

<p>EXPECTED OUTCOMES <i>(as outlined in our SLA with Creative Ireland)</i></p>	<p>ACTUAL OUTCOMES & IMPACT <i>(Feedback from members of the project team in Jan 2026)</i></p>
<p>Participants will acquire an enhanced understanding and knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. how to reduce emissions in everyday life. b. meaningful actions that can be taken to facilitate climate adaptation and coastal resilience (from learning about nature-based solutions aimed at strengthening coastal defences and protecting biodiversity; to understanding how to engage a community in taking positive collaborative action). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A specific learning day was dedicated to reducing emissions in everyday life, and many workshops and activities have further supported that learning: peer-to-peer learning visits to each other’s houses for energy, food growing and reusing waste; demonstration on how to use a household energy saving kit; transport mapping exercise; artistic activities focused on foraging and eco-materials. • Larger projects like bio-mass district heating; sustainable energy communities; seagrass restoration, community farming, etc. have been demonstrated by other community groups during our fieldtrips and have been gathered into the seed-bank of ideas. • We’ve had practical demonstrations of marram grass planting and expert talks on other nature-based solutions for coastal resilience e.g. wetland restoration and marine protected areas. • We discussed and experimented with multiple pathways for engaging communities in taking positive collaborative action, from the household surveys to the podcast, to public workshops (asking the community how they would best engage their own community) to project-focused discussions and workshops on the topic. Some of these discussions were focused on the community partners, but many engagement strategies targeted the full community.
<p>The resultant impact will be a change in behaviour, an actual reduction in carbon emissions in participants’ everyday lives, an increase in volunteerism to effect climate adaptation actions and a community that is actively participating in developing and implementing community led plans for climate adaptation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We went more gently on measuring the actual reduction in carbon emissions in the community partner’s lives than first anticipated, after discussions as a project group on balancing empowerment (bringing the information and letting people adapt it to suit their needs) versus the potential for disengagement if community partners or the wider community felt judged or guilty through the use of quantitative measurements. However, the community partners have spoken about their greater awareness of carbon emissions in their own lives and of changing their behaviours knowing that it contributes to the long-term livability of Maharees. Since the transport mapping exercise, there was also a shift in transport behaviours, with the majority of community partners carpooling to future events. • Many of the community partners, alongside the Steering Group, have volunteered additional time to support or led their own ideas around engaging the community of Maharees to take positive, collaborative action (from the storytelling idea which profoundly influenced the podcast creation; to the Almanac to the community adaptation planning process). This demonstrates not just an enhanced understanding but also lived experience and learnings from acting, sparked by this project. We have calculated 2,800 additional volunteer hours just by the Steering Group alone due to this project. • The wider community has fed into the surveys and community visioning workshops led by Maharees Conservation. This community-led plan for climate adaptation is continuing past the end date of the project, with more community workshops in the pipeline and ongoing discussions between Dingle Hub, Maharees Conservation and Kerry County Council on how to link these community-led plans into area development plans and strategies.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

(as outlined in our SLA with Creative Ireland)

Participants will benefit from an enhanced sense of place, a love of place and a sense of connectedness to the area and its heritage through a creative approach to interpreting and telling the heritage-related 'stories' of Maharees and how climate change will impact on our heritage (both tangible and intangible).

This project will ultimately result in an enhanced community capacity and sense of agency from a creative engagement with climate change, its impacts on Maharees and a knowledge of community visioning, coastal resilience and adaptation strategies. The legacy of the project will be a Maharees community that is resilient, engaged, equipped, and well-placed to adapt to climate change.

ACTUAL OUTCOMES & IMPACT

(Feedback from members of the project team in Jan 2026)

- Participants and the wider community were engaged in-depth through a **creative approach to interpreting and telling the heritage-related stories of Maharees, and how climate change impacts the future**, through the Will It Stay Fine? Podcast which interviewed 98 people, including about 80 from Maharees itself (from a population of 220 adults) and most of the community partners.
 - The community partners expressed a particularly **strong response** to feeling more connected to the heritage, nature and community networks through their role in the project, the artistic exercises and building stronger relationships with the individuals of Maharees Conservation through this collaboration.
 - Our public events as well as many of the creative responses sought to enhance a sense of place, love of place and connectedness for the wider community, visitors and those living in other coastal communities or the diaspora of Maharees, eg World Sand Dune Day 2024 and 2025; Harvest Festival in 2025 and exhibitions, as well as the Go Gently on Maharees flier, podcast and documentary.
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- Through the balancing of project support, creative stimulus and emphasis on community-led change, the Steering Group in particular, alongside key members of the Community Partners, have **expressed their sense of enhanced agency and capacity for dealing with the local predicted impacts of climate change** – expressed through their leadership of the adaptation planning process, which has **developed a community vision and the beginning of planning adaptation strategies (including some actions tested during the project itself)**.
 - Important learning is the considerable time that this planning process will take communities if it is to be truly community-led, the extensive volunteer hours during Neart na Machairi are a testament to this, and the adaptation planning process will continue past the ending of the project funding. **The importance of building in the legacy through community ownership cannot be stressed enough, as true resiliency is a long-term and ever iterating process.**

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

(as outlined in our SLA with Creative Ireland)

This project will also result in an understanding of the most effective messaging strategies to communicate climate adaptation and biodiversity enhancement messages and actions and will inform the design of communications strategies used in Maharees and beyond.

ACTUAL OUTCOMES & IMPACT

(Feedback from members of the project team in Jan 2026)

- Throughout the project, the project group discussed how best to share the learning journey with the wider community as well as visitors and other coastal communities. These **communication strategies were then tested via different creative methods:**
 - *Go Gently on Maharees* flier: emphasis on explaining the why behind behavioural requests (eg not walking on marram grass; keeping dogs on leads; not driving on the beach) to evoke a duty of care eg this is why Maharees is so special, here are simple behaviours you can do (or not do) during your stay to protect it.
 - *Will It Stay Fine?* Podcast: interviews focused on people's individual love and knowledge about the place, giving space to allow simple climate messages to emerge naturally (eg stories were shared about the changes over time to the tombolo and biodiversity, the memories of bad storms, ideas for how individuals or groups could build their resiliency to these things). The podcast allows engagement for individuals who might not want to engage with a climate event or creative event - instead they can listen and learn about these things from their neighbour's stories.
 - *Community Partners*: these individuals acted as another ripple effect of the project, disseminating climate information simply by chatting about the project they were involved in. The majority brought their families into the process, either through getting them involved in the podcast or inviting them to multiple project events.
 - *Documentary and Learning Brief*: these resources communicate practical knowledge of how another community could take some of the actions and learnings to replicate a similar community-led adaptation planning process.
 - *World Sand Dune Day and Exhibitions*: these activities have focused on sharing both Maharees Conservation's decade of learning, as well as the additional work of Neart na Machairí on creative engagement practices and adaptation planning. The curated exhibition, *Neart na Machairí*, also uses the creative artefacts made through sustainable methods in collaboration with the local community (cyanotypes, eco-dying, lanterns etc) to communicate that using local and biodegradable materials can bring people together and bring them into a new type of relationship to their place.

Other all, we settled on a communication strategy that engaged people through the beauty and love of Maharees landscape, ecology and people; contained simple climate messages backed by experts; and was communicated by friends, neighbours and family (in person conversations, invitations to events, or listening/ watching them through the creative outputs).