

Cleaner Neighbourhoods Report 2018/19



**KEEP
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BEAUTIFUL**

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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**.

Key facts and figures at a glance for the period 2018-2019

20% The number of transects failing to meet the accepted standard for litter has increased to **20%** from 15% in 2017/18

10% Transects with dog fouling has increased by **4%** to 10%, compared with last year



295  schools that have earned the right to fly a Green Flag, **26%** of all schools in the country

7% of transects surveyed were completely **free of litter**, (Grade A) down from **12%** last year

25% The spend on street cleaning services has gone down **25%** to **£33,576,111**

625

In 2018, there were an average of **625** litter items washed up by the tide per **100m** of Northern Irish beach, of which **78%** were plastic

2,902

Fixed Penalties were issued for **littering** during 2017-18



(the last complete year for which records are available, down from 3,158 in 16/17)

25% of the operational time accrued by a mechanical sweeping machine is wasted because **obstructions prevent them from reaching the curb or pavement backline**



167
Adopt A Spot

Groups have adopted a **spot** in their local area, committing to undertake four clean ups per year



347 

Fixed Penalties were issued for failing to clean up dog fouling during 2017-18

(the last complete year for which records are available, and increase of 25% from 2016/17)

Foreword

Welcome to the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Cleaner Neighbourhoods Report, which has been written by our new Local Environmental Quality team.

They have arrived at a time when the littering and dog fouling problem seems to be worsening, despite unavoidable awareness of its serious impacts on the quality of life we enjoy and the health of our beautiful environment. Let's not forget that 80% of litter in the sea has been dropped on the land. So it messes up our lives when it is in front of us and it continues doing just that after it has passed from sight.

This is a sad indictment of our attitude towards struggling wildlife and towards communities that have to live with the effects of littering, dog fouling and other environmental incivilities. One in every four people still publicly admits to littering. No wonder our streets are strewn with single use cups, bottles, fast food packaging and sweet wrappers. This state of affairs presents a serious challenge to the way we try and engage with people to change their behaviour.

There is some good news: among the councils a few look like they have met with some success to buck the overall trend; Eco-Schools has more Green Flag schools than ever before; and, the Live Here Love Here initiative continues to grow, creating a movement of people who actively care about their community and are beginning to challenge the apathetic status quo.

All of us say we want better for ourselves, our children and our children's children. If we are serious about securing such a future, then we must deliver a scale of change never achieved before. That will require more than any one of us can achieve alone. It will require us being willing to invest more in prevention (and less in clean-up), to work differently, to choose new messengers, to bring about committed practical action and to empower communities so they can bring about the changes they want to see.

I hope you use this report to reflect on your own organisation's approaches to this appalling and complex issue and look forward to discussing with you how we can work together to instil new societal norms that really do protect nature and raise the quality of life for all our citizens.

Dr Ian Humphreys

CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
KEEP NORTHERN IRELAND BEAUTIFUL



Executive summary

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful is an independent charity which works with the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), local Councils, businesses and people to assist in improving our local environmental quality and increasing the quality of the environment in 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 supporters in 2018. We also manage the Eco-Schools environmental education programme which is in every school in Northern Ireland and the marine litter survey, which can be viewed and downloaded at: www.KeepNorthernIrelandBeautiful.org/marinelitter

We have also recently begun working on Single Use Plastics (funded by DAERA). A key strand of this work has been the commission of a Waste Composition Analysis across Northern Ireland in order to understand which products and brands are disposed of on our streets and public places and also to understand current levels of action and potential problems and solutions from the perspective of the General public, Councils, Businesses and NGO's. This report will be out shortly.

The Cleaner Neighbourhoods report is based on a number of sources: the litter and cleanliness data comes from a survey of 1,100 individual transects covering approximately 55km (or 34 miles) of streets and parks across all 11 Council areas, while 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 local authorities.

Findings & insights

- 20% of transects surveyed in 2018 failed to make the acceptable standard for cleanliness (Grade B- or less). This is 5% more transects failing than 2017. However in our recent surveys carried out in Spring 2019, for additional council availing of surveys, the equivalent figure is 9%, indicating a 6% improvement.
- The occurrence of dog fouling has increased to 10% of transects from 6% in 2017. However in our recent surveys carried out in Spring 2019, for additional council availing of surveys, the equivalent figure is 7%, which is not a statistically significant change. Although recreational areas had the highest percentage of transects affected at 32%, main roads had the highest fouling rate, at 1.7 per transect which is a decrease on the highest incidences last year. This is perhaps due to the cluster effect, i.e. one dog foul attracting more dog fous – one site had 6 dog poos within the

50m stretch and persistent offenders in local areas.

- Rural roads and industrial shed and retail areas are disproportionately affected by litter when compared to residential, recreational and other retail areas. Over half of rural and industrial shed transects failed with a fail rate of 56% and 58% respectively compared to primary retail transects having a fail rate of only 2%. Rural roads have to be cleaned manually and this has health and safety issues as well as being resource intensive while cleansing resources may also be focused on areas with higher footfall and greater visibility.
- Only 1% of Low Obstruction housing stock (where more than 50% of cars can pull off the road into driveways or similar) transects failed in 2018 – the best result ever. The High Obstruction housing stock (where most cars park on street) had a 14% failure rate – 1% better than last year but still high – this could be due to vehicles parked on the streets preventing sweepers from reaching the kerb in these areas.
- Obstruction to road and pavement sweeping has continued to drop by an average of 5% across all council areas on last year, increasing the amount of litter being collected by mechanical means.

- The annual spend on cleansing has decreased from £45 million in 2016/17 to £33.5 million in 2017/18. This drop in spend, if real, is highly likely to lead to increased litter and dog fouling on our streets. This may be due to a shift in what Councils included in cleansing spend previously or budgets could be significantly tighter this year. In addition the fixed penalty notices issued for litter and dog fouling have stayed similar to last year although there have been big changes within some of the council areas.

At the end of the report, a number of recommendations have been made as to how we can all move towards a litter free future together. They cover both national and local policy makers, but it has to be stressed that we can all do our part when it comes to keeping Northern Ireland beautiful.



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 and the places they love.

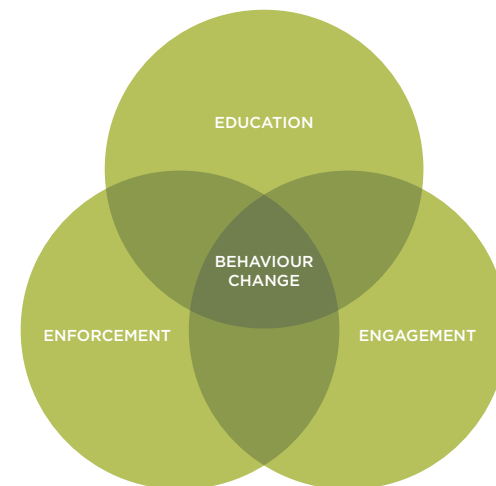
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful provides a range of programmes, services and initiatives that include:

Education: Eco-Schools is the world's largest education programme. Focused on behaviour change, it encourages pupil-led action. Northern Ireland was the first country in the world to gain a Green Flag for one of its schools and have all its schools participating. 26% of schools currently fly the Green Flag, having reached the international standard. We also have had the first Ecocampus registered in Northern Ireland this year – Stranmillis University College – and there are likely to be more third level institutions coming on line working towards their Green Flags this year.

Volunteering: The BIG Spring Clean, a part of the Live Here Love Here Campaign, 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: We audit a range of National and International Standards including Blue Flag for Beaches and Marinas; Seaside and Green Coast Awards; Green Flag for Parks, the Green Business Award and Green Key for the Hospitality Industry. We carry out surveys such as the Cleaner Neighbourhoods survey for this report, additional surveys to support local authority cleansing decision making, and the Marine Litter Surveys for OSPAR reporting. We also bring enforcement officers together at the Northern Ireland Environmental Quality Forum to support the councils working together to raise and maintain the quality of Northern Ireland public places.



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.

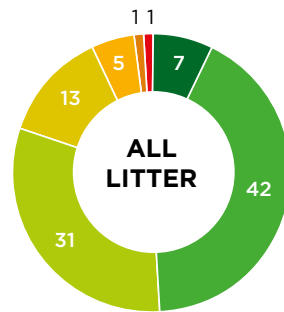
Recognising in 2012 that litter was not the only 'indicator' of the quality or cleanliness of a space, we began to monitor graffiti, flyposting and pavement staining, as well as specific information about dog fouling.

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. Surveys are representative of the site at the time the surveyors visited it, so the results can be sensitive to how thoroughly or recently the site has been cleansed. This is why 1,100 surveys are completed to negate any effect this would have on the results.

The 2018/19 data was collected between July and October 2018 across Northern Ireland.

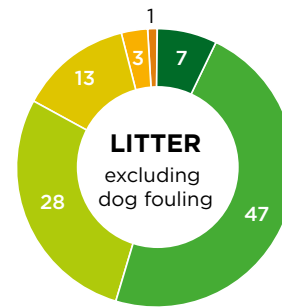
Some Councils also participate in additional seasonal surveys throughout the year in order to receive additional support and evidence to help them plan their cleansing regimes so they can target resources where they are needed and save money in cleaner areas. 20% of transects surveyed in 2018 failed to make the acceptable standard for cleanliness, 5% more than 2017. However in our recent surveys carried out in Spring 2019, for additional council availing of surveys, the equivalent figure is 9%, indicating a 6% improvement. Similarly, the occurrence of dog fouling in the Spring 2019 surveys increased by only 1% from 6% to 7% which is not a statistically significant change.

We also provide focused surveys such as our Dog Fouling Hotspot surveys with Ards and North Down Borough Council so they can trial interventions to investigate what really makes an impact.



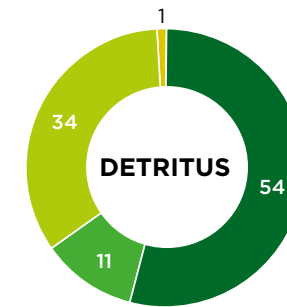
AVERAGE PASS RATE: 80%

All 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.



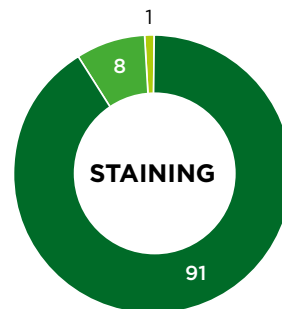
AVERAGE PASS RATE: 82%

Litter excluding dog fouling This 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.



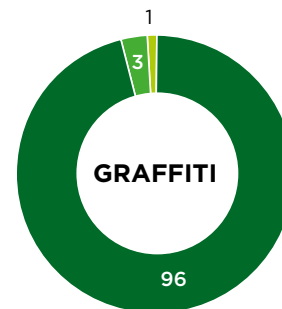
AVERAGE PASS RATE: 99%

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.



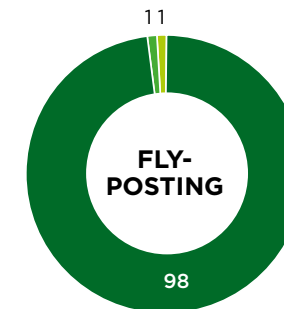
AVERAGE PASS RATE: 100%

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



AVERAGE PASS RATE: 100%

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.



AVERAGE PASS RATE: 100%

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

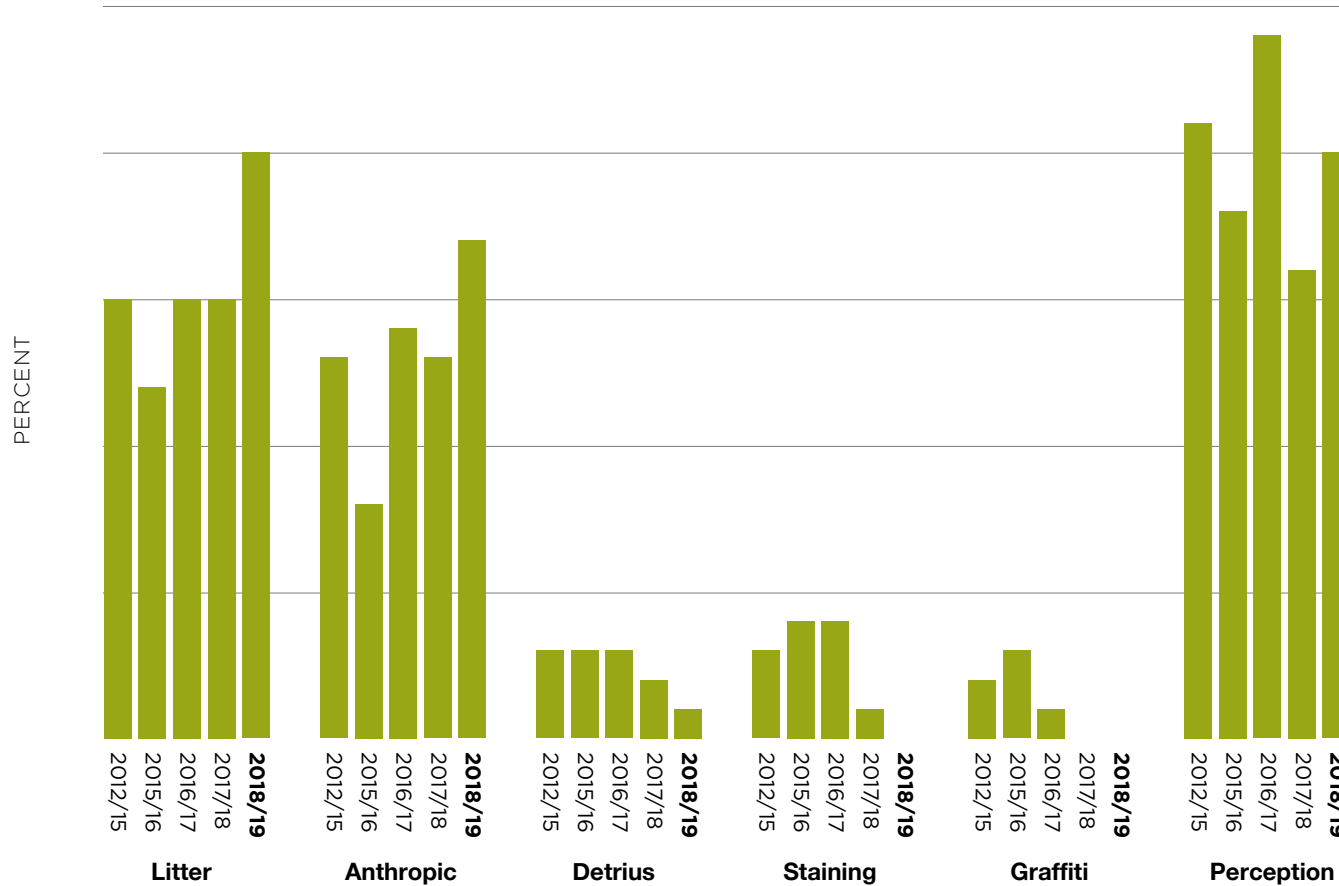
KEY

- **Grade A (pass)**
Completely free of indicator (litter, detritus, graffiti etc.)
- **Grade B+ (pass)**
Predominantly free of indicator apart from some small items
- **Grade B (pass)**
Many small indicator items or one larger item
- **Grade B- (fail)**
A few larger indicator items
- **Grade C (fail)**
Many larger indicator items
- **Grade C- (fail)**
Accumulations of larger indicator items
- **Grade D (fail)**
Transect is heavily affected by indicator, both widespread and accumulated

The rings above show the percentage of transects surveyed that were allocated each of the seven grades available (see key). Each ring represents each of the different cleanliness indicators that we measure in our survey. Totals may not equal 100 due to the rounding up or down of figures to make whole numbers.

The trend in pollution indicators

2012-15 is the baseline against which current performance should be compared. Flyposting has been at zero over all survey periods so it has been removed from the graph.



No sites failed for Staining, Graffiti or Flyposting in 2018.

Surveyor's comments

“Local residents cleaning up footpath”

High obstruction street **Gracehill**

“Pristine!” Main road **Irvinestown**

“Tidiest wee town”

Secondary retail **Portglenone**

“Residents complained about lack of Council cleaning”

High obstruction street **Gracehill**

“Fly tipping of lorry wheels and tyres behind broken glass” Industrial area **Mallusk**

“Pristine area with beautiful views” Low obstructions street **Derry**

“Hedge line full of litter”

Main road **Ballysillan**

“Absolutely disgusting”

Industrial area **Mallusk**

“There was dog poo right beside the bin!”

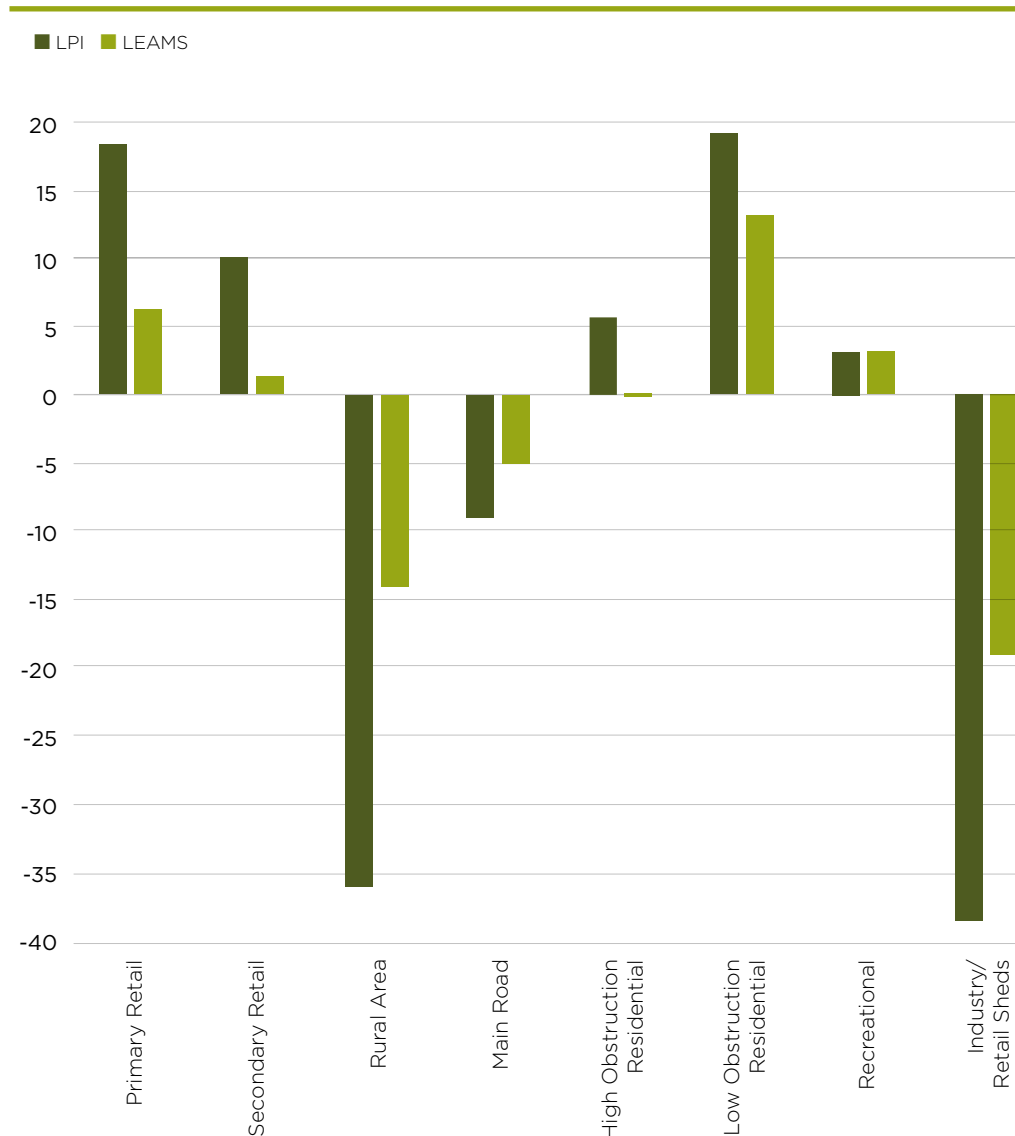
Public Park **Holywood**

LEAMS

Local Environmental Audit & Management System

LEAMS is an alternative method of measuring litter and other indicators, which is used in both Scotland and Wales. Unlike the pass/fail indicator used in Northern Ireland, 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 Litter Pollution Index (LPI) in that a LEAMS score takes account of how clean or littered a transect is, rather than just whether it is a pass or a fail. For example, Councils A and B might both have an LPI of 12, indicating that 12% of transects have failed to meet the acceptable standard for litter. However, if all of Council A's failed transects were 'grade D', but all of Council B's failed transects were 'grade C', then Council B would have a higher LEAMS score. This allows for a more accurate analysis of the survey data, which may be preferable for local authorities when setting targets or allocating resources.

LEAMS vs LPI (Relative to average)



Average for all of NI: ■ LPI 20% in 2018/19 (15% in 2017/18)
 ■ LEAMS 71% in 2018/19 (70% in 2017/18)

This graph gives a representation of how clean the eight land-use types are in terms of both the Litter Pollution Index and the LEAMS score, relative to the mean for each system.

If we look at primary retail, for example, we can see that the LPI suggests that the transects here are much cleaner than the average (+18%), whereas the LEAMS score gives a more conservative figure (+6). This indicates that although they had a much better pass rate they were not completely clear of litter. This can also be seen with Industrial and Retail shed transects as they look far dirtier than the average LPI (-38%), but with a LEAMS score 19 points below the average we can see that not all transects are failing badly. Going by the LPI scores alone, a Council looking at this information above may be tempted to equally divide their resources between Rural and Industrial and Retail shed areas as they appear to be equally dirty. The LEAMS scores however show that the Industrial and Retail Shed transects were in fact dirtier than their rural counterparts and more likely have a greater need for resources. Also they may be easier to clean with a mechanical sweeper which is not possible on a rural road.

Survey results for each Council

Litter and dog fouling in Northern Ireland

Comparing the NI Litter Survey and the Borough Cleanliness Survey results, showing the percentage of transects which fall below the required standard for litter (Litter Pollution Index), the local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) score and the percentage of transects on which dog fouling was observed across Northern Ireland.

Survey Period	LPI	LEAMS	Dog Fouling
Summer 2017 (1,100 transects)	15%	71	6%
Summer 2018 (1,100 transects)	20%	71	10%
Spring 2018 (500 transects)	21%	69	13%
Spring 2019 (500 transects)	9%	71	7%

At first glance the figures for both litter (LPI 20%) and dog fouling (10% presence) are disappointing, particularly given the very positive move towards joined up efforts to tackle this problem we all share. There are some positive points to note however. First, the more sensitive LEAMS measure of cleanliness shows no change between Summer 2017 and Summer 2018, meaning on average, Northern Ireland's streets are no more littered than last year (it is just that there is more litter/dog fouling on some transects meaning they are now failing, and equally, less litter/dog fouling on other transects). Second, a number of councils have invested in carrying out additional Surveys (through the Borough Cleanliness Survey). The LPI for these councils was also 20 in Summer 2018. However, in the Spring 2019 survey period the LPI showed a significant improvement with just 9% of transects failing to meet the required standards.

This large fluctuation may in part be down to random chance. For the 1,100 surveys that

make up the NI Litter Survey any year on year change must be greater than +/-3% to be regarded as a real change. The 100 surveys that are carried out for each council as part of this survey can vary to an even greater extent before changes in reported figures are actually significant and indicative of real change. With this in mind we have not reported individual council figures in this report.

All councils participating in the Borough Cleanliness Survey can view their LPI, dog fouling and other figures through our on-line datahub. For more information on how to participate please contact us.

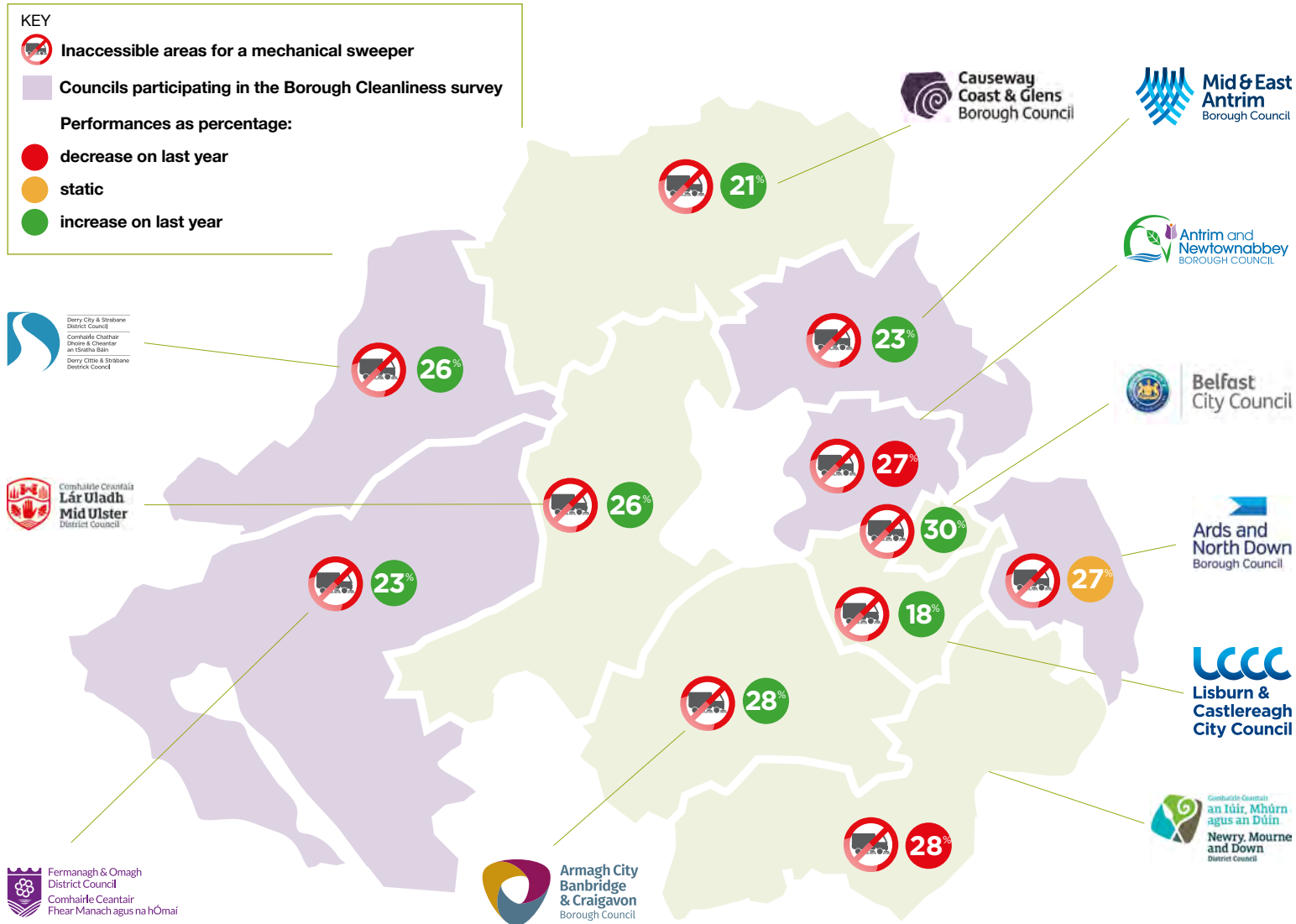
Across the eight different land uses there has been an increase in the rates of dog fouling with some of the land types having drastic changes from last year. 2018 figures have increased in all areas apart from primary retail which has stayed the same as last year. For the likes of recreational areas this has been the worst amount of dog fouling that has been seen in the past four years.

The two biggest areas affected by dog fouling are High Obstruction residential areas and Recreational areas, with some transects being afflicted with as high as six dog fouls. This could be due to the same dog walker returning to the same area allowing their dog to reuse the same spot or the presence of dog fouling may signal other dog walkers that they don't need to pick up after their dog. High levels of dog fouling could also point to an issue with stray dogs in an area. Focusing the activities of dog wardens in lifting stray dogs could, therefore, have a positive impact on dog fouling levels and the litter pollution index.

There have been successful behavioural change, or nudging campaigns run by various Councils to directly address the issue of dog fouling in past years. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful has produced a number of posters to help with these initiatives which are currently available upon request. See our website for details.

Obstruction to 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.



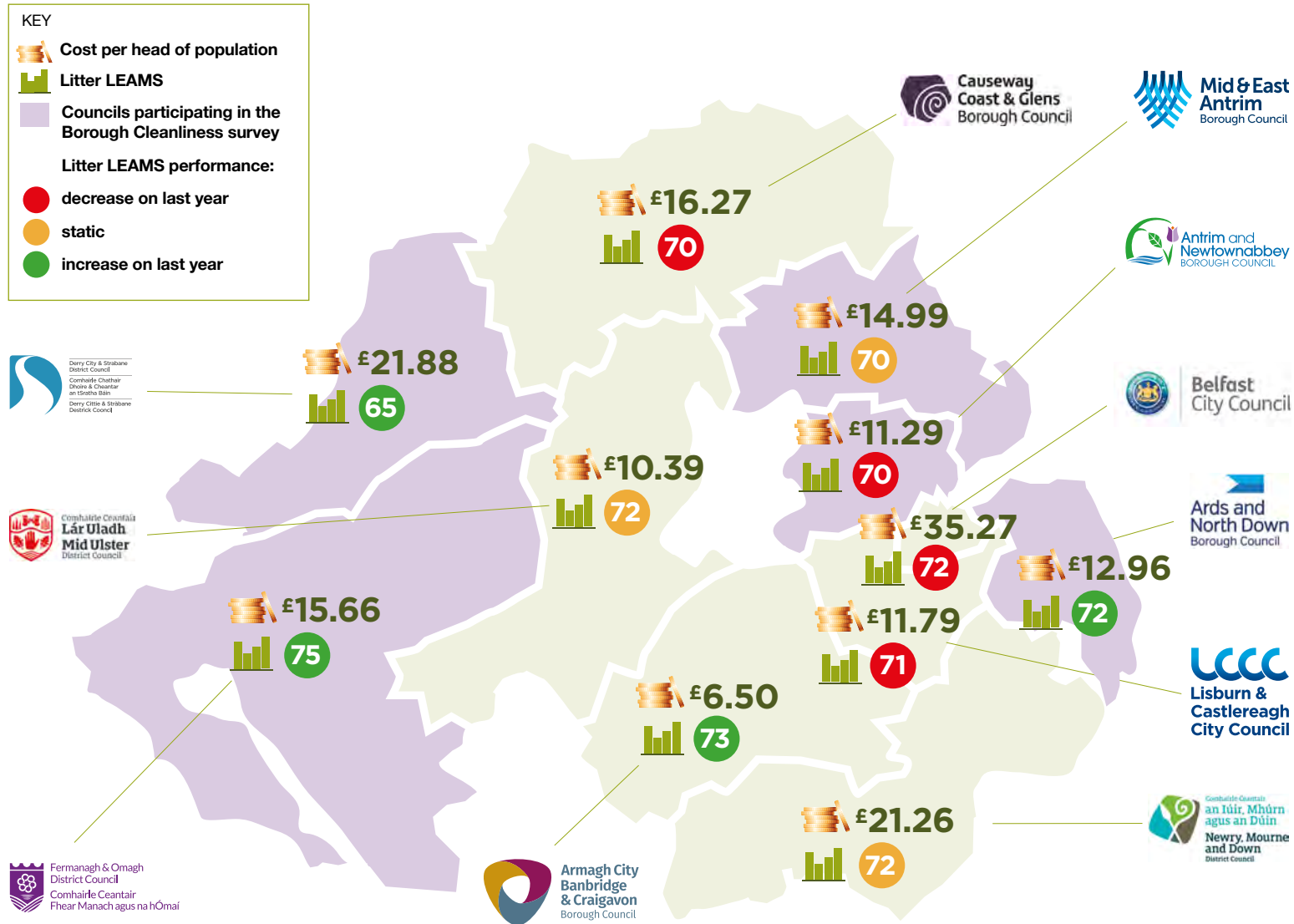
A significant issue in any cleansing routine is the ability to fully exploit the cleansing resources available. If a mechanical sweeper is unable to access an area then the choice becomes: a) leave any litter and detritus; b) task a sweeper on foot to an area, or c) schedule a return to an area in the hope that the obstructions will have moved. 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 that would prevent access, especially outside retail areas.

AVERAGE FOR ALL OF NI:



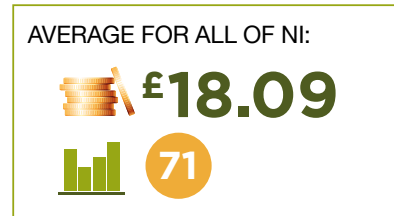
Cleansing spend vs LEAMS

Litter LEAMS was calculated from Survey data collected by trained surveyors between August and October 2018. Spending figures per head of population were calculated using the projected population of each area from the NI Statistics and Research Agency and cleansing spend obtained from individual Councils upon request from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.



The total average spend on street cleaning across all of Northern Ireland in 2017/18 was £33,576,111. With a total estimated population of 1,856,187 people in 732,597 Households in Northern Ireland* this means that on average every rate payer was charged £45.83 for cleaning the streets, even if they are not personally a litterer.

Please note that these figures relate to 2017/18, 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 autumn of the following year.





* NISRA Population and Household Projections for Northern Ireland (for 2018), 2016-2041 (HHP16_NI).


Fixed penalties vs LEAMS

FPN figures were provided by each council in response to request for information. Litter LEAMS was calculated from survey data collected by trained surveyors between August and October 2018. Higher Leams values means cleaner streets in comparison to last year.

AVERAGE FOR ALL OF NI:

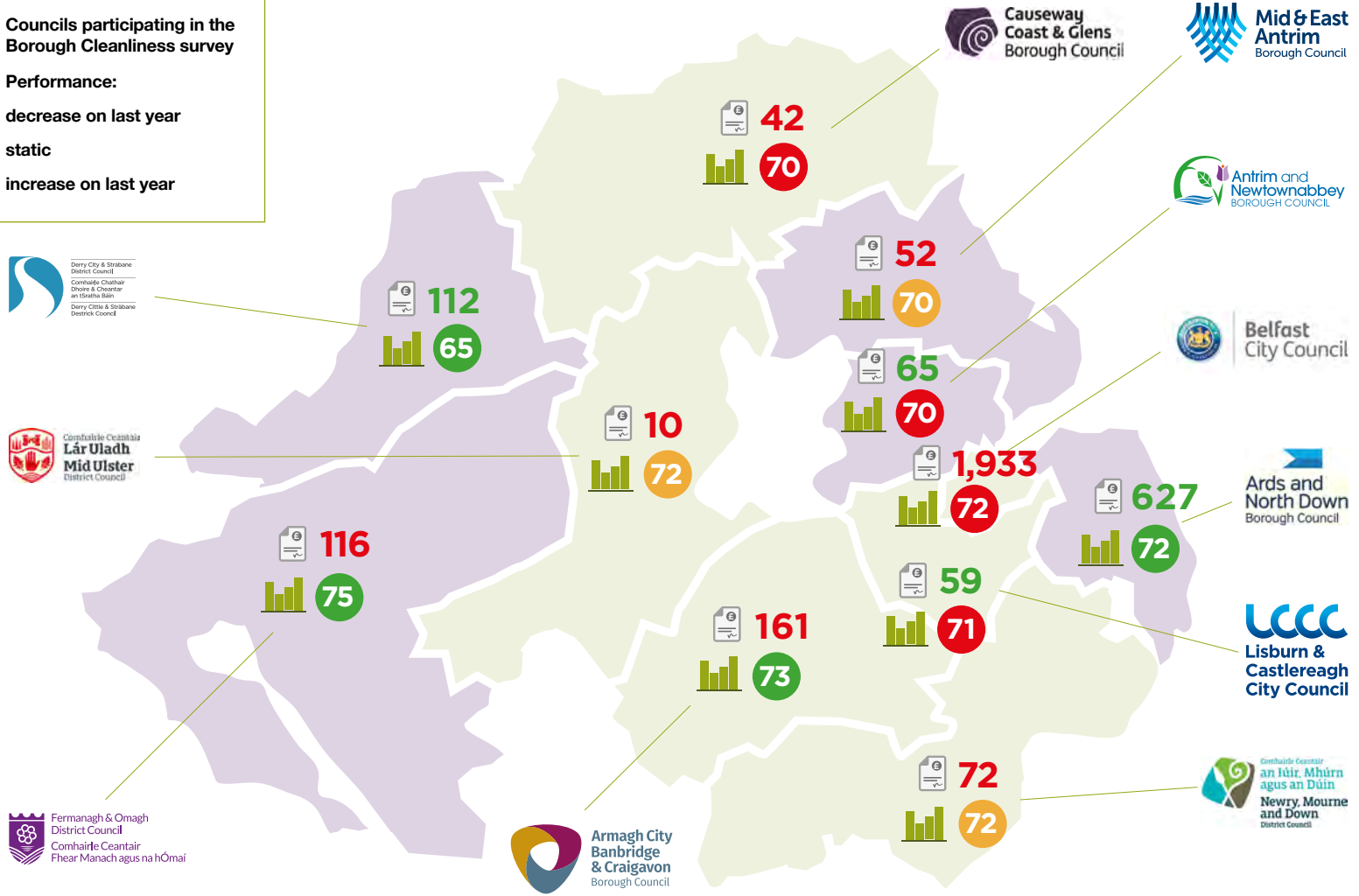
 **288**
 **71**

KEY

-  Fixed penalty notices issued*
-  Litter LEAMS
-  Councils participating in the Borough Cleanliness survey

Performance:

-  decrease on last year
-  static
-  increase on last year



* Fixed Penalty Notices include fines for littering and Dog fouling combined.

Marine litter

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

One of the key indicators of abundance, composition and trends of litter in the marine environment is the amount on beaches. Our surveys support the OSPAR Convention through monitoring litter on 100m stretches at over 70 beaches in the North-East Atlantic following common monitoring guidelines. The monitoring records litter in 112 predefined litter items in 11 types: Plastic / polystyrene, Metal, Paper and cardboard, Wood, Sanitary waste, Cloth, Rubber, Glass, Pottery/ceramics, Medical waste and Faeces. Our results also provide a baseline figure against which to measure progress toward what is termed Good Environmental Status (GES) under the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

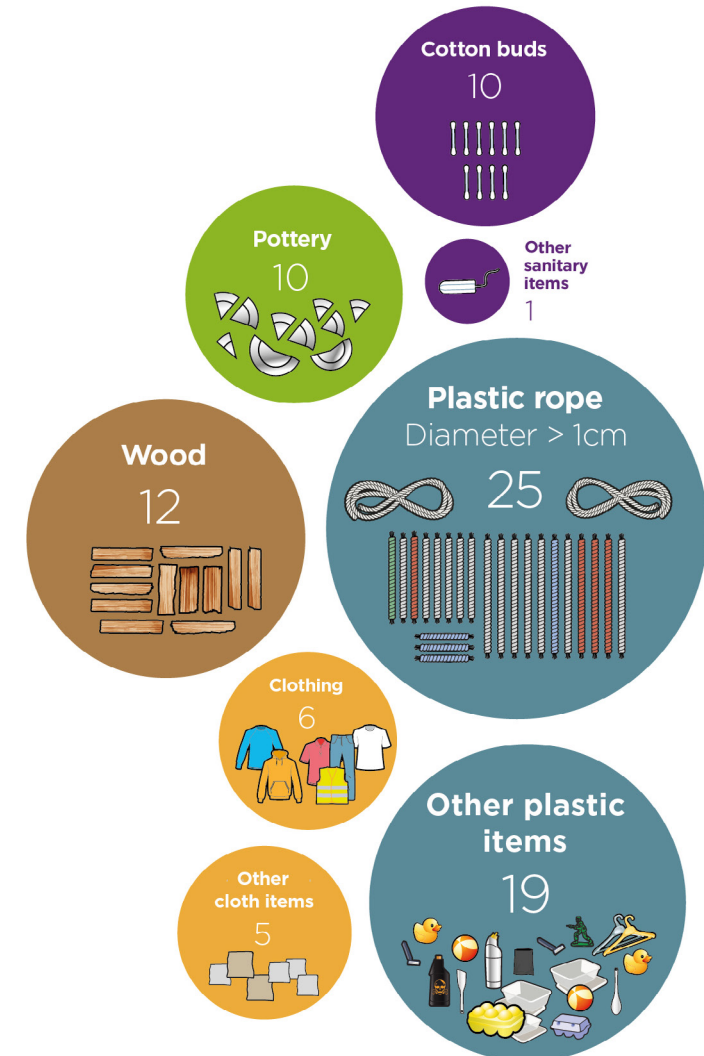
The 2018 Marine Litter Report will be available from May 2019 highlighting the many effects of marine litter and plastic pollution, including the harm it poses to wildlife, along with the particular issue of microplastics.



Volunteers from MCL Consulting are joined by members of their families and Michael McAliskey from DAERA to collect the millionth piece of litter from Rostrevor Beach.

In 2018 There was on average 625 items of litter per 100m beach per survey of which 78% were plastic. The figures in the bubble diagram just show an average breakdown combining all beaches and seasons. For more information The latest full report can be found here: www.KeepNorthernIrelandBeautiful.org/marinelitter

Volunteers have removed over 1,000,000 pieces of litter from the survey beaches since the surveys began in 2012.





Foam sponges
3

Plastic food containers

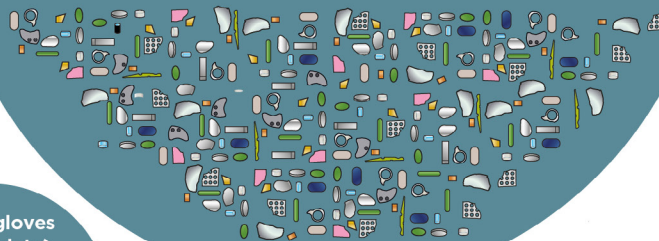
13



Plastic and polystyrene pieces

< 2.5cm

136



Plastic drinks caps and lids

40



Industrial packaging/ sheeting

3



Plastic recreational fishing gear

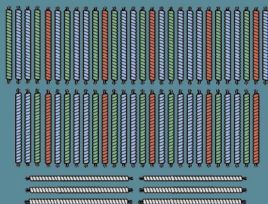
10



Plastic string and cord

diameter < 1cm

60



Cigarette butts

2



Other metal items

9



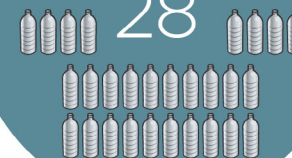
Bottle caps

1



Plastic drinks containers

28



Plastic gloves (heavy duty)

10



Tyres/belts

4



Other rubber items

5



Drink Cans

20



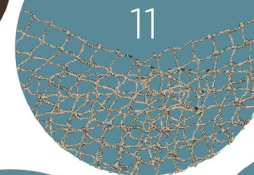
Other glass items

59



Plastic fishing nets

11



Plastic and polystyrene pieces

> 2.5cm

74



Cutlery, trays, straws

7



Plastic bags

10



Shotgun cartridges

7



Bottles

6



Plastic food wrappers

19



Plastic cups

2



Live Here Love Here

In 2018 the Live Here Love Here Campaign was supported by ten of the eleven local councils, DAERA, the Housing Executive, Choice Housing, Coca Cola, McDonalds and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. The campaign has now been running for five years, and in that time:

Awareness of Live Here Love Here by the Public due to our media campaign through TV, billboards and radio as well as social media channels has increased every year and is at 31% in 2018. In this time admitted littering has also dropped from 34% 2015/16 to 26% 2017/18.



Tuesday 12th February 2019 saw volunteers gather at the 3rd annual Live Here Love Here Awards in Belfast City Hall with host, TV presenter Joe Mahon and guest speaker Jo Ruxton, filmmaker and campaigner who opened the eyes of the world to the problems of plastic in A Plastic Ocean.



Nominations for our Community Awards have increased significantly over the last three years

2018 **163**

2017 **90**

2016 **42**

Adopt A Spot

314
Adopt A Spot groups supported

3,268
clean ups across Northern Ireland



553,571
volunteers

800+
metric tonnes of rubbish collected equivalent to approx.

114 large African elephants



CLEAN COASTS PROGRAMME

sponsored by Coca-Cola HBC

20,640
volunteers engaged

For more information on our work contact:

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www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

Live Here Love Here Partners (2018)



Winner of Ards and North Down Litter Heroes Award

The Gibson Family



Bangor Grammar School Students, Ethan and Matthew Gibson have grown up in a family that is passionate about the environment and wanted to set up a family group to tackle local litter problems. They have an Adopt A Spot in the beautiful coastal area of Ballywhiskin, Millisle an area of profuse littering, anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping. The boys correctly segregate all waste collected and leave at the local recycling centre. Over time the boys have removed scooters, bikes, hoovers and mattresses with the help of the local council and have involved the extended family including grandparents and cousins.

Winner of Community Together Award presented by Housing Executive

Victoria Street and Surrounding Area Residents Group

Based in an urban area of Lurgan that has become a hotspot area for Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Council and the PSNI, there is a very active and engaged residents group that are trying their utmost to bring about change in their local area. The group holds regular monthly meetings to address environmental issues including recently transforming an area in a local park into allotments and community garden. The group have reached out to minority groups to address language barriers by publishing an infographic pack that displays the dos and don'ts of domestic waste disposal and littering. This has been in partnership with the council and has now been translated into 9 different languages. This has been instrumental in improving resident's morale and pride in their area and has improved community relations.



Eco-Schools

Eco-Schools is the largest global sustainable schools programme – it starts in the classroom and expands to the community by engaging the next generation in action-based learning.

Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland works closely with 32 (and counting) education and environmental organisations to help deliver the programme including all of our local councils.

As well as undertaking detailed learning on three environmental topics, schools must maintain a litter free environment to achieve their 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 award a Green Flag for schools and to have every school registered with the programme.

Mill Strand Integrated School & Nursery first school in NI to set up a #2minutebeachclean board

Mill Strand Integrated School & Nursery, Ambassador Eco-School, strive to educate others to love their local environment and endeavour to spread this message to the wider community. As part of the Adopt a Spot Campaign, they have adopted the Mill (West) Strand and perform regular beach cleans. They wish to encourage other beach users to care for their adopted spot and for our marine wildlife by lifting litter and debris from the beach.

With the support of Sea Changers they have been able to sponsor a #2minutebeachclean A-frame board which will encourage and enable tourists and local beach users to take just two minutes to make a difference. They are extremely grateful to have support from the

Babushka Kitchen Café as a guardian of the board so that it is safe and well cared for on a daily basis.

#2minutebeachclean boards are placed on the beach and have a space for litter-pickers and bags; local beach users can pick up a litter-picker and a bag and carry out a quick clean up. A two minute beach clean might seem insignificant but removing even the smallest bit of rubbish makes a difference. #2minutebeachclean boards have been shown to reduce litter on beaches by 61%.

For more information on how to acquire a board contact enquires@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org





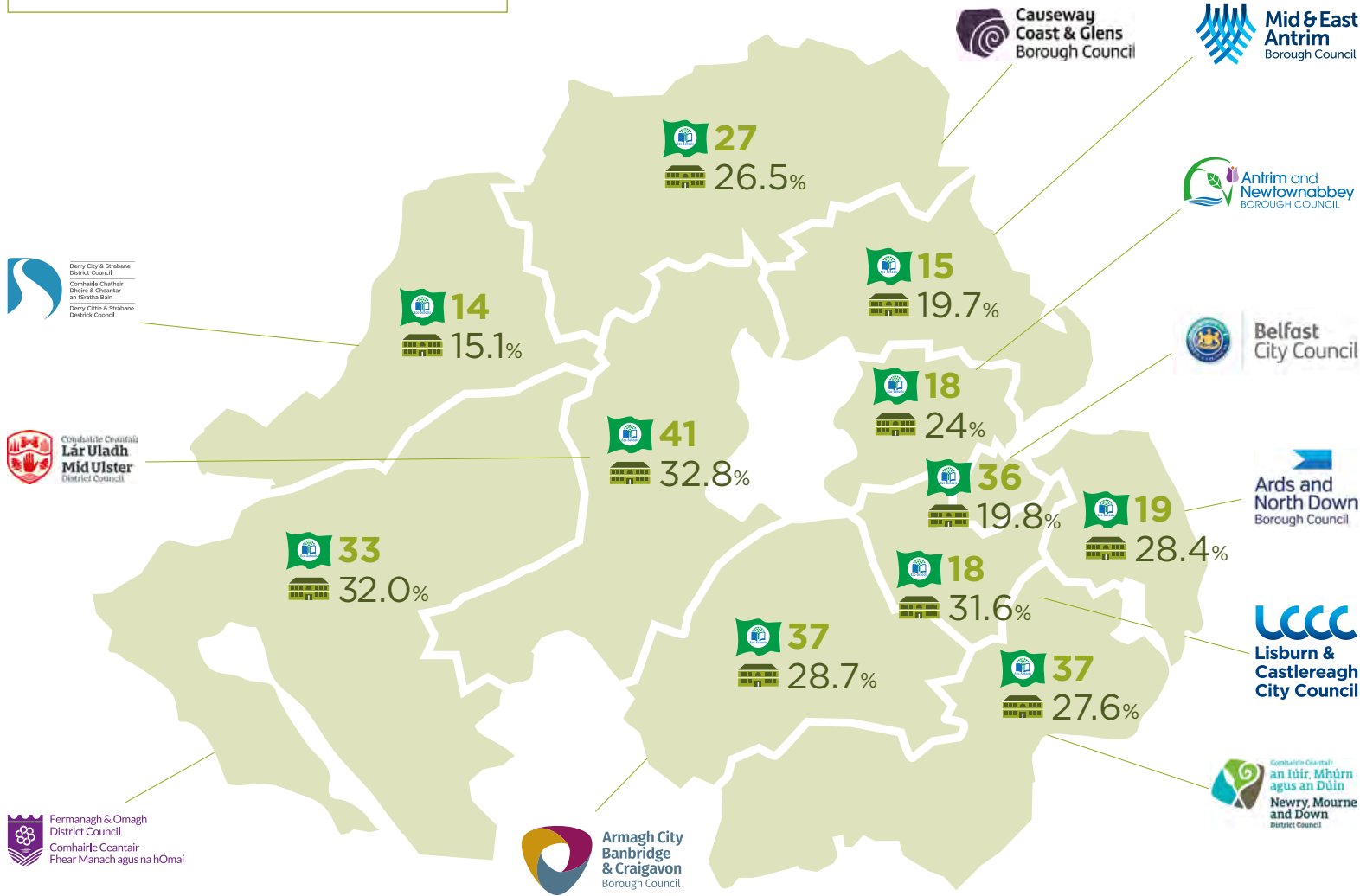
Eco-Schools Green Flags in Northern Ireland

Number and percentage of schools in each Council which held a Green Flag on 20/03/2019
(All Councils have supported the Eco-Schools programme this year.)

AVERAGE FOR ALL OF NI:
 25.7%

KEY

-  **Number of Schools that fly a Green Flag**
-  **Percentage of schools that are Green Flag**



The Eco-Schools programme was developed by the Foundation for Environmental Education, which is actively run in 67 countries around the world and is in 51,000 schools. It also provides an excellent foundation for delivering the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. There are now 295 schools across Northern Ireland that have been awarded the coveted Green Flag, the pinnacle of the programme and all schools in Northern Ireland have registered to work towards this goal.

Tackling the production, consumption and littering of Single-Use Plastics in Northern Ireland

With the support of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs we are attempting to reduce plastic pollution in Northern Ireland- in particular focusing on eliminating unnecessary single use plastic (SUP).



The Eco-Schools Teachers Conference, March 2019.

Single Use Plastics are any plastic item designed to be used once – from plastic bags, coffee cups and straws to food packaging, disposable nappies and wet wipes.

There are many strands to this work including:

- A waste composition analysis on bin waste and litter throughout Northern Ireland which includes type, quantity and any branding on the waste. Keep an eye on our website for the results.....
- Understanding the current level of awareness, actions and challenges faced across a range of stakeholders in reducing plastic usage including:
 - The business community – especially on the go retailers, producers and suppliers
 - Councils
 - Schools
 - General Public
- Developing an awareness campaign which will also shift behaviour in relation to plastics usage and waste reduction.

Some of our preliminary findings and actions include:

- People across all demographics don't really understand the term "Single Use Plastic" – however they recognise there is a problem with too much plastic but feel a little lost. *"It's all very well saying that I have to do it but look around you, plastic is everywhere –*

how am I going to do it," SUP Focus Group Representative.

- All councils engaged with are keen to do more on single use plastics with their focus initially being to 'put their own houses in order' before engaging with the public.
- Ards & North Down Borough Council (ANDBC) have introduced a ban on single-use plastics following a Council Notice of Motion (NOM) to 'support the end to single-use plastics'.
- Some businesses are already 'trying to do the right thing' such as using alternatives to plastic but there is currently confusing messaging regarding the disposable biodegradable/ compostable alternatives and what of this can be handled correctly in the councils differing waste processing systems.
- Creating a new Eco-Schools module on 'Plastics and the Marine Environment'. This was launched at our Eco-Schools Teachers Conference.



It's amazing the things people leave on our streets like this toy guitar found during the waste composition analysis surveys.

We've also created an interactive webpage to give businesses, councils, schools, NGOs and the general public a platform to tell us what you've done or planning to do to tackle our plastic pollution problem. To see what others are currently doing or pledging in the near future. Please visit www.livehereandlovehere.org/plasticpromise

A focus on rural roads

Rural Roads continue to be sites with littering issues as 56% of rural transects surveyed in 2018/19 were unacceptably polluted by litter. This litter is most likely to have been chucked by careless people out of their vehicles – such as take away packaging from food, drinks and cigarettes.

Compare this to both primary (2%) and secondary retail (10%) and it is clear that there is a difference in the volume of rubbish accumulating in these areas.

Issues

- Careless people chucking waste out of their vehicles
- It is resource intensive cleaning country roads safely - as cleaning is carried out by hand and health and safety of cleansing staff is vital.

Recommendations

- Bring in fines similar to England allowing councils to fine the owners of vehicles which litter is thrown from, rather than expecting councils to prove who exactly in the vehicle had thrown litter.
- All councils should Increase resources to support behaviour initiatives such as the Live Here Love Here campaign making littering and fly tipping socially unacceptable.

- Funding litter surveys helps to target limited resources where and when they are needed.
- Assess innovative solutions such as Funnel Bins at the exits of Service Stations.
- Local action is important and prevention is better (and cheaper) than cure.

This is most likely explained by the way cleansing resources are allocated within council areas. In the main towns and cities, sweepers and teams of litter pickers are deployed on a daily basis, whereas very few councils are able to clean rural roads in their jurisdictions very often, due to fears over the health and safety of staff. It is also not often possible for mechanical sweepers to clean rural roads as there is no hard backline for sweepers to clean to.



Dog fouling

10% of transects had dog fouling present and there were hotspots in recreational and high obstruction housing areas. One transect had six dog poos within 50m!

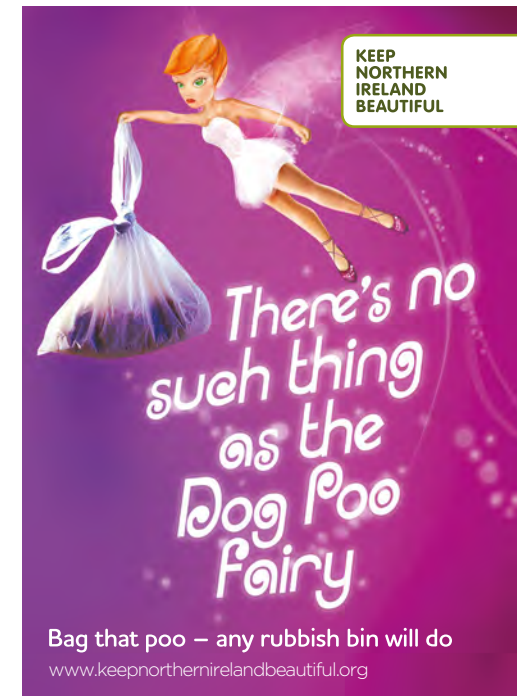
Issues

- There are dog fouling hotspots in all councils where there may be persistent offenders or issues.
- Unclear signage sometimes with differing fine levels on the same lamppost does not seem to be deterring fouling.

Recommendations for Councils

- Understand your local issues and your local hotspots – use dog fouling data to target resources effectively and develop a dog fouling strategy. (We can help!)
- Extend campaigns such as “Scoop that Poop” encouraging owners to pick up after their dog and report those who don’t.
- Include hard hitting information in all puppy and dog licensing materials.
- Use behaviour change signage that works such as “There is no such thing as the Dog Poo Fairy” and “We are watching you” and remove confusing signage.
- Harmonisation of enforcement practices across the council areas will send a clear message to offenders and stop confusion amongst the general public.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful offers opportunities for further surveys within the councils to identify and assess dog poo hotspots so behaviour change initiatives can be trialled while not changing the existing cleansing regime to test what is effective in your local area.



Council Education and Awareness Campaigns

Green Dog Walkers scheme numbers on the rise

Around 500 dog owners in Mid and East Antrim are now members of the Green Dog Walkers scheme with the number continuing to grow.

The Green Dog Walkers scheme is a UK wide community-based campaign to change attitudes about dog fouling. Mid and East Antrim officially launched the scheme in February 2018. The number of complaints for dog fouling in 2018 in Mid and East Antrim has decreased in comparison to 2016 and 2017 which shows the scheme is having a positive impact on the attitudes of dog walkers.

When a dog owner signs up and takes the pledge they receive a Green Dog Walkers collar and lead. The pledge means that the owner will always clean up after their dog, and will give other dog walkers free poop bags.

In 2019 active participants will be offered a green collar light and a keyring torch to make evening walks safer and make it easier to clean up after their dog.

In introducing the Green Dog Walkers scheme the council is committed to encouraging responsible dog ownership and to gaining wider public support for a cleaner borough.



Bin it your way..

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council was chosen for the fifth year running to deliver a high profile campaign in an effort to reduce chewing gum litter across the borough. The campaign has seen significant year on year reductions in the amount of gum dropped in areas monitored. The dynamic, brightly coloured advertisements appeared in a range of locations across the borough, including billboards, ad shells, phone kiosks and bus stops. Posters, banners, window stickers, beer mats and Gum-Raps have also been produced. This campaign ran for one month at the start of the school year and complemented the 'Bin It' Roadshow which took place in a number of secondary schools across the Borough later in the term. As a council running engaging campaigns such as these, the council aims to promote a positive shift in the behaviour of gum droppers, which as a result will bring about a reduction in this unsightly litter and a cleaner more attractive environment for residents, visitors and businesses from the borough.



Sea Bins in Ards and North Down

Ards and North Down Council installed the first Seabin in Northern Ireland into Bangor Harbour in November 2018. Seabins can collect up to half a ton of debris each year including large plastic items, microplastics, and even oils and pollutants floating on the water surface. If proven successful, further Seabins will be purchased for other marinas and harbours. This project is one of many to be paid for by the Council's Recycling Community Investment Fund (RCIF), established in 2016 as a thank you to residents for their recycling efforts and to help promote the fact that 'recycling pays'. Each year it is being used to fund a variety of projects that directly benefit local communities.



We are watching you!

Dashcam surveillance cameras were installed in Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Enforcement vehicles in 2017. These dashcams capture video and photographic evidence of environmental offences such as littering and fly tipping from vehicles in accordance with the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act. The Dashcam is mounted onto the internal windscreen of the vehicle which continuously records the front view providing real time evidence. The camera acts as a deterrent to the illegal act of littering reducing the cost of street cleansing and helping to change behaviour patterns to achieve a cleaner environment.

CCTV signs were displayed on the vehicles, to conform with legislation informing members of the public 'images are being monitored and recorded for the purposes of the enforcement of The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011'.

Video and photographic evidence of offences provides irrefutable evidence, saving time and associated expense in preparing cases for court. Images also reduce the risk of aggressive behaviour from perpetrators once they are made aware that incontrovertible evidence exists.

Policy developments

With Brexit decision time looming it is difficult to predict our legislative future. With no Stormont in place to develop and enact laws there is no mechanism to cover the legislative vacuum.

What we can do is horizon scan for potential legislation and consultations in the UK, Ireland and the EU or which have recently come through which will help us prepare for the future, whatever that may be.

UK

■ Resources and waste strategy for England, December 2018

This strategy will preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy in England. The high level strategy recognises that all stages of the material cycle need to be addressed and promises to embed the concepts of “polluter pays” and “extended producer responsibility”. The strategy does not yet have any legal underpinning.

■ Litter Strategy for England updated July 2018

This is the first Litter Strategy for England (There is a Litter Strategy already in Scotland). It includes many actions which are useful such as giving councils the ability to fine car owners when littering occurs from their vehicle, and investing in behaviour change awareness campaigns.

Current & upcoming consultations include:

■ Packaging waste: changing the UK producer responsibility system for packaging waste

(Directly relevant to Northern Ireland)

■ Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers (bottles and cans)

(Directly relevant to Northern Ireland)

■ Plastic packaging tax consultation – Single Use Plastics: Budget 2018

Westminster government announced that from April 2022 it would introduce a world-leading new tax on the production and import of plastic packaging with less than 30% recycled content – it is currently consulting on that tax.

Current & upcoming consultations include:

■ UK Marine Strategy Part One

This is the (only) comprehensive UK Strategy for healthy seas. It’s legally binding and requires the UK as a whole to take all necessary steps to reach and maintain ‘Good Environmental Status’. This is directly relevant to Littering as it includes targets against a Marine Litter/Plastics Descriptor.

■ 25 year environment plan: measuring progress

There will be feedback on the 25 year Plan for England – Northern Ireland are currently developing an Environmental Strategy.

■ Single use plastic: banning the distribution and/or sale of plastic straws, stirrers and plastic-stemmed cotton buds in England

There are likely to be more consultations coming soon on plastic.

At EU level

The Circular Economy Package includes four EU directives that entered into force on 4 July 2018 and Member States should implement the directives within a two year period.

The legislative package amends:

■ The Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)

■ The Landfilling Directive (1999/31/EC)

■ The Packaging Waste Directive (94/62/EC)

■ The Directive on end-of-life vehicles (2000/53/EC)

■ The Directive on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators (2006/66/EC),

■ The Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment (2012/19/EU)

A new directive on single use plastics was agreed in December by the EU Commission. The Directive, covering both conventional and bio-based plastics, bans items including cutlery and plates, straws and oxo-degradable plastics. It also creates consumption reduction measures for other materials and new design and labelling requirements for balloons, tobacco, wet wipes and sanitary products.

Recommendations

These recommendations are What Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful believe are necessary to meaningfully reduce littering, dog fouling and related environmental damage in Northern Ireland.

We have given priority to recommendations which deal the cause rather than the effects.

For national policy makers

- 1. Northern Ireland still needs a comprehensive litter strategy that tackles the causes of litter.** This would need to include a joined up approach across education, credible levels of enforcement, increased public engagement, and the sharing of scarce resources.
- 2. Northern Ireland needs legislation & policy that takes a longer term view** – including a longer term plan for the Environment similar to the 25-year plan for England or Scotland and Wales, more ambitious environmental policies providing a joined up approach which the litter strategy would nest within. Switzerland is considered a leading example for waste and water pollution policy.
- 3. Support initiatives and campaigns to reduce particularly harmful and common types of litter.** The spotlight has been shone on plastic pollution as posing a real long-term risk to our environment and wildlife. More should be done to address such issues, including the promotion of viable eco-friendly alternatives and spreading of best practice.
- 4. We need a deposit return scheme which will work for Northern Ireland including all plastic bottles.** The consultation at the moment includes Northern Ireland within the UK and we should also consider the practicality of introducing this and other viable options on an all-island basis, all UK basis and solely for Northern Ireland.
- 5. Northern Ireland should, as a minimum, comply with the EU Plastics Directive by 2021 and the Waste Directive amendments.** They must also ensure funds raised from introducing relevant legislation are ringfenced for action to further reduce consumption of single use plastics and prevent littering.
- 6. Clear guidance is required for the treatment of littering by the courts.** This should explain which fines, penalties and other options can be issued during court proceedings. This would ensure that fair and reasonable penalties are applied consistently, removing the opportunity to cheat 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 the original Fixed Penalty Notice.
- 7. Adopt a suitable benchmark for all land managers.** This entails the 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. 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 an understanding and positive attitude towards it. Harmonisation is needed to project a clear and unambiguous message to the public regarding the treatment of offenders.
- 2. Schemes that reward desired behaviours should be promoted on an equal footing with enforcement.** Examples of these schemes have already been successfully trialed in parts of Northern Ireland and are growing in popularity across most Council areas.
- 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 that are there are often ignored. To reduce 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 or taking litter home rather than to simply install more bins.
(Continued.)

For local policy makers

- 4. Support initiatives and campaigns to reduce particularly harmful types of litter and pollution.** The spotlight has been shone on single use plastics as posing a real long-term risk to our environment and wildlife. Local businesses could be encouraged to adopt the alternatives through a reduction in rates or subsidised purchasing scheme.
- 5. 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 and advice should be provided with all dog licences at each renewal. Some councils are running successful engagement schemes such as Scoop the Poo and Green Dog Walkers.
- 6. 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 about a quarter 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.
- 7. A greater role should be played in Public Realm procurement and planning by cleansing service departments.** 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.
- 8. Act to make your own council single use plastic free by 2023 and ensure alignment with requirements in EU legislation.** Cascade these policies throughout your supply chains and the high street. Invest resources in developing a circular economy to reduce waste and save resources. Eliminate materials identified in the policy from all their properties and all events taking place on their land.

Education and Awareness Actions

- 1. Improve and Invest in co-operation between stakeholders.** Ten of the eleven Councils are already involved with the Live Here Love Here Campaign and every school in Northern Ireland is registered for the Eco-Schools programme. There is a need for better integration of Council messaging on litter and waste, to allow for development and production of larger and more diverse range of resources, and facilitate a more consistent approach across individual channels and agencies.
- 2. Share information and ideas further.** 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 Northern Ireland 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.
- 3. Focus community planning resources to build self-efficacy in communities and measure success through a new civic pride index.**

Further Research Needed

- 1. Study the pathways of Microplastics from the terrestrial environment to the sea in Northern Ireland in order to put in place effective policies and actions to reduce their impacts at source.**
- 2. Understand the hotspots of litter and pollution sources on privately owned land, non council land and waterways and formulate focused solutions for those areas.**
- 3. Study in greater detail the link between litter, 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 also been linked to social problems, including disrepair and a rise in anti-social 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.



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.



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

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