

Mid and East Antrim Borough Carbon Footprint Report 2020

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)	tCO ₂ e	No. Employees	tCO ₂ e per Employee
2019/20	22,359,260kWh	5,172	880	5.88
2018/19	21,532,680kWh	5,864	860	6.82
2017/18	23,773,595 kWh	6,474	848	7.63
2016/17	19,865,871 kWh	5,410	804	6.72

Council operated an additional site in 2019/20. Whilst Council's overall energy consumption has increased by 4%, the carbon footprint for this has reduced by 12% as electricity is generated from more renewable sources.

Transport

Year	Total fuel used by vehicle fleet (litres)	tCO2e	No. Employees	tCO2e per Employee
2019/20	714,228	1,858	880	2.11
2018/19	763,184	1,986	860	2.31
2017/18	740,714	1,928	848	2.27
2016/17	714,981	1,861	804	2.31

Council's fleet fuel consumption has decreased by 6% compared to the previous year.

Waste

Year	Waste generated per employee (kg)	No. of Employees	% Recycled	tCO2e from total waste landfilled	CO2e per Employee (kg)
2019/20	139.7	880	73.2%	33.7	38.3
2018/19	142.6	860	66.5%	47.78	56.9
2017/18	142.9	848	66.1%	48.48	57.16
2016/17	141.0	804	60.9%	33.48	41.64

Council has reduced internal waste to landfill by 2%. Council employees are recycling 73% of internal waste, a 7% increase on the previous year.

Carbon Footprint

Year	Total tCO2e	tCO2e per employee
2019/20	7,064	8.0
2018/19	7,898	9.12
2017/18	8450	9.96
2016/17	7,304	9.0

Council has reduced its carbon footprint by 10% compared to the previous year. This is due to due to electricity being generated from more renewable sources and a 6% reduction in fleet fuel.

Water

Year	Water Consumption (m3)	No. of Employees	Water Consumption per employee (m3)
2019/20	66,764	880	75.9
2018/19	58,910	860	68.6
2017/18	71,163	848	83.9

Water consumption has increased by 10.6% per employee compared to last year. Council maintain checks for water leaks and repair any found as soon as possible.

Environmental Incidents

There were no environmental incidents during 2019/20.

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 achieved certification to the International Environment Standard 2015:ISO 14001 across all service areas in May 2019.

Council achieved a Gold Award for environmental performance at the NI Environmental Benchmarking Survey Awards 2019. The survey ranked 107 local businesses and public sector organisations, demonstrating their commitment to ensure the highest standards of environmental performance.

Council established an All-Party Working Group on Climate Change to provide leadership and demonstrate commitment within Council and the community in responding to climate change. The working group will review Councils carbon footprint, prioritise key actions to minimise that impact and identify key measures to be put in place to ensure the Council and community can adapt to climate change.

Council actioned climate mitigation through the Environmental Champions team and staff delivering on Councils 12 environment targets for 2019/20. This included a 6% reduction in fleet fuel, 7% reduction in paper use (equivalent to 22 trees saved), 8% increase in internal recycling and an overall 10% reduction on Councils carbon footprint.

Council are working in partnership with Climate NI to implement a Climate Adaption Plan specific to Mid and East Antrim Borough and are developing a Community Resilience Plan to ensure communities became more resilient to climate change.

Council recycled 51% of all waste collected from householders during 2019/20, similar to 2018/19.

Waste services rolled out two recycling campaigns during 2019/20:

1. A dry recycling (plastics) communications campaign during October - December 2019 to encouraging householders to think about alternatives to single-use plastics and to continue to recycle as much plastic as possible.
2. A food waste communications campaign during January - March 2020 to encouraging householders to think about how they buy / use / store food and to encourage them to reduce food waste.

Council supported the NI Water 'Refillution' Campaign to promote re-usable water bottles and reduce single-use plastic, securing 93 businesses across the borough.

Council employees were provided with re-useable bottles to reduce the use of single use plastics.

Council delivered a series of waste-related communications throughout 2019/2020 including WRAP supported Recycle Week - Sept 2019 and new litter signage delivered for 'hot spot' areas across the borough.

Council delivered the following environmental education throughout 2019/2020:

- 94 schools and 37 community groups visited to deliver environment (climate change, sustainability), recycling and littering talks
- Delivery of 'PROUD Detectives' programme to MEA Schools (tackling single-use plastic)
- Delivery of 'MEA Growing Clubs' to three MEA schools (in partnership with Parks and Open Spaces)
- Eco Schools = 18% of schools in MEA Council area have a current Green Flag - NI average is 28% [23 schools hold Silver Certificate. 9 schools currently hold Bronze Certificates.]
- 56 local clean ups delivered across the borough, 954 bags of rubbish collected.
- 12 MEA projects awarded funding through Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme 2019/2020, amounting to £10,600.

Council supported The Alpha Programme, Waste Resource Action Programme, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, Live Here Love Here, Litter Survey, Eco Schools, The Big Spring Clean, Recycle Now/Recycle Week and European Week for Waste Reduction.

Keep NI Beautiful Litter Survey reported Council's litter index for 2019/20 as 72%, a 2% improvement on 2018/19 and 4% higher than NI 2019 average. This means that 72% of streets in the Borough have a high level of cleanliness.

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 (GDW) Scheme is a UK wide community-based campaign to change attitudes about dog fouling. Council are using the scheme as an innovative

approach to dog fouling, one of the most controversial issues we deal with in our Borough. Dogs wearing the Green Dog Walkers collar 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.

During 2019/2020:

- 1022 pledges by 31 March 2020;
- Decrease in dog foul complaints received by Council 43% compared to 18/19
- 7 Community groups engaged in promoting GDW.

Keeping Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) survey (July - September 2019) found that dog foul on MEA streets had reduced by 50%. Of the 100 streets surveyed, dog foul was noted on 5, compared to 11 streets in the previous period.

During 2019/20 the following fixed penalties were issued:

- Fly-tipping = 47
- Dog fouling = 1
- Prosecution for dog fouling = 1

A new Reportable App was introduced which allows people to report a variety of environmental concerns to Council and can be downloaded from the iPhone App Store or Android Play store. It allows the complainant to photograph the issue and enter the location and further details. An officer can follow up where necessary and keep the person reporting the problem updated via the app. The App means that residents can report incidents to us any time of the day, any day in the week at a time that suits them. It is restricted for use within the borough, and is free to download.

The app gives residents the opportunity to report concerns such as; animal welfare, pollution, high hedges, pests, dog foul, fly-tipping or abandoned vehicles. Instructions for downloading and use are on the council website.

Council continue to operate chemical-free cleaning at a number of facilities in order to reduce the level of harmful chemicals entering drains.

The Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Mid and East Antrim has been fully integrated within the work programme for Parks and Open Spaces.

Other activities delivered by Parks and Open Spaces during 2019/2020:

- The MEA4Trees campaign launched during Tree Week 2019, in support of the Big Climate Fight Back, and will see Council work with partner organisations and the community to plant 58,000 native trees over the next 5 years - this is one for each household in the Borough. As of March 2020 the total number of trees planted is 17,348. Council are working with the Woodland Trust to ensure quality native stock and will be educating the public on the huge importance of trees through the programme.
- Council has agreed to significantly reduce herbicide usage in parks and open spaces, with a proposed 15% reduction annually from April 2020 to April 2023, leading to a total of 45% reduction overall. In order to achieve 45% herbicide reduction by 2023 the following approaches are employed:
 - Trial of alternative methods on selected sites
 - Reduction of weed control in certain areas
 - Staff training and engagement
 - Community involvement and communications campaign
- Chaines Wood Ballygally officially designated a Local Nature Reserve by CNCC (Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside) in December 2019.
- Red squirrels were successfully reintroduced to Carnfunnock Country Park in September 2019. They monitored for breeding etc. and are doing well.
- A Creature Calendar is promoted annually to increase awareness of priority species in the Borough e.g. hedgehog, barn owl, common lizard as per LBAP.
- Extensive biodiversity events programme is delivered annually e.g. Dawn Chorus walk, Peregrine Watch, Bat Night, Tree Week, Big Garden Bird Watch, Whale Watches etc. as per LBAP.
- 15 days of free Biodiversity University activities in August 2019 at Diamond Jubilee Wood, Ecos Nature Park and Larne Town Park.
- Mid and East Antrim is proud to be one of the first Council's in Northern Ireland to promote and develop the Forest School Programme. Every school in the Borough has the opportunity to become a Forest School and since 2016, 13 schools have completed the Forest School programme. This equates to 300 children, as well as 13 teachers trained and receiving their Forest School Leader accreditation to ensure the sustainability of the programme. The programme continues in 2020, and additionally, there is a dedicated Forest School Hub/Afterschool Club at People's Park as of 2020.
- The first compostable toilet in the Borough, and first "Kazuba" in Northern Ireland, to be installed at Greenisland Allotment Gardens in 2020. "Kazuba" is an

environmentally friendly waterless toilet which uses only sunlight and wind to dry human waste via its unique evaporation/drying mechanism. With no need for water, electricity or chemicals, it imposes much less strain on the environment.

- The Parks Department continue to promote GYO/sustainable food choices via 300 allotment plots for rent in the Borough and community garden provision.
- The Schools Growing Club programme encourages pupils and teachers to make use of their outdoor space and grow their own fruit and vegetables. Every school in the Borough has the opportunity to become a School Growing Club and successful schools receive six practical sessions as well as a Schools Growing Club Starter Kit Bag including tools, seeds and learning resources. The programme promotes healthier eating and drinking as well as a deeper understanding of sustainable food issues and environmental matters. 70 pupils completed the programme in 2019. Practical sessions included building raised beds, cloches, composters and bird boxes; learning how to plant and look after crops through the season; and a final celebration session in which they enjoyed their home grown produce. All materials used in the creation of school gardens were recycled. The programme continues in 2020.
- A Cycling Routes Masterplan was developed in partnership with Sustrans.
- Ahoghill New Park is a 3.16ha site currently being developed to include walkways, wildlife pond and wetlands, wildflower meadows, and extensive native tree and hedgerow coverage.
- MEA Parks & Open Space team won APSE's "Best Service Team of the Year: Parks, Grounds and Horticultural Service" in 2019, in large part thanks to biodiversity initiatives and community engagement leading to environmentally conscious management of sites.
- 3 x MEA beaches hold the Seaside Award - 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.
- 8 x Green Flag awards, over 10 sites, for high quality Parks & Open Spaces. Criteria include environmental management, biodiversity and conservation.

Council achieved three Blue Flags for Glenarm Harbour, Carrick Marina and Portglenone Harbour. The criteria includes environment management in the marine environment.

Further Information

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