

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

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACHT COMHSHAOIL

ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT

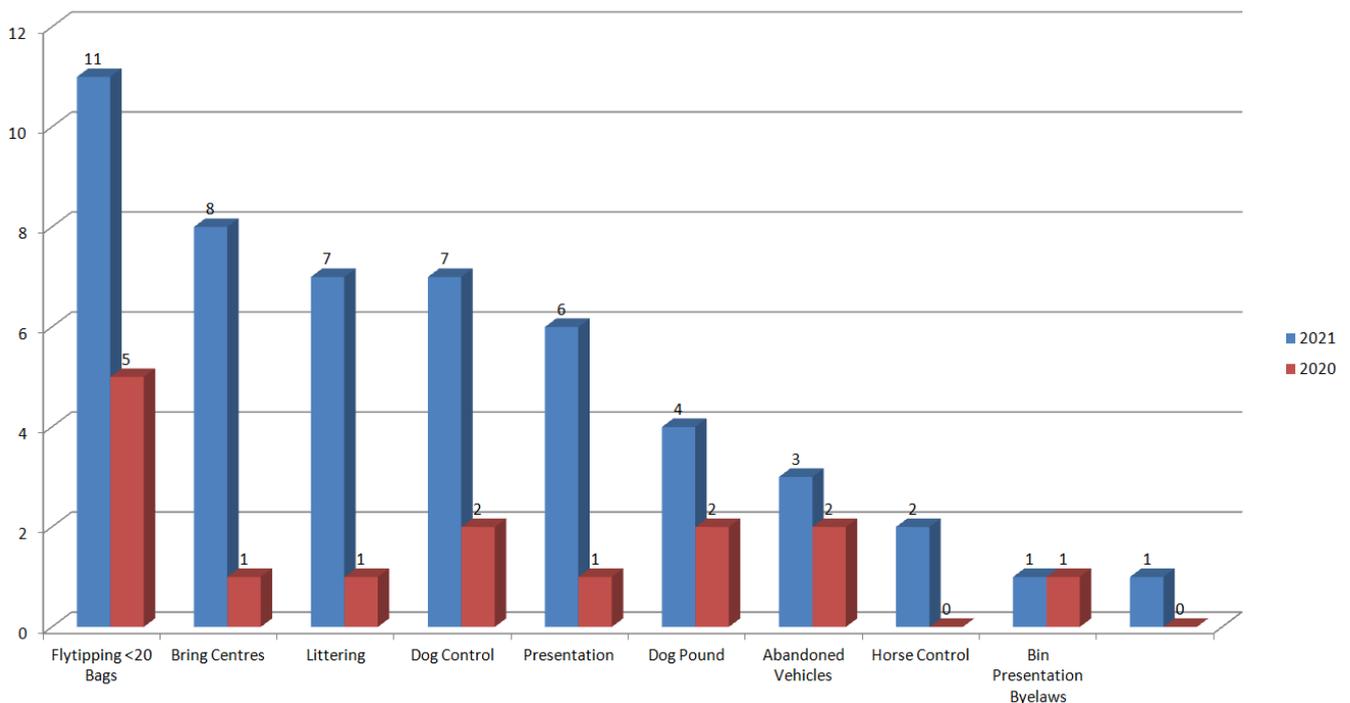
FEABHRA 2021

FEBRUARY 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.

The following graph shows a comparison of the top ten categories of CRM cases recorded in the Dungarvan / Lismore area during the period from 1st January to 26th January in the years 2020 & 2021.



Presentation & Cleansing

Dungarvan:

Covid-19 - Level 5 restrictions put in place in recent weeks have resulted in restricting a large part of the activities which we would otherwise be involved in at this time of year. In order to protect staff a large part of our maintenance works have been suspended; this being tree pruning, tree planting and shrubbery maintenance. Work in the primary maintenance of our parks remains ongoing that being maintaining litter bins and litter picking as this is seen as essential in providing the public with a safe and clean space to avail of recreation. When these restrictions are lifted, staff will return to these works.

Where works are seasonal a review will be required to ascertain what is achievable in any remaining time frame, this review will take place when we have a clearer indication as to when it will safe to return to these works.

Proposal for Landscape Design on N25 (at Lisfennel Close, Dungarvan) & N25 (at Youghal Road)

A Landscape Design Proposal has been developed relating to a section of the N25, Dungarvan town, specifically from the Spring Roundabout to the entrance to the IDA Business Park, Lisfennel. In recent months the necessary removal of trees which had been identified to contain hazards were removed in order to safe guard persons and property, both who use and live alongside this section of the N25.

The proposal can be split into two separate but coordinated topics:

- Replacement tree planting in order to ensure there is no overall loss of tree cover in the town of Dungarvan
- Improve the aesthetics of the area where the existing trees once stood.

The overall aim is to promote the beneficial effects of biodiversity by way of providing new habitat within this section and the overall town.

The Landscape proposal for the site is intended to address and contribute towards:

- A site-specific design generated from existing landscape elements and context;
- A design that acknowledges the local landscape character and integrates well into the receiving environment;

Issues which have been considered throughout the landscape design are:

- Linkage to existing landscape, adjacent land use, residential buildings, pedestrian and vehicular use and underground services;
- The constraints of the local environs and the appropriate selection of tree and shrub species there for;
- Specification of tree and shrub species which shall enhance biodiversity and visual amenity.

Design:

The subject of designing and representing this shifting landscape and the issue regarding space is important. The existing space contained a tree line; however we now have transformation changes to consider here where upon assessment it is clear that this space does not have the ability to include the direct replanting of trees here; as the constraints of the built environment prevent this, that being the N25, associated footpath and housing development do not allow to sustain trees in the long term. Therefore it is more appropriate to relocate the replacement tree planting to a location which can meet these needs and yet remain connected.

Equally in recent times another section of the N25 has had landscape changes following the removal of the boat feature and raised stone flower bed with welcome sign, this being the section approaching the town, as indicated in red following map.



This now largely represents a blank canvas particularly above ground, with the following notable underground consideration of a newly laid water main within this space also. However with this in mind it shall still allow for the introduction of a tree line spanning this space which will accommodate some 22 number semi mature trees. This planting location shall largely be viewed by passing traffic and those who frequent the footpath on the opposite side of the road, therefore the visuals of the planting palette are important with the understanding of the exposed nature of the site where it sits some 150m from Dungarvan Bay.

With this in mind the chosen selection of planting would represent *Acer platanoides* 'Cleveland' which can tolerate sea winds and provide a striking yellow-orange autumn colour to create this visual interest.

Within this linear planting shall also contain a number of groupings or thickets of Crabapple, *Malus sylvestris* encapsulated by Hawthorn, *Crataegus monogyna* to create hedgerow pockets providing cover and forage for our small birds to enhance and strengthen the biodiversity of this area. While these may be smaller in stature the combined numbers shall be greater than the overall number of Poplar trees removed.

As already identified the existing space where the trees were removed is not viable to sustain new tree planting we do have the remaining stumps which shall need addressing. Poplar trees by their very nature have a high degree of tendency to produce suckers, even when the main part of the tree has been removed they still have the ability to do so in the following growing seasons. Therefore there is a requirement to manage these until they become dormant where the above ground part can be grinded down to the existing grade or ground level. These stumps have been primarily treated however shall require further treatment/s; therefore an interim landscape solution is more applicable here until we are satisfied that the Poplars have become dormant.

With this in mind and with the underlying objectives of this design proposal this space would sustain a linear wildflower meadow as the soils shall be impoverished from the existing trees. This meadow with a specific selected blend of wildflowers would both provide visual interest to passing vehicular and pedestrian traffic, enhance biodiversity, whilst allowing the opportunity to manage the trees stumps through this phase of sucker regeneration.

This design proposal is viable in so far as it meets the objectives set out, works within the constraints identified and can be completed within one planting season thus resulting in no overall loss of tree cover; the aesthetics and the biodiversity of the town further increased.

The above proposal will be submitted to TII (Transport Infrastructure Ireland) for comment.

Environmental Education & Awareness

Schools

January, February and March are usually busy months for our work with Green Schools. This year, Green Schools assessments and visits are taking place online, in accordance with An Taisce's recommendations. Green School Committees will continue to be engaged with via Zoom. However due to the extended closure of schools, engagement has understandably been much lower than usual for this time of the year. An Taisce has extended the assessment deadline until the end of the school year to reflect this nationwide trend.

In an effort to continue to engage with schools, workshops are being offered online. Many teachers have expressed a preference for pre-recorded video content for workshops (due to internet connection, difficulty in scheduling live video with classes, etc.) and so this content is currently being created in order to offer this option to schools also.

Litter prevention

Waterford City & County Council continues to offer assistance throughout the year to the general public, community groups 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. There has been an increase in the number of individuals & individual households carrying out clean-ups within their 5km limit at present, when groups cannot meet to carry out larger scale clean-ups as usual.

WCCC Biodiversity Events

In conjunction with the Europe Direct in Central Library, we are working on a weeklong series of online events about biodiversity during the week 22nd – 26th February. The focus will be on nature in the garden and what individuals can do to encourage biodiversity. From tips to help biodiversity on your doorstep to a competition for children, promoting plants for pollinators and looking at garden birds, it will cover a range of topics suitable for biodiversity at home. All online events will be recorded and made available for viewing online afterwards also.

Tidy Towns

The national Tidy Towns competition will go ahead this year, 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 have also been

encouraged to focus on biodiversity, green spaces and sustainable living. With this in mind, a webinar about planting for biodiversity will be held for Tidy Towns groups on 10th February. This webinar will include a talk by Consultant Ecologist, Botanist and National Tidy Towns Adjudicator Ms. Fiona McGowan. It will focus on practical ways to enhance biodiversity locally and will showcase simple projects that are feasible for any group.

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