



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

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACHT COMHSHAOIL
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT

DEIREADH FÓMHAIR 2023
OCTOBER 2023

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 102020

Presentation/Parks & Open Spaces

Waterford City

- Open Spaces Crew and contractor are working and continuing to maintain grass. The weed spraying contractor is due for the final application of spray at the end of October.
- Maintenance of our parks and open spaces is ongoing.
- Soft surfacing in Manor St. John playground to be removed and replaced with tarmacadam. Existing surface damaged from old age and vandalism.
- Open Spaces crew are continuing to cut hedges and weed flower beds.
- People's Park Fountain – Fountain is expected to start in October and due to be finished by year end.
- Tender for replacement playgrounds equipment in Farronshoneen is complete and awarded to contractor. For installation by year end.
- City Centre Cleansing – Cleaning regime ongoing with crew power washing inner city streets.
- Cleansing crews continue to manage their areas well, particularly for the busy events through summer and into Autumn.
- Very large list of tree cutting works for Autumn/Winter already in place and additional tree CRM's being received weekly, due to begin in October.

Playground in Kilcaragh Park

The Environment Department is seeking consultants to undertake a preliminary design for the pocket park in Kilcaragh.

Tramore

- Maintenance of our parks and open spaces is ongoing.
- Presentation Crew have cut all grass that had been left uncut for the summer, to encourage pollinator flowers.
- Tender to be completed for an electric scut truck vehicle for beach and parks cleansing and general open spaces works.
- Tender completed for new out-front mower for Tramore Presentation, due for delivery by year end.
- Cleansing regime ongoing, summer bins on prom due to be removed in the coming weeks.
- The Adult Exercise Equipment contractor has completed the installation of equipment at location adjacent to Splashworld.
- Sensory Garden contractor appointed. Site is set out by contractor and ready for phase 1 which includes creating paths and forming flower beds.

- Plastering of the front of the entrance wall into St. Declans Cemetery is complete.
- Presentation Crew will be working towards replacing summer flowering plants with winter ones over the coming weeks.

Climate Action

Climate Action Plan

The pre-draft consultation for the Climate Action Plan closed on 23rd June. 19 submissions were received online and 4 written submissions were received by the Climate Action office. The Climate Action team has completed a set of draft actions for the County and for the City (Waterford's Decarbonising Zone). The Climate Action team will be looking for involvement from elected members throughout this process and will present at District Council meetings in the next few weeks with the proposed actions that have been formulated from the consultation with the public and from consultations within the Council. The draft plan consultation will go live on 23rd October.

Rates Energy Discount Scheme

The Rates Energy Discount Scheme was open for applications until 29th September. Businesses with rates of less than €10,000 per annum or hospitality businesses were eligible to apply through our Submit Portal:

<https://waterford.submit.com/show/151> Businesses who complete the application and have their rates paid in full will have the discount applied to their account.

Environmental Education & Awareness

Tidy Towns

The Environment Department has been working with Tidy Towns groups to further their work towards the 2023 competition. The national Super Valu Tidy Towns competition is an annual contest organised by the Department of Rural and Community Development. The competition involves participating areas being rated on all aspects of their local environment and prizes awarded to the best under many different categories, from Litter to Sustainability. The overall winner is "Ireland's Tidiest Town" which was announced at a national ceremony on Friday, 6th October. Below is a summary of results achieved by Tidy Towns groups in the Tidy Towns Competition 2023 in the Metropolitan area (marks awarded out of a total of 550).

Metropolitan Area

Town	Marks awarded 2022	Marks awarded 2023	Medal	Special award	
Cheekpoint and Faithlegg	287	302		Endeavour Award	"It is hard to envisage a harder working & more engaged group than the Cheekpoint & Faithlegg Development Group (CFDG) & the sub-group of the Tidy Towns. As a very young sub-group, less than 4 months old, you have hit the ground running... For a small community, you have achieved a significant body of work over time & your future plans are equally ambitious"
Dunhill	No entry	231			Dunhill is most welcome to the Tidy Towns competition & we hope that, as a community, you gain much from the experience now & in the future. The Tidy Towns movement will provide Dunhill with a wonderful opportunity to holistically plan to make the locality the best possible place to live, work & visit.
Dunmore East	316	326			It was a pleasure to visit Dunmore East after a long hiatus. A lot has been achieved & it is encouraging to see all the community groups work together for the future of the town.

Fenor	325	334			You are an example to many villages about what can be achieved if one views the journey as a marathon rather than a race. The amenities available to local residents are remarkable & well done on keeping the momentum with further projects in progress & others in the pipeline.
Tramore		No entry			

Litter

The annual survey of coasts and inland waterways by business group **Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL)** showed that both Dungarvan Harbour and Tramore were found to be Clean to European norms. However, the study of 33 areas nationwide revealed the majority of beaches falling short of clean status, despite the unsettled summer meaning lower visitor numbers.

Tramore also received a very positive report, with it receiving an excellent result in 2022 which was replicated in 2023. According to the IBAL Litter survey, “The beach, promenade, parking and immediate environs were not just excellent with regard to litter but very freshly presented and maintained e.g., paving, signage, visitor information notices, seating, planter boxes, lifebuoys, etc. The area is exceptionally well served by litter bins and associated signage, and this is certainly having the desired effect - a very clean site. The Beach Borrow Box is a lovely feature. There was minimal litter throughout, some occasional food related items, dog fouling and cigarette butts.” Beaches, harbours, rivers and their immediate environs were monitored by An Taisce in June and July. While there was a 50% rise in clean sites overall, the survey again found our coastal areas to be more littered than our towns, which IBAL researches as part of its Anti-Litter League programme.

The **Gum Litter Taskforce (GLT)** took to the streets of Waterford on 14th August. The interactive roadshow carried out fun and engaging education and awareness initiatives that demonstrate the proper means of gum disposal and raise awareness of the environmental and fiscal impacts of gum litter. Now in its sixteenth year, the campaign is a collaboration between Food Drink Ireland, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, the chewing gum industry, and local authorities. This campaign was launched by the Mayor of Waterford City and County Council Cllr. Joe Conway and members of the Waterford Youth Climate Action Group. Research published recently to coincide with the National Launch of the 2023 GLT Campaign revealed that 87% of people now report proper gum disposal, versus 49% when the campaign began in 2007– an increase of 77.5%, demonstrating the positive impact the campaign has had on attitudes towards gum litter. Peer pressure was found to be the key contributor to this shift in attitudes, followed by knowledge of the €150 fine. However, work remains to be done to further reduce this figure, as still only 46% of people can claim to have never dropped gum on the ground, demonstrating the continued importance of the awareness and behavioural change campaign.

Recycling

Waterford householders were encouraged to bring their batteries, electrical, and electronic waste to a series of free collection days around the county during August. The events, hosted by WEEE Ireland in partnership with Waterford City and County Council. On Thursday 17th August, the collection took place at the Gaultier GAA Club, Dunmore from 10.00am-1.00pm. Finally, a collection took place at the Tesco Car Park in Tramore on Saturday 19th August. All household items with a plug or a battery were accepted free of charge, including old washing machines, TVs, toasters and kettles, electronic tools and toys, cables, IT equipment, mobile phones, remote controls, batteries, including farm fence batteries, and even watches.

Green Flag Programme

Green Schools visits are already underway, with a talk taking place with all staff at the Ursuline Secondary School in Waterford at the end of August. The Green Schools Seminar was online on 3rd 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.

Waste Prevention

Greening food festivals: the two rinse stations trialled at last year’s Vitamin Sea Festival to encourage the use of reusable cups, cutlery, plates, etc was used at the Harvest Festival in Waterford and again at the Vitamin Sea festival in Tramore this September. These stations allowed attendees to bring their own reusable cutlery, plates, cups, etc and rinse them out for reuse at the festival. This was particularly useful at the food trail and picnic elements of the festivals.

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 from both Dungarvan and Waterford offices to many of the groups taking part, as well as collecting the bags of litter for all clean ups.

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