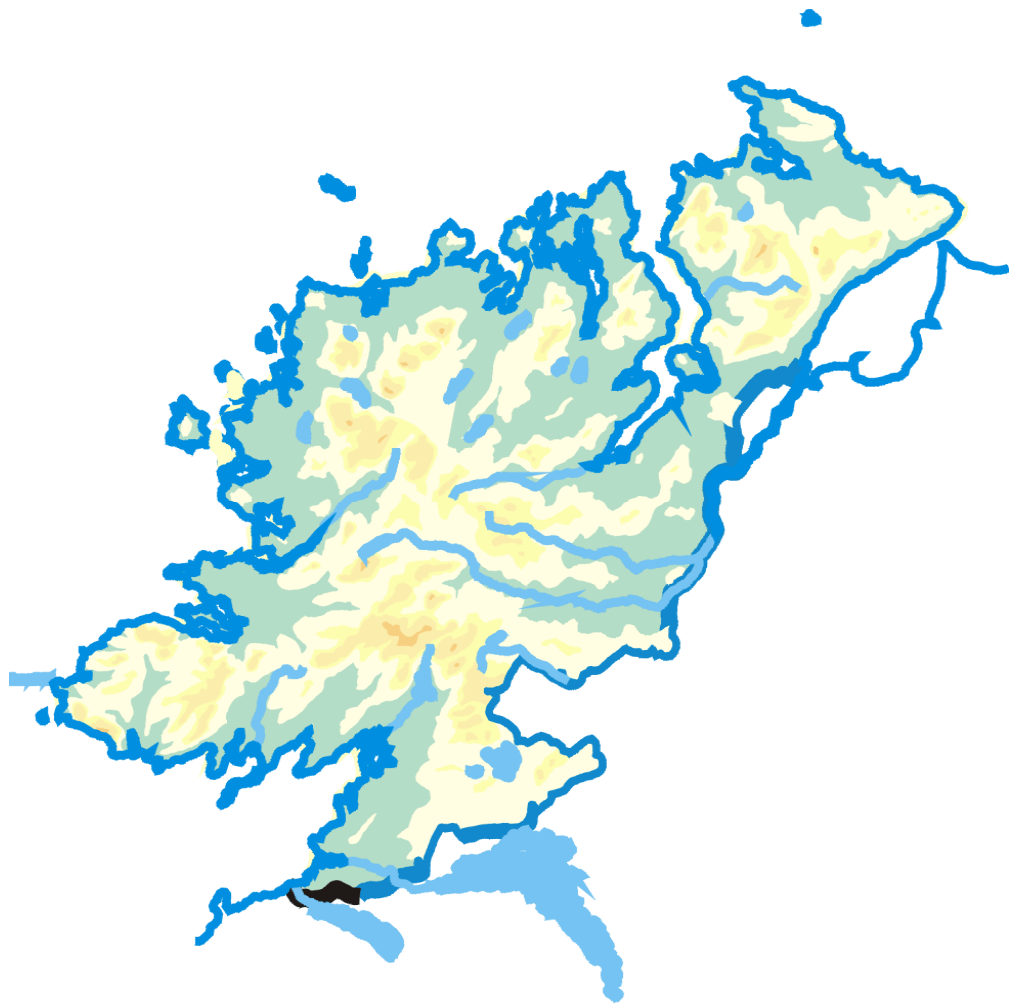




**Comhairle Chontae Dhún na nGall**

**DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**



**DONEGAL WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**2006 - 2010**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



## INTRODUCTION

The issue of ensuring efficient and sustainable waste management offers a significant challenge to society today. There is a need for everyone to view waste as a resource and hence ensure that it is managed more effectively, with minimal risk to the environment.

County Councils have a statutory responsibility to plan for the management of wastes and are required to prepare a Waste Management Plan which sets out arrangements for the management of wastes arising from or situated within their County.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) undertook a National Overview of the previous Waste Management Plans in April 2004 and stated the review process for the plans should be commenced. In mid 2004, under legislative requirements, Donegal County Council placed an advertisement in the local press inviting written submissions in relation to the review of the Donegal Waste Management Plan 2000.

## DONEGAL REGION PROFILE

County Donegal is situated on the North-West coast of Ireland and is one of the largest counties with a land area of 486,091 hectares, which represents 6.9% of the total land area of the state. It is renowned for its dramatic cliffs, rough mountainous scenery, deep valleys, long scenic loughs and hectares of bog land, as well as for its fishing villages scattered along its rocky barren coastline and sweeping sandy beaches.

## PROGRESS IN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Significant progress has been made towards meeting the objectives set out in the Waste Plan published in 2000. This includes the provision of Mixed Dry Recycling Bins, expansion of the number of Civic Amenity sites and Bring Banks in the County, improvement in Waste Data, provision for Waste Recycling, Awareness and Regulation Officers and the provision of landfill capacity.



### **Waste Prevention and Minimisation**

The achievements in waste prevention, minimisation and recycling have improved since the appointment of an Environmental Awareness Officer, Recycling Officer and a Regulation Officer by Donegal County Council. Since the 2000 Waste Plan, 6,000 compost bins have been distributed by Donegal County Council to homeowners for the purpose of home composting.



The An Taisce green schools programme has awarded 32 schools in Donegal with green flags to date and 96 schools are actively working towards the Green Flag. It is estimated that at least 10 new schools will be awarded the green flag in 2006. The programme is designed to promote and acknowledge whole school action for the environment. Environmental issues studied in the school curriculum are then applied to the running of the school in a controlled and defined manner.

The County is now well placed to implement the recommendations of the revised Plan for the next planning horizon (2005-2010).

### **Waste Infrastructure**

The 2000 Plan made recommendations for the expansion of existing waste infrastructure in the County. Significant progress has been made (by both the local authority and the private sector) in the provision of waste infrastructure in the County which is summarised in the table below.

<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Infrastructure Delivered By 2005</b>
Recycling Points	57 in place, providing coverage to all significant centres of population within the County
Civic Amenity Sites	2 in operation. 1 due for construction, 1 at design stage and two others have recently received funding.
Materials Recovery Facility	Feasibility study prepared by Donegal County Council. Small facilities currently operated by Private waste collectors
Waste Transfer Stations	A number of small scale transfer stations have been permitted within the county by Donegal County Council for private waste.
Green Waste Composting	6000 subsidised composters distributed.
Biological Treatment	Two private sector facilities have been permitted in the county.
Landfill Sites	1 no. landfill currently in operation in the Region. Site Selection process identified another site at Meenaboll – Planning approval has not been granted.
Kerbside collections	Commenced in 2005 as part of waste permitting regulations.

Donegal County Council have set in place a programme for the development of recycling facilities within the County. Civic Amenity sites have been developed at Stranorlar and Carndonagh, while construction for sites at Laghey and Letterkenny is due to commence during 2006 with further sites in Milford and Dungloe during 2007. The Waste Management Plan also proposes sites in Buncrana and at a location in South West Donegal. The Civic Amenity Sites will offer opportunities for a wide range of recyclables to be accepted including glass, aluminium cans, steel cans, paper, textiles, fridges/freezers, other white goods, batteries, plastics, fluorescent tubes, etc.

It is an underlying objective of the Plan to provide a range of integrated waste management infrastructure. Donegal County Council recognise the importance of private investment in realising this aim.

### WASTE GENERATION

The waste quantities in the 2000 plan were based on the best available data from 1998. Since then the reporting mechanisms for waste data have improved. The Plan addresses the need for further improvements accuracy of the data provided by Waste Collectors.

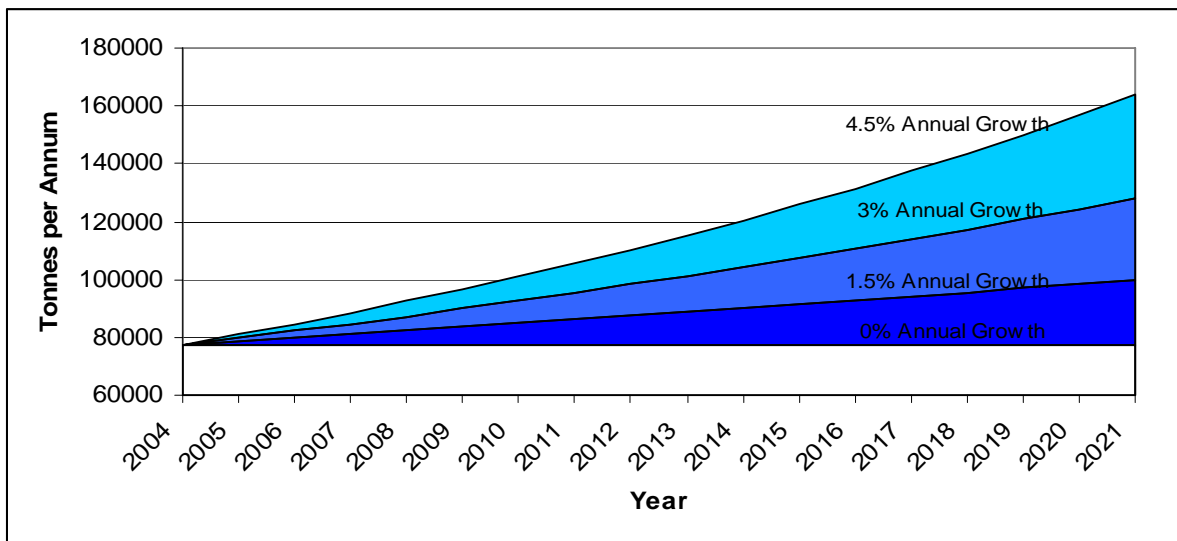
#### **DONEGAL WASTE ARISING 2004**

Household	46,416 tonnes
Uncollected Household Waste	19,967 tonnes
Commercial	30,084 tonnes
Litter and Street sweeping	1,013 tonnes

For the Council to make the necessary provision for infrastructure and services, the amount of waste that will have to be collected, recycled, disposed of or otherwise treated, provides a critical element for planning purposes, both in view of the costs and also the scale and type of facilities and services that they will need to provide. If the assumed growth is too high then this could result in over capacity with cost implications and negative impact on incentive to minimise. If it is assumed too low then insufficient capacity could result and with failure to achieve targets, extra cost and potential environmental damage resulting.

The graph below projects the effects on waste arisings in Donegal of four growth rates. For the purposes of projecting waste tonnages in Donegal over the life of the Plan a waste growth of 1.5% was used.

### Municipal Waste Growth



### WASTE COLLECTION

In 2004 County Donegal generated around 77,513 tonnes of household and commercial/ industrial waste. Not all households in the county have access to a collection service, particularly in more rural areas of the County. The available waste data would indicate that the uncollected household waste in the County is unacceptably high at present. It is recognised that many of these households dispose of their waste at a local transfer station/Civic Amenity sites, directly to the landfill or share services with neighbours. In order to verify the accuracy of these figures a household waste collection survey is proposed during the period Plan. The findings will be used to set targets aimed at reducing uncollected waste levels in the County.



The collection of the Mixed Dry Recyclables and organic waste will require the further expansion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> bin collection service commenced earlier this year and the introduction of the 3<sup>rd</sup> bin collection in urban areas.

### WASTE RECOVERY AND RECYCLING

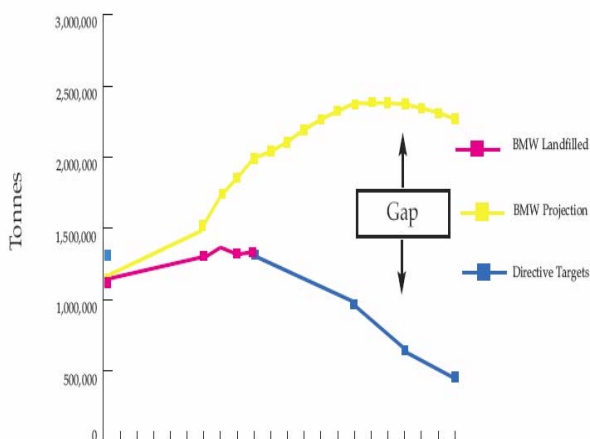
Municipal waste refers to household waste, commercial and other waste which because of its nature or composition is similar to household waste. The overall recycling and recovery rate based on the 2004 waste data was approximately 25% as reported in the NWD Report of 2004.

Waste recovery and recycling infrastructure in the County in the form of civic amenity sites, bring banks, permitting for the collections of mixed dry recyclables has been expanded by Donegal County Council over the past 5 years. There is further expansion planned for the coming years including the roll out of an organic kerbside collection and the addition of 6 Civic Amenity sites in the County which are Grant aided by the DoEHLG. This includes sites at Letterkenny, Laghey, Dungloe, Milford for which grant aid has already been allocated with site now also proposed at Bunrana and South West Donegal. This will lead to promoting and increasing of recycling and recovery in the household waste stream.



The household recycling rate is calculated at 16.0% and is slightly below the national average of 19.0% as reported by the EPA in the National Waste Report 2004. The preliminary recycling figures for 2005 would indicate that the household recycling rate has grown further.

Recovery rates in the commercial sector have improved since the 2000 plan, partially due to new legislation and greater enforcement by the EPA and Local Authorities. In particular, the Packaging Regulations 2003 have had a significant impact on recovery rates. The recovery rate for the commercial sector is estimated to be 51%. The bulk of recovered commercial material is comprised of cardboard, paper and newspaper.



There is a need for the development of facilities for treating key waste fractions such as biodegradable waste. At present there are no separate collection schemes of household biodegradable waste in the County. The ambitious targets set out in the EC Landfill Directive requires that this fraction of the household waste stream is recovered. This has been recognised by the National Strategy for Biodegradable Waste and the graph illustrates the gap that must be filled on the national level and Donegal must play its part in meeting these targets.

The Plan has a set out a series of actions for the 5 year period including the provision of civic amenity sites, bring sites, home composting and kerbside collection systems. The results in terms of recycling percentages that are likely to be achieved and the associated costs are detailed in the Plan. However to comply with the 2010 landfill diversion targets there will be a need in County Donegal for access to alternative waste management technologies e.g. MBT, Energy Recovery. Due to economies of scale such facilities are unlikely to be located in County Donegal and some waste from the County is likely to be transported to adjacent planning regions to access the alternative technologies e.g. North West Region Waste Management Group.

## WASTE DISPOSAL

The reliance on landfill in the County is high with one operational landfill at Ballynacarrick in the south of the County. The charge at Ballynacarrick is €137.50 per tonne and €92 per car trailer/pick up van.

The 2000 plan stated that it was preferable to develop 2-4 regional landfills as opposed to one large landfill. A site selection exercise was undertaken by Donegal County Council to identify suitable sites. Two sites were selected, an extension to the existing facility at Ballynacarrick, filling of which has now commenced, and a site at Meenaboll, centrally located in the County.



A decision to refuse approval of the application for Meenaboll was issued by An Bord Pleanála in January 2006. The development of a new landfill such as that proposed at Meenaboll is a fundamental element of the plan. Such a proposal is being further considered and evaluated having regard, inter alia, to policy objectives otherwise contained in the county development plan and in the context of proper and sustainable development given the importance of such a site for waste management in the County. A waste licence for the Meenaboll site has been granted by the EPA. The option of further landfill development in Ballynacarrick is also being considered and evaluated.

Due to decreasing tonnages to landfills with the expansion of recycling and the need to meet landfill diversion targets, the economics of developing more than one landfill in the County is now considered impracticable. Hence it is now proposed that Donegal County Council will only develop one landfill for the County with an anticipated annual input of 25,000 tonnes. Construction work on developing this additional capacity will need to commence during 2010 to ensure landfill capacity remains in the County subsequent to the existing capacity at Ballynacarrick being filled.

## WASTE POLICY

In line with National Policy the Replacement Donegal Waste Management Plan will have its fundamental strategy grounded in the concept of integrated waste management. Priority will be assigned in accordance with the EU and National waste hierarchy with a strong emphasis on waste prevention and minimisation.

The policy set out in this Plan will have the following specific objectives:

- Local Authorities will promote campaigns to meet the long-term challenge of waste prevention and minimisation at the household and business level,
- An integrated management approach will be applied to waste generated with priority given to minimisation, reuse and recycling,
- Donegal County Council will encourage the development of sustainable waste management technologies and services for the County whilst delivering European and National targets,
- Waste treated or disposed of at landfill in the County will be done in accordance with highest environmental standards without causing environmental pollution, and
- Donegal County Council will work in partnership with the private sector to deliver waste infrastructure required in the County.
- It will be the policy of the Council that the cost of recycling at civic amenity sites shall take into account the affordability of the charges which in turn should be reflected in the private sector service charges.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

While Donegal County Council are responsible for leading implementation, the success of the Plan will depend on the actions of society as a whole.

The **General Public** as a producer of waste has a duty to continue to prevent waste where possible, and secondly to handle waste generated responsibly by ensuring that waste produced does not cause environmental damage. They need to participate in source separation and recycling services provided, and separate household hazardous waste for safe disposal.

The **Business and Industrial** sectors need to implement best practice in relation to waste prevention, minimisation, recycling and waste disposal, and to implement greener policies in-house. They will ensure that all waste leaving their premises has appropriate documentation and is handled by legal operators.

**Repak**, as a representative of the Packaging Industry, is responsible for improving packaging waste reduction, reusability and recyclability, as well as funding recycling and recovery of packaging waste.

The **Private Waste Sector** will continue to expand collection and recycling services, provide innovative technologies and assist in the promotion of awareness on waste management. Improvements in data reporting and compliance are required.

**Voluntary, NGO & Community Groups** are encouraged to undertake waste projects at local level. Increased responsibility will be taken for waste management through community schemes with support from local authorities.

## PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

An objective of the Plan is that producers and suppliers will play a greater role in preventing, minimising and recycling waste, and should share the burden more fairly with the end-user of the product:

- Full cost of collection, sorting and recycling of packaging waste will be recovered from industry through Repak.
- National initiatives for WEEE, scrap cars and tyres will be implemented eventually enabling free delivery of the end-product for recovery.
- Producers of materials such as newspapers, junk mail and telephone directories will be required to contribute to the cost of collecting, sorting and recycling the material.
- Greater producer responsibility will be sought for materials such as batteries, paints, medicines and other household hazardous waste.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial review identified waste management costs in the County, operational costs associated with different waste streams for the local authorities and costs for future waste management. Consideration was given to changes in volumes of specific waste streams and how these may impact upon income and expenditure in the County. Using 2006 financial data obtained from Donegal County Council, the aim of the financial review was to project future incomes and expenditures with regard to waste flows, and potential new waste infrastructure.

In overall terms it is estimated that the deficit for 2006 will be approximately €710,000 which will increase to over €2.5 Million by 2010. The funding gap for Donegal County Council over the life of the Plan is estimated at approximately €9.2 Million. New landfill capacity in the county will be required by 2011 based on the assumptions made in the preparation of the waste plan.

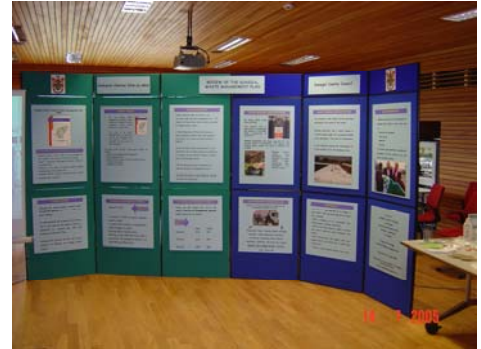
## IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

The Plan states policies, objectives and targets for the period 2005-2010. In order to measure and assess the performance of the Plan, an annual report will be produced, which will be measured against a set of "Key Performance Indicators". The annual reports will provide for increased transparency and will indicate the degree of real progress that is being made in the County while allowing the County to be compared with other waste management regions in Ireland.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Public consultation and involvement played a major role in the formulation of this Plan. In order to obtain maximum feedback reflective of all sectors of the County, consultation was sought using a number of methods:

- Leaflet & Newspaper advertisements requesting written public submissions
- Consultation Days for the Public
- Consultation Day for the Waste Industry
- Requests for submissions from interested stakeholders
- Workshops for elected members of the council



The issues that were common to all audiences were:

- Waste Mininisation & Packaging
- Recycling
- Composting
- Landfill & Incineration
- Illegal dumping & Litter
- Education
- Waste Collection & Charges

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Donegal County Council	<a href="http://www.donegalcoco.ie">www.donegalcoco.ie</a>
Race Against Waste	<a href="http://www.raceagainstwaste.ie">www.raceagainstwaste.ie</a>
Environmental Protection Agency	<a href="http://www.epa.ie">www.epa.ie</a>
Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government	<a href="http://www.environ.ie">www.environ.ie</a>
Information on the Environment	<a href="http://www.enfo.ie">www.enfo.ie</a>

**We would like to take this opportunity to thank you very much for your interest and response to the review of the Donegal Waste Management Plan.**