



Northern Ireland **CLIMATE** Change-Makers



Belfast
City Council

VALUE & IMPACT REPORT

A *world-class* leadership programme designed to unearth, inspire, and equip 30 'exceptional potential leaders' under the age of 30.



Northern Ireland

CLIMATE

Change-Makers



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Impact Headlines:



Some of the 2025 30U30 Cohort pictured
with **Leo Varadkar** & **Mark Pollock**

- **90** Climate Change-makers Inspired & Equipped
- **18** Action-Orientated Workshops
- **105** Short-Term, Local Impact Projects Catalysed
- **6** Showcase Events for Influential Stakeholders
- World-Class Speakers & Facilitators
- Transforming Medium-Long Term Change-Maker Trajectories
- Successfully Engaged Participants from Underrepresented Groups
- Successfully Secured a Cross-Sectoral Pool of Sponsors
- Mass Media Coverage & Awareness of Programme, Partners & Need



Northern Ireland **CLIMATE** Change-Makers



Profile Value to Belfast City Council



A woman with blonde hair and glasses, identified as Councillor Christina Black, is speaking at a podium. The podium features a logo of the Belfast City Council, which includes a building illustration and the word 'BELFAST'. She is holding a microphone and a laptop. The background consists of a large, ornate wooden door. In the foreground, the backs of several audience members' heads are visible, indicating she is addressing a group.

Councillor Christina Black, then Lord Mayor of Belfast addresses the NI Climate Change-Makers in March 2023





Councillor Tracy Kelly, current Lord Mayor of Belfast addresses the NI Climate Change-Makers in June 2025





Belfast City Council's Climate Team has presented to each of the 3 cohorts of the NI Climate Change-makers programme. Informing them on the work of the Council including the net zero carbon roadmap, the plan to mitigate climate change, becoming carbon neutral as well as detail on partnership actions.....



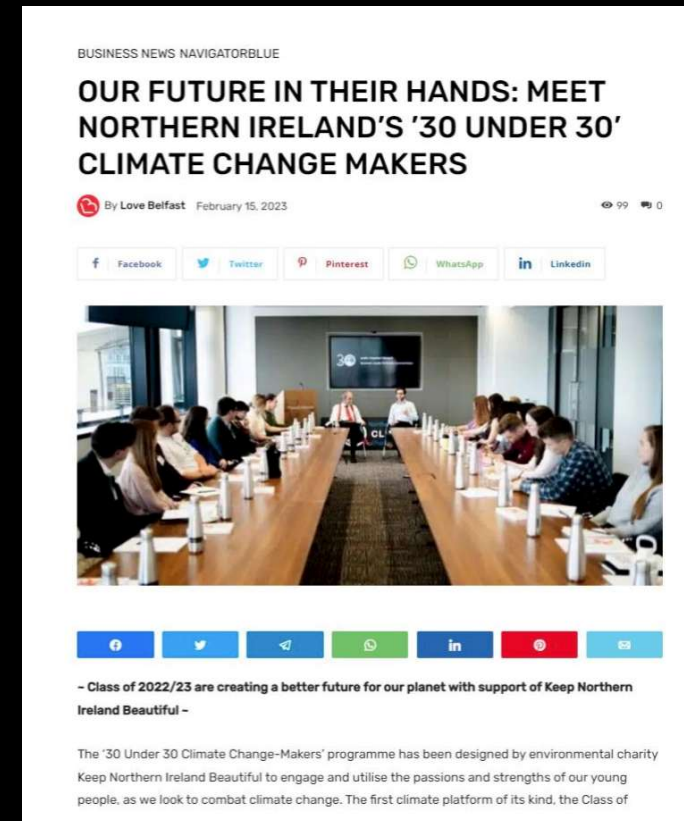


Belfast City Council's Climate Team also served as Expert Panellists, providing guidance to each of the three Team Impact Project Pitch Events.



Media Coverage

- For the 2024-25 cohort, 24 different pieces of media coverage were secured.
- PR reach in excess of 14.1 million.
- Articles featured in leading outlets such as the BBC, Farming Life and Business Eye
- Article in Love Belfast focused on the 11 people from Belfast who took part in the programme, achieving a readership of 1,100,000





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**Belfast
City Council**

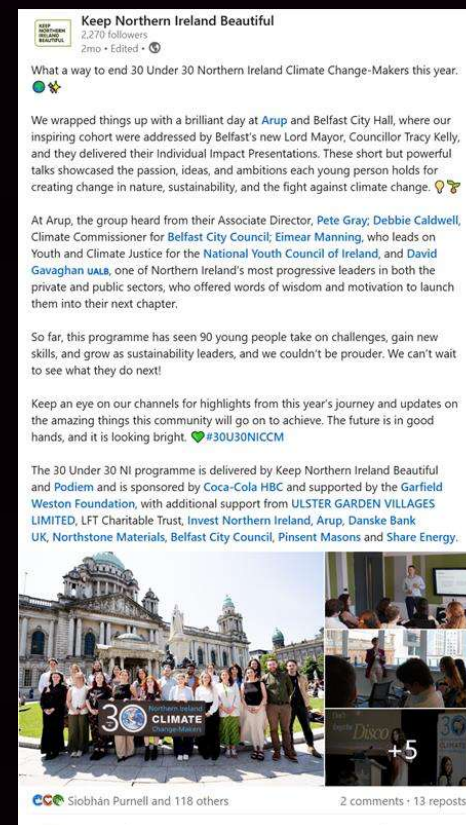
The Belfast City Council brand has been featured on our 30 under 30 branding across KNIB's social media channels (Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn).

Here is one example of the reach: Our social media posts celebrating the final session outside Belfast City Hall

Linkedin-3, 568 impressions

Facebook-2,112 views

Instagram-1,678 views



Two Causeway Coast environmentalists named in prestigious list of Under 30 Climate Change Makers



Henry Ross said: "I'm over the moon to be included as one of this year's 30 Under 30 Climate Change-Makers. For years I've been deeply concerned about the climate crisis and what the future could look like if serious steps aren't taken to ensure we meet our targets." CREDIT

Date: 10.01.25

Youth wasted on the young? Not when it comes to climate action

THE age-old saying that youth is wasted on the young is outdated. In my experience, today's young people are intentional in their choices and keen to leave a lasting legacy – and it is welcomed.

The world is home to 1.8 billion young people – the largest generation of youth in history – and, thankfully, many are increasingly aware of the challenges and risks that the climate crisis poses to our planet.

As the impacts of a changing climate intensify, international movements like Fridays For Future are demanding that we do much better to protect our planet and inspire change. They are actively finding solutions to this pressing challenge. Their unprecedented mobilisation around the world shows the massive power that they possess in bold decision makers accountable.

Last year, Stormont passed the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act, which finally brought Northern Ireland into line with other jurisdictions in having a dedicated climate act. We would not have achieved this important piece of legislation without the many young activists who consistently demanded better from our executive.

Many of those very same climate activists will be confirmed on the

CLIMATE CRISIS

Jenna Potter



persuasion, influencing and communication', which they recently completed and used to consolidate their burgeoning leadership credentials.

The 30 individuals come from a wide range of industries and sectors, including 26-year-old Ashleigh Henry, a chemical engineering PhD student at Queen's University and 28-year-old Ralph Lavery, a net-zero applications engineer at Catagen.

Ashleigh, Ralph and their cohort of 26 other individuals will

THINK OF THE FUTURE: In Northern Ireland climate-crisis disruptions to communities, businesses and our day-to-day lives will continue to escalate until we follow the example given by our youth

quality will also bring discomfort to the vulnerable and threaten thousands of our indigenous species.

We can take greater responsibility for climate action by uniting with young people, like the 30 Under 30 Northern Ireland Climate Change Makers.

With more resources and support from government and business leaders for cohorts like them, we can show future generations that we are really in this together and that we are listening.

LOCAL TRIO HELPING TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate Craic founder, CEO of start-up and environmental educator to help 30 under 30 scheme

CLIMATE CRISIS: Stormont's Climate Crisis is a bold and ambitious plan to reduce carbon emissions and achieve net-zero by 2050.

EDUCATION: Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful's environmental education programme is a key part of the '30 Under 30' class of 2023/24.

Farming Life

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful recruiting 30 Under 30 for third year



in Kelly of Podiem and Jenna Potter, 30U30 Programme Manager.

Meet Northern Ireland's '30 under 30' Climate Change Makers

February 10, 2023



The '30 Under 30 Climate Change-Makers' programme has been designed by environmental charity Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to engage and utilise the passions and strengths of our young people, as we look to combat climate change. The first climate platform of its kind, the Class of 2022/23 were selected in November, and they are already well on their way to making a lasting, positive contribution to Northern Ireland's future. The group have participated in various workshops that have helped them to hone their skills to effect positive environmental change.

30 Under 30 Climate Change-Makers

The Class of 2022/23 began training in December and have already completed workshops focusing on finance, social impact and policy, with workshops in performance, leadership and influencing to be completed between now and March.

Funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), and additional corporate sponsors including Pacem, Pinsent Masons and Danske Bank, the programme is the first of its kind in the UK and draws on an international 30 Under 30 initiative introduced by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE).

County Derry have four in the 30 Under 30 Climate Change-Makers programme

This programme aims to keep Northern Ireland Beautiful



2025 30 Under 30 Climate Change Makers cohort

Next climate leaders urge Stormont to be inspired by COP29



Aine Murray is a senior sustainability engineer and podcaster

Immediate Impact:

World-class Speakers & Real
Time Participant Feedback

Rene Carayol MBE
Global Leadership Guru



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Belfast
City Council

Danske Bank



Pacem



Force For Good

“The guest speakers are fantastic and it’s incredible to have the opportunity to hear from so many inspirational and intelligent people.”

Richard Moore
Children in Crossfire

Alan Mahon
Brewgooder



Cultivating Confidence & Harnessing Stress

Professor Ian Robertson

Neuroscientist, Psychologist,
Author & Global Authority on
Performance

“The programme has been amazing. ‘Bucket List’ speakers at each session – my team in work can’t believe it when I tell them!”



Purpose, Why and Impact

Alice Thompson

Founder of Social Bite &
The Big Sleepout

“Alice was amazing...Being vulnerable is ok...”



Purposeful Leadership

Helen Thompson

Former MD of TOMS

An unmissable event offering remarkable insights into the dynamics of thought and action”



Confronting the Climate Emergency

Sir Jonathon Porritt CBE

Globally Renowned Sustainability
Leader

*“This programme has been a
once in a lifetime opportunity”*



Resilience



“A great workshop. The passion emanating from the speakers really helps to refocus why we are doing what we do”.

Sir AP McCoy MBE
World #1 for 20 Years

Applying Behavioural Science to Encourage Sustainability

*...ing is to
...ey can do it
...ey'd prefer
...o" - Daniel
...hneman*



“One of the best programmes I have
ever come across.”



Richard Shotton

Internationally Renowned
Thought Leader & Speaker



Wellbeing, Performance & Teamwork

Gerry Hussey

Ireland's Leading
Authority on Wellbeing &
Performance

*A very Inspirational event, giving
insight & guidance on both career
but also personal life. I will take
away a lot from this event.*



Youth & Climate Justice

Eimear Manning

UN Committee Member

“Insightful, engaging and a powerful reminder of how both individual and collective action can drive real change in tackling environmental challenges”.



Groundbreaking Leadership

*“What an event full of amazing
advice”.*

Leo Varadkar
Former World Leader

Judith Gillespie CBE
Pioneer for Change



Leadership in an Age of Disruption & Chaos

Ian McClean

Internationally-
Renowned Speaker,
Thought Leader & Writer

*“A great opportunity to refine your
skills to make positive changes!”.*



Leadership, Activism & Opportunity

Conor McKinney

Broadcaster,
Conservationist & Founder
of Starling Ecology



*“A great opportunity to connect with
other young people who are
passionate about the planet!”.*



Purpose, Why & Impact

Rónán Ó Dálaigh

Environmentalist & Founder &
CEO of Thriftify

“Ronan was amazing...Being vulnerable is ok....”



Immediate Impact:

Impact Projects &
Concepts Catalysed...

The Issue



Currently 22,666 vacant
domestic properties



55,000 experiencing homelessness
4,000 sleeping rough

Working for people, property, and planet



Individual Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

➤ **Sustainable Construction**

A framework for sustainable design practices in construction.

➤ **Voices for Change**

A platform for diverse perspectives on the climate crisis.

➤ **Business & Biodiversity Action Programme**

Accelerating nature-positive action in business.

➤ **Cemetery Infrastructure**

Integrating climate resilience into memorial landscapes.

➤ **EcoHome**

A mobile app to improve your home economically & eco-friendly.

➤ **7 Months of Surveys**

Data monitoring scheme for species across UK & Ireland

➤ **Behaviour Change for Climate Change**

Tackling the behaviour of the SME & Private sectors in NI.

➤ **Don't forget the Disco**

Building joy and meaning in the response to the climate crisis.



Individual Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

➤ **Symbiosis**

Connecting sustainable business with environment and culture.

➤ **The NI Student Nature Project**

A network of university students volunteering for environmental NGOs.

➤ **Pick It Forward**

Gleaning as a solution for food waste & food insecurity in NI.

➤ **GrowBox**

Where office life meets forest life.

➤ **Farming for Nature**

Introducing nature friendly practices & climate resilience to farming.

➤ **Climate Resource**

An online platform sharing science-based data on climate facts.

➤ **The Green Scene**

An app bringing people together socially while taking on sustainability initiatives.



Individual Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

➤ **CarbonCut**

A net zero toolkit for small contractors.

➤ **Roots to Change**

An 8-week school sustainability programme.

➤ **KitchenSync**

Planning a more sustainable and cost-effective lifestyle.

➤ **NatureWise NI:**

Biodiversity programme for school grounds management.

➤ **Open Mosaic Habitats**

Improving the condition of previously developed land.

➤ **Circular Economy Donation Project**

Reducing consumption, reusing materials and rethinking waste.

➤ **Lots of Life Wardrobe**

Free swap shops throughout the year to reduce textile waste.



Individual Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

- **UU & QUB Furniture Fayre**
A sustainable solution to student living.
- **Algae Blooms In NI**
Combatting the pollution of our beaches and coastlines.
- **Cement-Free Concrete**
Environmentally sustainable practices in concrete production.
- **Biodiversity Bulletin**
Quarterly biodiversity-focused newsletters.
- **Connection To Nature**
An office plant initiative for staff.
- **Urban Green Spaces**
Making existing green spaces more pollinator friendly.
- **Enviro-Sense**
Tracking energy conservation within buildings.



Individual Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

- **Environmental Benchmarking**
Empowering NI businesses in minimising their environmental footprint.
- **Civilian Conservation Corps**
A new, sustainable direction of the historical programme.
- **Nature Narrators**
Skills-based workshops for children.
- **Rooted**
A creation care programme in church communities.
- **Agricultural Shows**
Increasing sustainability awareness in local communities.
- **ROAM**
A travel app to explore next-door.



Individual Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

- **Make Polluters Pay**
Legislation to ensure justice and equity of the collective planet.
- **Powering a Greener Future**
Energising public infrastructure.
- **Farmers are the Solution**
The role of farmers in tackling carbon emissions.
- **ForevergreenNI**
Multi-Company Green Spaces & Tree Nursery.
- **Greenspaces NI**
Connecting people with more local greenspaces.
- **Carbon Literacy**
Action-based climate change training for citizens of NI.



Individual Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

- **Nutrients in NI Waterways**
Reducing the level of excess manure in NI waterways.
- **Optimising Sheep Management:**
Leveraging the role of sheep in shaping our landscapes.
- **Community for Energy Assessment NI**
Uniting Energy Assessors across NI.
- **Our Odyssey**
Reducing single-use plastics in the events industry.
- **Social Value in Riparian Buffers**
Integrating public access and recreation.
- **Community Gargen Network**
Inspiring community action in South Belfast.
- **Microplastic Filtration**
Reducing microplastics in the ecosystem.



Individual Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

- **Thriving in Each Others Shade**
Enabling Collective Action
- **Beginners Green Guide to Construction**
Targeting Females & Young People
- **Optimising Space**
Merging Planetarian and Humanitarian Values
- **Action in Harmony**
Redressing Climate Action that Conflicts with Nature
- **Thrifty Seeds**
A community-based plant trading movement
- **Greeting Relations**
Greeting genetic relations through technological, cultural, & ecological kinship
- **Green Get Togethers Ireland**
An Events Hub
- **Detection Dogs**
A Conservation Solution



Individual Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

- **Climate Craic**
A Festival for fun, families and positive action
- **Energy Impact & Independence**
Heat Pumps & Solar Panels
- **Responsible Business Decisions**
Provide NI businesses with confidence & knowledge
- **Responsible**
Movement for Circular Fashion
- **Build the Future**
The World Needs You
- **QUB Sustainable Action Programme**
Delivering knowledge, skills and motivation
- **Carbon Offsetting**
Greenwashing or a Net Zero Necessity
- **Action Mountstewart**
Pollinators, Freshwater invertebrates, canopy cover & mammals at night



Individual **Impact** Projects & Concepts Catalysed

- **Community Link**
A hub connecting climate action within geographic communities
- **Net Zero Playbook**
A resource for business representative bodies
- **Architectural Action**
Reducing Carbon Emissions in Construction
- **Eco Officers**
Inspiring young people through gardening
- **Wild Seisiúns**
Ceol agus craic helping nature fight back
- **Grain to Plate**
Fixing the broken supply chain within the wheat market in Ireland
- **Climate Heros**
Helping young people understand and articulate climate change
- **Carbon Offsetting**
Greenwashing or a Net Zero Necessity
- **Back to our Roots**
Rewilding, Harvesting & Growing



Team Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

➤ **Climate Compass**

A hub for sustainable activity in NI.

➤ **No River**

Tackling NI's dirty rivers.

➤ **Unearthed**

Cultivating the potential of NI soil.

➤ **Geofirmall**

Digging NI into a renewable future.

➤ **Roots to School**

Growing fun, green commutes for kids.

WHAT IS ROOTS TO SCHOOL?

ADDRESSING SCHOOL TRAVEL CONGESTION:
COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE JOURNEYS

LEVERAGING EXISTING PROGRAMS TO BROADEN REACH AND UNITE EFFORTS.

ENCOURAGING WALKING AND CYCLING TO SCHOOL FOR FAMILIES

REGULAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO CONNECT WITH NATURE

Northern
CLIMATE
Change



Team Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

- **Green Spaces, Shared Spaces**
Tackling the environmental impact of segregation in Belfast.
- **Re-Home**
Building the foundations of a better future for Belfast.
- **Ecovasive: The Plant Shift**
Corporate Action. Biodiverse Impact.
- **Re-Grow**
A gamified gardening app as a tool for change.
- **Coleraine F.C.**
Scoring big for NI on the environmental impact of football.



Team Impact Projects & Concepts Catalysed

➤ VACAN

The key to unlocking space in Belfast

➤ Rethink: A Thirst for Change

Public water refill station campaign

➤ CCM Hub

For Young People By Young People

➤ Rechoice

Building choice into waste deposit return schemes

➤ Grow & Co NI

Food-growing spaces to empower communities



‘Mood Follows Action’ – 30U30 & Belfast City Council’s Commitments to Young People

30 under 30 Climate Change Makers Programme drives forward Belfast City Council’s Commitment to Young People:

- **Empowered**- 30 under 30 Climate Change Makers Programme helps young people realise their own power in tackling the climate emergency.
- **Safe**- 30 under 30 Climate Change Makers Programme provides a structured forum to develop their own ideas and skills.
- **Happy**- 30 under 30 Climate Change Makers Programme instils a can-do attitude in our young people that they can make a difference
- **Achieving at each stage of life**- 30 under 30 Climate Change Makers Programme ensures that our cohorts develop lifelong and transferable skills that will help their career and personal development in the immediate, medium and long term.
- **Playing their part in their city and communities**- 30 Under 30 Climate Change Makers Programme empowers young people to continue on their projects and make a difference in their communities

Key Points

- 30 under 30 Climate Change Makers Programme has had a real, tangible impact across Northern Ireland, including the Belfast City Council area.
- Young people often feel talked at about the climate emergency; we have flipped that and ensured our young people know they can lead.
- The ideas for projects are 100% from those who take part. We work with them to help shape and provide networks to enhance impact.
- To date, 90 young people have benefitted from 30 under 30, and we are ambitious to keep going.
- Keep going, not just for the sake of running a programme, but for the future, led by our young people.

Inclusivity

Participation from Hard-to-Reach & Underrepresented Demographics

- From the outset the 30 Under 30 programme has been promoted to all and encouraging of applications from all backgrounds.
- The outcome of this has been participation from underrepresented or hard-to-reach demographics such as:
 - Neurodivergent
 - Unemployed
 - Ethnic Minorities (to include people of colour and from the travelling community)
- 64% of participants to date have been female
- The programme partners welcome the opportunity to work with Belfast City Council to promote the fourth cohort across the Council's networks to ensure that we continue to attract participants from hard-to-reach and underrepresented communities across the city.
- Overleaf is a news article focussing on one of the Belfast-based 30U30 participants from a traditionally 'hard-to-reach' and 'underrepresented' background (Polly Garnett from a traveller background) .



NEWS

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Young people see Belfast Hills through new lens



Top stories

Play: Cooler Than Me?

Weather · 10 hours ago

BBC News app

30 April

More to explore

**I ordered drug-laced vapes on Snapchat. It was as easy as**

Louise Cullen

BBC News NI agriculture and environment correspondent

9 August 2025

The Belfast Hills have been seen through a different lens by young people, as part of a project to create a visual archive of the natural heritage they are home to.

The group used different cameras to explore Cave Hill, Divis and Black Mountain.

And even for those familiar with the hills, it changed their perspective.

Polly Garnett led the **Belfast Photo Festival** project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

"This was maybe one of the first times that I'd really been able to give people cameras and see what they were noticing," she said.

Coming from a traveller background, the hills made her feel at home when she moved to Northern Ireland.

"I could see Cave Hill and, you know, Napoleon's nose being such a significant landmark, it kind of made me feel more comfortable so I started going hiking and exploring them.

"And then it was really once I had my work at the Belfast Hills Partnership and working with the National Trust that I realised the kind of cultural significance that they have as well and just how special they are.

"So they mean a lot to me."



Why the world is watching RFK's fight with US health agency



Humble & sweet, but a lion - the story of the first female £1m player

 Sport



Russia targets WhatsApp and



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