

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

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACHT COMHSHAOIL
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT

AIBREÁN 2025
APRIL 2025

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. Waterford City & County Councils Dog Wardens continue to investigate all control of dog issues throughout the City & County.

Nationwide RTÉ National Tree Week

A recent edition of the popular Nationwide programme, to mark National Tree Week featured an excellent piece on Waterford City & County Council's Tree Mapping programme. Eoin Dullea, Parks and Landscape Officer, Marina Mulligan, Biodiversity Officer and Jon Hawkins together with members of Trees for Life and Native Tree Trust all contributed to inform the public of the innovative tree mapping programme supporting the Council's tree planning programme. This unique GIS tree mapping survey provides vital information on biodiversity ecosystems, integral for future planning. The feature also highlighted the work of local community groups who are enriching their communities with tree planning programmes supported by this tree mapping information.



Environmental Education & Awareness

Green Flag Programme - Green-Schools promotes long-term, whole-school action for the environment Green-Schools with primary and secondary schools. A renewal visit must take place before a school submits a renewal application form for their renewal Green Flags (Energy, Water, Travel, Biodiversity and the Global Citizenship themes). Renewal visits are carried out by the Environment Awareness Officer. The purpose of the visit is to demonstrate that the school has an active Green-Schools programme in operation and has been maintaining previous themes in addition to working on the current theme. Schools applying must first complete an assessment visit from the Environment Awareness Officer before submitting their renewal application. All Green Schools working on a flag for this current school year received a visit and submitted an application by 28th March 2025. Themes range from Litter & Waste to Climate to Biodiversity.



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. We continue to supply bags, gloves and litter pickers to many of the groups taking part, distributing them from both our Dungarvan and Waterford offices. Collection of any bags of litter is then organised for after the clean-up takes place. National Spring Clean takes place throughout the month of April; registrations are now being taken at www.nationalspringclean.org ; as part of this we supply bags, gloves and litter pickers to many of the groups taking part, as well as collecting the bags of litter for all clean ups. Groups are encouraged to register their clean up as a National Spring Clean event to receive additional resources from An Taisce.

Connecting Communities Roadshow - Environment Awareness is taking part in a Connecting Communities Roadshow around the county this spring. Environment's display will focus on food waste prevention. This has taken place in Ferrybank and Lisduggan to date and we will visit Cappoquin on 30th April.

National Tree Week - National Tree Week took place 9th – 16th March. 500 small tree and hedgerow saplings were distributed to communities in Co. Waterford, donated by Coillte through the National Tree Council.

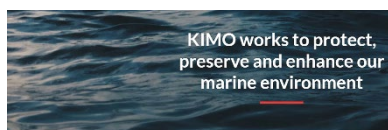
Rubbish Film Festival - The Environment Section is working with Createschool and 5 secondary schools in County Waterford on the Rubbish Film. The Rubbish Film Festival is an opportunity for Transition Year Students to showcase their creative talents, create awareness on Environmental Issues such as Climate Action and learn some new digital storytelling skills in the process. Each participating school will receive an intensive 2-day workshop on-site in their school from Createschool to help them gain and/or develop the skills to create their own short ONE MINUTE film or films that will create awareness among their peers on their selected environmental issue. All costs are covered by the Environment Section of Waterford City & County Council. A follow up awards ceremony will take place in late April.

Grant Funding - Two grants were announced locally, with a closing date of 11th April for both grants:

Local Circular Economy Grant 2025: This grant is designed to encourage innovative local projects that embody principles of the circular economy—longevity, renewability, and minimal waste. The focus will be on projects that promote reusing, repairing, and changing the way we think about and consume resources. We are looking for initiatives that can demonstrate tangible ways to extend the life of products through skills such as repair and maintenance, reducing the community's environmental footprint. In previous years, funded projects have ranged from textile repair events, clothes swaps, beach toy libraries to food waste reduction workshops. These initiatives not only conserve resources but also cultivate a sense of community and shared responsibility. Projects will be evaluated based on their potential impact on waste prevention and their ability to serve as a replicable model of best practices in sustainability. Apply now at <https://bit.ly/CircularEconomyGrant2025>

Local Litter Awareness Grant: we are seeking submissions from community groups, youth groups, schools or other community development organisations, based in County Waterford, who are interested in receiving funding for public education and awareness initiatives regarding litter or graffiti. Examples of projects previously funded under this grant include: Dog fouling – community projects on dog fouling have been effective in the past, putting responsibility firmly back on the dog owner to clean up after their dog. Stencils can be provided to groups who wish to buy paint to stencils messages onto black spot areas/affected streets in their community, etc. Similarly, if an awareness campaign wished to tie in with the Council's campaign by erecting posters locally, holding a number of local awareness events (virtually or in person) or by acting as a Green Dog Walker ambassador within their community, such a project could be funded. School assembly talks/class workshops could be held either virtually or in school (depending on school/COVID restrictions in place at the time) to highlight the issue. Roadside litter – A local campaign/ photo/poster competition could be run with youth clubs, sports clubs, etc. about roadside litter. Posters could be displayed at local takeaways, deli counters, cafes and shops to remind customers to bring their litter home with them and not throw it from the car. A digital competition could be run with a local secondary school to use on your group's social media account. Apply online via <https://bit.ly/LitterAwarenessGrant2025>

Kimo Membership



Together for cleaner seas

KIMO is a network of local governments, working together for healthy seas, clean beaches, and thriving coastal communities.

Waterford City & County Council is to become a member of KIMO, the local authorities international environmental organisation, as agreed at the Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Action SPC. Councillor Niamh O'Donovan will be the political representative for this initiative, from the environmental SPC. KIMO stands for *Kommunernes Internationale Miljøorganisation* (Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation) and was founded in Denmark in 1990. The objective is to prevent pollution and to protect, preserve and enhance seas, coastal waters and rivers.

Climate Action

Schools Climate Conference - On 26th March, 2025 eight secondary schools from across the county came together in Dungarvan for the second Schools Climate Conference. The conference provides the opportunity to update the younger members of our community on the Council's progress in meeting our Climate Goals. Schools also presented their own projects and learned from successful community projects across Waterford.

A **Tidy Towns Network Event** in Dungarvan brought a number of Tidy Towns Committees together with a view to inspiring local community actions for climate and biodiversity.

Biodiversity

Waterford Biodiversity Action Plan: We are currently in the development stages of the Waterford Biodiversity Action Plan with public consultation dates being arranged for all district areas. An application for Heritage Council funding for activities, environmental assessment and delivery aspects of the Waterford Biodiversity Action Plan is also being prepared.

Cross departmental Projects: The Biodiversity Officer is working with the Waterford Sports Partnership team to allocate biodiversity actions to two sports projects under Participation Nation funding – one in Dungarvan and one in Waterford City. This will include integration of biodiversity into the community spaces in both locations.

The Climate Action Team together with the Biodiversity Officer are collaborating with Communities to work on a proposal for Sláitecare funding which hopes to integrate tree planting and ecological corridors into disadvantaged areas. This proposal is being presented for consideration.

WCCC Biodiversity & National Parks and Wildlife Service: WCCC Biodiversity and NPWS Rangers are assisting with multiple community queries on biodiversity within their local areas.

Local Authority Biodiversity Action Fund – Seven projects have been applied for under LBAF funding to a value of €96,000. An update will follow once the application has been processed and awarded.

Biodiversity Week: Preparations are underway for Biodiversity Week 2025 which occurs from 17th – 25th May.

Biodiversity Officer Training – The Biodiversity Officer attended quarterly training with the Heritage Council in Dun Laoghaire which covered grazing management by goats for scrub control, barrier removal in rivers, river restoration and engagement with the Local Authorities Waters Programme on the grants available for communities working to eradicate Invasive Species and begin River Restoration works under Inland Fisheries Ireland and LAWPRO funding.

NPWS Community-led Peatlands and Natura Community Engagement Scheme: Progress can be followed on TEG Social Media: [Tramore Eco Group](#) | [Waterford](#) | [Facebook](#)

Irish Ramsar Wetlands Committee: The Biodiversity Officer represented the Biodiversity Officer Network at the national meeting of the IRWC in Brú na Bóinne, Co. Meath. Discussions surrounded the need for a national strategy on the protection of wetlands and the rate at which these areas are being lost. Currently, BOs and NPWS are participating in national mapping of wetlands and it is hoped that this will be expanded in the coming years to include data from multiple agencies. It was agreed that Ireland is underperforming in protecting its wetland areas and that new Ramsar sites should be put forward for designation. The Global Wetlands Outlook was cited as a good place to start this discussion nationally: <https://www.global-wetland-outlook.ramsar.org/>

Community Foundation Ireland: Six Waterford communities have received €33,000 funding under the CFI Biodiversity Fund which is run in conjunction with NPWS and with letters of support from local Biodiversity Officers. Congratulations to Ardmore, Bunmahon, Clonea Power, Dungarvan and Dunhill on receiving a grant (€5,000 per community) to create local Biodiversity Action Plans with certified ecologists. Clashmore and Kinsalebeg Community Council have received €8,000 towards implementation of actions on their existing plan. The Biodiversity Officer and ecologists will liaise on habitat data collected during the course of the survey work and actions included in community plans will be incorporated into county planning. WCCC Press Release: <https://waterfordcouncil.ie/six-waterford-communities-awarded-strategic-funding-to-support-influential-local-biodiversity-action/>