

€coMerit

Membership Newsletter, Summer 2015

Record EcoMerit Carbon Performance

14.9% Improvement Achieved for 2014

The latest annual environmental performance figures for the EcoMerit family are now available.

Each year, the carbon emissions of EcoMerit certificate holders are calculated and totalled to give an overall performance figure.

The latest figures, for 2014, show a continuation of the success of previous years. In fact, 2014 saw the biggest ever improvement in carbon emissions performance, from the biggest ever number of EcoMerit contributors.

50 EcoMerit members posted a 3,287 tonne reduction in carbon emissions compared to their equivalent performance in 2013. This is a 14.9% reduction in carbon emissions.

The figures were assisted by a milder winter and improved performance from the national grid. Nevertheless the greatest improvements came from the members' own in-house actions.

EcoMerit carbon emissions performance has been monitored since 2009, and the average annual improvement over this time has been 9.3%.



New EcoMerit Certifications

The latest organisations to successfully achieve EcoMerit certification are;

- JJ Devereux (Wexford)
- Arklow Business Enterprise Centre
- Wexford Golf Club
- Wicklow Enterprise Park
- Enniscorthy Enterprise & Technology Centre
- The Beacon Hotel (DLR, Co. Dublin)

We are delighted to welcome them into the EcoMerit 'family', which now totals 75 certified companies and organisations.



Wexford Golf Club

Five of the new members have already capitalised on their certification status by applying for, and winning, SEAI grant support for energy-saving improvements.

Energy Case Study



The Irish National Heritage Park, located just outside Wexford town, provides visitors with a journey through 9,000 years of Irish history.

On joining EcoMerit, they embarked on their own epic journey to reduce energy costs and improve their long term sustainability.

Heating & Insulation

The main visitor centre, housing the shop, restaurant and audio visual facility, was originally designed for summer use only, and was unsuited to the year-round opening now operated by the Heritage Park. Improvements were made as follows;

- Upgrading the loft insulation to modern standards.
- Installing radiant panel heaters to replace the inadequate mix of old wall heaters and plug-in heaters.
- Installing inflector blinds over the extensive glazed areas, to help retain the heat without compromising the views of the park's attractions.



The combined effect is to **save €8,000** per year in heating costs. The panels and inflector blinds were supplied by Sunnyheat Ireland (www.sunnyheat.ie).

Lighting

Lighting was by a mix of fluorescent tubes and halogen spots. The total lighting load was 12 kW costing €6,500 per year to run.

The solution was to replace the 249 lights with modern energy-efficient LED units which are 70% more efficient. These **save an impressive €4,700** in annual electricity costs.

The lights were supplied by LED Vista Lighting (www.ledvista.ie)



Solar Panels

The Heritage Park has installed an extensive array of photo-voltaic panels to generate their own electricity on site.



The 25 kWp array was supplied and installed by Solar Electric Ireland (www.solarelectric.ie). It generates 22,000 kWh of electricity per year, **saving €4,000** on the park's annual electricity bill.

Grant Aid



To help fund the project, the Heritage Park used its EcoMerit certification to apply for SEAI 'Better Energy Communities' grant support.

SEAI provided a **50% grant** reducing the overall project cost from €94,000 to €47,000. As a result, the overall **payback time** on the project will be a little **under three years**.

Annual **carbon savings** will be **46.8 tonnes**.