

**Comhairle Contae  
Fhine Gall**  
Fingal County  
Council

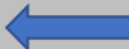



**National Enforcement Priorities  
Progress Report for 2024**

28<sup>th</sup> February 2025

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National Enforcement Priority: <b>GOVERNANCE - RMCEI Review &amp; Reporting</b>	
Local Authority:	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RMCEI Plan frequency of reviews should be bi-annual at a minimum. The review frequency and the outcomes should be included in the progress report.</li> <li>• RMCEI reviews should evaluate progress of NEPs and assess if planned inspection targets are on track.</li> <li>• RMCEI reviews should provide reasons for any deviation from targets, planned activities or objectives set out in the plan.</li> <li>• RMCEI reviews should be presented to the Director of Services/Senior Engineer/Senior Management/Environment Strategic Policy Committee at least once during the earlier part of the year, to facilitate plan review.</li> <li>• The RMCEI Plan, RMCEI Data Return and NEP Progress Report should be submitted to the EPA on schedule.</li> </ul>	<p>The RMCEI Plan 2024 was presented to Fingal County Council Environment Strategic Policy Committee on 26th March 2024, where the objectives of the plan, the national environmental enforcement priorities, the planned inspections and the resources allocated to the implementation of the plan were discussed with the SPC members. Topics raised for discussion by members included Section 4 Discharge Licenses, the End-of-Life Vehicles project and neighbour to neighbour noise issues.</p> <p>There are three Sections in the Environment Department that deal with Waste, Water Quality and Air &amp; Noise, reporting to the Senior Engineer. Each section has a spreadsheet to track activities associated with the RMCEI plan. Regular team meetings are held to review actual activity against targets and to adjust and re-prioritise targets based on progress and staff resources available. The tracking spreadsheets are used to fill in the quarterly returns (including litter) to NEMIS (National Environmental Management Information System). A summary of the quarterly NEMIS figures is included in the monthly Chief Executive Report to the elected members.</p> <p><u>Mid-Year Review</u></p> <p>In July 2024 each of the contributing Sections to the RMCEI Plan were requested to provide an update of inspections carried out at mid-year and to indicate whether inspection targets needed to be amended up or down due to unforeseen circumstances (resource constraints, staff changes, focus on particular projects, additional legal cases). Inspections numbers were revised down in 54 categories, upwards in 15 categories and remained unchanged in the remaining categories. The revised inspections numbers and the reasons for their change were submitted to the Senior Engineer and Director of Services who signed off on the changes in September 2024 with a record kept on file for audit purposes.</p> <p>The 2023 RMCEI Data Returns were submitted on NEMIS on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The 2023 NEP Progress Report was submitted on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The 2024 Inspection Plan was submitted on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (extended deadline due the late notification of the National Agricultural Inspection Programme).</p>

National Enforcement Priority: <b>GOVERNANCE - Environmental Complaint Handling</b>	
Local Authority:	Activities
 <b>Looking back at the year</b>	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment of a dedicated Environmental Complaints Co-ordinator.</li> <li>• Implementation of the National Environmental Complaints Procedure.</li> <li>• Appropriate systems in place for recording and tracking environmental complaints.</li> <li>• Adequate resources assigned to complaint investigation in the RMCEI Plan.</li> <li>• Appropriate handling of EPA referred complaints and Section 63 Notices received by the local authority.</li> <li>• Ensuring timely investigation of complaints and reporting of complaints outcomes. This should include progress on complaints</li> </ul>	<p>Environmental Complaints are received through several channels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By Email or Phone through the Fingal Customer Care Unit</li> <li>• By email from See it Say it app via the EPA</li> <li>• By email to the Fingal Environment Division's email address</li> <li>• Representations from Councilors/Elected representatives on behalf of their constituents</li> <li>• Internally from staff from other departments e.g. Planning, Operations</li> </ul> <p>The complaints are acknowledged (except for anonymous complaints) and are uploaded on the Council's CRM system which is used to assign complaints to relevant staff for investigation and to track progress.</p> <p>Not all complaints are investigated, for example Neighbour to Neighbour noise complaints or anonymous complaints with insufficient information e.g. location or complaints where the Council has no enforcement power e.g. Aircraft noise. Where complainants' details are included in the complaint, an update is provided by the investigating officer.</p> <p>No Section 63 notices were received by Fingal County Council from the EPA during 2024.</p> <p>For waste enforcement, 229 complaints (82% of complaints received) related to backyard storage of waste or burning of waste and as such were relevant to the Household &amp; Commercial Waste National Priority. 11% of complaints (31) related to fly-tipping / dumping and were relevant to the illegal activity National Priority.</p> <p>For Air and Noise, 34 noise complaints (25% of noise complaints received) were in respect of noise from construction sites, which is relevant to the Air &amp; Noise Control (Planning) National Priority, as noise from construction sites is typically controlled via condition as part of planning permissions. In respect of air complaints, 12 air complaints (23%) related to smoke from chimneys and were relevant to the Solid Fuel National Priority.</p>

<p>outstanding from previous years, the complaint investigation rate and the timeframes for complaint investigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of complaints numbers and inspection intelligence that may have potential impacts on NEPs and other thematic areas.</li> <li>• Details of environmental complaint handling should be provided in the appropriate section of the NEP Progress Report.</li> <li>• Reporting of complaint numbers and investigation for each thematic area in the RMCEI Data Returns.</li> </ul>	The table below provides an overview of the work carried out on complaints during 2024:			
		Waste	Air & Noise	Water Quality
	No of complaints	279 (excl abandoned cars investigated by litter section)	191 (138 noise complaints, 53 air complaints)	77
	No of site visits	722 visits, estimated 366 days or 2 FTE – 44% or resources available for inspections	200 (includes close out of 2023 complaints) - estimated at 200 days = 91% FTE.	117 (19.2% x 1 FTE)
No of enforcement actions	67 Directions under S14 WMA 91 warning letters	14 x Air/Noise complaints warning letters	1 x WP Act Section 23 Notice 1 x WP Act Section 12 Notice 7 warning letters	

NEP Assessment Criteria		
<b>A</b>	<b>For regulated / authorised sites, a compliance rate</b> documented and compared over the previous years, and analysed or explained;	CORE
<b>B</b>	Demonstrate <b>appropriate site selection</b> methodology and inspection implementation and/or early interventions;	
<b>C</b>	Demonstration <b>that non-compliances/unauthorised activities are being detected</b> and are being followed up – and some progress in the NEP is shown;	
<b>D</b>	Clear example(s) of a positive <b>environmental outcome(s)</b> – something was achieved to improve the environment (not simply reached a target of inspections);	
<b>E</b>	Clear <b>useful learning in a NEP area</b> (positive or negative e.g. what to do, or what not to do, or identification of illegal sites or unauthorised operators);	Complementary
<b>F</b>	<b>Collaborative work</b> with WERLA, NTFSO, RWMPO, LAWPRO, EPA, Catchment Care Projects, inter-departmental within the local authority or with other local authorities; cross cutting NEP collaboration;	
<b>G</b>	Demonstration of a <b>proactive approach, or innovation</b> in dealing with a problem or demonstration of an <b>enforcement curiosity</b> ;	
<b>H</b>	<b>Compliance promotion and awareness</b> raising activities;	
<b>I</b>	Activities on <b>data validation, data analysis, systems development, website development</b> ;	
<b>J</b>	<b>Significant enforcement actions/prosecutions</b> and the outcomes such as remediation, sharing of lessons learnt to aid national consistency of enforcement;	
<b>K</b>	<b>Case studies written up and shared</b> that encompass any of the above properties.	

National Enforcement Priority:		WATER – Pressures from Agriculture (Farmyards) - slurry/soiled water collection and storage													
Local Authority:	Activities														
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p>														
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspections of farmyards in areas where agriculture is identified as a significant pressure, with a lesser percentage in other areas, as defined in the National Agriculture Inspection Programme for local authorities.</li> <li>• Undertake targeted agricultural inspections specific to the pollutants of concerns (P, N and organics),</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>FARM SELECTION FOR INSPECTION</u></b></p> <p>A GIS analysis of farms was undertaken using the Land Parcel Information System. The purpose of the analysis was to characterise the nature of farming in Fingal and how it relates to the NEP agricultural priorities, summarised as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Wholly inside LAWPRO and ASSAP active areas</th> <th>Outside LAWPRO and ASSAP active areas (either partially or wholly)</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>All Farms</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>566</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Herd Numbers with Bovine herds and buildings/farmyards</td> <td>51</td> <td>97</td> <td>148</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Of the 97 herd numbers with a presence outside a LAWPRO/ASSAP catchment, only 75 are in catchments where agriculture has been identified as significant pressure. Further screening farms from this set of 75 for inspection based on high PIP-P and PIP-N mapping, pathways for nutrients, farm size and stocking density renders the annual target of 74 unachievable without widening the selection criteria.</p> <p><b><u>Farm inspections in 2024</u></b></p> <p>18 initial GAP Inspections (Farmyard / Farmland) covering, where appropriate, regulations relating to slurry management and spreading were undertaken. The target set by the EPA for 2024 was 41, however it was not possible to achieve this target due to the difficulty in appointing additional staff to undertake the task. This number does not include seven plus re-inspections and four</p>				Wholly inside LAWPRO and ASSAP active areas	Outside LAWPRO and ASSAP active areas (either partially or wholly)	Total	All Farms			566	Herd Numbers with Bovine herds and buildings/farmyards	51	97	148
	Wholly inside LAWPRO and ASSAP active areas	Outside LAWPRO and ASSAP active areas (either partially or wholly)	Total												
All Farms			566												
Herd Numbers with Bovine herds and buildings/farmyards	51	97	148												

<p>using the EPA Pollution Impact Potential (PIP) maps and EPAs Targeting Agriculture Measures map.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take all necessary steps to ensure compliance, including follow up and close out of non-compliances detected by inspections or complaints.</li> <li>• Cross reporting of non-compliances to DAFM.</li> <li>• Document and report results for all farm inspections to the EPA.</li> </ul>	<p>reconnaissance surveys which covered 39 Herd numbers in both the open and closed periods for slurry, farmyard manure and soiled water spreading.</p> <p>Of the 18 Initial Full GAP Inspections during 2024, three were issued with warnings and cross reported. Penalties were applied in two of these cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• non provision of records</li> <li>• failure to minimise generation of soiled water</li> <li>• poaching</li> <li>• stacking silage/haylage bales too high</li> <li>• effluent discharge</li> </ul> <p>One additional farm was issued with an advisory relating to slurry storage capacity and two other farms are still under review in this regard.</p> <p>Two inspections gave rise to several follow up inspections (n=7).</p> <p>One provided good environmental outcomes whereby a pollution incident was monitored over time to ensure return to background levels across a range of parameters. The farmer, in response to enforcement action, engaged Teagasc and ASSAP to review of farmyard management practices and is reported to be entering into funding initiatives through the waters for life project for farmyard improvements.</p> <p>The other farm which required several follow up inspections is still under review and is being monitored regarding potential impacts on the adjacent stream.</p> <p>Environmental outcomes were positive in the other farms which were cross reported in that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one farmer had undertaken not to use an old yard which had poorly maintained guttering and downpipes. This farmer also indicated that they would not use a sacrifice field again where poaching was a problem.</li> <li>• Another farmer who had marginal storage capacity undertook to reduce stocking density and to desist from spreading slurry during the closed season.</li> <li>• Another farmer indicated they would comply in future with the 2 bale stacking rule for haylage and silage.</li> </ul>
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Results for all inspections undertaken are provided in a separate reporting spreadsheet “Reporting on Farm Inspections 2024 v1.3”, submitted to the EPA.

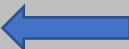
Fingal County Council Staff have been actively engaged in training attending and being involved in agricultural training webinars via TEAMS in June and October. A new agricultural inspector ringfenced into agricultural inspections was appointed in October 2024, who attended the NAIP training day in Gurteen Agriculture College in October 2024.

OUTREACH

During the 2024 closed period for spreading slurry and farmyard manure, Fingal County Council was active on social media space and on its website, reminding farmers of their obligations under GAP regulations relating to the management and spreading of organic fertilisers. This will continue during 2025 during the open period for spreading organic fertilisers.

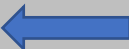
National Enforcement Priority:		<b>WATER – Pressures from Agriculture (Farmland) - slurry and fertiliser spreading</b>	
Local Authority:		Activities	
 Looking back at the year		<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</b></p>	
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspections of farmlands in areas where agriculture is identified as a significant pressure, with a lesser percentage in other areas as defined in the National Agriculture Inspection Programme for local authorities.</li> <li>• Undertake targeted agricultural inspections specific to the pollutants of concerns (P, N and organics), using the EPA Pollution Impact Potential (PIP) maps and EPAs Targeting Agriculture Measures map.</li> <li>• Inspections/surveillance of farmlands to monitor that spreading of slurry and fertilisers does not take place in the closed season or under unsuitable weather and/or soil conditions.</li> <li>• Take all necessary steps to ensure compliance, including follow up and close out of non-compliances detected by inspections or complaints.</li> <li>• Cross reporting of non-compliances to DAFM.</li> <li>• Document and report results for all farm inspections to the EPA.</li> </ul>		<p><b><u>NATIONAL PRIORITY: Agricultural Pressures on Farmlands (2024)</u></b></p> <p>In 2024, the Council systematically monitored land-spreading practices during the prohibited period. Slurry and fertiliser applications in the Delvin and Matt/Bracken Catchments were closely monitored, with checks ensuring buffer zone adherence, particularly in vulnerable areas.</p> <p>Farm inspections targeted the Delvin and Matt/Bracken Rivers, aligning with the National Enforcement Priority. Targeted waterbodies were identified using EPA PIP maps, local knowledge, and LAWPRO Priority Areas for Action. The Delvin Catchment was a focal point due to its designation as a Local Authority Priority Area for Action in the 3rd Cycle River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>The Council collaborated with Meath County Council and LAWPRO on water sampling events in the Delvin Catchment. Future surveys will include the “Catchment Walk Field Sheet” for recording various environmental observations.</p> <p>Two Initial Focused Vantage Point Farm Inspections for Slurry Management during the closed period covered 39 farms. Follow-up inspections after the closed season also covered the same farms. Compliance levels were generally high in 2024, with one farm found spreading slurry out of season, leading to an advisory, warning, and cross report.</p> <p>The Delvin was surveyed twice in January 2024, covering prohibited and early “open” periods. Observations included evidence of slurry spreading, stockpiling of manure, and field conditions. Similar surveys were conducted for the Matt in January 2024.</p>	

	<p>Overall compliance with GAP regulations was high, but non-compliance was identified, leading to penalties for one farm. Results were documented in a separate report to the EPA. The Council will continue this approach in 2025, focusing on non-compliance with GAP regulations and liaising with DAFM. Select farms will undergo full GAP Inspections based on reconnaissance survey observations.</p> <p>During the 2024 closed period for slurry and manure spreading, the Council used social media and its website to remind farmers of their GAP regulation obligations.</p>
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<b>National Enforcement Priority:</b>		<b>WATER – Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems / Septic Tanks</b>
<b>Local Authority:</b>	<b>Activities</b>	
 <b>Looking back at the year</b>	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</b></p>	
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake the allocated number of DWWTS/Septic Tanks inspections under the National Inspection Plan.</li> <li>• Take all necessary steps to follow up and ensure advisory notices are closed out.</li> <li>• When selecting households for inspection, consider areas where LAWPRO have issued letters of grant eligibility and homeowners have not taken action.</li> <li>• Undertake engagement activities, as specified in the National Inspection Plan, to ensure homeowners understand how to maintain septic tanks and the risks to human health and water quality from poorly maintained systems.</li> </ul>	<p>At start of 2024 remaining inspections under NIP Plan were; 30 no. Zone 1 (high risk) inspections (53 in total (23 completed)) and 9 no. Zone 3 (low risk) inspections (10 over plan (1 completed in 2023)). This is the third year. One Advisory Notice issued in 2023 was open from previous inspection at start of 2024 but was closed 22.3.24 (Q1).</p> <p>The EPA were notified, in March and April respectively, that two DWWTS Inspectors registered have left the employment of Fingal County Council in 2024. No new staff have completed training in 2024.</p> <p>There were 13 no. Sites allocated for inspection in 2024 and inspections carried out. 2 sites (zone 1) were deferred in 2024 and contact information on file to assist in re-scheduling them. The remaining 11 sites were chosen based on previous methodology (high risk first, local priority areas, nearest to stream/older house, clusters targeted). New sites required reconnaissance inspections, and two inspections were completed in 2024 for these new sites.</p> <p>In total 9 no. high risk (Zone 1) sites and 2 no. low risk (Zone 3) sites were inspected (no shared septic tanks) with two people (one inspector) and no re-inspections were required in 2024. One zone 3 inspection was carried out in Loughshinny catchment as part of beach management plan risk assessments. The second zone 3 site was chosen due to its location adjacent to the Delvin River (local priority river). Wells were found at a few sites but if in use for drinking water homeowners were referred to EPA website and information on annual testing provided. Letters were issued at least 10 days ahead of inspection date. The letter was reviewed to highlight the information required for homeowner to confirm attendance on date of inspection by telephone with inspector.</p> <p>When dates were planned for these inspections, the letters were sent by registered post to homeowner with a leaflet to explain the documentation requirements to be viewed by the inspector and the type of inspection. Two letters were deferred inspections at Eircodes identified from 2023 list. Two reminder letters issued (revisits) where no answer was received on date of inspection in letter. All sites planned were undertaken but in general no confirmations were received ahead of inspection date, but inspection was facilitated by owner and paperwork/information followed up afterwards (when available). This has delayed the uploading of inspection paperwork and submissions on EDEN. No</p>	

evidence of leaks was observed on the dates inspected and some homeowners had emptied their tanks ahead of the inspection date following receipt of the letter notifying them of the inspection. At the end of 2024 there are 26 inspections remaining to be carried out (7 no. Zone 3 sites and 19 no. Zone 1 sites).


There are three sites on record in Fingal as having received a letter from LAWPRO since 2022. Only one owner has made contact on receipt of that letter. No applications received for grant for septic tank upgrade/remediation in 2024. Several enquiries were made asking for an inspection (approximately 15 no.) following revision of the Septic Tank grant which was updated on our website and circulated on social media also. A survey provided by the EPA was also shared and circulated internally and externally.

National Enforcement Priority: WATER – Discharge Licences / Misconnections	
Local Authority:	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all licence conditions are consistent with the requirements of the Surface Waters and Groundwater regulations.</li> <li>• Undertake risk-based inspections/monitoring of Section 4 licences. Inspect all licences in areas where discharge licensing is a significant pressure.</li> <li>• Ensure that all licensable discharges are authorised by a Section 4 licence.</li> <li>• Ensure compliance with discharge licence conditions and follow up and close out non-compliances and LAWPRO referrals on Section 4s and misconnections.</li> <li>• Follow up on misconnections that have been identified as impacting on water quality to ensure that works are undertaken by property owners to remediate such misconnections.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discharge Licences:</b></p> <p>In 2024 the Council carried out a desk top review of 16 of its existing trade and sewage effluent discharge licences. The outcome of this review identified that some licences require a licence review in 2025. The desk top review also identified the need to carry out at least 5 TEDL audits in 2025 which will be added to the 2025 RMCEI Plan. The selection of companies for audit was arrived at taking a risk-based approach (poor compliance/potential impact to waterbody).</p> <p>The Council monitors all licensed discharges taking a risk-based approach and including catchments where Section 4 discharges are listed as a significant pressure to the waterbody.</p> <p>Sampling frequencies are increased if the licensee is failing to comply with its license and posing a risk to a waterbody.</p> <p>Where identified non-compliant licence holders and unauthorised discharges will be addressed in accordance with the requirements of the Act including enforcement actions if deemed necessary.</p> <p>In 2024 13 enforcement letters were issued to non-complaint licence holders, which may lead to legal proceedings in 2025 if the licensee’s fail to address the identified non-compliances.</p> <p><b>Misconnections:</b></p> <p>Misconnections are proving to be a significant pressure to surface waters within the functional area of Fingal. In 2024 the Council became aware of at least 6 significant misconnections/illegal dumping to stormwater networks within the functional area of Fingal which are still under investigation.</p>

In 2024 the EPA found evidence of sewage contamination in the River Ward at Swords while carrying out Q value testing of Fingal's rivers. Investigations to date have proved to be extremely labour intensive and included the surveying over 250 metres of the stormwater network and testing every stormwater connection within this section of the stormwater network. Surveys to date included desktop planning checks, traffic management, lifting manholes, taking of water samples, obtaining laboratory results, dye testing drainage systems serving residential and commercial properties and requesting the owners of offending properties to correct misconnections were identified. To date 1 significant pollution source (beauty parlour) has been identified and removed which will result in an improvement to the River Ward.

The Council has similar projects on-going in Loughshinny, Rush, Dublin 15 and Balbriggan and are hopeful of identifying pollution sources in Balbriggan, Rush and Loughshinny.

Pollution sources in D15 are proving very difficult to trace as pollution events to this network are infrequent and most likely involve sporadic dumping of wastewater to the stormwater at any time of the day. The Council have been closely monitoring a section of network in D15 (almost daily) to try and ascertain the nature of the effluent when it is discharged which if detected at the time of discharge may give some clue to the nature of business that is discharging the effluent.

<b>National Enforcement Priority:</b>		<b>WATER – Local Priorities and Water Quality Monitoring</b>
<b>Local Authority:</b>	<b>Activities</b>	
 <b>Looking back at the year</b>	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</b></p>	
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete statutory monitoring for WFD surveillance and operational monitoring, investigative monitoring and bathing water monitoring.</li> <li>• Inspect and follow up any local issues (not covered by other NEPs), including non-compliances with water quality standards and LAWPRO referrals.</li> <li>• Address any climate related water quality issues e.g. impacts due to extreme weather events</li> <li>• Monitoring and enforcement of private drinking water supplies.</li> <li>• Engage with LAWPRO and Regional Committees on the implementation of the RBMP Actions.</li> <li>• On publication of the 3rd Cycle RBMP, develop schedule for the local authority led Areas for Action outlining when work will start on each AFA.</li> <li>• Take all necessary steps to risk assess and close out complaints relating to water quality.</li> </ul>	<p><b>WFD Monitoring:</b></p> <p>Fingal County Council sampled 19 WFD monitoring locations on 4 occasions in 2024 (76 samples), with the monitoring network having increased from 16 WFD monitoring locations in 2022 to 19 in 2024. The additional monitoring locations were added to facilitate PFOS/PFOA monitoring. Fingal County Council co-ordinated sampling with Meath County Council at 2 locations where the Local Authorities are bordered by the River Delvin.</p> <p><b>Investigative Monitoring:</b></p> <p>As well as routine non statutory WFD monitoring river monitoring, investigative monitoring resources were targeted on trying to protect bathing waters, when it was discovered that there were likely sources of pollution adversely affecting bathing water quality at Balbriggan and Loughshinny. Fingal County Council strategically assigned resources to investigate possible pollution sources at 5 locations namely Loughshinny, the River Bracken, the Delvin River, the Huntstown Stream and the Tankardstown Stream. Additionally, investigative samples were taken for many isolated pollution incidents throughout the year.</p> <p>In addition to investigating potential impacts to bathing waters, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 2024, Fingal County Council also led a collaborative RBMP river sampling project in the Delvin Catchment which spans both Fingal and Meath County Councils. Fingal County Council together with Meath County Council and LAWPRO sampled 30 locations within the Delvin Catchment. A number of these locations were also assessed using the small stream risk score (SSRS). The results of this monitoring project were used to steer future investigations within the Catchment.</p>	



**Bathing Water Monitoring:**

The annual bathing water season commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2024 and ended on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2024 where Fingal County Council monitored and managed their 10 designated bathing areas in accordance with the 2008 Bathing Water Regulations.

The 2024 Bathing Water season included 9 sampling rounds of bathing water at 9 of the designated bathing areas and 16 sampling rounds at the designated bathing area Front Strand, Balbriggan.

Sampling frequency at Front Strand, Balbriggan was increased for 2024 as the Council was required to provide evidence of a significant “change” in bathing water quality at Balbriggan which Fingal County Council believed was achieved following the removal of a significant pressure from the contributing catchment in 2023. The EPA confirmed in Q4 2024 that Fingal County Council was successful in its application for a change in bathing water status at Balbriggan based on the significant improvements in Balbriggan Bathing water in 2023 and 2024. Reclassification of this bathing water will be completed at the end of 2025 bathing water season.

In terms of managing bathing waters most individual bathing water sample results throughout the 2024 bathing season were determined to be of “excellent” water quality status.

In total the Council issued 2 prohibition notices during the bathing season. Both incidents arose on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 2024 (Storm Lilian) following reports from Uisce Eireann of 2 stormwater overflows. These notices were issued as a precaution due to stormwater overflow incidents at Portmarnock Strand Pumping Station and Deer Park Pumping Station, Howth.

**Blue Flag Beaches:**

Water quality at Fingal County Council’s two blue flag designated bathing areas, namely Portmarnock, Velvet Strand and Donabate, Balcarrick Beach remained at “excellent” water quality for 2024.

Accordingly, applications for Blue Flag awards at Portmarnock and Donabate will be made again for next year, subject to relevant 2025 application criteria set by An Taisce.


Collaborative cross departmental/agency water pollution investigative work took place prior to and during the 2024 bathing season, which enabled Fingal County Council to address foul sewer misconnections to the surface water drainage network.

In terms of environmental awareness Fingal County Council initiated environmental educational campaigns to cover the area of dog fouling to try and prevent controlling certain pollution sources that could cause a failure of a bathing water. This year two educational events took place on 4<sup>th</sup> June (Front Strand beach, Balbriggan) and 7<sup>th</sup> August (Loughshinny beach) which included the free distribution of dog waste bags to interested dog owners who were visiting the beaches by Dog Wardens, Litter wardens and Environment staff.

**Private Water Supplies:**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2024 Fingal County Council had 4 registered Private Water Supplies (PWS) however 1 of these supplies was connected to mains water circa April 2024. Prior to connection to the mains supply this private water supply was check sampled in April 2024.

The remaining 3 private water supplies were check sampled twice and audit sampled once in 2024.

National Enforcement Priority: <b>WASTE - Tackling illegal waste activities &amp; Multi-Agency Sites/Operators of Concern</b>	
Local Authority:	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'. Note that Criteria A (to provide a compliance rate and comparison with previous years) is not specifically applicable under this NEP. The activity reported under the following RMCEI data categories should be considered under this NEP: 6.1.2, 6.1.5, 6.2.1 - 6.2.6, 6.2.11.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted inspections and follow up enforcement actions of unauthorised collectors and site operators using intelligence from waste data flows, complaints and other available data.</li> <li>• Co-ordinate enforcement activity with other regulators through the NWESC, NIECE, Garda Multi Agency forums and by multi-lateral concerted actions. Other regulators include inter alia, Social Welfare, An Garda Síochána and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners.</li> <li>• Relevant Anti-Dumping Initiatives implemented.</li> <li>• Traceability requirements to be enforced at Permitted/Licensed sites.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Multi-Agency Sites/Operators of Interest</u></p> <p>Multi-Agency Approach - During 2024, sites where illegal waste activities were taking place were identified using local knowledge, waste enforcement intel, complaints from the public and intelligence from An Garda Síochána (AGS) and the EPA. 1 site involving a follow up inspection of ELV storage required AGS assistance in 2024.</p> <p>A site illegally storing C&amp;D waste was identified based on a complaint from by a member of the public and enforcement action is ongoing to clear the site, with remediation works underway.</p> <p>Another complaint from a member of the public led to the discovery of a waste operator using an illegal waste transfer station to store waste. Officers were able to have early intervention as a result of help from the public via the initial complaint and the site has been closed down.</p> <p>In response to a complaint forwarded by the EPA in 2023, an inspection was carried out at a site where it was found that a quantity of hazardous waste was being illegally stored. A reinspection was carried out in 2024 following a Section 14 direction issued in 2023 and found that the waste was still present. Enforcement action was escalated due to poor engagement by the site operator, resulting in a Section 55 Notice being issued. A legal file was prepared when the Section 55 Notice was not followed. New owners took over the site and agreed to remove the hazardous waste. In court the legal case was withdrawn following removal &amp; disposal of the hazardous waste, and payment of costs were awarded to FCC.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on those who are facilitating the unauthorised treatment of waste.</li> <li>• Keep the Convictions Register up to date.</li> </ul>	<p>No significant multi agency inspections were carried out in 2024 due to lack of resources. This will be addressed early 2025, with 1 site already identified for a multi-agency inspection. AGS assistance is required for high priority sites for health &amp; safety reasons.</p> <p><u>Illegal Activity</u></p> <p><u>Checkpoints</u></p> <p>In 2024, a checkpoint strategy was drawn up in consultation with DCC and AGS. 13 checkpoints were conducted with An Garda Síochána at locations identified based on previous successful checkpoints, AGS intelligence, and known dumping hotspots. A number of these checkpoints were completed in collaboration with waste enforcement officers from Dublin City Council. A key benefit of multi-agency checkpoints allowed information to be shared with all involved parties and to target key areas of illegal waste activities. In general, trucks and small vans were prioritised and most vehicles inspected were compliant, with a few required to provide proof of authorised disposal at local recycling centres. No FPNs were issued to waste permit holders at checkpoints in 2024 demonstrating a high level of awareness among those involved in the movement of waste materials ensuring they were appropriately authorised and adhering to WCP conditions. It is proposed to have multi-agency checkpoints regularly with AGS /RSA/DCC in 2025.</p> <p><u>Surveillance &amp; Patrols</u></p> <p>Officer surveillance and patrols were utilised to assess illegal waste sites and to provide up to date intel on the ground prior to inspections and clearance operations. 104 patrols were carried out throughout the year at known dumping hotspots.</p> <p><u>Sites of Interest</u></p> <p>Regular patrols were carried out at known dumping hotspots including Bay Lane, Powerstown Road, Barnlodge, Kileek Lane, and Baskin Lane. The operations department were then tasked with clearing any waste found dumped at these sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stockhole Lane</b>- A multi-agency checkpoint was conducted at Stockhole lane as it is a dumping hotspot.</li> <li>• <b>Silloge Green</b> - Patrols were regularly conducted at the NCT and NTC sides as there was ongoing illegal waste activity on site including dumping of waste on a regular basis interfering with the traffic flow to the NCT test centre. There are significant H &amp; S issues for officers in carrying out their work here and AGS were required for any direct intervention with the residents. Ongoing monitoring is proposed for 2025.</li> </ul>
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• **Dunsink Lane (Observatory side)** – There was minimal incidents of dumping on this side of Dunsink lane since the hedges have been cut back, CCTV installation and anti-dumping signage were erected, occasional patrols were conducted, and illegally dumped waste was rarely noted here.

• **Dunsink Lane (Ratoath Road Side)** - This area is still a hot spot for dumping. Regular patrols were undertaken to identify offenders from inspection of dumped waste with warning letters issued as required. CCTV was employed at Dunsink Lane to prevent illegal waste activity by capturing acts of dumping which enabled WEOs to issue warning letters to registered vehicle owners.

#### Anti-Dumping Initiative

An extensive Illegal dumping awareness cinema campaign was continued during 2024 to educate the public regarding illegal dumping and illegal waste collectors. The campaign was run across 5 cinemas over a 5-month period in 2024 with 460,000 delivered admissions. The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness among the public regarding the importance of ensuring that the waste collector taking your waste has a valid waste collection permit to prevent illegal dumping.


The Fingal County Council Waste Presentation Byelaws and the Fingal County Council Waste Presentation Byelaw Project 2023-2025 ad campaign was rerun across 5 different cinemas in 2024. The importance of the Waste Presentation Byelaws for managing and segregating waste, to help increase recycling rates and reduce illegal dumping was highlighted. The ad emphasised the requirement to participate in a waste collection service, to bin share or to bring your waste to an authorised facility so that household and commercial waste is managed and disposed of properly.

Both ads were shown on the Fingal County Council website and social media sites to promote awareness around illegal dumping, illegal waste collectors and the Waste Byelaws. Mayo County Council contacted FCC about the possibility of using the ad and permission was given to use the cinema ad to help raise awareness regarding illegal waste collectors.

#### Proactive Approach

Waste enforcement officers built on the previous year's engagement with AGS and continued to implement multi agency operations as and when required to tackle illegal waste activities. This was evident in the multi-agency planning and implementation of tasks in particular checkpoints to ensure a visible presence at key locations and routes where waste was being transported. New WEO's called into garda stations to introduce themselves to local Gardai and community liaison officers to establish and maintain key contacts for future multi-agency operations. As a result Gardai are now fully on board to assist WEO's with man in the van inspections and checks at known blackspot locations.

	<p>10 legal cases were brought to a conclusion in 2024, the same number as the previous year. Successful outcomes were achieved in all cases via the probation act, convictions and the covering of FCC legal costs. Of the 10 cases, 5 resulted in a conviction, 4 resulted in the Probation act and 1 case was withdrawn. In total €25,134.37 in costs were awarded to FCC which is an increase from 2023 when €21,512 in legal costs were awarded to FCC. In total, €42,500 in fines were applied to 7 of these cases. The convictions register was kept up to date as several legal proceedings concluded throughout the year.</p>
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<b>National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Construction and Demolition Activity</b>	
<b>Local Authority:</b>	<b>Activities</b>
 <b>Looking back at the year</b>	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'. The activity reported under the following RMCEI data categories should be considered under this NEP: 6.1.1-6.1.4 (C&amp;D waste facilities), 6.1.7, 6.1.12 (C&amp;D waste collectors), 6.2.10.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk based inspections of construction sites using WERLA intelligence and inspection templates.</li> <li>• Inspection of Regulation 27 sites of origin and destination to include material notified under Regulation 27 being accepted at WFP/Licensed sites.</li> <li>• Inspection of soil recovery sites to ensure only appropriate materials accepted.</li> <li>• Validation and cradle to grave inspection of WCP/WFP and licensed sites dealing with C&amp;D waste.</li> <li>• Identify and resolve issues concerning the selling of waste materials (such as crushed</li> </ul>	<p><u>Risk Based Inspection of Construction and Demolition Sites</u> (including relevant detail relating to the assessment of Resource &amp; Waste Management Plans)</p> <p>Inspections were carried out at a combination of Major Public Projects and Strategic Housing Development sites. All sites inspected were found to be compliant with no further enforcement action required.</p> <p>Due to available resources a total 7 Major Public Projects and Strategic Housing Development sites were selected from the commencement notices list and inspector's knowledge of active sites. Sites included Part XI development for Fingal County council and Strategic housing developments.</p> <p>Compliance inspections were carried out at an additional 6 construction sites, which were assessed for compliance with submitted Resource and Waste Management Plans (RWMP) or the management of waste streams where no RWMP was in place. The 6 sites were targeted based on commencement notices and inspector's knowledge of active sites with all inspections carried out following the C &amp; D inspection template provided by WERLA. The number of C&amp;D sites assessed in 2024 was down from 20 sites in 2023 due to a lack of resources. A recruitment drive is currently underway to fill a number of vacancies to ensure inspection targets are increased for 2025.</p> <p>All 13 sites inspected were found to be compliant with one site waiting for documents to demonstrate compliance by the developer. This follows a similar pattern for 2023 where all 30 sites inspected were compliant.</p> <p>Reduction in inspections/targeted sites was mainly due to resources. The number of referrals of planning applications and planning compliance reports, submitted by our Planning Department, increased significant in 2024, which had a noticeable impact on</p>

<p>concrete) without EoW decision from WFPs/Licensed sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on research data and local knowledge, identify authorised operators for further investigation and/or enforcement action.</li> </ul>	<p>resources available for site inspections. 237 planning applications were referred in 2024 (vs 151 in 2023 – a 44% increase), and 192 Planning compliance reports were referred in 2024 (vs 116 in 2023 – a 55% increase).</p> <p><u>Site inspection and Data Validation of Waste Collection Permit (WCP)/Waste Facility Permit (WFP) (including Soil Recovery Sites)</u></p> <p>Enforcement activity of WFP’s had to be curtailed in 2024 due to significant resource issues, with priority placed on AR validation of all facilities in conjunction with the inspection of permitted facilities handling C&amp;D waste and metals. There was only one soil recovery facility in operation in Fingal during 2024, and the site was inspected twice during 2024 with no non-compliances detected. Inspections confirmed that all waste acceptance procedures on site were undertaken in compliance with EPA Guidance on waste acceptance criteria at authorised soil recovery facilities.</p> <p>Two MRFs accepting skip waste (bulky waste and mixed C&amp;D) operate under Waste Facility Permit and their Annual Returns were validated following a desktop review and extensive correspondence with the operators. Both facilities were inspected (accompanied by WERLA), with a non-compliance issued to one facility over waste classification / wrong use of LoW codes. The inspections included the completion of Cradle to Grave Assessments. During the Cradle to Grave inspections, the WERLA document - ‘Waste Collection Permit Inspection Form, Cradle to Grave Verification’ was employed to determine compliance. Both inspections were compliant, with both sites found to have good waste recording systems in place to ensure all relevant information was recorded enabling verification. Waste collection dockets were filed chronologically and easily accessible during both inspections.</p> <p>AR validations were carried out whereby WCP holders had their AR checked through a desktop validation, with a number of operators, including C&amp;D operators, undergoing a more thorough inspection. Cradle to grave inspections were also carried out at 2 WCP holders, for LoW code 17 05 04, whereby both were noted to be compliant.</p> <p><u>Regulation 27 Notifications Activity</u></p> <p>75 single case notifications of Regulation 27 for soil and stone were received in 2024. 47 of the notifications had a source site only in Fingal, 16 had both source and receiving sites in Fingal and 12 had the receiving site only in Fingal.</p> <p>In addition, 16 registrations were made using the new National Criteria for greenfield soil and stones, 8 with only the site of origin in Fingal, 3 with both origin and destination sites in Fingal and the remaining 5 with only the destination site in Fingal.</p> <p>Overall, for soil and stone, 91 notifications/registration were made, with 55 having a site of origin only, 19 both site of origin and destination and 17 having the site of destination only.</p>
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Given the large number of notifications, sites inspections did not take place for each notification. Instead, inspections were prioritised based on the quantity of material notified and whether the site had already been inspected under a different notification. Priority was also given to registrations under the National criteria, for which a desktop review was undertaken systematically, with a particular focus to ensure that the sites of origin were greenfield and the receiving sites had planning permission.

Overall, 16 desktop reviews of national registrations were made, with cross communications with Meath Co Co where a registration was in respect of sites (origin / destination) both in Fingal and Meath. The desktop reviews led Meath Co Co to request deregistration of 2 sites. Fingal Co Co requested deregistration of 1 case where the receiving site in Fingal did not have valid planning permission.


For the receiving sites (36 cases, across 13 sites of destination), a number of receiving sites were notified for large quantities from various sites of origins, with 4 destination sites accounting for 26 out of 36 notifications and for 635,000m<sup>3</sup> notified out of a total of 655,000m<sup>3</sup>. The 2 sites with the most material notified (in excess of 250,000m<sup>3</sup> each) were inspected three times each, one of these inspections carried out in conjunction with WERLA and the EPA. The other 2 sites with quantities just over 45,000m<sup>3</sup> each were inspected once and twice respectively. The 10 remaining notifications accounted for a total notified of 20,000m<sup>3</sup> across 9 sites, 3 of which did not proceed, and 4 of the remaining 6 were inspected. Overall 13 site inspections at receiving sites were conducted, with 8 out of 10 sites having received by-product inspected.

A minor non-compliance was detected at one of the receiving sites, with a small amount of concrete visible in 1 load supposed to originate from a greenfield site of origin. However, the receiving site had a procedure in place for removing small contamination, and the potential issue with the site of origin was flagged with Dublin City Council who conducted a site inspection and did not detect any issues at the site.

For sites of origin, a total of 75 notifications/registrations were made, in respect of 33 separate sites of origin. Of these 33 sites, 23 were inspected at least once, with a few sites inspected twice due to the larger number of notifications made. Of the 10 sites not inspected, the majority were submitted in late 2024 and resources and timelines did not allow site inspections to take place in 2024. The percentage of sites of origin inspected in 2024 was 70% (23 of 33 sites of origin inspected). The percentage of sites of destination inspected was 80% (8 out of 10, when excluding 3 sites which were withdrawn / deregistered), but covered 98% of the volumes notified.

#### Detection of Two Unauthorised C&D facilities

During the last quarter of 2024, 2 facilities were identified where C&D waste was found to have been illegally deposited, one of which was suspected of containing cement asbestos. Investigations into these 2 sites are at an early stage, with the parties involved in the transport of the waste to the site not yet identified and the process of identifying and contacting landowners underway. These investigations will continue in 2025.

National Enforcement Priority: <b>WASTE – End of Life Vehicles (ELV) &amp; the Waste Metal sector</b>	
Local Authority:	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’. The activity reported under the following RMCEI data categories should be considered under this NEP: 6.1.1-6.1.4 (ELV &amp; metal waste facilities), 6.1.12 (ELV &amp; metal waste collectors), 6.1.14.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk based inspections of Authorised Treatment Facilities and other ELV sites using WERLA/EPA intelligence and inspection templates (at least one inspection per annum of permitted/Licensed sites).</li> <li>• Multiagency inspections to be carried out as appropriate and/or as identified by the local government sector and the EPA.</li> <li>• Validation and inspection of records for WCP/WFP and licensed operators dealing with ELV and metal waste including traceability checks as per the relevant legislation and conditions.</li> <li>• Take all necessary steps to resolve non-compliant issues.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Site inspection and data validation of End of Life Vehicles Facilities</u></p> <p>AR validation and inspection of 3 Authorised Treatment Facilities (ATFs) took place during 2024.</p> <p>Non-Compliance letters were issued to all 3 ATFs for late submission of their annual returns. AR validations were carried out in conjunction with the Regional Waste Management Planning Office (RWMPO) for 1 of the facilities while the other 2 were conducted by Fingal County Council. The AR validation with the RWMPO was found to be inconclusive due to deadlines not being met by the operator, while the other 2 were validated following lengthy exchanges with the permit holders.</p> <p>Site inspections were conducted at the 3 ATFs where a comprehensive assessment of traceability measures was undertaken. Using WERLA’s inspection forms it allowed the WEO’s to determine the destination of all hazardous material and that the facilities were handling and disposing of hazardous material in an authorised manner. Waste such as tyres, batteries, catalytic converters, and liquids associated with the depollution of cars were inspected and their traceability measured and verified. Export documentation, waste disposal dockets as well as environmental monitoring records were all examined at each ATF.</p> <p><u>Unauthorised ELV Facilities</u></p> <p>Extensive work took place in previous years in Fingal in stopping illegal activity and clearing sites at a large number of unauthorised ELV Facilities, and 2024 started with no known unauthorised ELV sites.</p> <p>One new site was detected during 2024 and enforcement action has begun at the site.</p> <p>Follow up visits were carried out at 3 previous sites and did not detect car dismantling activities.</p>

Site inspection and data validation of Waste Metal Collectors and Facilities


In addition to the 3 ATFs, two companies operate waste transfer stations for the collection of Metal under a WFP. One of the three ATFs also handles large volumes of metals.

Data validation for the 2 metal operators was led by the RWMPO, with attendance from a Fingal County Council Waste Enforcement Officer. Both Annual Returns were desktop validated.

All the sites were inspected in 2024, with a particular focus on non-compliances detected in 2023. Fingal were accompanied by an officer from WERLA during the inspections. The WERLA inspection templates and FCC WFP inspections templates were used during these inspections, with a particular focus paid to WEEE leakage.

Some of the metal transfer facilities have been making good progress informing customers of their limits in terms of consequential waste. This has been in the form of stamps on documents and documentation for signing. This has reduced the number of non-commercial users of the waste transfer facilities in the local authority's area. Previous enforcement action has promoted compliance in this area.

As a direct result of inspections, facilities had improved record-keeping and traceability, promoting compliance.

<b>National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Waste Collection - Household &amp; Commercial</b>	
<b>Local Authority:</b>	<b>Activities</b>
 Looking back at the year	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'. The activity reported under the following RMCEI data categories should be considered under this NEP: 6.1.1-6.1.4 (HH &amp; Commercial waste facilities), 6.1.10, 6.1.11, 6.1.12, 6.1.13, 6.2.9.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspection of WCP operators for provision of 3 bin system.</li> <li>• Inspections of identified household and commercial sectors requiring appropriate intervention to ensure proper use of 3 bin system, segregation and use of authorised collectors.</li> <li>• Focus on waste acceptance at authorised facilities to help combat misclassification of wastes and ensure waste acceptance criteria are complied with.</li> <li>• AER Validations on WCP and WFP priority lists.</li> <li>• Establishment of a register under Section 34C of the Waste Management Act, as required.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Waste Collectors</u></p> <p>Desktop AR validations of 110 Waste Collection Permits (WCP) were carried out. A number of operators were found to be late submitting their Annual Returns, and were contacted to submit it within a specified timeframe. Failure to submit it by the allocated deadline led to fixed payment notices issued to 6 waste collection permit holders for breaches of their waste collection permit. Of the 110 WCP's, 92 were validated and the remaining 18 marked inconclusive. This shows a validation rate of 83% similar to 80% in 2023, and an improvement over the 77% validation in 2022. 10 waste collection permits were inspected for compliance with permit conditions. These 10 premises were selected based on a list provided by WERLA and on officers' knowledge of operators. One inspection detected non-compliances from an operator and a S34 non-compliance letter was issued.</p> <p><u>Household Waste</u></p> <p>When investigating public complaints of household waste storage and backyard burning, WEOs reviewed compliance with Fingal County Councils Waste Bye-Laws. 54 warning and advisory waste bye-laws letters were sent to non-compliant households notifying them of their obligations under Fingal County Council's Segregation, Storage and Presentation of Household and Commercial Waste Bye-Laws 2020, an increase from 23 issued in 2023. 52 Section 14 of the WMA 1996 direction letters were issued in 2024 directing people to cease storing/burning waste and to remove waste. Householders were directed to the My Waste website for information regarding the correct segregation of waste.</p> <p>Where enforcement action was not feasible in cases of extreme poverty, Focus Ireland were contacted to assist with the matter, which led to the waste being cleared and a regular waste collection service put in place.</p> <p>In addition, representatives from different Fingal County Council Departments including Planning, Housing, Property services, Rates and Air &amp; Noise were engaged to assist with waste issues.</p>

### Section 34C Register

In 2023, Fingal County Council completed a register of households availing of a waste collection service, pursuant to Section 34C of the Waste Management Act 1996, as amended, from which a reverse register was created, to identify households who did not have a waste collection service. The reverse register produced identified far more households than expected, suggesting issues in the data collated.

A quick review identified that some households with a collection system did appear on the reverse register, due to the collectors not having listed them as their customers in their original return. This was due to some households being recorded in another Local Authority area, but also because the customer was not identified as a household customer in cases where the service was provided through a management agency.

In 2024 Amtivo were hired to analyse the reverse register and identify large clusters of addresses where there was suspicion that the collector's data was wrong. Once confirmed by checking on site it could then be reported back to the collectors to fix the issue on their database, so that their next return would be more accurate. This process will be finalised in Q1 2025, following which an updated register and reverse register will be produced.

The Amtivo dashboard was used in 2024 to visualise the reverse register addresses which enabled the carrying out of Household door to door inspection on a sample of 22 addresses across 3 housing estates. The presence of WEOs carrying out inspection helped raise awareness in the area regarding the obligation to participate in a waste collection service. Ten households had a bin collection service and 8 had bin sharing agreements in place with family or neighbours. The remaining 4 were not compliant with Fingal County Council Waste Bye-laws and enforcement letters were issued to rectify non-compliances with reinspection's planned in early 2025.

### Commercial Waste

In 2024, FCC conducted 80 commercial food waste and dry recyclables inspections across 58 premises encompassing a wide range of premises including restaurants, supermarket delis, hotels, cafes and bars. The focus of these inspections was on the segregation of waste in bins inside the kitchens and outside, authorised disposal of waste oils, a 3-bin system in place and collection by authorised collectors. Premises were identified based on local knowledge, follow up inspections from 2023 and a list of premises suspected of non-compliance provided by WERLA. 7 of the 9 premises provided by WERLA were inspected, with the other 2 premises closed or outside the FCC area.

26 premises were found to be non-compliant on first inspection and enforcement action was undertaken. Common non-compliances included the premises missing a brown bin and insufficient segregation of food waste and dry recyclables. 74% (44) of inspected premises were compliant by end of 2024, an improvement over 67% in 2023. Non-compliant premises are scheduled for followed up inspection in 2025.

Inspection and Data Validation of Waste Collection Permit (WCP<sup>1</sup>)/Waste Facility Permit (WFP)


There are 2 facilities in Fingal operating under a waste facility permit and accepting commercial waste in the form of skip waste. Data validation of these 2 facilities' Annual Return were carried out by Fingal County Council, with both validated.

Inspections of the facilities were carried out and are detailed under the C&D Waste National Priority.

There is only one collector based in Fingal offering commercial kerbside waste collection (and no household collection), and it had its annual return validated (desktop).

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<sup>1</sup> The activity carried out by WERLA on the Household Waste Kerbside Collectors does not need to be reported under the NEP Progress Report. If relevant activity was carried out by the local authorities with the Household Waste Kerbside Collectors, then this should be reported. The permitted waste collectors who collect commercial kerbside waste, but not household waste, remain under the local authorities responsibilities and the activity related to them should be reported on.

National Enforcement Priority: <b>WASTE - Producer Responsibility Initiatives and additional local priorities</b>	
Local Authority:	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'. The activity reported under the following RMCEI data categories should be considered under this NEP: 6.8.1-6.8.9.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EPA and Local authorities continue to identify, inspect and monitor all obligated producers under existing compliance schemes having regard to sectoral and local issues.</li> <li>Inspections of sectors where WEEE takeback is low.</li> <li>Enforcement of producer, retailer and operator obligations under the Deposit Return Scheme Regulations.</li> <li>Inspection and follow up of sites and operators of local concern not covered by the other waste NEPs.</li> </ul>	<p><u>WEEE Regulations</u></p> <p>In 2024, 31 WEEE and 33 Battery Inspections across 35 premises were undertaken. Premises were identified based on retailers with previous non-compliances/follow ups required from 2023, premises without previous inspection records, and WERLA collaboration. Premises selling vapes were targeted due to their disposable nature and their prominence as litter found in the streets. 19 retailers inspected for WEEE and Batteries were non-compliant, frequently missing the correct signage and battery boxes. 16 of the retailers inspected were unregistered. For premises selling vapes 11 of 15 vape shops inspected were non-compliant, and 11 unregistered, with enforcement action underway to achieve compliance. 48% of inspected premises were compliant for WEEE and batteries by end of 2024 which is the same as 2023. Any non-compliant or unregistered premises will be listed for reinspection in 2025.</p> <p><u>Tyres</u></p> <p>21 waste tyre inspections were carried out in 2024 at tyre retailers. 16 premises were identified from the Circol ELT list of revoked/potential retailers and 5 were identified through FCC officers on patrol. One of the five premises turned out to be non-compliant and not on Circol ELT's list. 13 retailers were confirmed as ceased trading, 1 was deemed not obligated, 5 were determined to be compliant, and 2 were determined to be non-compliant. This demonstrates a compliance rate of 72% in 2024 compared to 64% in 2023. The non-compliant retailers are in the process of joining Circol ELT and follow up inspections will be carried out in early 2025 to ensure compliance. Comments were added to inspected retailers on the Circol ELT local authority enforcement portal.</p> <p>WEOs were made aware of illegal dumping of tyres in the FCC area by a complaint from a member of the public and through engagement with the landowners, the site was cleared, and the tyres were disposed of in an authorised manner.</p> <p>WEOs became familiar with the Circol website and registration process which proved essential when inspecting premises, particularly non-compliant retailers where they were guided through their obligations to become registered, and informed where to go to find further information.</p>

### Deposit Return Scheme

In Q3, 5 unregistered sites were identified via the online portal. Section 14 letters were issued, and the 5 sites became compliant with the regulations.

In Q4, two areas were identified following consultation with WERLA as having high non-compliance rates and were targeted for 6 inspections i.e. 1) Take aways & 2) ethnic food/grocery retail outlets. Strong engagement was recorded and all non-complying businesses became registered with Re-Turn. Improved awareness of the scheme and advertising of the nearest reverse vending machine location is now available to customers at these locations, via mandatory signage. The inspections also led to the identification of an unregistered distributor, who has since registered with Re-Turn.

Strong communication between Fingal County Council, WERLA and Re-turn helped to identify operators of concern, non-compliant activities and facilitated the referencing of compliance to the scheme. The online Re-turn portal was maintained and updated as required. FCC will continue to work closely with WERLA during 2025 to improve compliance and increase awareness within the Sector.

### Suspected Major Producers (SMP's)- European Union (Packaging Regulations) 2014 as amended

Going into 2024, 8 suspected major producers were identified in the Fingal area, and 5 previous self-compliers had yet to join Repak.

Of the 8 suspected major producers, 1 was deemed not obligated. Of the remaining 7, 3 are now full members of the scheme, 2 are in the process of joining and 2 have shown very little engagement with Repak but have stated to Fingal County Council their intention to join which is currently being followed up on. Of the 5 previous self-compliers, 4 are now full members of the scheme with the remaining 1 self-complier in the process of joining. This gives a resolution rate of 62% for 2024. This compares to a resolution rate of 50% in 2023 (20 identified, 2 not obligated, 8 joined Repak, 8 engaging with Repak and 2 non-engagement).

This increase in compliance was achieved through communicating directly with the identified companies and strong liaison with our colleagues in Repak. A clear learning from the above work is the benefit of strong and persistent communications with identified major producers to achieve a positive outcome. When dealing with a non-complier, it was noted that frequent and clear communication led to engagement and compliance.

Ongoing collaboration between Fingal County Council, WERLA and Repak helped to check the progress of operators of concern and facilitated the referencing of compliance to the scheme. The Repak online portal was maintained and updated as progress was made to track compliance and measure success.



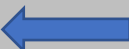
Local Priorities and Other PRIs - Hazardous Waste

From an initial target of 20 a total of 13 hazardous waste inspections were conducted at producers in 2024. The number of inspections had to be reduced from 20 to 13 due to resource constraints (staff shortages).

The 13 premises were identified based on non-compliances from previous years, no recent inspection records, local knowledge, and WERLA communications. FCC requested premises to provide waste docket for the disposal of oil, filters, metals, batteries, solvent paints for review purposes.

10 premises were compliant, 2 were inconclusive and required follow up and 1 was non-compliant. Warning letters were issued to producers who could not provide docket and/or were in breach of Section 32 of WMA 1996 as amended. Of the 13 inspected premises 85% were compliant by end of 2024, similar to the 90% compliance rate recorded in 2023, and an improvement over a 70% compliance rate noted in 2022.

Data uncovered during these inspections will form the basis of inspections to be carried out in 2025. Based on inspections, it is evident that there is a high level of awareness among hazardous waste producers of their obligation to store and dispose of hazardous waste in an authorised manner which is encouraging.

National Enforcement Priority: AIR - Solid Fuel Inspections	
Local Authority:	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackle the sale of non-compliant fuel (including online sales) and its use via compliance promotion, inspection and enforcement of fuel merchants and retailers.</li> <li>• Participate in multi-agency operations investigating the sale of non-compliant fuels.</li> <li>• Carry out awareness programme to promote compliance by increasing the awareness of how the choices people make in heating their homes impacts on their air quality and health and legal obligations.</li> <li>• Establish and/or maintain a list including the number and profile of solid-fuel merchants operating in each local authority area including those using social media platforms to market solid fuels.</li> <li>• Build capacity through engaging, collaborating and sharing with colleagues in other Local Authorities via networks</li> </ul>	<p>In 2024, additional resources were allocated to address shortfalls identified in previous RMCEI Plans across all 5 Air &amp; Noise thematic areas whereby a new Air &amp; Noise team was established in FCC comprising 3 x Executive Scientists. Officers underwent training in Solid Fuel legislation &amp; inspections provided by LASNTG and participated in the Local Authority Implementation Group (LAIG) meetings in April and November 2024. This provided staff with a good basis for carrying out the required inspections in Q4 of 2024.</p> <p><b><u>Retailer Inspections</u></b></p> <p>The first significant action undertaken in 2024 was to populate the Register for Solid Fuel Merchants in Fingal. A total of 36 solid fuel merchants were placed on the register during the year having been identified from internet searches and local knowledge. This is not a final figure and will be added to in the future as more information becomes available.</p> <p>Inspections of Solid Fuel Retailers were carried out in Q4 of 2024 at 15 premises. The sites were chosen based on the type of premises, FCC targeted hardware stores, agricultural supply stores and solid fuel depots. Of the 15 retailers inspected, 10 (67%) were found to be non-compliant due to selling non-registered fuels (coal and wood/biomass products). In addition, 10 (67%) were found to non-compliant with the labelling requirements of the legislation. Inspections also found that 4 premises (27%) were selling loose bagged turf which is no longer permitted. All noted non-compliances were communicated to the retailers on the day of the inspection and through follow-up written warning letters. FCC intends to carry out further follow-up inspections in Q1 of 2025 to ensure compliance which is within the same 'burning season' as Q4 of 2024.</p> <p>The inspections carried out in Q4 of 2024 were an introduction to the retailers, many of whom had not had an inspection previously under the Solid Fuel legislation. The engagements between FCC officers and the retailers were mostly positive and the inspections acted as a learning experience for both retailers and FCC officers.</p> <p>Many of the sites visited were unaware of their responsibilities under the legislation and FCC provided copies of the guidance leaflet for retailers which was developed by DECC in 2022. Following the inspections, one of the retailers was found to be selling coal from an unregistered producer. FCC contacted the EPA team responsible for maintaining the Register of Producers</p>

and working groups and participating in training events.

- Develop and implement a programme for the sampling and analysis of fuel types (this can be carried out per individual local authority, or a joint approach can be adopted with other local authorities).

and Products and was informed that the producer had never been registered and had never engaged with the EPA. FCC engaged with the retailer, and they immediately changed their supplier of smokeless coal products to one who was registered. Further work will be carried out in 2025 to add to the Register for Solid Fuel Merchants in Fingal and increase compliance.

### Solid Fuel Sampling

Fingal Co Co collaborated and participated in a County Dublin-based solid fuel sampling programme in Q4 of 2024 in which staff from the 4 Dublin LAs devised a plan to carry out a coordinated sampling programme across the County on the same date. On the 22nd of October 2024, 41 samples were taken and delivered to an accredited lab in Scotland for analysis. Analysis was carried out for moisture content, ash content and total sulphur. Fingal CC sampled 10 products from 3 different retailers and the results showed that 7 samples (70%) were found to contain more than the 2% Sulphur Content limit. The project developed a series of letters which were issued to Producers and Retailers to communicate the results of the sampling programme and to help increase awareness regarding Solid Fuel Regulations. This work was assisted by a grant received from DECC, building on the experience of previous sampling projects elsewhere and the results obtained will help target future sampling programmes which DECC may undertake.


### Checkpoints

Fingal Co Co officers took part in 2 checkpoints with Gardai and Waste Enforcement staff in Q4. During one of these checkpoints, a van was searched and found to be (legally) carrying coal. The coal was found to have been purchased from a solid fuel depot which was unknown to Fingal CC staff. This led to an inspection being carried out at the premises in question, several non-compliances noted, and further enforcement action being taken to bring the premises into compliance with the regulations.

### Additional Activity

Fingal CC staff undertook online/social media searches to identify sellers of unregistered fuel operating within Fingal. While some operators were identified, they were all found to be based outside Fingal and staff from those local authorities were subsequently informed helping to establish key contacts for future collaboration.

A significant learning from the solid fuel work carried out in Fingal in 2024 was that most of the producers supplying fuel found in the County were based in Northern Ireland. This continues to present significant challenges for enforcement efforts and needs to be addressed at a national level to address the issue in a meaningful way.

National Enforcement Priority: AIR - Air Quality Monitoring Activities and Data Use	
Local Authority:	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the EPA National Ambient Air Quality Unit to:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist EPA to troubleshoot issues at existing air quality monitoring stations, including the nomination and notification to the EPA of a primary and secondary contact person.</li> <li>Assist (where possible, to the best extent possible) EPA to maintain existing and new air quality monitoring stations.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Review air quality data within the local authority functional area to identify and address areas for action due to poor air quality and to prioritise sites/areas for action.</li> <li>Provide public access to air quality data within the local authority functional area including a map to the public for each local authority. As a minimum, a link to the relevant page(s) of the EPA site should be placed on each Local Authority website.</li> <li>Awareness raising campaigns or information on LA websites or social media campaigns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Work with the EPA National Ambient Air Quality Unit to (1) Assist EPA to troubleshoot issues at existing air quality monitoring stations, including the nomination and notification to the EPA of a primary and secondary contact person</b></li> </ul> <p>There are 3 ambient air quality monitoring stations in Fingal, located at Swords, Blanchardstown and Dublin Airport. The Air and Noise team assisted the EPA in troubleshooting at these 3 stations as issues arose during 2024.</p> <p>In January 2024, elevated PM10 readings were recorded at the Blanchardstown air quality monitoring station and the EPA requested the Council to review the issue. Following an investigation by the Air and Noise team, the elevated readings were found to be attributed to a technical issue with the equipment and not as a result of a decrease in air quality at that location. Once the issue was resolved, no further PM10 exceedances were reported at the Blanchardstown air quality monitoring station for the remainder of the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Work with the EPA National Ambient Air Quality Unit to (2) Assist (where possible, to the best extent possible) EPA to maintain existing and new air quality monitoring stations.</b></li> </ul> <p>In 2024, the Air and Noise team carried out a monthly visual check at both the Swords and Blanchardstown monitoring stations to confirm that the monitors were operational and to check for any damage to the stations. (Note: The station at Dublin Airport is managed by the DAA and EPA).</p>

Damage to the air conditioning unit at the Blanchardstown station was reported to the EPA during 2024 following a site check by Council staff. The Air and Noise Team continue to liaise with the EPA to resolve this issue and to ensure the equipment is repaired.

In 2024, the Air and Noise team re-commenced the calibration contract for the Blanchardstown NOx monitor, further to a cessation of the contract due to EHO/HSE staff no longer working in this area.

- **Review air quality data within the local authority functional area to identify and address areas for action due to poor air quality and to prioritise sites/areas for action.**

In 2024, the Air and Noise Team reviewed the ambient air quality bulletins received from the EPA together with the real-time data on the EPA air quality website to identify any issues / sites for actions. In Q4 2024, the EPA issued the Annual High Resolution air quality maps for 2023 for a number of parameters including PM and NO2. These are being reviewed by the Air and Noise team in conjunction with the EPA Air Quality unit to identify any issues / sites for action for 2025.

- ***Provide public access to air quality data within the local authority functional area including a map to the public for each local authority. As a minimum, a link to the relevant page(s) of the EPA site should be placed on each Local Authority website.***

Links to real-time data for the ambient air quality monitoring stations at Swords, Blanchardstown and Dublin Airport have been placed on the Council's website. Information and access to the Air Quality Index for Health and Air Quality Forecast Maps is also available on the Council's website.

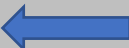
<https://www.fingal.ie/council/service/air-quality-monitoring>


<https://airquality.ie/information/air-quality-index-for-health>

<https://airquality.ie/>

- ***Awareness raising campaigns or information on LA websites or social media campaigns.***

The real-time ambient air quality data link for Fingal was also posted on the Council's social media pages and this is scheduled to continue at regular intervals during 2025.

National Enforcement Priority:	AIR - Environmental Noise Directive (ENDs)
Local Authority:	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the <u>previous reporting year</u> – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide public access to noise maps on Local Authorities' websites to communicate information to the public. The LAs should also provide a link to all Round 4 maps on the EPA website.</li> <li>• Prepare and submit the Annual Noise Action Plan Progress Report for Round 3 of Action Plans to the EPA by 29th February 2024. Annual Noise Action Plan Progress Report should demonstrate progress on the key issues and priority areas for action.</li> <li>• Public consultation on Draft Noise Action Plans. Results of public consultation to be considered when finalising Noise Action Plans (NAPs) 2024-2028. Final Plans to be submitted to the EPA by 18th July 2024.</li> </ul>	<p>Submission of the local authority 2024 Noise Action Plan (NAP) Progress Report by 28th February 2025:</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Please note that the local authority is not required to submit information on the progress of actions under the Noise Action Plan. This information will be submitted separately under the recommended reporting template submitted to the EPA Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring.</p> <p><b>Activities to communicate information to the public on noise maps and provide public access to noise maps on the local authority's website including a link to all Round 4 maps on the EPA website.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round 3 and Round 4 Noise Action Plans for FCC, including the latest Strategic Noise Maps are available on the FCC website:</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.fingal.ie/environment/noise-action-plan">https://www.fingal.ie/environment/noise-action-plan</a>.</p> <p><b>Progress on the completion and submission of Noise Action Plans (NAPs) 2024-2028 to the EPA team in the Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Dublin Agglomeration Noise Action Plan 2024 - 2028 was prepared jointly by the 4 Dublin LAs, including Fingal County Council, and was finalised by 18/07/2024 in line with statutory requirements and submitted to the EPA.</li> </ul>

<b>National Enforcement Priority:</b>		<b>AIR - Air &amp; Noise Control (including Planning)</b>
<b>Local Authority:</b>		<b>Activities</b>
 <b>Looking back at the year</b>		<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-planning assessments of air and noise impacts associated with proposed developments.</li> <li>• Environment staff assist in follow up of air and noise issues to ensure compliance with planning conditions, including use of Sections 107 and 108 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, the Air Pollution Act and liaising with planners where planning enforcement is more appropriate.</li> </ul>		<p>During 2024, the Air &amp; Noise team assessed 103 planning applications for Air &amp; Noise concerns following referral from the Planning Department. In Q2, the Air &amp; Noise team and the Senior Engineer in the Environment Department met with senior planning staff to standardise the referral process. This involved identifying the type and scale of applications to be referred with reference to existing major noise sources (transport and industry) and potential development impacts (construction and operational) to help streamline the process and increase efficiencies.</p> <p>The Air &amp; Noise team developed a series of standard planning conditions for air &amp; noise using guidance from the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) and the EPA NG4 Guidance Document (noise). Staff familiarised themselves with a series of Standards regularly referenced in conditions including BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites, ProPG: Professional Practice Guidance on Planning &amp; Noise, BS 8233:2014 Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings.</p> <p>The Air &amp; Noise team undertook relevant training by completing the Institute of Acoustic's Certificate in Environmental Noise Measurement during 2024. This training allowed staff to better critically review consultants' acoustic assessment reports which often accompany planning applications.</p> <p>In 2024, FCC developed a 'Good Practice Guide for Construction &amp; Demolition' document which outlines a risk-based approach to designing the contents of all Construction &amp; Demolition Plans submitted as part of planning compliance. This document offers certainty to developers as to the requirements of Fingal Co Co.</p> <p>Fingal CC staff participated in pre-planning meetings with applicants and outlined the requirements of any acoustic assessments deemed necessary as part of the application process.</p> <p>Throughout the year FCC completed 20 planning compliance inspections on a variety of permitted activities which ranged from noise/dust-control issues on C&amp;D sites to noise control at music concerts.</p>

These inspections assessed compliance with planning conditions which are enforced by the Planning Enforcement (PE) section with technical input from the Air & Noise team, where necessary. A strong working relationship with the PE section is vital and numerous joint inspections were undertaken in 2024.

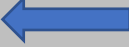
The Air and Noise team also reviewed 75 compliance submissions for air and noise aspects of existing planning permissions. These were referred by the Planning Compliance (PC) team and included a significant number of Construction and Environmental Management Plans (CEMP) which the Air and Noise team reviewed to determine if sufficient dust and noise mitigation measures had been provided for by applicants during the construction process.

One planning-related topic which appeared regularly throughout 2024 was noise associated with newly installed Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs). Through planning referrals, the Air & Noise team identified locations where ASHPs were to be installed as part of a proposal. Acoustic assessments were requested as 'Further Information' and they identified potential impacts on noise sensitive locations near to the developments. The developers were then required to suggest alternative technology or introduce mitigation measures such as noise barriers to help reduce noise impacts.

Investigation of Air/Noise complaints includes a search of any relevant planning permissions granted at the location. This review of previously granted conditions allowed the Air & Noise team to continuously update these conditions to improve their effectiveness.

An example of the planning referral process in FCC being effective relates to a case of a member of the public applying for permission to construct a one-off dwelling near a motorway. The application was assessed by the Air & Noise team and when compared to the Strategic Noise Maps (Dublin Agglomeration) was found to be in an area considered to potentially have high noise levels. An acoustics report was requested as further information. The applicants arranged for a suitably qualified acoustic consultant to carry out an assessment and prepare a report outlining the noise levels and recommendations. The report demonstrated elevated noise levels which required the use of higher specification construction materials and the installation of a Noise Barrier Wall to provide an outdoor area with appropriate sound levels. The application was approved and specific conditions relating to the noise mitigation measures were included in the decision.



<b>National Enforcement Priority:</b>		<b>Air - Ongoing Air and Noise Enforcement Work</b>
<b>Local Authority:</b>		<b>Activities</b>
 <b>Looking back at the year</b>		<p><b>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</b></p>
<p><b>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspect and carry out any required enforcement actions of facilities/activities as specified in the RMCEI template and/or as otherwise determined by the Local Authority including sites registered under Solvent, Deco Paints and Petroleum Vapours Regulations and sites licensed under the Air Pollution Act.</li> <li>Make available on their websites, up-to-date registers under Solvent and Deco Paints Regulations, Best Practice Guidelines for Dry Cleaning, Best Practice Guidelines for Vehicle Refinishing, and EPA Vehicle Refinishers video and use appropriate channels to promote these materials.</li> <li>Investigating air and noise complaints. Inspect and carry out any required enforcement actions under the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, as amended and the Air Pollution Act, 1987, as amended to limit air and noise nuisance.</li> <li>Make available on their websites information on how to make air and noise complaints and associated procedures for affected parties.</li> </ul>		<p><b><u>Deco Paints Regulations:</u></b></p> <p>An inspection campaign under the Deco Paints Regulations was completed in 2024 with a particular focus on the vehicle refinishing sector. A list of premises for inspection was compiled based on (1) a review of existing files to identify premises who had failed to renew their registration, and (2) a desktop survey using internet sources and local knowledge to identify previously unregistered premises. This list was used as the focus of a targeted inspection campaign, and a total of 15 inspections were completed in 2024. This resulted in 10 new premises found to be unregistered. Follow-up communication with all 10 premises is ongoing, with 2 of these premises subsequently registering in Q1 2025. Follow-up of remaining premises continues.</p> <p>There were 16 registered vehicle refinishers premises at year end, with the list of registered premises published monthly on the Fingal website. This list will continue to be updated and published monthly during 2025:</p> <p><a href="https://www.fingal.ie/council/service/vehicle-refinishers-and-deco-paints-regulations">https://www.fingal.ie/council/service/vehicle-refinishers-and-deco-paints-regulations</a></p> <p>The website was also updated in 2024 with information for applicants on how to register, including an upload of the Vehicle Refinishers Info Leaflet in English and Polish, EPA Best Practice Guidelines for Vehicle Refinishing, EPA Video on Decorative Paints and a link to the Deco Paints Regulations.</p> <p><b><u>Solvents Regulations:</u></b></p> <p>An inspection campaign under the Solvents Regulations was completed in 2024 with a particular focus on the dry-cleaning sector. A list of premises to be inspected was compiled based on (1) a review of existing files to identify premises who had failed to renew their registration, and (2) a desktop survey using internet sources and local knowledge to identify previously unregistered premises. This list was used as the focus for a targeted inspection campaign, and a total of 12 inspections were completed in 2024. This resulted in 2 premises found to be unregistered.</p>

- Build capacity through engaging, collaborating and sharing with colleagues in other Local Authorities via networks and working groups and participating in training events.

Follow-up communication with both premises resulted in 1 premises subsequently completing the registration process in Q1 2025, with follow-up ongoing for the 2nd premises.

There were 6 registered premises at year end, with the list of registered premises published monthly on the Fingal website. This list will continue to be updated and published monthly during 2025.

<https://www.fingal.ie/council/service/dry-cleaners-and-solvent-regulations>

The website was also updated in 2024 with information for applicants on how to register, including an upload of the EPA Best Practice Guidance, Dry Cleaners Information Leaflet and a link to the Solvents Regulations.

**Petroleum Vapour Regulations:**

Fingal County Council continued to liaise with the Fire Prevention/Dangerous Substances Division of Dublin Fire Brigade during 2024 to ensure compliance with the Petroleum Vapour Regulations. A total of 17 inspections were completed in 2024 and all premises were noted to be compliant with the Regulations.

**Sites Licenced under the Air Pollution Act:**

There are no licenced sites under the Air Pollution Act in the County.

**Local Air and Noise Issues/Complaints:**

138 noise complaints and 53 air complaints were received by the Air and Noise Unit in 2024, with all complaints investigated and responded to, and enforcement action taken as appropriate. A small number of 2024 noise complaints remain open going into Q1 2025, and these are typically in connection with noise from commercial premises, including gun club noise and commercial heat pump noise. One air pollution complaint from 2024 remains open going into Q1 2025, and this is in connection with odours from a commercial premises where solvents are in use. Investigations into all open complaints are ongoing and will continue until satisfactorily resolved.

Noise complaints which appeared regularly during 2024 included noise from construction sites, and these were dealt with in conjunction with colleagues from the Planning Enforcement Section, as planning conditions were the typical noise control measure in such situations. A number of complaints regarding drone noise were received following the establishment of a drone food delivery service in Blanchardstown in Q1 2024. Complaints in relation to noise from heat pumps (domestic and commercial) were also noted to have been more regularly reported in 2024.

Where complaints concerned neighbour-to neighbour noise, the complainants were advised of the remedies available, including the S108 process.

Air complaints received in 2024 included complaints regarding smoke from chimneys of private dwellings. These can be challenging to investigate under the Solid Fuel regulations given the domestic setting, however the Air and Noise Unit investigated a number of these complaints in conjunction the Waste Enforcement team where there were also concerns regarding the possible burning of household waste.

**Website:**

The Fingal County Council website was updated in 2024 with information on how to report air and noise issues to the Council, with all complaints to be reported to the Environment Section via the contact details provided. Air and noise complaints are then assigned to the appropriate staff member for investigation. The website was also updated with information on how domestic, commercial and construction noise complaints can be addressed, as well as providing a sample noise log and S108 form for reporting neighbour to neighbour noise. A further update of the FCC website regarding information on air and noise is planned for 2025.

<https://www.fingal.ie/council/service/air-pollution-complaint-reporting>

<https://www.fingal.ie/council/service/noise-pollution-complaint-reporting>

**Building capacity:**

The Air and Noise unit continues to engage and collaborate with colleagues in other Local Authorities, particularly the Dublin local authorities and other neighbouring counties. FCC has a staff member from the Air and Noise Unit on a number of groups including the working group on the National Protocol for Dealing with Noise Complaints for Local Authorities, the Solid Fuels working group and the NAP steering committee. The team continues to strengthen in-house collaborations with the Planning Department and the Waste Enforcement and Regulation Section, as many aspects of air and noise are cross-departmental, with areas for greater collaboration and information sharing identified across the Transport, Active Travel, Operations, Climate and Housing Departments of the Council.