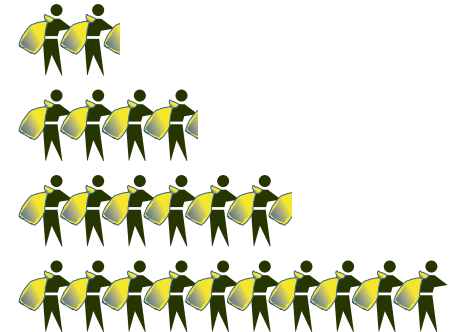


National Benchmarking Report

KEEP
NORTHERN
IRELAND
BEAUTIFUL



**LIVE
HERE
LOVE
HERE**



KEEP
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IRELAND
BEAUTIFUL

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful is the charity that inspires people to create **cleaner, greener and more sustainable communities**. Through our behaviour change campaigns and education on local, national and global environmental issues we are working to **improve the quality of people's lives, the places they live in and the places they love**.

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Foreword

Most people don't drop litter. Most people don't set out to put tourists off visiting or businesses from investing. They don't think of raising the taxes we all have to pay or of the painful slow deaths they inflict on life in our seas, where much litter ends up. And that's the problem; when people are littering they are not thinking.

We have to change this if we are to see an improvement in how we all look after our small part of planet earth. We may not be able to individually stop climate change, prevent extreme weather or avoid biodiversity loss but we can all do our bit to better look after the world on our doorstep.

This report clearly sets out the scale of the problem. Around 34% of the public admit to littering. If they dropped just one piece of litter a day that would mount up to 230 million items to pick up every year. No wonder street cleansing is costing £43m and rising. No wonder you only have a one in twenty chance of walking down a street with no litter. There are also many hidden costs of littering such as disamenity, lost tourism income, increases in crime and road accidents, poorer mental health and lower house prices. These double the financial cost to our economy and it is damaging everyone's prosperity, health and happiness. So it is also no wonder that we are now beginning to all work together to pool scarce resources and share intelligence and learning.

Thankfully, this report also shows people have had enough and change is on the way. Inside we highlight many of the positive efforts now being applied to the problem. Education, whether through Council's own initiatives or other wider programmes, such as Eco-Schools, all have an important role to play in inculcating strong critical thinking skills that can be applied to the littering issue. Raising awareness of the impact of littering and stigmatising the antisocial behaviour is also important and again can be delivered

through local initiatives or broader programmes. Live Here Love Here has made good progress in the past three years, involving more people from different sectors. It is supporting a growing confidence and belief in communities that they can make a difference and can create places that we can all be proud of. The media activity has resulted in 86% of people saying it would make them likely to think twice about littering and over a third think about getting involved in practical activities such as clean-ups. Recent moves to target the main littering demographic (taken from the Live Here Love Here market research) through social media look promising. The efficiencies of working together on tightening budgets are beginning to be felt. So there is much to celebrate between these covers, despite the scale of the problem portrayed.

In the end it will all come down to individuals deciding how to act; deciding what sort of society they want, and want for their children to grow up in. Our work revolves around changing behaviour for the good of this small place we call home. To a large extent the future is in our hands. It is a big responsibility and we must continue to strive for excellence in all that we do.



Dr. Ian Humphreys

CHEIF EXECUTIVE,
KEEP NORTHERN IRELAND
BEAUTIFUL

Key facts and figures at a glance for the period 2016-2017

15%

of streets failed to meet the accepted standard for litter, a rise of 3% on the 2015-16 figure.

37%



of the operational time accrued by a mechanical sweeping machine is wasted because obstructions prevent them from reaching the curb or pavement backline

The availability of a bin or not had no statistically significant impact on the litter grade achieved by an individual transect



265



schools earned the right to fly a green flag, 23% of all schools in the country

6%

of streets had dog fouling, a fall of 6% on the 2015-16 figure

5%

of streets were completely free of any litter

There were an average of **431** litter items washed up by the tide per **100m** of Northern Irish beach, of which over **82%** was plastic and over **91%** was likely to be recyclable (plastic metal or glass)

24,500

children took active part in **anti-litter education** through the Eco-Schools programme

Higher spending on street cleansing does not correlate with better Local Environmental Quality

233



groups have adopted a spot in their local area, committing to undertake four clean ups per year in 2016-17

46%



of respondents living in the participating council areas recognised one or more element of the advertising campaign when shown (TV/outdoor/newspaper/social media or council specific poster)

3,724

Fixed Penalties were issued for littering during 2015-16 (the last complete year for which records are available)

Dog fouling tended to be very 'clustered' in High density



Housing areas, with a relatively low percentage of transects experiencing a relatively high total number of deposits

£43m

was spent on street cleansing in Northern Ireland during 2015-16 (the last complete year for which records are available)



1st **Live Here Love Here Awards night** was held, recognising volunteers in participating Council areas and Partner organisations.

310



Fixed Penalties were issued for failing to clean up dog fouling during 2015-16 (the last complete year for which records are available)

Executive summary

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful is an independent charity which works with the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, local Councils and businesses to assist in improving our local environmental quality and increasing the cleanliness of our towns and countryside.

Our work includes managing Live Here Love Here, the largest single civic pride and volunteering campaign in Northern Ireland with over 100,000 supporting our campaign in 2016-17. We also manage the Eco-Schools environmental education programme and the marine litter survey.

This report is based on a number of sources. Litter and cleanliness data comes from a survey of 1,100 individual transects covering 55km (or 34 miles) of streets and parks across all 11 councils. Fixed penalty records, spend on street cleansing data and information on enforcement and education activities was collected directly by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful from individual Councils.

The cost of street cleansing in Northern Ireland for 2015-16 was £43,285,212¹. This figure includes activities such as litter picking, street sweeping, graffiti removal and collection of flytipping from council lands. This would pay for the construction of the Aurora Aquatic and Leisure Complex in Bangor, Northern Ireland's only Olympic-size swimming pool, with £5 million left over² for other projects or maintenance. It is only the cost to the Councils, and does not include the cost to other land owners such as the National Trust; Housing Executive; Transport

NI; Translink; The Forest Service or Ulster Wildlife, who allow the public access to their land, and must clear up after them.

Just under one in seven transects (a section of path, pavement or green space 50m long) fails to meet accepted standards for cleanliness, which is described as 'predominantly free of litter apart from small items'.

There is just a one in twenty chance that any given 50m stretch of street or green space in Northern Ireland will be completely free of litter. We are all working to shorten those odds but need to pool scarce resources if we are to make the biggest impact.

¹ Spending figures were collected from individual Council financial statements, which are available at Council websites.

² Bangor Aurora cost £38 million to construct, with completion in 2013. <http://www.dqi.org.uk/case-studies/sport-leisure/bagorauroraaquaticandleisurecomplex.php>

Interpreting this report

Benchmark in this report refers to the process of comparing the performance of one council against another, or of comparing NI results to those of other regions of the UK.

Baseline refers to the average of the results of the NI Litter Surveys carried out in 2012, 2013 and 2014 with the data mathematically weighted to reflect the amended landuse ratios used in subsequent surveys. Consequently, 'weighted baseline' figures may be different from those given in previous reports.

Transect is the term given to an individual survey site. For this survey it is a length of pavement 50m long, extending from the backline into the gully. In recreational areas it is either a 50m length of path plus 1m into the grass on either side, or an area of open space approximately 100m², depending on which is more appropriate.



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful is the charity that inspires people to create cleaner, greener and more sustainable communities.

Through our behaviour change campaigns and education on local, national and global environmental issues we are working to improve the quality of people's lives, the places they live in and the places they love.

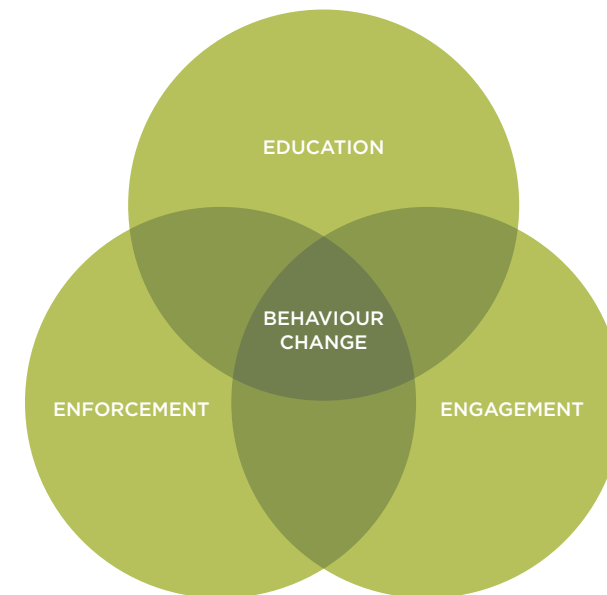
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful provides a range of programmes, services and initiatives that include:

Education: Eco-Schools is the world's largest education programme. Focused on behaviour change, it encourages pupil led action. Northern Ireland is the first country in the world to have all its 1,163 schools participating and 20% fly the green flag, having reached the international standard.

Volunteering: The BIG Spring Clean, a part of Live Here Love Here, mobilises tens of thousands of people every year in cleaning up their parks, sports pitches, streets and beaches. Live Here Love Here is raising the bar on anti-social behaviour by building civic pride and stronger communities.

Local Environmental Quality

Standards: Blue Flag for beaches and marinas, Seaside Awards, Green Flag for Parks, the Green Business Award and the NI Environmental Quality Forum all help raise and maintain the quality of the places we live in and visit by setting national and international benchmarking standards.



For more information on our work contact:

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Northern Ireland Litter Survey

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful have been collecting information about the amount and distribution of litter for over ten years.

Recognising in 2012 that litter was not the only 'indicator' of the quality or cleanliness of a space, we began to monitor graffiti, flyposting and pavement staining, as well as specific information about dog fouling.

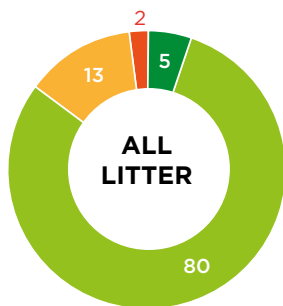
Readers should note that many of the statistics relate to the presence or absence of the indicator (e.g. litter or dog fouling), rather than the volume or amount dropped. However, the standard against which sites are graded as "acceptable" or not acceptable does take into account the volume and distribution present. Surveys are a snapshot of a site at the time surveyors arrive, so the results are sensitive to how thoroughly or how recently the survey site has been cleansed before data is recorded. Over the course of the 1,100 individual surveys any effect this may have had is very likely to have been evened out.

The 2016-17 data was collected between July and October 2016. Previous work using five years' worth of data has shown a weak tendency for higher failure rates for litter in winter.

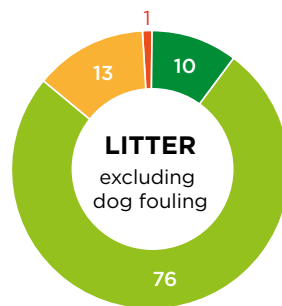
Councils which participate in the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Borough Cleanliness Survey receive additional detail, support and interpretation of this information online. Currently six Councils are participants in this programme.

Headline indicators for each marker

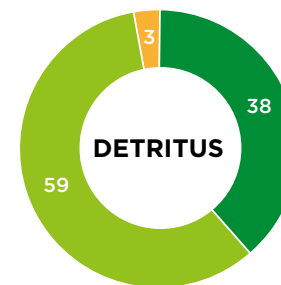
The percentage of transects allocated each grade for each indicator measured. See the key for an explanation of the grading system used for litter, detritus and other indicators. In this report intermediate grades for pollution indicators have been folded into the grade below for ease of understanding (so a B+ is included in the B grade). This has no effect on the results.



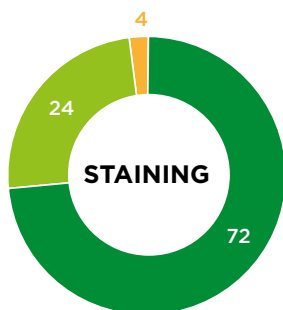
Litter is anything that is dropped, discarded or thrown down by anyone. It includes cigarettes, crisp bags, bottles and cans, receipts and many more things as well as dog fouling.



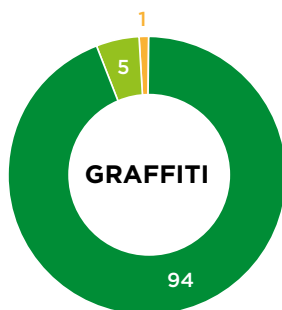
Anthropic is what the picture of litter would be like if we do not include dog fouling. We measure this because dog fouling is much more difficult for street cleansing to collect than other types of litter.



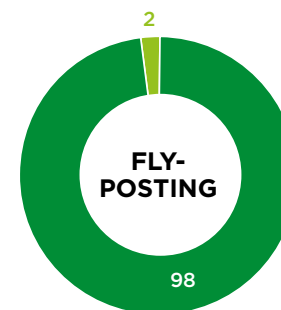
Detritus comprises small, broken down particles of synthetic and natural materials and includes dust, mud, soil, rotted leaf and vegetable residues, and fragments of twigs, glass, plastic and other finely divided materials.



Staining is all the substances that mark a pavement, and commonly includes chewing gum, oil, drinks stains and heavy discolouration.



Graffiti is writing or drawings scribbled, scratched, or sprayed illicitly on a wall or other surface in or visible from a public place. Murals and cultural artworks are not considered graffiti.



Flyposting is the placing of unauthorised advertising or posters in a public place, and includes stickers, bills and large posters.

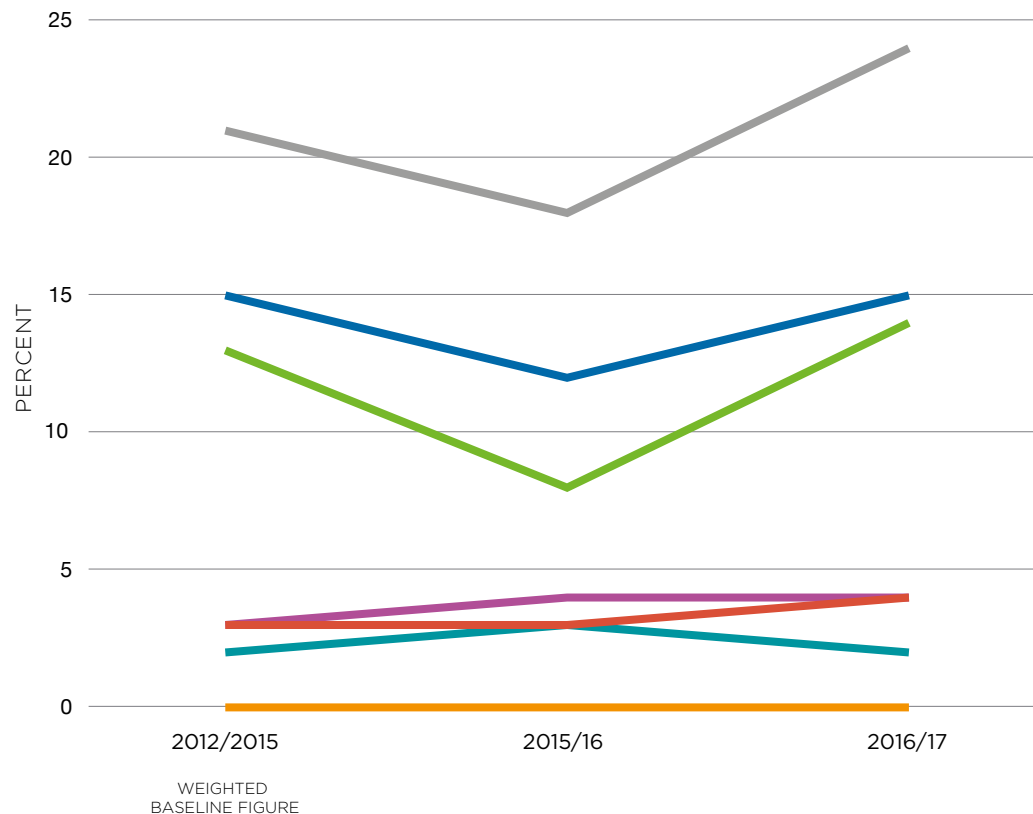
KEY

- **Grade A (pass)**
Completely free of indicator
- **Grade B (pass)**
Predominantly free of indicator apart from some small items
- **Grade C (fail)**
Widespread distribution of indicator with minor accumulations
- **Grade D (fail)**
Heavily affected with significant accumulations

The trend in pollution indicators

2012-15 is the baseline against which current performance should be compared.

■ Litter ■ Anthropic ■ Staining ■ Detrius ■ Graffiti ■ Flyposting ■ Perception



On 36 of the 1,100 transects (3%) weed growth was noted as being a significant issue – this is likely an underrepresentation as weed growth is not currently an indicator, and these have simply been recorded ad hoc in the notes. As a result of this weed growth will be added to the indicators recorded by the survey from April 2017. Other measures including the level of pavement obstruction and measures of dilapidation have also been added following discussions with stakeholders and other groups. Other illustrative comments made in the notes included:

‘Count over 30 plastic bottles lying around’

in a children’s play area in Coleraine

‘Hundreds of cigarette butts’

in a Retail Shed area in Ballycastle

‘Needs a bin’

on an industrial estate in Lisburn

‘Litter chopped up by grass cutting’

in a public park in Crossgar

‘Phenomenal view’

on a rural road outside Armooy

‘A sign on the wall beside the changing rooms says ‘no ball games’’

on a sports pitch in Gracehill

‘Drain blocked with drinks and takeaway packaging’

in Milltown

‘Stream culvert full of bottles and cans’

in Carrickfergus

‘Local spoke to me and complained that bin needs relocated to top of steps’




in a play park in Ballygalley

Survey results for each Council

Transects badly affected by litter or dog fouling

The percentage of transects which fall below the required standard for litter, and the percentage of transects on which dog fouling was observed in each council area.

KEY

-  Litter including dog fouling (%)
-  Dog fouling present (%)
-  Councils participating in the Borough Cleanliness survey





Derry City & Strabane District Council
Comhairle Chathair Dhoire & Cheantar an tSrátha Bán
Derry City & Strabane District Council



Comhairle Coimisiún Lár Uladh Mid Ulster District Council

AVERAGE FOR ALL OF NI:

-  **15%**
-  **6%**



Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí



Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council



Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council



Mid & East Antrim Borough Council



Antrim and Newtownabbey BOROUGHCOUNCIL



Belfast City Council



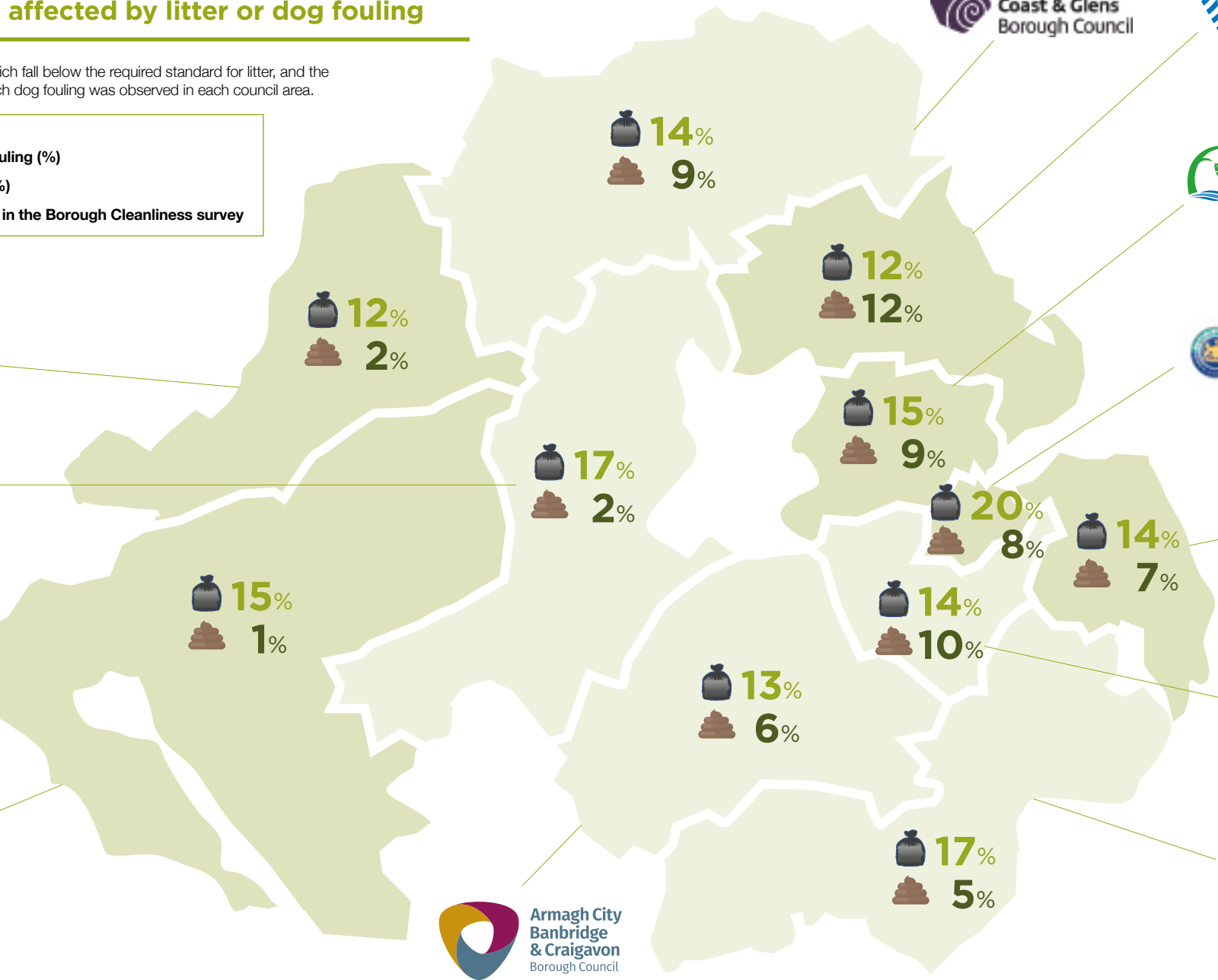
Ards and North Down Borough Council



LCCC Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council



Comhairle Ceantair an tOir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council



Levels of litter pollution in each land use

The pattern of littering in each land use remains relatively constant from year to year in Northern Ireland.

Rural and industrial areas have higher rates of failure than residential areas, which could be due to less frequent cleansing; greater likelihood of people to litter in these areas; or some other factor or combination of factors. It is not possible to say definitively which is the leading contribution without further study.

Using the Pollution Index system it is clear that a fall in overall performance between 2015 and 2016 has been the result of falls in six of the eight landuses. Only Low Density Residential and Recreational areas showed improvements during this period, and these were modest. Between them these two landuses account for 37% of the survey. The percentage of passing grades in Industrial and Retail Shed areas fell for the second year in row. This taken along with a large fall in the main retail areas indicates that many people are going to work in a more littered environment than they were previously.

Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS)

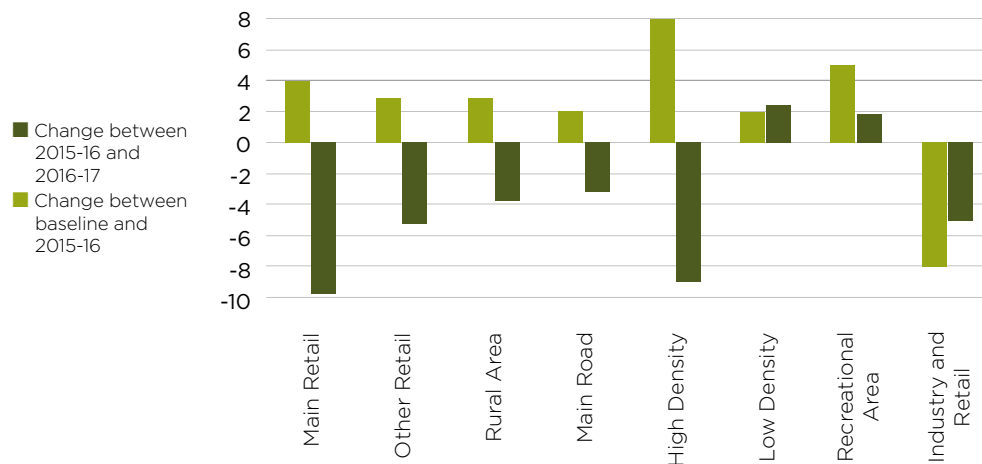
LEAMS is an alternative method of measuring litter and other indicators. Unlike the pass/fail Performance Index, LEAMS scores are generated by assigning a value to each grade, and then calculating the average value of all the grades assigned. It differs from the Performance Index in that a LEAMS score takes account of how clean or littered a transect is, rather than just whether it is a pass or fail. In this way if several transects just fall below the acceptable standard, the LEAMS score would be higher than it would if they were well below the standard. Due to this more nuanced expression, LEAMS can be used

to perform various analysis that are not possible with the Pollution Indicator.

By the LEAMS measure four of the eight landuses experienced a fall in performance. Rural areas and main roads improved slightly under this measure, in contrast to the Pollution Index. This suggests that while more transects may have failed to meet the accepted standard, there were a greater percentage of transects which were better than their counterparts in 2015. In addition, the LEAMS score also shows falls in Main Retail and High Density Housing, suggesting that these are the two areas which have seen the largest decrease in performance during 2016.

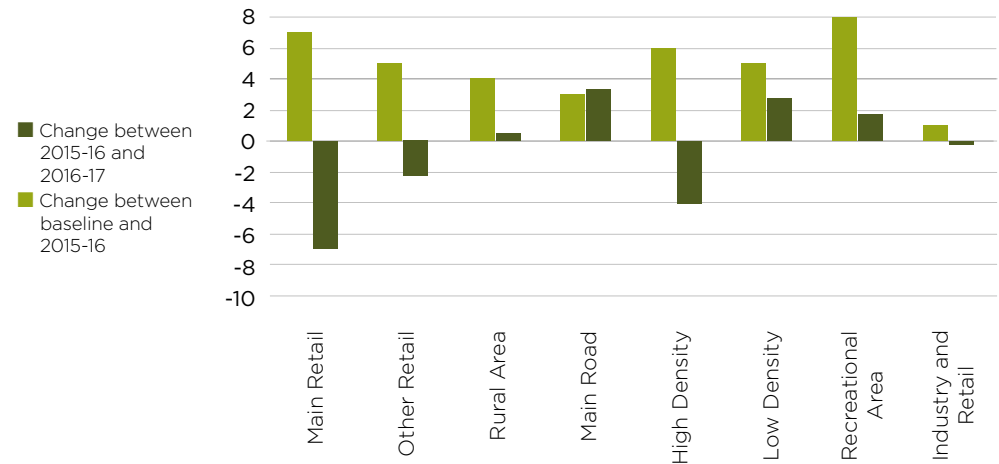
The Litter Pollution Index

The Litter Pollution Index (percentage of transects which fail) in each landuse. A positive move indicates improved performance compared to the previous year. Note the different analysis given in, for example, main roads, where the Pollution Index shows deterioration between 2015 and 2016 while LEAMS (right) indicates an improvement



LEAMS score

The corresponding LEAMS Score. A positive move indicates improved performance compared to the previous year. Note the different analysis given in, for example, main roads, where the Pollution Index (left) shows deterioration between 2015 and 2016 while LEAMS indicates an improvement



Dog fouling

Dog fouling showed a welcome fall in prevalence, from 12% of transects in 2015 to just 6% in 2016. In a reversal of previous year's results, dog fouling was observed less often on High Density Housing transects than in Low Density Housing transects. This is surprising given that 17% of High Density transects failed for Litter, while just 1% of Low Density transects did.

Dog fouling was observed on 6% of transects, down from 12% in 2015 while the weighted baseline figure is 11, suggesting that dog fouling was much less common during the summer of 2016 than previously found. Where surveys suggest that dog fouling is becoming more of an issue is within Main Retail areas. There were striking falls in the rate of observation on Main Road and High Obstruction Housing areas. However, this is the result of just one survey, and it would need to be backed up by further observations before any clear trend can be endorsed.

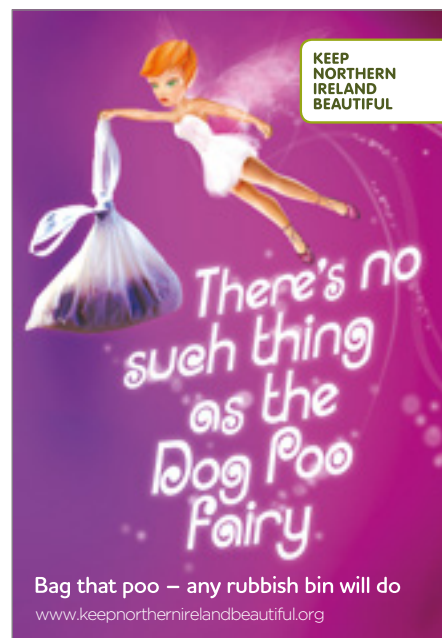
The data on dog fouling continues to appear to show clustering behaviour. While a relatively low proportion of transects was affected by dog fouling this year, they tend to be heavily affected, with an average of 1.25 deposits on each affected transect, rising to almost 1.7/transect in High Obstruction Housing, suggesting that either people return to the same place to allow their dog to foul, or that dog walkers are signalled by the presence of fouling that they do not need to pick up after their dog either.

Prevalence of dog fouling in each land use

Dog fouling was observed on 8% of main retail sites in 2016, up from just 2% in 2015. By contrast, the observation rate in High Density Housing areas fell from 19% to just 7%.

	Percentage of transects baseline	Percentage of transects 2015	Percentage of transects 2016	Total number of dog fouling observed 2016
Main retail/commercial	2	2	7	10
Other retail/commercial	8	13	5	5
Rural area	5	7	2	2
Main road	11	16	0	0
High density residential	17	19	7	21
Low density residential	9	11	8	18
Recreational area	15	15	12	34
Industry and retail sheds	9	14	9	12
Total				102
Average	11	12	6	

Taken together, this suggests that by surveying a relatively large area of residential streets it should be possible to determine the approximately 6–10% of streets with a dog fouling problem. These streets are more likely than others to suffer from recurrent fouling problems, and as such make a much more efficient set of candidates for close monitoring and enforcement action.



Posters such as this are now available to Councils, Land Owners/Managers and Individuals from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful

Bins

Lack of an available bin is often cited as a reason for dropping litter – the “the Council haven’t provided me with somewhere to put it; blame them” argument. Indeed, during an interview on Radio Ulster’s Talkback in response to the release of Street Cleansing costs in November 2016 this was raised by both members of the panel and one of the listeners.

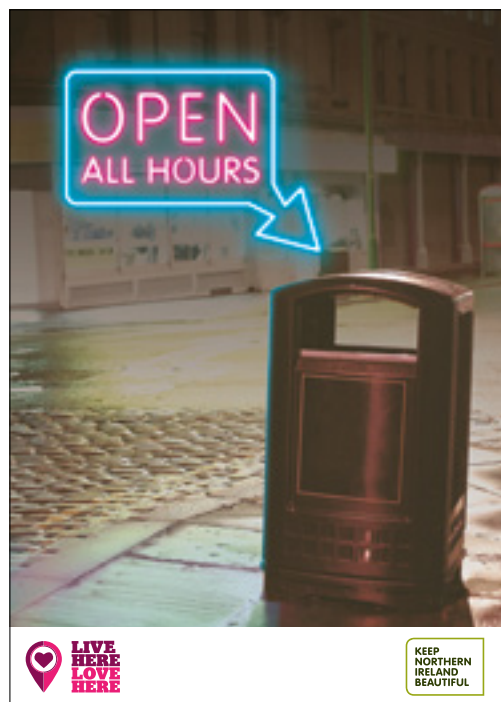
Surveyors make a note of the number, placement and condition of any bins present on any transect, and also if they feel it is likely to be a cause of the litter, either because it is overflowing and people have left rubbish around it, or because it is blowing out of the bin. On

none of the 1,100 transects covered was a problem with a bin being overflowing or absent/ removed cited as a major cause of observed high litter levels. On one occasion a member of the public approached the surveyor and mentioned the lack of a bin, and on another they pointed out a spot near to but not on the transect which would benefit from a bin.

There were a total of 22 transects out of 1,100 observed to have overflowing bins, or just 2%. The presence or absence of a bin was not statistically significantly linked to the litter grade achieved ($r_s=0.009$) or to the likelihood of observing dog fouling ($r_s=0.026$).

Our surveys indicate that there is an average of 1.4 bins on every primary retail transect in Northern Ireland. Belfast has the most, with an average of 2.6 bins on every 50m transect, while Mid And East Antrim has the fewest, with 0.6 bins / transect. Given that Mid and East Antrim has a Primary Retail LEAMS Score 7% higher this suggests that availability of bins in this landuse has little effect on the prevalence of litter. Belfast however also has the highest per capita cost of cleansing; the highest number of fixed penalties issued for litter; and the largest area of primary retail in country by some margin, so it may be unfair to make comparisons between it and other NI councils.

This suggests that areas with both a bin and a litter problem are prime sites for sustained action, both by Enforcement Officers and through education and suggestion campaigns. Having a prompt or subconscious nudge toward using those bins already provided in the form of a



Prevalence of bins and transects with unacceptable levels of litter

There is no correlation between availability of a bin and the average cleanliness of a particular landuse.

* There were only 4 beaches surveyed during the bathing season, which is not enough to provide a reasonable analysis of this recreation type.

Landuse	% with bins present	% of transects with unacceptable levels of litter
Main retail/commercial	66	2
Other retail/commercial	55	12
Rural area	2	22
Main road	14	11
High density residential	4	8
Low density residential	1	3
Recreational area	71	15
Beach	N/A*	N/A
Public park	77	20
Children’s play area	93	10
Sports pitch	51	19
Industry and retail sheds	6	23

poster, or simply making the bin more salient – making it stand out from its surroundings by for example painting it bright yellow – could be a highly cost effective means of tackling littering in most landuses.

Obstructions preventing sweeping

A significant issue in any cleansing routine is the ability to fully exploit the cleansing resources available. If a mechanical sweeper is unable to access an area then the choice becomes: a) leave any litter and detritus; b) task a sweeper on foot to an area, or c) schedule a return to an area in the hope that the pattern of obstructions will change. The majority of obstructions are parked cars preventing access to the kerb, but other obstructions, especially in retail areas, include fixed signs, movable signs, inappropriately placed street furniture and poorly designed sites which would prevent access, especially outside retail areas.

Belfast had the lowest average percentage of pavement which could be cleaned mechanically – approximately 2.5km of the 5km of road and path surveyed in Belfast could not be cleaned by a mechanical sweeper. Derry City and Strabane District experience the highest level of completely obstructed transects, with 40% (not shown in table). Focusing on residential areas, the data indicates that less than half as much of a high obstruction housing area can be mechanically swept as a low obstruction area (97% against 44%). This means that, for a given input of resources (cost or time), the resulting outcome (how clean the area is) is likely to be better in low obstruction housing areas.

Manual litter picking and sweeping has a specific and important place in any cleansing routine – in parks it may not be possible or sensible to use a mechanical sweeper; in smaller hamlets remote from the nearest operations depot it may be more cost effective to task a manual clean than to send a sweeper; gravel paths and some types of brick pavers are not suitable for mechanical cleaning. However, given that between a quarter and a half of all a mechanical sweeper's operational time is unproductive, this represents an area that could produce significant efficiency savings.

RECOMMENDATION



The Assembly, Transport NI and Councils examine the business and technical cases for implementing a parking management system which would enable sweeping to be carried out more efficiently in high obstruction areas.

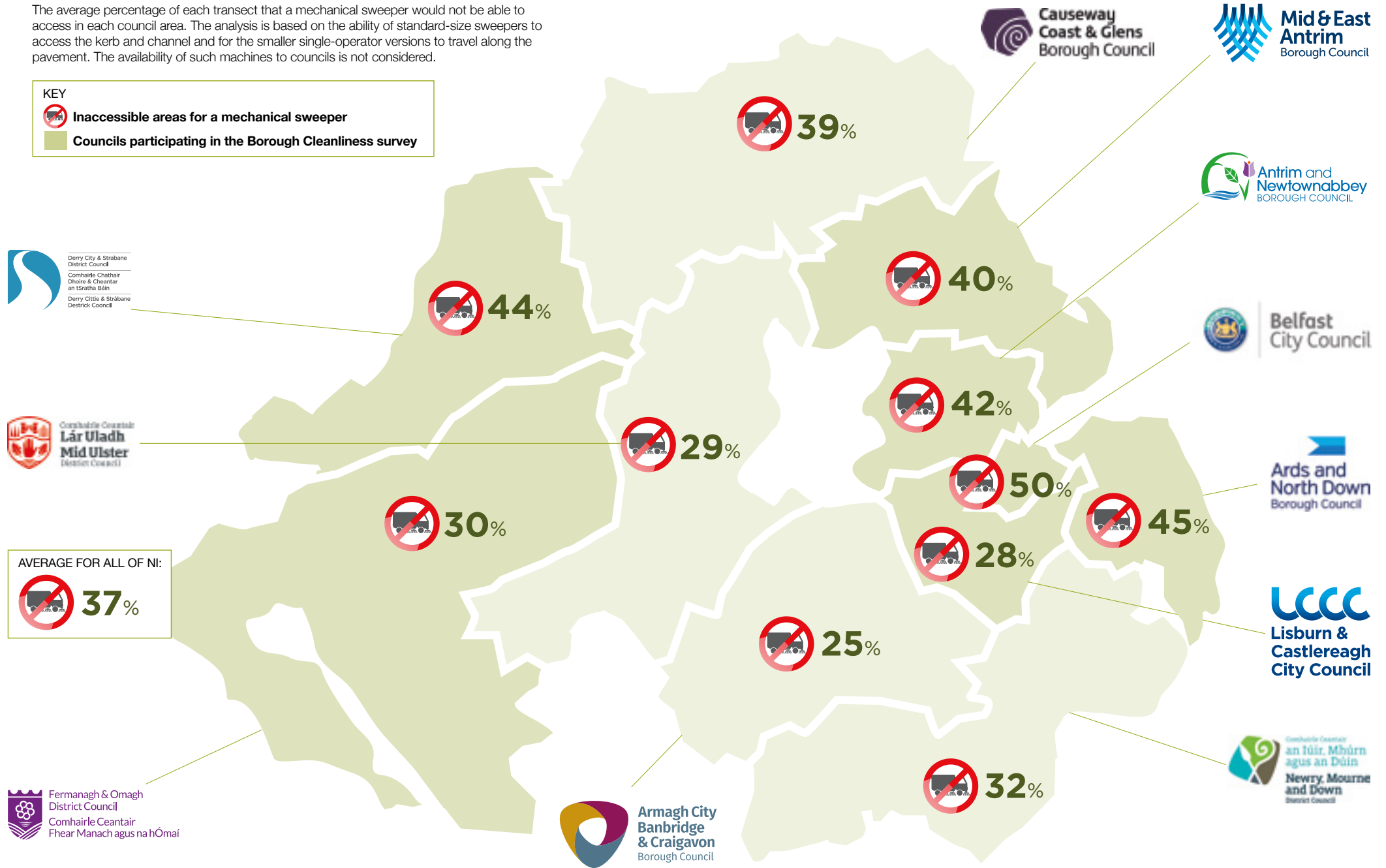


Percentage of transects on which obstruction prevents sweeping

The average percentage of each transect that a mechanical sweeper would not be able to access in each council area. The analysis is based on the ability of standard-size sweepers to access the kerb and channel and for the smaller single-operator versions to travel along the pavement. The availability of such machines to councils is not considered.

KEY

-  Inaccessible areas for a mechanical sweeper
-  Councils participating in the Borough Cleanliness survey



Impact of spend on cleansing

The total average spend on street cleansing across all of Northern Ireland in 2015-16 was £43,285,212.

In other words every man, woman and child pays an average of £23.66 per year for this service. An alternative way of looking at this is that cleansing is paid for through the rates bill councils send each householder. With a total of 744,800 households in Northern Ireland this means that on average a rate payer was charged £58.12 for cleaning the streets, even if they are not personally a litterer.

Please note that these figures relate to 2015-16, and are therefore one year behind the figures in the rest of this report. Because of careful auditing and the public presentation process public finances go through, the approved figures are only made available in September or October of the following year.

By looking at the outcome of the spend on cleansing – the LEAMS data – we can see that councils with similar expenditure per head of population can have very different outcomes, and that higher spending on street cleansing does not correlate with better Local Environmental Quality. Street cleanliness is a result of many complex and often interrelated factors, and simply spending more on lifting litter is, as well as being unsustainable in even the short term, not an effective means of controlling litter.

FACT

Higher spending on street cleansing does not correlate with better Local Environmental Quality

The inflation (CPI) adjusted spend on cleansing since 2011.

Spend actually dropped in 2012/13 but has risen steeply in the past three years. The inflation adjusted spend in 2011/12 was actually greater than it was for the following three years.



Amount spent on street cleansing and the effect of that spend

Litter LEAMS was calculated from survey data collected by trained surveyors between August and October 2016. Spending figures were collected from individual Council financial statements, which are available on Council websites, and reported on 29/11/2016, and the projected population of each Area from the NI Statistics and Research Agency.

KEY

- Cost per head of population
- Litter LEAMS
- Councils participating in the Borough Cleanliness survey

Derry City & Strabane District Council
Comhairle Chathair Dhóire & Cheantar an tSrátha Báin
Derry Cille & Strábane Districc Council

Comhairle Coimisiún Lár Uladh Mid Ulster District Council

AVERAGE FOR ALL OF NI:
 £23.66
 71

Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

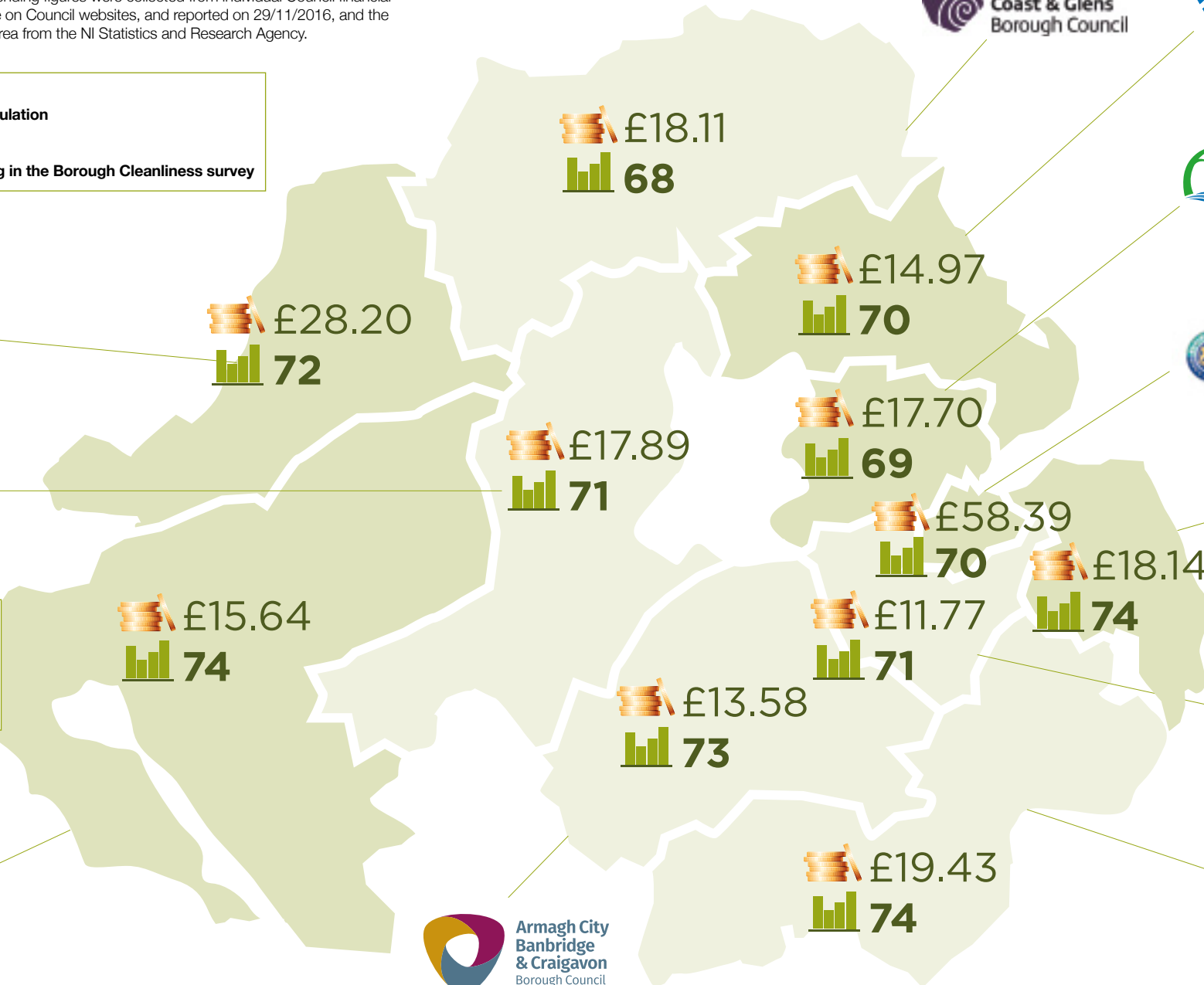
Antrim and Newtownabbey BOROUGH COUNCIL

Belfast City Council

Ards and North Down Borough Council

LCCC Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Comhairle Coimisiún an tOir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin Newry, Mourne and Down District Council



Marine litter

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful conducts four surveys on ten reference beaches each year on behalf of the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

This survey was designed to provide a baseline figure against which to measure progress toward what is termed “Good Environmental Status” (GES) under the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Good Environmental Status in the case of marine litter is defined as “Properties and quantities of marine litter do not cause harm to the coastal and marine environment”

In February the results of all the surveys since 2012 were reported in the media and placed online under the open data principle. The report highlighted the many effects of marine litter and the means by which litter may accumulate on some beaches and not others.

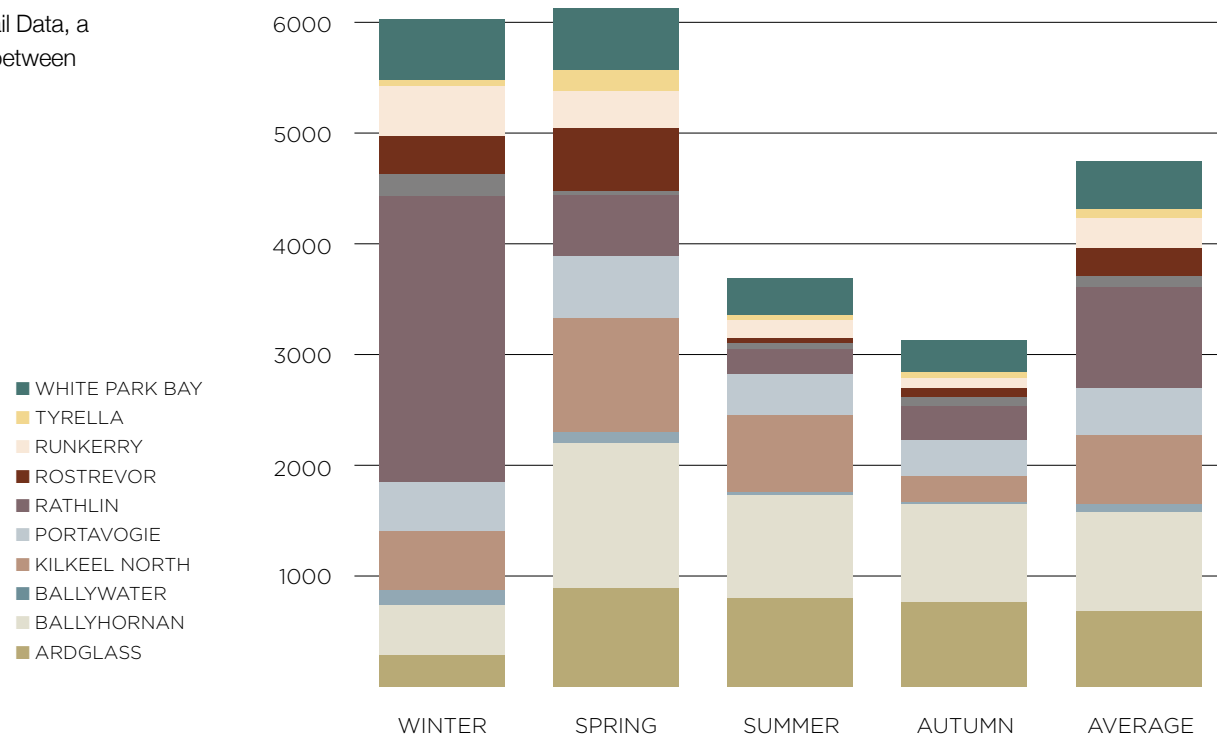
The major point of note in the surveys was the variability in the amount of litter, even on the same beach, and the apparent lack of a pattern or trend. Over the course of 2016 an average of 431 items of litter per 100m was recorded. One type of litter that has reduced since the survey started is plastic bag litter, which has dropped from an average of 12/km at the end of 2012 to

just over 5/km at the end of 2016, most likely as a result of the carrier bag levies introduced around the UK and Ireland.

Reports specifically about marine litter around the coast of Northern Ireland can be found at our website* as can tools to download or analyse the data. This facility has been made available in partnership with Detail Data, a BIG Lottery funded partnership between NICVA and theDetail.tv.

Litter count by beaches in 2016

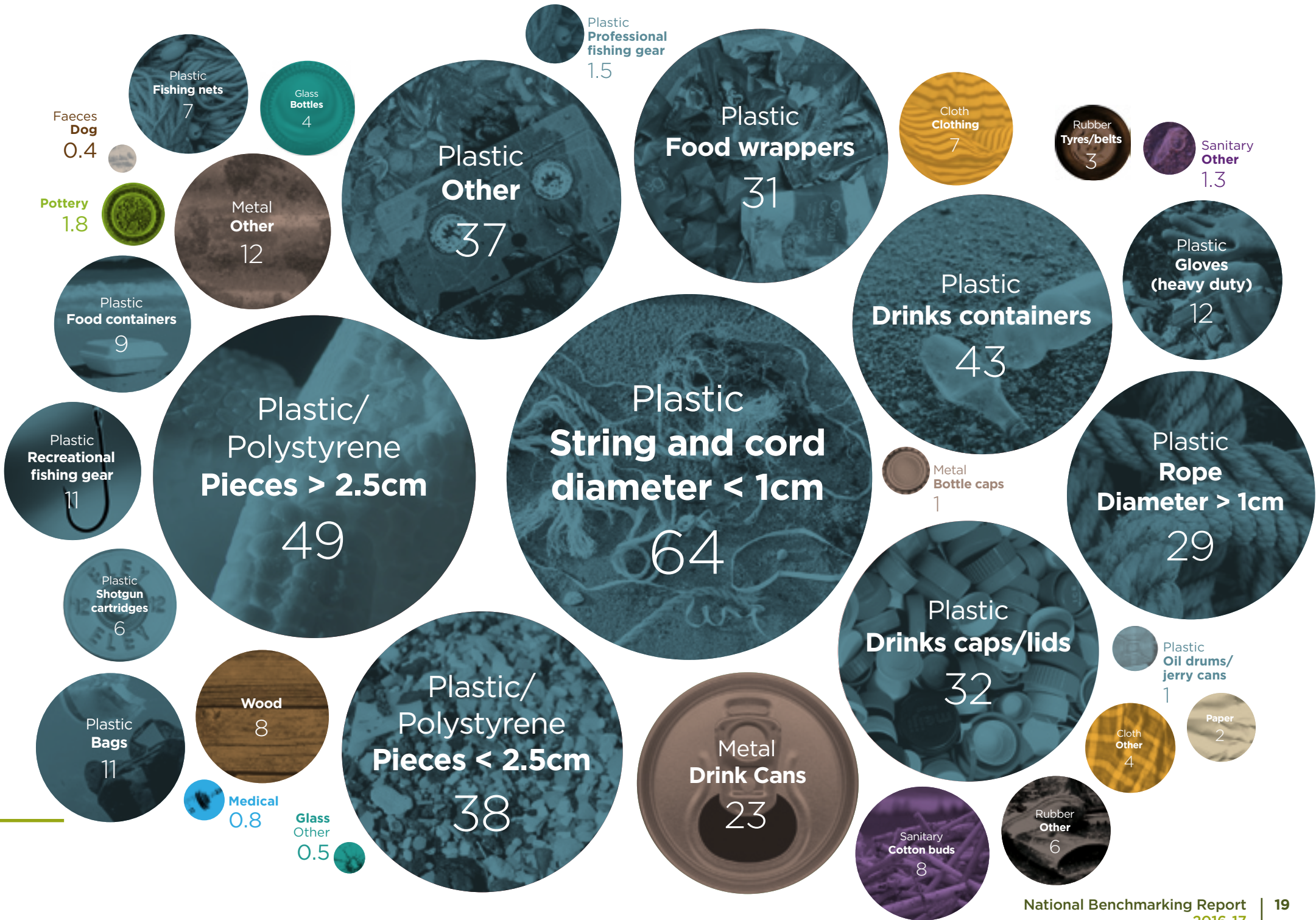
The contribution of each of the ten reference beaches to the total litter count in each of the four survey windows during 2016. Rathlin contributed a huge figure in the Winter survey, but much less in the other three surveys.



2016 marine litter survey: types of litter observed

The graphic on the opposite page shows the relative proportions of different types of litter observed during the 2016 marine litter surveys. Bits of string and cord smaller than 1cm in diameter were the most commonly observed type of litter. <https://public.tableau.com/profile/bob.harper#!/vizhome/SubcategoryBubbles/Sub-categorybubbles>.

*<http://www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org/cgi-bin/generic?instanceID=50>



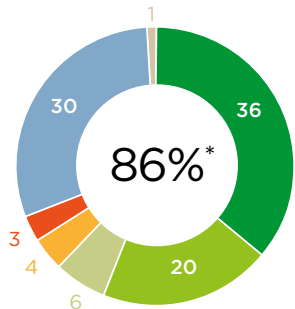
Live Here Love Here

In 2016 Live Here Love Here:

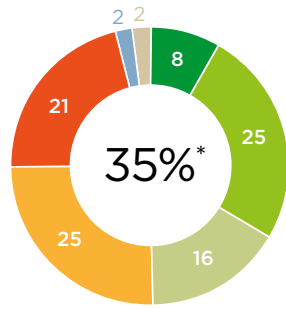
- Supported over 107,000 volunteers in clean-ups and other civic pride actions
- Removed nearly 300 tonnes of litter
- Operated a small grants scheme that was 9 fold over-subscribed, which supported 84 groups
- Developed and delivered significant media coverage including TV, outdoor and social
- Grew to include the social housing sector (and we are delighted to see it grow again in 2017 with the addition of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon and Mid-Ulster Councils)
- Started to change our littering culture (see right)

Advertising impact on future intentions to drop litter

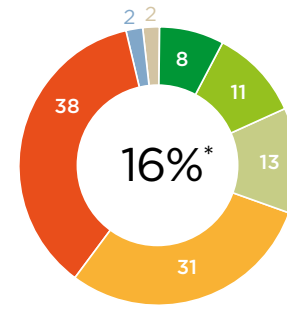
Including those who spontaneously say they would never drop litter, the advertising had a very strong impact on future intentions of dropping litter. The impact on likelihood of taking other more proactive action is significantly less, however more than 1 in 3 did say they would be at least fairly likely to volunteer



Think twice about dropping litter.



Volunteer or take part in a clean-up project, planting, updating buildings or similar civic pride activities



Organise a clean-up project, planting, updating buildings or similar civic pride activity

KEY

- Very likely
- Fairly likely
- Neither likely or unlikely
- Fairly unlikely
- Very unlikely
- I would never drop litter/ already done so
- Don't know

* Total of Very likely/Fairly likely or already done so (or would never drop litter)



Dave Foster (DAERA) presents an award to members of Love Your Lough at the first annual Live Here Love Here Awards ceremony in March 2017

These organisations are partners in Live Here Love Here:



Mid Waterside Residents Association



Success in the Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme spurred the newly constituted Mid Waterside Residents Association into direct action, bringing the community together in an alleyway improvement campaign, targeting weeds, rubbish, dog foul, broken glass and overgrown plants.

Residents and neighbours invited all local homeowners, tenants, landlords and local business that have access to and use of the alleyways to be a part of the group, to come out, clean up and support each other as a community that takes pride in their area.

As well as people taking pride in their area, the action brought people of all ages, nationalities, religions and political persuasions together. Some residents were meeting their neighbours for the first time and creating new friendships. Regular meetings and liaisons with council has resulted in a good working relationship, to date two new dog bins have been installed with the promise of increased signage targeting littering and dog fouling.

The funding from Live Here Love Here has allowed the group to spray weeds and regrowth as well as hire of equipment to power clean the space. The momentum of the work that the residents have achieved to date is helping the Association move forward into Spring with a renewed vigour.

Ballycraigy Primary School



Ballycraigy Primary School received funding through the Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme to create a colourful planted area and to compliment a mural that has been put up in Ballycraigy Drive, Antrim. Recently the pupils from the school and the Considerate Constructor's scheme created a mural close to the school and close to the development of a mix of new houses and apartments within the community. When the mural was completed it looked wonderful and the school wanted to apply the Ballycraigy School stamp to finish off the area by planting bulbs underneath it.

The school chose to use spring bulbs, including daffodils, crocuses and tulips, to help improve the aesthetics by adding more colour to the area. Ballycraigy Primary School is known for its wonderful garden and they to extend this influence into the community. The children designed the bulb planting drifts as the teachers worked out how to plant them. The group also worked with the local Men's Shed to add some planters.

The event was attended by local councillors who interacted and chatted with the children as they planted bulbs - 'Shoots up and roots down!' The group were very resourceful and asked the folks from a local building site close by, who helped to put up the mural, to dig the trenches with a small digger to make it easier for the children to plant.

The success will be in spring, when they will see the fruits of their labour and the bulbs are blooming. Plans are afoot to put a garden seat there, for older members of the community. The group hope this venture under the new mural, will be an advert for their school, to highlight outdoor activities which the school is renowned for.

Education and awareness campaigns

Alongside the Live Here Love Here campaign Councils and community organisations run various education initiatives and workshops which buttress wider-scale campaigning.

All eleven councils were offered the opportunity to contribute a case study for this section.

Belfast City Council

In April Belfast City Council launched the Anti-Litter Billboard Challenge, a competition to design a billboard which would be displayed in the winning entry's local community. The Council contacted local schools and groups and asked them to register their interest in taking part. Once they had done so the Council contacted them to provide support in the preparation of the design. The theme was 'The impact of litter and graffiti in our community'

58 groups and schools registered from right across the city with 76 completed boards returned.



The poster features the Belfast City Council logo and the text 'ANTI-LITTER BILLBOARD CHALLENGE!' in large, colorful letters. Below this, a cartoon illustration shows a park scene with children playing, a dog, and a person cleaning graffiti. A sign in the park reads 'YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR SAY!'. At the bottom, a person is cleaning graffiti with a high-pressure washer, and a dog is being walked. The text 'Have your say!' is prominently displayed. Below the illustration, there is a call to action: 'Design a billboard advertisement on the topic of litter, graffiti or dog fouling with your group or school and you'll be in with a chance to have your own advertisement displayed on a billboard in your area.' It also provides contact information: 'To register email catcleansing@belfastcity.gov.uk or contact us on 9032 0202 (ext 5377) by Monday 7 March 2016.' The Belfast City Council logo is at the bottom right.

Chewing Gum Action Group campaign (CGAG) - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon



Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council were chosen for a third year running to deliver the high profile campaign in an effort to reduce gum litter across the Borough. The Council was the only Council in Northern Ireland to run the campaigns in 2014, 2015 and 2016 and have seen successive reductions in the amount of gum dropped in areas monitored. In 2014 the Craigavon area saw a 56% gum reduction in hotspot areas monitored during the campaign and in 2015 the reduction observed was 42%.

The highly visible promotional campaign includes visuals on bus stops, lamp-posts and telephone kiosks. Posters were distributed to secondary schools, community and leisure centres and window stickers were hand delivered to local shops to display the message. Gum-Raps were also given to pupils taking part in the Educational sessions. These sessions, aimed at pupils ranging from Primary 3 to 7, look at all the different types of litter; the consequences of littering and the steps we can all take to help fight the litter problem. The litter awareness programme has been very successful and many sign up to the Adopt-a-Street scheme as a result of the talks. Schools have reported that the children who have taken part in both schemes have gained a more responsible attitude towards littering and it is hoped that ultimately they will bring the message home to their parents and other family members.

Mid and East Antrim

Green Dog Walkers Scheme (GDW)

GDWs is aimed at tackling the issue of dog fouling and was launched to call on volunteers to sign up and make a difference together. The scheme wants to encourage people to get involved and take a pledge to clean up after their dogs as well as acting as a friendly reminder to other dog walkers to do the same, it is designed to be a non-confrontational, friendly way to change attitudes about dog fouling. Those who sign up to the scheme receive a doggie welcome pack which contains the Green Dog Walkers® armband, dog bone shaped bag dispenser, doggie bags and clip on hand sanitiser. They then take the pledge to say they will wear the armband when walking their dog to remind people to clean up after their pooch as well as carrying extra doggie bags and be happy to share these bags with dog walkers who need them. The scheme first launch in Craigavon area is being rolled out into the wider Borough of Banbridge and Armagh in coming months. Currently we have 210 dog walkers signed up to the scheme.

Dog Watch

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council has launched its Dog Watch scheme, which aims to help locals who want to stamp out dog fouling in their area. Twinburn, Straid, Mayfield, Mount Pleasant and Ballyrobert have been the first areas to become involved and the scheme has proved to be a great success.

The community based scheme has seen some of the volunteers don a Dog Watch hi-visibility vest and actively patrol their own areas on the look out for dog owners who fail to pick up after their pets. This along with increased patrols by Council Enforcement Officers and regular cleaning by Council Cleansing Operatives acts as a visible deterrent to irresponsible dog owners. Along with the community presence the Council has placed signs in these areas highlighting that the scheme is in place and the area is being monitored. Volunteers also act as advocates, offering out dog fouling bags, as well as acting as a link between the Council and the community.

Frances Carson,
Twinburn Neighborhood Watch:

“The scheme has been a huge success and has made big improvements in our area. We initially got involved because of the increase in the amount of fouling on our footpaths and I felt passionately that we needed to work together to sort out the issue of dog fouling locally. I’d encourage other communities in the Borough to get involved in Dog Watch – it really doesn’t take up that much of your time, and the results are worth it.”

Not only are the residents providing a visible deterrent against dog fouling but have also been passing information about offences on to the Councils Enforcement Team. This



allows Council Officers to target their patrols more effectively.

The Councils Enforcement Officers offer support to Community Groups who want to tackle dog foul within their area. The project was initially piloted in Straid, though we since have established a network of “Dog Watch” groups, who act as the eyes and ears of the community, help to identify offenders, and

provide a highly visible and prompt response to concerns raised about the problem. The Council provide hi visibility “Dog Watch” vests, a supply of dog waste bags, and information leaflets to hand out to dog walkers. In addition, Dog Watch signs and anti-fouling pavement markings have been placed on the footpaths in problem areas to act as a deterrent.

Eco-Schools

Eco-Schools forms an important element of the anti-littering education package in most Councils in Northern Ireland.

The Eco-Schools programme was developed by the Foundation for Environmental Education, is actively run in 64 countries around the world and is acknowledged as the world's largest pupil led environmental education programme, engaging over 15 million young people. It also provides an excellent foundation for delivering many of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. During 2015-2016 there were 136 schools in Northern Ireland awarded a Green Flag, the pinnacle of the programme. As well as undertaking detailed learning on three environmental topics, schools must maintain a litter free environment to achieve the Green Flag. Schools are reassessed every two years, ensuring that all participating pupils receive regular anti-litter messaging.

At the heart of the Eco-Schools programme is a very simple 7-step process supporting long-term behavioural change and promoting the environmental message beyond the school gates into the surrounding community. Northern Ireland was the first country in the world to have every school registered with the programme.

Anti-littering education through Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland

The number of Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland. Around nine out ten Green Flag schools are actively encouraging a pupil-led anti-litter message at any one time. Years quoted are academic years.

Year	Number of Green Flags	% of schools looking at topic	Children receiving anti-litter education
2012-2013	103	76.7	24,000
2013-2014	113	85.0	25,000
2014-2015	128	70.3	25,500
2015-2016	136	80.1	24,500



Presentation Primary School, Portadown, receiving their first Green Flag award in June 2016.




Eco-schools operates with the support of:



Eco-Schools green flags in Northern Ireland

Number and percentage of schools in each Council which held a Green Flag on 01/03/2017. Lisburn City and Castlereagh District Council does not support the Eco-Schools programme.

KEY

-  **Number of Schools that fly a green flag**
-  **Percentage of schools that are green flag**
-  **Councils which support the Eco-schools programme**



Derry City & Strabane District Council
Comhairle Chathair Dhóire & Ceantair an tSrátha Báin
Derry Citty & Strábane Districk Council



Comhairle Coimisiún Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster District Council

AVERAGE FOR ALL OF NI:
 **22%**



Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí



Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council



Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council



Mid & East Antrim Borough Council



Antrim and Newtownabbey BOROUGH COUNCIL



Belfast City Council



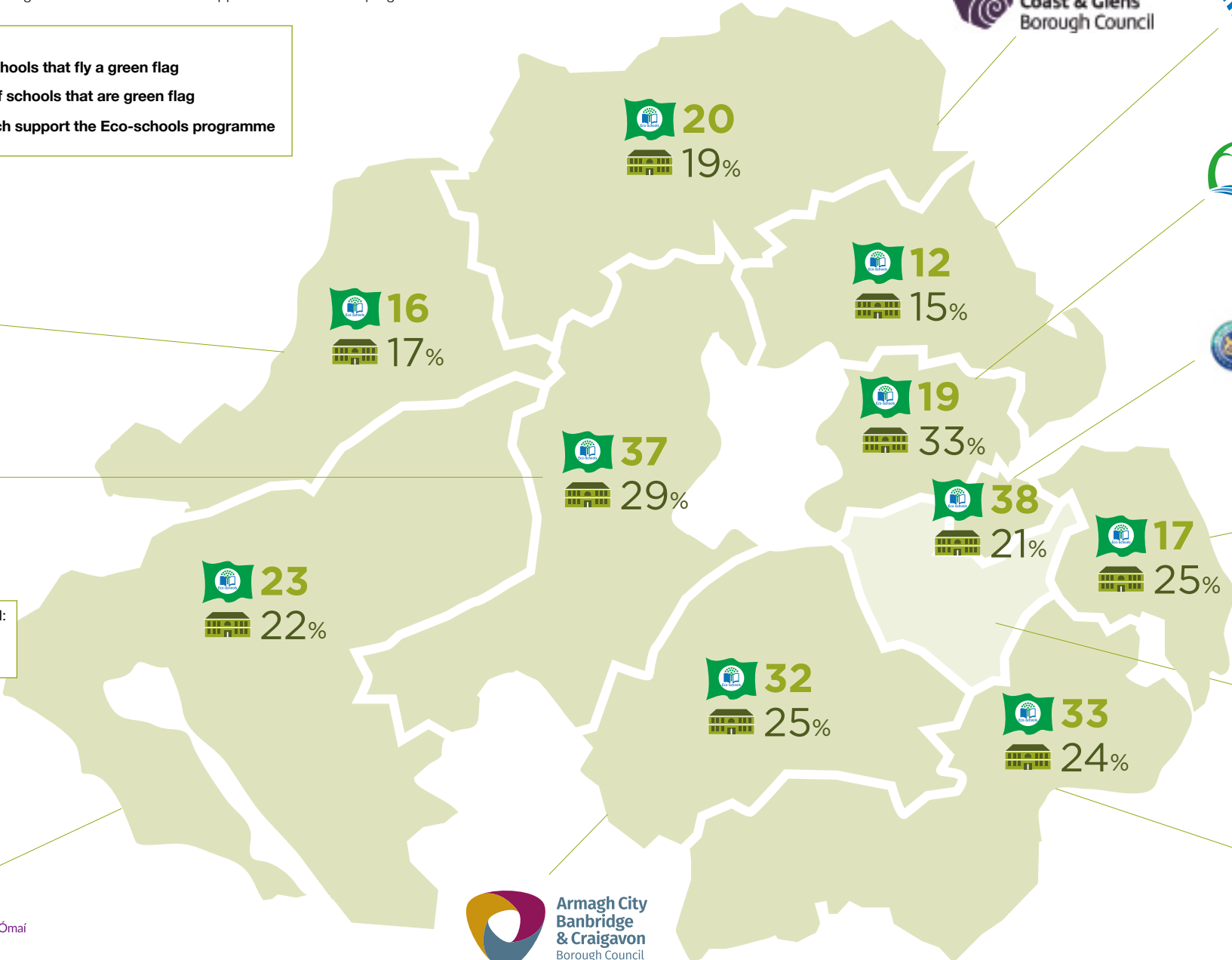
Ards and North Down Borough Council



Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council



Comhairle Coimisiún an tOir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council



Enforcement actions

Alongside education campaigns and awareness raising, enforcement of expected standards is an integral part of an effective campaign to change individual behaviour in a group of people.

Councils in Northern Ireland keep records of their enforcement operations, and these can provide a measurement of a council's efforts to tackle litter and improve the local environmental quality for their residents. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful requested this information, and all 11 councils voluntarily supplied the data in full for 2015/16.

Figure 6 presents the numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) issued by each council over the past seven years, showing that positive enforcement peaked in 2013 and has fallen over the past two years.

Across Northern Ireland there were on average 20 fixed penalties issued for every 10,000 people between April 2015 and March 2016 – this is equivalent to one in every 454 people. However FPN issued in Belfast make up over half of the total, while Belfast also spends a massively disproportionate amount on cleansing, so it may be misleading to consider the total figures including Belfast.

Fixed penalties issued for litter and dog fouling

Belfast City Council issued over half of all Fixed Penalties in 2015-16. The average recovered from each fixed penalty issued is £49.71. The rate / 10,000 people in 2014-15 was 22. Dog fouling actions were not included in the data provided for 2014/15.

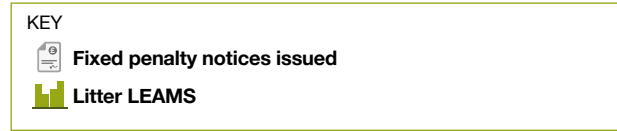
■ DOG
■ LITTER



As with other reports which use data provided by others, there are limits to the analysis that can be done. Perhaps the most significant is the lack of reported figures on the provision of resource to this task within a council, for example how many full time equivalent posts are dedicated to litter enforcement, or what the budget for education programmes is. Discussions with a minority of the Councils has suggested that this more comprehensive data would allow a more advantageous analysis to be provided in future reports, but that providing it may be difficult. Further work will be done to determine both the value and the prospect of this during 2017.

Fixed penalties issued by each Council

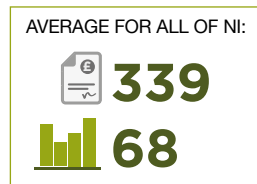
FPN figures were provided by each Council in response to requests for the information. Litter LEAMS was calculated from survey data collected by trained surveyors between August and October 2016.



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Comhairle Coimisiún an tOir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Recommendations

These recommendations are what Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful believes would be necessary to truly banish littering, dog fouling and related environmental incivilities from Northern Ireland. We have given priority to those recommendations which prevent these problems from occurring over those which mitigate the effects.

For national policy makers

1. Northern Ireland needs a Comprehensive litter strategy. In order to tackle littering behaviour, Northern Ireland should develop a strategy for combating the causes of litter. This would need to include a joined up approach across education; targeted, credible levels of enforcement and public engagement and the sharing of scarce resources. This would also support the EU Waste Directive, and development of a strategy could be informed by the seven 'Breakthrough Propositions' adopted by MEPs in March 2017.
2. Hold all bodies with responsibility to account equally. The Department of Infrastructure, particularly Transport NI and the Rivers Agency, should be held to account for their failure to provide a level of cleansing activity which will control the litter in areas within their remit. This includes actively managing and penalising contractors who fail to collect litter before cutting or clearing work is undertaken. Other public and private land managers should also be held to the same standard.
3. The Assembly; relevant Departments; beverage producers and environmental groups should examine the costs, benefits and hurdles to adoption of a container deposit return scheme. Such schemes have been effective in reducing litter around the world. The process should consider the practicality of introducing this and other viable options on an all-island basis as well as solely for Northern Ireland.

4. Clear obstructions from streets to improve cleansing outcomes. Consideration should be given to a requirement that residential areas are kept clear of vehicles between designated times on given days in a month to allow unfettered access for street sweeping. With almost 40% of a mechanical sweeper's operational time wasted due to parked cars blocking access, this would significantly improve the outcomes from street cleansing operations while reducing the resources required.
5. Clear guidance is required for the treatment of littering by the courts. This should contain structured guidance against which fines, penalties and other options issued during court proceedings can be set. This would ensure that fair and reasonable penalties are applied consistently, removing the opportunity to game the system and take to court a defence case that is without merit on the possibility that the sentence will be less costly than paying Fixed Penalty.
6. Adopt a suitable benchmark for all land managers. Development of a local environmental quality performance indicator for all Councils and other major land managers, based on the current surveys carried out by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

For local policy makers

1. Schemes that reward desired behaviours should be promoted on an equal footing with enforcement. Positive messaging is an important and under-utilised element of a behaviour change campaign. Small scale examples of these schemes have already been successfully trialled in parts of Northern Ireland.
2. Provide education for new dog owners. New owners should be required to attend a basic awareness course when registering a dog for the first time. Ignorance of welfare issues and owner responsibilities should not be allowed to reduce the amenity of shared spaces.
3. Prioritise behaviour change above provision of additional disposal facilities. The presence of one or more bins on a transect has no statistically significant impact on litter or dog fouling outcome suggesting that bins which are there are often ignored. To decrease the number of people who litter it would likely be as cost effective, if not more so, to invest in ways of encouraging bin use than to simply place more bins.
4. Councils should work for a consensus on support for and application of enforcement practices. An apparent 'postcode lottery' in enforcement rates creates a resentment of the system, rather than understanding of and positive attitude toward it. Harmonisation is needed to project a clear and unambiguous message to the public regarding the treatment of offenders.

5. A greater role should be played in Public Realm procurement and planning by cleansing services. Examples of cluttered layouts, inappropriate street furniture selection and primacy of aesthetic considerations impair the ability of cleansing services to maintain an environment, resulting in increased maintenance spending and reduced amenity over the lifespan of the scheme.
6. Adopt a suitable benchmark for all land managers. A local policy goal as much as a national one, Councils should use the Local Environmental Quality survey data to establish a key performance indicator that is very close to the hearts' of the public. Ultimately, this will require all eleven Councils, to participate. It should consider going further and include all statutory undertakers and other organisations in the reporting.

For Other Agencies

1. Adopt a suitable benchmark for all land managers. At present there is no information available about the level of littering or the resources expended in combating litter in areas other than council lands. Organisations such as the NI Forest Service, Northern Ireland Water, Translink and the various government departments or bodies in charge of lands, for example Transport NI or the Rivers Agency should gather information on littering on their lands, and be held to the

same standard as the local councils in preventing or removing it. A number of these bodies are designated 'statutory undertakers' meaning that they are required to do this, but they are not being held to this duty. This will draw on resources but if we are serious about tackling Northern Ireland's negative litter image the battle must be fought on all fronts.

2. Study in greater detail the link between litter and dog fouling and social cohesion; economic progress and deprivation. Litter has been linked to depressed economic performance in the local area. Understanding what effect littered streets have on High Street shopping may help to revitalise town centres. High levels of litter have been linked to social problems including disrepair and a rise in antisocial behaviour and criminal activity. Effective solutions to the litter issue may raise the standard of living, economic outcomes and even mental health in many areas and improve social cohesion.
3. Study in greater detail the effect of poorly-kept private land on surround public areas. Resources are required to determine the extent to which poorly-kept private space, litter and scrap lying in gardens and state of repair has an effect on the amount of litter in the public space. This would allow us to understand better the relationship between littering by residents and by transients, and help formulate effective focused solutions to local littering issues.

Education and Awareness raising Actions

- Improve co-operation between stakeholders. Better integration of existing programmes such as Eco-Schools and Live Here Love Here with council messaging on litter and waste could bring an economy of scale, allowing for development and production of a larger or more diverse range of resources, and facilitate a more consistent approach across individual channels and agencies.
- Share information and ideas more widely. Greater sharing of information should be the norm, including sharing of education and enforcement endeavours through groups such as the Technical Advisory Group, Chief Environmental Health Officers Group and The NI Environmental Quality Forum. This could improve the quality of individual actions by making available a wider range of skills, experience and creativity, as well as greater resources.



To discuss how we can work together to tackle littering please contact:

Chris Allen

LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CO-ORDINATOR OFFICER

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T 028 9073 6921 M 077 9664 7012

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