

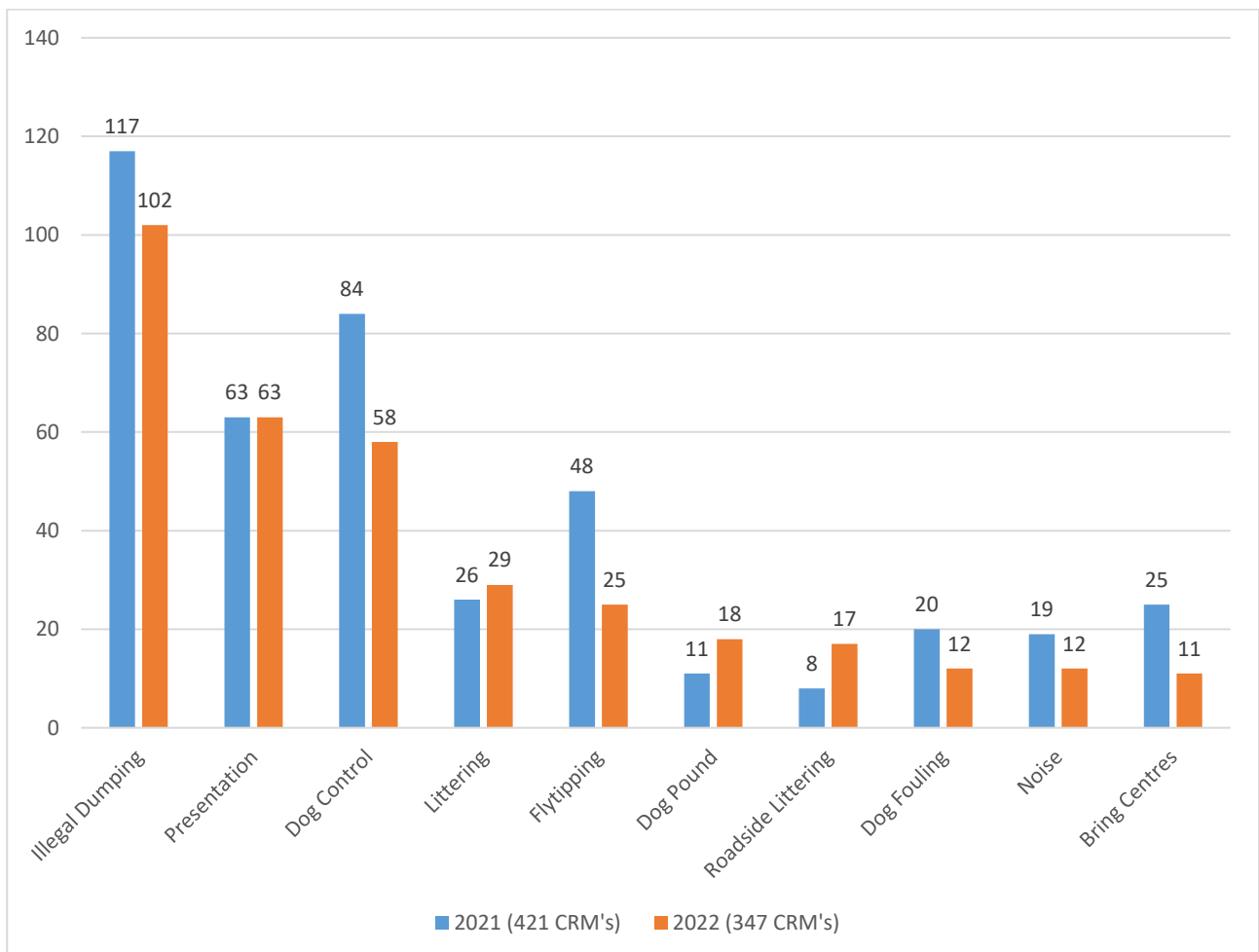
DO: GACH BALL DE CHEANTAR BARDASACH DHÚN GARBHÁN/LEASA MHÓIR
TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF DUNGARVAN/LISMORE

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACHT COMHSHAOIL
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT
DEIREADH FÓMHAIR 2022
OCTOBER 2022

General Environment Enforcement

Environmental Inspectors continue to investigate and monitor illegal waste issues, littering, fly-tipping and illegal signage and issued litter fines where offences are detected. Members of the public are encouraged to contact the local authority to report all incidents of illegal dumping or littering by using the following telephone number: 0818 10 20 20

The following graph shows a comparison of the top categories of CRM cases recorded in the Dungarvan/Lismore area during the period to mid-September in the years 2021 & 2022.



Presentation & Cleansing

Dungarvan:

As with their colleagues in Waterford City and Tramore, staff in Dungarvan Presentation have completed the cutting and lifting of our wildflower meadows around the town. This is necessary to ensure they remain viable and producing where they are required to be cut in autumn. This shall allow for re-growth next spring and a new flourish of flowering species. The areas that have been cut include an area across from the Linear Park, and a section off the Youghal Road. As with the last number of years we worked with a local farmer who would have cut these areas and subsequently baled where these bales will provide this farmer with additional fodder over the winter months.

Staff have also been carrying out autumn maintenance of planted areas along the Youghal Road, the Coolagh Road Roundabout and planting between this roundabout and the Strandside roundabout. Equally work has been taking place in both the Town Park and Walton Park in preparation for autumn, particularly the cutting back of the herbaceous planting which has now finished flowering for this season.

Upcoming shall be the removal of the hanging baskets from the street poles around the town where they have now come to their end of useful life from which the focus shall be on the changing of these prominent planters within Grattan Square and along the Quays. The current planters contain summer flowering species where this process shall involve returning these to our depot and putting in their stead planters containing winter flowering species. This seasonal rotation allows us to present the town centre in a colourful and vibrant sense throughout the year.

Climate Action

Commercial Rates Energy Credit Scheme

Businesses and industry account for approximately 41% of county Waterford's carbon emissions. A successful transition to a carbon neutral county and city requires businesses to play their part. With that in mind Waterford City & County Council has put in place an Energy Credit Scheme this year for rate payers. Businesses who attended a short training on energy efficiency and downloaded the information on the energy saving supports available, were eligible to receive a credit on their rates account. The scheme was open to businesses with an annual rates bill of less than €10,000, and all hospitality businesses. The closing date was September 30th at 6.00pm. As of 26th September 571 businesses are eligible for the credit. This compares favourably with other campaigns to engage with businesses.

Local Climate Action Plan

Guidance has been published for formulation of Local Climate Action Plans. The Council will have one year to complete this plan. The Local Climate Action Plan will include Climate Adaptation and the Decarbonisation Zone as chapters. The current Climate Adaptation Strategy goes to 2023. The Local Climate Action Plan will be a comprehensive roadmap as to how we will achieve emissions reduction across the city and county while preparing for climate impacts.

Climate Adaptation Strategy Report

A progress report on how the Council is meeting the goals set out in the Waterford Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2023 is being sent to the Department of the Environment, Climate Action and Communications.

Reduce Your Use Campaign

Waterford City & County Council will participate in the Government's Reduce Your Use campaign with a goal of reducing energy use by 15% this winter. Council staff will be encouraged to complete several actions each month and to be mindful of energy use. This is a competition with the winning department being announced in the Spring.

Update from Waterford Energy Bureau

- WCCC senior management have adopted an energy policy whereby WCCC will strive to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040 and the consumption of fossil fuels in Waterford City and County Council public buildings will cease by 2025.
- The launch of the "South East Energy Agency" took place on the 30th of September. SEEA is a non for profit Regional Energy Agency, committed to supporting every energy user in using energy more efficiently, monitoring energy use and towards a greater choice of renewable energy sources. Working in Partnership, raising awareness, providing support, and delivering low carbon in the region.
- WCCC are open to partner with community groups to include buildings within the 2022/2023 WCCC application to Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland under the "Better Energy Communities Scheme". Funding of between 30% is available for businesses and 50% for community projects. Community building upgrades can include insulation, heating system, renewable energy technologies. Projects funded under the 2022 application include

Knoockanore School, (Window / Door Upgrades, Dungarvan Fire Station (solar PV, Insulation Upgrades, heat pump upgrades).

- The community center investment fund maybe opened for applications in 2023. The 2022 scheme is now closed and had a capital fund of €15 million which provided funding for the improvement and refurbishment of existing community centers in both urban and rural areas. This scheme is operated by the Department of Community and Rural Development and is 100% funded.
- Contracts have been signed for the led retro fitting of street lighting throughout the City and County.
- The Department of the Environment, Climate Action and Communications, has launched a “Support Scheme for Renewable Heat” (SSRH). This scheme includes grant funding for air-source heat pumps for businesses and farmers and tariff payment for biomass boilers, biomass / anaerobic digestion CHP’s and anaerobic digestion boilers. The SSRH scheme is operated by SEAI and open to applications.
- A draft “WCCC Electrical Vehicle and Charging Strategy”, has been prepared for approval of WCCC Management and details a phased transition of WCCC vehicles to EV’s with appropriate charging infrastructure being installed where operationally feasible by 2025. It is projected that up to 30%-40% of WCCC vehicles could be EV’s by 2025.
- WCCC are supporting communities in joining the “Sustainable Energy Communities” initiative, where funding is available through SEAI, for the development of “SEC Master Plans” and funding is available for energy efficiency upgrades and renewable energy installations. To date Clashmore/Kinsalebeg SEC have developed a master plan. A group within the Blackwater Valley has developed a master plan.
- Installation of a new heating system at the Dungarvan Sports Centre is completed. The works will include the installation of an air- heat pump to heat the offices, changing areas and meeting rooms etc. A new heating system to the sports hall will be completed in a later phase of upgrades.
- An order has been placed for the purchased of three electric vans for the WCCC environmental inspectors. These vans should be delivered by late 2022 and will replace the existing diesel vans.

Environmental Education & Awareness

Waste Prevention

Reuse Month takes place during the month of October. The Environment Department are launching a toolkit for swap events to encourage reuse and repair; this toolkit will provide tips, posters and social media posts to enable community groups, schools, etc to run swap events for items such as sports equipment, clothes, musical instruments, school supplies and more. Waterford City & County Council are also hosting a clothes swap at Central Library on 19th October, with a Repair demonstration and fast fashion exhibit on the night also.

Waterford City & County Council have been chosen for the Reuse Month Flagship event 2022, a Repair Café to be held on 22nd October. This event will feature experts in textiles, furniture and bicycle repair demonstrating practical examples of repair. Waste prevention workshops will be held in libraries for Reuse Month. The focus of these workshops is making a reusable food wrap that provides a natural alternative to plastic wrap. These wraps are a great way to start out on your waste reduction journey and offer an easy switch from plastic. Each participant can make their own wrap to take home with them and are encouraged to bring along any other waste prevention or recycling questions they might have. The workshop provides a forum to discuss reuse, composting and recycling as the wraps are being made. These workshops will take place in Waterford city centre, Ardkeen, Tramore and Kilmacthomas. A sustainable living workshop will also take place in Lismore, incorporating Greener Cleaning (environmentally friendly cleaning in the home, how to reduce the use of chemicals and hazardous materials), Greener Gardening, Composting, food waste prevention and waste prevention tips.

Waterford is taking part in the Commercial Waste Campaign run by the Regional Waste Management Office, a waste audit project was commissioned in small food businesses. As part of this, a waste characterisation is completed, then the commercial waste assets are deployed and a follow up review is done two months later. Each business is also encouraged to give feedback on their experiences. Two businesses in Waterford have agreed to take part in this survey.

The Environment Department continue to work with 2GoCup to encourage the use of the deposit return reusable cups at cafes. 10 cafes are taking part in a three month pilot initiative with deposit return reusable cups that cost €1 each (5 cafes along the Greenway and 5 in Waterford). It is hoped that these 10 cafes will then encourage other cafes to accept and move towards reusable cups.

Schools

The Green Schools Seminar will be online on 5th October as the majority of teachers found this to be a convenient way to take part. The Environmental Awareness Officer will be available to visit schools or answer any questions that they might have, as will An Taisce’s Green Schools team. The Council is working with a further four schools and the

Waterford Teachers Centre to continue the Climate Literacy programme with secondary schools this autumn. This is a 10- week Climate Literacy programme, focused on improving climate literacy and fostering behavior change in schools. The course is developed to include teacher training, resources, and lesson plans. The teacher training is designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills required to effectively and confidently deliver not only this course, but also across their curriculum subject as the course can complement any subject framework that has an environmental strand. After the training the teachers will then be able to deliver the course with as many groups of students as they wish. An in-person teacher training day will be held on 22nd August, with further online sessions taking place during September.

Waterford primary schools are participating in Picker Pals litter programme once again this school year. This programme is most suitable for 1st and 2nd class children but has classes participating up to 4th and 5th class also. It teaches about litter and involves activity based learning to promote a keen sense of responsibility for the environment.

Community Clean-Ups

Waterford City & County Council facilitates community clean ups throughout the year to clean up litter and illegally dumped waste from approach roads, local beauty spots, beaches and general public areas. The Environment Department continue to supply bags, gloves and litter pickers to many of the groups taking part, as well as collecting the bags of litter afterwards.

Website

Environmental Information continues to be added to the Environment section of the Waterford City & County Council website which can be found at www.waterfordcouncil.ie