

## Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Environment Report 2017

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, 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<br>(Electric gas oil) | Carbon<br>Equivalent<br>(tonnes) | No. Employees | Carbon<br>Equivalent per<br>Employee<br>(tonnes) |
|----------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|--|
| 2016/17<br>MEA | 19,865,871 kWh                   | 5410                             | 804           | 6.72   |
| 2015/16<br>MEA | 18,522,793 kWh                   | 5044.3                           | 770           | 6.55   |
| 2014/15<br>MEA | 18,855,853 kWh                   | 5135                             | 770           | 6.67   |
| 2013/14<br>MEA | 20,445,204 kWh                   | 5571                             | 770           | 7.24   |

Council has increased its energy consumption per employee by 2.7% compared to the previous year. This is due in part to more accurate record keeping. Council has employed and energy advisor to implement energy saving initiatives across Council in 2018.

## Transport

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

Council has reduced its fuel consumption per employee by 1.7% 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) |
|---------------|--------------------------|------------------|------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 2016/17 MEA   | 108.71 (MEA)             | 804              | 60.9%      | 33.48  | 41.64                               |
| 2015/16 MEA   | 97.41 (MEA)              | 770              | 66.7%      | 30   | 38.96                               |
| 2014/15 Larne | 33.0 (Larne)             | 254              | 60.6%      | 9.2  | 36.5                                |
| 2013/14 Larne | 31.2 (Larne)             | 214              | 60.0%      | 8.8  | 41                                  |

Council has increased its waste generated per employee by 6.7% compared to the previous year. This is due in part to more accurate record keeping. Council employees are recycling 61% of internal waste and following a recycling audit across all services aim to increase recycling to 65% in 2017/18.

## Carbon Footprint

| Year           | Total Carbon Footprint (tonnes CO2) | Carbon Footprint per employee (tonnes CO2) |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 2016/17<br>MEA | 7304                                | 9.0  |
| 2015/16<br>MEA | 6888.3                              | 8.9  |
| 2014/15<br>MEA | 7125                                | 9.2  |
| 2013/14<br>MEA | 7810                                | 10.1                                       |

Council has increased its total carbon footprint by 1% compared to the previous year, but has reduced by 2% compared to 2014/15.

## Water

| Year                                   | Water Consumption (m3) | No. of Employees                         | Water Consumption per employee (m3) |
|--|------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 2016/17<br>(MEA)                       | 59791                  | 804                                      | 73.4                                |
| 2015/16<br>(Larne and Ballymena areas) | 39036                  | 531<br>(Ballymena and Larne area figure) | 73.5                                |
| 2014/15<br>(Larne and Ballymena areas) | 47,724                 | 531<br>(Ballymena and Larne area figure) | 89.9                                |

Council are continuing to improve recording and monitoring of water usage, and can now include a baseline for Carrickfergus in 2016/17 figures. Water consumption shows a slight decrease per employee compared to the previous year.

## Environmental Incidents

There were no environmental incidents during 2016/17.

## 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.

Overall, environmental performance has improved over recent years as shown by the annual survey of organisations environmental management performance published by Arena Network. Council retained their platinum status which is the top quantile for the 90 businesses who take part. Only 24 participants have reached this level which is a score over 90%.

Council recycled 45.2% of all waste collected from householders during 2016/17, this is an increase of 2.3% on the previous year.

Council rolled out a food waste ban from black residual household bins in April 2017, in line with new legislation. This encouraged residents to separate out high energy food waste. Householder participation has increased the household recycling rate by over 7% during April-September 2017 compared to the same period in 2016.

Council's Recycling Officer takes an education bus around Household Recycling Centres, schools, communities and events, such as Love Food Hate Waste annually to raise awareness of the environmental benefits to reducing and recycling waste.

Council appointed an Education Officer in 2017 who 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 will also be assisting in the implementation of the Environmental Management System ISO 14001:2015 across Council.

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 was operating 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/>

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.

Projects to protect threatened bird species have focused on swifts (walks and talks, bird boxes), barn owls (3 boxes installed at Ecos Nature Park, Eden Allotments and Diamond Jubilee Wood), and black guillemot (creating nesting holes at Glenarm Marina and installing guillemot boxes Carrickfergus Marina). Bird and bat boxes have also been put up in several parks, including Ecos Nature Park, Smiley Park and Shaftesbury Park, to encourage birds like sparrows, which while still common are in decline.

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. An educational leaflet has been produced to increase awareness of the discovery of endangered native crayfish in the Sixmilewater.

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.

Seaside 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. The water quality testing is carried out by Marine Division, DAERA.

Green Flags - Council maintained 7 prestigious green flag awards this year and added two additional; Carrickfergus Mill Ponds and Shaftesbury Park & Marine Gardens.

Biodiversity Summer School - 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 LNR, Carrickfergus was declared in May 2017. Local Nature Reserves are areas where nature and wildlife is protected and where people can visit and enjoy contact with the natural world.

**'Beelicious'** - Mid and East Antrim Council is one of eight local authorities involved in the **'beelicious' project which is funded by Heritage Lottery** Funding. Mid and East Antrim have £5,262 to spend on improving habitat and raising awareness for bees.

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 throughout 2016. For example; cook your catch, wild garlic pesto - foraging and making, veggie BBQ @ allotment sites, dread making and ice cream making. The project was shortlisted for the Best Food Story Award at the NI Year of Food & Drink Awards in Feb 2017.

Forest Schools - An exciting programme which began in the Mid and East Antrim area in 2017. 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.

Further Information

For further information on our environmental performance or details of our initiatives in this area, please contact:

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