

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

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACHT COMHSHAOIL
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT

NOLLAIG 2022
DECEMBER 2022

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

Trees have now become dormant and it has allowed us to begin our Tree Programme where it is envisaged that this will be one of our work items from now through to next March. At present staff have completed elements of tree works in Templar's Hall.

Annually a key work item within the Parks & Open Spaces Section is the placing and standing of the City's Christmas trees which took place in early November in advance of lighting the trees. Staff this year again placed a tree in John Robert's Square; Ballybricken and in front of the Waterford Crystal Menapia Building. This operation takes place in the early hours of the morning requiring a specialist crane to stand the tree in the purpose-built stand.

Inclusive wheelchair swing installed in December 2022 in the People's Park.

Tramore

Presentation Staff in Tramore have been involved in works associated with the season and preparing for winter. This has largely entailed the planting of our winter bedding whereby planting is used to create both winter and early spring colour in key locations.

As with previous year's the locating of the Christmas tree in the Town Park across from the Majestic Hotel took place in the earlier part of the month; and with the introduction of a tree on Main Street and Church Road Carpark last year this has been repeated to provide Christmas cheer to this part of the town.

In the coming weeks staff shall be completing tree works initially within Ballycarnane Woods to include crown lifting of all trees and specific crown reductions of several trees.

Inclusive wheelchair swing installed in December 2022 in the Inclusion Park.

Climate Action

Climate Action Plan – Baseline Emissions Inventory and Climate Risk Assessment

Over the next 12 months WCCC is required to adopt a Climate Action Plan which will set out our actions between 2023 and 2028. The data gathering phase is already underway. A Baseline Emission Inventory is being carried out to determine the volume of Greenhouse Gases produced in the City and County and where these come from (sector and geography). This Baseline is what Waterford will measure our success against when it comes to making carbon

emissions savings. The second piece of work currently underway is the Climate Risk Assessment. The Climate Risk Assessment will look at the impact extreme weather events may have on council operations (damage to roads/bridges, closure of buildings etc) and will identify what the Council needs to do to prepare for the increase in weather events that Climate Change may bring.

Energy booklet

An energy saving booklet has been distributed to households throughout the City and County.

Reduce Your Use energy saving campaign within the Council

WCCC has signed up to the National Reduce Your Use campaign and have pledged to reduce our energy consumption by 15% this winter. We have been working with building managers to save energy and we have a staff challenge that starts in December.

Funding win for library energy awareness project with SEEA and the Southeast Councils

A project developed by the Southeast Energy Agency in conjunction with the library services in the four Southeast counties has won funding. The project will develop learning materials that will be shared across library outlets. The materials will teach people how to make energy efficiency assessments and improvements in their own home. The funding is coming from a Pobal fund.

Energy Efficiency

- Contracts have been signed for the led retro fitting of street lighting within the Waterford City area. Funding has been received to complete the retro fitting from the Department of Environment, Climate & Communications under the Climate Action Fund. Retro fit works are to begin in Waterford in July 2023. Approximately 15,000 lights are to be replaced in total.
- The first of WCCC environmental inspector electrical vans have been delivered to WCCC. Two further EV's are to be delivered in the coming months and will operated by the environmental inspectors.
- Works have begun on the upgrades to 16-18 Barker Place, where the building is being converted into an arts/theatre/community venue. The building will be heated via air-water heat pumps and have led lighting technologies installed and will be NZEB compliant. Works are due to be completed by February 2023.

Environmental Education & Awareness

Schools

The Tom Murphy Litter Competition for Secondary Schools has been completed and judged. 15 secondary schools across Waterford city and county entered the competition and received litter pickers, high visibility vests, gloves and bags to allow them to carry out litter picks of their designated area. Over a six week period, schools carried out clean ups, with many schools embracing the competition fully, carrying out 3 clean ups a week with different classes. Photos of these clean-ups were posted on Beat 102–103 FM's, etc. social media. A prizegiving and presentation of certificates of participation took place in the Mayors Parlour in early December.

We are developing an education pack for primary school teachers about glass recycling to raise awareness regarding the new bottle bank sensors. This will highlight the importance of recycling glass and also emphasise the usefulness of the sensors. The pack with touch on a number of school subjects to encourage teachers to use it. It will be available to download from our website.

Reuse Month took place during the month of October. We created a toolkit for swap events to encourage reuse and repair; this toolkit will provide tips, posters and social media posts to enable community groups, schools, etc to reuse items by running swap events for items such as sports equipment, clothes, musical instruments, school supplies and more. This is available on the Council website and information has been sent to community groups, schools, sports groups, etc. We continue to encourage schools, community groups, etc to use this. The toolkit will be presented to PPN members at their December meeting.

Launch of Deposit Return Scheme

The Minister of State with responsibility for Communications and Circular Economy, Ossian Smyth, launched Ireland's national Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) on 28th November.

It is estimated that about 1.9 billion drinks bottles and cans are consumed each year in Ireland, in-house and 'on the go'. The Deposit Return Scheme aims to boost the recycling rate for these drinks containers by charging a small, refundable deposit for each plastic bottle or can. The Scheme will include PET plastic bottles and aluminium and steel

cans between 150ml and 3 litres. A deposit of 15c will apply to containers 500mls or less and a deposit of 25c for each container above 500ml.

The Scheme will be operated by Deposit Return Scheme Ireland CLG, trading as Re-turn, who Minister Smyth appointed in July 2022. All producers and retailers are legally obliged to register with Re-turn. Registration is open from 28th November at www.re-turn.ie.

The department will work closely with Re-turn on the implementation of the Scheme, which will start immediately with the registration of producers and retailers. The planned 'go-live' date for consumers is February 2024.

Launch of Bring Banks Capacity Sensors



Sensors to monitor the levels of glass within bring banks have been installed at 70 locations around the city and county. Information from the sensors, is available at <https://wccc.magnusmonitors.com/> via a link on the Council's homepage which will allow you to check the capacity of the different types of glass and avoid a wasted trip, or plan to visit an alternative bring centre.

The project will also reduce the amount of fuel required for the Council's glass collection contractors to empty the bottle banks.

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