

Eibhlin Fitzpatrick

The Refill Mill

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Increasing dismay at the excessive use of plastic packaging for everything from groceries to cleaning products inspired Eibhlin Fitzpatrick to set up her own plastic-free retail store in Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

The Refill Mill offers shoppers the opportunity to reduce their reliance on single-use plastics by filling their own containers from the array of everyday pantry staples and eco-friendly products available in-store. An online service is also available to visitors to the website.

A native of Tyrrellspass, Eibhlin believes the success of the business, which opened its doors in July 2020 after a short period operating solely online, is testament to the desire of residents around Mullingar to join the global push to reduce waste, boost biodiversity and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

“When I visited friends in Dublin, I would shop in refill shops there and saw it was a great idea. I knew that if I brought the idea back home that people would be enthusiastic about it – and so it’s proved,” she says, adding that she was delighted to receive the award for Eco-Retailer of the Year for Leinster at the 2021 EU Business News Awards.

She continues: “Since then, we’ve received funding from Creative Westmeath to run workshops on how to live more sustainability and how to reduce waste in the home. We take 10 people at a time for two hours in the evening. It becomes a community social event with tea and conversation about climate action. We really want to expand the workshops going forward and, hopefully, get into schools to teach teenagers how to develop good habits.”

Eibhlin believes her participation in ACORNS was “totally invaluable” to the development of the Refill Mill, adding that she is no longer shy about describing herself as an entrepreneur.

“I’m very open about it now. ACORNS has given me a huge amount of confidence. It’s helped me bring in a new product range and develop my workshops. It really pushed me forward and helped me set goals,” she says.

Providing early stage female entrepreneurs, living in rural Ireland, with the knowledge, support and networking opportunities to meet and even exceed their current aspirations.



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine