

DO: GACH BALL DE CEANTAR BARDASACH AN CHOMARAIGH
TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE COMERAGH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACHT COMHSHAOIL
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT

SAMHAIN 2022
NOVEMBER 2022

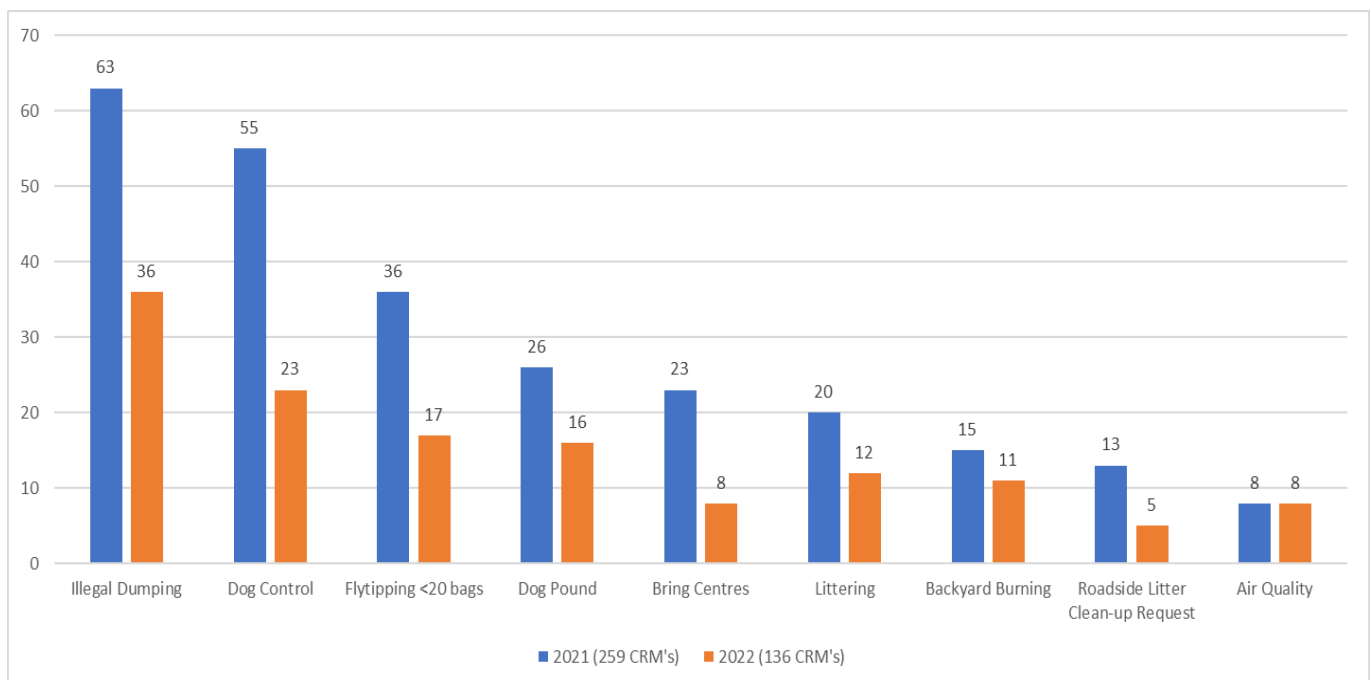
General Environment Enforcement

Environmental Inspectors continue to investigate and monitor illegal waste issues, littering, fly-tipping and illegal signage and issued litter fines where evidence of an offence is available.

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.

CRM Activity

The following graph shows a comparison of the top categories of CRM cases recorded by the Environment Dept. in the Comeragh area in the period to mid-October in the years 2021 & 2022. Environmental Inspectors continue to investigate complaints received and monitor illegal waste issues, littering, fly-tipping and illegal signage and issued litter fines where offences are detected. Waterford City & County Councils Dog Wardens continue to investigate all control of dog issues throughout the City & County.



Climate Action

Commercial Rates Energy Credit Scheme

Businesses and industry accounts 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, the Council 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. 953 businesses participated in the scheme.

Local Climate Action Plan

Draft guidelines have been issued for the 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 previous 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. In November we will complete a Climate Change Risk Assessment and Baseline Emissions Inventory.

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 was sent to the Department of Environment, Climate Action and Communications at the start of this month. The Council has increased the number of actions ongoing to prepare for Climate Change to 78 from 52. These actions have been taken by Roads, Planning, Heritage, Fire Services and HR.

Reduce Your Use Campaign

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and the Office of Public Works (OPW) are collaborating on the Reduce Your Use energy efficiency campaign for public bodies. This campaign is now mandatory for public bodies. This campaign aims to reduce the public sector's energy consumption over the winter period by 15% to help combat rising energy costs. The Council has designated November as Reduce Your Use month and will implement the following initiatives:

Heat

- Establish maximum period for heating, air conditioning and all utilities. Switch-off heating and utilities during out of hours periods.
- Requirement for internal space heating temperature of all public buildings to be consistent with the minimum recommended temperatures for heating. In most (though not all) cases, this will be 19 degrees.
- Requirement to shut off all heat in office buildings at least 1-2 hours before the buildings close.

Light

- Requirement not to have external/window/feature display lighting (i.e., non-security/safety lighting) between 5pm and 7pm and to reduce unnecessary lighting at other times.

Time

- Appropriate to hours of public services and hours of work, introduce new operational control conditions. Challenge core and extended hours of business, minimise and lockdown controls outside these hours.
- Reduce electricity use at peak times whenever possible.

Tracking

- Implement own Energy Efficiency Assessment of all buildings as a minimum, plan to undertake an energy audit by external expert – SEAI/OPW can provide template and guidance to complete.
- Introduce an out-of-hours walk-through audit, to be conducted by security, facilities personnel or by other arrangement.
- Facility Teams to conduct own Operations and Maintenance Audit, assuring condition, settings and upkeep of plant. Focus on plant conditions, set-points, control, maintenance, register of opportunity input.
- Facility team to introduce own process for operational control and measurement.

Energy Efficiency

- WCCC have prepared an “Energy Saving Booklet”, for dissemination to 35,000 houses in Waterford. The booklet highlights energy savings that can be made by homeowners and what funding is available for energy upgrades. Booklet is to be circulated between 21st and 28th November.
- WCCC are open to partner with community groups to include buildings within the 2022 “SEAI 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 etc. Funded projects in the 2022 application include 1) Knockanore School, 2) Dungarvan Fire Station, 3) Holy Ghost Residential Home, 4) Tramore Library, 5) Deanery Building, 6) Bolton Street Depot, 7) Ardkeen Shopping Centre. Measures included within funded measures include window / Door Upgrades, solar PV, Insulation Upgrades, heat pump upgrades etc.
- 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.

Environmental Education & Awareness

Schools

The Tom Murphy Litter Competition for Secondary Schools was expanded to include all secondary schools in Waterford city and county this year. 15 secondary schools entered the competition and received litter pickers, high visibility vests, gloves and bags to allow them to carry out litter picks of their designated area. Schools are busy carrying out clean ups between now and the end of November, with some schools carrying out 3 clean ups a week with different classes. Judging will take place by an adjudicator from IBAL (Irish Business Against Litter) in the coming weeks. The prizegiving and presentation of certificates of participation will take place in the Mayors Parlour in early December. St Declan’s Community College, Kilmacthomas took part in the competition.

The Green Schools Seminar took place online on 5th October. Most teachers found online events to be a convenient way to take part. The Environmental Awareness Officer is available to visit schools to give advice on the programme.

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.

Waste Prevention

Reuse Month took place during the month of October. The Environment Department created 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 reuse items by running swap events for items such as sports equipment, clothes, musical instruments, school supplies and more. This is available on the Council website and information has been sent to community groups, schools, sports groups, etc.

The Environment Department continues 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.

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.

Tidy Towns Results

In late October the results of the Super Valu Tidy Towns Competition for 2022 were announced. Congratulations to all of the Tidy Towns groups in the District who took part in the competition for 2022.

The following were award winners in the various categories:

Category A – Ballymacarbry – Silver Medal

Category B – Stradbally – County First and Gold Medal

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