



Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge
Waterford City & County Council

DO: GACH BALL DE CHEANTAR BARDASACH DHÚN GARBHÁN/LEASA MHÓIR
TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACHT COMHSHAOIL
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT

MEITHEAMH 2025
JUNE 2025

IBAL Results June 2025: Waterford City: 8th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Cleaner than European Norms.

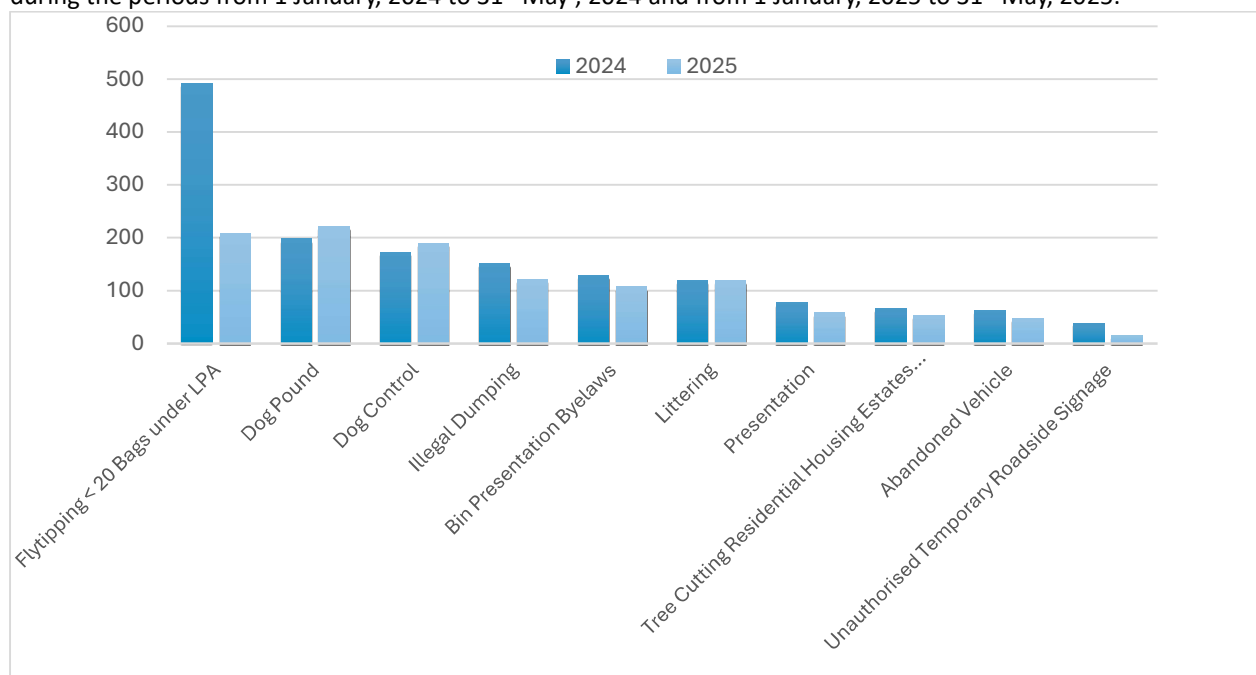
Waterford City has retained its high ranking position and was again Ireland's cleanest city. With so many top ranking sites, it's not possible to mention them all, but some stand out for various reasons. The Mall (beautifully presented and maintained), the shopping area of Barronstrand Street / Broad Street, Viking Triangle / Museum Quarter, Quays / River Walk and Lombard Street / William Street – the latter, while not quite as beautiful as the others deserves a mention as clearly as it was clear of litter, despite plenty of closed down / derelict sites. There was only one heavily littered site - the Bring Bank at Tesco Ardkeen. Improvements were noted at 'Woodpecker' site, Apple Market Car Park and Site beside Vee Car Park.

Ballybeg: 15th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Clean to European Norms.

A slight slip on 2024 but a solid result for Ballybeg with half of the sites surveyed getting the top litter grade and just one seriously littered one. There were no litter blackspots. The residential area of Ardmore Terrace and Ballybeg Stores & Environs were much improved compared to previous IBAL surveys, just missing the top litter grade this time around. By far the most heavily littered site was Ballybeg Bring Bank – it wasn't just littered but dumped upon.

CRM Activity

The following graph shows a comparison of the top categories of CRM cases recorded in the Metropolitan area during the periods from 1 January, 2024 to 31st May, 2024 and from 1 January, 2025 to 31st May, 2025.



Changes to Environment Department Structures

Effective from 12th May 2025, the Parks, Open Spaces and cleansing teams for the City will transfer to the Metropolitan Municipal District Department, under the leadership of Paul Johnston. The Dungarvan Presentation & Cleansing team will transfer to the Dungarvan Roads section under the leadership of Gabriel Hynes.

The Environment Department will continue to lead on the areas of Waste, Air and Noise Pollution, Water Quality, Climate Action and Animal Control.

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.

CCTV

We have convened and held the first meeting of the Oversight Group which is the first stage in developing our internal processes for the use of CCTV

The Oversight Board is responsible for assessing the necessity and proportionality for the proposed use of CCTV for the purposes of waste and litter enforcement. We are also in the process of tendering for the provision of CCTV services for this purpose. It is anticipated that subject to the completion of the relevant processes, including Data Protection Impact Assessments and public consultation on the location of CCTV that this system should be operational in Quarter 3 – Quarter 4.

Environmental Education & Awareness

Green Flag Programme: 21 schools were awarded their Green Flag at an awards ceremony in Kilkenny recently. Green-Schools promotes long-term, whole-school action for the environment Green-Schools with primary and secondary schools. Themes range from Litter & Waste to Climate to Biodiversity. 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 were 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.

Food waste prevention: National Food Waste Recycling Week takes place during the first week in June. This year's campaign celebrates the significant strides made in food waste recycling, with over 1.2 million households now using brown bins across Ireland. The key message this year is "No Metal, No Glass, No Plastic Makes Your Brown Bin Fantastic!" and highlights the importance of reducing contamination.

Green Hubs: We have been working with Waterford Chamber and local businesses in Waterford on a Green Hubs project. This is part of a nationwide initiative to promote sustainable waste management practices. These hubs provide resources and support to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint, improve recycling rates, and adopt more environmentally friendly practices. Green Hubs also act as a network for businesses to learn from each other and share best practices.

Rubbish Film Festival: The Environment Section worked with Createschool and six 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 two-day workshop on-site in their school to help them gain and/or develop the skills to create their own short one minute film 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 county awards ceremony took place in May for this and the winning schools were Mercy Secondary School, Newtown Secondary School and Meanscoil San Nicolas) went forward to the national awards in various categories.



Rubbish film festival regional award being presented to Mercy Secondary school and Newtown secondary school.

Grants

Two small grants were awarded locally, with a wide range of projects being applied for under 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 still in the process of confirming funding with successful applicants for initiatives that extend the life of products through skills such as repair and maintenance, reducing the community's environmental footprint through upcycling projects, composting, etc.

Successful projects in the Metropolitan District included:

- Wyse Green Growers - Compost project
- Francis Court Aged action group - Reuse and recycling project SLI Waterford –
- Project ReWrap Waterford Area Partnership - PAT test training for repair café volunteers
- Waterford New Communities Network - Torn Treasures textile repair skills
- Carbally Active Retirement Group - Furniture Upcycling Initiative
- Carbally Women's Shed - Stitch & Save Clothing Repair Workshops.
- St. Christophers Conference SVP (New Community Mens shed group) - Trampoline reuse BLAST Store Textile Upcycle workshop and event

Local Litter Awareness Grant: This fund is for 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. Successful applicants include:

- Tides & Tales Maritime Community Project for local 5th and 6th class - Litter awareness on Cheekpoint Strand
- Community Development committee (Passage East and Crooke)
- Beach and Community Litter and Dog Waste Project
- Dunmore East Development Group - Awareness campaign for dog fouling
- Tramore Tidy Towns - Tramore Beach Clean Trolley

Water Quality



The Blue Flag / Green Coast Awards were presented to the Environment team this month. Waterford's coastline fared well as four beaches – Ardmore, Clonea, Tramore and Counsellor's Strand, Dunmore East – were awarded the prestigious Blue Flag 2025. County Waterford also received six green accolades with Newtown Cove, Guillemene Cove, Kilfarrassey, Ballyquin, Curragh and Goat Island Beach all receiving a Green Coast Award. The Blue Flag is one of the world's most recognised environmental awards. Originating in France in 1985 it was launched as an international programme as part of the "European Year of the Environment in 1987. In 1988, the first-year sites were awarded outside of France 19 beaches and 2 marinas received the Blue Flag in Ireland. The Green Coast award recognises beaches for their clean environment, excellent water quality and natural beauty.

Bathing Water

The bathing season runs from 1st June to 15 September. Pre-Season sampling started on 22nd May. Sampling will continue throughout the bathing season, results will be posted on the WCCC website and on www.beaches.ie.

Climate Action & Biodiversity

Waterford Biodiversity Action Plan

Preparation stages of the Waterford Biodiversity Action Plan. Kickstart Biodiversity Working Group meeting was held on 27th May with representation from several internal departments, state agencies, ecology experts and community representation. This will further expand for the full Biodiversity Action Plan working group to be held at the end of June. B.A.P public consultation will open at the beginning of June to coincide with the preparation process.

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:

The Biodiversity Officer awarded the full €96,699 for 2025 under the NPWS grant. These include a selection of year-long and multi-year projects for the benefit of conservation, habitats and environmental education. This funding is matched 15% by WCCC.

The Projects for Waterford:

- The **Clodiagh Freshwater Pearl Mussel Hatchery** under LBAF will continue WCCC support of the Kilmeaden breeding facility to include the addition of new tanks, increase public engagement along the catchment and contribute towards habitat assessment/restoration along the Clodiagh.
Project Partner: Friends of the River Clodiagh

- **Nightjar and upland breeding bird survey** to undertake a survey of Nightjar in County Waterford, to determine the presence of Nightjar and all other bird species at suitable selected sites in upland areas across Waterford.
Project Partner: John Lusby, BirdWatch Ireland
- **National Mayfly survey of Ireland for the IUCN redlist.** To record the mayflies in freshwater habitats across Ireland with the view to complete the red listing to determine the current conservation status.
Project Partners: UCD, LAWPRO and 29 councils nationally.
- **Waterford Biodiversity Public Engagement & Outreach.** Funding awarded to support community biodiversity outreach events and citizen science, publication of Waterford-specific biodiversity booklets, creation of film piece on Waterford's habitats, arts-ecology collaborations and biodiversity training for communities and the public.
Project Partners: Multiple across conservation, communities and the arts.
- **Sand Dune Restoration & Management.** Development of a long-term Sand Dunes Management Plan in collaboration with NPWS, ecological monitoring, infrastructure maintenance and erosion control at both Tramore Dunes and Backstrand SAC and Bunmahon dunes.
Project Partners: NPWS and WCCC
- **County Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Audit & Training for WCCC.** To carry out an assessment of the EU-regulated IAS and nationally significant IAS at a county level to assess the presence, distribution and impact of multiple IAS species with the goal of providing recommendations for targeted management and control within the county.
- **Wetland Restoration for the benefit of Dungarvan Harbour SPA.** Habitat restoration of WCCC-owned wetland site at Duckspool, Dungarvan to restore natural processes and benefit the protected bird species of Dungarvan Harbour SPA with community engagement on wetland conservation.

Biodiversity Week 2025

Biodiversity Week Ran from 16th – 25th May, and WCCC Biodiversity held several events including:

- **Biodiversity Corridor Creation** – WCCC Biodiversity Officer and the National Biodiversity Data Centre are supporting a network of community groups along the Maypark river walk to create a biodiversity corridor for both pollinators and species of the Lower River Suir SAC. The Biodiversity Officer Heritage Council funding provided support for a workshop event with Grace O' Sullivan
- **Dark Sky Communities Event with Wexford** – MM presented at the Connections Festival in Kilmore Quay on the importance of dark skies for coastal area wildlife and communities. This was in the Stella Maris Centre where communities of the SE counties were invited.



Grace O'Sullivan giving a workshop on native habitats of the 'B' Corridor area and Lower River Suir SAC to members of the Local residents' in the Woodlands Hotel for Biodiversity Week 2025.