

CAVAN COUNTY COUNCIL PRE-DRAFT STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2024-2029

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1.0 Overview

Cavan County Council is currently in the process of developing its Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LA-CAP) to cover the 2024-2029 period. The plan will set out how the local authority can help tackle climate change and promote a range of mitigation, adaptation, and other climate action measures, to help deliver on the national climate obligations and the Government's overall National Climate Objective, which seeks to; *pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy.*

Ireland's Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act (2021) requires local authorities to prepare a Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LA-CAP) over the next five years. The plan for County Cavan is intended to guide the county's sustainable development over the next five years.

The plan sets out how Cavan County Council will be responsible for enhancing climate resilience, increasing energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions across its own assets, services and infrastructure, to which it is fully accountable for, whilst also demonstrating a broader role of influencing, advocating and facilitating other sectors to meet their own climate targets and ambitions.

Climate change has become one of the most pressing global public policy challenges facing governments today. International organisations, national and local governments are increasingly compelled to take ambitious action through mitigation (decreasing emissions that cause climate change) and adaptation (enhancing resilience to climate change impacts and risks).

Local Authorities will be required to play their part in meeting national emissions objectives and to transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy.

Comprehensive public and stakeholder consultation continues to be central to the LA-CAP development. A number of strands of consultation have been conducted over previous months, including online surveys (both business and community focussed), focus group workshops and one-to-one key stakeholder interviews. Through these engagement formats, Cavan County Council encourages a range of public, NGO, private sector stakeholders and the general public to have their say on the plan's development. This engagement will also help ensure that the plan is a true reflection of the needs and ambitions of Cavan's wider population.

Purpose of this document – a starting point for discussion.

The purpose of this document is to set out the initial strategic direction for the new LA-CAP in the form of draft high-level actions.

It should be noted that this document is a work-in-progress and does not necessarily reflect the content of the finalised LA-CAP. Upon receipt of any feedback obtained during the statutory consultation process, the draft LA-CAP may be revised to ensure that the high-level actions are reflective of, and aligned with, the views and needs of the community and that they are broadly in line with the national climate obligations.

2.0 Consultation Process & Findings

The pre-draft stakeholder engagement for the LA-CAP ran from the 12th of June to the 11th of August 2023. The public engagement process encouraged members of the public and stakeholders to have their say on the development of the draft LA-CAP through a series of public engagement events:

- Presentation to Climate Action Steering Committee
- Presentation to the Strategic Policy Committees
- Presentation to the Elected Members
- Presentation to Senior Management Team of Cavan County Council
- Presentation to Public Participation Network (PPN)
- Meeting with members of Cavan LEADER Programme
- Meeting with representatives from Cavan Local Enterprise Office
- Meeting with members from Local Industry
- Climate Information display at the Cavan Calling Festival weekend from 29th 30th July 2023
- Completion of an online community survey
- Completion of an online business & enterprise survey
- Individual meetings with key stakeholders from the public, private and community sectors
- Written submissions

The events and mechanisms for getting involved in the pre-draft LA-CAP were advertised across various platforms for the duration of the public engagement process, including the local newspaper, social media, the council website, and various online forums.

The aim of the public engagement process was to identify key priorities and needs that could be addressed through the actions of the LA-CAP. The public participation process sought to generate a sense of shared ownership for the actions and to secure the buy-in of key stakeholders, including members of the general public.

All written submissions and survey responses were collated and reviewed as part of the consultation analysis as well as the key points raised during the workshops. The submissions included:

- **Written Submissions** –11 written submissions were received from the following entities: The Water Forum, The Heritage Council, Bailieboro Town Centre First, Cavan Regeneration Project, The Irish Green Building Council (IGBC), Cootehill Development Group, Friends of Killymooney, LAWPRO, BJD MD Engineer and 1 private individual.
- **Community Survey** – 54 responses were received. This survey sought the views of the general community in relation to travel, nature-based solution, biodiversity, resource management solutions and renewable energies in the home.
- **Business Survey** – 32 survey responses were received. This survey sought views specifically from individuals in the Business and Enterprise sector. Circulation of this survey was assisted by the Local Enterprise Office in addition to Enterprise Ireland.

The combined analysis of the different strands of the consultation identified several key themes aligned to economic and community needs. The ideas and suggestions put forward by the community and other key stakeholders have been incorporated, both directly and indirectly, into actions within the draft LA-CAP.



Figure 1 Images recorded during stakeholder events completed as part of public engagement.

2.1 Considerations & Strategic Goals

The LA-CAP has aligned with the the strategic goals of the sectoral strategy published in April 2021 by local government ***Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030 DECA***.

Strategic goals set the context for mitigation and adaptations actions in service of Cavan County Council's climate Vision and Mission. The identification and development of such goals establishes a structured approach to the arrangement of climate actions to be addressed. These goals are informed by the key themes that emerged from the issues collated as part of the evidence base and stakeholder engagement.

There are 5 Strategic Goals/Themes included in this plan:



In alignment with the above, the LA-CAP is also required to support the Decarbonising Zone of Cavan town, these areas will be taken into consideration and reflected in the development of the goals and actions of the Climate Action Plan.

3.0 Community Ideas and Visions for the Local Authority Climate Action Plan

3.1 Community Online Survey Results

As part of this public consultation, members of the public were invited to carry out a short online survey to help shape the actions to be included in Cavan’s LA-CAP. The following results are the main finding from this survey.

3.1.1 Main findings

Survey participants were initially asked to rank the proposed thematic area in order of perceived importance from a climate change perspective. This information was then used to inform the thematic areas under which the LA-CAP actions were designed.

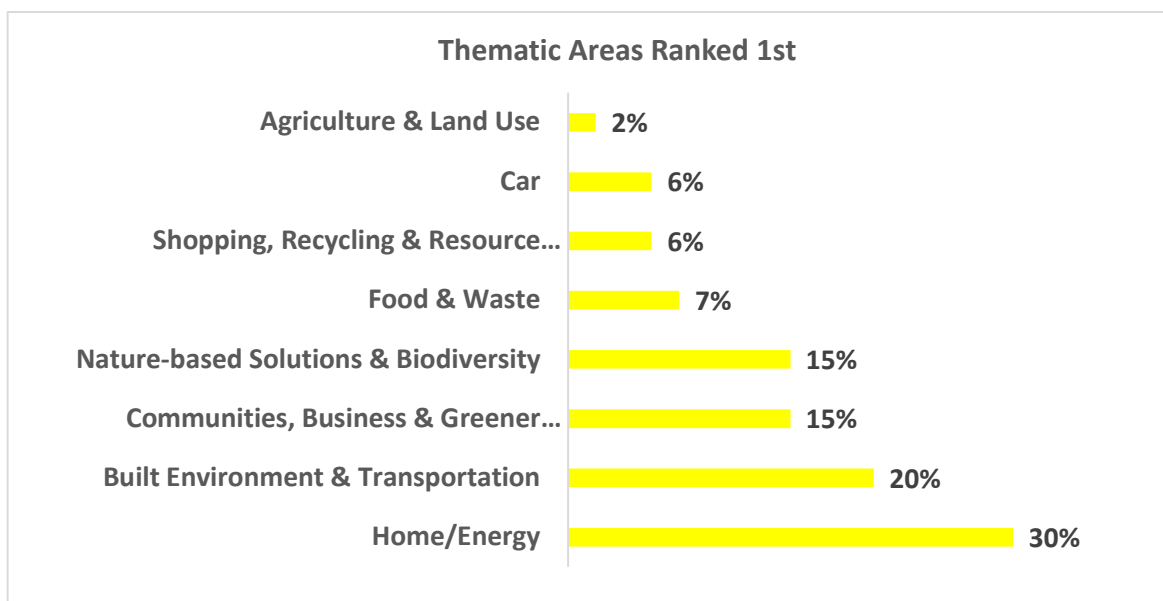


Figure 2- Climate themes in order of importance to respondents

3.1.2 Transport

The survey then proceeded to ask the respondents a number of questions under the various thematic areas. The first area examined was transport.

This element of the survey revealed that the residents of Cavan are very reliant on the use of private vehicles with 94% citing private car as their main mode of transport. Respondents were also asked if they would consider changing their modes of transport and if not, what are the barriers that prevent them from doing so. The results from this question overwhelmingly highlight the heavy reliance on private cars with a large proportion of respondents citing that they felt that a barrier to alternative modes of travel included the lack of frequent public transportation servicing rural areas.

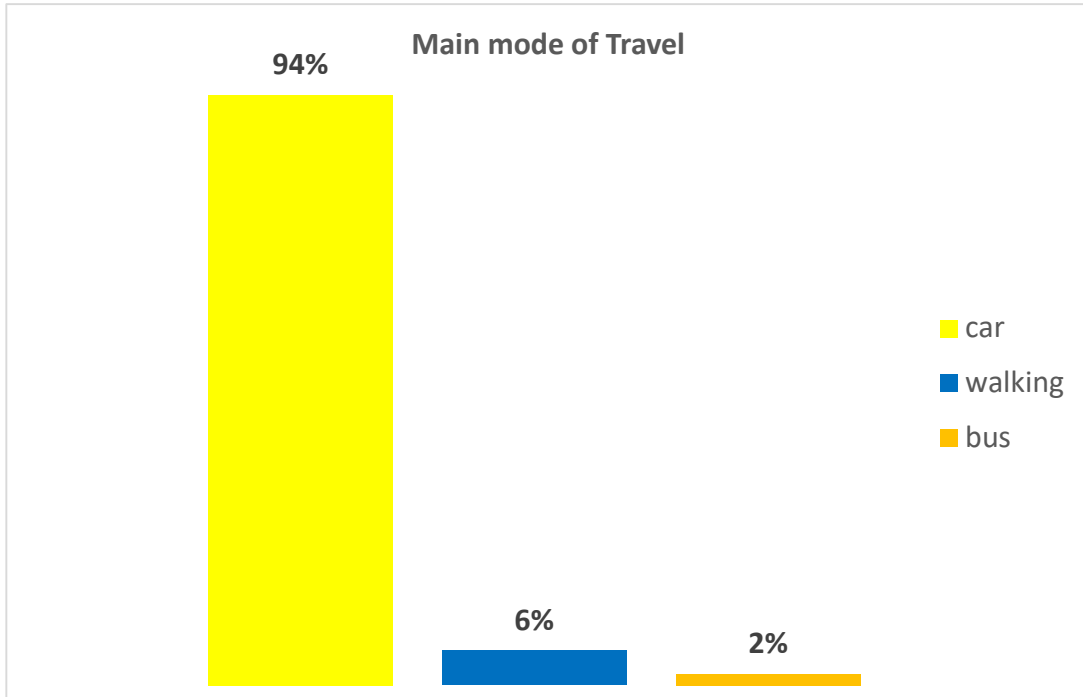


Figure 3- Main travel mode for respondents

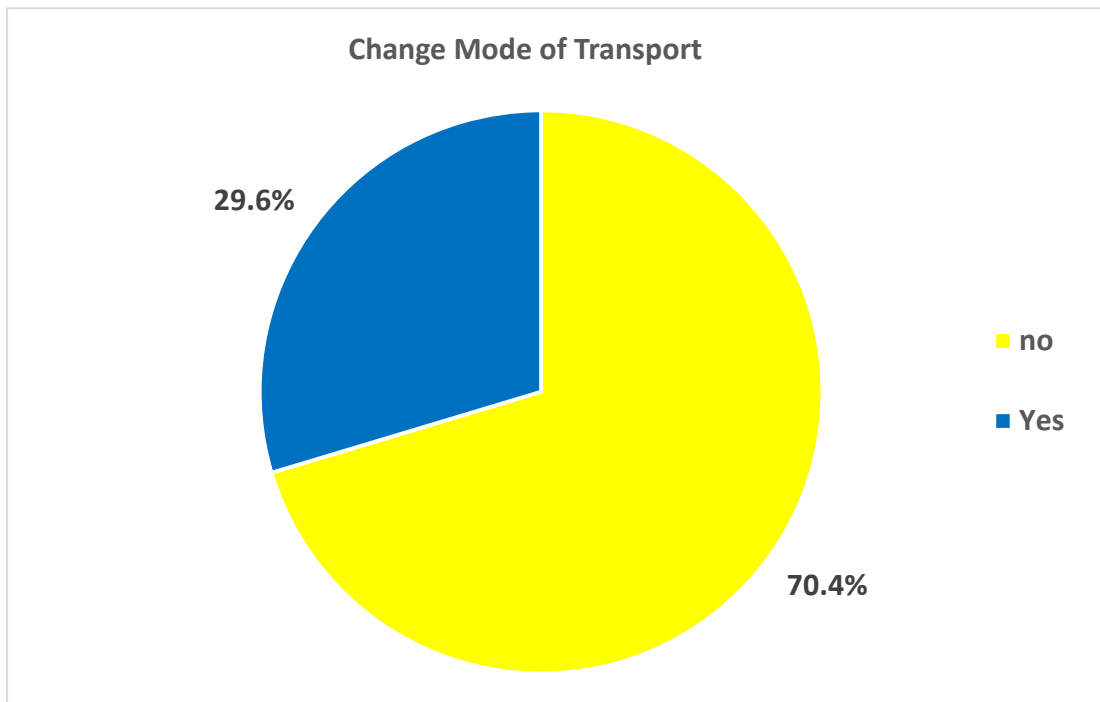


Figure 4- Response to changing travel modes

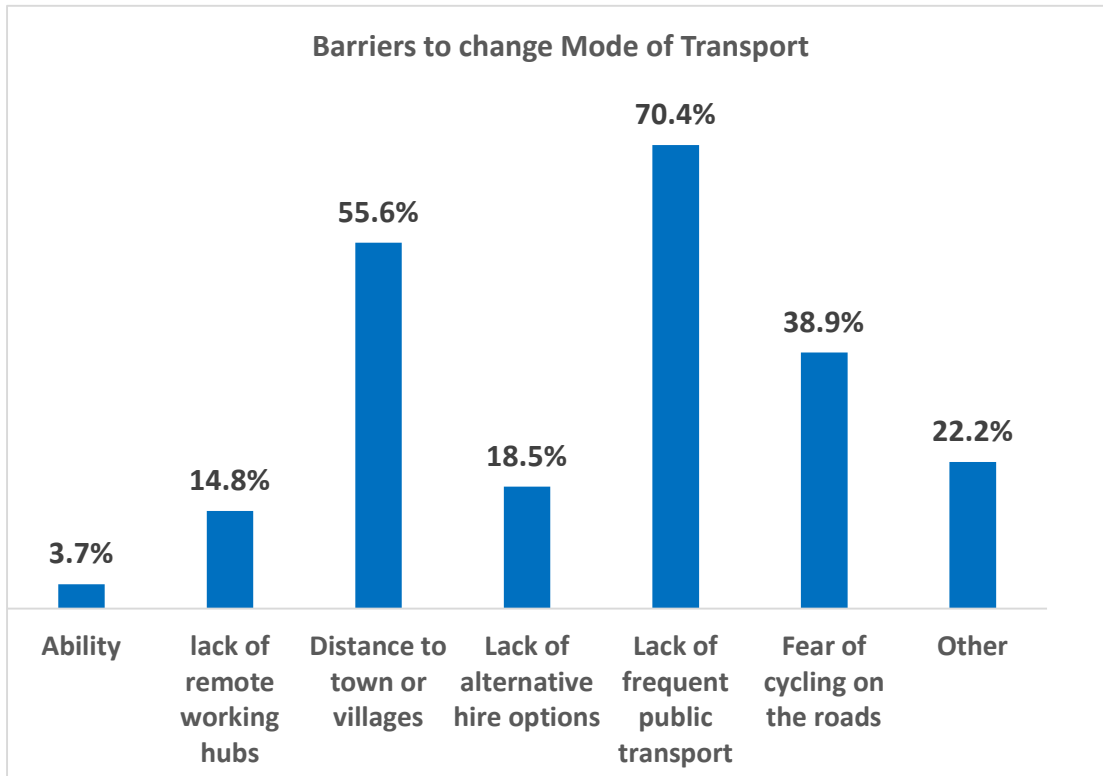


Figure 5- Barriers preventing respondents to change the way they travel

The above graph outlines the alternative forms of travel that would be considered by respondents. Public transport was found to be the most popular followed closely by moving to an electric vehicle. Another high proportion of respondents stated that they would consider cycling as an alternative option.

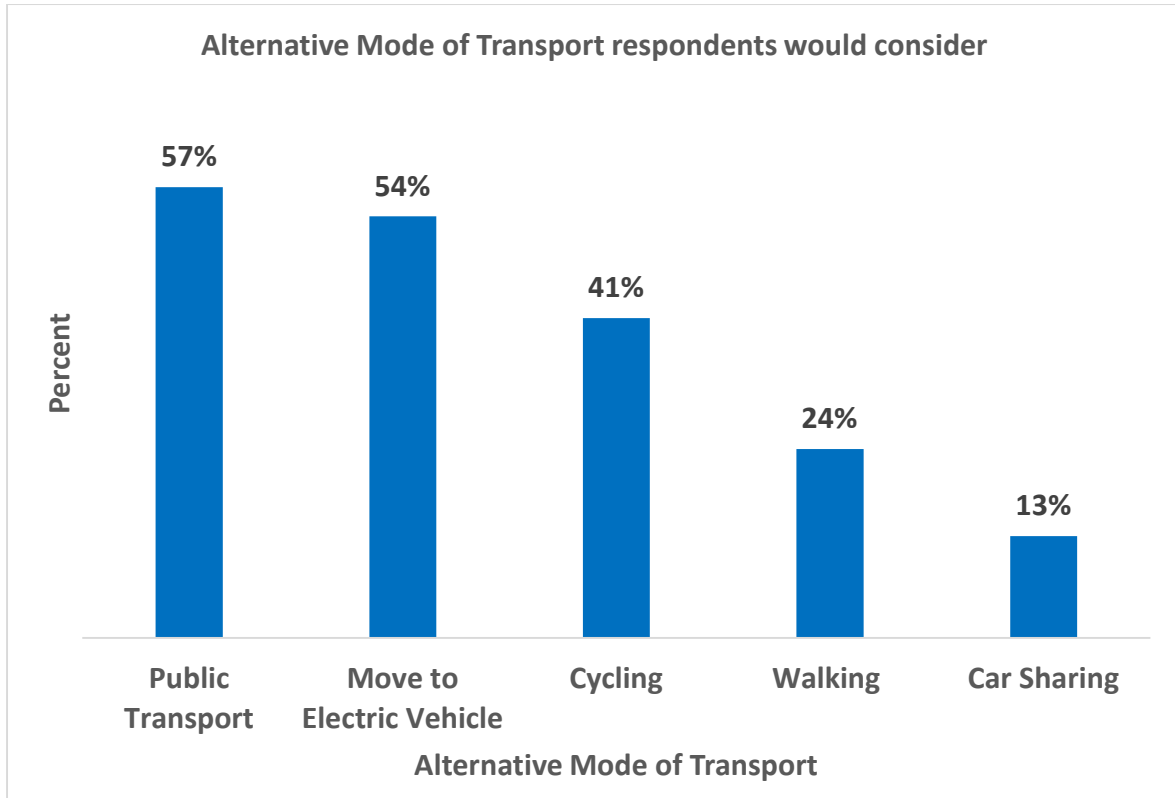


Figure 6- Other forms of travel respondents would consider

Respondents were asked what actions they would be most likely to take to reduce the carbon footprint on how they travel. The two main responses related to utilising public transport if the network was improved, in addition to moving to Electric Vehicles.

3.1.3 Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure

This element of the survey assessed the level of interest of respondents in nature-based solutions. It enquired as to what forms of nature-based solutions they were aware of, in addition to what nature-based solutions they would consider implementing around their own homes and communities. The survey found that respondents were interested in the application of nature-based solutions such as leaving areas of lawn un-mowed or planting trees.

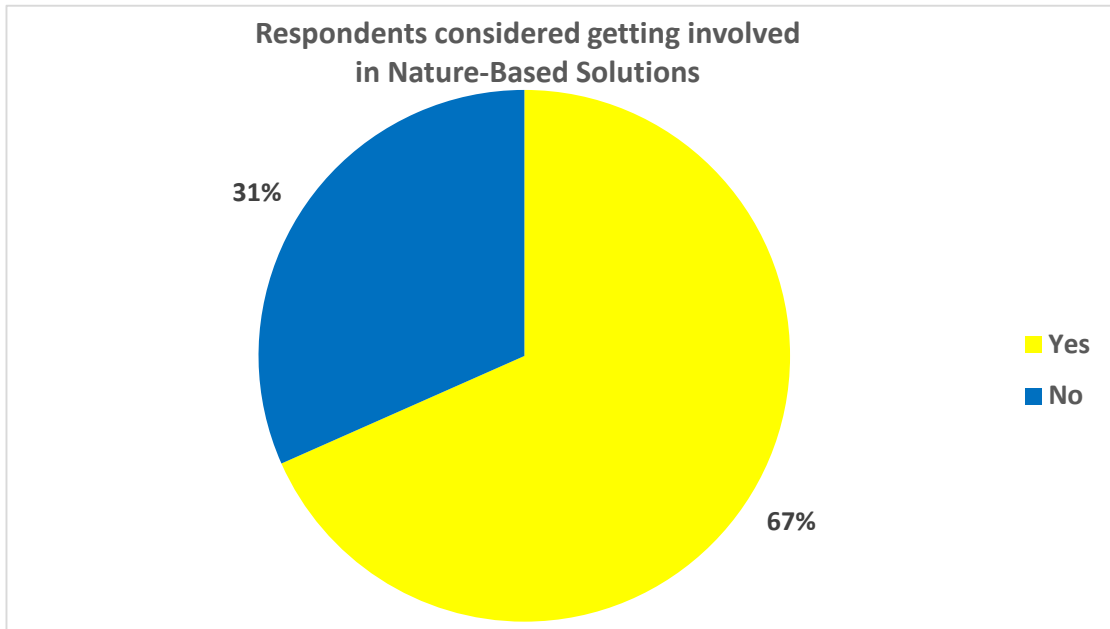


Figure 7- Respondents who considered getting involved in nature-based solutions

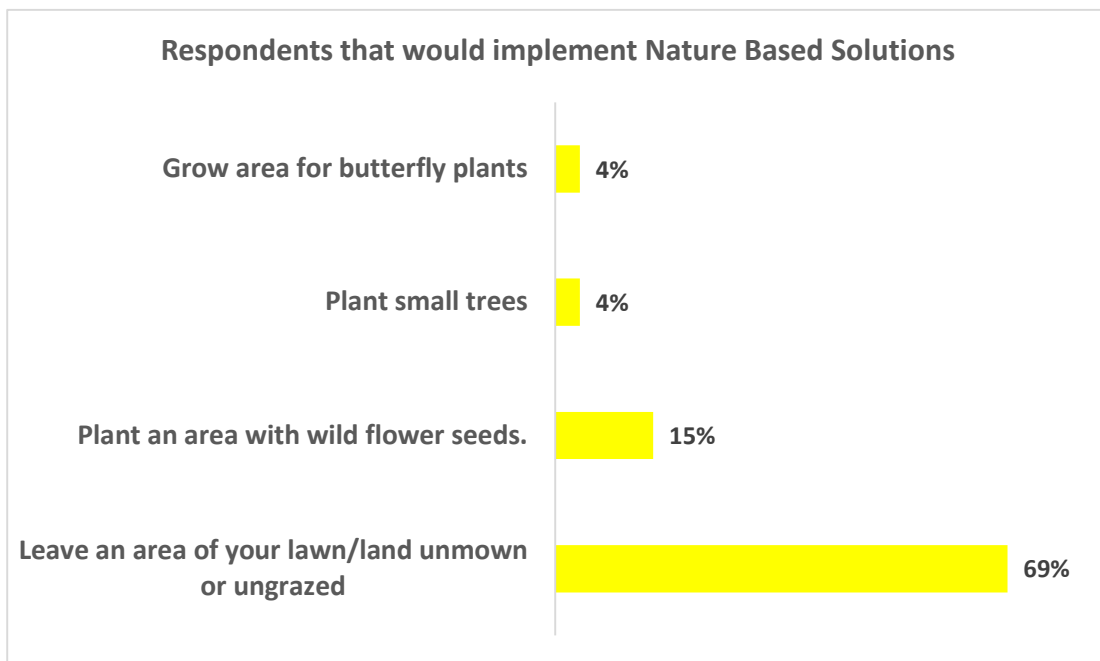


Figure 8- Respondents that would implement nature-based solutions

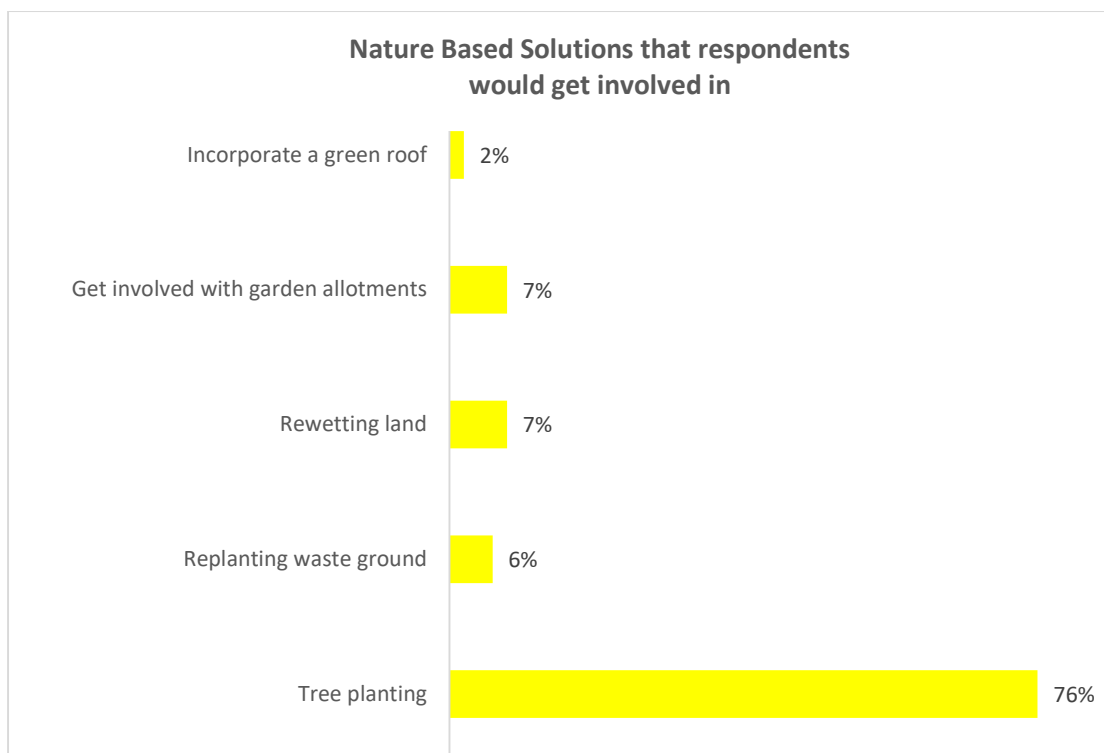


Figure 9- Nature based solutions that respondents would get involved in

When asked what forms of nature-based solutions they would like to see incorporated into the LACAP as actions, some of the following comments were generated:

- Planting public spaces for biodiversity
- Provide more land for allotments
- Reduce use of pesticides
- Tree planting, protection of green areas, wildflower planting in verges
- Promote biodiversity in farming
- Buffers for growth of biodiversity nearer waterways but allow accessibility
- Ensure developments are surrounded by dense biodiversity lands
- Increased targets for tree planting, greater respect from Council crews for existing trees and hedgerows, planting plans for lakes
- Specific methane / ammonia reduction projects for pig, poultry, and dairy farmers
- Promotion of local food growing and the purchase of locally grown products
- Classes on growing own vegetables

3.1.4 Sustainability and Resource Management

Under this thematic area of the survey respondents were queried about sustainability and resource management. The majority of respondents indicated that they would be willing to change their shopping habits to aid climate change. The most common responses were, the utilisation of reusable coffee cups, growing one's own food and shopping at local farmers markets.

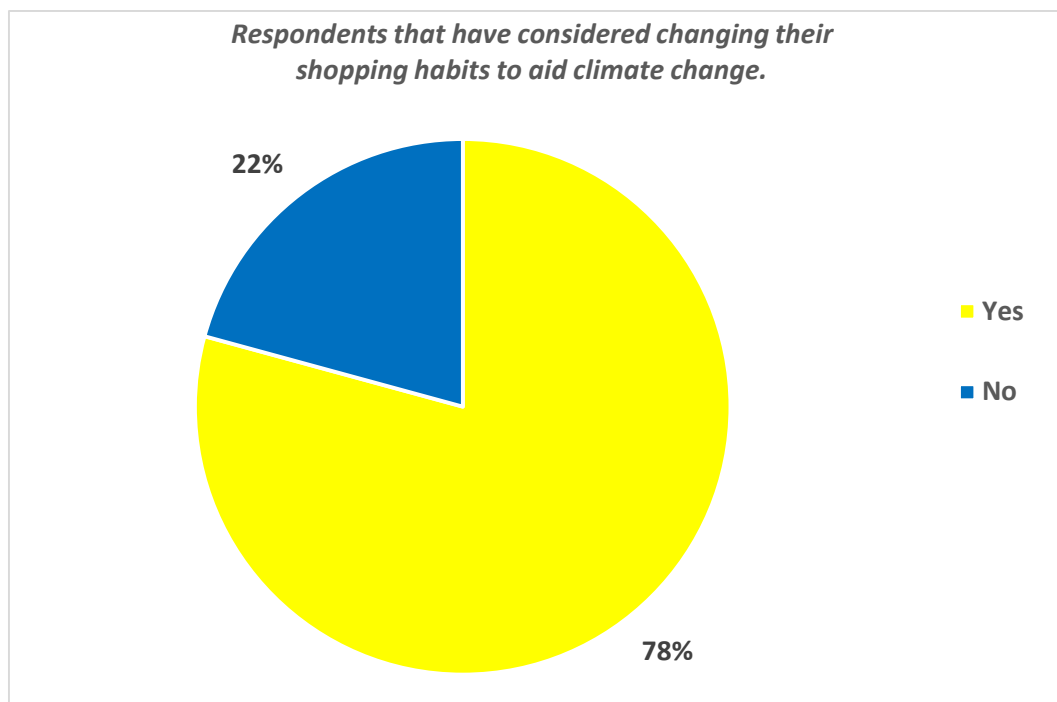


Figure 10- Respondents that have considered changing their shopping habits to aid climate change

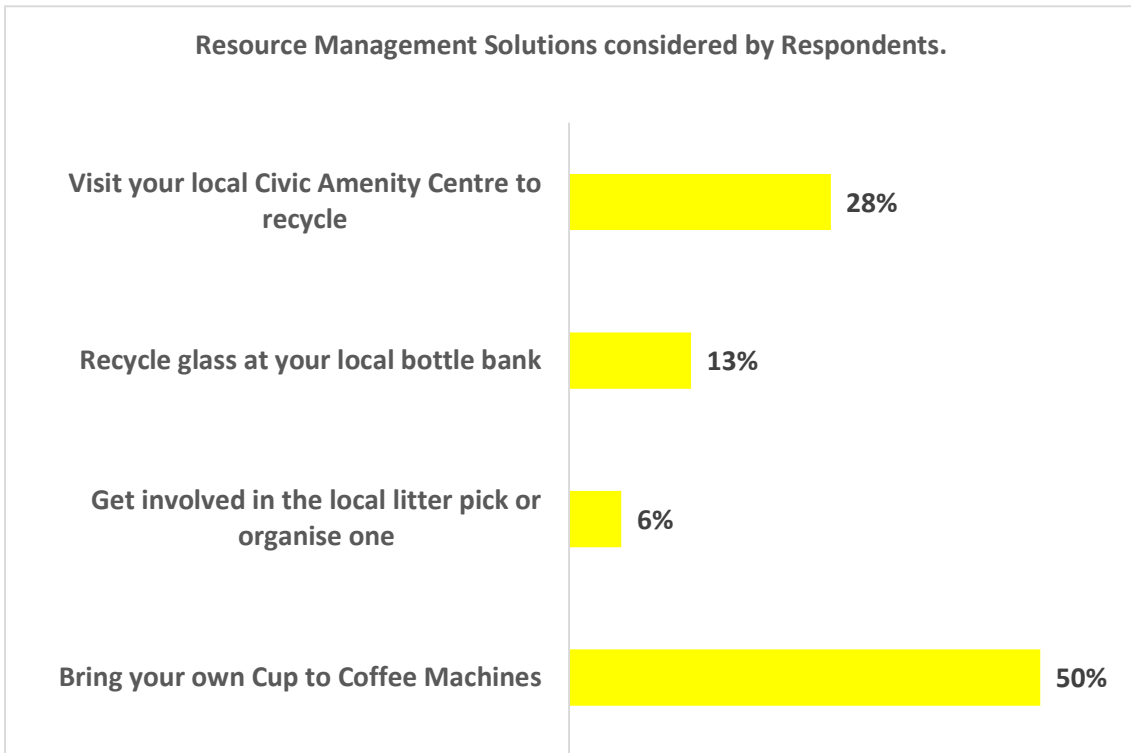


Figure 11 - Resource management solutions considered by respondents



Figure 12- Resource management solution respondents would support

The survey also asked respondents to outline the type of Sustainability and Resource Management climate actions that they would like to see included in the LA-CAP. Some of the most popular ideas included:

- Educational talks for the public/ farmers on rewilding, regenerative farming
- Assistance with growing your own fruit and veg through community allotments and ecosystem restoration
- Community engagement and training
- Tree planting of public lands
- Promote shop local more often than at specific times of year
- Introduce Deposit/Return schemes in the towns
- Supporting establishment of weekly farmers markets within all towns
- Improvement of recycling facilities

3.1.5 Built Environment- Home/ Energy

The survey queried the thematic area of built environment and home energy.

The predominant heating source utilised by respondents to the survey was oil or a mixture of oil and solid fuel, bringing the total solid fuel usage to 71%. It is clear from the survey that the use of renewable energy as a heating source is not prevalent with only 4% reporting the use of a heat pump. 96% of respondents stated that they were considering an alternative to their current fossil fuel source with cost being cited as the greatest obstacle to the transition.

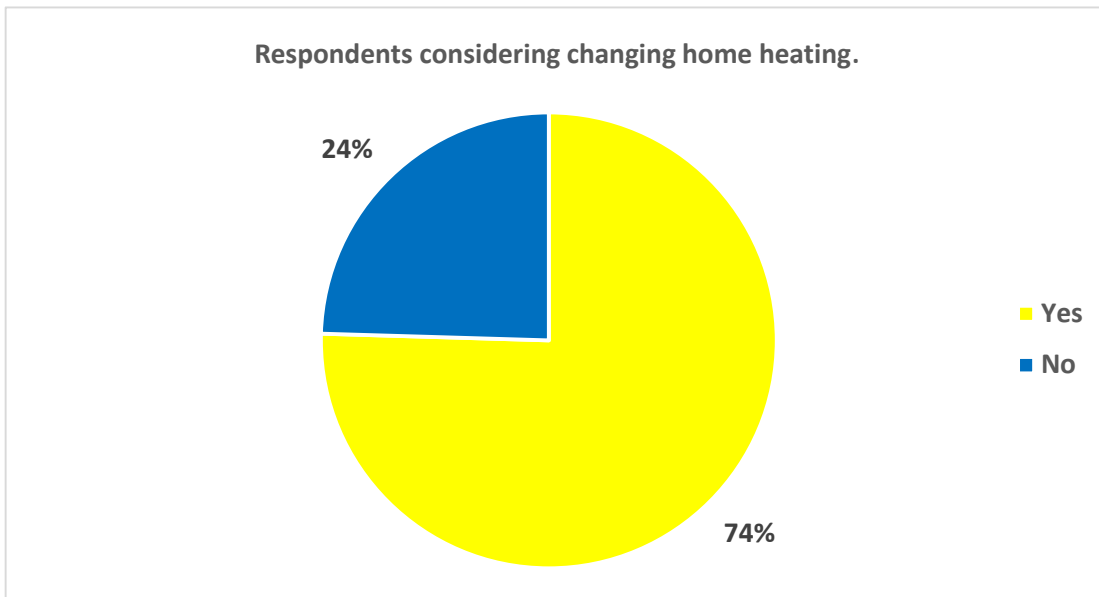


Figure 13 – Respondents considering changing home heating

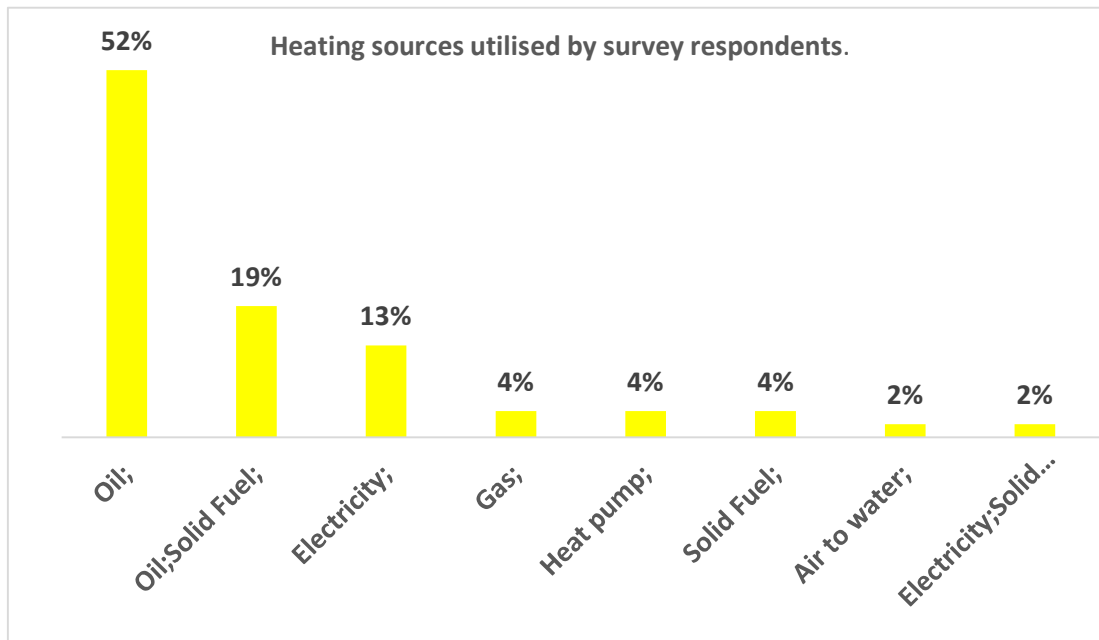


Figure 14– Heating sources utilised by survey respondents

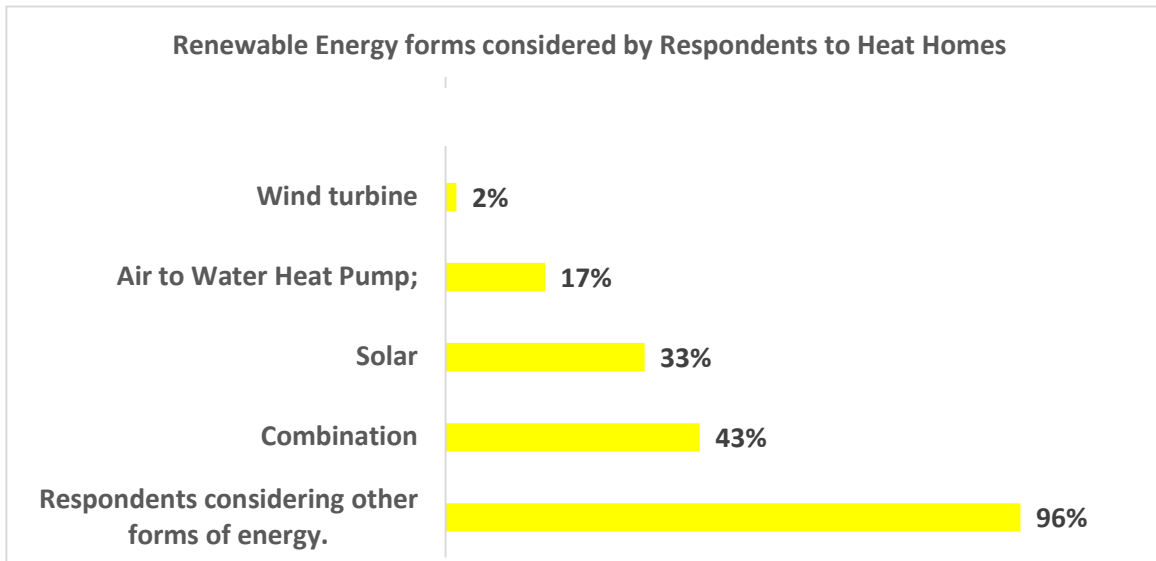


Figure 16 - Renewable energy forms considered by respondents to heat homes

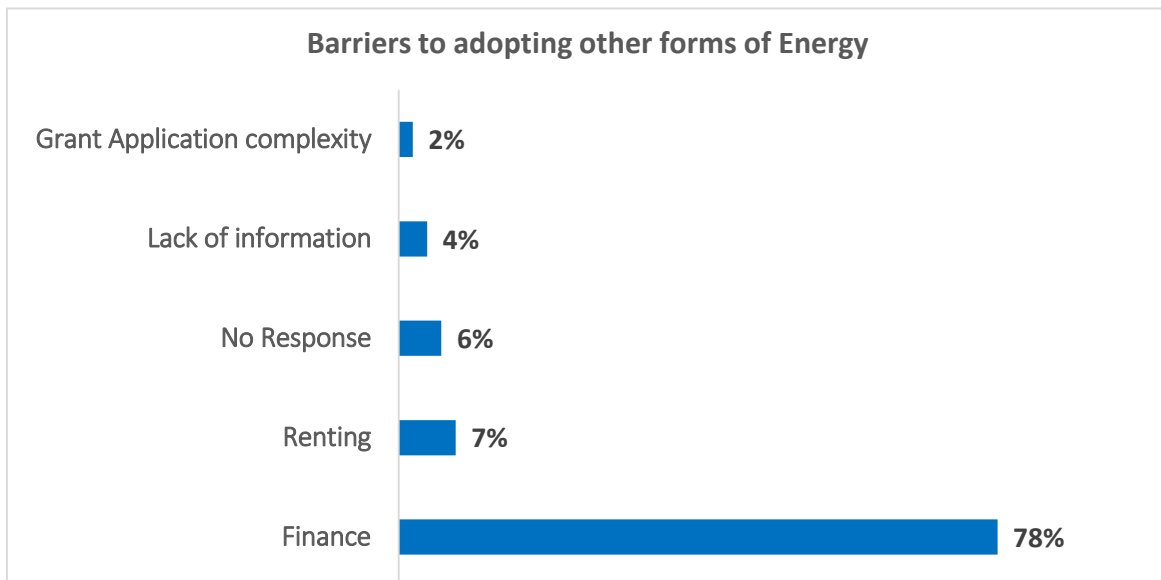


Figure 15 - Barriers to adopting other forms of energy

Respondents were also asked to outline the type of home energy related climate actions they would like to see added to the draft LA-CAP. Some of the most popular comments are outlined as follows:

- Greater financial aid/ grants to support renewable upgrades
- Simple grants for energy efficiency measures, avoiding complex grant applications
- Provide accurate information on the different types of heating/electricity generation
- Information board in every community centre giving details of home emissions reduction
- Organise events in community hubs to inform people
- Develop solar panel covered roofs over car parks, provide free charging for EVs
- All public buildings generating their own renewable energy

Finally, respondents were asked to outline any other measures/ actions they would like to be included in the LA-CAP. Some of the most popular ideas included:

- Advice on protecting water quality
- Full support for greenways/active travel projects within the County as well as providing valuable connectivity linkages to neighbouring Counties
- More walking routes / paths from Cavan town into the surrounding countryside
- More green areas for the towns and better sports facilities and outside areas
- Examine the carbon emissions from construction wastes with greater reuse of construction wastes
- Renovate unused houses in town centres
- Installation of EV charging point in every town and village in county
- Reduce the cost of public transport
- Increase water harvesting projects around the county

3.2 Business & Enterprise Online Survey Results

An additional online survey targeting the Business, Enterprise, Manufacturing & Industry sector was launched. The purpose of this survey was to harness the views and input from this specific sector due to their status as the highest emitter of GHG emissions within the county of Cavan. The results of the survey were very beneficial in the compilation of actions to assist this sector in meeting their reduction requirements.

3.2.1 Main findings

The responses received represented a broad range of business sectors within the county. The largest number of responses were received from the manufacturing sector.

As can be seen from the following charts, many of the business in Cavan have serious concerns regarding climate change with the vast majority agreeing that climate change needs to take priority over other issues.

Respondents were asked if they would be interested in implementing initiatives to reduce their carbon footprint. The majority of responses indicated that they have considered examining their energy consumption with 78% stating that they have already taken action to decrease their GHG emissions. A large proportion of respondents have still not availed of any of the energy grants available to businesses whilst a large number of respondents said that they would consider availing of such grants but that they were not adequately informed on what is available to them.



Figure 17 - Business Location

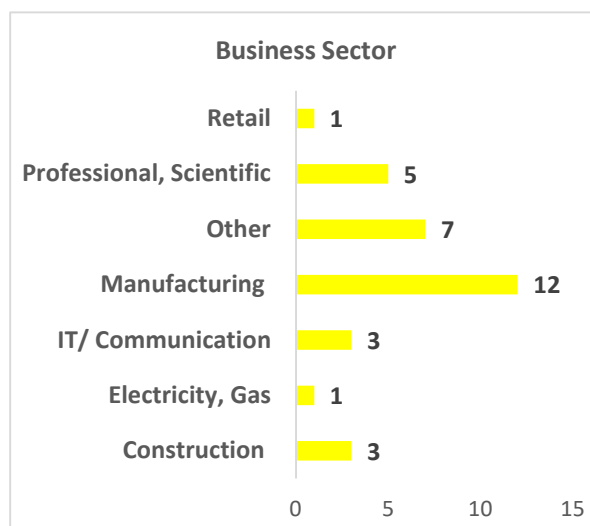


Figure 18 – Business Sector

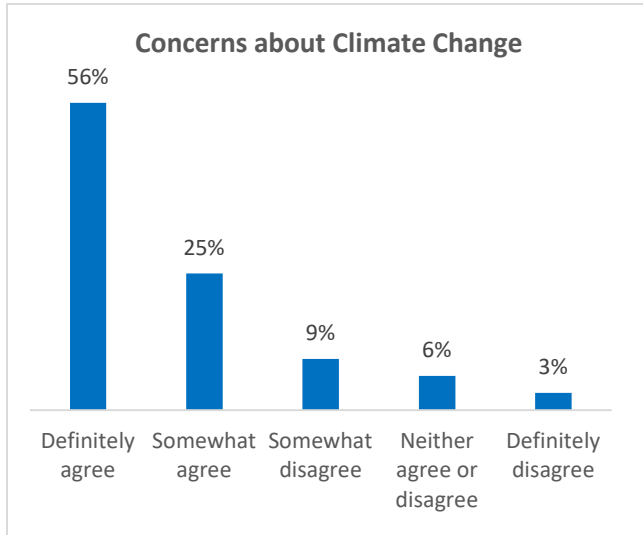


Figure 20 – Climate concerns

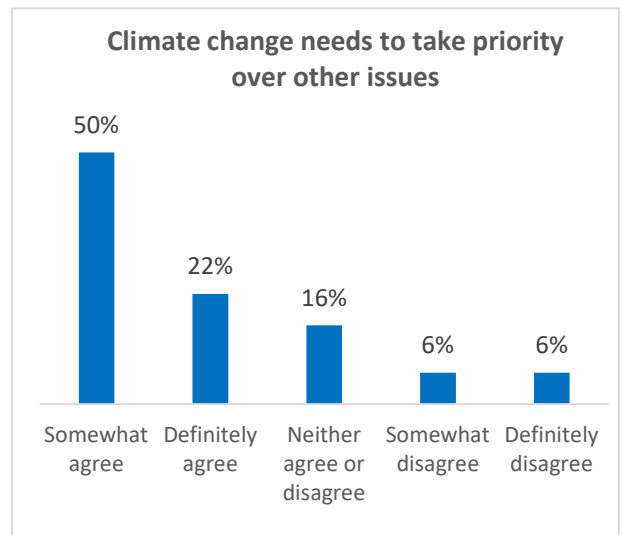


Figure 19 – Business location and sector

- Examining Energy Consumption... 24
- Regulating Business Travel 10
- Using Sustainable Suppliers 18
- Emissions Monitoring Software 8
- Waste Reduction Investigations 17
- Water Conservation Initiatives 20
- Engagement of Employees Thro... 14
- Investing in Low Carbon Fleet 12
- Investing in Renewable Energy T... 19

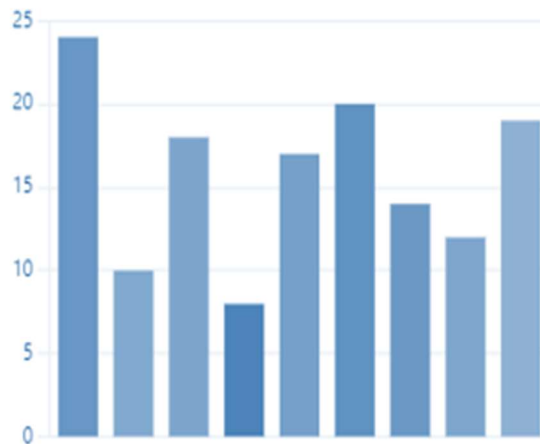


Figure 21 – Initiatives considered by business sector to reduce carbon footprint

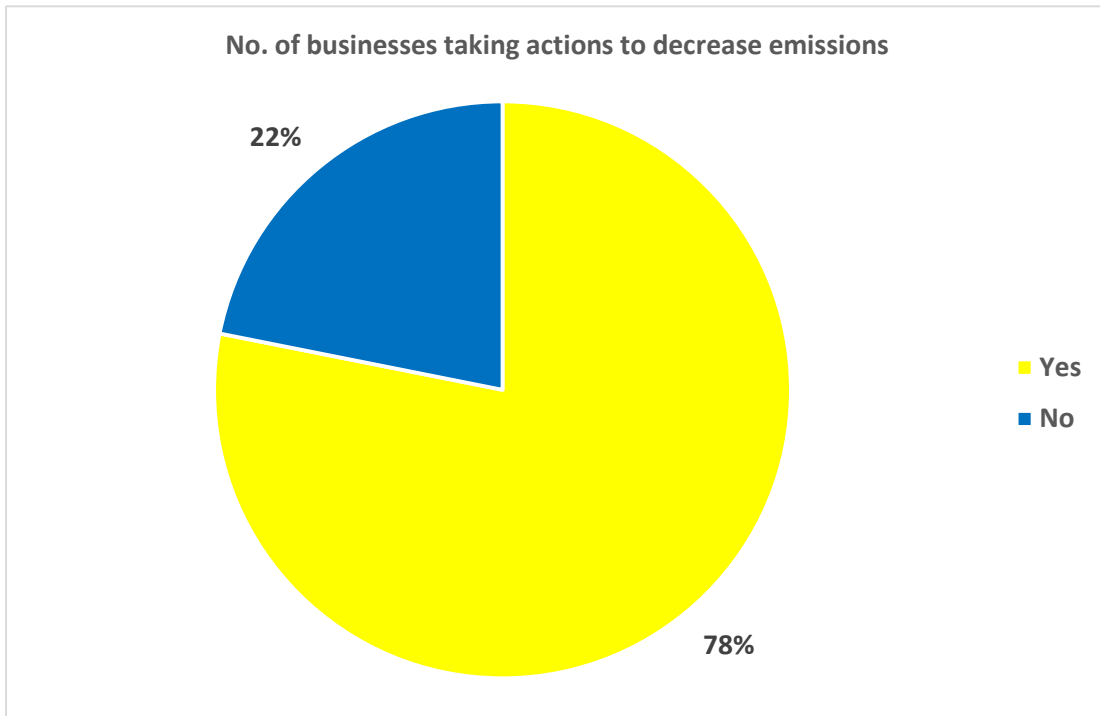


Figure 22 – Taking actions to decrease emissions

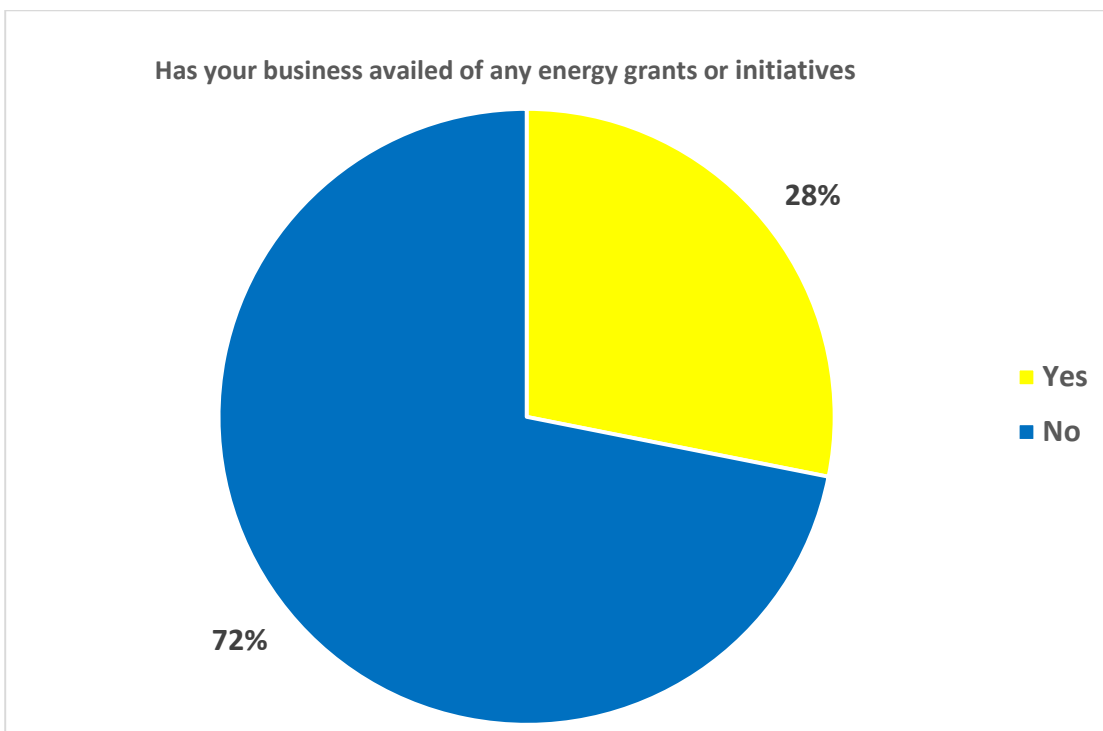


Figure 23 - Percentage of businesses who have availed of energy grants

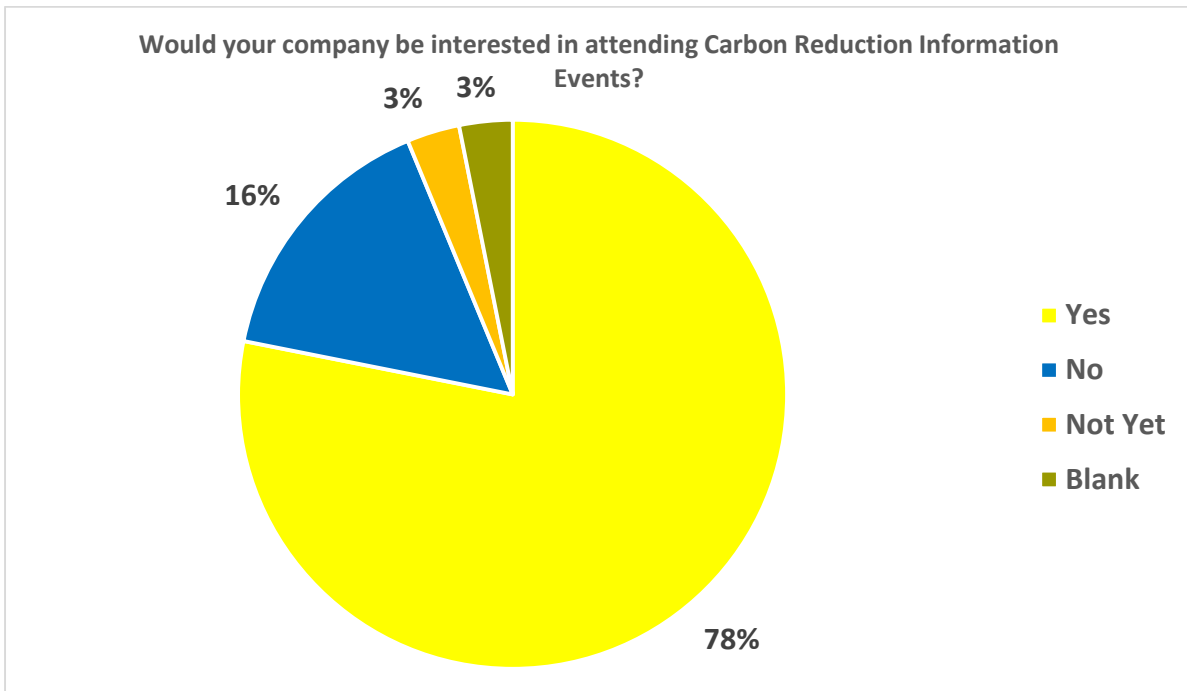


Figure 24 - Percentage of businesses interested in attending GHG reduction information events facilitated by Cavan County Council

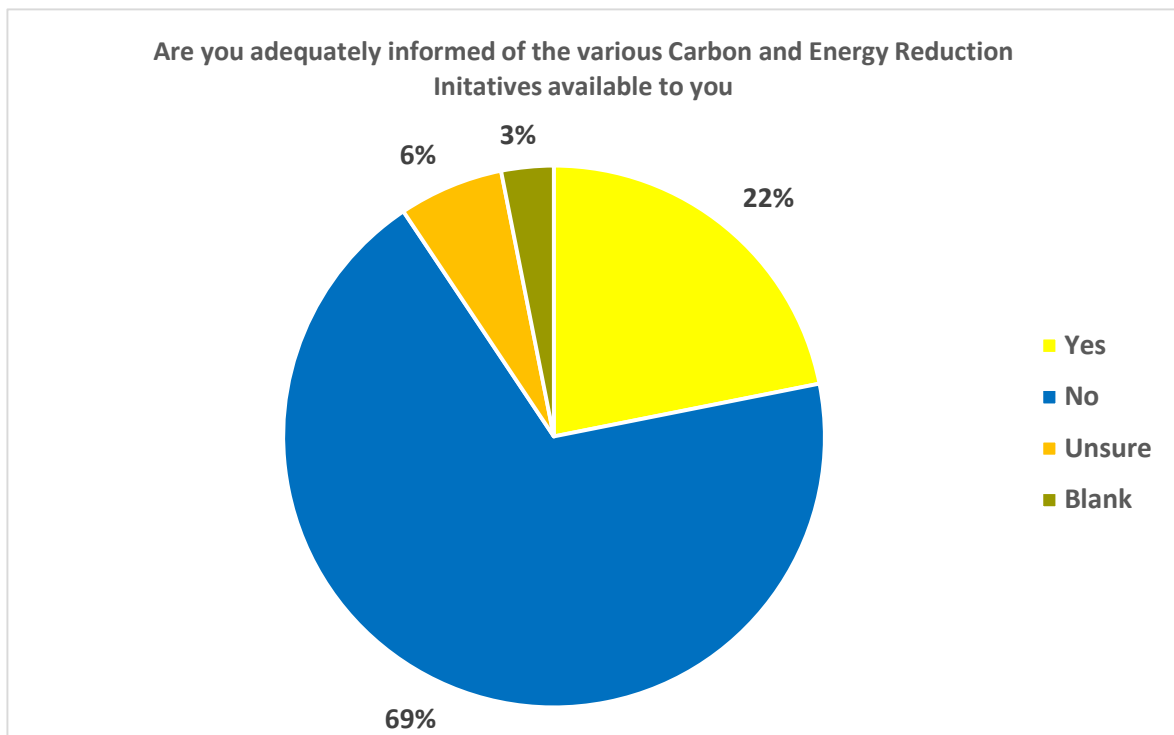


Figure 25 - Businesses opinion on awareness of initiatives available to them

Respondents were queried about what assistance, if any, could potentially be provided by Cavan County Council. The following comments were received:

- Grants and financial assistance
- Training and workshops
- Information of planning process and construction of wind turbines
- Implementation of a Climate Action Hub in County
- Practical, sectoral specific guidance and frameworks
- Special zoning for renewable development
- Set up a database of interested parties for circulation of information

Finally, the survey asked respondents if their company would be interested in being contacted by Cavan County Council in relation to potential Carbon Reduction Training Initiatives with 70% stating Yes.

4.0 Consultations

This section contains a summary of the submissions received as part of the Pre-Draft Consultation phase from Stakeholders, Prescribed Bodies, Elected Members, and members of the public.

All written submissions and survey responses were collated and reviewed as part of the consultation analysis as well as the key points raised during workshops. Submissions from the following sources were also accounted for as part of the Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement for the LA-CAP.

4.1 Submissions from Emails

A total of 11 submissions were received by email pertaining to all aspects of Climate Change. The issues raised by each stakeholder were tabulated with a view to identifying the key priorities and needs that could be addressed through the 5 Strategic Goals/Themes, objectives, and actions of the Climate Action Plan.

4.2 Submissions from the LECF

All climate related issues raised in the Cavan Socio-Economic Statement July 2023 were collated and paid cognisance as part of the consultant process.

4.3 Submission from Leader

A detailed submission from Leader was reviewed as part of the pre-consultant process. All comments, observations and suggestions were noted and considered during the development of actions for the draft Climate Action Plan.

4.4 Submissions from the Local Enterprise Office

All responses from Enterprise/ Business groups were collated through the online business survey as discussed in section 3.0. All comments, observations and suggestions were noted and considered during the development of the actions for the draft Climate Action Plan.

4.4 Submissions from Public Participation Network Workshop

A total of 15 areas for action were discussed during the PPN workshop. All comments, observations and suggestions were noted and considered during the development of the actions for the draft Climate Action Plan.

4.5 Submissions from SPC & Elected Members

A total of 4 areas for action in the Climate change plan were raised at SPC meeting. All comments, observations and suggestions were noted and considered during the development of the actions for the draft Climate Action Plan.

4.6 Submissions from Internal Engagement

Bilateral meetings were held with all departments of Cavan County Council and the Senior Management Team. These meetings, in association with an action planning workshop, were utilised to develop the actions that are now contained within the Draft Climate Action Plan.

4.7 Submissions with Climate Focus taken from County Development Plan

A total of 21 submissions under the Draft County Development Plan 2023-2028 that had a Climate focus were collated and paid cognisance during the development of the actions for the Draft Climate Action Plan.

Following the initial recording of all submissions, a thematic analysis was conducted and classified under the following themes/ goals:

1. Governance and Leadership
2. Built Environment and Transport
3. Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure
4. Communities: Resilience and Transition
5. Sustainability and Resource Management

Appendix 1- List of submissions by Stakeholders and Prescribed Bodies

ID	Stakeholder	Source
1	Bailieboro Town Centre First Public Consultation	Email
2	Cavan Town Regeneration Project	Email
3	Water Forum	Email
4	Ben Malone Community water officer	Email
5	Heritage Council	Email
6	Irish Green Building Council	Email
7	Cootehill Area Development Limited, c/o Malachy Mage	Email
8	Friends of Killymooney	Email
9	LAWPRO	Email
10	J McGahern BJD MD Area	Email
11	Heather Bothwell	Email
12	Coillte	CDP - submission
13	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	CDP - submission
14	Eirgrid	CDP - submission
15	EPS (SEA)	CDP - submission
16	ESB	CDP - submission
17	Fermanagh & Omagh District Council	CDP - submission
18	Gas Networks Ireland	CDP - submission
19	HSE	CDP - submission
20	Inland Fisheries	CDP - submission
21	Irish Green Building Council	CDP - submission
22	Irish Water	CDP - submission
23	NWRA	CDP - submission
24	OPR	CDP - submission
25	Owen Martin Email	CDP - submission
26	Renewable Energy Systems Ltd	CDP - submission
27	SSE	CDP - submission
28	Wind Energy Ireland	CDP - submission
29	LEADER	Email
30	Mannok	Meeting
31	PPN	Workshop

END OF REPORT

**CLIMATE ACTION TEAM
CAVAN COUNTY COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 2023**