



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

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACHT COMHSHAOIL
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT

MEÁN FÓMHAIR 2023
SEPTEMBER 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 to catch up on grass cutting, weed spraying and weed removal following wet weather.
- 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.
- Fence at Bracken Grove has been replaced.
- Summer bedding is being watered weekly. Open Spaces crew beginning to cut hedges and weed flower beds, particularly in People's Park and around Bishops Palace.
- Peoples Park Fountain – final tender evaluation completed and tender awarded. Works expected to start in October and be completed by year end.
- Tender for replacement playgrounds equipment in Farronshoneen is complete and due to be awarded in September, for installation by year end.
- City Centre Cleansing - Cleaning regime ongoing with crew power washing inner city streets.
- Cleansing crews did a great job in having Waterford City clean straight after Spraoi weekend.
- Substantial list of tree cutting works for Autumn/Winter already and additional tree CRMs coming in 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.
- 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.
- Cleansing regime ongoing including road sweeping and emptying of additional summer bins on Prom.
- Summer bedding and hanging basket bedding has been completed.
- The Adult Exercise Equipment contractor is due on site adjacent to Splashworld and should be completed by the end of this week.
- Sensory Garden contractor appointed and due to start in early September.

- Contractor appointed for the plastering of the front of the entrance wall into St. Declan's cemetery, Tramore.

Dunmore East

- The trustees of the park in Dunmore East have refused the Council permission to locate the Adult Gym equipment which was funded under the Community Recognition Fund in the Park. This is despite initially meeting with a member of the trustees and receiving verbal agreement. In light of this, the Department have now asked that we investigate other eligible projects in Dunmore East to be put forward for approval by the Department before 27th September.

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 is open for applications until 29th September. Businesses with rates of less than €10,000 per annum or hospitality businesses are 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 have 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 is announced at a national ceremony in September each year.

Litter

The annual survey of coasts and inland waterways by business group Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) showed that Tramore was 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, began on Tuesday 15th August. 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 will be 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. They have already been booked for use again at the West Waterford Festival of Food in 2024.

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, in addition to 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