

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Environment Report 2018

Local authorities are in a leading position to demonstrate CO₂ 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 <https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/council/policies-and-documents/policies/environmental-policy/>

Energy Use

Year	Energy Use (Electric gas oil)	Carbon Equivalent (tonnes)	No. Employees	Carbon Equivalent per Employee (tonnes)
2017/18	23,773,595 kWh	6474	848	7.63
2016/17	19,865,871 kWh	5410	804	6.72
2015/16	18,522,793 kWh	5044	770	6.55
2014/15	18,855,853 kWh	5135	770	6.67
2013/14	20,445,204 kWh	5571	770	7.24

Council has increased its energy consumption per employee by 13.5% compared to the previous year. This is due to improved monitoring and record keeping rather than actual energy usage. Council will be employing an Energy Manager to implement energy saving initiatives across Council in 2018/19.

Transport

Year	Total fuel used by car users and vehicle fleet (litres)	Carbon Equivalent (tonnes)	No. Employees	Carbon Equivalent per Employee (tonnes)
2017/18	740,714 (MEA)	1928	848	2.27
2016/17	714,981 (MEA)	1861	804	2.31
2015/16	696,828 (MEA)	1814	770	2.35
2014/15	760,909 (MEA)	1981	770	2.6
2013/14	856,550 (MEA)	2230	770	2.90

Council has reduced its fuel consumption per employee by 0.87% compared to the previous year.

Waste

Year	Waste generated (tonnes)	No. of Employees	% Recycled	Carbon Equivalent (tonnes) from waste landfilled	Carbon Equivalent per Employee (kg)
2017/18	143 (MEA)	848	66.1%	48.48	57.16
2016/17	108.71 (MEA)	804	60.9%	33.48	41.64
2015/16	97.41 (MEA)	770	66.7%	30	38.96
2014/15	33.0 (Larne)	254	60.6%	9.2	36.5
2013/14	31.2 (Larne)	214	60.0%	8.8	41

Council has decreased its waste generated per employee by 3.94% compared to the previous year. This is due in part to more accurate record keeping. Council employees are recycling 66.1% of internal waste.

Carbon Footprint

Year	Total Carbon Footprint (tonnes CO2)	Carbon Footprint per employee (tonnes CO2)
2017/18	8450	9.96
2016/17	7,304	9.0
2015/16	6,888.3	8.9
2014/15	7,125	9.2
2013/14	7,810	10.1

Council has increased its total carbon footprint by 10.7% per employee compared to the previous year. This is mostly due to better monitoring and record keeping for energy.

Water

Year	Water Consumption (m3)	No. of Employees	Water Consumption per employee (m3)
2017/18	71,163	848	83.9
2016/17	59,791	804	73.4
2015/16	39,036 (Ballymena and Larne area figure)	531 (Ballymena and Larne area figure)	73.5
2014/15	47,724 (Ballymena and Larne area figure)	531 (Ballymena and Larne area figure)	89.9

Council are continuing to improve recording and monitoring of water usage, which now covers all areas. Water consumption has increased by 14% per employee compared to last year, but this is mostly due to improved monitoring and record keeping.

Environmental Incidents

There were no environmental incidents during 2017/18.

Highlights and Achievements

Council has a positive impact on the environment through provision of street cleansing, refuse collection, recycling collection, air monitoring, beach cleaning, biodiversity projects, environmental education, building control services, parks and grounds maintenance and public conveniences.

Council have been recognised as one of the highest achieving Councils for their commitment to environmental excellence at the 2018 Northern Ireland Environmental Management Benchmarking Awards. Council retained their platinum status in the top quintile. Of the 101 businesses who took part, only 33 achieved platinum status by scoring over 90%.

Council recycled 52.69% of all waste collected from householders during 2017/18, this is an increase of 7.5% on the previous year.

Council rolled out a food waste ban from black residual household bins in April 2017, in line with new legislation. Householder participation increased the organic household recycling rate by over 7% in 2017/18 (32.27%) compared to 2016/17 (25.27%).

The waste management team received the NI Local Government Award for Best Waste Management Team and two awards at Sustainable NI Awards for Household Recycling Centre of the Year and Safety in Waste in 2018.

Council's Recycling Officer takes an Education Bus around Household Recycling Centres (HRCs), schools, communities and events, such as Love Food Hate Waste annually to raise awareness of the environmental benefits to reducing and recycling waste. In the academic year 2017/18, we have undertaken 94 (primary and secondary) school visits across 38 schools (approx. 49% of the 78 Eco Schools in borough) reaching a total of 13,900 pupils. Multiple visits were made to some schools where we are assisting with eco-projects including composter creation, greenhouse building, creation of re-use items including bird/bat boxes.

Council's Education Officer works closely with householders, schools and community groups to raise awareness on reducing waste, recycling and promoting sustainable behaviour in daily routines. This involves regular communications with these groups through social media, PR, leaflets etc.

The Education Officer conducted an internal waste audit which included a roll out of recycle bin facilities including kitchen caddies and blue bins, introduction of toner cartridge boxes at each office for recycling and education and awareness training to staff. Council now also operate an internal re-use 'shop' for office furniture and stationery.

The Waste Education Team hosted a Green Living Fair (7th May, Larne Market Yard) which promotes sustainability by tweaking minor things in our day to day lives. Exhibitors on the day were from transport, energy, biodiversity, waste, food and drinks, environmental health, sustainable traders, and of course family entertainment.

Council support The Alpha Programme, Waste Resource Action Programme, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful campaigns including Love Food Hate Waste, Live Here Love Here, Litter Survey, Eco Schools, The Big Spring Clean, Environmental Youth Speak, Recycle Now/Recycle Week and European Week for Waste Reduction. Landfill gas from Ballymacvea Landfill site operates at 0.4Mw of electricity which was fed into the national grid. This has prevented harmful landfill gas seeping into the atmosphere.

Completion of Council's environmental management objectives and targets has had a positive impact on the environment. These are available for view on the Council website: <https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/council/policies-and-documents/policies/environmental-policy/>

Green Dog Walkers Scheme is a UK wide community-based campaign to change attitudes about dog fouling. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council are using the scheme as an innovative approach to dog fouling, one of the most controversial issues we deal with in our Borough. The scheme was launched on 12th February 2018. If you see a dog wearing the Green Dog Walkers collar, this means the owner has taken the pledge:

- to always clean up after their dog;
- to carry extra poop bags; and
- to give other dog walkers free dog poop bags.

Environmental Health have also been busy patrolling the streets and country roads and have issued 33 Fly tipping, 9 dog fouling and 41 littering fines during 2017/18.

The Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Mid and East Antrim has been fully integrated within the work programme for Parks and Open Spaces. It sets out three main objectives to enhance biodiversity:

- Help conserve habitats and species;

- Raise awareness of local biodiversity; and
- Involve people in biodiversity projects and develop partnerships.

The Parks & Open Spaces Service, in line with the Sustainable Development Action Plan, are making a significant move away from annual floral planting towards sustainable bedding. This not only saves on time and cost, but also reduces the use of herbicide further and is beneficial to wildlife. P&OS operate peat free policy.

June 2018 Bioblitz [Larne Town Park] - A BioBlitz is an intense period of biological surveying in an attempt to record all the living species within a designated area. This will be the first one in the Borough, to my knowledge, and looking forward to finding out what species are living in Larne!

There are a wide range of free, public educational events and workshops each year including hedge laying workshops, tree planting, bat nights, moth nights, whale watches, rock pool rummages, foraging workshops and much more. Creature Calendar created, promoted and distributed to increase awareness of priority species in the Borough e.g. hedgehogs, common lizard.

Council scooped twelve awards at the Ulster in Bloom Competition, two silver gilts at the Britain in Bloom Competition and 3 awards at the Best Kept Awards. Mid and East Antrim area schools, community groups and individuals picked up 4 Coast Care awards.

Within Mid and East Antrim Borough, three beaches hold the Seaside Award, they are Carnlough, Ballygally and Brown's Bay. These beaches are only three out of a total of 23 beaches in Northern Ireland that are tested for water quality by DAERA. Council maintained 7 green flag awards this year and added two additional; Carrickfergus Mill Ponds and Shaftesbury Park & Marine Gardens.

Council run a Biodiversity Summer School programme each August in Carrickfergus, Larne and Ballymena to promote local biodiversity and community involvement. The aim is to engage local families in the natural environment through a range of fun, practical activities.

Local Nature Reserves - Bashfordsland Wood & Oakfield Glen Carrickfergus were officially designated a Local Nature Reserves by CNCC (Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside) in August 2017. Local Nature Reserves are areas where nature and wildlife is protected and where people can visit and enjoy contact with the natural world.

Wild About Food - This was a partnership project, with Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, that saw participants take

part in a range of activities making the most of local products. For example; cook your catch, wild garlic pesto - foraging and making, veggie BBQ @ allotment sites, dread making and ice cream making.

Forest Schools - An exciting programme which began in the Mid and East Antrim area in 2017/18. Successful schools choose a green space near their school in which to engage in outdoor learning. It is hoped the children will value and take ownership of their Forest School site, and this sense of pride will spread throughout their families, friends and wider community.

Tree Planting - 2017/18 saw 2,000 trees planted across the borough with help from our local community groups.

Further Information

For further information on our environmental performance or details of our initiatives in this area, please contact: Elaine.Smith@midandeastantrim.gov.uk