



AN TAISCE BLUE FLAG AND GREEN COAST AWARDS 2024



PRESS RELEASE

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Photos from the awards will be available on Monday from 2pm Photos available to go out
with release from Aengus McMahon 087-2464770

2024 Blue Flag and Green Coast Awards Recognise Ireland's Best Beaches and Marinas

94 Blue Flags and 70 Green Coast Awards awarded in 2024

Today, An Taisce announced the International Blue Flag and Green Coast Award recipients for 2024. The awards were presented by Hildegard Naughton TD - Government Chief Whip and Minister of State at the Department of Education at a ceremony held in the Galway Bay Hotel overlooking Salthill Blue Flag beach this afternoon.

Speaking at the awards ceremony Minister Naughton, who presented the award flags said:

"It is my great pleasure to congratulate all of the recipients of International Blue Flags and Green Coast Awards today. For Ireland to be the home of 94 Blue Flags across the length and breadth of our beautiful beaches and marinas. As a Galway Minister, I am particularly proud to see the return of the Blue Flag to one of my own local swimming spots, Traught Beach in Kinvara, I know that this will be of particular note and celebration for many Galway swimmers."

Continuing, Minister Naughton said: *"As we get warmed up for the bathing and swimming season this year we are breaking the record with some 70 Beaches receiving the Green Coast Award. We all know just how lucky we are to have such beautiful water quality and natural beauty across our shores and this year's recipients are testament to just how exceptional and rich in diversity that our beaches are. Congratulations to everyone involved and I want to wish a very happy and safe bathing and swimming season to everyone for 2024."*

Talking at the event, Ms. Cathy Baxter, Director of the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce, said:

"We were delighted to be welcomed to Salthill, a Blue Flag and Green Coast Award beach for many years, for the opportunity to celebrate the beaches and marinas awarded for the 2024 season. The Local Authorities, marina operators and Clean Coasts groups responsible for their management have worked tirelessly to ensure that these sites meet the excellent standards required by The Blue Flag and Green Coast Award. I would like to congratulate all the awardees on their success, and to thank Galway City Council for hosting us here today."

Blue Flag

The Blue Flag is one of the world's most recognised environmental awards. Originating in France in 1985 it was launched as an International programme as part of the "European Year of the Environment in 1987. In 1988, the first year sites were awarded outside of France 19 beaches and 2 marinas received the Blue Flag in Ireland. 2024 is the 37th year that beaches and marinas have been awarded here in Ireland, with 94 beaches and marinas being awarded for the 2024 season.

The programme aims to raise environmental awareness and promote sound environmental management of beaches, marinas and eco-tourism boats around the world. The 85 Irish beaches and 9 marinas that have achieved this accolade must adhere to specific criteria related to water quality, information provision, environmental education, safety and site management for the duration of the bathing season.

Blue Flag 2024 in numbers: 85 Beaches and 9 marinas awarded the Blue Flag for 2024

- 3 beaches not awarded in 2023 have been awarded for the coming bathing season. These are: Bettystown Beach; Enniscrone Beach and Traught in Kinvara.
- Bettystown Beach in Meath has been awarded a Blue Flag for the first time since 1996 this year.
- Enniscrone in Sligo is being awarded for the first time since 2014.
- Traught has regained Blue Flag status last held in 2021.
- 82 of the 85 beaches awarded in 2023 have retained Blue Flag status for the 2024 bathing season.
- The 3 beaches, awarded in 2023 that have not been awarded for the 2024 season are: Rush South Beach in Fingal, Ballymoney North Beach in Wexford and Tramore in Waterford. The Blue Flag Programme requires that beaches being awarded for the upcoming season have achieved Excellent bathing water quality in the most recent annual classification. Each of the sites received a classification of "Good", the second highest classification available based on analysis of bathing water samples over the past four bathing seasons.
- 10 marinas were awarded a Blue Flag in Ireland in 2023, 9 of these have retained Blue Flag status for the coming season.
- The Blue Flag awarded to Greencastle Marina in 2023 was withdrawn by Donegal County Council in July 2023 as construction works at the harbour on a breakwater necessitated closure of the seasonal marina there. There was no application for Greencastle Marina for 2024.

An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland is responsible for the operation of the Blue Flag programme in Ireland on behalf of the Foundation of Environmental Education (FEE). 48 Countries operate the Blue Flag programme globally and more than 5000 beaches, marinas and tourism boats will be awarded the Blue Flag this year. The Blue Flag programme in Ireland is supported by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Green Coast Award: A record- breaking 70 Beaches receive the Green Coast Award for the 2024 Bathing Season

The Green Coast Award recognises beaches for their clean environment, excellent water quality and natural beauty. Green Coast Award sites are exceptional places to visit and enjoy our rich coastal heritage and diversity.

An important aspect of the Green Coast Awards is the involvement of voluntary Clean Coasts groups, who participate in community clean-ups and help manage the applicant beaches in cooperation with Local Authorities. The main purpose of the Green Coast Award programme is to foster partnerships within communities in an effort to protect and enhance local coastal environs, and to celebrate the efforts of those communities.

The first Green Coast Awards were presented to four beaches in Wexford in 2003. The award was rolled out nationally in 2008 and has gone from strength to strength ever since. The 2024 season sees a record breaking 70 beaches being awarded the Green Coast Award. This is an increase of 4 awards compared to last year.

Green Coast Award 2024 the numbers:

- 70 sites awarded, 4 more than 2023.
- 5 sites weren't awarded in 2023 and get the flag in 2024, these are:
 - Quilty Beach, Seafield, Co. Clare
 - Cross, Louisburgh
 - Portacloy
 - Enniscrone Beach
 - Arklow South Beach
- Quilty Beach in Co. Clare is being awarded a Green Coast Award for the first time
- Cross Louisburgh is being awarded for the first time since 2013
- Enniscrone is being awarded for the first time since 2014

In the Republic of Ireland the Green Coast Award is operated by An Taisce with the support of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Fáilte Ireland.

The List of Blue Flag Beaches in Ireland for the 2024 bathing season (June 1st to September 15th)

#	County	Blue Flag Beach Applicant Name	2023	2024	Detail
1	Clare County Council	Ballycuggeran	Awarded	Awarded	
2	Clare County Council	Fanore	Awarded	Awarded	
3	Clare County Council	Kilkee	Awarded	Awarded	
4	Clare County Council	Lahinch	Awarded	Awarded	
5	Clare County Council	Mountshannon, Lough Derg	Awarded	Awarded	
6	Clare County Council	Spanish Point	Awarded	Awarded	
7	Clare County Council	White Strand Doonbeg	Awarded	Awarded	

8	Clare County Council	White Strand Miltown Malbay	Awarded	Awarded	
9	Cork County Council	Fountainstown	Awarded	Awarded	Also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024
10	Cork County Council	Barley Cove	Awarded	Awarded	
11	Cork County Council	Garretstown	Awarded	Awarded	
12	Cork County Council	Garrylucas, White Strand	Awarded	Awarded	
13	Cork County Council	Inchydoney East Beach	Awarded	Awarded	Also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024
14	Cork County Council	Inchydoney West Beach	Awarded	Awarded	
15	Cork County Council	Owenahincha, Little Island Strand	Awarded	Awarded	
16	Cork County Council	Redbarn	Awarded	Awarded	
17	Cork County Council	Tragumna	Awarded	Awarded	
18	Cork County Council	Youghal, Front Strand	Awarded	Awarded	
19	Cork County Council	Youghal, Claycastle	Awarded	Awarded	
20	Donegal County Council	Bundoran	Awarded	Awarded	
21	Donegal County Council	Carrickfinn	Awarded	Awarded	
22	Donegal County Council	Culdaff	Awarded	Awarded	
23	Donegal County Council	Downings	Awarded	Awarded	
24	Donegal County Council	Fintra	Awarded	Awarded	
25	Donegal County Council	Killahoey	Awarded	Awarded	
26	Donegal County Council	Marble Hill	Awarded	Awarded	
27	Donegal County Council	Murvagh	Awarded	Awarded	
28	Donegal County Council	Naran	Awarded	Awarded	
29	Donegal County Council	Portsalon	Awarded	Awarded	
30	Donegal County Council	Rossnowlagh	Awarded	Awarded	
31	Donegal County Council	Stroove	Awarded	Awarded	
32	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council	Killiney	Awarded	Awarded	

33	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council	Seapoint	Awarded	Awarded	
34	Fingal County Council	Balcarrick, Donabate	Awarded	Awarded	Also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024
35	Fingal County Council	Portmarnock, Velvet Strand Beach	Awarded	Awarded	
36	Galway City Council	Salthill Beach	Awarded	Awarded	Also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024
37	Galway City Council	Silverstrand Beach	Awarded	Awarded	Also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024
38	Galway County Council	Cill Mhuirbhigh, Inis Mór	Awarded	Awarded	
39	Galway County Council	Trá Inis Oírr (Main Beach)	Awarded	Awarded	Also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024
40	Galway County Council	An Trá Mór, Coill Rua, Indreabhán	Awarded	Awarded	
41	Galway County Council	Trá an Dóilín, An Ceathrú Rua	Awarded	Awarded	
42	Galway County Council	Bathing Place at Portumna	Awarded	Awarded	
43	Galway County Council	Loughrea Lake	Awarded	Awarded	
44	Galway County Council	Traught Kinvara	Did not apply	Awarded	Last Awarded 2021
45	Kerry County Council	Baile an Sceilig (Ballinskelligs)	Awarded	Awarded	Also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024
46	Kerry County Council	Ballybunion North Beach	Awarded	Awarded	
47	Kerry County Council	Ballybunion South Beach	Awarded	Awarded	
48	Kerry County Council	Ballyheigue	Awarded	Awarded	
49	Kerry County Council	Banna Strand	Awarded	Awarded	
50	Kerry County Council	Doire Fhíonáin (Derrynane)	Awarded	Awarded	
51	Kerry County Council	Fenit	Awarded	Awarded	

52	Kerry County Council	Fionntrá (Ventry)	Awarded	Awarded	
53	Kerry County Council	Inch	Awarded	Awarded	
54	Kerry County Council	Kells	Awarded	Awarded	
55	Kerry County Council	Maharabeg	Awarded	Awarded	
56	Kerry County Council	Rossbeigh, White Strand	Awarded	Awarded	
57	Kerry County Council	White Strand, Caherciveen	Awarded	Awarded	
58	Louth County Council	Clogherhead	Awarded	Awarded	
59	Louth County Council	Port, Lurganboy	Awarded	Awarded	
60	Louth County Council	Shelling Hill, Templetown	Awarded	Awarded	
61	Mayo County Council	Clare Island, Louisburgh	Awarded	Awarded	
62	Mayo County Council	Bertra	Awarded	Awarded	
63	Mayo County Council	Dooega Beach, Achill Island	Awarded	Awarded	
64	Mayo County Council	Dugort Beach, Achill Island	Awarded	Awarded	
65	Mayo County Council	Elly Bay, Belmullet	Awarded	Awarded	
66	Mayo County Council	Golden Strand, Achill Island	Awarded	Awarded	
67	Mayo County Council	Keel Beach, Achill Island	Awarded	Awarded	
68	Mayo County Council	Keem Beach, Achill Island	Awarded	Awarded	
69	Mayo County Council	Mullaghroe Beach, Belmullet	Awarded	Awarded	
70	Mayo County Council	Mulranny Beach	Awarded	Awarded	
71	Mayo County Council	Old Head	Awarded	Awarded	
72	Mayo County Council	Ross Beach, Killala	Awarded	Awarded	
73	Meath County Council	Bettystown Beach	Did not apply	Awarded	Last Awarded in 1996. Also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024.
74	Sligo County Council	Enniscrone	Not Awarded	Awarded	Last Awarded in 2014, also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024.
75	Sligo County Council	Rosses Point Beach	Awarded	Awarded	Also awarded a Green Coast Award for 2024

76	Waterford City and County Council	Ardmore Beach	Awarded	Awarded	
77	Waterford City and County Council	Clonea Beach	Awarded	Awarded	
78	Wexford County Council	Ballinesker	Awarded	Awarded	
79	Wexford County Council	Carne	Awarded	Awarded	
80	Wexford County Council	Curracloe	Awarded	Awarded	
81	Wexford County Council	Morriscastle	Awarded	Awarded	
82	Wexford County Council	Rosslare Strand	Awarded	Awarded	
83	Wicklow County Council	Brittas Bay North Beach	Awarded	Awarded	
84	Wicklow County Council	Brittas Bay South Beach	Awarded	Awarded	
85	Wicklow County Council	Greystones South Beach	Awarded	Awarded	

The List of Blue Flag Awarded Marinas in Ireland for 2024

#	Marina Operator	Name	2023	2024
1	Donegal County Council	Rathmullan Marina	Awarded	Awarded
2	Kerry County Council	Fenit Marina	Awarded	Awarded
3	Kilrush Maritime Ltd	Portmagee Seasonal Visitors Pontoons	Awarded	Awarded
4	Kilrush Maritime Ltd	Kilrush Marina	Awarded	Awarded
5	Kinsale Yacht Club	Kinsale Yacht Club	Awarded	Awarded
6	Quigleys Marina	Quigleys Marina, Killinure Point	Awarded	Awarded
7	Royal Cork Yacht club	The Royal Cork Yacht Club	Awarded	Awarded
8	Wexford County Council	New Ross Marina	Awarded	Awarded
9	Wexford County Council	Kilmore Quay Marina	Awarded	Awarded

Beaches and marinas awarded the Blue Flag in 2023 that have not been awarded for the 2024 award season

Rush, South Beach in Fingal, County Dublin could not be awarded in 2024 as the beach did not comply with the Blue Flag limit value for the microbiological parameter Intestinal Enterococci (as per Blue Flag beach criterion 10). It is imperative that an applicant beach is classified as having 'Excellent' water quality as defined in Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008, if it is to be awarded a Blue Flag in Ireland. The current annual classification for Rush, South Beach is 'Good' based on the analysis of results of in-season water samples taken between 2020 and 2023.

Tramore Beach in County Waterford could not be awarded in 2024 as the beach did not comply with the Blue Flag limit value for the microbiological parameter Intestinal Enterococci (as per Blue Flag beach criterion 10). It is imperative that an applicant beach is classified as having 'Excellent' water quality as defined in Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008, if it is to be awarded a Blue Flag in Ireland. The current annual classification for Tramore is 'Good' based on the analysis of results of in-season water samples taken between 2020 and 2023.

Ballymoney, North Beach in Wexford could not be awarded in 2024 as the beach did not comply with the Blue Flag limit value for the microbiological parameter Escherichia coli (as per Blue Flag beach criterion 10). It is imperative that an applicant beach is classified as having 'Excellent' water quality as defined in Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008, if it is to be awarded a Blue Flag in Ireland. The current annual classification for Ballymoney, North Beach is 'Good' based on the analysis of results of in-season water samples taken between 2020 and 2023.

The List of Green Coast Award beaches in Ireland for the 2024 bathing season (June 1st to September 15th)

#	County	Name	Detail	2023	2024
1	Clare	Carrigaholt Beach		Awarded	Awarded
2	Clare	Ballyallia Lake		Awarded	Awarded
3	Clare	Seafield		Awarded	Awarded
4	Clare	Quilty Beach	Not awarded in 2023. Did not apply for 2023. Awarded for the first time this year.	Not Awarded	Awarded
5	Clare	Bishops Quarter		Awarded	Awarded
6	Cork	Ring		Awarded	Awarded
7	Cork	Ardnahinch, Shanagarry		Awarded	Awarded
8	Cork	Ballynamona Beach		Awarded	Awarded
9	Cork	Inch Strand		Awarded	Awarded
10	Cork	Fountainstown Beach	Also a Blue Flag Beach	Awarded	Awarded
11	Cork	Rocky Bay		Awarded	Awarded
12	Cork	Inchydoney East	Also a Blue Flag Beach	Awarded	Awarded
13	Cork	Red Strand		Awarded	Awarded
14	Cork	Sherkin Island, Silver Strand Beach		Awarded	Awarded
15	Cork	Cadogan's Strand,		Awarded	Awarded
16	Cork	Ballyrisode		Awarded	Awarded
17	Cork	Galley Cove		Awarded	Awarded
18	Cork	Dooneen Pier		Awarded	Awarded
19	Cork	Garnish Beach, Lehanmore		Awarded	Awarded
20	Donegal	Dooley Beach		Awarded	Awarded
21	Donegal	Magheroarty Beach		Awarded	Awarded
22	Donegal	Drumnatinney		Awarded	Awarded
23	Donegal	Ballyheirnan		Awarded	Awarded

24	Fingal	Balcarrick Beach, Donabate	Also a Blue Flag Beach	Awarded	Awarded
25	Galway City	Salthill	Also a Blue Flag Beach	Awarded	Awarded
26	Galway City	Silver Strand	Also a Blue Flag Beach	Awarded	Awarded
27	Galway County	Trá Inis Oirr	Also a Blue Flag Beach	Awarded	Awarded
28	Galway County	Trá Poll na gCaorach, Inis Oirr		Awarded	Awarded
29	Galway County	Aillebrack, Silver Hill		Awarded	Awarded
30	Galway County	Renvyle Beach (The Whitestrand)		Awarded	Awarded
31	Galway County	Dumhach Beach		Awarded	Awarded
32	Galway County	East End Bay, Inisbofin		Awarded	Awarded
33	Kerry	Waterville		Awarded	Awarded
34	Kerry	Ballinskelligs	Also a Blue Flag Beach	Awarded	Awarded
35	Kerry	Béal Bán		Awarded	Awarded
36	Kerry	Castlegregory		Awarded	Awarded
37	Kerry	Littor		Awarded	Awarded
38	Louth	Seapoint Beach, Termonfeckin		Awarded	Awarded
39	Mayo	Tránaun, Inishturk		Awarded	Awarded
40	Mayo	Cross, Louisburgh	Not awarded in 2023. Did not apply for 2023	Not Awarded	Awarded
41	Mayo	Carrowniskey Beach		Awarded	Awarded
42	Mayo	Srah Beach		Awarded	Awarded
43	Mayo	Termon Beach		Awarded	Awarded
44	Mayo	Cross, Erris Peninsula		Awarded	Awarded
45	Mayo	Rinroe		Awarded	Awarded
46	Mayo	Portacloy	Not awarded in 2023. Did not apply for 2023	Not Awarded	Awarded
47	Meath	Mornington		Awarded	Awarded
48	Meath	Bettystown Beach	Also a Blue Flag Beach	Awarded	Awarded
49	Sligo	Enniscrone Beach	Also a Blue Flag Beach. Not awarded in 2023. Last awarded in 2014	Not Awarded	Awarded
50	Sligo	Dunmorán Strand		Awarded	Awarded
51	Sligo	Rosses Point	Also a Blue Flag Beach	Awarded	Awarded
52	Sligo	Streedagh Beach		Awarded	Awarded
53	Waterford	Newtown Cove		Awarded	Awarded
54	Waterford	Guillamene Cove		Awarded	Awarded
55	Waterford	Kilfarrassey		Awarded	Awarded
56	Waterford	Annestown		Awarded	Awarded

57	Waterford	Ballyquin		Awarded	Awarded
58	Waterford	Curragh		Awarded	Awarded
59	Waterford	Goat Island Beach		Awarded	Awarded
60	Wexford	Cahore Point Beach		Awarded	Awarded
61	Wexford	Old Bawn Beach		Awarded	Awarded
62	Wexford	Culleton's Gap		Awarded	Awarded
63	Wexford	Rosslare Harbour Beach		Awarded	Awarded
64	Wexford	St. Helen's Bay		Awarded	Awarded
65	Wexford	Ballyhealy		Awarded	Awarded
66	Wexford	Cullenstown Strand		Awarded	Awarded
67	Wexford	Grange		Awarded	Awarded
68	Wexford	Baginbun Beach		Awarded	Awarded
69	Wexford	Booley Bay		Awarded	Awarded
70	Wicklow	Arklow South Beach	Not awarded in 2023. Did not apply for 2023	Not Awarded	Awarded

Ends /////