

DO: GACH BALL DE CEANTAR CATHRACH PHORT LÁIRGE
TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACTH COMHSHAOIL
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT

BEALTAINÉ 2021
MAY 2021

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: 0761 10 20 20

Presentation / Parks & Open Spaces

Waterford City & Tramore

In recent weeks with the improving weather has seen an increase in footfall to our parks & open spaces and while for the greater part of April our work programmes have been limited and in line with Government Covid-19 restrictions. The work being carried out has primarily been focused on the maintenance of litter controls, both litter picking and maintaining litter bins.

With an easing in restrictions in the latter part of the month staff have been and are now in full operation of landscape works as of April 26th. Grass maintenance of all our parks is now back in line for the time of year assisted by the particularly dry period recently.

The challenge has been to largely set aside the planned work elements for the early part of the year, that being tree planting and tree pruning until the next appropriate season of the autumn. Some minor tree works has been completed in order to safeguard the public, yet again the most of this committed work is being re-scheduled for the autumn.

As documented recently Waterford City & Council has commenced the use of a non-selective contact herbicide as part of its natural weed management solution for our Parks. One such application of this non-selective contact herbicide has been applied to control unwanted weed growth in our parks in recent weeks and is part of our sustainable management strategy with regards to weed control.

Building on the success of last year Waterford City & Council has submitted Kilbarry Nature Park & the Greenway for judging for the "Green Flag for Parks Award 2021". Last year's success demonstrated that both of these sites are at Green Flag standard and it is anticipated that they will retain this status when judging takes place later this summer.

Works at Kilbarry Cemetery.

Works on the installation of new footpaths and plinths at Kilbarry Cemetery are due to commence on the week beginning 10th May. These works will continue for a period of three to four weeks. During this time public access to the cemetery will not be restricted.

Environmental Education & Awareness

Litter

Waterford City & County Council continues to offer assistance throughout the year to the general public and schools to clean up litter and illegally dumped waste from their local environs e.g. approach roads, local beauty spots, beaches and general public areas. These clean ups are ongoing and extremely busy this year not just with group clean ups but with an increased number of individuals and families taking part.

The regional dog fouling campaign is ongoing. The first 6 social media posts and 3 bilingual leaflets have been designed and are scheduled to be released online between now and mid July. These cover the first two themes of the "Bag it, Bin it" campaign, which address the responsibility of the dog owner to clean up after a dog and the effects that dog fouling has on others in the community. We are currently contacting the Irish Wheelchair Association, Waterford Childcare Committee, etc. to highlight the effects of dog fouling on others in the community. Radio advertisements in relation to the campaign have been broadcast on WLR FM. Waterford City & County Council have also been working with community groups across Waterford to get the anti-dog fouling message out; a dozen communities have come on board to date and some of these have availed of the local Litter Awareness grant to support their activities. These communities have received help in creating videos, social media content, stencils on footpaths, awareness days and dog litter counts, etc. We are keen to work with other communities and groups also on this issue. Online and local activities over the summer months will ensure that awareness of the responsibilities of dog owners in relation to dog fouling will be highlighted. An education pack will be worked on over the summer months and released for use in schools and youth groups in September. A mid campaign boost the campaign is planned with a small number of responsible dog owners being rewarded with a high visibility dog jacket; this will be used to maintain momentum for the campaign and restate the importance of picking up after dogs as the evenings begin to grow darker. A regional ad campaign will feature on Beat FM at this time also, along with additional social media content, etc.

Tidy Towns

The national Tidy Towns competition entry form is due to be available online this month, with groups encouraged to include relevant photographs wherever possible with their entries in case judging cannot take place in person due to COVID-19. Groups must also submit their application online for the first time. With this in mind, a webinar on how to write an application was held for Tidy Towns groups on 13th April and included a talk by National Tidy Towns Adjudicator Fiona MacGowan. The webinar was well attended.

Biodiversity

A Sustainable Gardening course which was held over the last five weeks has now finished. There was great interest in this course and Tidy Towns, community groups and community gardens were prioritised for places. Feedback has been excellent from the course, with participants commenting on how much practical advice they received on how to compost, reduce waste, take cuttings, how to identify what creatures live in your area etc.

Schools

This year, Green Schools assessments and visits are taking place online, in accordance with An Taisce's recommendations. An Taisce has extended the assessment deadline until the end of the school year to reflect this nationwide trend. The number of renewals and assessments are considerably lower this year, with many schools choosing to defer until 2022.

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