

# Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2024

To: All local authorities in Northern Ireland

For info: Scotland, Wales and England

## 1 Summary

On 30 May, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) published the 'Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report'.<sup>1</sup> This statistical report is produced annually and contains information on a range of environmental indicators in Northern Ireland.

The findings in the report are based on the most recently available data at the time of publication for each indicator with most providing data on trends over time and, where applicable, performance against quantified targets. The indicators that were included were determined in agreement with key data providers, policy colleagues and other interested parties.

## 2 Key points

### 2.1 Public Attitudes

The level of public concern about environmental issues was high in 2023/24, with 78 per cent very or fairly concerned about the environment.

Climate change and illegal dumping of waste and litter were the greatest environmental concerns for households (28 and 27 per cent respectively) in Northern Ireland in 2023/24.

### 2.2 Air & Climate

Roadside nitrogen dioxide levels have decreased from 40.6µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2012 to 23.7µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2023.

In 2021, Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions were estimated to be 22.5 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e, a reduction of 23 per cent since 1990.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/news/northern-ireland-environmental-statistics-report-released-6>

### **2.3 Water and Marine**

In 2023 soluble reactive phosphorus (SRP) was measured at 93 surveillance rivers across Northern Ireland giving an average concentration of 0.062 mg/l of phosphorus per litre of water.

Of the twenty-five inshore coastal waterbodies delineated in Northern Ireland, 13 (52 per cent) have been assessed at good or better ecological condition.

In 2023, there were 1,851 water pollution incidents reported, of which 821 (44 per cent) were substantiated (confirmed) as having an impact on the water quality of the receiving waterway.

### **2.4 Biodiversity**

In 2023/24, 55 per cent of features within Marine and Terrestrial protected sites were in Favourable condition while 36 per cent were in unfavourable condition.

### **2.5 Historic Environment**

Listed buildings are those of special architectural or historic interest. The number of listed buildings in 2022/23 was 9,072, an increase of 11 per cent compared to 2003/04.

## **3 Discover how APSE can help your council**

All APSE members can sign up to APSE Advisory Group networks in the following:

- [Climate Change and Renewable Energy Network](#)
- [Parks, Horticulture and Grounds Maintenance](#)
- [Waste Management, Refuse Collection and Street Cleansing](#)

The online networks providing four learning events across the year, with expert speakers from across local government and the wider sector.

### **3.1.1 Benchmarking**

APSE Performance Networks is the largest voluntary public sector benchmarking organisation in the UK. With over 200 authorities in membership, Performance Networks assists local councils by:

- Demonstrating progression on carbon reduction/ecological actions
- Helping to set a clear baseline on which competitiveness, efficiency and value for money can be measured in a systematic manner.
- Identifying the impact of service changes and interventions for your own local authorities and for others.
- Assessing the quality, cost and competitiveness of the services that councils provide on a regular basis.
- Helping to report data in meaningful ways to both elected members and the public.
- Identifying direction of travel and pace of change with regard to service delivery.

- Identifying inefficiencies such as poor productivity and high cost.
- Supporting service improvement through process benchmarking and sharing best practice examples.

For more information about how your environmental service can benefit from Performance Networks membership, click [here](#).

### **3.1.2 Training**

APSE Training has designed a special interactive online course for parks professionals: Preparing for Biodiversity Net Gain. This training has been specifically designed to prepare parks and greenspace colleagues for the introduction of this legislation. Through a variety of interactive activities, learners will have the opportunity to gather information and discuss strategies for practical application. Heavily discounted for APSE members, you can book your place on the course [here](#).

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## Sign up for APSE membership to enjoy a whole range of benefits

APSE member authorities have access to a range of membership resources to assist in delivering council services. This includes our regular advisory groups, specifically designed to bring together elected members, directors, managers and heads of service, together with trade union representatives to discuss service specific issues, innovation and new ways of delivering continuous improvement. The advisory groups are an excellent forum for sharing ideas and discussing topical service issues with colleagues from other councils throughout the UK.

Advisory groups are a free service included as part of your authority's membership of APSE and all end with an informal lunch to facilitate networking with peers in other councils. If you do not currently receive details about APSE advisory group meetings and would like to be added to our list of contacts for your service area, please email [enquiries@apse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@apse.org.uk).

Our national advisory groups include:-

- FM and Building cleaning
- Catering (School Meals)
- Cemeteries and Crematoria
- Highways and Street Lighting
- Housing, Construction and Building Maintenance
- Local Authority Commercialisation, Income and Trading Network
- Parks, Horticulture and Grounds Maintenance
- Renewables and Climate Change
- Roads, highways and street lighting
- Sports and Leisure Management
- Vehicle Maintenance and Transport
- Waste Management, Refuse Collection and Street Cleansing

Visit [www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk) for more details.



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