

# CLIMATE NEWS



Dublin City Council Climate Action Team Official  
Newsletter



## DUBLIN SELECTED TO JOIN EU MISSION FOR 100 CLIMATE NEUTRAL AND SMART CITIES

Dublin City Council is delighted that Dublin City has been selected to join the European Commission Mission for 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities.

As the local authority responsible for Dublin City, a European capital, we recognise the importance of capital cities taking on a leadership role in addressing the global climate emergency.

“I am absolutely thrilled at this announcement, as I know my Dublin City Councillor colleagues are also,” said the Lord Mayor of Dublin Alison Gilliland. “We recognise that we all nationally and internationally have a massive climate imperative and need support to realise our climate neutral vision. Cities like Dublin are central to realising this vision. Thanks to our Smart Dublin team the City already excels in innovating and harnessing smart technologies so our inclusion in the European Commission Climate-Neutral Smart Cities Mission allows us to build on that expertise and apply it across all sections of Dublin City Council to accelerate our climate change targets.”

Benefits for cities include tailor-made advice and assistance from a dedicated Mission Platform run by NetZeroCities, additional funding and financing opportunities and the possibility to join large innovation actions and pilot projects. The Mission also provides networking opportunities, exchange of best practices between cities and support to engage citizens in the mission.

The Commission will invite the 100 selected cities to develop Climate City Contracts, which will include an overall plan for climate neutrality across all sectors such as energy, buildings, waste management and transport, together with related investment plans. This process will involve citizens, research organisations and the private sector. The clear and visible commitments made by the cities in the Climate City Contracts will enable them to engage with the EU, national and regional authorities – and most importantly with their own citizens to deliver on this ambitious objective.



EUROPEAN UNION



# EU MISSIONS

CLIMATE-NEUTRAL AND SMART CITIES



29 September 2021

## Concrete solutions for our greatest challenges

### CHALLENGES

- Cities produce **>70% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**.
- They account for **> 65% of global energy consumption**;
- They take up only **4% of the EU's land area**;
- Cities are home to **75% of EU citizens**.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Contribute to the European Green Deal **ambition to reduce gas emissions by at least 55%**;
- Offer **cleaner air, safer transport and less congestion** to citizens;
- Lead in **climate and digital innovation**, making Europe attractive for investments from innovative companies and skilled workers.

### GOAL

**Deliver 100+ climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030**  
and inspire all other cities to follow suit by 2050

### ACTIONS



The Horizon Europe programme will provide **€359.3 million** in seed funding during the period 2021-23 to help deliver on the mission;



Launch of a **Mission Platform** to provide technical, regulatory, and financial assistance to cities working on the mission;



Cities will prepare, sign and implement **Climate City Contracts**, co-created with citizens and local stakeholders;



Launch a **portfolio of research and innovation projects** and set up a **Global Knowledge Exchange Centre**;



**A network of national, local and regional authorities** will support the cities' transition to climate neutrality.

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Comhairle Cathrach  
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Dublin City Council

# CARBON FOOTPRINT VS. CARBON SHADOW

Late last year an article was published talking about our ‘carbon shadow’ a concept which presents a slightly different slant on how we measure our climate impact. The ‘carbon footprint’ has become the tool used to measure how we, as individuals, have an impact on our environment.

The ‘carbon footprint’ was promoted by British Petroleum who hired a PR company to promote the idea widely and it has certainly caught on. Whilst it can be useful and important in many cases to use our individual capacity to reduce waste and have less of an impact on the planet, it’s also true to say that all those individual actions are not enough in themselves to bring about the change that is needed.

In addition, focusing on individual action can, at times, feel like an added pressure in a world where the cost of living is going up, life is busier and expectations of us seem to increase every year. It is for this reason that we should be cognisant of the fact that we can only do what’s within our own capacity.

Which is why the idea of a ‘carbon shadow’ provides an alternative, and a pathway that considers life. This concept was created by Emma Pattee and you can read more about it here - <https://www.mic.com/impact/forget-your-carbon-footprint-lets-talk-about-your-climate-shadow>.

In brief, Emma outlines that the carbon shadow is made up of three elements which are 1) our consumption, 2) our choices and 3) our attention. Consumption deals with all the individual lifestyle choices around resources and travel. Choices are the big things like deciding how many children to have or what kind of work to do and the last is attention, which is the broad picture of how much energy or time we put into thinking about or taking action on climate change.

This is a broader and more holistic look at our climate impacts. If, for example, someone had to drive regularly for work or family care, but spent a great deal of time campaigning for policy change on climate, the blunt carbon footprint tool would mean that the carbon footprint would be high, yet this person could be contributing substantially to more effective change.



So to follow on from this, all the lifestyle changes that we make are important, and yes, sometimes a carbon footprint calculator can be a useful starting point to get some information but we do live within systems that need wider change.

We can also look at consumption-based emissions inventories (CBEI). ‘A consumption-based emissions inventory (CBEI) is a calculation of all of the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production, transportation, use and disposal of products and services consumed by a particular community or entity in a given time period (typically a year).’ (Ref: Stockholm Environment Institute). The way this is measured is to calculate what is consumed, multiplied by GHG emissions associated with each unit of consumption. Cities can reflect much higher consumption emissions than the average for the territory and wealthier industrial nations tend to have a much higher footprint using this measure of calculation. This is a key point to consider when calculating usage and sometimes the ability to make lifestyle changes is restricted due to circumstances, ability or access. Our next newsletter will go into more detail on production and consumption based inventories.

Occasionally, a particular environmental campaign or idea is picked up by mainstream media, like for example, the plastic straw discussion, turf-cutting or the carbon levy. Whilst it’s good to have environmental issues highlighted, this focus on a singular topic can be misrepresentative of the big picture, or at best, distracting. The plastic straw debate, for example, led to a wider discussion about the needs of those less able for whom the plastic straw represented an accommodation and a necessity. So to tie this into the idea of the carbon shadow, it’s always better to look at the big picture and even if certain lifestyle changes are not an option, there is huge value in having conversations around climate change, talking to your public representatives or contributing to national or local authority consultations.

We should also be conscious of attributing greater value to certain individual actions or critiquing those who are making different environmental choices. Whilst it can be frustrating at times to observe the slow pace of change, it’s unhelpful, and at times divisive, to create these separations. In summary, we can all play a part in protecting the planet for future generations and hopefully this article has broadened the scope a little and highlighted a few more ways that we can contribute to living in a climate friendly way.



We can all play a part



# DUBLIN BIKE WEEK 2022



Bike week was launched on 12th May by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alison Gilliland.

‘Bike Week’ was a celebration and promotion of the benefits of cycling and took place from Saturday 14th May to Sunday 22nd May.

Cycling is one of the most sustainable forms of travel and a family friendly activity. .

As a transport option cycling has one of the lowest impacts on the planet and the environment, impacting positively on air and noise pollution.

Some of the activities included cycling stories from Climate Ambassadors, a guided cycle of UCD and the flagship event, Pedal Palooza which aimed to celebrate and promote the benefits of cycling through workshops, guided cycles and fun activities.

In other exciting news, there will soon be a Bike Hub in Crumlin. Bike Hub is a Social Enterprise that uses cycling to strengthen civic engagement.



# Health-in-all-Policies

We are delighted to have a contribution from Dr.Cale Lawlor for this issue. Dr. Lawlor is a Senior Medical Officer at the Department of Public Health, with an interest in global health and the environment.

## Health-in-All Policies: Housing and Climate

Housing is considered by many a key human right; the right to safety, shelter and protection. In health, we consider it a Social Determinant of Health, which is a factor that is outside of individual control, but can greatly affect the health and wellbeing outcomes of individuals, akin to other factors such as crime, pollution, education and socioeconomic status.

Housing is integral to health, as we saw during the most recent health emergencies when people were quickly provided emergency accommodation. Not having a safe shelter and stability will generally taken a few decades off someone's life. With housing being so essential to health, it is also so important for housing changes and policies to take into account health. This not only refers to the provision of housing, but also the quality of housing, and the needs of individuals, families and communities.

The predictions for climate change are for increasing needs for housing, with, at their worst ends, we expect to see large population movements, worsening weather events and instability in other Social Determinants of Health. Considering the health implications of housing policy is essential now; it will be more than essential into the future.



# PLASTIC FREE JULY



The theme of this year's Plastic Free July challenge is 'Turn the Tide, one choice at a time' and celebrates the collective impact of millions across the world choosing to refuse plastics. In March this year, the UN member states signed a global treaty to tackle the global plastic crisis.

Titled 'End Plastic Pollution', the treaty will create global rules and obligations for the whole life cycle of plastic, from plastic production and transport, to manufacture, consumption and disposal with the goal of ending plastic pollution.

(Ref.)

We can all make small changes to reduce plastic. By bringing our reusable drinks cups with us, a huge amount of waste can be minimised. You can opt for plastic free fruit and veg where possible. Many online retailers will offer more eco friendly packaging and we can use this to prioritise shops who are making an effort to reduce pollution. We can also think before we buy or choose options which have minimal packaging, or which can be reused.

Below are some of the ways we can avoid plastic and you can check out **Plastic Free July** for lots more tips and ways to get involved





# Mychallenge choices

GETTING  
STARTED

**CHOOSE  
TO REFUSE**  
SINGLE-USE PLASTIC  
PLASTICFREEJULY.ORG

WHAT TO AVOID	HOW TO AVOID IT	YOUR IMPACT			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES I'LL DO THIS
		OCEAN	LANDFILL	GLOBAL WARMING	
Fill your bin with plastics for 'recycling'	Avoid as much plastic packaging as you can				<input type="checkbox"/>
Pre-packed fruit and veg	Choose loose products (skip the little plastic bag or put in a reusable bag)				<input type="checkbox"/>
Lightweight plastic bags	Remember your reusable shopping bags or use a cardboard box				<input type="checkbox"/>
Pre-packed meat or fish	Shop at the deli counter or butcher or fishmonger for paper wrapped cuts or BYO reusable container				<input type="checkbox"/>
Takeaway drink straws	Refuse plastic straws (or opt for a paper straw if they have them). BYO reusable straw				<input type="checkbox"/>
Takeaway coffee cups	Bring your reusable cup or sit and enjoy a real cup				<input type="checkbox"/>
Takeaway utensils and containers	Support vendors offering compostable alternatives (bamboo or card), BYO reusables or sit and enjoy 'dine-in'				<input type="checkbox"/>
Bottled water	Fill a reusable bottle from the tap				<input type="checkbox"/>
Bottled soft drinks	Reduce the amount (helps your health), or make your own with a soda maker/ carbonator or choose glass bottles (and recycle)				<input type="checkbox"/>
Bin liners (or 'reusing' plastic shopping bags)	Have a sealed container for 'wet' scraps and compost or freeze until bin day. Line the kitchen bin with paper				<input type="checkbox"/>
Plastic food wrap for leftovers and sandwiches	Use a reusable lunch box to store food, store food in containers or use beeswax wraps				<input type="checkbox"/>
Littering: cigarette butts, balloons	Dispose of cigarette butts in the bin (they are plastic and wash into the ocean environment) Avoid releasing balloons (what goes up, must come down)				<input type="checkbox"/>