

## Tramore Coped Well With Storm Emma

Tramore experienced its worst snows since 1963 and while there were some falls on ice reported, thankfully no serious injuries were recorded as the vast majority of residents stayed indoors and heeded Government advice.

Supermarkets closed in the town on Thursday and Friday last, before re-opening on Saturday, with all outlets recording massive business in the wake of Storm Emma.

On Saturday alone, SuperValu received three lorry deliveries of goods as customers replenished in the wake of the cold snap and we understand they coped well, as did Centra (Tank Field) and Tommy Farrell's, despite the lengthy queues for bread, milk and other essentials.

Meanwhile, smaller shops, restaurants and bars who had staff within close proximity, managed to stay open and recorded a fine trade on both Thursday and Friday. There was a festive atmosphere in the town, with locals breaking the cabin fever and enjoying friendly conversation.



The Tramore sandhills, as they've seldom been photographed. | Photo: Noel Browne

Unlike Wexford, there were no power outages recorded in Tramore, although we were aware of one resident in Pine Grove who re-filled her kettle and bathroom cistern with snow water. Once the official emergency had been lifted, locals marvelled at the snow show, sticking on their hiking gear and woolies to enjoy the bay and the slopes!

Youngsters built igloos in Canon's Field, others got toboggans and bun boards to go down Train Hill, Main Street or the Doneraile, where great sport was had.

We met well-known local snowboarder Gary Whelan who was thrilled with the snow and he was joined by a few others, including another snow boarder who got a tow on The Prom! A skier was also spotted on TV and social media going down Main Street!

We walked across some housing estates on Friday afternoon, where the roads were very bad and people were knee-deep in snow in both Elm Park and Tramore Heights.

One energetic tractor driver, Jason Murphy, helped people out at the lower end of the town, getting briquettes and fuel to houses and older people in particular, as well as organising phone top-ups for those who were snowed in. Coastal and Cliff Rescue members assisted elderly people, getting some to hospital and other care workers and staff into work in Waterford. Community activists also visited those who were ill or elderly and had been finding it hard to cope.

We met Neil O'Donnell from Kilfarrassey on Sunday. He had hiked with his wife Bridget from their homey, where he and some of his neighbours were snowed in. He was going into Tramore for a well earned meal. He was organising a JCB to dig out the drifts and get vehicles moving again. Other farmers out towards Dunhill were also finding it tough.

Ballymacaw was another difficult area to access, as was Corballymore, where farmers in their tractors again came to the fore. Overall there was a great spirit of community out there and a willingness to help. Some swimmers went out Saturday and survived, but people thankfully kept away from the sea shore. Pot holes will be a big problem in the months ahead and will need fixing. Saturday last saw Waterford Council workers doing great work. They had many staff on hand to clear the roads and get things moving again. Preparatory work had been ongoing on the Friday to get the main road to Waterford open with snow ploughs out. On Friday last, we saw one car crashed at a roundabout while a couple of cars had also been abandoned in

the heavy snow.