



CASE STUDY:

CLAN NA GAEL, CO. LOUTH



The challenge we faced:

In 2019 we carried on an energy audit of the club that showed that we were spending over €17,000 a year on electricity and oil, equating to 52 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually.

The increasing maintenance costs on our lighting weren't sustainable and, on top of this, our main pitch was unplayable after dark as our floodlights weren't providing the necessary level of safe lighting. We needed to find a solution to our excessive energy use and poor floodlighting.

The solution we identified:

The club reached out to Croke Park and Louth County Council for guidance and the advice we received led to us to apply to the SEAI (Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland) for a 50% Communities Energy grant to upgrade our pitch floodlights and our club building.

The club was successful in the application and was awarded the grant. A third-party organisation, Louth Energy, designed the solutions and project-managed the works throughout.

The actions we took:

We upgraded our main pitch and training pitch lights to LED.

Our energy audit had also shown us how energy inefficient our clubhouse was and so we also upgraded our building fabric, with insulation of wall cavities and attic space, we installed new ventilation points and we changed all external and internal lights to LED. We also ran energy training and awareness initiatives for club and community members



The project impact:

1. 55% reduction in energy use and CO2 emissions. This gave the club a greater budget for other purposes within the club.
2. The comfort level achieved in our indoor facilities was exceptional and has led to increased use of our facilities.
3. The new LED floodlighting gave the main pitch back to the playing of our games again. All players enjoyed playing under the lights, in particular the children.
4. The quality of the lights resulted in the playing of high-profile games at the club which in-turn generated revenue.
5. Households and businesses in our community have been inspired by the energy improvements done by the club and now look to achieve similar improvements.
6. The profile of the club has been elevated within the county and nationally.



Secrets to our success:

- It really helped to have someone leading the project: we appointed a Green champion from within the Healthy Club Committee.
- We got fantastic support from the club executive – they worked with us to agree the path forward and to secure and to manage the necessary financing needed.
- Outside expertise was crucial and we got invaluable advice and guidance from Louth County Council and our project coordinators Louth Energy.
- We ran an awareness campaign within our community, and further afield, to explain the problems, the need for action and the value these actions would contribute.
- We raised the club's 50% contribution from the community, members and local businesses.

Who we partnered with:

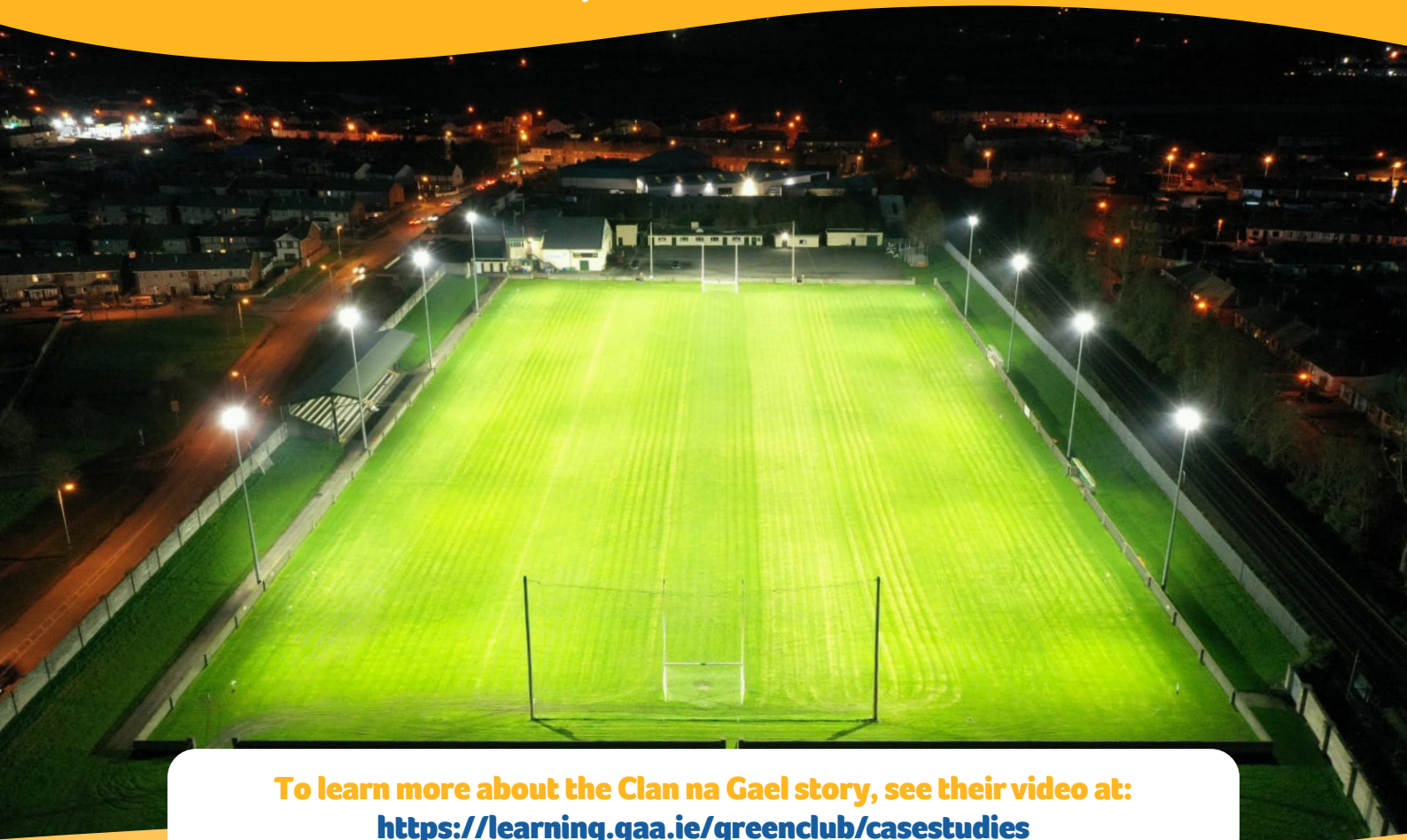
The club reached out to Louth County Council and Croke Park for direction. A detailed audit and analysis report was completed by Louth County Council. This led to the club's successful application to the SEAI for an energy upgrade grant under the Community Energy Grant scheme.

Funding we received:

We received a 50% grant from the SEAI and raised 50% from the club and community.

The next steps for Clan na Gael:

The club is working towards Carbon Neutral Status. While this be a challenge, it can be achieved by the replacement of our oil boilers with a heat pump and the deployment of an 11KW PV solar array for electricity generation. The club can apply for further SEAI funding but may only qualify for 30%. The remaining 70% will be difficult to raise by the club given we were badly impacted by Covid. A challenge for 2023!



To learn more about the Clan na Gael story, see their video at:
<https://learning.gaa.ie/greenclub/casestudies>