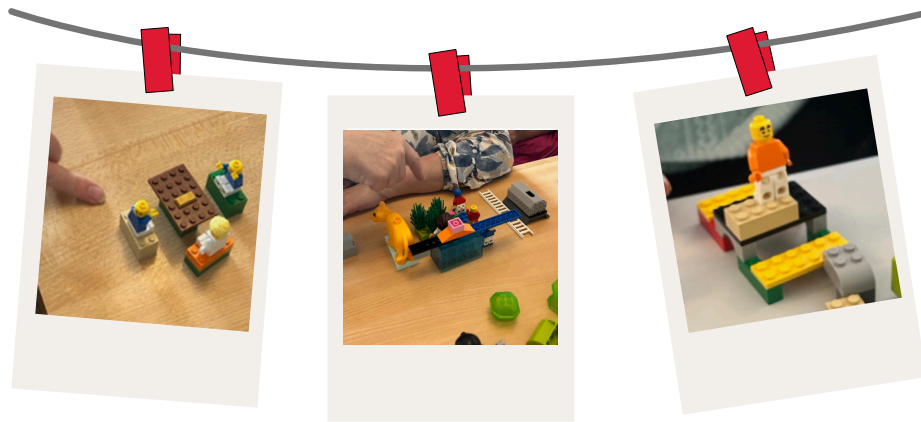
Participants created individual models reflecting the elements that contribute to the home’s positive living environment and overall sense of wellbeing. A strong emphasis was placed on activities and social engagement, with builds depicting art, bingo, and group events that bring residents together and create enjoyment in daily life. Creative expression and shared participation were seen as central to fostering connection and maintaining a vibrant atmosphere within the home.

The importance of outdoor space, animals, and nature also featured prominently. Participants highlighted the therapeutic value of gardens, fresh air, and interaction with nature, recognising the role these elements play in supporting relaxation, stimulation, and emotional wellbeing.

Reflective and personal themes emerged through references to memories and reminiscence, with builds symbolising the continuation of life stories and meaningful experiences within the home environment.

Relationships were also central, with participants acknowledging the importance of staff and work colleagues in creating a supportive, caring, and homely atmosphere.

Practical supports such as bus services and transport were represented, recognising their role in maintaining connection to the wider community, enabling outings, and supporting independence.



## GROUP BUILDS

*“Build how this home can be looked after so it stays warm, comfortable and works well into the future — choosing what matters most to protect and keep for future generations.”*

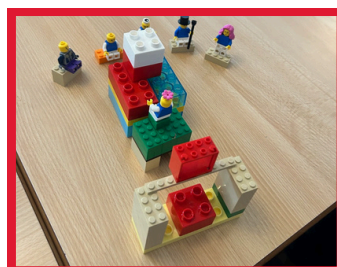
Working collaboratively, participants developed a shared model exploring how the home can continue to provide a warm, comfortable, and sustainable living environment into the future.

A number of priority themes emerged. The establishment of a quiet space was identified as important, recognising the need for calm, low-stimulus areas that support rest, reflection, and sensory wellbeing for residents.

The continued enhancement of outdoor spaces also featured strongly, building on their therapeutic value. Participants explored ways to further develop gardens and outdoor areas to support relaxation, activity, and connection with nature. Environmental sustainability formed a key pillar of the shared build. Participants proposed a range of energy solutions to future-proof the facility, including the introduction of solar panels and improved insulation to maintain warmth and support long-term efficiency. Water conservation measures were also incorporated, particularly to sustain and enhance outdoor and garden spaces.

Nature and sensory engagement remained central, with ideas such as the inclusion of animals and a sensory fish tank to support stimulation, comfort, and emotional wellbeing.

Transport was also considered an important factor in sustaining quality of life, with participants highlighting the need for larger, more energy-efficient transport to facilitate outings, appointments, and continued connection with the wider community.



## SHARED BUILD

*“What is the most important first/next step we can take to protect this home for future generations?”*

Participants worked collectively to bring earlier builds together into one shared model, focusing on the most immediate and impactful next steps to sustain and enhance the home.

A key priority identified was the development of new and expanded spaces, alongside reconfiguration of existing areas to better support resident comfort and engagement. In particular, participants highlighted the value of a day room with clearly defined spaces, both within new layouts and by enhancing the functionality of the current day room, to accommodate varied activities, quiet time, and social interaction.

Roof insulation emerged as the most urgent infrastructure priority, recognised as critical to maintaining warmth, comfort, and long-term energy efficiency within the home.

Participants also explored the introduction of a small onsite shop, supporting independence, choice, and everyday social interaction for residents. Enhancements to dining and entertainment spaces were proposed to further enrich communal living, creating more inviting and flexible environments for meals, activities, and events.

Creative expression remained important within the shared vision, with art identified as a key feature, both as an activity and as a means of enhancing the physical environment through colour, display, and resident participation.



## STEAM CONNECTIONS

- Science: Health and wellbeing, sensory environments, nature engagement, and environmental comfort within care settings.
- Technology: Communication tools, assistive technologies, and systems supporting resident care and facility management.
- Engineering: Building infrastructure, roof insulation, energy efficiency, spatial design, and accessibility.
- Arts: Creative activities, art therapy, visual enhancement of spaces, and resident expression.
- Maths: Planning, space allocation, resource use, budgeting, and prioritisation of future improvements.

## OUTCOME / PROGRESSION

Discussion focused on identifying practical next steps to progress priority actions emerging from the workshop. Roof insulation was agreed as the most immediate infrastructure priority, recognised as critical to maintaining warmth, comfort, and long-term energy efficiency within the home. A grant application to support this work is currently pending.

It was also agreed that a more detailed analysis of the payback period and long-term value of energy investments would be undertaken for presentation to the Board of Management, supporting informed decision-making around future sustainability measures.

Alongside infrastructure considerations, there was shared recognition of the intrinsic value of the home itself. Participants spoke about the sense of comfort, belonging, and joy experienced by both staff and residents, reinforcing the importance of protecting not just the physical building, but the lived experience and quality of life it provides.

### **Next Steps**

Participants highlighted the importance of broadening engagement as plans progress, bringing additional staff and residents into the conversation to ensure continued inclusivity and shared ownership of future developments.

It was agreed that workshop outcomes would be presented to the Board of Management to support awareness, alignment, and future planning discussions at management level.

To encourage ongoing input, the introduction of a suggestion box was proposed, providing residents and staff with an accessible mechanism to share ideas, feedback, and improvement suggestions on a continuous basis. Collectively, these actions represent practical next steps, supporting communication, participation, and the progression of agreed priorities.

### **3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)**

#### **KNOWLEDGE**

The workshop highlighted strong care for the home and local surroundings, reinforcing shared responsibility for sustaining a positive living environment for residents now and into the future.

#### **SKILLS**

The hands-on approach enabled participants to express ideas, listen to others, and build shared understanding. Many were surprised by how effective LEGO® was as a communication tool, often surpassing expectations.

#### **ATTITUDES**

Participants reported feeling more positive and optimistic following the session. There was clear passion among staff for sustainable development and a deep culture of care, reflected in the strong, respectful relationships between staff and residents.

#### **ENJOYMENT**

The session was enjoyable, inclusive, and engaging. The creative process fostered openness and participation, supported by a warm, homely atmosphere.

#### **BEHAVIOUR / PROGRESSION**

Willingness to engage in future action increased, alongside a strengthened sense of home and belonging and commitment to ongoing improvement.

## Workshop 8

### Group Description:

Entrepreneur Development Programme for early-stage entrepreneurs. It is designed to support individuals with innovative business ideas to develop, validate and grow their ventures, with a strong focus on scalability, market potential and long-term sustainability. The programme provides a structured pathway from idea to investor-ready business. Participants benefit from expert mentoring, practical business training, financial support and access to a network of industry and enterprise supports. The programme supports participants in developing key skills across areas such as market research, financial planning, pitching, and strategic growth, positioning them to launch and scale successful businesses both nationally and internationally.

### 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

This workshop is designed to support early-stage entrepreneurs in exploring how sustainability can be embedded into their business from the outset, recognising the importance of building ventures that are not only commercially viable but also environmentally and socially responsible.

Using the LEGO® Serious Play® methodology, the session enables participants to think creatively, communicate ideas more effectively and explore complex challenges in a hands-on and engaging way. The use of LEGO® acts as an equaliser, ensuring all voices are heard while supporting deeper reflection through visualisation and storytelling.

The workshop provides a collaborative space where participants can share experiences, challenges and ideas with fellow entrepreneurs from a range of sectors, fostering peer learning and new perspectives. Through guided discussion and model-building, the session aims to generate practical, actionable steps that support sustainable business practices and enhance climate awareness, encouraging participants to consider long-term impact, resilience and responsibility as central to their business development.

### 2. Build Observations

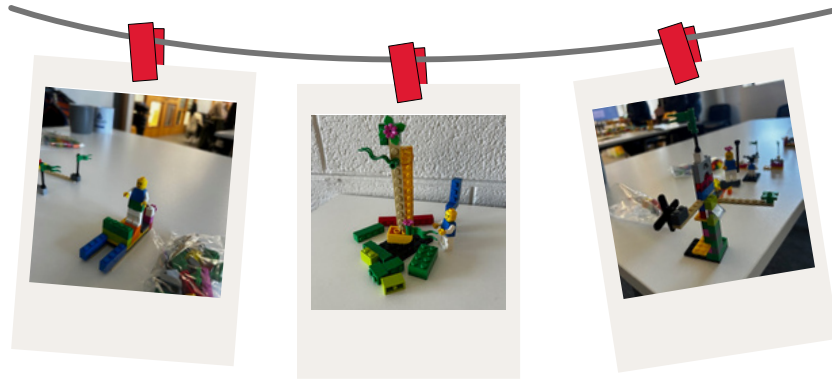
#### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

*“Build a model that represents you as an entrepreneur.”*

Participants were invited to “Build a model that represents you as an entrepreneur,” encouraging reflection on personal values, motivations and individual journeys. This opening build created space for participants to consider not just what they do, but who they are as entrepreneurs, grounding the session in personal meaning and purpose.

Through model-building and storytelling, a number of common themes emerged across the group, including the importance of balance and peace, alongside a strong focus on growth, progress and recognising small wins along the way. Many participants described entrepreneurship as a journey, shaped by continuous learning and evolving goals, with an understanding that success looks different for everyone. The role of family also featured strongly, highlighting the connection between business ambitions and personal life.

This build helped to establish a reflective and open tone for the workshop, reinforcing shared experiences while recognising the diverse paths of each entrepreneur.



## GROUP BUILDS

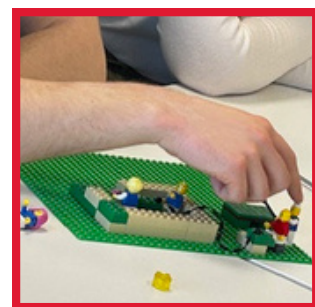
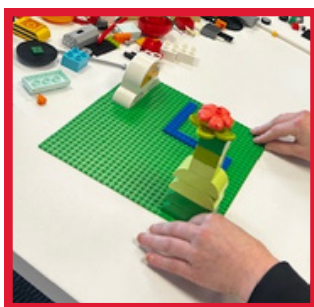
*“Build a model showing your business as it exists today and/or as you would like to see it in the future,”*

Through this process, participants explored the core elements of their business, including the products or services they offer, as well as the key components that enable delivery such as people, processes and resources. For many, this created clarity around how their business currently operates, while also highlighting areas of growth, ambition and future direction.

The build encouraged participants to begin to explore where sustainability is already present within their business, often in ways that had not been previously recognised, as well as identifying gaps and opportunities for further development. It also prompted discussion around values, decision-making, and the practical realities of running a business, helping to connect day-to-day operations with longer-term sustainability goals.

Participants then extended their models by responding to the prompt: *“Add to your model to show what makes running a sustainable or environmentally responsible business difficult.”* This second layer of the build introduced complexity and surfaced a number of shared challenges. Key themes included the impact of energy consumption, particularly for businesses reliant on AI, cloud technologies and data-driven systems, as well as practical considerations such as printing, travel and transport. The concept of human energy also emerged, with participants reflecting on time pressures, capacity constraints and the challenge of balancing sustainability ambitions with the realities of early-stage business development.

There was a strong sense that while many sustainability challenges, particularly those linked to infrastructure, supply chains and energy systems, are broader than the individual business, participants still recognised their role in making informed, responsible choices where possible. This build provided a realistic and honest view of both the opportunities and challenges associated with embedding sustainability in early-stage enterprises, while also empowering participants to identify practical, achievable steps within their own sphere of influence.



## SHARED BUILD

*“Build a shared model showing how small businesses like yours can overcome these challenges to become more sustainable and climate-conscious.”*

This collective exercise moved the group from individual reflection towards a shared understanding of what meaningful action looks like in practice. Working together, participants distilled their thinking into short, focused insights (1–3 words), identifying what is needed to support this transition. Themes centred on awareness and informed decision-making, alongside the importance of building on existing good practices and policies. There was a clear focus on taking a practical and intentional approach, with participants highlighting the role of lean thinking in reducing waste and improving efficiency across everyday business activities.

Discussions also brought forward tangible considerations, such as making more conscious choices around digital infrastructure, including server providers and their connection to green energy. The importance of access to information emerged as a key enabler, supporting better choices, while supportive work practices were seen as essential in embedding sustainable behaviours within teams.

Importantly, participants acknowledged that many of the broader challenges, particularly those linked to infrastructure, energy systems and supply chains, extend beyond the control of individual businesses. However, this did not lead to disengagement; instead, it reinforced a shared view that individual actions still matter, and that small, consistent decisions can collectively contribute to wider change.



## OUTCOME / PROGRESSION

Participants were invited to *“Add one piece to show the role YOU can play in this,”* bringing the focus back to individual responsibility within the wider system. This final step encouraged each participant to identify a specific, personal action or commitment, reinforcing the idea that while sustainability challenges are complex and often systemic, meaningful change begins with individual choices.

The additions to the shared model reflected a strong intention to take practical steps, supported by information gathering to better understand impacts and make more informed decisions. Participants highlighted the importance of exploring what already exists, whether tools, policies, technologies or good practices, and building on these rather than starting from scratch.

There was also recognition that broader sustainability considerations, including machinery, the environment, and pollution, require ongoing attention and deeper exploration as businesses evolve. This pointed to sustainability as a continuous learning process rather than a one-off action.

## Next Steps

Participants were encouraged and committed to take forward one or two practical actions identified during the workshop, using these as starting points to embed sustainability within their business. This may involve seeking further information, reviewing existing practices, or making small, intentional changes to operations or decision-making.

Building on the insights gained, participants can continue to reflect, test and adapt their approach over time, recognising that progress is incremental and evolves alongside their business journey.

## STEAM CONNECTIONS

- Science: Awareness of environmental impact, energy consumption (AI, cloud, data)
- Technology: Use of digital tools, cloud systems and AI, choice of server providers, information gathering for better decisions, communication and idea sharing
- Engineering: Business operations, processes and systems, efficiency, lean practices, managing resources, workspace and workflow design
- Arts: Creative exploration through LEGO®, storytelling, sharing perspectives, problem-solving, visualising ideas and challenges
- Mathematics: Budgeting, cost awareness, resource management, planning, measuring efficiency, making informed and practical decisions

## 3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)

### KNOWLEDGE

Participants developed a stronger understanding of sustainability in early-stage businesses, including energy use, resource management and the wider systems influencing impact, alongside their own role in driving change.

### ATTITUDES

A strong sense of personal accountability emerged, alongside a connection to the emotional aspects of running a business, including balance, pressure and motivation. Participants recognised the importance of informed decision-making, responsibility, and continuous improvement.

### SKILLS

The LEGO® approach supported clear thinking, communication and problem-solving, helping participants reflect on their business, identify challenges and explore practical, lean solutions.

### ENJOYMENT

The session was engaging and interactive, with the creative process enabling participants to connect emotionally to their ideas, share openly and learn from others.

### BEHAVIOUR / PROGRESSION

Participants identified small, actionable steps to embed sustainability, with a focus on ongoing reflection, learning, and incremental change.

## Workshop 9

### Group Description:

This social group offers a welcoming and supportive space where people come together each week to explore arts and crafts while building meaningful social connections. More than simply a creative outlet, the group provides an important opportunity for conversation, collaboration and community wellbeing. In a relaxed and inclusive environment, participants share skills, exchange ideas and support one another, creating a space where creativity and community flourish side by side.

### 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

This workshop was conducted with facilitators of the social group to provide an opportunity to reflect on how the group currently operates and to share experiences of supporting a creative and welcoming community space. Through the LEGO®-based activities, participants reflected on current practices, explored how they might work together in a more connected and coordinated way, and generated practical ideas that could contribute to a more sustainable future. The process encouraged shared reflection, creative thinking, and collaborative problem-solving, supporting participants in identifying opportunities for continued growth and positive community impact.

Using the LEGO® Serious Play® methodology, participants explored ideas through hands-on model building and storytelling, enabling everyone to contribute equally to the conversation. The session created a platform for open discussion, learning and collaboration, recognising the important role that community-led initiatives play in fostering wellbeing, connection and creativity within local communities.

### 2. Build Observations

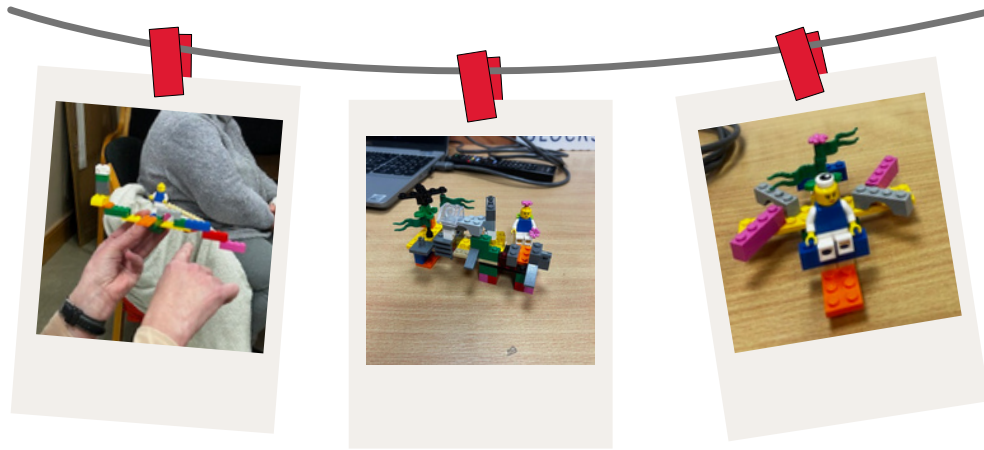
#### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

*“Build a model that represents you as a maker or creator”*

Participants were invited to complete an individual build representing themselves as a maker or creator. Through the models and accompanying reflections, several common themes emerged. Many participants highlighted the importance of the outdoor environment as a source of inspiration, emphasising the value of nature, fresh air and natural surroundings in supporting creativity. The idea of space and workspace was also central, with models reflecting the need for a dedicated area to create, explore materials and develop ideas.

Participants also spoke about the social dimension of making, noting the importance of conversation, connection and sharing ideas with others. Several models represented a busy and active creative environment, filled with different materials, tools, and ongoing projects. The use of bridges and connections appeared in several builds, symbolising collaboration, linking ideas together and learning from others.

At the same time, some participants highlighted an appreciation for structure and guidance, recognising that instruction, techniques and shared learning can help support confidence and creativity within the making process.



## GROUP BUILDS

*“Build a model that represents the strengths of your crafting circle and what makes it work well as a community.”*

Participants first worked individually to build models representing what they felt were the key strengths of the group. They then shared and discussed their models with others at their own table, allowing participants to reflect together on common themes and experiences. The models and discussions highlighted a strong sense of connection and belonging, with participants emphasising the importance of friendships and supportive relationships within the group.

While each person brings their own individuality and creative style, these differences were seen as a strength, contributing to a diverse and vibrant environment where people learn from one another. Participants also spoke about the value of sharing, laughter and enjoyment, noting that simple moments such as sitting together for a cup of tea and chatting are an important part of the experience. The group was described as a place where ideas are exchanged freely, where people support each other and where creativity is encouraged. The build and discussions reflected that the group works well because it is welcoming and inclusive, creating a space where everyone feels comfortable, valued and encouraged to participate.

Participants were then asked to add to their models in response to the prompt: *“What makes coordination difficult or prevents the group working together smoothly?”* This stage encouraged participants to reflect on some of the practical and interpersonal challenges that can arise within community groups. Through the models and discussion, several themes emerged. Participants noted that group dynamics can sometimes present challenges, particularly where strong personalities may influence discussions or disrupt the balance within the group.

Practical constraints were also highlighted, including a lack of funding, which can limit opportunities for activities, as well as a lack of resources and materials needed to support creative work. These additions to the models helped participants acknowledge the realities of sustaining community initiatives, while also creating space to discuss how such challenges might be addressed collectively.





## OUTCOME / PROGRESSION

The workshop strengthened connections between facilitators and created an opportunity for shared learning and the exchange of ideas. Participants highlighted the value of increased communication and coordination between those supporting the group, alongside opportunities for training, peer support and the sharing of materials and resources.

A strong message emerging from the discussion was that the sustainability and continued success of the group cannot rest with any one individual. Instead, it relies on collective leadership and shared responsibility, with facilitators taking an active role in supporting communication, collaboration and coordination. By working together in this way, the group can continue to maintain a welcoming, inclusive and sustainable community space for all participants.

### Next Steps

Building on the discussions during the workshop, facilitators will continue to strengthen communication and connections across the group through a combination of in-person meetings, proactive communication and ongoing sharing of information. Participants highlighted the value of structured touchpoints, including quarterly in-person meetings, where facilitators can come together to reflect, plan and learn from one another. Progressing these actions will rely on collective effort rather than any one individual. Facilitators will take a leading role in maintaining proactive communication, encouraging the sharing of knowledge, and supporting collaboration across the group. By working together in this way, the group can continue to build on its strengths while maintaining the welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment that participants value.

### 3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)

#### KNOWLEDGE

The workshop highlighted a strong sense of care for the group and its shared space, reinforcing a collective responsibility for maintaining a positive and supportive environment into the future.

#### ATTITUDES

A strong sense of mutual support emerged throughout the session. Participants demonstrated a shared passion for the group and a commitment to maintaining a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment.

#### SKILLS

The hands-on approach enabled participants to express ideas, listen to others and build shared understanding. LEGO® proved to be a highly effective communication tool, helping participants articulate thoughts and experiences in a simple and accessible way.

#### ENJOYMENT

The session was enjoyable, engaging and inclusive. The creative process encouraged openness, laughter and participation, reflecting the warm and supportive atmosphere that participants value within the group.

#### BEHAVIOUR / PROGRESSION

Participants expressed a willingness to continue supporting the development of the group through collaboration, communication and shared responsibility. The session reinforced the importance of social connection, creativity and collective effort in sustaining a positive and active community space.

## Group Description:

This group is a vibrant and welcoming community organisation that provides a supportive space for women to come together, connect and take part in a range of shared activities. Rooted in friendship, inclusion and mutual support, the group offers an important opportunity for social engagement, creativity and wellbeing. It serves as a space where members can build relationships, share skills, and enjoy a sense of belonging within a relaxed and informal environment.

## 1. Workshop Purpose & Key Aims

This workshop aimed to build on the strong foundations already in place within the group, creating space for participants to reflect on what is working well while exploring how the group can become even more welcoming, inclusive and enjoyable for everyone. It provided an opportunity for committee and non-committee members to connect, share experiences and learn from one another in a relaxed and supportive environment.

The session was delivered using the LEGO® Serious Play® methodology, which supports hands-on thinking, storytelling and inclusive participation. This approach acts as an equaliser, ensuring all voices are heard and enabling participants to express ideas and feelings in a simple, creative and accessible way.

A key focus of the workshop was to identify small, practical ways in which all members can become more involved, helping to foster a stronger sense of shared ownership and collective responsibility for the future of the group.

## 2. Build Observations

### INDIVIDUAL BUILDS

*“Build something that represents how you are feeling today.”*

This build offered participants a gentle and low-pressure way to begin the session and ease into the creative process. Through model-building and sharing, a number of themes emerged, including feeling grounded and at home, alongside a sense of being inspired and looking forward. At the same time, participants reflected on the importance of remembering the past, recognising experiences and memories that continue to shape them.

There was a strong use of colour and positive imagery across the builds, with elements such as flowers and bright LEGO® pieces symbolising optimism, growth and positivity. This visual expression added depth to the storytelling, helping participants to communicate feelings in a simple and meaningful way.

Overall, this build set a warm, open and reflective tone for the workshop, encouraging connection and shared understanding from the outset.



## GROUP BUILDS

*“Build a model that shows the group as it is today”*

Participants were invited to “Build a model that shows the group as it is today,” encouraging reflection on the current experience of the group and what defines it in practice.

Through model-building and sharing, participants highlighted the wide range of activities that take place, reflecting the creativity and variety within the group. A strong theme of a warm welcome emerged, with many describing the group as open and inviting, particularly for new members. Feelings of being safe and secure were also prominent, alongside a deep sense of connection and friendship among participants. There was also a strong emphasis on equality within the group, with participants valuing an environment where everyone feels on the same level, respected and included, and where no one is seen as more important than anyone else.

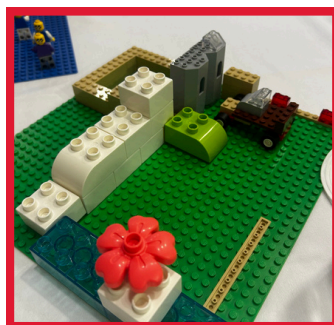
There was also an awareness of the importance of sustainability in maintaining the group, particularly in relation to volunteer time and effort and the need for ongoing funding and resources. Participants recognised the value of shared responsibility in supporting the continued success of the group.

Participants were then invited to *“Add to show what could make the group even better,”* building on their existing models to explore ideas for enhancing the group experience.

A strong theme that emerged was the desire for more outings and social activities, with particular interest in opportunities to connect with the outdoors, such as walks and informal meetups beyond the group space. These were seen as valuable ways to strengthen relationships and create additional opportunities for connection.

Participants also emphasised the importance of maintaining the strong sense of welcome that currently defines the group. There was a clear awareness of the need to ensure that new members feel included and comfortable, with a focus on avoiding any feelings of exclusion and continuing to foster an open and supportive environment.

Overall, this build highlighted simple, practical ways to enhance the group experience while protecting the core values that make the group strong.



## SHARED BUILD

Participants were then invited to *“Together, build the kind of group you want this to be and, in 1–3 words, what must happen to achieve this.”* The group came together to create one large shared model, ensuring that all voices were included and that each participant felt represented in the final build.

A strong priority that emerged was the importance of maintaining a welcoming environment, which was seen as central to the identity and future of the group. Participants also expressed a desire for more activities,

particularly social and shared experiences. This was balanced with a clear recognition that additional support would be needed to make this sustainable. There was an awareness that responsibility should be shared more broadly, helping to avoid committee burnout and ensuring that those organising activities can also fully participate and enjoy them.

Sustainability of the group was a key consideration, with participants highlighting the importance of identifying funding sources to support activities and resources, as well as strengthening communication so that all members are aware of what is happening within the group. Clear and proactive communication was seen as essential in encouraging participation and ensuring everyone feels included.

Overall, the shared model reflected a collective vision of an inclusive, supportive and active group, grounded in shared responsibility, strong communication and a continued commitment to making the group a positive and sustainable space for all.



## **OUTCOME / PROGRESSION**

A number of clear and practical actions were identified and agreed by the group to support the continued development of the group. To strengthen the sense of welcome, participants proposed introducing a buddy system for new members, ensuring they feel supported and included from the outset. In addition, the idea of creating a short welcome video was suggested, helping to show what it's like to “come in” to the group and easing any concerns or uncertainty in advance.

Participants also highlighted the value of developing a comfort agreement, capturing the shared values of the group and reinforcing the importance of maintaining a warm, inclusive and respectful environment for all members.

To support the sustainable running of the group, it was agreed that a monthly rota could be introduced, where members take turns supporting activities such as set-up and organisation. This approach not only distributes responsibility more evenly but also encourages greater involvement, helping members to connect with one another and build stronger relationships across the group.

Overall, these actions reflect a shared commitment to maintaining a welcoming, inclusive and sustainable group, with a focus on collective responsibility and continued connection.

## Next Steps

As a final step, participants were invited to “Add one piece to show the role YOU can play in this.” This was an important moment in the workshop, moving from ideas to action and reinforcing a sense of ownership and shared responsibility across the group.

Each participant placed their piece within the shared model in a way that reflected where their strengths, interests or passions lie. This helped to make contributions visible and tangible, while also demonstrating that everyone has a role to play, regardless of how big or small.

This step was key in ensuring that the outcomes of the workshop do not remain as ideas alone, but are supported by individual commitment. It strengthened the collective understanding that the continued success of the group relies on shared effort, with each member contributing in their own way.

## STEAM CONNECTIONS

- Science: Impact of social interaction on mental and physical health
- Technology: Communication methods (e.g. messaging groups), sharing information, promoting activities, use of video (welcome video) to support inclusion
- Engineering: Organisation of the group space, planning activities, use of a monthly rota, creating systems that support shared responsibility and smooth running
- Arts: Creative expression through LEGO®, storytelling, sharing experiences, exploring ideas together, visualising the future of the group
- Mathematics: Planning activities, managing resources, considering funding needs

## 3. GLO Summary (Facilitator Observations)

### KNOWLEDGE

Participants developed a deeper understanding of the importance of social connection, inclusion and shared responsibility in sustaining the group.

### SKILLS

Participants demonstrated strong storytelling throughout and benefited from hearing different perspectives, helping to broaden thinking and deepen insight.

### ATTITUDES

A strong sense of respect for one another was evident, alongside openness, warmth and enthusiasm. Participants valued equality within the group and showed a shared commitment to maintaining a welcoming, inclusive and supportive space.

### ENJOYMENT

The creative process encouraged openness, connection and emotional expression, creating a relaxed environment where participants felt comfortable sharing and learning from others.

### BEHAVIOUR / PROGRESSION

Participants identified clear, practical actions to support the future. There was a strong commitment to continued involvement, collaboration and building on the ideas shared.

## Project Evaluation

An independent external evaluation of the STEAM Powered Action for Sustainable Futures using LEGO® Serious Play® project (March 2026) demonstrated a highly successful, well-structured initiative that effectively combined broad public engagement with deep, participatory community action. The project responded to a clear need within the community and voluntary sector by providing an accessible, practical, and empowering pathway to climate action.

At its core, the project addressed a key challenge: while awareness of climate change is widespread, translating this into practical, localised climate action can feel overwhelming. By beginning with existing strengths and focusing on achievable steps, the project successfully supported communities to move from awareness to action.

A mixed-method evaluation approach was adopted, ensuring both depth and breadth of analysis. This included a review of project documentation, analysis of the public consultation data, interviews with workshop participants and the project coordinator, review of workshop write-ups, and a post-workshop survey. This comprehensive approach enabled triangulation of findings and provided a robust evidence base for assessing impact.

The public consultation phase was a cornerstone of the evaluation. Conducted across all Municipal Districts in Kerry, over 600 participants contributed insights into sustainability challenges affecting their homes, workplaces, and communities. The use of in-person, tablet-assisted interviews encouraged meaningful dialogue and ensured high-quality data collection. The resulting dataset provided a clear, evidence-based foundation for the project, identifying key themes and priorities that directly informed the design of the workshop phase. The development of accessible outputs, including an infographic and dedicated project webpage, further strengthened public awareness and dissemination.

The Blocks4Change workshops represented the second phase of the project and were evaluated as a “qualified success” across all participating organisations. Feedback from semi-structured interviews highlighted several consistent themes: the workshops were highly interactive, inclusive, and engaging, creating a safe and supportive learning environment. Participants valued the opportunity for reflection, noting that the process enabled deeper thinking, clearer articulation of ideas, and the development of shared understanding. A particularly strong theme was “voice”, with participants feeling empowered to contribute, including individuals who may not ordinarily engage in group discussions.

The LEGO® Serious Play® methodology was widely praised for its effectiveness. The structured progression from individual builds to shared models supported collaboration and consensus-building, while the hands-on approach stimulated creativity and sustained engagement. Participants reported that the process shifted conversations from focusing on problems to envisioning positive, future-oriented solutions. Importantly, sustainability has now become more embedded within participating organisations, with many integrating it into strategic planning and day-to-day activities.

The post-workshop survey further reinforced these findings. The majority of participants had no prior experience of LEGO® Serious Play®, yet overwhelmingly found it highly effective for exploring sustainability. Over 80% of organisations have already begun implementing actions identified during the workshops, with key priority areas including community wellbeing (88%), energy (77%), and biodiversity (66%). This demonstrates both an increased awareness and tangible behavioural change and progression.



Figure 5: Post workshop actions

A significant outcome of the project was the articulation of STEAM connections across all participating groups. Science themes such as biodiversity, composting, renewable energy, and climate change were prominent. Technology focused on communication, coordination, and data collection. Engineering highlighted infrastructure and systems such as transport, lighting, and water. Arts brought forward identity, storytelling, and placemaking, while Mathematics underpinned planning, measurement, and resource management. These connections illustrate a strong, applied understanding of how STEAM disciplines intersect to address real-world sustainability challenges.

The workshop write-ups represent a key output of the evaluation. Each organisation received a high-quality, tailored summary outlining their STEAM connections, outcomes, and progression pathways. Collectively, these demonstrate significant learning, strategic thinking, and readiness for action. They also serve as valuable tools for future planning, stakeholder engagement, and funding applications, while providing a compelling resource for scaling the programme.

Overall, the project has demonstrably met its stated objectives - raising public awareness of STEAM in everyday life, enabling inclusive participation across diverse and often underrepresented groups, and introducing an innovative methodology to engage communities in sustainability. The strong positive feedback, high levels of engagement, and clear evidence of ongoing action highlight a strong return on investment.

### Quotes from workshop participants:

*“The outcomes will enable the board in making informed decisions on future development particularly when designing future infrastructure and programmes”*

*“Everyone participated and found it very interesting”*

*“The LEGO® approach allowed everyone to be vocal”*

*“A passion and a unity emerged”*

*“Participants felt they were going in the same direction”*

*“LSP is a lovely way to start a conversation”*

*“It worked through doing something with your hands while talking at the same time”*

*“...building trust while building a model”*

## Conclusion

The Blocks4Change (STEAM Powered Action for Sustainable Futures) project successfully delivered a two-phase, integrated approach to community engagement, combining broad public consultation with in-depth, participatory workshops. Together, these phases created a strong foundation for understanding community perspectives on sustainability, while also enabling meaningful, locally driven action.

The survey phase played a critical role in raising awareness of STEAM in everyday life and capturing a rich dataset of community insights across the county. It engaged a wide cross-section of the public, highlighting key themes such as biodiversity, climate action, infrastructure, and community wellbeing. Importantly, it established a shared evidence base that informed the design and focus of the workshop phase, ensuring relevance and alignment with real community priorities.

Building on this, the workshop phase translated these insights into action through the use of LEGO® Serious Play®. This creative and inclusive methodology enabled diverse groups, many of whom may not typically engage with STEM, to explore complex issues in an accessible and meaningful way. The workshops fostered high levels of participation, enjoyment, and ownership, with each organisation articulating how STEAM connects to their own context and future ambitions.

A key strength of the project was the clear emergence of STEAM connections across all participating groups. Science themes such as biodiversity, composting, renewable energy, and climate change were consistently identified. Technology was linked to communication, coordination, and data gathering, while Engineering focused on infrastructure, transport, and energy systems. The Arts brought forward identity, storytelling, and placemaking, highlighting the importance of culture and community expression. Maths underpinned planning, measurement, and resource management. Collectively, these connections demonstrated a strong and practical understanding of how STEAM disciplines intersect to address real-world challenges.

The project also delivered clear outcomes and progression pathways. Across workshops, there was a strong emphasis on partnership, feasibility, and action-oriented planning. Participants identified the need for early, visible wins to build momentum, alongside longer-term strategic planning supported by robust funding applications. Key priorities included biodiversity initiatives, infrastructure improvements, enhanced digital communication, and better coordination of resources and stakeholders. While challenges such as time, capacity, and access to funding were acknowledged, there was a clear commitment to progressing ideas in a structured and collaborative way. Importantly, each organisation now has a tailored write-up of their workshop, providing a practical roadmap for next steps. These include initiatives such as developing multi-year strategies, progressing energy and infrastructure projects, enhancing community engagement, advancing biodiversity actions, and strengthening digital communication. These outputs ensure that the impact of the workshops extends beyond the sessions themselves, supporting ongoing development and funding opportunities.

In evaluating the project against its core objectives, Blocks4Change has been highly effective. It has increased awareness of STEAM and its societal relevance, enabled inclusive participation across diverse and often underrepresented groups, and successfully introduced a new, creative methodology to engage communities in sustainability. The overwhelmingly positive response from participants highlights the value of combining structured facilitation with creative exploration.

Overall, the project demonstrates how a place-based, STEAM-driven approach can empower communities to understand, engage with, and act on sustainability challenges. By connecting data, dialogue, and action, Blocks4Change has created a replicable model for meaningful public engagement - one that supports awareness and lasting community-led change.



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