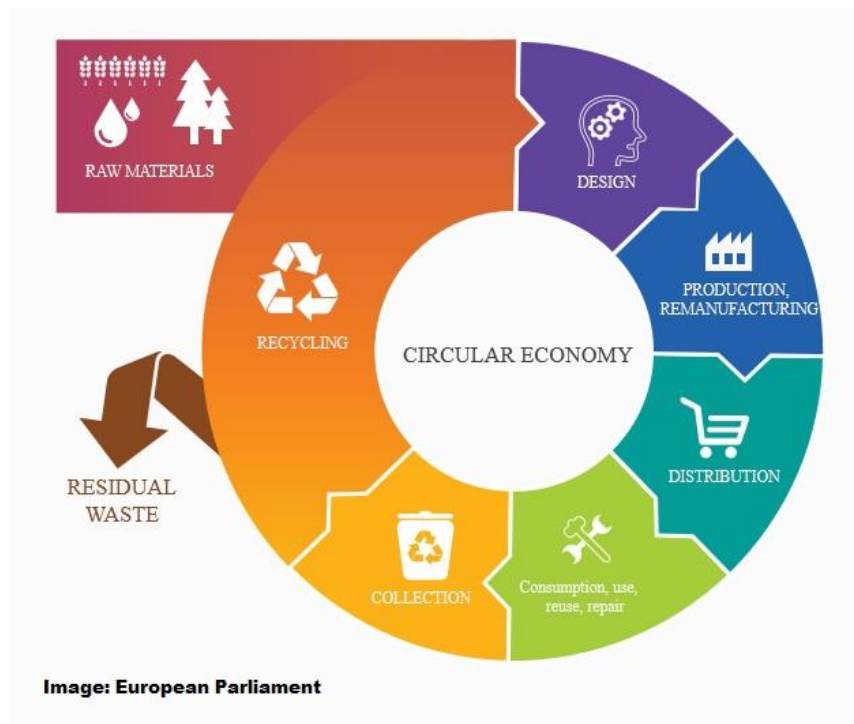


Monaghan Tidy Towns Community Circular Economy Action Plan (CCEAP)

“Waste Not, Want Not”

Introduction:

The circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products to ensure that the life cycle of products is extended for as long as possible and in so doing reducing waste to a minimum.



Monaghan Tidy Towns (MTT) seeks to encourage the people of Monaghan to become a circular community - a community where waste is avoided and where materials are upcycled and reused.

MTT accessed support from Community Foundation Ireland (CFI) to develop a circular economy plan for Monaghan Town.

This plan is supported through the Circular Economy Fund set up in 2019 under Community Foundation Ireland’s wider Environment and Nature grant-making to encourage sustainable practices in communities across Ireland.

“The mission of the Circular Economy Fund is to invest strategically to raise the profile of circular economy, support the development of skills needed to effectively engage with issues associated with sustainability, and ensure that organisations working in this space are supported to continue their work.”

CFI partnered MTT with a consultant to guide us through the stages of Mapping, Inventory, Inquiry and Planning in the development of our Community Circular Economy Action Plan. Kathryn Mc Cabe from VOICE Ireland facilitated the development of our plan supported by seed funding to get started on community engagement as well as some recommendations that emerge.

The aim is to raise the profile of the circular economy and advance the education and awareness of sustainability initiatives in our community.

Across all 3 meetings there was a wide variety of community members present, eight to ten consistently.



Circular Economy meeting in Craftstudio's Rail Exchange with Kathryn Mc Cabe

The Plan

In developing our plan, we discussed previous initiatives (see Appendix 1) and experiences. Participants in the group had watched the series of videos produced by Voice Ireland as an introduction to the key concepts of the circular economy.

(<https://www.voiceireland.org/cceap>)

After discussion participants developed the following statements:

Vision Statements

During the consultation period participants devised a number of statements regarding what they wanted to achieve:

“Our vision is that all people in our community are able to waste not and want not.”

“There are enough resources on this Earth for everyone’s needs, but not everyone’s greed.”

“We recognise a culture and values shift is happening and that overtime we are learning to value a worklife balance, connections within our local community and to nurture nature, for all our wellbeing.”

“We will educate people on existing repair or waste recycling services. We will connect up those who need with those who want to share.”

Supplementary Statements:

- *Changing values for a future world; slow down, buy less, buy used, buy local, be thrifty*
- *Look to the past to plan for the future*
- *The future can be better if we work together now*
- *A better standard of living - not shop till you drop*

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals related to Sustainability:



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

Goals:

- **Inform and familiarize the public with the principles of the Circular Economy through simple and practical measures.**
- **Highlight and begin connecting existing Circular Economy projects and resources.**
- **Develop new Circular Economy projects depending on resources available.**

Action	Start date	Milestones	Key people/groups - responsibility	Resources
1. Host info stall at August event – inform and raise awareness regarding what goes into bins via an event at the	August 2024	Completed. Potential for repetition at future Street food festival events	Volunteers, Environment Officer We will raise awareness of and explain existing repair or waste recycling services. We will connect	Gazebo CE Pull Ups Leaflets and fliers Kitchen food waste caddies to distribute free to participants

local shopping centre.			up those who need with those who want to share.	
2. Invite businesses to sign up to the repair directory repairmystuff.ie	May 2025	Target - May Information needed about what repairs are available	TT volunteers Note – right to repair – eu	Flier, followed by form supplied by environment officer who will provide list of possible businesses to target We will work with the council to audit and target these Council to add details to Repair My Stuff website
3. Promote Fashion/Fabric Re-use and Repair Projects An exchange and swap shop for children eg Denim day Fancy dress night for children Junk couture already in several schools. “Eco-milliners” – similar project but for primary schools ReLove Fashion Project	2025	GAA gear, kids school uniform rugby kit and a specialist group for special-needs equipment/ accessibility equipment.	Schools, Teach na Daoine Resource Centre, charity and secondhand shops, GAA club. Some of this is already happening Eco Milliners trialled in St Mary’s Boys School in 2023 Remake, repair project in post primary schools already happening	Social media for advertising and awareness Awareness raising needed Some existing examples of this but could be better publicised Debs dresses campaign suggested Sewing machines available in the library for the public to use – social media publicise
4. Repair café event	Summer 2025	Aim to make this an annual event	Rediscovery Centre contacts. To include skills learning for children and the community eg sewing repair, upcycling, teddy doctor. This could also facilitate intergenerational relationships and transfer of skills; traditional and technological. Partners could be ICA, other	Venue, insurance, awareness raising through traditional and social media. Possible repair skills teaching through online video. We also discussed the possibility of a how-to kit for schools and links to other community groups that might

			relevant partners to be considered.	provide teaching of skills in schools.
5. Partner with Vision Ireland and other charity / second-hand shops in the town on a number of projects	September 2025	One target project per year eg. Handbags, Accessories Décor	Subgroup TT volunteers Educate the community on junk textiles being a valuable resource for the two local charity registered shops who can get paid €4.50 per bag to recycle them “cash for your trash”.	Textiles fact sheet with options and avenues for textiles Contact Mary Beagan / D. Treanor re bigger event similar to previous Hillgrove event.
6. Develop a paint reuse option via the council	Researched August 2024 Work with Teach na nDaoine As possible drop off point	Need for interim project on paint in advance	Environment Officer Social enterprise based out of potential Louis Convent Building – EcoHub NM to speak with Edel Treanor	Not an option locally Proposed paint amnesty as an option and collection to be brought to existing paint re-use centres such as Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun.
7. Awareness raising - Podcasts	Research & prepare Autumn 2025	August 2026	TT members Invited guests Council staff Have a regular radio show / podcast to publicise the various things that are happening. eg. what people can do to reduce their waste and become more circular.	Need for professional advice on how to set this up. Link to Biodiversity activities on podcast already happening.
8. WEEE /ERP Collection several times a year for <u>small</u> electrical appliances with a plug or battery. (It was noted that there is only one shop that will take used	May 2025	Coordinate with ERP Annual event Start with smaller estates	Volunteers. EPW uses van & trailer with ICU's containers to call to various estates – Include list of what can be dumped FOC – Mobile phones included here.	Leaflets and publicity for collection dates Van hire – Teach na Daoine Family Resource Centre has offered use of van. License required for collections? Insurance?

lightbulbs in town – Flemings Supervalu)				
9. List of resources and groups that facilitate Reuse, resell etc	2025	Aim to complete by July 2025 Regular updates	Volunteers Educate through informal media channels like Facebook “Monaghan cheap free stuff” and other community noticeboards.	Social media TT Website
10. Informing households about Brown Bin collection for Food waste and grass	August 2024 (and repeat)	May 2025	Volunteers Waste Collection companies	Social media Streetfood events Farmer’s Market
11. Awareness Campaigns – eg Bulky Goods 50% reduction for the month of August	Ongoing / as events arise	Ongoing	Target Network – All public representatives, TT network, Monaghan Pix, Monaghan CoCo social media channels, Castleblayney News etc	Social media Radio etc Northern Standard
12. Digester Bring “Big Hanna” Digester in Mullaghmat back into operation	Summer 2025	Create a wild space in your garden for biodiversity / pollinator friendly planting	Michael Carroll Horticulturalist	Big Hanna – located at Teach na nDaoine container https://www.biodiversity.town/connectingtonature.ie eco.ni pollinators.ie
13. Collection for Homeless	Winter months	Coat donation collection for the homeless.	Sosad	Join with charity shop
14. Social Enterprise Community Hub – St Louis Convent Buildings	Submitted idea to public consultation	Reimagining Monaghan Consultation ongoing through 2024	EcoHub - Library of things for people to be able to check out and borrow items that they only use once for a very short period of time these could be power and	Monaghan TT and other community groups

			garden tools, strimmers, etc	
15. List legacy of previous projects carried out and continue to record their positive input in reducing waste	Appendix 1	Record on MTT website	Investing in one-off projects which continue to add benefit to Monaghan TT area eg Monaghan Town Runners received Plastic Cups to replace buying SUP water bottles	Committee
16. Fieldtrip / Visit the rediscover Centre in Ballymun or "Gift of Hands" Mulranny (crafthub)	Summer 2025		TT members and interested residents	Liaison with TT Network or PPN
17. Bike repair – Men's shed	ongoing	Record the number of repairs per year	Men's Shed	Members of shed
18. Battery collection through use of Barretstown Collection cylinders from ERP	Begun 2024	ongoing	Mc Connon's Shop and others. Schools	Social media
19. Small food digester to energy for local restaurants (Mygug)	April 2025	Demo event proposed	Local restaurant such as Andys agreed to take this on.	Contact Mygug company & LEO re organising demo of product
20. Organise Town Team invitation for Environment Officer	April 2025	Schedule presentation	Niall Malone, Env Officer	Council Circular Economy Plan
21. Raise awareness regarding contamination of bins	May 2025	Supermarket handouts. Streetfood event	https://mywaste.ie/resources-and-campaigns/free-posters-bin-labels-and-guidance-booklets/	Social media Newsletter Simple sticker for bins?
22. Coffee grinds – potential for gardeners Survey restaurants and hotels re collection of same	May 2025	Volunteers	Advice – Michael Carroll	Business newsletter or contact business through Town Team email
23. Investigate the potential of a 2Go Cup campaign for the town	Summer 2025	December 2025	Liaise with Castleblayney TT, Council.	Contact Killarney TT for advice from their successful implementation of the scheme.

24. Leaf mould Fallen autumn leaves are allowed to rot down to replenish the soil where appropriate. Others are collected and developed into mulch for landscaping purposes across the town.	Begun Autumn 2024	Ongoing	Michael Carroll, council horticulturalist	Council
25. Energy audits DZ day in April – for Enterprise Week	April 2025	Annual event	LEO, Environment section	Local business
26. Soap – survey hotels regarding the collection of unused soap from hotel rooms	May 2025	Result June 2025	Local hotels and B&Bs	Volunteers
27. Unwanted packaging in supermarkets	June 2025	Feedback July 2025	Lidl cited as a good example Contact supermarkets about making it easy for customers to leave unnecessary packaging behind	Volunteers Business Newsletter
28. Community Survey: Develop and promote a community survey to gather information and raise awareness of the circular economy	2025	Surveys available on greenhome.ie	Surveys available on greenhome.ie seai.ie or greenschools web site Committee to review and decide	Possible online survey or use of schools for distribution in community
29. Green Hubs 30. (business)	2025	Target 10 businesses initially	This project aims to foster a community-led approach to drive local action on circular economy and climate action, working in partnership with Monaghan LEO and Monaghan Town Team and County Monaghan Tidy Towns network. https://monaghan.ie/environment/monaghan-green-business-hub/	The Green Hub initiative will provide resources and support to local businesses looking to adopt more sustainable practices, including waste segregation and reduction strategies. One-to-one sessions with a waste advisor to help identify simple changes to improve waste segregation and recycling.

Resources

- Mywaste.ie is an existing program from Monaghan County Council to educate pubs and businesses on waste, there are 20 local businesses already involved.
- Go to councils Environment Awareness Officer as first contact for any community ideas as they will have connections and possible resources.
- The VEC offers a course on recycling and the ETB offers courses on upcycling furniture

Video Tutorials

Here are links to the videos, the second one full of ideas to inspire and inform further.

VIDEO ONE

<https://youtu.be/pNtgq7ARZfg>

VIDEO TWO

<https://youtu.be/Y9FxRozXV7I>

Appendix 1: Previous Circular Economy Projects

The Big Bag Day	
	<p>A circular economy project organised in conjunction with Vision Ireland is our “Big Bag Day” in 2024. This project involved the donation of preloved and possibly vintage handbags for sale in the charity shop. Locals were able to donate unwanted bags to the shop in anticipation of the “Big Sale Day”. The project was advertised on social media and local media. Potential to follow with similar focussed events such as hats, accessories etc.</p>

Eco Milliners




A primary school project involving children designing hats from recycled materials, similar to Junk Couture at second level. For this initial phase we engaged a local artist who specializes in junk art. The project was completed in June 2023 and displayed in a shopwindow in July (not in time for last year’s judging)
The cost of employing an artist would make it prohibitive, however the project could work if led by teachers.

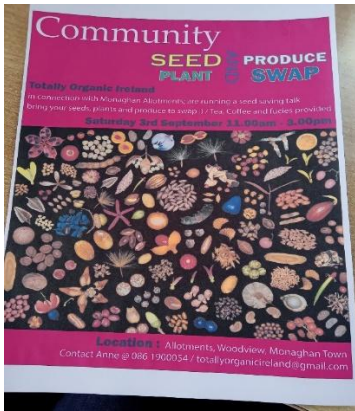

Kitchen bins	Unwanted Gift Campaign
 <p>We distributed hundreds of kitchen caddy bins at events from 2022 – 2024</p>	 <p>A Circular Economy project with the local NCBI Charity Shop (now Vision Ireland) to organize an “Unwanted Gifts” collection. Hundreds of items were donated for the benefit of the NCBI.</p>

Project name: Book and DVD swap and recycling containers hub at Pizza d’Or	
<p>One of the local Pizza outlets provides their customers with the opportunity to take books and DVDs on loan or swap as well as providing handy containers for re-use. Location – Pizza dOr, Market St.</p>	


Project name: The Hub furniture recycling facility

	<p>Mullaghmatt Cortolvin Community Development Company supports the employment and progression for people distant from the labour market through the operation of a furniture recycling facility.</p> <p>This facility accepts unwanted second-hand furniture, refurbishes and sells it on to locally disadvantaged individuals and families within the local community. Staff have undertaken ETB courses on upcycling furniture.</p>
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Community Seed Swaps | **Project name: Re-useable water cups for runners / joggers**

<p>These seeds and plant swaps are now organised several times a year at Monaghan Allotments</p> 	<p>Monaghan Tidy Towns and Monaghan County Council jointly purchased 3000 reusable branded plastic cups for Monaghan Town Runners. MTR uses these cups and lends them out to other running clubs for sporting events thereby replacing the need to buy hundreds of environmentally unfriendly plastic bottles. They have eliminated plastic waste to the tune of c 2500 plastic bottles at their major races annually. Used for races such as the 10 Miler in August, the Crocus 5k in March and at the Monaghan park-runs on Saturdays.</p> 
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Project name: Monaghan Allotments

	<p>The allotments in Killygoan, the Community Garden in Mullaghmatt and the Sage Garden at the Grange bring involvement from the community in and around the estates, Rehab, National Learning Network, Scouts, migrants and many more. Work is also provided and supervised for Community Service and probationers.</p> <p>Rainwater is harvested from nearby roofs, there is a state-of-the-art wormery, a biodiversity area, a herb garden, an orchard, a hedgehog haven and an insect hotel to name just a few features.</p> <p>Native hedging has been planted along the fence borders. Upcycling of pallets and other materials is the order of the day and all of the garden sheds have been constructed using same. Native trees and hedging, apple and other fruit trees have all been added annually.</p>
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Project name Men's Shed, Gardens and Orchard

Monaghan Men's build bird and bat houses and plant fruit trees among many other things.



Food Pantry/Community Fridge- Stop Food Waste and cost of living support



With the support of Monaghan County Council, Teach na nDaoine bought a freezer to help support their food rescue system, with food donated by Tesco and also from the local shop which is a community not for profit shop. The shop is also participating in a food waste reduction project with Monaghan County Council. Through analysis of stock versus waste, food waste is being reduced at the deli counter. People can make appointments to access the pantry and all dealings are confidential.

Award trophies

Trophies for our own local awards night were entirely made from recycled materials - bicycle chains, nails, screws and other pieces of metal. They were all themed for each award and completely unique.



Sustainability stall at Food Festival



We set up a stall at the town’s Street Food Festival where we distributed keep cups, kitchen caddies, car bins, wildflower seeds and Stop Food Waste Information. We partnered with Comhairle na nOg for a very successful Clothes Swap as well

Stop Food Waste Chef Demonstration at Street Food Festival 2023

We teamed with the council to sponsor a chef for this year’s Street Food Festival on the theme of Stop Food Waste. We distributed Stop Food Waste information and our recipe booklet for leftovers. The recipe booklet was created for our Junior Tidy Towns group to distribute at previous festivals.



Project name: Keep Cup Campaign	

We ran a Keep-Cup campaign whereby everyone bringing a reusable cup could a free draw to win €200 worth of Monaghan Town vouchers. Seven outlets including convenience stores and restaurants assisted. We made branded keep cups available at a reduced price for customers.



Appendix 2: Links and Resources

<https://monaghan.ie/environment/circular-economy/>

Our focus now is to move from a linear to a circular economy.

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

<https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring-assessment/circular-economy/>

View Circular Economy Programme documents:

- [The Circular Economy Programme](#)
- [The Circular Economy Programme Leaflet](#)
- [Watch the Circular Economy Programme video](#)
- [Circular Economy Programme Annual Report 2023](#)
- [Reuse and Repair in Your Community](#)

Useful Websites for Householders/Community • www.mywaste.ie (A to Z of all things Waste, recycling lists, Circular Economy, Upcycling) •

- www.localprevention.ie/tidytowns
- www.rediscoverycentre.ie (national centre for Circular Economy (Ballymun))
- www.voiceireland.org
- www.changex.org/ie/repaircafe (Ideas for setting up a local 'Repair' event)

- www.greenhome.ie (An Taisce scheme with online community/ household surveys and Action Plans)
- www.greenschoolsireland.org
- www.consciouscup.ie (Campaign to promote use of Reusable coffee cups)
- www.seai.ie (Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland) Energy/money saving tips for households/ schools/business. Includes Home Energy Survey.)
- www.taptips.ie tips for conserving water at home/school/work Includes survey, posters, kids colouring sheets)
- www.mywaste.ie
- www.epa.ie
- www.greenbusiness.ie/sme-efficiency-and-costreduction-questionnaire
- www.localprevention.ie/projects
- www.repak.ie
- www.stopfoodwaste.ie