

# Environment & Carbon Footprint Report 2021/22

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#MEAAction  
FOR

CLIMATE



**Mid & East  
Antrim**  
Borough Council





# Environment & Carbon Footprint Report Contents

Local authorities are in a leading position to demonstrate CO<sub>2</sub> reductions through their activities and behaviour as an example of best practise to residents and local businesses. By calculating their own emissions and making in-house reductions, in addition to increasing awareness and supporting local businesses and residents, carbon emissions can be reduced across each local authority area and therefore across the country as a whole, meeting the government's climate change targets.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and improving environmental performance year on year. This is demonstrated through its accreditation to ISO 14001:2015, the international standard for environmental management.

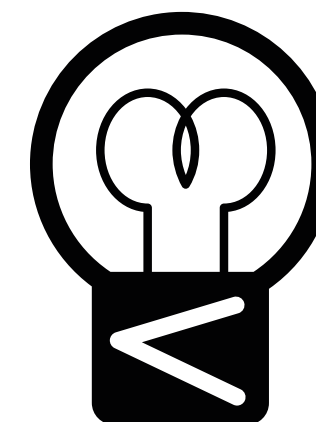
Council's environment policy can be viewed on the Council website at:

[midandeastantrim.gov.uk/council/policies-and-documents/policies/environmental-policy/](https://midandeastantrim.gov.uk/council/policies-and-documents/policies/environmental-policy/)

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Council fuel consumption **increased** due to Covid 21/22

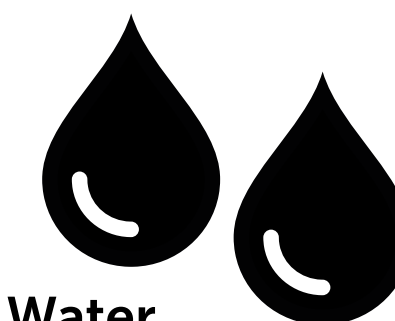
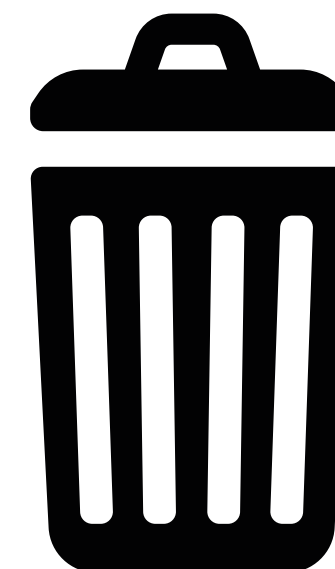


Council Energy Consumption

**-9%**

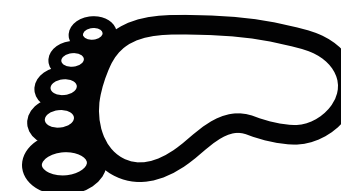
Internal council produced waste reduced by

**50%**



Water consumption reduced by

**25%**



Overall carbon footprint down by

**18%**



Staff have also maintained their recycling rate at

**67%**

# Detailed Climate Change Statistics

## Energy Use

Council has reduced its energy consumption by 9% compared to 2019/20 pre-covid year. This is due to reduced use in some buildings and services in 2021/22 and the introduction of energy efficiency measures. The carbon footprint for energy use has reduced by 24% compared to 2019/20 pre-covid year as electricity is generated from more renewable sources.

Year	Energy (Electric Gas Oil)	tCO2e*	Number of Employees	tCO2e Per Employee
21/22	22,409,087 kWh	4,758	837	5.68
20/21	17,509,843 kWh	4,082	878	4.65
19/20	24,552,132 kWh	6,276	880	7.13
18/19	22,773,650 kWh	6,447	860	7.50
17/18	26,424,603 kWh	9,290	848	10.95



tCO2e stands for tonnes (t) of carbon dioxide (CO2) equivalent (e)  
\* Using gov.uk conversion factors for appropriate year



## Transport

Council's fleet fuel consumption increased in 2021/22 due to increased vehicle use during covid and improved digital recording implemented across all depots. Carbon emission reduction measures for fuel have been included in 2022/23 environmental objectives and targets.

Year	Total Fuel Used (By Vehicle Fleet)	tCO2e*	Number of Employees	tCO2e Per Employee
21/22	766,639 Litres	1,926	837	2.30
20/21	713,089 Litres	1,816	878	2.07
19/20	714,228 Litres	1,853	880	2.11
18/19	763,184 Litres	2,005	860	2.31
17/18	740,714 Litres	1,926	848	2.27



## Waste

Council staff have reduced internal waste by 50% compared to 2019/20 pre-covid year. This is due to reduced use in some buildings and services in 2021/22 and also due to reduction of paper use by 60% from 2019/20. Staff have also achieved an internal recycling rate of 68%.

Year	Waste Generated Per Employee	Number of Employees	Percentage Recycled	tCO2e from Total Waste Landfilled	CO2e per Employee
21/22	68.0 kg	837	68%	19.53	23.33
20/21	69.0 kg	878	68.7%	19.32	22.01
19/20	139.7 kg	880	73.2%	33.7	38.3
18/19	142.6 kg	860	66.5%	47.78	56.9
17/18	142.9 kg	848	66.1%	48.48	57.16





Carbon Footprint

Council has reduced its carbon footprint by 18% from 2019/20 pre-covid year due to reduced use in some buildings and services, the introduction of energy efficiency measures and electricity being generated from more renewable sources.

Year	Total tCO2e	tCO2e per Employee
21/22	6,703	8.00
20/21	5,917	6.74
19/20	8,163	9.23
18/19	8,450	9.83
17/18	11,264	13.28



Water

Water consumption in 2021/22 shows a 25% reduction compared to 2019/20, pre covid year.

Year	Water Consumption (m3)	Number of Employees	Water Consumption per Employee (m3)
21/22	49,879	837	59.6
20/21	37,870	878	43.1
19/20	66,764	880	75.9
18/19	58,910	860	68.6
17/18	71,163	848	83.9

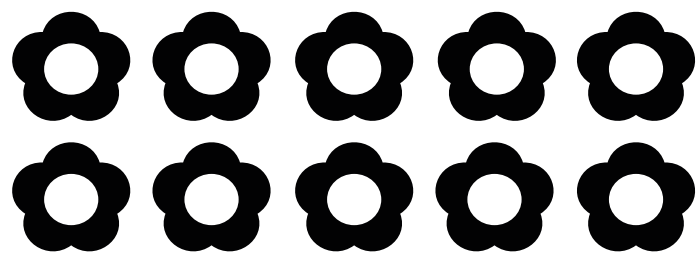


Key Achievements





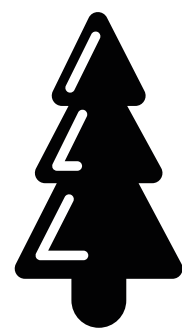
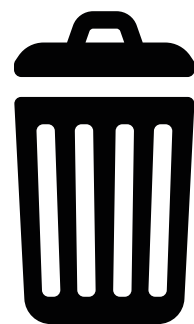
**5** Green Flag Awards retained across the borough



**10** Awards won at 'Ulster in Bloom'

Carrickfergus skate park is now

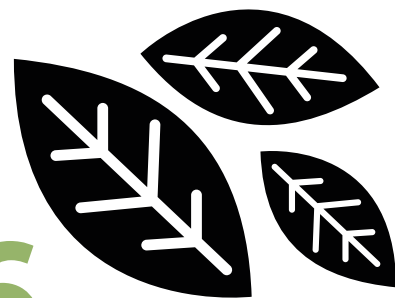
**LITTER-FREE**



MEA4Trees have planted **58,000 TREES**



**PLATINUM STATUS** achieved in the 2021 NI Environmental Benchmarking Survey



**16** Environmental objectives delivered

## Key Achievements

### Environmental Health - Green Dog Walkers (GDW) Scheme:

- 14 Community groups participating - more emphasis on GDW this Summer in conjunction with DCO consultation.
- Greater balance between enforcement and education – as education alone realised less improvement in DF complaint reduction in 20/21 than in 19/20 – this saw 120 FPNs issued for DF.
- Reduction on DF complaints circa 25% for 21/22 (compared to 20/21).
- New GDW themed signage around the borough.
- Routine posts on social pertaining to GDW scheme and targeting dog fouling.

### Environmental Education:

- Council continued to support the Eco Schools Programme through online learning to all 77 MEA schools, including Wrigley's Litter Less Campaign, Translink Travel Challenge, Single-Use Plastic Project. Council are provided £10,864 to KNIB for 2021/22 academic year to support a new Big Wheelie Bin Challenge to encourage school pupils (and their families) to recycle.
- Eco Schools - Charlene McKeown (Environmental Education Manager) delivered a Eco Schools Overview webinar 28th February to Elected Members updating them on MEA schools progress through the programme. This presentation was then shared to all Elected Members following the webinar. Mid and East Antrim's Green Flag awarded schools have seen a significant increase by 6%, reaching 27% at the end of the academic school year, the most improved borough across Northern Ireland. This would see a rise from 21% to 25% of schools in our council area with active Green Flags. KNIB are happy with the current progress on the ground across MEA. KNIB field officer has reengaged 9 dormant/less active schools this year and carried out in person workshops in 5 schools who hadn't previously been active since registering and they are now on their journey towards Green Flag for March 2023. 5 of MEA Council very active schools had new Eco-coordinators put into post this year and our field officer has supported them greatly to ensure they have become aware of the programme.

### There are 3 Biodiversity projects happening in partnership with Radius Housing:

- St Colmcilles PS, Carniny PS & Ballymena PS.
- There is one outdoor learning garden in partnership with Danske: Sunnylands PS (previously haven't engaged).
- There are 2 productive Biodiversity projects happening in partnership with Apex Housing: Portglenone PS (previously haven't engaged) and St Mary's PS.
- The BIG Wheelie Challenge – this programme closes on 16th May 2022. This is the last date for data and then KNIB will quickly judge and invite engaged schools along to the award ceremony in June 2022, to be presented with their award. KNIB have 11 MEA schools registered and have received all the information, with several in-person workshops booked for after Easter. The BIG Wheelie Challenge has been a hard sell this year for schools and they have asked for an online version if possible. Therefore there are 2 online sessions for MEA Council booked on 25th April, to ensure KNIB hit their target of schools completing the challenge.

- We continue to keep all MEA schools up to date with funding opportunities including the DAERA Climate Challenge Fund, Platinum Jubilee Pollinator Garden Award, DAERA School Pollinator Garden Grants, the Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme and the DAERA Marine Litter Capital Grant. We also keep schools up to date with training opportunities including DAERA/KNIB Climate Change Programme and Carbon Literacy Programme.
- Council awarded £13,700 (£3,700 carried over from 2020 due to covid restrictions) to 14 projects across the borough (currently being delivered), through the Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful – projects are to support communities to improve their local area and promote civic pride among residents. Environmental Awareness training has been delivered to MEA staff, via classroom-style training or via online module training provided by High Speed Training and HSQE.

### Communications:

- Council has continued to adapt to covid-19 by engaging more with our residents Household Recycling Centres and Bring Centres and through delivery of two covid-19-specific communication campaigns to maintain service delivery and to keep people safe.
- We continue to engage with our residents through social media/press releases/website info/Bin-ovation app delivering waste reduction and recycling comms campaigns to help to reach EU recycling targets (50% by 2020 [achieved], 55% by 2025, 60% by 2030).
- In September 2021 we delivered Recycle Week which was very climate-crisis related. It directly linked 'one more' recycled item to the CO2 equivalent saved. The campaign was designed by WRAP in partnership with NI Councils. We supported this campaign through social media (FB, Twitter, Instagram), press release, Council website update, Bin-ovation app update, as well as 'sharing' online posts issued by WRAP.
- Throughout December 2021 we delivered Christmas/New-Year-related comms on reducing waste and encouraging recycling. We also delivered a campaign on the 'Christmas Toy Container' project, which encouraged our residents to gift pre-loved/unwanted toys to our recycling centres, which were then provided to local charities to raise funds, or were directly gifted to local community groups for families across the borough. We diverted 2 tonnes during this campaign in 2021 (2.3 tonnes in 2020 and 1 tonne in 2019).
- In March 2022 we delivered a Hate Food Waste comms campaign aimed at encouraging residents to reduce the amount of excess food shopping, to meal plan, to store food properly and to use up leftovers more effectively. This campaign was linked to the climate crisis, with CO2 emissions equivalent calculated for varying amounts of food wasted. March 2022 – we also delivered a plastic bag and wrapping campaign promoting local supermarkets as drop off points for this type of waste stream, rather than landfilling.

### Recycling:

- Council's current recycling rate is 53% (Jan-Mar 2022 data still to be verified by NIEA) compared to 50.65% (2020/21). We've met the 2020 EU target (50%), but it will be harder to reach 55% by 2025. Proposed expansion into municipal waste collections from businesses etc in borough. Council has responded to multiple consultations requests from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) on this, including:
  - Carrier Bag Levy (June 2021);
  - Plastic Packaging Tax (July 2021);
  - Deposit Return Scheme (Sept 2021);
  - Extended Producer Responsibility (Sept 2021);
  - Plan to eliminate Plastic Pollution (Sept 2021);
  - Reduction in Single-Use Beverage Cups and Food Containers (Dec 2021); and
  - Introduction of Mandatory Digital Waste Tracking (April 2022).
- Works have continued on the development of a new Household Recycling Centre at Sullatober in Carrickfergus. Site to open in early May 2022. This will see an increase in recycling efficiency of 20%, will divert 1,000 tonnes from landfill and will reduce carbon emissions by 800 tonnes p/annum. October 2021 - We secured a new waste management licence from NIEA for our 31 Bring Banks, with an additional location at Gleno, Larne.

### Litter:

- KNIB Cleanliness Survey: The most recent figures available Jan-Mar 2022, Council scored 73% which is a 4% improvement from the last survey between Jul-Sept 2021.
- Council continue to support all litter picking volunteer groups across the borough, with a lot of focus on the Eco Rangers in Larne and Carrickfergus, County Antrim Countryside Custodians (Ballymena area) who continue to tackle polluting litter, enhancing our borough.

- Jan - March 2022 - One specific project Council supported was the A8/Shane's Hill Road litter compositional analysis in partnership with Live Here Love Here. No cleansing took place for 12 weeks. One large clean up was undertaken in March 2022 with litter items itemised. The project was used to highlight the issue of rural litter and included press release/social media comms to our residents.
- At the end of the arduous count of the 133 bags of litter collected, 111 were from the A8, with 22 lifted from Shane's Hill Road. Recyclable plastic bottles and cans made up 48 of the bags with the remaining 85 bags being
- general mixed litter. To break this down further, they contained 2061 cans, 1896 plastic bottles, 90 glass bottles, 516 coffee cups, 510 miscellaneous items and 70 plastic food trays. The remaining mixed litter equated to approximately 43,650 littered items. Of particular note was the number of hygiene items, including tissues (1,200) and wet wipes (800).
- The volume of this is staggering and it equates to 280.5 kgs of mixed waste and 132 kgs of plastic bottles and cans from ONLY two roadsides.
- February 2022 - installation of new road anti-litter signage along Harbour Highway, Larne. This will accompany a wide-spread anti-litter comms campaign including Driver Hauliers Association, Port of Larne, P&O, Dumfries and Galloway Borough Council and the Port of Cairnryan. Comms campaign planned for May 2022.
- March 2022 - Completion of year-long anti-litter campaign at Carrick Skate Park – behavioural change project to encourage young people to look after their env. Park is now litter-free, with skate park users using new bins (including recycling bin) on site.

### Environment:

- ISO14001 - Council continue to be accredited to ISO 14001:2015 International Environmental Management Standard across all services, with 8 new sites being audited in August 2021.
- Energy: Application has been made to NIE for three solar PV installations this year: Carrick Leisure Centre, Larne Leisure Centre and Waveney Road Household Recycling Centre. Additional sites have been assessed for suitability and plan to progress applications for 2022/23, which can avail of 25%

funding: Sullatober Depot old and new sites, Seven Towers Leisure Centre, Larne Depot, Smiley Buildings, The Braid & Ardeevin (tbc).

- Energy: The following LED projects have been designed and delivered during 2021/22: Larne Leisure Centre - phase 1 and 2 complete, Amphitheatre - phase 1 complete, Ecos external complete, Larne Town Park - portion completed by parks department under advisory, Larne promenade - at qualitative stage for completion Q4 2021/22, Carrickfergus Marina car park and walkway - due to be complete Q4 2021/22 or Q1 2022-23 dependant on contractor capacity, Ballymena North - sports hall, changing area and hallways scheduled for OOH installation. Galgorm CC sports halls will addressed 2022/23 with further projects planned.
- Water: MEA are part of a 3 council tender team, leading a joint procurement exercise for expiring energy contracts on behalf of 9 other councils. A Flexible approach to pricing has been introduced through MEA recommendations, with a transition to a broker / wholesale procurement model planned for 2023-24 and beyond. This has introduced a risk managed approach to energy purchasing replicating the central government model. A new framework is under development to support this approach. Borehole investigations at both Larne Leisure Centre and the Amphitheatre have concluded that both sites are on unsuitable rock bed, which would result in clay water so unsuitable for borehole installations, due to associated purification costs. 30% drop in consumption 2019/20 vs. 2020/21 due in part to new working practices. Review to maximise retention of savings is underway. Behaviour change, as a result of awareness raising with internal and external stakeholders has resulted in more leaks being reported and addressed. Response times continue to improve, generally within a few hours of reporting. Building audits have been agreed with NI Water to identify waste and design controls, with trickledown training planned for monitoring officers. Investigation has begun at Sullatober, but Ballymena area appears to have the most suitable rock for a borehole and St Patrick's Barracks is being considered as a potential option.

- Fuel: April 2020 – Dec 2020 = 579,623 Lts vs. April 2021 – Dec 2021 = 592,998 Lts = 2% increase from previous year. The small increase is due to unavoidable additional covid vehicles required in 2021 and additional haulage. Sullatober Transfer Station will reduce fuel used in haulage and route optimisation of the refuse and recycling fleet will improve efficiency and have a positive impact on fuel reduction during 2022/23. Council services have been mapped out against the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Michelin Tyre Contract – 46 tyres regrooved, 68 tyres retreaded. 3400 kg of raw material or roughly an equivalent of 3740 kg of CO2 saved from Apr- Dec 2021.
- Renault Master XE electric tipper demo - trialed in February by Waste and Parks crews. The potential fuel saving for converting to the electric tipper could be up to £8 per 100 miles. Based on an estimated distance of 20,000km/year, an estimated 2,800 litres of diesel a year would be saved, which is the equivalent to removing circa 7000kg (7 tonnes) of carbon emissions each per vehicle, each year.
- Paper usage: reduced by 12% across Council in 2021, due to home working which was the equivalent saving of 17 trees and approximately 2 tCO2e
- Herbicide usage: the Parks Team reduced herbicide usage by 15%, with 3 sites now herbicide-free.
- Tree planting: The Parks Team planted out approximately 58,000 trees as part of the MEA4Trees programme. Major success as they've beaten their timeline by 2 year (planned delivery 2024).

#### Climate:

- Council are working partnership with Climate NI through an internal group to identify and prioritise actions for Council in-line with the Adaption Planning Cycle. An MEA All-Party Working Group has been established to identify what we as a Council can do to reduce our carbon emissions.
- We've now identified our vulnerabilities and have produced risk register to identify key actions required. All Service Areas are engaged. The Risk Statements will be integrated into Council's Corporate Risk Register, particular officers will have responsibility for delivery of key actions.
- Prepared and now approved new Climate and

#### Sustainability Strategy.

- Vision, aims and themes now agreed for Council's Climate Adaptation Plan.
- Environmental Awareness Training offered to all MEA staff. Staff are still completing this, but have all been given the opportunity.
- Parks and Open Spaces Sustainability officer, Alison Diver line managed a student from QUB who has mapped out the potential for carbon capture across our Council assets, in order to understand how we as a collective borough can act as a carbon sink, in the combat against climate change (report available).
- FASTER project - install of 76 fast chargers across Scotland / N. Ireland and Ireland – deadline for completion of works May 2023 - Council now an associate member - in process of identifying potential locations for chargers. Once agreed, project will move to next phase of installations.
- ORCS project - installation of 15 EV chargepoints across the borough. Sites identified. Mass bid going in to secure funding for this regional project.
- April 2022 - We have secured £3k funding from Live Here Love Here to deliver a new climate-related video on 'top tips' around the home, travel and workplace to reduce your carbon footprint.

#### Sustainability:

- MEA Asset Sustainability - QUB student Soma Dutta completed a report on the sustainability of Council's assets, using the Sustainable NI screening toolkit. This screening tool is designed to help departments consider the likely sustainability impacts of their proposed decisions, following the five pillars of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda: People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnership.
- Results - all assets have been screened in (i.e. it will be necessary to undertake mitigation and screen again), with suggested research / actions proposed. Harbours and marinas have been deferred, due to a lack of information.
- MEA Sustainable Food Place - work continues to make Mid and East Antrim a Sustainable Food Place (partnership work with Belfast Food Network.)
- Delivery of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Lunchtime Seminars - series of 3 seminars focussing on biodiversity, sustainable tourism and energy.

Delivery to MEA staff - well attended (recording available).

- Capital Works: St. Patrick's Barracks - Capital Works asking us re: BREEAM - movement towards consideration of sustainability in design and operation of major development in Ballymena. Project concept meeting held in April 2022 to identify opportunities.
- Working to become a Sustainable Food Place (with Belfast Food Network).
- Responsible Plastic Management Coaching Day 1 completed - formation of steering group, introduction to concept including Plastic Indexer database.
- Plastics Survey issued to MEA staff to support Responsible Plastic Management Program (RPM).
- The above 'Environment' and 'Climate' updates have cross-cutting themes with sustainability.

#### Biodiversity/Community:

- Phase 1 of Keeran Moss peatland restoration project completed, works totalling 70k funded by DAERA, included extensive mowing, ditch blocking, spoil removal and ecological surveying.
- 58,000th tree planted bringing MEA4Trees programme to a close.
- Blackhead Path designated a Local Nature Reserve by CNCC.
- Support for red squirrel conservation programmes along the coast continues (Ballygally & District Biodiversity Group, Glens Red Squirrel Group).
- Herbicide usage reduced by 15% (compared to 2020/21 levels).
- Application made to Fairtrade for Fairtrade status for the Borough.
- Sustainable Food Places process begun, working towards bronze award.
- x2 Community fridges opened at Eden Allotment Gardens & Islandmagee community garden.
- x5 Green Flag awards retained (Bashfordsland Wood and Oakfield. Glen, Carrickfergus Mill Ponds, Shaftesbury Park and Marine Gardens, Diamond Jubilee Wood Whitehead, Dixon Park, People's Park).
- x1 Green Flag community award retained for Shellinghill Park & Millennium Walk in Cullybackey.
- x3 Seaside awards retained (Carnlough, Ballygally,

Browns Bay).

- x10 awards won at 2021 'Ulster in Bloom' competition.
- x1 'outstanding achievement' award won at 2021 'Britain in Bloom' competition.
- x34 individuals, community groups, schools and businesses recognised via the Mid & East Antrim in Bloom community competitions, judging criteria focusing on biodiversity and sustainable gardening practices.
- x3 schools completed Forest School programme (6 sessions per school = 18, approximately 80 pupils engaged).
- x3 schools completed Schools Growing Club programme (6 sessions per school = 18, approximately 80 pupils engaged).
- 50+ x parks events delivered including foraging walks, nature walks, biodiversity university.





# **#MEA**Action FOR **CLIMATE**

To find out more about our work on climate change,  
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