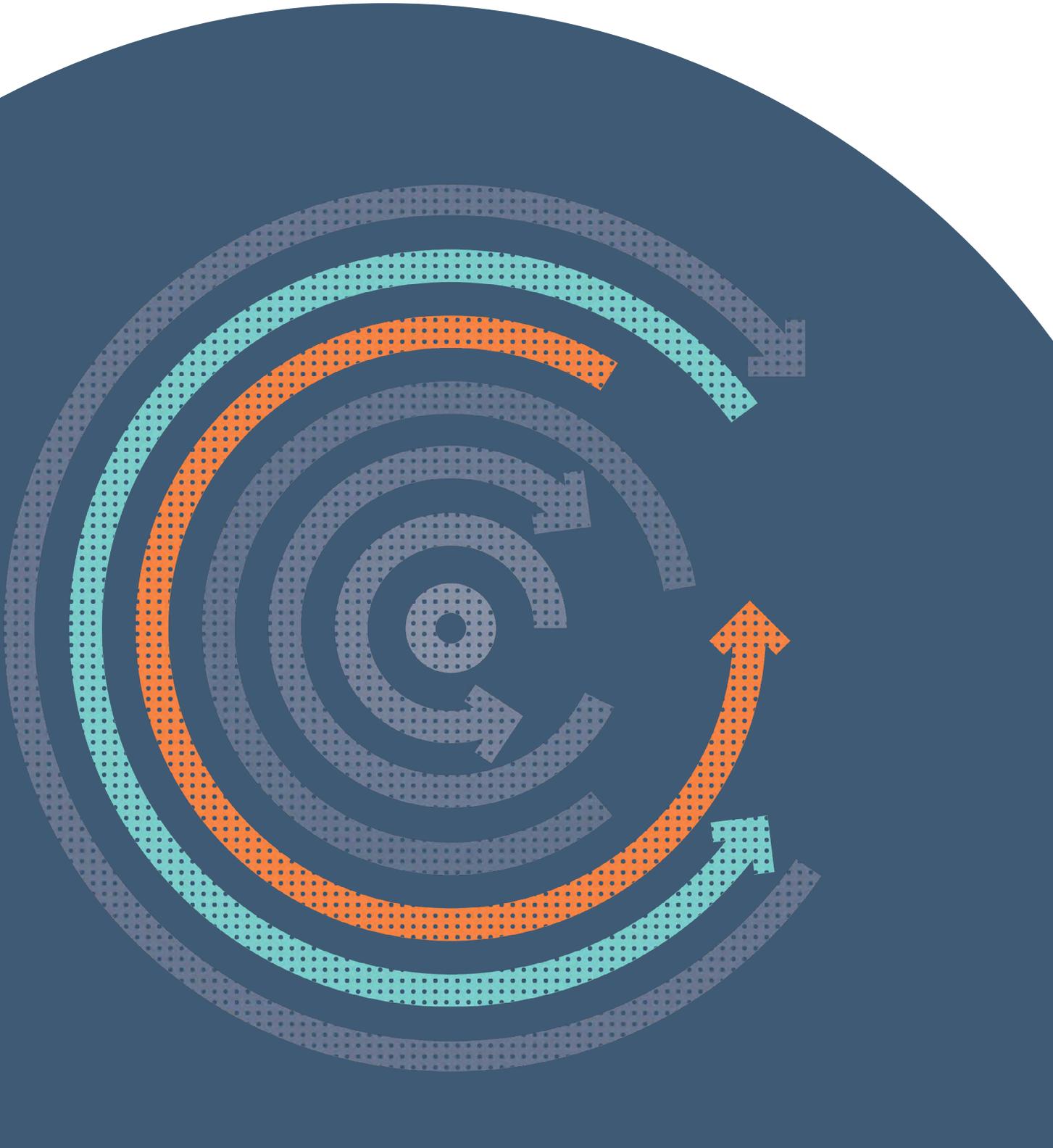




Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Environmental Protection Agency

NATIONAL WASTE PREVENTION PROGRAMME

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Preventing Waste, Driving the Circular Economy

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for protecting and improving the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. We are committed to protecting people and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation and pollution.

The work of the EPA can be divided into three main areas:

Regulation: We implement effective regulation and environmental compliance systems to deliver good environmental outcomes and target those who don't comply.

Knowledge: We provide high quality, targeted and timely environmental data, information and assessment to inform decision making at all levels.

Advocacy: We work with others to advocate for a clean, productive and well protected environment and for sustainable environmental behaviour.

Our Responsibilities

Licensing

We regulate the following activities so that they do not endanger human health or harm the environment:

- waste facilities (e.g. landfills, incinerators, waste transfer stations);
- large scale industrial activities (e.g. pharmaceutical, cement manufacturing, power plants);
- intensive agriculture (e.g. pigs, poultry);
- the contained use and controlled release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs);
- sources of ionising radiation (e.g. x-ray and radiotherapy equipment, industrial sources);
- large petrol storage facilities;
- waste water discharges;
- dumping at sea activities.

National Environmental Enforcement

- Conducting an annual programme of audits and inspections of EPA licensed facilities.
- Overseeing local authorities' environmental protection responsibilities.
- Supervising the supply of drinking water by public water suppliers.
- Working with local authorities and other agencies to tackle environmental crime by coordinating a national enforcement network, targeting offenders and overseeing remediation.
- Enforcing Regulations such as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) and substances that deplete the ozone layer.
- Prosecuting those who flout environmental law and damage the environment.

Water Management

- Monitoring and reporting on the quality of rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters of Ireland and groundwaters; measuring water levels and river flows.
- National coordination and oversight of the Water Framework Directive.
- Monitoring and reporting on Bathing Water Quality.

Monitoring, Analysing and Reporting on the Environment

- Monitoring air quality and implementing the EU Clean Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive.
- Independent reporting to inform decision making by national and local government (e.g. periodic reporting on the State of Ireland's Environment and Indicator Reports).

Regulating Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Preparing Ireland's greenhouse gas inventories and projections.
- Implementing the Emissions Trading Directive, for over 100 of the largest producers of carbon dioxide in Ireland.

Environmental Research and Development

- Funding environmental research to identify pressures, inform policy and provide solutions in the areas of climate, water and sustainability.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- Assessing the impact of proposed plans and programmes on the Irish environment (e.g. major development plans).
- Radiological protection.
- Monitoring radiation levels, assessing exposure of people in Ireland to ionising radiation.
- Assisting in developing national plans for emergencies arising from nuclear accidents.
- Monitoring developments abroad relating to nuclear installations and radiological safety.
- Providing, or overseeing the provision of, specialist radiation protection services.

Guidance, Accessible Information and Education

- Providing advice and guidance to industry and the public on environmental and radiological protection topics.
- Providing timely and easily accessible environmental information to encourage public participation in environmental decision-making (e.g. *My Local Environment*, *Radon Maps*).
- Advising Government on matters relating to radiological safety and emergency response.
- Developing a National Hazardous Waste Management Plan to prevent and manage hazardous waste.

Awareness Raising and Behavioural Change

- Generating greater environmental awareness and influencing positive behavioural change by supporting businesses, communities and householders to become more resource efficient.
- Promoting radon testing in homes and workplaces and encouraging remediation where necessary.

Management and Structure of the EPA

The EPA is managed by a full time Board, consisting of a Director General and five Directors. The work is carried out across five Offices:

- Office of Environmental Sustainability
- Office of Environmental Enforcement
- Office of Evidence and Assessment
- Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring
- Office of Communications and Corporate Services

The EPA is assisted by an Advisory Committee of twelve members who meet regularly to discuss issues of concern and provide advice to the Board.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



National Waste Prevention Programme

Preventing Waste, Driving the Circular Economy

Annual Report 2020

The National Waste Prevention Programme
is a Government of Ireland initiative.

Acknowledgements

The EPA acknowledges the following for their support of the National Waste Prevention Programme:

- The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications for providing programme funding.
- The National Waste Prevention Committee members who have provided their time and collective knowledge to the programme.
- The Board and staff of the EPA, in particular the National Waste Prevention Programme team.

ISBN 978-1-80009-013-2

11/2021/50

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FOREWORD

The National Waste Prevention Programme plays an important role in fostering a circular economy in Ireland through supporting innovation and partnering with other organisations to extend our support and reach. This supports job creation, generates economic growth and improves our environment.

2020 was a year like no other and the impact of Covid-19 posed challenges right across this programme, which has such a strong focus on outreach and networking. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my admiration and gratitude to the NWPP's partners who have adapted to these changed circumstances and maintained delivery on the work of the programme.

It will take some years for us to fully understand the environmental impacts of pandemic restrictions. One notable impact has been an increase in consumption of single-use plastics for protection equipment and extra packaging, reversing positive trends towards reducing use of these materials.

When the pandemic eases, our focus will shift to economic recovery and in this context Ireland and the EU have both clearly indicated that ambitious 'green' stimulus measures will be prioritised. Leadership from industry frontrunners and a progressive public sector will be key in delivering change across the economy. EPA is pleased to be part of this through actions such as support for CIRCULÉIRE the national platform for circular manufacturing, and the roll-out of national training on Green Public Procurement. The publication of a new National Waste Policy in 2020 was an

important milestone in Ireland's transition to a circular economy. This policy document charts our future direction on resource management and shifts the focus firmly away from waste disposal. The EPA welcomes the intention to reconfigure the National Waste Prevention Programme into Ireland's Circular Economy Programme with a designated coordinating role under the continued leadership of the EPA. We are currently working on this evolution and look forward to delivering a step-change in progress towards a vibrant circular economy in Ireland.

In the years ahead, the EPA will continue to invest in innovation and to work with others through this programme to drive Ireland along a pathway to a circular and climate-neutral economy. I am pleased to present this report on our activities in 2020 and look forward to further success in the years ahead.

Mary Frances Rochford

Chair, National Waste Prevention Committee

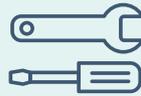


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NWPP HIGHLIGHTS 2020

Resources & Raw Materials



Maximising use of products and materials towards a circular economy.

- **26 leading Irish manufacturers** committed to a **>20% reduction in GHG emissions and waste production** through joining CIRCULÉIRE, the national circular manufacturing platform.
- **10 circular economy enterprises** mentored through the Rediscovery Centre's Circular Economy Academy.
- Community Resources Network Ireland supported their members to **reuse over 18,000 tonnes** of materials **saving over 117,000 tonnes of carbon**.
- **1,374 companies & public bodies** used the TREE online resource efficiency tool by end 2020.
- RepairMyStuff online repair directory connected **more than 800 repair businesses** with over **73,000 users**.

Food Waste Prevention



Reducing waste in households, hospitality, retail and along the food production chain.

- **4.6 million people** reached during a national Stop Food Waste 'Eat It or Freeze It' media campaign.
- **29,000 followers engaged** on food waste by social media, with a **17% increase** in stopfoodwaste.ie website users.
- A **new 3-year strategy** has been developed to strengthen the approach of food waste prevention activities through **enhanced collaboration, impact and measurement**
- A **national survey on food waste attitudes and behaviours** was published and the results used to prepare targeted communications.
- The application of behavioural insights from the survey **identified priority areas and established a baseline** to monitor and evaluate progress.

Plastics



Displacing single-use plastic items through prevention, reuse and recycling actions.

- Green Enterprise: Innovation for a Circular Economy funded two plastic projects:
 - Developing an **innovative manufacturing process using recyclable, reinforced plastic** to produce wind turbine blades.
 - Showcasing a **novel solution to recycle waste farm plastics** into livestock drinking troughs.
- EPA procured **research into preventing and reducing soft plastic waste in the provision of school meals** under Enterprise Ireland's Small Business Innovation Research programme.

Local Waste Prevention



Mobilising & empowering communities to make changes for sustainable and circular living.

- **15 local authorities** funded €89,000 to carry out **36 community circular economy initiatives**.
- **Seven civic amenity sites** in Meath, Cork and Waterford began **accepting paint for reuse** and **four social enterprises were mentored and supported** to deliver paint reuse enterprises.
- **Public drinking water fountains** were installed in **two public buildings** in Drogheda and Dundalk Co. Louth to reduce consumption of single use plastic bottles.

Construction & Demolition



Working with industry and others to tackle high-volume wastes in this critical sector.

- Circular construction **best practice factsheets and case studies published** to EPA website.
- **Revision of the 2006 Best Practice Guidelines** on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for C&D Projects commenced.
- **Supported C&D waste prevention and management training** for local authority staff through the Local Authority Prevention Network.

Agriculture



Increasing output efficiency and reducing carbon emissions for sustainable food production.

- Smart Farming assessments on **25 farms across 16 counties** identified potential for average greenhouse gas emission reductions of 9% and average savings of €5,602 per farm.
- Smart Farming website saw a **40% increase** in traffic compared to 2019.
- As a **Sustainable Development Goals Champion**, Smart Farming's Summer Virtual Farm Talk focussed on linking the practical actions promoted by Smart Farming to delivering sustainable development.

INTRODUCTION

The National Waste Prevention Programme (NWPP) supports national-level, strategic programmes to prevent waste and drive the Circular Economy in Ireland. The programme does this by funding innovation and demonstration projects; by partnering with organisations to deliver our initiatives at national scale; and by publishing evidence & assessments to promote waste prevention.

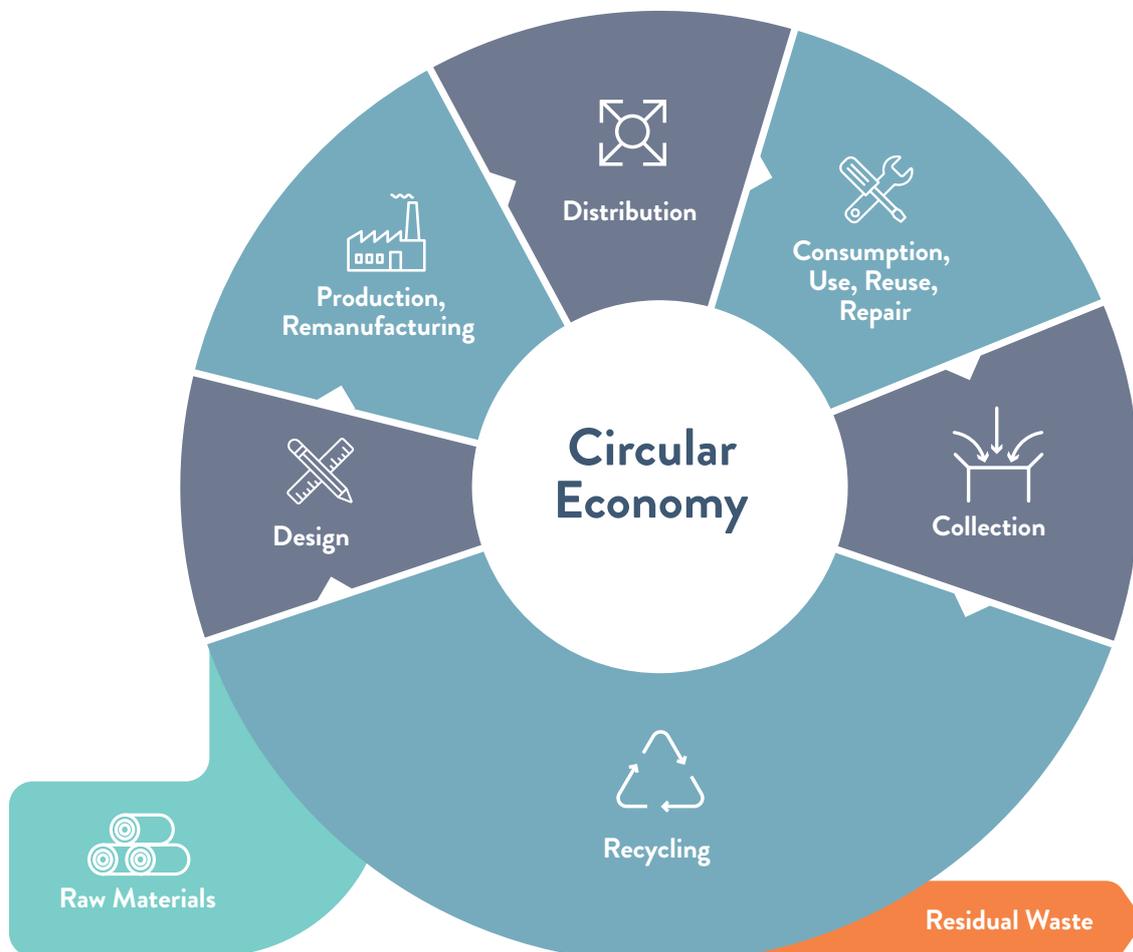
The circular economy concept encompasses a system that seeks to maintain and grow economic activity while at the same time reducing the extraction and consumption of virgin raw materials. It is based firmly on the waste hierarchy and the proposition that preventing waste in the first place is the most effective way to reduce consumption.

Within a circular economy, the products and goods already in circulation are carefully managed to ensure their maximum productive life is obtained through reuse, repair, and remanufacturing. This reverses the trend seen in recent years for products to be offered at relatively low initial selling costs based on driving frequent product replacement. This can be driven by marketing and fashion stimuli; by design approaches

that form barriers to repair; or even through deliberate planned obsolescence. Reuse and repair are higher on the waste hierarchy than recycling.

Increased sharing of products both at personal level and through commercial product-as-a-service models allows greater usage of products without needing additional manufacturing. As seen with urban car-sharing schemes, this approach can offer new economic opportunities through leveraging digitalisation and smart technology to serve customers with seamless, efficient services that eliminate the need for product ownership.

Resource efficiency is also a fundamental element of circularity whereby businesses ensure that materials and processes are optimised to maximise utility, prevent waste and reduce the consumption of virgin materials. Often in a manufacturing operation, there can be by-products such as off-cuts and surplus production. By applying circular thinking in these instances, partnerships can be formed between companies such that the by-product of one process become the raw material for another.



For items that can no longer be used or repaired, these are dismantled to recycle the components in the product and/or the materials it is made from. Through careful segregation and processing, these wastes can then be safely returned to manufacturers as a cost-effective raw material stream.

In Ireland, over 13 million tonnes of waste are generated per year, in our homes, workplaces and through leisure activities. National waste statistics and waste characterisations provide evidence and highlight areas with potential for change and impact through introducing circular economy policies. For example, Ireland is now generating more than 1 million tonnes of packaging each year, and the recycling rate of packaging is decreasing with more going for energy recovery. The amount of construction & demolition waste is increasing in line with activity nationally. In commercial residual bins, over 70 per cent of what's presented and goes for landfilling or energy recovery but could be recycled. Single use items, such as coffee cups and single use tissue paper, are an increasing feature in our household and commercial kerbside bins.

The latest national waste policy document "A Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy" published in September 2020, seeks to shift the focus away from waste disposal and treatment to ensure that materials and products remain in productive use for longer thereby preventing waste and supporting reuse through a policy framework that discourages the wasting of resources and rewards circularity. It also draws attention to the role of design in waste prevention through the delivery of products that are more amenable to recycling or reuse. The policy notes that the NWPP has led the way in developing measures and initiatives that have fostered the evolution of policy and practice towards circularity; and propose a reconfiguration of the NWPP as Ireland's Circular Economy Programme.

Within the NWPP, we have identified six focus areas to reflect national waste prevention priorities. These are: **Plastics; Food; Agriculture; Construction & Demolition; Local Waste Prevention;** and **Resources & Raw Materials.** The programme's objectives are implemented through a set of strategic national-level programmes with strong impact & influence. The overarching aim of these interventions is to stimulate waste prevention and to embed circular economy practices in Ireland. Our activities are structured across three delivery pillars as shown below.

How We Work

NWPP is delivered in three ways:



Our Priority Areas

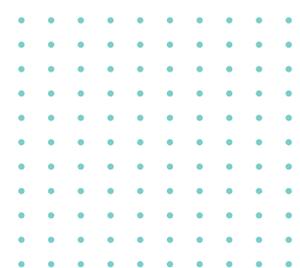
Six focus areas of the NWPP reflect circular economy priorities:



1. INNOVATION & DEMONSTRATION



Transitioning to a Circular Economy requires the development of novel techniques and business models that are focussed on reuse, repair and recycling. The EPA supports and showcases innovation to accelerate the growth of the circular economy and highlight the economic and environmental benefits of circular business practices. The programme provides innovation funding calls and supports demonstration projects to bridge the gap from prototyping to full-scale application. The programme also publishes case studies and provides tools to enable implementation of circular economy opportunities in Ireland.



1.1 DELIVERING IN 2020

Green Enterprise: innovation for a circular economy

Green Enterprise is a flagship initiative of the NWPP, it is an annual funding call which supports businesses and other organisations to develop and demonstrate new circular economy approaches. For 2020, our priority areas were: *Plastics; Construction & Demolition; Food; and Resources & Raw Materials.*

New Green Enterprise projects

Growing engagement by business and industry in the circular economy was reflected in the diversity and number of applications received. A record 33 applications were received with grant-aid of €2.8 million requested. Following a two-stage evaluation process, the EPA invested €533,525 in the following projects:

Single-use plastic packaging remoulded into livestock drinking troughs

Polymer Alloy Technology



Showcasing a novel solution to recycling waste farm plastics into on-farm livestock drinking troughs.

Replacement aggregate for cement products

Gannon Eco



Identifying and testing suitable construction & demolition waste streams for use in concrete production.

Skills training and life cycle analysis in Construction & Demolition sector



Irish Green Building Council

Delivering training on Level(s), the European framework for sustainable buildings. An early design stage carbon design tool will be developed.

Developing a Circular Textiles System for Ireland

Community Resources Network Ireland



Delivering a controlled pilot programme comparing different textile collection systems, supported by a communications campaign.

Developing recyclable wind turbine blades

ÉireComposites Teoranta



Developing an innovative manufacturing process using recyclable, reinforced plastic to produce wind turbine blades.

Remanufacturing bicycles

An Mheitheal Rothar



Remanufacturing frames of poor condition used bicycles. Six Tús trainees will be trained in cycle mechanic skills, growing the circular economy ecosystem.

For more information on Green Enterprise projects please visit: <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/circular-economy/green-enterprise/green-enterprise-completed-projects-and-outputs/>

Green Enterprise Projects Completed in 2020

In 2020, several Green Enterprise projects from previous call years were finalised and the outputs used by the organisations and other stakeholders to shift towards more resource efficient operations. The projects are listed below:

Food for Ireland Campaign (2017 call)



FoodCloud

Funding: €60,000

FoodCloud developed five case study videos "feeling kindness" which capture their full service for the food supply chain and showcase best practice examples of surplus redistribution with four donors. The videos were shared with stakeholders, including the European Food Banks Federation and FoodCloud's retail partners to demonstrate the positive impact surplus redistribution has had in communities across Ireland.

Scoping the Irish fruit & vegetable supply chain for valuable biomass resources for upgrade (2019 call)



CyberColloids

Funding: €46,637

CyberColloids evaluated the potential to recover and use the biomass generated in fruit and vegetable supply chains as a resource to produce new food ingredients. The project demonstrated that Ireland generates up to 360,000 tonnes of fruit and vegetable waste that could feed into one or more processing facilities to produce new food ingredients. Of 35 prototype fibres produced and evaluated at lab-scale, potatoes, carrots, swedes and apples showed most potential for valorisation. There is potential to develop processing facilities in Ireland, subject to sourcing industry partners.

Methods for expansion of paint reuse programme (2016 call)



Rediscovery Centre

Funding: €60,000

The Rediscovery Centre investigated methods for the optimisation and expansion of their Rediscover Paint operation in Ballymun, Dublin. Changes were made to Rediscover Paint's operations on foot of the study, which resulted in increased paint throughput (180 kg in Jan 2018 to 1,220 kg by April 2019), operational efficiency, reduced administration and improved work practice. The learnings are being applied by the Rediscovery Centre to develop regional paint reuse through mentoring social enterprises in their Circular Economy Academy.

Green Teams Recognition Scheme (2015 call)



Consulteco

Funding: €59,979

This project delivered a training and support programme for green teams and environmental champions in fifteen organisations. The course content was piloted before the training was fully rolled out. The training is now commercially available, see www.greenteams.ie

Service models for bulky item reuse (2017 call)



Community Resources Network Ireland

Funding: €36,700

With up to 1.2 million potentially usable bulky items going to waste in Ireland each year, this project looked at the design of business service models to encourage public sector bodies to engage in reuse/exchange of unwanted bulky items. A 'How to guide for reuse in the public sector' was developed. Community Resources Network Ireland have used the findings to engage with public procurement groups and to inform national policy and future reuse targets.

Green Jobs in the Simon Community (2015 call)



Midlands Simon Community

Funding: €60,000

Midlands Simon Community expanded the range of material sold in their charity shops and increased the reusability of materials donated. Raising awareness on reusing, upcycling and prevention of waste was achieved through training, workshops, upcycling events and the engagement of Green Schools.

Green Enterprise Communications

There was a strong focus on promotion and sharing Green Enterprise learnings in 2020. The funding call was widely promoted through print and social media advertising to encourage participation and engage with new business sectors, and this resulted in a record number of applications being received. The NWPP hosted a webinar to engage with potential applicants and this was well attended and received.

A new series of Green Enterprise webinars started in 2020, with four webinars hosted by the NWPP to share the learnings of six circular economy innovation projects. The webinars covered two reuse projects (the ReMark project and Bulky Item Reuse project); a Greening IT project at the University of Limerick; and three bioeconomy projects were presented as a Bioeconomy Ireland Week event in October (see case study). The webinars were recorded and are available to download on EPA's Circular Economy YouTube playlist. Between 40-50 attendees joined each webinar and feedback from participants was very positive.

For more information on Green Enterprise project outcomes visit: <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/circular-economy/green-enterprise/green-enterprise-completed-projects-and-outputs/>

Small Business Innovation Research

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) enables public bodies to purchase research to stimulate innovation, when goods and services aren't available in the marketplace. This falls under pre-commercial procurement and helps the public sector to address challenges that impact on citizens. The NWPP was selected under Enterprise Ireland's competitive SBIR 2020 call, to lead our challenge "Innovating a circular economy for soft plastics".

This challenge invited innovators to develop solutions to prevent and reduce soft and single-use plastic packaging in the provision of school meals. Following an open European tendering process, Radical Innovations Group Ab were awarded a contract to carry out a four-month feasibility study which began in November 2020. Further development of this concept through a second prototyping phase will be considered in 2021, subject to evaluation of the feasibility study and its findings.

Resource Efficiency Tools

The NWPP supports the following open access, online tools for promoting and growing circular economy.



TREE online resource efficiency tool. In 2020 the number of registered users on TREE grew by 34% to over 1,370. TREE enables organisations (businesses and public sector) to examine their operational processes and their housekeeping practices to ensure that they are making best use of materials, energy and water. The tool provides a performance score for the company and a tailored action plan of measures to drive waste minimisation and a more efficient use of resources.

In a circular economy, waste is prevented, product life is extended, and the maximum value is extracted from products while they are in use, so repair is central to circular economy.



Repairmystuff.ie is Ireland's national online repair directory, supported by the NWPP and managed by Monaghan County Council. In 2020, the website connected more than 800 repair businesses with over 73,000 users. Its search facility allows users to identify the repair service required and their location and provides information on nearby repairers. Following an introduction from the NWPP, WEEE Ireland also supported this initiative through encouraging the White Goods Association to add their authorised repairers to the website and promotion of the website.

FreeTrade Ireland was a web-based portal to enable users to exchange unwanted items for reuse. It was originally established in 2006 and was funded by the EPA from 2013. When FreeTrade Ireland was established, it was the first of its kind but since then there has been a welcome growth in website, social media and digital platforms offering similar services that support and facilitate reuse. Considering this growth, the EPA is bringing the FreeTrade Ireland project to a close in 2021.

1.2 Case Study: Green Enterprise supporting Bioeconomy Ireland Week

To support Bioeconomy Ireland Week, the NWPP hosted a webinar showcasing three Green Enterprise bioeconomy projects: Symbiobeer, Hexafly and CyberColloids.

Symbiobeer is an industrial symbiosis project led by Irish Manufacturing Research looking to reduce food waste through a bakery (Panelto Foods) and a brewery (St. Mel's Brewing Co. Ltd.) on an industrial estate in Co. Longford partnering on using waste bread as a secondary raw material in the production of beer and using beer waste to produce bread.

Hexafly is an insect farming project identifying and demonstrating the conversion of different waste streams by the Black Soldier Fly into high quality protein derivatives (meal, oils and fertilisers) which can be used by industries including aquaculture, pet food, agriculture and horticulture.

CyberColloids evaluated the potential to recover and use the biomass generated in fruit and vegetable supply chains to produce new food fibre ingredients. The project demonstrated that Ireland generates sufficient fruit and vegetable waste that could feed into one (or a few) central processing facilities to produce new food ingredients.

Hear about 3 of our **GREEN ENTERPRISE** bioeconomy projects

**Symbiobeer
Hexafly
CyberColloids**

A Webinar Series for Green Enterprise: Innovation for a Circular Economy

**Thursday 22nd October
10-11am**

**Register Now
at nwpp@epa.ie**

BIOECONOMY IRELAND WEEK OCTOBER 18-23 2020

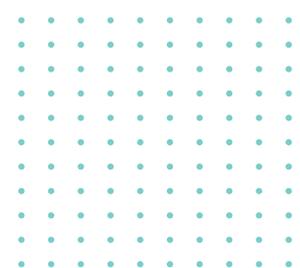
#greenenterprise
#irishbioeconomy
#BuildBackBetter

2. DELIVERING THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS



A partnership approach is central to delivering our Circular Economy ambition and vision. We partner with others to extend our influence and to drive growth of the circular economy in Ireland. We collaborate with influential national organisations and networks to deliver strategic, co-created and targeted programmes and solutions for the circular economy. The NWPP provides funding support to deliver partnership programmes and brings expertise on waste prevention and circular economy to developing the programmes.

Our programme actively partners with organisations in the manufacturing, agriculture, social enterprise, third level education and local government sectors. In 2020, we built on our existing successful partnerships with the Rediscovery Centre, Irish Manufacturing Research, Irish Farmers' Association and Community Resources Network Ireland. We also developed a new collaboration with the Irish Universities Association to stimulate change in waste and resource management behaviour on Irish university campuses.



2.1 DELIVERING IN 2020

Irish Manufacturing Research

The NWPP entered a three-year strategic partnership (2020–2022) with Irish Manufacturing Research to establish CIRCULÉIRE, the National Platform for Circular Manufacturing. The NWPP is providing grant-aid funding of €250k per year and sits on the platform's steering group. Funding for this platform is also being provided by DECC and Climate-KIC and through member fees.

This is a landmark circular economy activity for Ireland which will deliver at scale through a public-private partnership innovation network. The platform works with leading manufacturers to develop circular economy models and provide innovation funding. Members commit to a >20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and waste production through joining CIRCULÉIRE. A key part of CIRCULÉIRE is to conduct company assessments to identify circular opportunities and an action plan to realise the CO₂ and waste savings. However, due to COVID-19 related site access restrictions, these were deferred to 2021.

During 2020, the platform established its website which includes an open access Circular Economy knowledge library. Thematic groups were set-up to focus on areas of cross-platform interest and reviews on *Bioeconomy*, *Industrial Symbiosis* and *Circular Procurement* were published.

CIRCULÉIRE has a €1.5m ring-fenced Innovation Fund which will be awarded through annual calls for proposals from members. This allows member companies to engage in innovative projects that deliver CO₂ reductions and financial benefits while reducing the financial risk associated to these projects. COVID-19 restrictions impacted on this fund as companies grappled with their new operating environment, but two projects were funded:

- **Skillset for a circular economy:** WEEE Ireland (Lead Partner). A project to develop skills for enhanced repairs of white goods.
- **Long-Life Lithium Batteries Centre of Excellence:** WEEE Ireland (Lead Partner). A project to look at the reuse and the refurbishment of batteries to increase their life cycle.

CIRCULÉIRE established an innovation and mentoring programme in 2020 targeting late-stage circular ventures that are revenue generating and thus close to market but seeking support to scale. The programme will support 15 ventures between 2020-2022. In the 2020 call nineteen applications

were received with five ventures supported: *Ashleigh Environmental*; *Avoca Seafood*; *DACS*; *I Am Not A Virgin (IANAV)*; and *The ZeroNet Group*.

The EU Circular Hotspot network plays a leading role in a global effort of centralising circular economy best practices and disseminating them at events and conferences. CIRCULÉIRE was announced as the Irish hotspot in November and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Holland Circular Hotspot.

CIRCULÉIRE has taken a lead role on NSAI Circular Economy Mirror Committee of ISO Technical Committee 323 which is working through a three-year process to develop an international standard to implement circularity.

CIRCULÉIRE partnered with Hamburg University to deliver "Circularity Thinking" an introduction to circular-oriented innovation for member companies. The programme was delivered virtually and ran over three days in December 2020 with 34 of CIRCULÉIRE's industry members attending.

Circular Campus

NWPP is collaborating with the Irish Universities Association on an innovation & demonstration sustainable "living lab" project to demonstrate the potential for scalable waste prevention and waste reduction behaviour change across Ireland's university campuses. The EPA will provide funding and expertise to deliver this programme over a two-year period.

Waste characterisation studies were completed at two universities before COVID-19 restrictions came into force in March. This work examined the types and quantities of waste presented for collection at student accommodation, food services and in external litter bins. The findings identified high potential for improving waste segregation to increase recycling, with up to 82 per cent of residual waste having the potential to be segregated for recycling (packaging and food waste). With the campus population mostly off-site due to COVID-19 restrictions, work on piloting behaviour change interventions was deferred, however the NWPP and IUA agreed a work programme and partnership for a full project launch in 2021.

Smart Farming

Smart Farming is a voluntary resource efficiency programme, delivered by the Irish Farmers' Association (IFA) in partnership with the NWPP. The NWPP provided grant-aid support funding of €84,000 and the IFA co-funded the programme through staff input and other programme costs. Smart Farming centres on identifying practical actions in eight thematic areas which, if implemented, will reduce costs and improve the environment. The practical actions which Smart Farming champions have co-benefits – efficient use of resources protects and improves water quality, soil fertility, biodiversity and greenhouse gas emission reductions.

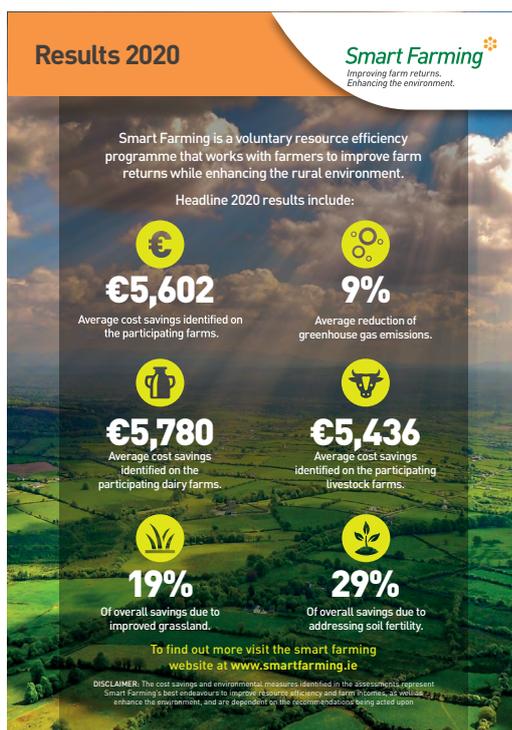
Smart Farming facilitates free on-farm resource efficiency assessments (REAs) which examine inputs across the farm such as energy, water, fertilizer and relate these to farm output. Farmers receive tailored advice and agree to share the learnings with their peers through discussion groups (although due to COVID-19 restrictions this activity couldn't go ahead in 2020). In 2020, 25 REAs were completed across 16 counties (down from previous years due to pandemic restrictions) across dairy, beef, sheep and tillage farms. The REAs identified the potential for average cost savings of €5,602 and greenhouse gas emission reductions of 9 per cent on participating farms. The assessments found that addressing soil fertility had the highest potential for cost savings (29%), followed by grassland management (19%) and energy (18%).

Smart Farming's annual Spring Seminar has a research & technology focus. The 2020 event moved online with recorded presentations. The event had an attendance of 587 individuals, a significant increase compared to attendance at the (live) 2019 event. The main topics covered were breeding for more profitable and efficient animals, fertiliser planning for profitability, reducing costs through good clover management and emerging technologies for dealing with enteric methane emissions.

The annual Summer Farm Walk was replaced by a series of on-farm demonstration videos, released in August. The videos focussed on practical sustainability actions promoted by Smart Farming as a Sustainable Development Goals champion. Within the first two weeks of the videos going online, there were nearly 1,250 views. Videos included:

- Demonstrating the potential for multispecies swards to reduce climate impact at Devenish farm.
- Demonstrating the benefits of low emission slurry spreading at Teagasc Moorepark.
- Demonstrating work happening in Mayo under the ASSAP programme.
- Demonstrating potential for biodiversity gains through the Bride project in Cork.

Traffic to the Smart Farming website was up 40% increase in visitors to the site in 2020. The opportunity for online engagement and awareness will be built on in the 2021 Smart Farming programme.



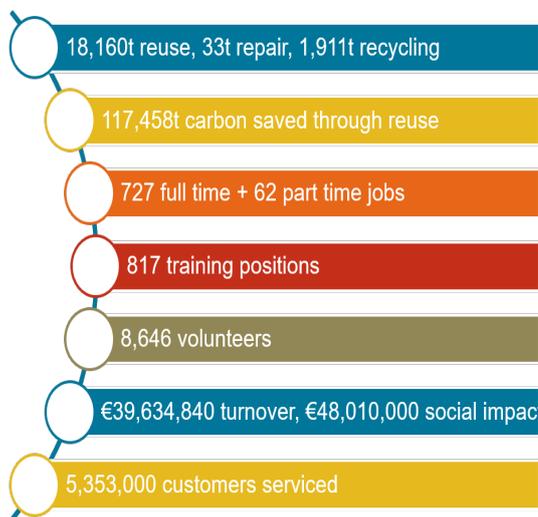
Community Resources Network Ireland



Community Resources Network Ireland (CRNI) is a network of community reuse, repair and recycling organisations and in 2020 NWPP provided grant-aid support of €85,000 to the network.

CRNI was ten years established in 2020 and saw the largest new member intake of any year, increasing by 13 to 37 members. The economic, social and environmental impact of the network is significant: in 2020 alone 18,160 tonnes of products were reused (saving over 117,180 tonnes of carbon), 911 tonnes of materials were recycled, 789 jobs were sustained, 817 people were trained and 8,646 volunteered with network members. This had a collective economic impact of €87M.

The network builds capacity in circular economy by providing support and training to its social enterprise and community members. CRNI shared key information on Government actions and funding in response to COVID-19 and set up a platform for peer-to-peer support.



The network's social media, newsletters and website reached approx. 350,000 stakeholders. A further 800 stakeholders were reached directly through CRNI presentations at events (mainly online in 2020).

CRNI involved its members in two EU-wide campaigns about "Repair Heroes" and social enterprise resilience and ran four national campaigns during the year on CRNI's policy submission to the Waste Action Plan; Reuse and Recycling during COVID; Reuse Month and Green Friday.



CRNI represented the reuse & repair sector in national and EU policy development processes by making submissions to 18 consultations during the year. CRNI also joined the EU Right to Repair Campaign in 2020.

In an international context, CRNI hosted a general assembly meeting of the RREUSE network in Ireland in March 2020. CRNI currently holds the Vice Presidency of RREUSE and contributes to its work as a board member.

Regional Waste Management Offices

The NWPP partnered with the Regional Waste Management Planning Offices to deliver the 2020 Upcycle Challenge, a national competition to get Irish people thinking creatively about reuse and upcycling for Reuse Month in October. Sponsorship of €10,000 was provided by NWPP to deliver the competition. The challenge helps create awareness of how everyday objects can be reused by upcycling and repurposing them, as well as allowing people and groups to share their creativity with a wider audience.

Among the nine winners of the 2020 competition were students at a Co. Wicklow secondary school who built a COVID-19 outdoor classroom from old sails and fencing and a Men's Shed from Donegal who created a Thomas the Tank Engine from an old oil tank. Due to public health restrictions, the 2020 award ceremony took the form of a video shared on social media showing the skills, creativity and ingenuity of all nine winners and their projects.

Upcycle Challenge 2020 closing date 30/10/2020

OPEN FOR APPLICATIONS

9 categories - each with a prize of €750!

how to enter

- 1 source material
- 2 'before' photo
- 3 diary of 'how & why'
- 4 'after' photo
- 5 entry form

mywaste epa

Construction & Demolition Waste

Through the DECC-chaired Construction Waste Resource Group, the NWPP committed to updating the “Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction & Demolition Projects” which were originally published in 2006. The purpose of the guidelines is to provide a practical and informed mechanism to document the prevention and management of wastes arising in construction & demolition projects. The NWPP contracted for a review of the guidelines, which will be subject to public consultation in early 2021 before being finalised. The revised guidelines will focus on the following key changes:

- Additional focus on waste as a resource.
- Increased emphasis on waste prevention, in line with the waste hierarchy.
- Promotion of circular design and construction principles.

Authority Prevention Network (see Leading by Example section for more detail).

In 2020, Rediscovery Centre were appointed as a member of the Coordination Group of the EU Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. During their three-year term there will be an opportunity to highlight Irish circular economy activity and share learnings from other EU Member States.

Rediscovery Centre

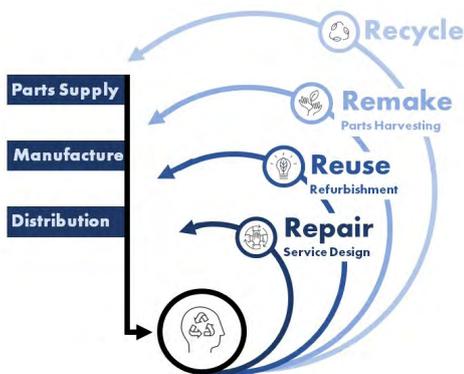
The NWPP’s three-year partnership with the Rediscovery Centre (2018-2021) aims to support and develop the Rediscovery Centre as National Centre for the Circular Economy. The NWPP provides grant-aid funding of €150,000 per year and supports the delivery of partnership initiatives and events. The Rediscovery Centre is extending its regional outreach through demonstration, education and collaboration and taking on new roles to strengthen Ireland’s circular economy.

In January the Rediscovery Centre, in association with Hemp Cooperative of Ireland, hosted a *Conversations on a Circular Economy* event on *Hempcrete in Construction*. Over 40 construction professionals were briefed on hemp as an alternative to concrete, with a lower carbon footprint and excellent insulation efficiency.

The Rediscovery Centre closed to the public in March due to COVID-19 restrictions but delivered a successful and innovative programme of work online during the year (see case study).

The Rediscovery Centre continued to lead the Circular Economy Academy, a free support programme to assist social enterprises and community organisations across Ireland to deliver circular economy activities. In 2020, ten members were supported through virtual training and mentoring. The Rediscover Paint team also worked with six local authorities to deliver paint reuse initiatives through the NWPP’s Local

2.2 Case Study: Rediscovery Centre - Delivering circular economy programmes online in 2020



The NWPP has a three-year grant-aid funding partnership with the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun. The Centre had to close its doors for much of 2020 due to COVID-19, however the team were agile and innovative in switching to delivering online content and virtual educational activities, workshops and events including *Rediscovery at Home* and the *Ask the Expert* series. This case study showcases some of the events delivered through partnership with the NWPP in 2020.

Circular Economy webinar

In May, the EPA and Rediscovery Centre hosted an online seminar on the EU Green Deal Circular Economy Action Plan for policy makers and other interested stakeholders. The seminar looked at the opportunities for Ireland from moving forward with a Circular Economy. Chaired by Mary Frances Rochford (chair of the National Waste Prevention Committee), speakers included Laura Niessen (researcher at the Rediscovery Centre), Philip Nugent (Department of Environment, Climate and Communications), Ladeja Godina Kosir (Circular Change) and Cillian Lohan (European Economic and Social Committee). The webinar had a reach of over 13,000 and the recordings had 610 views.

Educational workshops and events

326 educational workshops and events were held for 10,578 participants including:

- 6,198 primary school children, 2,817 secondary students, 25 third level students
- 1,130 community participants & 408 teachers.

The EPA supported Rediscovery Centre in its successful application to Science Foundation Ireland for funding to develop a regional education programme. This is a significant outcome for meeting our partnership ambition to regionalise circular economy knowledge and awareness.

Rediscovery At Home and Ask the Expert series

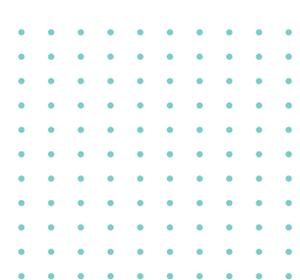
A [Rediscovery at Home](#) series of 20 videos were produced by the Rediscovery Centre staff, covering topics such as bike maintenance, furniture upcycling, children's education and junior science and sustainable living. This series had a reach of almost 81,000 and over 8,600 views.

Four episodes of a new [Ask the Expert](#) series were also produced, one for each of the social enterprises based within the Rediscovery Centre: Paint, Cycling, Fashion and Furniture. This series achieved a reach of over 26,000 and close to 1,400 views.

3. COMMUNICATIONS & ADVOCACY



Our communications are targeted to raise the profile of our programme activities with our key audiences such as public sector bodies, research and innovation organisations, industry and enterprise, and product designers. We underpin this work with evidence-based recommendations in support of the development of national policy relating the Circular Economy.



3.1 DELIVERING IN 2020

NWPP Communications

We undertake a series of communications actions throughout the year including publishing our annual report, press releases, social media activities, developing programme outputs such as guidance, case studies, factsheets, videos, data reports, speaking at events, and making submissions on public consultations. During 2020 we adapted our plans for hosting meetings and events and delivered an online webinar series to promote Green Enterprise, hosted virtual committee and plenary meetings and supported the development of a national-level conference on the circular economy in September that engaged a broad cohort of participants from the NIECE network membership to policy makers. Each event and meeting informed and engaged stakeholders around the mission, priorities, and outcomes of the NWPP.

Supporting & Advocating

In support of the development of national circular economy policy, the NWPP (and the wider EPA) provided a detailed submission to DECC regarding the waste action plan. Observations and recommendations in this submission informed development of this major new national policy. Implementation of this policy is core to developing Ireland's circular economy. The policy included a proposed reconfiguration of the NWPP into a national circular economy programme, which will be actioned during 2021.

Other advocacy work in 2020 included the commissioning of a study on the nature and extent of textile waste to understanding the challenges of this waste stream and to provide evidence to inform the development of circular solutions.

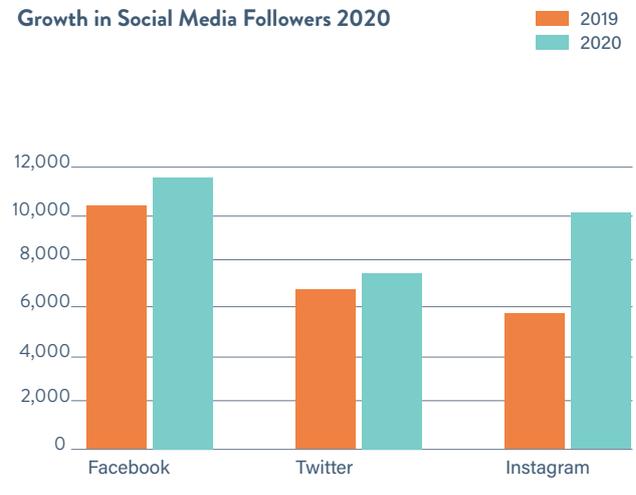
In addition, we provided sponsorship to events, awards and other initiatives aligned to waste prevention and circular economy priorities.

Food Waste Prevention

StopFoodWaste is our national campaign for householders. Over the next 3 years, the campaign aims to achieve a measured increase in the number of people engaging on the topic, and widespread public awareness of the issue of food waste and solutions to help reduce it.

Our social media initiatives resulted in a strong increase of Stop Food Waste social media followers, rising by 24% to over 28,000 followers in 2020. Instagram continues to be

Growth in Social Media Followers 2020



the channel showing the greatest growth. Overall, traffic to stopfoodwaste.ie website improved in 2020, with a 17% increase in users and 12% increases in both sessions and page views when compared with 2019. Organic traffic to the website also increased showing a growing awareness and interest in the programme by the public.

We continued to provide leadership and expertise on food waste to support policy and decision-making. We also participated in the EU Platform on Food Losses & Waste.

Following a review of the food waste prevention programme during 2020, we developed a new 3-year strategy to strengthen the approach of food waste prevention activities through enhanced collaboration, impact and measurement.

The activities and delivery model of the food waste programme have been revised to ensure they are optimised for impact and appropriately focused to play a key role in the achievement of Ireland's 50% reduction in food waste target by 2030 and reduce associated GHG emissions.

The programme activities align with the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy and address the priority areas of households, retail, distribution, manufacturing and processing sectors, and the food services and hospitality sector.

Behavioural insights provide evidence and data to inform policy, behavioural change interventions and awareness campaigns, establish sectoral benchmarks and indicators, and to monitor progress. We completed a national survey of food waste attitudes and behaviours to provide insights and inform household food waste prevention activities and evidence-based communications, and to establish a baseline for

monitoring progress. These surveys will be repeated to monitor the changes in engagement, inform the identification of target audiences, key messages and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme activities.

From 2020 Ireland will be required to report on food waste using a common methodology and minimum quality requirements agreed under the EU Circular Economy Package and work is underway to establish reporting methodologies and develop baseline data in accordance with protocols established by the European legislation. The EPA produces national waste statistics and therefore has responsibility for producing the relevant statistics under the Waste Framework Directive.

A key focus of the food waste prevention programme aims to improve data quality and availability. Actions to build capacity for food waste prevention in the retail, processing and manufacturing and hospitality sectors include the roll-out of a standardised food waste measurement methodology for businesses in the food supply chain and conducting studies improve the granularity and address data gaps.

European activities

During 2020 we collaborated with other Member States contributing to the European Environment Agency (EEA) project on Bellagio Principles and co-authoring the guidance on evaluating waste prevention programmes which was published in early 2021².

We also worked with other Member States in EEA and EIONET³ projects to draft guidelines on evaluating waste prevention programmes in Europe.

Promoting the Circular Economy

The EPA hosted a national conference in the area of [Waste and the Circular Economy](#) in September, as a collaboration between the NWPP and the NIECE network. 380 attendees participated in the conference which provided six presentations across the different aspects of the circular economy. The keynote address came from Wesley Spindler in Accenture and was titled '*Realizing the Circular Advantage*'.

The NWPP issued press releases throughout the year sharing waste prevention messaging, releasing guidance and announcing funding opportunities. These were followed up with interviews and social media posts to increase engagement. Though many events were curtailed by COVID-19 restrictions, NWPP provided continued sponsorship to the Green

Awards where *Ancient Permaculture* won in the Green Small Organisation of the Year category.

CDP Ireland Network

EPA and SEAI jointly fund the CDP Ireland Network, a national initiative to promote and support corporate carbon reporting via the not-for-profit Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) organisation. This network promotes Irish participation in the global disclosure movement and supports organisations to complete their reporting tasks. Several new organisations joined CDP as new responders in 2020 bringing Irish responders to 47, along with over 250 multinationals with operations in Ireland. These new participants come from a wide range of sectors and include: Ardagh Group, Applegreen Plc, Cairn Homes Plc, CIE, Ecocem, Gas Networks Ireland, John Sisk & Son (Holdings) Ltd, Keelings Group, Kenmare Resources Plc, Mercury Engineering, Permanent TSB Group Holdings, Ryanair Holding Plc. The NWPP provided grant-aid support of €15,000 to the CDP Ireland Network in 2020.

Sectoral Sustainability Resources

Ireland's economic sectors faced significant and unprecedented challenges during 2020 due to COVID-19. A 'Green Recovery' is a strong opportunity for recovering sectors to embed sustainability and climate action into their businesses by reducing water use, waste and energy use. The NWPP led on providing step by step guidance for this transition aimed for key sectors. Demonstrations showcased the benefits through case studies where this recovery has led to significant cost savings and reduced environmental impacts.

Resources were shared for the construction sector on how to reduce water use, energy use and waste generation. Nine case studies were shared demonstrating significant cost savings of up to €43,000 as well as reduced environmental impacts such as saving up to 93 tonnes CO₂ reduced energy and preventing up to 164 tonnes of waste.

Resources were also shared for the hospitality sector with guidance to save costs on water use and energy use as well as steps to take to prevent waste with particular focus on action to prevent food waste which can result in up to €15,000 cost savings.

For more see: <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring-assessment/circular-economy/circular-and-sustainable-sectors/sectoral-sustainability>

2. Guidance for evaluating waste prevention programmes by the EEA and Eionet: www.eea.europa.eu/themes/waste/

3. European Environment Information and Observation Network

3.2 Case Study: National 'Eat it or Freeze it' Communications Campaign

The national *Eat It or Freeze It* food waste prevention awareness campaign ran in November 2020. The campaign was targeted the 25 – 34 age group and ran over two weeks using a range of communication channels. It generated significant reach among the Irish public through national PR coverage of 4.6 million, social media advertising reach of 769,000 people (3.6 million impressions), over 6,000 views of the stopfoodwaste.ie website (up over 300%) and the @stopfoodwaste.ie Instagram received over 400 new followers and 2.4 million impressions.

The objective of the campaign was to inform people that by simply eating or freezing food up to its use-by date they can make their food go further, save up to €700 a year and prevent food waste.

The campaign was informed by findings from the 2020 national food waste attitudes survey which found that 68% of Irish people say 'passing use by dates' is the top reason they throw out food at home while 53% don't realise they can freeze food right up to its 'use by' date.



4. LEADING BY EXAMPLE



We support the public sector in its leadership and transition to the circular economy. During 2020 we collaborated on a cross-government level to build capacity, provide guidance and training under the Green Government initiative to support Resource Efficiency Action Plans, Green Public Procurement, and facilitate local waste prevention through the public sector Local Waste Prevention Network (LAPN). With the Irish public sector “Leading by Example” this will drive demand for more sustainable goods and services while reducing the environmental/carbon impacts.

4.1 DELIVERING IN 2020

Resource Efficiency Action Plans

As part of the Green Government initiative, 17 Government Departments prepared their first departmental Resource Efficiency Action Plans (REAPs) in 2019 to address resource use in energy, water and waste. The REAPs act as an audit and review of a department's 'greening' practices. In 2020 the NWPP provided technical support to Government Departments to assess the status of their 2019 REAPs in terms of waste management data and prevention measures and to assist in preparing the 2020 departmental REAPs. Support outputs provided include identifying waste management and prevention targets and actions, updating of the REAP guidance, streamlining the reporting template and the provision of a training webinar. A series of factsheets on waste prevention for public sector offices and highlighting good practice examples, including savings identified, are also being prepared.

Green Public Procurement

The Irish Government's annual public sector spending accounts for 10% to 12% of GDP. Green Public Procurement (GPP) is a process where public authorities seek to source goods, services or works with a reduced environmental impact. In 2020, the NWPP successfully progressed several Green Public Procurement activities required under the 2019 Climate Action Plan.

We worked on the revision of the EPA's 2014 *Green Procurement Guidance for the Public Sector* and sought the views of public sector bodies as well as business representative groups through a targeted consultation which received a strong response and closed in December. The updated guidance will be published in 2021.

A new online GPP training programme for public sector procurers and specifiers was developed. Over the course of 2020, 94 public sector procurers attended the training representing 63 public sector organisations: a mix of local authorities, government departments, state agencies and educational bodies.

With the support of the Office of Government Procurement and the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, we developed GPP monitoring and reporting guidance and a reporting template for government departments who are required to report on GPP implementation in their 2020

departmental annual reports. This guidance was issued to all 17 departments in December with a request that the completed template be returned by end March 2021.

Local Authority Prevention Network

The Local Authority Prevention Network (LAPN) supports the NWPP's priority area of local waste prevention, and its objective is to build waste prevention capacity at local and community level. The network provides strong outreach. Analysis of 2019 LAPN grants showed that 60 projects led by 24 local authorities engaged over 1 million citizens.

Local authorities are provided grant-aid of up to €20,000 following a competitive funding call. Technical support for delivery of the projects is provided through NWPP funding by the Clean Technology Centre at Munster Technological University and there are opportunities to network to exchange knowledge.

There were three themes for the 2020 funding call: supporting paint reuse, fostering the repair economy and an open call for innovation projects. Following an evaluation of applications, fifteen local authorities were successful in obtaining funding of €89,040 to carry out 36 community circular economy initiatives. Some of the 2020 funded projects are highlighted below.

Reuse and Repair of Musical Instruments

Initially established by Fingal County Council in 2019 and replicated by Monaghan County Council as a LAPN project in 2020, the repair and reuse of musical instruments has been a great success in both local authorities. It had been noticed in Fingal County Council that old instruments, many of which were in good working order, were being disposed of at their recycling centres. Through developing a collection and repair service, over 60 instruments from guitars, banjos, fiddles, mandolins, keyboards and a drum kit have been re-homed in the first two years with a variety of community organisations benefitting.

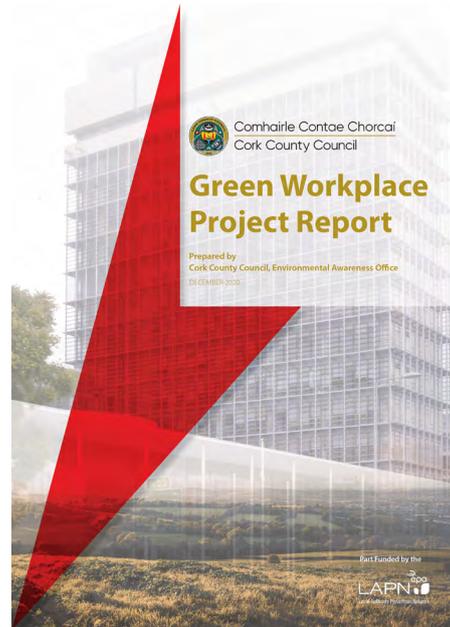
Paint Reuse Projects

Eight local authorities received funding for paint reuse projects. These projects included a partnership between three local authorities to develop paint prevention focused promotional materials; feasibility assessments in two local authorities to look at potential for setting up new paint reuse operations and in other local authorities establishing paint reuse operations in collaboration with social enterprises. Through evaluating the experiences of those involved in these paint reuse projects; guidance materials will be produced to provide other local authorities with best practice information for establishing other such local initiatives.



Local Authority Green Workplace

The measuring and monitoring of resource use underpin waste prevention and the circular economy. This is reflected in the requirement of government departments to develop Resource Efficiency Action Plans (REAPs) under the Green Government initiative launched in 2019. Cork County Council initiated a project to gather detailed information from several of their local authority buildings on waste generation and water consumption. The findings of this work have been synthesised in a Green Workplace Project Report. This outlines the key findings, benchmarks and recommendations for reducing the environmental impacts of the sites examined. The findings have been incorporated into a green workplace software package, which collates energy, waste and water data, and is now being rolled-out across all Cork County Council buildings.

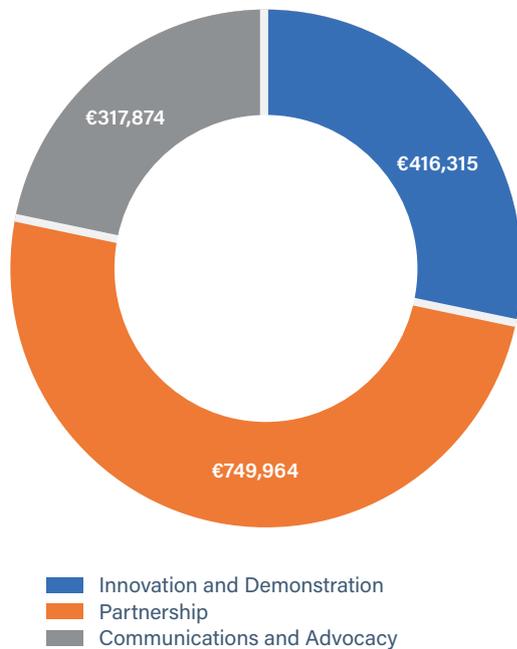


External Review of LAPN

LAPN was established in 2009 with the ambition of building capacity to deliver waste prevention initiatives through local authorities. Given the changes in local authority structures and the increased national policy focus on circular economy and climate action, the NWPP contracted for an external review of the programme in 2020. The programme will be reconfigured in 2021 as part of the development of the New Circular Economy Programme, taking the external review findings into consideration.

5. FUNDING & GOVERNANCE

The NWPP is a Government of Ireland initiative and operates through EPA actions and through external activities funded by the programme. Programme funding in 2020 was provided by the Department of Environment, Climate & Communications from the Environment Fund and was disbursed through contracting arrangements, grant agreements and sponsorships. Total expenditure was €1.48M. The figure below shows the breakdown of expenditure by NWPP activity pillars.



- Innovation and demonstration expenditure includes the Green Enterprise: Innovation for a Circular Economy funding call, Small Business Innovation Research, support for circular economy tools (www.repairmystuff.ie, TREE and FreeTrade Ireland), campus waste characterisation, development of sectoral supports for construction & demolition and Green Public Procurement, and food waste prevention business innovations.
- Partnership expenditure includes grant-aid to strategic partners including the Rediscovery Centre, Irish Manufacturing Research (CIRCULÉIRE), Irish Farmers Association (Smart Farming), Community Resources Network Ireland and the Local Authority Prevention Network.
- Communication and advocacy include all outreach activities such as publications, conferences/webinars, Stop Food Waste (consumer facing food waste prevention programme) and media campaigns.

The table below shows the NWPP 2020 cost areas.

NWPP cost areas	2020 expenditure
Programmes & Grants (e.g. partnerships, Green Enterprise, LAPN)	€899,696
Consultants and Contractors (e.g. technical support to programmes such as Stop Food Waste and development of guidance and training)	€478,607
Communication activities including events, campaigns and publications	€90,849
Sponsorships (including Tidy Towns, Green Awards, Upcycle competition)	€15,000

Over the course of the year, the EPA Board reviews and approves the work of the NWPP. A Memorandum of Funding Agreement between EPA and DECC defines the strategic collaboration and financial controls in place between the two organisations. The NWPP has financial controls in place for funding beneficiaries and all NWPP procurement is in line with government procedures. The NWPP is subject to audit from the EPA Internal Audit Unit; DECC Internal Audit Unit; and the Comptroller & Auditor General.

The EPA and DECC recognise a collective responsibility to ensure an effective system of internal financial controls is maintained to comply with statutory obligations applicable to the provision of funding. During 2020 the EPA developed an audit methodology for NWPP grant recipients and conducted an audit on a sample of 2019 grant recipients.

The EPA and DECC maintain strong cooperation on the NWPP to ensure alignment between programme actions and policy development & implementation.

Technical advice is provided for the programme by the National Waste Prevention Committee – membership as follows:

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Department of Environment, Climate & Communications
- Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine
- Chambers Ireland
- Chartered Institution of Waste Management
- Clean Technology Centre at Munster Technological University
- Regional Waste Management Planning Offices
- Community Resources Network Ireland
- Engineers Ireland
- Enterprise Ireland
- Health Service Executive
- Ibec
- IDA Ireland
- Irish Environmental Network
- Irish Farmers' Association
- Irish Waste Management Association
- Small Firms Association

Further information on the NWPP can be viewed here:

<https://www.epa.ie/environment-and-you/circular-economy/>

An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

Tá an Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil (GCC) freagrach as an gcomhshaoil a chaomhnú agus a fheabhsú mar shócmhainn luachmhar do mhuintir na hÉireann. Táimid tiomanta do dhaoine agus don chomhshaoil a chosaint ar thionchar díobhálach na radaíochta agus an truaillithe.

Is féidir obair na Gníomhaireachta a roinnt ina trí phríomhréimse:

Rialú: Déanaimid córais éifeachtacha rialaithe agus comhlíonta comhshaoil a chur i bhfeidhm chun torthaí maíthe comhshaoil a sholáthar agus chun díriú orthu siúd nach gcloíonn leis na córais sin.

Eolas: Soláthraimid sonraí, faisnéis agus measúnú comhshaoil atá ar ardchaighdeán, spriocdhírthe agus tráthúil chun bonn eolais a chur faoin gcinnteoireacht ar gach leibhéal.

Tacaíocht: Bímid ag saothrú i gcomhar le grúpaí eile chun tacú le comhshaoil atá glan, táirgiúil agus cosanta go maíthe, agus le hiompar a chuirfidh le comhshaoil inbhuanaithe.

Ár bhFreagrachtaí

Ceadúnú

Déanaimid na gníomhaíochtaí seo a leanas a rialú ionas nach ndéanann siad dochar do shláinte an phobail ná don chomhshaoil:

- saoráidí dramhaíola (m.sh. láithreáin líonta talún, loisceoirí, stáisiúin aistrithe dramhaíola);
- gníomhaíochtaí tionsclaíocha ar scála mór (m.sh. déantúsaíocht cógaisíochta, déantúsaíocht stroighne, stáisiúin chumhachta);
- an diantalmhaíocht (m.sh. muca, éanlaith);
- úsáid ghlanscartha agus scaoileadh rialaithe Orgánach Géinmhodhnaithe (OGanna);
- foinsí radaíochta ianúcháin (m.sh. trealamh x-gha agus radaiteiripe, foinsí tionsclaíocha);
- áiseanna móra stórála peitрил;
- sceitheadh fuíolluisce;
- gníomhaíochtaí dumpála ar farraige.

Forfheidmiú Náisiúnta i leith Cúrsaí Comhshaoil

- Clár náisiúnta iniúchtaí agus cigireachtaí a dhéanamh gach bliain ar shaoráidí a bhfuil ceadúnas ón nGníomhaireacht acu.
- Maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar fhreagrachtaí cosanta comhshaoil na n-údarás áitiúil.
- Caighdeán an uisce óil, arna sholáthar ag soláthraithe uisce phoiblí, a mhaoirsiú.
- Obair le húdarás áitiúla agus gníomhaireachtaí eile chun dul i ngleic le coireacht chomhshaoil trí chomhordú a dhéanamh ar líonra forfheidmiúcháin náisiúnta, díriú ar chiontóirí, agus maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar fheabhsúcháin.
- Cur i bhfeidhm rialachán ar nós na Rialachán um Dhramhthrealamh Leictreach agus Leictreonach (WEEE), um Shrian ar Shubstaintí Guaiseacha agus na Rialachán um rialú ar shubstaintí a ídíonn an ciseal ózóin.
- An dlí a chur orthu siúd a bhriseann dlí an chomhshaoil agus a dhéanann dochar don chomhshaoil.

Bainistíocht Uisce

- Monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht aibhneacha, lochanna, uisce idirchreasa agus cósta na hÉireann, agus screamhuiscí; leibhéal uisce agus sruthanna aibhneacha a thomhas.
- Comhordú náisiúnta agus maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar an gCreat-Treoir Uisce.
- Monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar Cháilíocht an Uisce Snámha.

Monatóireacht, Anailís agus Tuairisciú ar an gComhshaoil

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht an aeir agus Treoir an AE maidir le hAer Glan don Eoraip (CAFÉ) a chur chun feidhme.
- Tuairisciú neamhspleách le cabhrú le cinnteoireacht an rialtais náisiúnta agus áitiúil (m.sh. tuairisciú tréimhsiúil ar Staid Chomhshaoil na hÉireann agus Tuarascálacha ar Tháscairí).
- Rialú Astaíochtaí na nGás Ceaptha Teasa in Éirinn
- Fardail agus réamh-mheastacháin na hÉireann maidir le gás ceaptha teasa a ullmhú.
- An Treoir maidir le Trádáil Astaíochtaí a chur chun feidhme i gcomhair breis agus 100 de na táirgeoirí dé-ocsaíde carbóin is mó in Éirinn.

Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil

- Taighde comhshaoil a chistiú chun brúnna a shainnithint, bonn eolais a chur faoi bheartais, agus réitigh a sholáthar i réimsí na haeráide, an uisce agus na hinbhuanaitheachta.

Measúnú Straitéiseach Comhshaoil

- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar thionchar pleananna agus clár beartaithe ar an gcomhshaoil in Éirinn (m.sh. mórfheananna forbartha).

Cosaint Raideolaíoch

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéal radaíochta, agus measúnacht a dhéanamh ar a oiread is atá muintir na hÉireann gan chosaint ar an radaíocht ianúcháin.
- Cabhrú le pleananna náisiúnta a fhorbairt le haghaidh éigeandálaí ag eascairt as tairmí núicléacha.
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar fhorbairtí thar lear a bhaineann le saoráidí núicléacha agus leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.
- Sainseirbhísí cosanta ar an radaíocht a sholáthar, nó maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar sholáthar na seirbhísí sin.

Treoir, Faisnéis Inrochtana agus Oideachas

- Comhairle agus treoir a chur ar fáil d'earnáil na tionsclaíochta agus don phobal maidir le hábhair a bhaineann le caomhnú an chomhshaoil agus leis an gcosaint raideolaíoch.
- Faisnéis thráthúil ar an gcomhshaoil ar a bhfuil fáil éasca a chur ar fáil chun rannpháirtíocht an phobail a spreagadh sa chinnteoireacht i ndáil leis an gcomhshaoil (m.sh. Timpeall an Tí, Mapaí Radóin).
- Comhairle a chur ar fáil don Rialtas maidir le hábhair a bhaineann leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíoch agus le cúrsaí práinnfhreagartha.
- Plean Náisiúnta Bainistíochta Dramhaíola Guaisí a fhorbairt chun dramhaíl ghuaiseach a chosc agus a bhainistiú.

Múscailt Feasachta agus Athrú Iompraíochta

- Feasacht chomhshaoil níos fearr a ghiniúint agus dul i bhfeidhm ar athrú iompraíochta dearfach trí thacú le gnóthais, le pobail agus le teaghlaigh a bheith níos éifeachtúla ar acmhainní.
- Tástáil le haghaidh radóin a chur chun cinn i dtithe agus in ionaid oibre, agus gníomhartha leasúcháin a spreagadh nuair is gá.

Management and Structure of the EPA

Tá an ghníomhaíocht á bainistiú ag Bord Iáinimseartha, ar a bhfuil Ard-Stiúrthóir agus cúigear Stiúrthóirí. Déantar an obair ar fud cúig cinn d'Oifigí:

- An Oifig um Inbhuanaitheacht Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Forfheidhmíthe i leith cúrsaí Comhshaoil
- An Oifig um Fhianaise agus Measúnú
- An Oifig um Chosaint Radaíochta agus Monatóireacht Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Cumarsáide agus Seirbhísí Corparáideacha

Tá Coiste Comhairleach ag an nGníomhaireacht le cabhrú léi. Tá dáréag comhaltáir air agus tagann siad le chéile go rialta le plé a dhéanamh ar ábhair imní agus le comhairle a chur ar an mBord



OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK WITH US

We want to work with others to drive Ireland's Circular Economy through **national-level, strategic programmes** with high visibility and influence.

We want to engage with:



We have opportunities for innovation funding, networking and partnering through our priority areas:



Food Waste



Construction & Demolition



Plastics



Agriculture



Resources & Raw Materials



Local Waste Prevention

TO FIND OUT MORE:

Email us: nwpp@epa.ie

Website: <https://www.epa.ie/environment-and-you/circular-economy/>

Follow us on twitter: [@EPAIreland](https://twitter.com/EPAIreland)