

## Business Survey and Focus Groups in Sandyford Business District

Final Report (August 2024)



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## A. Rationale and Methodology

Sandyford Business District is a partner in the IB Green Project, co-funded by the EU's North West Europe Interreg Programme. The project aims to help transform industrial and business parks in NWE into climate-resilient, sustainable spaces, benefiting local businesses, the residents and the environment.

As a Pilot Action, Sandyford Business District, in partnership with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, is actively working towards the transformation of an 0.8 hectare (1.98 acres) of land parcel centrally located in the District, into a civic park.

This initiative aims to improve the quality of public spaces and address environmental challenges within the business park areas. The envisioned park will be located at the junction of Corrig Road and the northwest segment of Carmanhall Road in a densely populated part of the district with limited green space. It will provide an attractive open space, offering benefits to both local residents and employees in the District.

As part of the IB Green Project, Sandyford Business District conducted a survey with selected businesses in the District to gain insight into their perspectives on sustainable development of the District with specific emphasis on the value they place on the proposed civic park. This was also an opportunity for participating businesses to elaborate on their own priorities and strategies for more sustainable practices.

Appendix A provides a compilation of responses from participating businesses on the questions asked in the survey questionnaire.

After analysing the responses, Sandyford Business District conducted a focus group with participants to discuss survey findings and to probe the possibilities for more stakeholder collaboration, specifically in co-designing the civic park and in developing district-wide sustainability actions. The objective was also to give participants the opportunity to connect and develop mutual understanding of the scope and potential for future collaboration and support. See Appendix B for notes on the focus group discussions provided by Sam O'Connor.

Finally, a focus group discussion was held with key non-business stakeholders (Sandyford-Glencullen Local Election Area Councillors, Officials of key departments in dlr County Council and Landlords of residential buildings in the District) on 24 August 2024 using the same format as the one used for the previous focus group discussion with business participants. See Appendix C.

This report is part of a process of deepening understanding of challenges and opportunities to advance the greening of the Sandyford Business District through projects like the IB Green Project and the development of the local authority's new Sandyford Urban Framework Plan.

## B. Main findings

### 1. Business Strategies for Sustainability

Participants indicated the importance of developing specific strategies to minimize their impact on the natural environment, to reduce their carbon footprint as well as to promote and subscribe to the values underpinning sustainable development as reflected in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). See for example the extract below from the Sustainability Report of Mercury Engineering:

Our focus areas align with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)

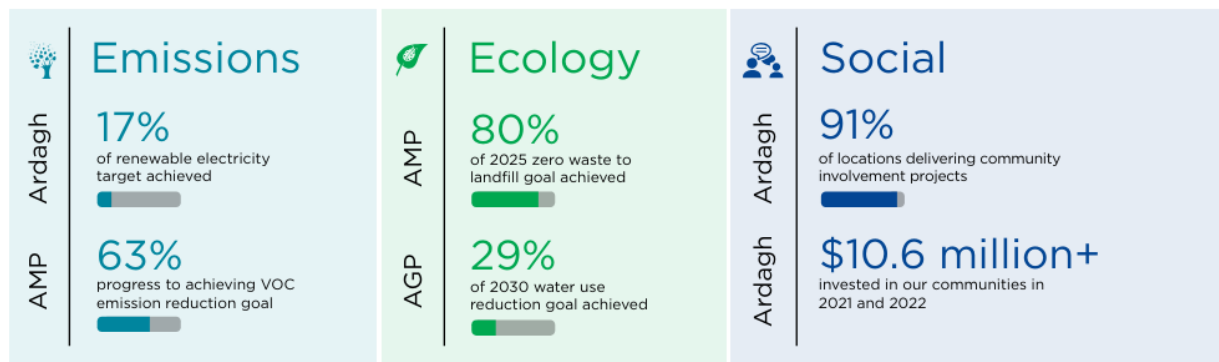
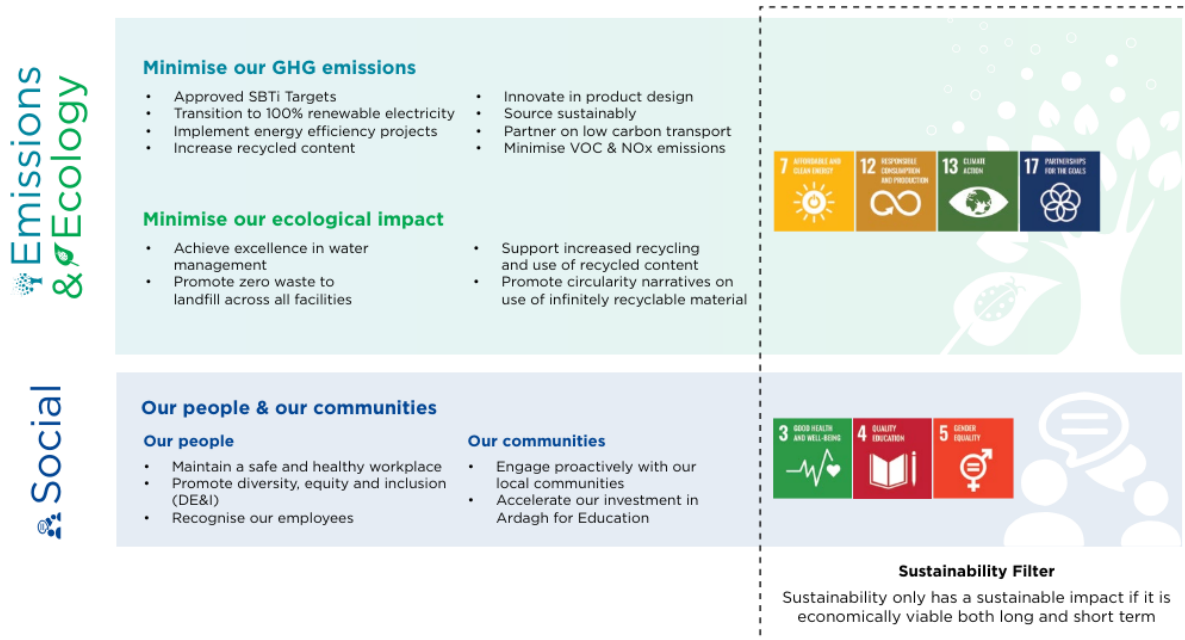
UN SDGs Mercury's Sustainability Strategy aligns with	Our commitment	Some of our key actions
8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	Supporting local jobs Pay fairly Supporting local communities	Local recruitment Sectoral agreements, regular pay reviews, and benefits Suppliers/Subcontractors Code of Conduct and audits Financial support to local initiatives
12: Responsible Consumption and Production	Supporting local jobs Pay fairly Supporting local communities	Financial support to local charitable organizations
3: Good Health and Well-being	Health & Safety Employees well-being	Safety training and "Work safe, Home safe" campaign Employee Assistance Programme Partnerships with charities promoting mental health/cancer research Financial support to local sports clubs
4: Quality Education	Learning & Development	Training programme and dedicated platform for all employees Apprenticeship investment & Apprentice Development Centre Graduate, Leadership Development, Educational Assistance and Scholarship programmes Financial and material support to local schools or initiatives
5: Gender Equality	Equality Diversity Inclusion	Diversity tracking and targeted recruitment Investors in Diversity survey participation and alignment, Work180 endorsement Elevate pledge signatory and alignment Suppliers/Subcontractors Code of Conduct and audits
10: Reduced Inequalities	Supporting local jobs Pay fairly Responsible partnerships	Local recruitment Sectoral agreements, regular pay reviews, and benefits Suppliers/Subcontractors Code of Conduct and audits
16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	Equality Diversity Inclusion	Diversity tracking and targeted recruitment Investors in Diversity survey participation and alignment, Work180 endorsement Elevate pledge signatory and alignment Suppliers/Subcontractors Code of Conduct and audits
13: Climate Action	Energy efficiency Responsible water use Responsible waste practices	Energy efficiency investments (LED lighting, sensors, timers, etc.) Embodied Carbon Calculator (eC3) Trials and investment in electric or hybrid vehicles and machinery Implementation of new water-efficient flushing methods
14: Life Below Water	Reduced GHG emissions Biodiversity	CDP disclosure and footprint reductions, setting of targets Internal and external awareness Decarbonisation initiatives e.g. switch to renewable energy supply, digitisation and others (see above)
15: Life on Land	Biodiversity Responsible water use Responsible waste practices	Implementation of new water-efficient flushing methods
17: Partnerships for Sustainable Development	Biodiversity Reduced GHG emissions Responsible waste practices	All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 programme Orchard in the Community programme ref SDG 12 and 13
1: No Poverty	Inclusion	Financial support to local charitable organisations

For further information referer to: 6. Being an employer of choice; 7. Minimising our environmental footprint; 8. Maintaining responsible partnerships; 9. Well-being of local communities

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Of the seven participants, four are Irish multi-national companies (Ardagh Group, Cubic Telecom, NTR and Mercury Engineering), one is a large local employer (Beacon Hospital), one is a local medium-sized export-oriented company (Brennan & Co), and one is a start-up company (Green Bikes). Three of the multi-nationals referenced their Annual Sustainability Reports as required for ESG and CSRD reporting. The other is in the process of finalising their Sustainability Strategy/Statement and Report.

See below an example of infographics summarising the Sustainability Strategy of the Ardagh Group and a summary of results in achieving sustainability targets:



All seven participants articulated sustainability goals and targets. Here is a summary of such goals:

- Reduction of GHG emissions
- Transition to Renewable Energy
- Producing Renewable Energy
- Increasing Energy Efficiencies

- Minimising ecological impacts
- Improving water management
- Reducing waste to landfill
- Increasing biodiversity
- Increasing circularity through re-use and recycling
- Increasing Active Travel / sustainable mobility options
- Continually refining work practices
- Training employees in environmental policies and awareness

Specific actions to achieve these goals include:

- Installation of solar panels
- Installation of EV Chargers
- Converting of company fleets to EVs
- Converting to eco-friendly office supplies
- Changing lighting to LEDs
- Rewilding green spaces
- Placement of bird and bat boxes
- Organising community involvement
- Support biodiversity actions of community organisations
- Organising staff training and education
- Sustainable sourcing of products and services
- Using more sustainable packaging materials
- Sign up to sustainability certification programmes such as EcoMerit and Ecovadis
- Installation of real-time CO2 Emissions Monitoring Systems
- Promoting, renting, buying and selling e-bikes and e-mopeds for use in the district.

In summary, the sustainability strategies of the seven participants revolve around four main themes, namely:

- Energy efficiencies and phasing out their dependence on fossil fuel – produced energy
- Ecological awareness among management and staff leading to more sensitivity to the impact of their business activities on the natural environment
- Adjustments to business models, processes and practices to include more circularity especially in waste management, packaging and re-use or recycling of materials.
- Promotion of liveability in the district both for employees and residents.

It is also clear that participants are committed to measure and report on their sustainability strategies and actions. See below the example of how NTR communicates key statistics that demonstrate their commitment to environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility, which also adds to their brand value.

## Key Highlights



c. **€1.5bn** assets  
under management  
(total capital)



**1,261,451** MWhr of  
clean power  
produced



**259,081** equivalent  
number of houses  
powered by  
renewable energy



**199,998** tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>  
emissions displaced  
(Tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>/Annum)



**€4,512,347** paid to  
community funds and  
local authorities



**Zero** reportable  
accidents, zero  
reportable  
environmental events



**100%** compliance with  
board governance  
processes



**5 stars** UN PRI  
Infrastructure\*  
**5 stars** UN PRI strategy  
and governance\*



**25%** increase in  
employees



**33%** female  
leadership



**95%** of staff say  
hybrid work model  
is successful



**97%** of staff agree  
that workplace is  
inclusive



**9** different  
nationalities



**100%** of staff agree  
ESG is important

\* 2021 assessment, results issued Sept '22

## 2. Proposed sustainability initiatives and goals for Sandyford Business District

The survey probed possible areas and sustainability goals where businesses in the District could collaborate.

From the participants' responses, the following initiatives appear to be practical areas for future collaboration:

### a) Compliance and governance

- Getting businesses in the district to sign up to the SBD Green Charter.
- Supporting businesses to become compliant with ESG guidelines and the EU's CSRD (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive).

### b) Green spaces in the district

- Developing and maintaining new green spaces in public and private open spaces.
- Initiating and supporting community projects to enhance biodiversity, especially tree planting.
- Restoring existing open spaces with more vegetation.
- Protecting pollinators.

### c) Sustainable food

- Encouraging restaurants and cafés to serve more sustainably sourced and produced food.
- Eliminating the use of non-compostable take-away food containers from eateries in the district.

### d) Sustainable mobility

- Promoting greener travel modes and options to, in and from the District.
- Increasing availability of green transport via mobility hubs and the accommodation of e-bikes.
- Initiating joint awareness campaigns on the positive impacts of individuals opting for more sustainable transport modes.

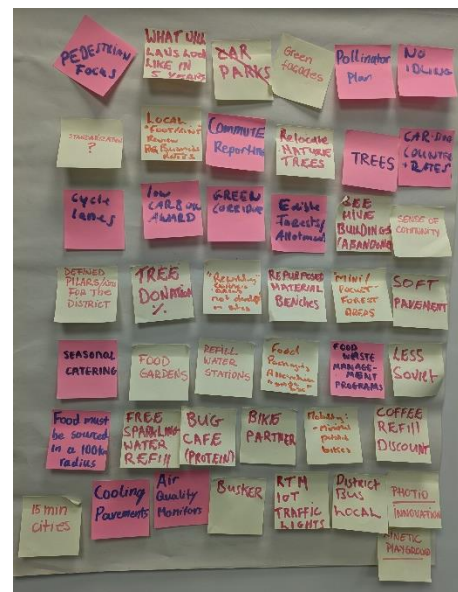
### e) Healthy environment

- Setting and monitoring air quality targets.
- Collecting plastic bottles from local businesses for the deposit return scheme.

These five areas were also further explored in the business focus group discussion. See discussion notes in Appendix B.

Additional suggestions from the focus group include:

- Plant more trees. Everywhere.
- Provide free water refill fountains.
- Give discounts for coffee refill using own container.
- Build more benches with recycled materials.
- Reduce or relocate car parking spaces.
- Softening and cooling pavements (less concrete).



Survey respondents were also asked to propose goals and targets that the businesses in the District could coalesce around advancing the environmental sustainability of the District. Some suggestions include:

- Specific target for expansion of green areas in the District (These could include the roofs of buildings).
- Air quality targets.
- Reduction of heat stress in the densely built areas of the District.
- Aim for the whole district to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- Extensively expand the use of grey water in buildings in the District.
- Ensuring the use of renewable energy in all buildings in the District.

From the business focus group discussion the following goals and targets can be added:

- A main priority is to install a district shuttle bus asap.
- Prioritise pedestrians in any future developments or redevelopment of existing spaces.
- Stakeholders to work together to achieve a low carbon use award for the District.

A number of concerns were raised during the business focus group discussion to take in consideration when planning collaborative sustainable development actions for the District. These include:

- Multi-national companies with HQs or sales and back offices in the District will have a lower priority to lessen their local carbon footprint given that for ESG reporting purposes their efforts and resources will be on the plants and other production facilities where they have large carbon footprints. It will thus require some coaxing to get them involved in district-wide actions.
- Many places in the District has a corporate park feel (e.g. manicured greens and little or no active travel infrastructure). It will require a cultural change among businesses and agencies to lessen car travel and to initiate rewilding projects that are essential to increase biodiversity, public health and nature-based solutions.
- Even though there are worthy initiatives to increase seating in public spaces, it still is insufficient and should be an integral part of improvements in the urban design of the District.

In the non-business stakeholder focus group discussion the following points of note were raised:

- a) There are many advantages to create more greener spaces in the Sandyford Business District including:
  - Greening improves wellbeing of people who live and work in the District
  - Trees create more shelter from the wind and shade for higher temperatures
  - Water features create cooling and calming effects
  - Green spaces are functional workout spaces
  - Green spaces are safe spaces for integrated play
  - Leafy areas increase property values.



- b) The greening of public spaces in the Sandyford Business District should include other important sustainability measures, such as:
- Improving mobility and permeability in the District with safe spaces for pedestrians and cyclists as well as more bike and scooter parking areas
  - Integrating flood attenuation and other nature-based solutions to address climate change
  - Working with local schools who want to use spaces in the District for green projects
  - Establishing water bottle filling stations
  - Creating spaces for food composting.
- c) Greening Sandyford Business District will require collaboration between stakeholders and high levels of compliance with the implementation of sustainability measures. The following aspects should be taken in consideration:
- There is a comprehensive local policy framework for sustainable development in dlr County. The focus should be on using this framework for measures to ensure compliance and accountability for delivery of plans.
  - There is a growing awareness of the ESG credentials of companies, but it is not always clear to what extent local climate action commitments are reflected in their sustainability statements.
  - There should be more vigilance to identify projects and activities that amount to green washing.
  - In general, governance should be informed by the belief that sustainability actions will lead to visible outcomes for a better healthier living environment such as improved transport safety, accessibility, clean air, more wildlife and the positive visual impact on public spaces.



### *3. Comments related to the development of the Civic Park*

#### **a) Awareness of the development of the Civic Park**

From the responses given in the business survey it is apparent that awareness of developments is tentative with a clear wish for more information and engagement.

#### **b) General comments and observations**

The following general observations were made:

- There is a keen interest to see plans for the layout of the Civic Park.
- As the development is at an early stage, businesses will be interested to discuss the project objectives and timelines.
- Emphasis should be placed on planting of native Irish flora.
- The space should be used for educational events on topics like air quality, biodiversity and active travel. It should be branded as a local living educational space.
- It will be beneficial to all employees and residents in the area.
- The expectation is that the proposed park will have far reaching benefits for the community at large.

From all the survey responses it is clear that there is considerable support from businesses for the development of the Civic Park. This was confirmed in the business focus group discussion.

#### **c) Benefits for employees**

The following benefits were envisaged:

- Chillout space
- Impact on employees' overall wellbeing and work-life balance
- Contributes to a positive work environment
- An outdoor green space for lunch and coffee breaks
- An outdoor space for exercise.
- Employees can develop a sense of pride in the place by getting involved in local events including planting and community gardening.

It can be concluded that together with other measures such as increased micro-mobility options, less heat stress and cleaner air, the Civic Park will enhance the liveability of the district for employees.

#### **d) Sustainability initiatives related to the Civic Park**

The following initiatives in which businesses can work together related to the Civic Park were proposed:

- Planting native trees as well as fruit trees.
- Supporting employee engagement in park initiatives.
- Supporting local schools using the park for educational purposes.
- Creating an e-bike station with charging points as well as repair and rent facilities.

#### **e) Challenges related to the development of the Civic Park**

The following challenges were identified in the stakeholder focus group discussion:

- There is a sense of urgency among stakeholders for the completion of the Civic Park, given that it has been an objective in the spatial plans of dlr County Council for more than a decade.
- The high expectations for the amenity that the Civic Park could bring to the District will inevitably place constraints on the available funding.
- The development can only proceed once the acquisitions of the identified parcels of land have been completed, and this may cause the project to lag to the frustration of stakeholders.
- The features of the Civic Park will require a high level of agreement among stakeholders, especially to meet the needs of frequent users in the immediate vicinity of the Civic Park.

Also note in Appendix D the ideas for the Civic Park from a previous survey among residents in Sandyford Business District conducted in November 2023.

## C. Conclusions

Most of the companies who participated in the survey and focus group discussions are heavily invested in achieving sustainable development goals. During the focus group discussions there was skepticism that such a priority on sustainable development can be generalised to many companies in the District. *There is an opportunity for the Sandyford Business District BID Company to facilitate knowledge/practice sharing between businesses while showcasing the local companies who have demonstrated their credentials in sustainable development.*

From the survey as well as during the focus group discussions it became evident that there is a general willingness among businesses to work together on achieving sustainable development goals. However, during the focus group discussions it also became clear that no assumptions should be made about the willingness to participate from multi-national companies in the District, mainly because these companies have sustainability reporting requirements where the emphasis will be on their plants and facilities with large carbon footprints which are not their business locations in the District. *This presents an opportunity for the Sandyford Business District BID Company to reach out to multi-nationals to entice them to participate in local initiatives with incentives such as publicity on public affairs platforms showcasing their local efforts.*

Survey respondents and focus group participants also proposed several practical initiatives which are achievable. These can be grouped under the following headings:

- a. Compliance and Governance
- b. Green Spaces in the District
- c. Sustainable Food
- d. Sustainable Mobility
- e. Healthy Environment

*The Sandyford Business District BID Company can use these ideas to develop new actions to support the greening of the District.*

Although not always adequately informed of the progress made with the proposed Civic Park, all participants welcomed the development and expressed an interest to be involved in stages of design and implementation where appropriate. *This is an opportunity for the Sandyford Business District BID Company to play a critical role in communicating the process and outcomes of the development of the Civic Park.*

The expectations for the Civic Park is high. These include an extensive contribution to the biodiversity of the District, an outstanding outdoor amenity that will cater for needs ranging from relaxation for employees on their breaks, to outdoor exercising and activities, to a 'living educational space'.

Finally, it can be concluded that participants from the business community in the survey and focus group discussions unanimously confirmed the value of greening the Sandyford Business District.

# Appendix A: Answers to 2024 Survey Questionnaire

## IB-Green Project: Answers to questionnaire for local businesses re Greening Sandyford and the new Civic Park

June 2024

Company Name	Is your company involved in initiatives that promote environmental sustainability?	Example 1	Example 2	Do you have any sustainability goals or targets your company is working towards?	Description of company's sustainability goals and/or targets
<b>Ardagh Group</b>	Yes	Our sustainability strategy mainly focused on the high environmental impact areas around our industrial production facilities of our metal and glass manufacturing plants around the world. Our Dublin office mainly is home to our finance, teams and group operations. The three pillars of our sustainability strategy our Emissions, Ecology and Social. We report in line with GRI and have Science Based Initiative approved targets that we work towards to reduce emission and in addition we have set targets to reach zero waste to landfill and 100% renewable electricity – all published in our Sustainability Report.	On the social side we support major STEM education initiatives and also run a global Community Involvement Project programme – meaning that each of our operating locations gets out to do positive community collaborations once a year. These are generally themed. Our 2024 theme are – Biodiversity for Europe, Recycling for North America and Education for our Glass Africa region.	Yes, See the 2023 Sustainability Report: <a href="https://www.ardaghgroup.com/pdf/pdfs/sustainability-report.pdf">https://www.ardaghgroup.com/pdf/pdfs/sustainability-report.pdf</a>	Minimise our GHG Emissions by transition to 100% renewable electricity; by implementing energy efficiency projects; by increasing recycled content; by innovating in product design; by sourcing sustainably; by partnering on low carbon transport; by minimising VOC and NOx emissions.  Minimise our ecological impact by achieving excellence in water management; by promoting zero waste to landfill across all facilities; by supporting increased recycling and use of recycling content; by promoting circularity narratives on use of infinitely recyclable material.
<b>Beacon Hospital</b>	Yes	A few small rewilding garden projects approx. 60 sq metres plus nest boxes for birds and bats.	Replacing old CFL lighting with LEDS hospital wide.	n/a	n/a
<b>Brennan &amp; Co.</b>	Yes	Installation of solar panels & electric vehicle chargers	Moving to eco-friendly packaging.	Yes, See the 2024 Environmental Policy: <a href="https://www.brennanco.ie/sustainability/">https://www.brennanco.ie/sustainability/</a>	We understand the importance of being proactive in addressing environmental sustainability challenges, and we are committed to working diligently to achieve our goals. We have a dedicated Green Team to drive this forward. We have achieved Eco-Merit certification for the past two years, and currently hold a bronze EcoVadis rating (we are looking to move this to silver over the next 18 months). We also have an overall target of 7.5% carbon reduction year on year – we achieved 8% in 2023.
<b>Cubic Telecom</b>	We are in the process of choosing initiatives to promote environmental sustainability.	n/a	n/a	We are in the process of setting sustainability goals.	n/a
<b>NTR</b>	Yes	Our company which produces renewable energy, has a key focus in actively displacing energy generated from solid fuel resources across Ireland, UK & Europe.	We apply that focus to environmental and sustainable practices across our company, including responsible sourcing from suppliers, carbon footprint analysis (scope 1,2 and 3) and recycling practices.	Yes, See our annual ESG Report: <a href="https://www.ntrplc.com">https://www.ntrplc.com</a>	As a renewable energy producer we measure our key goals in MWhr produced, tonnes of CO2 avoided and the number of houses powered. In addition, we measure key health, safety and environmental indicators, social indicators and publish all data in our annual ESG report.
<b>Green Bikes</b>	Yes	Green Bikes is committed to promoting environmental sustainability through electric bikes, electric mopeds and e-bike charging infrastructure.	Our bike frames are eco-friendly, hand-painted using solvent-free paints and dried in solar-powered rooms with heat pumps, ensuring a pollutant-free process.	Yes, See business model statement: <a href="https://greenbikes.ie/about/">https://greenbikes.ie/about/</a>	Aim to create designated safe areas for e-bikes and e-scooters that are equipped with sustainable e-bike charging infrastructure.  Green Bikes are a government registered supplier of the Cycle to Work Scheme promoting tax relief and health benefits for companies and employees.
<b>Mercury Engineering</b>	Yes	We are part of DC's for Bees initiatives to protect and preserve pollinators in Ireland.	We are also member of the Irish Green Build	Yes, See our Sustainability Report 2023: <a href="https://www.mercurveng.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/MF_Sustainability-Report-2022_final.pdf">https://www.mercurveng.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/MF_Sustainability-Report-2022_final.pdf</a>	We have waste management internal targets to achieve a diversion from landfill target of at least 95% of the total waste generated by us.

IB-Green Project: Answers to questionnaire for local businesses re Greening Sandyford and the new Civic Park

Company Name	Which environmental sustainability initiatives do you think businesses and residents in Sandyford Business District can work together on?		What sustainability goals and targets do you think should be set for Sandyford Business District?		How important do you believe sustainability is for businesses within the Sandyford Business District?
	Example 1	Example 2	Proposal 1	Proposal 2	
<b>Ardagh Group</b>	The most relevant would be collaboration for a community project that positively contributes to Biodiversity. We have a three-year partnership with Hometree and would be interested to see if we could connect them to the planned project.	We are also signed up to the All-Ireland Pollinator plan, but if there are other opportunities for local connection we would be open to exploring them too. We have struggled to get engagement from Aramark our management company in relation to this topic despite numerous attempts to start a conversation.	It would be worth referring to the upcoming CSRD Framework to put shape on this question – they have a section on biodiversity that could be relevant.	Also air quality targets.	Extremely important
<b>Beacon Hospital</b>	The elimination of non-compostable /recyclable take away food containers from all shops/eateries in the area.	n/a	Reach 51% reduction in GHG by 2023 as per Climate Action Plan 2021.	n/a	Extremely important
<b>Brennan &amp; Co.</b>	Greener travel options.	Increasing bio-diversity in the area  Education programmes around green policies/initiatives, particularly for businesses.	Number of people /companies who signed up to the SBD Green Charter.  Creation & maintenance of green spaces.	Increased availability of green transport/mobility hubs/bikes, EV charging stations.  Increased number of active travel areas.	Extremely important
<b>Cubic Telecom</b>	Green areas.  Encouraging nice and sustainable restaurants and cafes to set up in the area so office workers and locals can stay in the area at lunch time.	Collecting plastic bottles from local businesses for the deposit return scheme.  Collecting glass bottles from local businesses for recycling.	Green areas for workers and residents.	Helping local offices with the deposit return scheme for plastic bottles and with glass recycling.	Very important
<b>NTR</b>	The Civic Park project is key for the locality, and we feel there are likely additional projects (sustainable & biodiversity) that local businesses and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council collectively can work together towards.	n/a	With the increasing levels of industrial and business parks in the Sandyford BD area, it is important to introduce a corresponding level of green spaces to reduce heat stress and create a positive environmentally friendly space for the locality. We believe this should be a key goal for any Business District who should strive to utilize any available green or brownfield spaces available.		Extremely important
<b>Green Bikes</b>	Green Bikes would like to get involved and engage with local stakeholders to help with innovative micromobility solutions and related infrastructure.	Sandyford Companies and residents to join awareness campaigns to promote the benefits of sustainable transportation, and to incorporate it into people's daily habits.	The district could possibly aim to become carbon neutral by 2030, with a significant reduction in carbon emissions coming from transportation.  Expand cycle lanes and connect them to allow non-stop cycling around the district. Invest in smart, e-bike charging stations to feature throughout to support the increased use of sustainable transportation.	Set a target for 50% of all commutes within the district to be made using sustainable modes of transport, such as e-bikes, electric mopeds, and public transportation by 2027.  Encourage businesses to implement corporate sustainability programs that include provisions for reducing their overall carbon footprint and promoting eco-friendly commuting options for employees.	Extremely important
<b>Mercury Engineering</b>	We should preserve and restore open and vegetated open spaces.	We should protect pollinators.	Encourage the use of more renewable energy , make sure all buildings use renewable energy.	Preserve indoor water usage by recycling the grey water.	Extremely important



IB-Green Project: Answers to questionnaire for local businesses re Greening Sandyford and the new Civic Park

Company Name	Are you aware of the development of the Civic Park within the Sandyford Business District?	Any comments re the development of the Civic Park?	How do you think the Civic Park would benefit your company and its employees?	Would your company be interested in collaborating with the IB-Green Project or participating in any sustainability initiatives related to the Civic Park?	Suggestions for collaboration	Any additional information or suggestions?
<b>Ardagh Group</b>	No, only what I read in the introduction to the questionnaire.	It would be good to run educational events related to active travel, air quality and biodiversity in proximity to this site as a local living education space	As it's quite a distance to walk I don't think we would be engaging with this space unless there were community based activities that could be tied to our strategic plans for engagement.	Yes, if we could connect any initiatives to our long-term strategy.	Planting native trees with Hometree; Educational activities; Creating a community garden; Anything that provides meaningful opportunities for education, employee engagement and local school engagement.	No
<b>Beacon Hospital</b>	We are aware of a civic park and think it would be most beneficial to all employees and residents in the area.	We have not seen plans for the layout. Emphasis should be placed on planting of native Irish flora as opposed to non-native species and habitats created for our native fauna.	It would give them somewhere to go on their breaks or a chill out space and hopefully somewhere to enjoy the wonders of nature when the wildlife takes up residence. Due to the lack of greenery, albeit pocket parks which are brilliant, there is nowhere green to relax.	We would be interested in this but would like more information on how we can participate.	n/a	No
<b>Brennan &amp; Co.</b>	Aware that it's been in the pipeline for a long time!	Will be a great amenity when it is finalised.	Local outdoor space for lunchtimes and recreation to enjoy fresh air, exercise and nature, sense of pride and ownership if involved in planting/community gardening areas.	Yes, please contact our Green Team with ideas for any suggested initiatives.	Active travel ways; Promoting safe disposal of hazardous waste/mattresses/other items not suitable for household disposal.	Sustainability should be extremely important given the current climate issues, however in reality I believe a lot of work needs to be done to push this up the agenda for many companies.
<b>Cubic Telecom</b>	Yes	It is great for our employees and locals.	It is great to have this outdoor green space in nature for our employees to take their lunch breaks and coffee breaks and connect with nature and others. It will help employee well-being.	Yes	We will give this some further consideration.	Would it be possible to invite / encourage sustainable producers to sell coffees etc in the Civic Park?
<b>NTR</b>	Yes, as our offices are in very close proximity to the proposed civic park area and we are very interested in the project and are keen to be involved.	We understand that it is currently at the early stage with landowner discussions so would be interested to discuss current objectives and timeline of the project.	The introduction of green spaces is key to reducing heat stress in our direct locality and would create a positive area for the company and its like-minded employees to enjoy.	Yes	We are always looking for sustainable and biodiverse projects to be involved with, as it affords us an opportunity to enhance the vicinity for our staff.	No
<b>Green Bikes</b>	Yes	Green Bikes supports the development of the new Civic Park. A great initiative that can lead towards a sustainable district, with far-reaching benefits for the community at large.	Civic Park can lead to increased adoption of micro-mobility solutions, enhance Green Bikes' position as a key-stakeholder in the district. Green Bikes can help reduce reliance on cars and contribute to lower emissions, less traffic congestion and pollution in the community. Green Bikes can help promote safe, sustainable transport with better accessibility, cycling infrastructure options and inclusivity.	Yes, Green Bikes would like to get involved and engage with local stakeholders to help with innovative micromobility solutions and related infrastructure	As a Pilot Action, we could provide the Civic Park with a fleet e-bikes and solar charging stations, promoting sustainability and reducing dependence on the grid.	Increase value of local businesses and organisations by leveraging the advantages of sustainability and to incorporate it in their corporate strategy.
<b>Mercury Engineering</b>	Yes	It has been presented to us and we are extremely happy to be part and support this initiative.	Our employees are our biggest asset and we strongly believe in getting involved in the local community where they live and where they work . It will impact their overall well being and work-life balance.	Yes	n/a	Use the flat roofs of buildings in the district for bee hives or to make a vegetated open space as a recreational area.

## Appendix B: Business Focus Group Discussion, 24 July 2024

These notes were produced by Sam O'Connor to reflect the main points raised during the discussion.

### Attendees:

Sarah Quinn, Group Social Sustainability Manager, Ardagh Group  
Luke Cunningham, Group Marketing Manager, Brennan & Co  
Brian Mullane, Financial Accountant, NTR  
Lilly, Regulation and Compliance Lawyer intern, Cubic Telecom

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### 1st Round of Discussion: Initiatives for the Sustainable Development of Sandyford Business District

#### a) Compliance and Governance

##### Main Concerns:

- Priority for sustainable development is not directly related to location of multi-national companies in Sandyford Business District (HQs, sales, back offices), which could affect their level of participation and commitment in district-wide initiatives.
- Sustainability projects are fund-driven with a focus on sustainability reporting to funders (investors and banks).
- For example, Ardagh's major carbon footprint involves gas furnaces and therefore its Dublin office location is not a priority for sustainability reporting.
- For example in the case of NTR, commuting to offices in Sandyford Business District could be a concern, but compared to the company's business of construction of windfarms, it produces a minimal carbon footprint.

#### b) Green Spaces in the District

##### Issues Identified:

- Lack of outdoor seating with shelter.
- Unappealing seating areas, such as the area with the wind tunnel effect near the Stillorgan Luas stop.
- Most workers bring lunch back to their offices due to inadequate outdoor areas.
- Possible resistance among corporate cohort (senior managers and owners) to more pedestrianisation and less car-use.
- Need for criteria and guidelines to green the buildings in the district.



### **c) Sustainable Food**

#### **Discussion Points:**

- A major issue is the ubiquitous use of disposable containers for take aways.
- Opportunities for businesses collectively to promote homegrown food.
- Uncomfortable fact that Ireland imports up to 80% of its food at times.

### **d) Sustainable Mobility**

#### **Concerns and Suggestions:**

- A challenge is the lack of consideration for car size and engine size when providing access to cars into the district and that many people in the district use large cars/SUVs/pickup trucks.
- A practical initiative will be to introduce a district bus to transport employees.
- Reports often focus on male commuting patterns, ignoring mothers' needs.
- It is also a concern that a lot of traffic in the district is not to and from the district (i.e. with the district as a destination), but rather, through traffic with little benefit for the district.

### **e) Healthy Environment**

#### **Concerns:**

- Air quality affected by car emissions.
- The impact of urban heat islands in densely populated areas.
- High traffic volumes contributing to poor air quality.

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## **2nd Round of Discussion: Initiatives for the Development of the Civic Park**

### **a) Challenges**

#### **Resistance:**

- Wilding and native planting perceived as unattractive.
- Poor awareness about the value of greening/pocket forests for the district.

#### **Integration:**

- The Civic Park development should align with residential development.

#### **Safety and Liability:**

- Concerns about safety and compensation culture (example: Ardagh constructed a fence to restrict a short-cut across their space to avoid claims).

## **b) Opportunities**

### **Suggestions:**

- Creating appealing eating areas for lunch breaks.
- Promoting congregation and community activities.
- Encouraging innovation.
- Installing outdoor gyms, games, and play areas.
- Increasing planting initiatives.

## **c) Stakeholder Commitments**

- **Local Authority:**
  - Needs to proceed with design and construction.
  - With inputs from businesses and residents
- **Businesses:**
  - Should provide financial/sponsorship support for community activities in the park
  - Should engage actively to help with planning and execution of park-based activities.

## **d) Engagement in Community Events and Initiatives Post Park Construction**

- **Interest and Commitment:**
  - Participation in litter-picking and planting.
  - Employees generally show good participation in community activities.
  - Engagement driven by Corporate Social Responsibility Directives (CSRD).
  - Difficulty finding volunteer opportunities.
  - Ardagh is involved in biodiversity initiatives in schools.
  - Suggestion to focus on one major initiative per year to maintain engagement without overwhelming participants.

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## **Key Takeaways**

### **Engagement and Participation:**

- Businesses willing to engage in community events, particularly when aligned with CSRD.

**Sustainability and Green Spaces:**

- There is a need for more appealing and functional green spaces, with a push towards sustainable practices.

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

- Balancing safety, attractiveness, and community engagement is crucial.
- Leveraging local businesses' support can enhance project success.

**In conclusion:**

- Attendees showed a lot of enthusiasm towards the project and already possessed knowledge on the sustainability issues in Sandyford Business District. However, it would also be interesting to hear from the companies who are not as knowledgeable or engaged to find out if the lack of green areas in SBD is of any concern to them.

## Appendix C: Stakeholders Focus Group Discussion, 24 August 2024

The second focus group discussion, held on 24 August 2024, targeted the key non-business stakeholders who will play a key role to enable the development of the Civic Park. The same methodology was used as was the case for the business focus group discussions.

The following topics were discussed pertaining to sustainable development of Sandyford Business District and in particular, the development of the Civic Park:

- a) Compliance and Governance
- b) Green Spaces in the District
- c) Sustainable Food, Sustainable Mobility and Healthy Environment
- d) Challenges for the development of the Civic Park



The following table lists the participants in the stakeholder focus group discussion:

Name	Position	Organisation	Stakeholder
Niall Grant	Administrator	Aramark	Landlords - Residential
Oisin O'Connor	Councillor	Dlr County Council	Political Representatives – Sandyford/Glencullen LEA*
Lettie McCarthy	Councillor	Dlr County Council	Political Representatives – Sandyford/Glencullen LEA*
Alan Lee	Green Business Officer	Dlr County Council	Council Departments
Eoin O'Brien	Senior Executive Park Superintendent	Dlr County Council	Council Departments
Claire Casey	IB-Green Project Manager	Dlr County Council	Council Departments

\* Note: All councillors of the Sandyford/Glencullen Local Election Area were invited to participate.

Fernanda Pinto Godoy, EU Project Manager of the Sandyford BID CLG coordinated the meeting and Wessel Badenhorst of Urban Mode Ltd facilitated the discussion.

## Appendix D: 2023 Online Green Infrastructure Survey Responses

Survey conducted in November 2023 by Sandyford Business District BID Company with 78 respondents, mostly residents.

Green Infrastructure needs of Sandford Business District:

<i>Q10 Please share any additional thoughts, comments, or suggestions you have regarding the Sandyford Green Infrastructure Project and the Civic Park</i>
Need for a civic park with community facilities
Need for more green spaces in the district
Need for more trees
Need for peaceful spaces
Need for amenities such as ping-pong tables and boules courts
Need for a community garden
Need for sufficient and well-placed bins
Need for cycle lanes
Access for people with disabilities
Need for volunteers to keep the park and spaces tidy and 'current'
Sandyford needs to be upgraded to look inviting and attractive as an area to live and work in

Preferences for practices and measures to make the Civic Park more sustainable:

<i>Q6 What best practices and sustainability measures do you believe we should consider implementing in the Sandyford Business District Civic Park to make it more sustainable and environmentally friendly?</i>
Pedestrian and cyclist-friendly pathways (79.5%)
Smart lighting and energy-efficient infrastructure (71.8%)
Solar panels for clean energy generation (69.2%)
Biodiversity enhancements (59.0%)
Rainwater harvesting for irrigation (57.7%)

Preferences for specific features in the Civic Park to benefit both residents and workers:

<i>Q5 What specific features or amenities would you like to see in the park to benefit both residents and workers in the area?</i>
Greenery and landscaping (87.2%)
Seating areas (78.2%)
Walking or jogging trails (62.8%)
Playground or recreational facilities (53.9%)
Picnic areas (51.3%)

Suggested community activities for the Civic Park:

<i>Q7 Are you interested in participating in community activities or events in the Civic Park? If yes, what kind of events or activities would you like to see?</i>
Yoga and wellness events
Fitness and outdoor exercise activities
Walking and cycling
Community gatherings based on festivals and holidays like Christmas, St Patrick's Day, Halloween, etc.
Children events
Community events, like litter picking, family days
Lunchtime music and other live music/buskers events
Evening and weekend activities around food and biodiversity
Talks on local heritage or gardens or health and wellness
Planting and painting (art wall/path/stones)
Sustainability workshops for families
Arts