

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Carbon Footprint Report 2021

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
2020/21	16,459,843 kWh	3,617	878	4.12
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

Council has reduced its energy use by 26% compared to the previous year. This is due to some services and buildings being closed during 2020/21 due to the covid19 pandemic and also the introduction of energy efficiency measures.

Transport

Year	Total fuel used by vehicle fleet (litres)	tCO2e	No. Employees	tCO2e per Employee
2020/21	713,089	1,708	878	1.94
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

Council's fleet fuel consumption did not increase during 2020/21 which is a great achievement as Council had to increase the size of its fleet to deliver services whilst maintaining social distancing regulations.

Waste

Year	Waste generated per employee (kg)	No. of Employees	% Recycled	tCO2e from total waste landfilled	CO2e per Employee (kg)
2020/21	69.0	878	68.7%	19.32	22.01
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

Council staff have reduced internal waste 50% compared to the previous year. This is due to some services and buildings being closed during 2020/21 due to the covid19 pandemic and also due to the reduction of paper use by 64%. Staff have also achieved an internal recycling rate of 69%.

Carbon Footprint

Year	Total tCO2e	tCO2e per employee
2020/21	5,344	6.1
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 24% compared to the previous year. This is due to some services and buildings being closed during 2020/21 due to the covid19 pandemic and also the introduction of energy efficiency measures and purchased electricity being generated from more renewable sources.

Water

Year	Water Consumption (m3)	No. of Employees	Water Consumption per employee (m3)
2020/21	37,870	878	43.13
2019/20	66,764	880	75.9
2018/19	58,910	860	68.6
2017/18	71,163	848	83.9

Water consumption has decreased by 43% per employee compared to last year. This is due to some services and buildings being closed during 2020/21 due to the covid19 pandemic and also the introduction of a water management system to improve efficiency and leak detection.

Key Achievements 2020/21

Environmental Health - Green Dog Walkers Scheme:

- 1,160 Green Dog Walker pledges are currently active (March 2021).
- Complaints of dog fouling - 2019/20 there was 112 complaints. 2020/21 there was 104 complaints - accounting for 8 fewer complaints and 7% reduction, which although falling short of the 10% target, given the unprecedented year with a substantial increase in dog walkers throughout the borough any reduction is quite an achievement. To put this into context Belfast City Council are reporting up to a 200% increase in dog foul during lockdown. A situation reflected in many councils across the UK.
- 9 community groups are committed to taking action. The latest to come on board was DAERA Forestry Service in respect of Portglenone Forest. Three of the existing Community Groups (Larne RFC, Millbrook Community Association and Ahoghill Thistle FC) had their new bespoke GDW banners erected on their grounds, as despite no sport being played as a consequence of Covid restrictions, grounds are being utilised more than ever by dog walkers.
- Engagement with community organisations has been maintained, with planning taking place for activities to commence coinciding with the proposed easing of lockdown restrictions in late April 2021.

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 providing £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. We'll also be working with P&OS to deliver MEA Growing Clubs in schools (soil-to-plate learning).
- 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.

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).
- We'll be delivering food-related comms campaign Oct-Dec 2021. Jan - Mar 2022 will focus on aluminium and aerosols.

Recycling:

- Reward4Waste Project (Digital Deposit Return Scheme) delivered Sept 2020 - Jan 2021. Results available. Demonstrated proof of concept. DEFRA consultation response completed on DRS. DAERA will provide responses in due course. NI need to agree direction on RVM or DRS option (proposed introduction in late 2023).
- Council's current recycling rate is 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. A second DAERA consultation due out Sept 2021 on this.
- Recent APSE 'Building Back Greener: What are the future opportunities for green growth?' seminar emphasised the need for the circular economy, stop waste exports to foreign countries but most definitely reduce the actual amount of waste arisings in the first place (Tim Walker, Arc21).

Litter:

- KNIB Cleanliness Survey: Jan-Mar 2021 - Council scored 69% which is a 4% improvement from the last survey between Jul-Sept 2020, and 2% better than the Northern Ireland average (67%). Survey currently being undertaken; we hope to improve against the same period in 2020.
- 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. Period of March - June 2021 - Council supported clean ups across the borough totally to approx. 10,500 bags of litter from across all three areas.
- Helped to secure Live Here Love Here Small Grant (£1,750) and National Lottery Community Grant (£10,00) for Eco Rangers. Working with them on DAERA Marine Litter Grant (£20,000) presently - funds being delivered as environmental improvements across Larne and Carrick areas.
- Installation of new recycling bin at Carrick Skate Park - behavioural change project to encourage young people to look after their env - in partnership with Eco Rangers and McDonalds.
- Ongoing - 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. Update: signs to be installed Sept 2021, comms campaign Sept/Nov 2021.

Environment:

- ISO14001 - Council continue to be accredited to ISO 14001:2015 International Environmental Management Standard across all services, with 6 new sites being brought inline in August 2020. NQA auditor with us 17th-19th August 2021 and will assess 6 additional sites to ensure continued accreditation to this standard.
- *Energy:* Community centre projects have included ceiling height reduction and loft insulation in place of previously planned rendering resulting in lower energy costs.

- LED lighting has been installed at Carnfunnock Country Park, Oakfield Community Centre and the multi-story in Springwell Street, Ballymena reducing energy costs and being more sustainable.
- *Water*: New process in place for monitoring, investigating, and responding to water loss. This is a proactive approach of identifying leaks rather than relying on notifications from NI water resulting in response time being reduced from weeks or months to days. Following actions include investigation actioned within 24 hours, with a commitment to not only resolve any on site issues but also to review and address any issues with existing controls.
- *Paper usage* in Council has reduced by 64% compared to the previous year.
- *Fuel*: The Transport Team introduced a new fuel management system across the three town areas. Can monitor carbon emissions.
- Council services have been mapped out against the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- *Herbicide usage*: the Parks Team reduced herbicide usage by 15%, with 3 sites now herbicide-free.
- *Tree planting*: The Parks Team planted out approximately 30,000 trees planted over winter 2020/21 in partnership with the Woodland Trust, despite a lot of community planting postponed due to tighter restrictions.

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 are producing a 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.
- Parks and Open Spaces (P&OS) assessing our green and blue spaces (natural capital) to determine carbon capture potential
- Continued work on Council's Climate and Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan.
- 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.
- Installation of EcoPro technology on RCVs in Larne Depot which reduce fuel usage and improved emissions. Results conclude meeting both targets well.
- Michelin tyre contract - Council now established contract - all vehicles using tyres which can be re-treaded, which extends road life by x3 times. Reduction in manufacture of new tyres, therefore carbon emission reduction.

Sustainability:

- Council are working with a QUB placement student to deliver a project on the sustainability of Council assets (report will be available August 2021).
- *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.
- *Catering*: replacing a number of SUP items in-line with the EU Plastics Directive.
- Installation of 4 water fountains through the Sea-Changers Fountain Fund (reduction in single-use plastic).
- Working to become a Sustainable Food Place (with Belfast Food Network).
- The above 'Environment' and 'Climate' updates have cross-cutting themes with sustainability.

Biodiversity/Community:

- Phase 2 of People's Park Play Area completed - bringing much-needed inclusive play facilities to one of our destination Parks.
- Phase 1 of the play Investment Framework completed - with enhanced play facilities installed at Millbrook and replacement play parks installed at Ballygally, Ballykeel and Legg Park.
- Access and Inclusion Funding drawn down to make our parks, open spaces and leisure facilities more accessible and inclusive for all.
- The Team added to a growing list of local nature reserves having added Chaine's Wood in 2020 (bringing the total to 8).
- Retained three Seaside Awards for Carnlough, Ballygally and Brown's Bay beaches.
- The Team delivered a number of virtual events in response to the pandemic - National Children's Play Day, Love Parks Week and Biodiversity University
- Bentra Golf Club membership figures rose considerably this year, going from 92 in 2019/20 to 162 in 2020/21 (76% increase).
- Getting outdoors has never been more important than during the Covid pandemic. The team were delighted to facilitate the following Covid-safe activities in 2020.
- 4 week introduction to Open Water Swimming - 15 participants.
- Kayaking taster sessions - 56 participants.
- Stand Up Paddle-boarding (SUP) - 39 participants.
- All open water sessions were funded through Capitan.