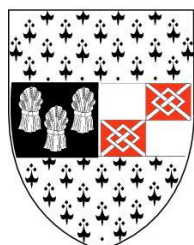


Report on Actions undertaken by Kilkenny County Council in 2019 in support the All Ireland Pollinator Plan



Kilkenny
County Council

Comhairle Chontae
Chill Chainnigh



Aug 2019

Below is a summary of the actions taken by Kilkenny County Council in 2019 as part of our commitment to support the All Ireland Pollinator Plan. This includes taking actions in our own work programmes and also supporting other sectors such as schools, Tidy Towns Groups, Businesses, Gardeners, Church Groups etc to take actions.

Framework Agreement Signed

In March 2019 Kilkenny County Council was the first local authority in Ireland to sign a Framework Agreement with the National Biodiversity Data Centre to formally commit to supporting the Plan.



Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, Cllr, Eamon Aylward and Chief Executive Colette Byrne signing a framework agreement with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan to formalise Kilkenny County Councils long term commitment to support pollinators

- A Pollinator Committee, reporting to Director of Services Mary Mulholland, and co-ordinated by the Heritage Officer, was established to devise a work programme to support pollinators, with representatives from the following Council Depts; Parks; Environment, Corporate, Area Engineers, Water Services. The committee meets quarterly.
- The Elected Representatives had agreed in 2018 that Council should adopt the garden bumblebee (*Bombus hortorum*) as an emblem to demonstrate our commitment to supporting pollinators. The Heritage Office commissioned a logo of the bee in 2019, along with branded tee-shirts and badges. These were distributed at appropriate events throughout the year such as the St. Patricks Parade and the Iverk Agricultural Show (24th Aug).
- The Heritage Officer gave a talk to the Kilkenny Tidy Towns Forum on supporting pollinators in towns and villages (27th Feb).
- A radio advert raising awareness about pollinators was commissioned by the Heritage Office and aired on local radio station KCLR from 13 – 23rd March
- The Heritage Officer was interviewed about pollinators on “*Ceol agus Comhra*” on Community Radio Kilkenny City (15th March)
- The Heritage Office, in partnership with the Parks Dept, commissioned surveys of the flora & habitats at County Hall & Dunmore Landfill, in order to identify how the Council can best manage these areas to support pollinators.



Wildflowers, including the bee orchid (right), at Dunmore Landfill

- The theme for the Kilkenny St. Patricks Day Parade 2019 was “Bring Back the Bees”. Prizes for best bee/pollinator float from a school and a community were provided by the Heritage Office. The prizes comprised a free visit from an ecologist to give advice on making their school/community pollinator friendly and to develop their own Pollinator Plan.



“Bring Back the Bees” was the theme of the Kilkenny St. Patricks Day Parade 2019

- “Managed for Wildlife” signs distributed to Tidy Towns groups by the Heritage Office to be erected to show that they are managing areas for pollinators
- Pollinator advice brochures distributed to community groups
- The Heritage Officer gave a talk to the Kilkenny Tidy Towns Forum on work the Council has been doing to support pollinators (25th July)
- The Environment Awareness Officer disseminated copies of the Junior Pollinator Plan to schools participating in the Green Schools Programme
- The Fairytale Festival co-ordinated by Kilkenny County Council and BEAT FM at Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum (July 19th) had a pollinator theme.



Fairytale Festival at Woodstock Gardens

- Heritage Office contacted the 9 Golf Clubs and Pitch and Putt Clubs in the County and provided copies of the “Pollinator Friendly Management of Golf Courses” guidelines produced by the NBDC in association with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland encouraging them to support pollinators.
- Kilkenny County Council supported the Local Authority Pollinator Award in the National Tidy Towns competition. The Heritage Office contributes €500 to the prize fund, and the Heritage Officer chairs the award committee.
- The Parks Department has identified, and is mapping, areas of grassland which will be managed for pollinators. This includes Pocke Valley and Piltown By-Pass.
- The Kilkenny Area Office purchased pollinator friendly plants for Kilkenny City with funding from the Local Authority Biodiversity Action Grant
- The Parks Department planted pollinator friendly hedges at Weir View Housing Estate as part of the Taking in Charge process
- Kilkenny County Council has incorporated actions to support pollinators in its Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024
- The Parks Department has instigated pollinator friendly planting at key areas in Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum including in the Winter Garden, Upper Terrace and Walled Garden.
- The Heritage Officer met with the grounds keeper in Kilkenny College to provide advice and information on pollinators
- The Environment Section of Kilkenny County Council added a condition to the Kilkenny County Council Graveyard Grant Scheme to encourage applicants to undertake actions to support pollinators in graveyards. All 35 recipients were supplied with a copy of the brochure “Faith communities; Actions to help pollinators.”

Resources

The primary source of funding for these initiatives was from Kilkenny County Council. Additional supporting funding was provided through the National Biodiversity Action Plan Local Authorities Fund, and the County Heritage Plan Fund provided by the Heritage Council.

However, it has been identified by our Pollinator Committee that additional resources will be required from 2020 onwards to implement changes to our grass mowing regimes and a reduction in the use of pesticides, both of which require increased staff and funding resources.

A note on National Oversight of All Ireland Pollinator Plan

10 Local Authorities in the Republic of Ireland have currently signed up to support the All Ireland Pollinator Plan, according to Dr. Una Fitzpatrick, Senior Ecologist at the National Biodiversity Data Centre. A full list of Council's which have committed to supporting the Plan can be found on the National Pollinator Plan website <https://pollinators.ie/councils/>

Under the Framework Agreement established by the National Biodiversity Data Centre with Local Authorities (LA's), LA's are obliged to update the NBDC on any actions/initiatives undertaken in November each year, and the NBDC compiles this data into an annual report which is published in December each year. See the following for the 2018 report <https://www.pollinators.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/All-Ireland-Pollinator-Plan-Year-3-review-2018.pdf>

Dearbhala Ledwidge

Heritage Officer

23rd August 2019