

Cleaner Neighbourhoods Report 2019/20



**KEEP
NORTHERN
IRELAND
BEAUTIFUL**

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NORTHERN
IRELAND
BEAUTIFUL

We all want to be healthy, happy and able to live in a **clean and supportive environment**. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful works to help everyone, to come together to deliver a **healthy lifestyle for you and the planet**.

Key facts and figures at a glance for the period 2019-2020

86%

The number of transects meeting the accepted standard for litter has increased to 86% from 80% in 2018/19

6%

Transects with dog fouling has decreased by 4% to 6% compared with last year



269



schools that have earned the right to fly a Green Flag, 23% of all schools in the country (accurate as of 11/05/20)

4%

of transects surveyed were completely free of litter (Grade A).

233

Adopt A Spot

Sites adopted as part of the adopt a spot programme in 2019



508

In 2019, there were an average of 508 litter items of litter per 100m of Northern Irish beach, of which 76% were plastic. This equates to nearly 4 million items of litter lying around our coast at any one time.

3,013

Fixed Penalties were issued for littering during 2018-19

(the last complete year for which records are available, up from 2,902 in 17/18)



1.3M

From the results of our litter composition analysis we estimate that 1.3 million items of litter are on our streets at any one time.

£29M

Total street cleansing spend

(Actual Value: £29,566,052)

12



Blue flags awarded to Beaches and Marinas in Northern Ireland in 2019

278



Fixed Penalties were issued for failing to clean up dog fouling during 2018-19

(the last complete year for which records are available, and decrease of 20% from 2017/18)

76

parks reached Green Flag Awards standard across Northern Ireland in 2019



Foreword

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

This report provides some encouraging news showing significant improvements in levels of litter and dog fouling. The work of Councils, DAERA, eNGOs and many individuals has to be playing a part in what is a statistically significant shift in behaviour on both fronts.

There were many other positives in 2019, with a record amount made available by Live Here Love Here partners to the Small Grants Scheme, a record number of Eco-Schools achieving the international Green Flag standard and a new high in numbers of our parks and public open greenspaces able to raise the Green Flag Award.

Each of these achievements should be properly recognised and celebrated. They are all the result of an incredible amount of hard work, planning and passion.

The Litter Composition Analysis has given us a new level of detail on where the issues lie in terms of littering behaviour. The packaging and items of just a couple of dozen companies make up the vast majority of the estimated 1.3 million litter items on our streets at any one time. There is now clear evidence that we need to be focusing on cigarette related items and drinks related packaging, with each making up around 30% of the total count. All this provides

useful information as we push to ensure that a post-Brexit Northern Ireland does not fall behind the EU when it comes to environmental legislation on waste and plastics.

As 2019 was coming to a close little did we know our world was about to change, and just as it looked as though the environmental message was starting to get through. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful's new strategic plan, focusing on climate action, biodiversity recovery and pollution solutions is almost on hold as many hard fought environmental gains have taken a back seat. Yet these extraordinary changes to our lives are also instilling a sense of community spirit, not seen in a long time and a re-evaluation of what is important in life. The answers, it seems, don't necessarily require us to buy more stuff!

It will be interesting to see the impact of our imposed home working in the coming year, assuming we are allowed out to measure the litter of course. More interesting, and perhaps challenging for all of us, will be keeping new habits, formed during this crisis, that have big benefits for the environment – less travel, more working from home, and making do with less, none of which have to mean a less fruitful, productive and meaningful life.

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 role is to create the awareness, understanding and means to inspire the leaders, businesses and people of Northern Ireland to take action and drive change now.

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 2019. We 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 been working to reduce use of Single Use Plastics (funded by DAERA). A key strand of this work has been the commission of a **Litter 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 can be downloaded at: www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

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 recreational spaces 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

- 86% of transects surveyed in 2019 reached the acceptable standard for cleanliness (Grade A to B). This is a 6% increase than in 2018. This is a significant positive change and we hope that this trend continues in 2020.

- The occurrence of dog fouling has fallen to 6%, from 10%, in 2018. Again, another positive result, with a significant decrease in dog fouling. Recreational areas had the highest volume of dog fouling, although only 9% of the transects had dog foul present, with main roads having the highest percentage with 10% of the transects having dog foul present. Whilst the percentage of transects containing dog fouling has reduced, where dog fouling is present, it is a serious problem, with one location having 9 dog fouls within a 50m stretch; this could be due to the cluster effect i.e. the presence of one dog foul signals that it is acceptable in the area and therefore attracts more dog fouls.

- Rural roads and industrial shed and retail areas, are disproportionately affected by litter when compared to residential, recreational and primary retail areas. 24% of rural roads and 35% of industrial shed and retail transects failed to reach an acceptable standard for litter, compared to 5% of primary retail transects that failed. Although still a

problem area, there have been improvements compared to the 2018 results. Rural roads have to be cleaned manually and this has health and safety issues as well as being resource intensive; cleansing resources may also be focused on areas with higher footfall and greater visibility.

- Only 1% of Low Obstruction Residential (where more than 50% of cars can pull off the road into driveways or similar) transects failed in 2019. High Obstruction Residential (where most cars park on street) transects had a 15% failure rate – 1% worse than last year. This could be due to the obstruction caused by parked vehicles, which prevent sweepers from reaching the kerb in these 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 apply to 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. 23% of schools currently fly the Green Flag, having reached the international standard.

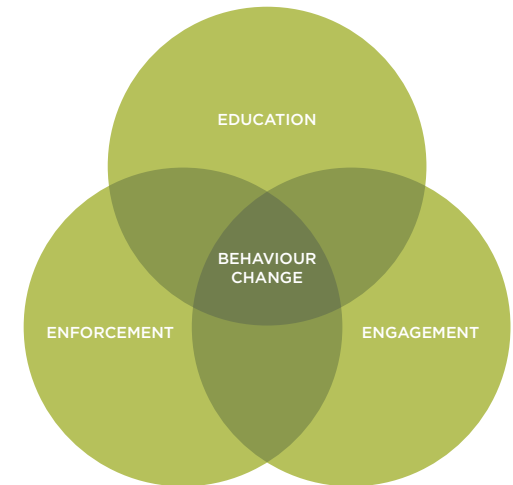
Volunteering:

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. Throughout the year, we carry out: Cleaner Neighbourhoods; Borough Cleanliness and Marine Litter surveys. The data collected from these surveys allows us to compare the local environmental quality of Northern Ireland year on year. We bring enforcement officers together at the Northern Ireland Environmental Quality Forum to encourage and support cohesive working between councils, to raise and maintain the quality of Northern Ireland's public places.



For more information on our work contact:

Dr Ian Humphreys
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ian.humphreys@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

T 028 9073 6920

www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

Northern Ireland Cleaner Neighbourhoods Survey

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Cleaner Neighbourhoods Survey is a country wide survey, carried out by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to assess the quality and cleanliness of our public spaces. The objective of the survey is to benchmark the cleansing performance of the councils by rating them against the same scale, thus ensuring a fair comparison. The results of the survey provide a picture of the levels of litter across Northern Ireland, how litter varies by area, and how littering trends vary over time.

In October 2007, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced a new set of 198 National Indicators. The indicators which are assessed as part of the Northern Ireland Cleaner Neighbourhoods survey are “NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting)” with staining being an additional indicator used in Northern Ireland. Records of these indicators have been collected by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful since 2012.

Similar surveys are carried out across the whole of the UK although due to slight differences in land use zones, measuring and scoring, it is difficult to accurately compare the results between countries.

Definitions:

Litter

Anything that is dropped, thrown, left or deposited that causes defacement, in a public place.

Detritus

Detritus comprises dust, mud, soil, grit, gravel, stones, rotted leaf and vegetable residues, and fragments of twigs, glass, plastic and other finely divided materials. Detritus includes leaf and blossom falls when they have substantially lost their structure and have become mushy or fragmented.

Graffiti

Graffiti is defined as any informal or illegal marks, drawings or paintings that have been deliberately made by a person or persons on any physical element comprising the outdoor environment, with a view to communicating some message or symbol etc. to others.

Fly-posting

Fly-posting is defined as any printed material and associated remains informally or illegally fixed to any structure.

Staining

Defined as any substance that marks or discolours a pavement. Commonly includes chewing gum, oil, and drink stains.

Litter Pollution Index (LPI)

The Litter Pollution Index is the percentage of transects which failed to reach an acceptable standard of cleanliness (Grade B- to D).

LEAMS

LEAMS is an alternative method of measuring litter and other indicators which is used in both Scotland and Wales. Unlike the pass/fail ‘Performance Indicator’ used in Northern Ireland, LEAMS scores are generated by assigning a value to each grade (A=3 B=2 C=1 D=0), and then calculating the average value of all the grades assigned. This average is presented as a percentage of the total available points for the transects surveyed. It differs from the Performance indicator in that LEAMS score takes account of how clean or littered a transect is, rather than just whether it is a pass or fail. Scores closer to 100 indicate better performance. It is easier to set a target under the LEAMS system; 66 is the point at which performance is considered acceptable, as it equates with an average grade B.



Heavily graffitied building visible from a survey transect



Build-up of detritus forming along the kerbside



An example of flyposting

Method

The Northern Ireland Litter Survey is carried out across all of the 11 council areas in Northern Ireland between July and September, covering 100 transects per council area.

These 1,100 surveys give a good representation of Northern Ireland, with a margin of error of +/- 3%.

The 100 transects are further distributed between eight land use types which are detailed on this page.

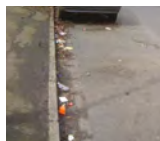
GRADES:



Grade A
Completely free of indicator e.g. litter, detritus etc.



Grade B
Predominantly free of indicator apart from some small items



Grade C
Widespread distribution of indicator with minor accumulations



Grade D
Heavily affected with significant accumulations

Three intermediate grades can also be used to further categorise transects. These are; B+, B- and C-.



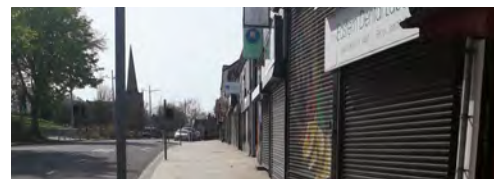
Main Road

This comprises "A" roads: throughout rural areas (except where main roads run through larger settlements containing Main and Other Retail and Commercial Areas and High Obstruction Housing Areas); and in urban areas, except where main roads run through main and other retail and commercial areas, or through high obstruction housing.



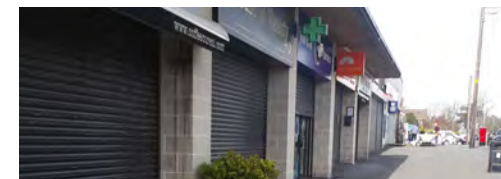
Rural Road

This comprises all adopted highways that are located outside built up areas and which are not otherwise included in the Main Roads.



Primary Retail

Main town and city retail and commercial centers.



Secondary Retail

Retail and commercial areas located outside main city and town retail. Areas must contain a minimum, continuous retail or commercial frontage of 50 meters.



Recreational

Includes a wide range of open spaces that are freely accessible to the public and which are maintained by a local authority. Sites include parks, picnic sites, canals, lakes, riversides; municipal cemeteries and cycle ways.



Industry/Retail Shed

This Land use type includes industrial and warehousing developments and out-of-town retail parks (including food and non-food developments) which contain land that is owned or managed by the local authority, and which is freely accessible to the public.



High Obstruction Residential

Housing areas with less than 50% of dwellings with purpose-made off-street parking/garaging facilities.



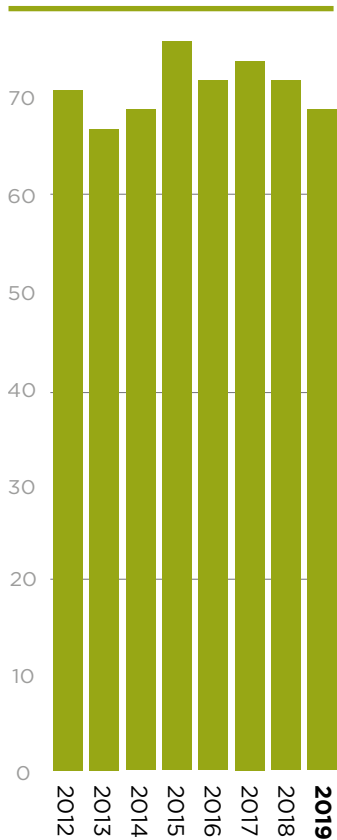
Low Obstruction Residential

Housing areas with more than 50% of dwellings with purpose-made off-street parking/garaging facilities.

Northern Ireland Litter Trends at a Glance

This year the survey results show an improvement in the LPI score with only 14% of transects failing compared with the 20% that failed in 2018. Despite this statistically significant improvement, it is important to note that the LEAMS value has decreased from 71% in 2018 to 68% in 2019. This means that although fewer transects are failing to meet an acceptable standard of cleanliness, fewer transects are obtaining a grade of A or B+. We can interpret this trend by deducing that more resources are placed on cleansing areas that are consistently awarded grades B- or less, meaning less resources are therefore available to be applied to maintaining cleaner areas. This change cannot be considered significant though as there is a margin of error of 3%, meaning there has to be a greater variation to determine if the change hasn't just been caused by chance. Dog fouling results have improved again with only 6% of transects having dog fouling present.

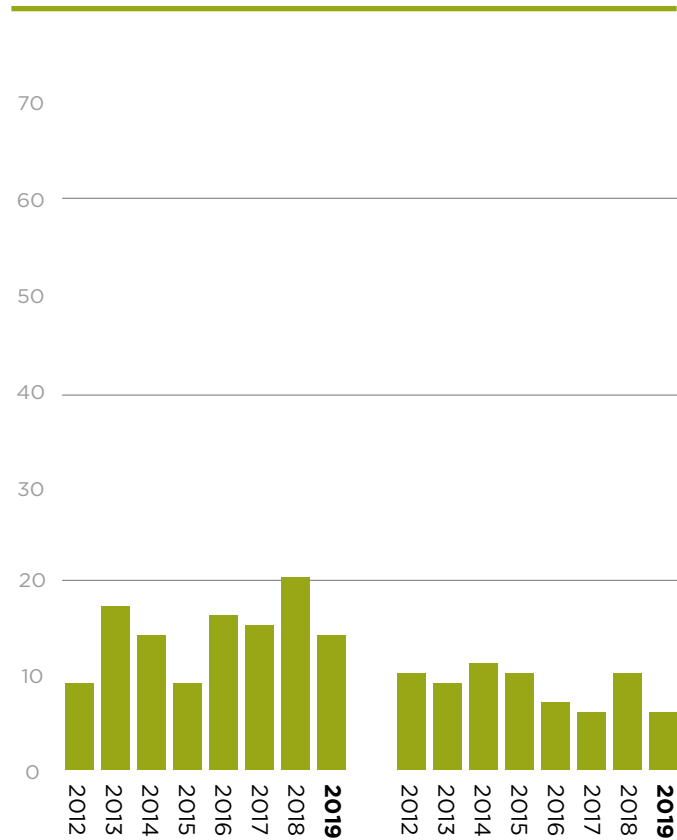
LEAMS



LEAMS

Average score out of 100 for all transects each year

LPI & Dog Fouling

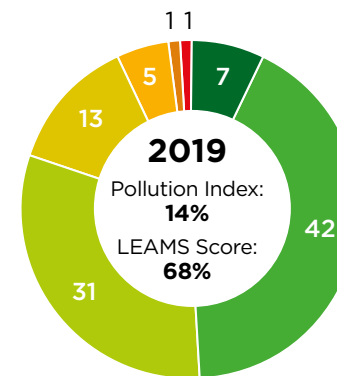
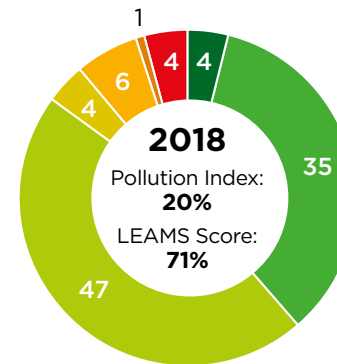


LPI

Percentage of transects failing

Dog Fouling

Percentage of transects with dog fouling present



The rings above show the percentage of transects surveyed that were allocated each of the seven grades available (see key).

Totals may not equal 100 due to the rounding up or down of figures to make whole numbers.

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

LEAMS

Local Environmental Audit & Management System

The graph adjacent depicts how clean the eight land-use types were during 2019, both in terms of their Litter Pollution Index and their LEAMS score, relative to the mean for each system.

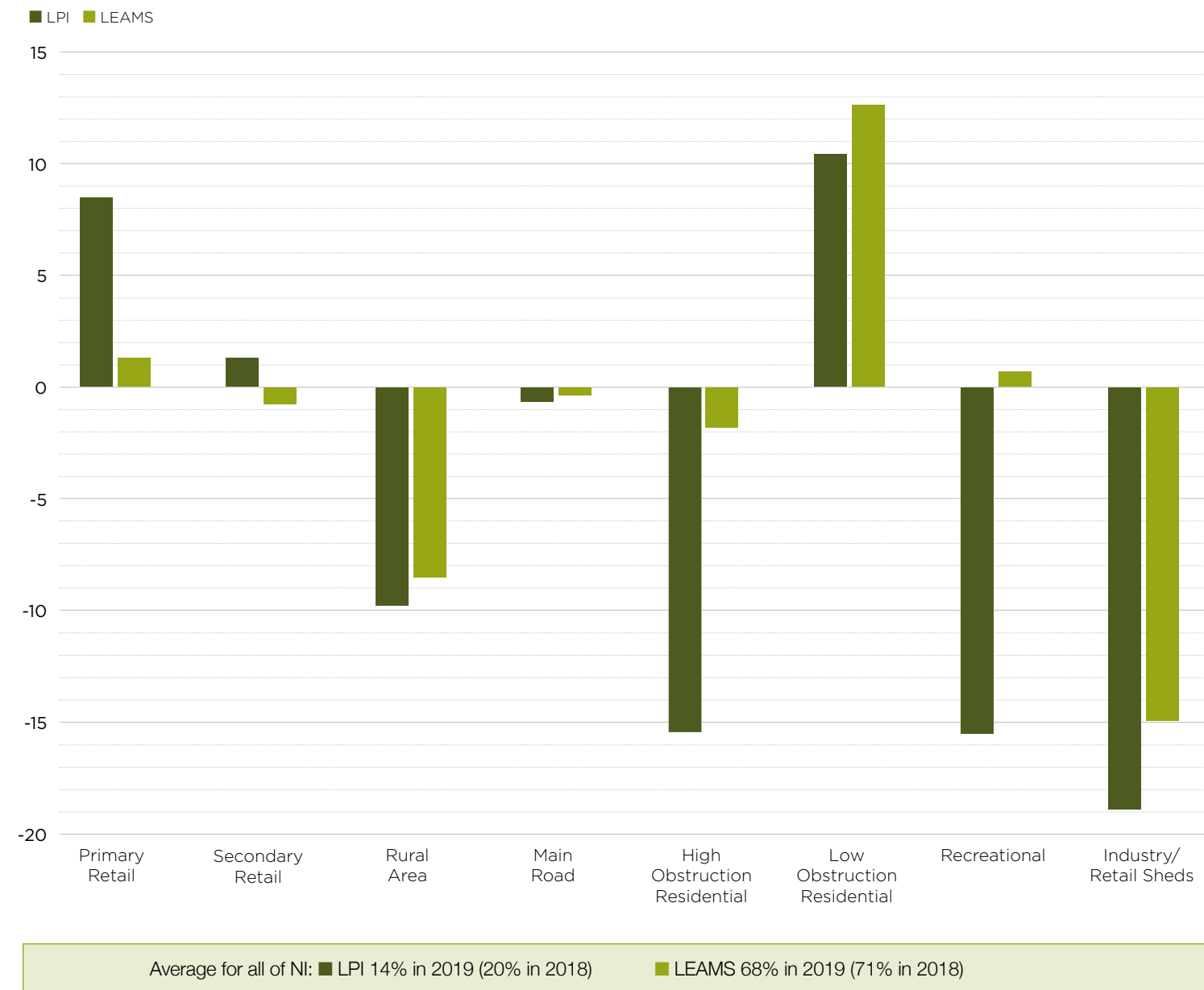
If we look at primary retail, for example, we can see that the LPI suggests that the transects in this category are much cleaner than the average (+8%), whereas, the LEAMS score gives a more conservative figure (+2%); this indicates that although they had a high pass rate, they were not free of litter.

Although it can be seen that rural roads and industrial/retail shed areas are amongst the poorest performing areas, both in terms of LPI and LEAMS score, it should be noted that both of these land use types had a much lower number of transects failing in 2019 than in the previous year reflecting an improvement.

There has been an improvement in the cleanliness of main roads, with 12 transects failing in 2019 compared to the 29 which failed to meet an acceptable standard in 2018.

The number of recreational transects failing to meet the acceptable standard is higher than the NI average; however, the average LEAMS score for recreational areas was above the NI average. This means that the transects that did fail to meet acceptable standard were only failing by a small margin, compared with the 'dirtier' industrial/retail shed areas which will require greater resource investment to raise standards.

LEAMS vs LPI Landuse Type



The Presence of Bins

Landuse Type	Percentage of transects with bins	Percentage of failed transects
Primary Retail	66%	5%
Secondary Retail	52%	13%
Rural Road	2%	24%
Main Road	14%	14%
High Obstruction Residential	2%	15%
Low Obstruction Residential	1%	2%
Recreational	63%	15%
Industry/Retail Shed	2%	37%
NI Average	25%	14%
Northern Ireland	422 litter bins (270 transects)	26 dog fouling bins (22 transects)
4 over flowing bins		



Lack of available bins is often cited as a reason for dropping litter. During the surveys the number, placement and condition of any bins present on a transect is recorded. This includes whether the bin is impacting the litter on the transect due to it overflowing, leading to litter blowing out of the bins or people leaving rubbish beside it. Of the 448 bins that were observed along the 1100 transects only 4 were observed to be overflowing, and none of these bins were judged to be contributing to the litter observed on that transect.

Bins on average were found on over half of recreational, primary and secondary retail transects. Although the presence or absence of a bin was not statistically significantly linked ($P=0.35$) to whether a transect passed or failed or to the likelihood of observing dog fouling. This is evident with over 10% of secondary retail and recreational transects failing to meet acceptable standards.

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 poster, or simply making the bin more salient (by for example ,painting it a bright colour), could be a highly cost effective means of tackling littering in most land use types (Kolodko et al., 2016).

Although it has been found that having signage

available encourages people to use bins more, seeing others using the bin and noticing that the area is clean has an even greater impact. Cialdini, Reno and Kallgren (1990) conducted a study which showed that when there are just one or two pieces of litter in an area, more people did not litter (90%) however as soon as there were three or more pieces visible the number of litterers increased to 41%.

This is affirmed by 'Focus Theory' (Cialdini et al., 1991) which suggests there are two types of social norms that influence individuals: injunctive and descriptive. An injunctive norm is an understanding of what should be done, whereas a descriptive norm is an understanding of what actually is done. Therefore to have effective influences on people to achieve pro environmental behaviour these need to align (Sussman and Gifford., 2011). Studies have shown that signs deliver an injunctive norm message, whereas people doing (models) help create the descriptive norm impression. Models in this case could simply be people using the bins in an area that is normally heavily littered and then communicating how their actions are leading to a cleaner environment.

Trends across landuse types for pollution indicators

The table below details the number of transects with a litter indicator present during the survey

Landuse	Total No. of Transects	Cigarettes	Fresh Gum	Takeaway Packaging	Glass	Drinks	Plastic Bags	Confectionary	Business Litter	Non-packaging	Food residue	Dog fouling	Other
Primary Retail	111	101	6	12	6	30	1	52	29	2	10	4	57
Secondary Retail	89	79	4	19	6	42	1	45	22	2	3	1	62
Rural Road	100	28	0	22	1	82	4	58	1	0	3	5	53
Main Road	111	65	5	33	7	55	2	61	13	5	2	12	79
High Obstruction Residential	200	167	6	33	5	101	6	105	35	7	5	11	168
Low Obstruction Residential	200	70	3	8	3	38	1	37	20	4	2	8	143
Recreational	200	84	9	23	19	87	8	132	8	6	8	18	132
Industry/Retail Shed	89	63	1	26	9	60	10	40	30	10	4	12	75
Total	1,100	657	34	176	56	495	33	530	158	36	37	71	769

The table shows that the most commonly observed items are cigarette butts. These appear in all land use types with 60% of transects having at least one cigarette butt present although there are often far more than that. Whilst they are present in all Landuse types some suffer more than others with 91% of primary retail, 89% of secondary retail and 83.5% high obstruction residential transects afflicted with this litter type. This comes as no surprise with the trillions of cigarettes that are produced annually in the world resulting in billions being thrown away carelessly (Torkashvand et al., 2020). Cigarette butts may seem small in comparison to some of the other

litter types on the list but they have a large impact, especially due to the presence of toxic and chemical substances which leach from these into the environment (Dobaradaran et al., 2017).

Rural roads suffer mostly from the presence of drinks containers (plastic bottles, cans, take away coffee cups) with 82% of transects having at least one drink container present. This type of litter will almost always come from cars with passengers irresponsibly throwing their empty drinks out of the windows. In some areas of England they have introduced roadside bins for road users to put their litter in, although some believe that this just encourages the mentality

that it is acceptable to throw litter out of their window.

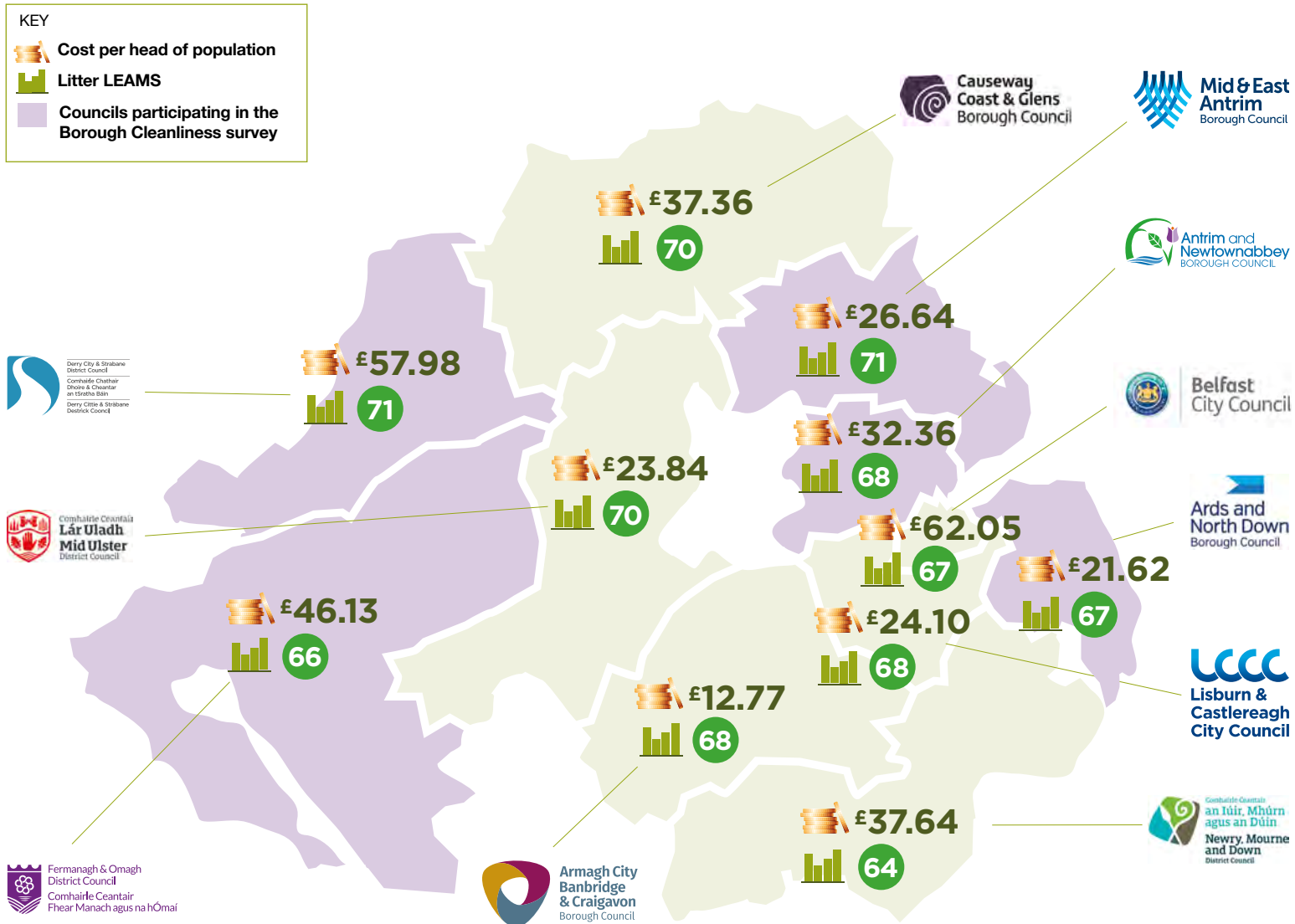
High obstruction and recreational transects hold the highest records of confectionary litter (sweet and crisp packets, lollipop sticks etc.) with 53% and 66% of transects having confectionary litter present. With high obstruction residential areas this large accumulation of confectionary may be due to the highest number of obstructions present, preventing a mechanical sweeper from reaching all of the street. For recreational areas this could be attributed to a mix of factors including; individuals having their lunch in parks, and young children watching others drop litter

and believing that it is therefore acceptable to do the same.

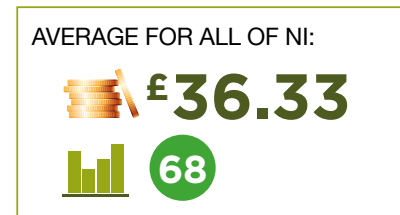
'Other' litter includes all pieces of litter which does not appear in the other categories and can range from anything from large pieces of cardboard to small pieces of plastic.

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 spend on street cleaning across all of Northern Ireland in 2017/18 was £29,566,052. With an estimated population of 1,864,570 people in 813,789 Households in Northern Ireland* this means that on average every rate payer was charged £36.33 for cleaning the streets, even if they are not personally a litterer. Please note that these figures relate to 2018/19, 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.



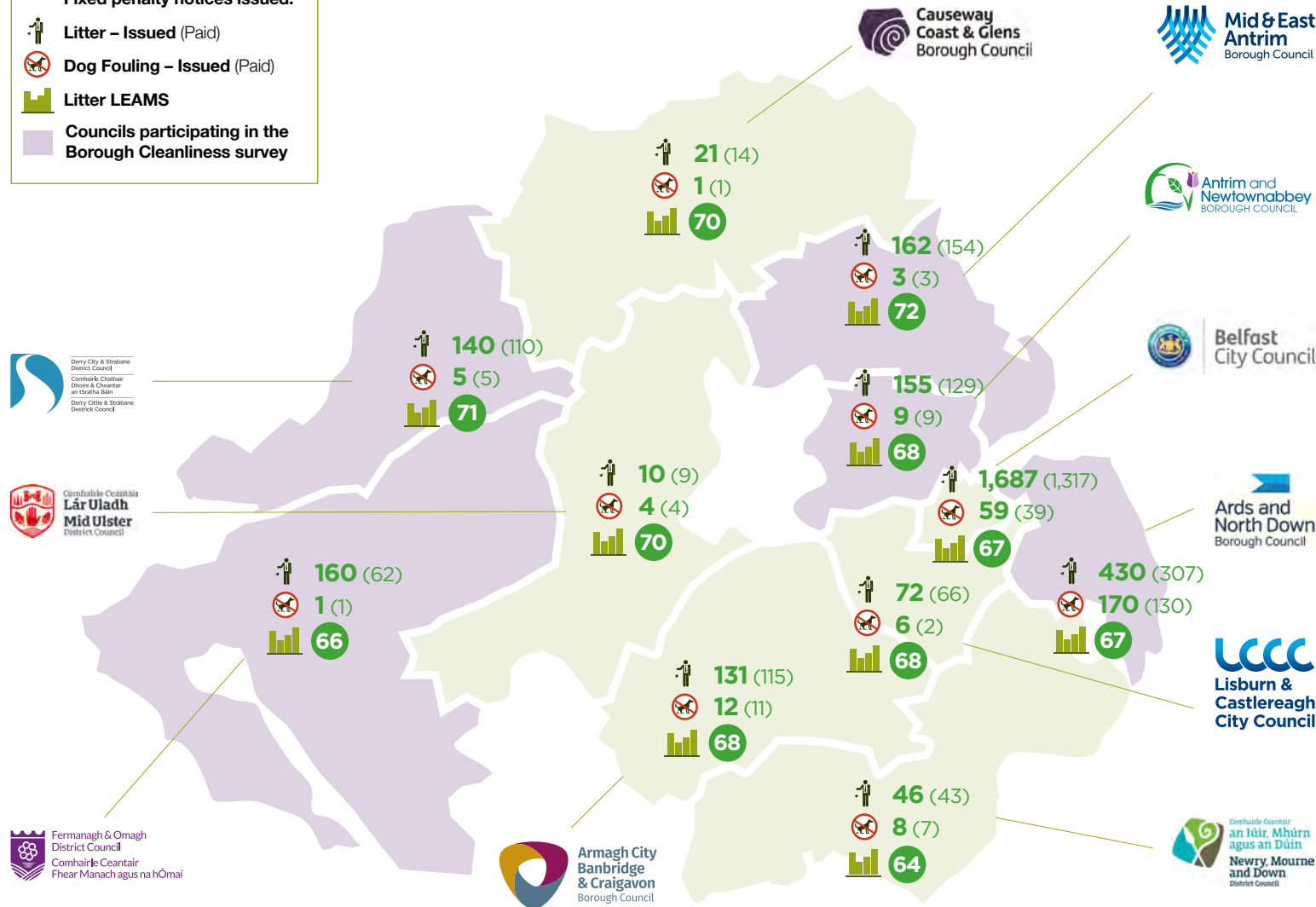
* NISRA Population and Household Projections for Northern Ireland (for 2019, 2016-2041 (HHP16_NI))

Fixed penalties notices for dog fouling and litter

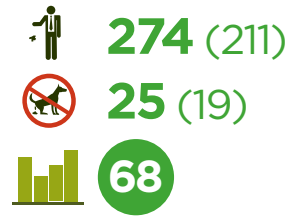
Setting KPIs as outputs, such as the number of fines, is not viewed as suitable. So whilst we view fining around 1 in every 150 litterers as necessary to effect behaviour change, the KPI we are seeking to measure might revolve around the amount of rubbish placed in the bins compared to that littered on the streets.

KEY

- Fixed penalty notices issued:**
- Litter – Issued (Paid)**
- Dog Fouling – Issued (Paid)**
- Litter LEAMS**
- Councils participating in the Borough Cleanliness survey**



AVERAGE FOR ALL OF NI:



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 obstruction residential 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**

Dog Fouling

Landuse	Total No. of Transects	Number of transects on which dog fouling observed	Percentage of transects with dog fouling present	Total number of dog fouls observed	Number of transects with nudge signs present	Number of transects with nudge signs and dog fouling present
Primary Retail	111	4	4%	5	5	0
Secondary Retail	89	1	1%	1	7	0
Rural Road	100	5	4%	5	0	0
Main Road	111	12	10%	19	19	3
High Obstruction Residential	200	11	5%	18	47	2
Low Obstruction Residential	200	8	4%	11	33	2
Recreational	200	18	9%	36	53	5
Industry/Retail Shed	89	12	9%	13	5	0
Total	1,100	71	6%	108	169	12

One in four transects which fail to meet the standard for litter do so because of high levels of dog fouling. Dog fouling was observed on 6% of all transects surveyed. This reflects quite an improvement on last year, where 10% of transects were observed to have dog fouling present. Although it fluctuates from year to year, since 2012, dog fouling has been on a downward trend with 6% being the lowest percentage of dog fouling observed.

Similar to 2018, the hotspots for dog fouling were along high obstruction residential and recreational transects. Although compared to previous years the number of dog fouls observed have improved significantly. In 2018, along high obstruction residential areas, 29 transects had dog fouling present compared, to just 10 transects in 2019.

This is the same with recreational areas with 17 transects having dog fouling present compared to 32 transects in 2018.

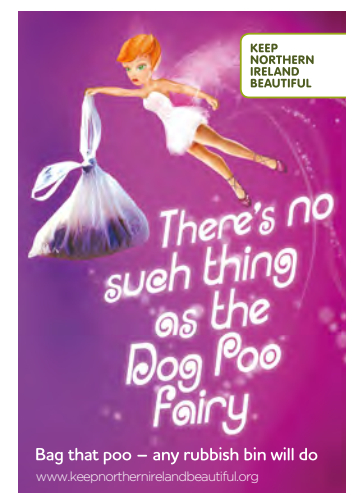
The data on dog fouling continues to appear to show clustering behaviour; while relatively few transects have been affected by dog fouling, they tend to be heavily affected, with an average of two deposits observed on these transects. The highest number recorded was nine separate deposits in one recreational area. This supports the idea that a failure to clean up dog fouling is influenced by 'signalling'; the presence of dog fouling indicates to other owners that fouling is accepted in that area, and they do not need to clear up after their pet.

In 2019, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful

recorded the presence of nudge signage, for the prevention of litter and dog fouling, if it was clearly visible from the transects.

Although this is the first year in which we have collected this information, the result do indicate that the presence of nudge signs make a significant difference ($P=0.02$) to the amount of dog fouling observed on transects across Northern Ireland.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful offers opportunities for further surveys within 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 the local area.



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful offers these and other posters as well as offering support and advice on their optimum use. <https://keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.etinu.net/cgi-bin/resources?instanceID=1>

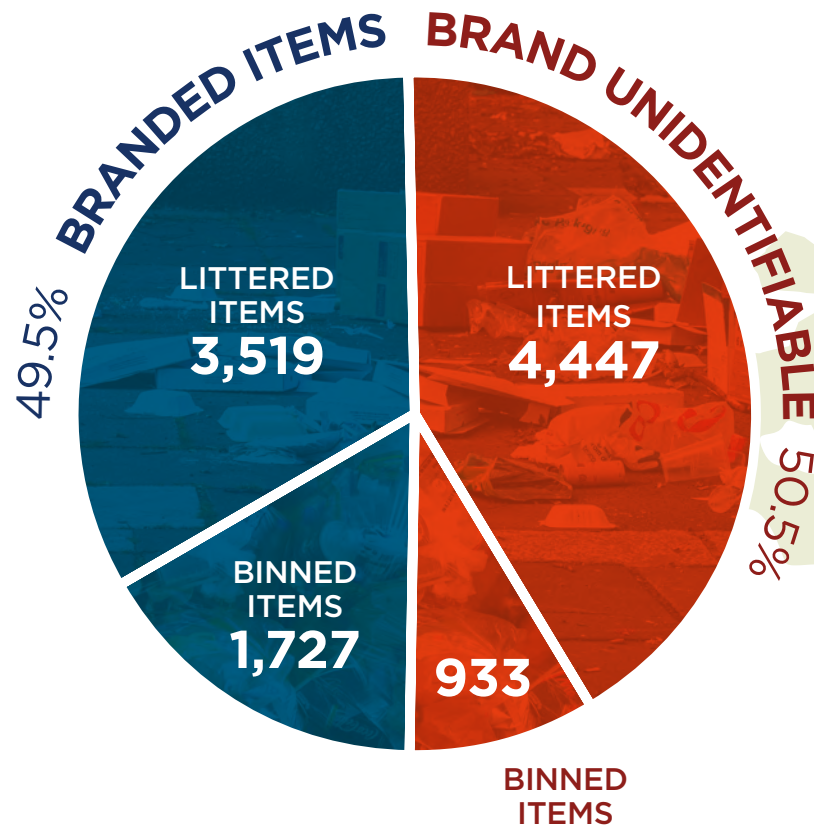
Waste Composition Analysis

In light of the forthcoming European Union (EU) Directives on litter, with UK legislation following closely behind, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful commissioned an independent litter composition analysis.

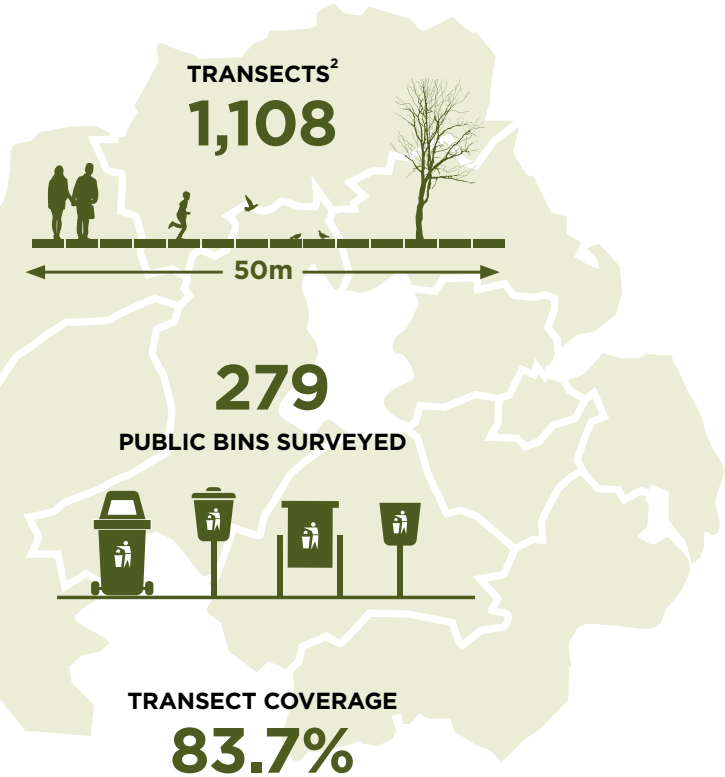
The results alongside our public focus groups, which highlighted one in three people admit to littering in NI, provide great insight into the scale of the NI litter problem. The legislation coming into force puts greater responsibility on producers to cover the clean-up costs of their littered products, as well as paying for communication and awareness campaigns on litter prevention. As market leaders, innovators and investors in Corporate Social Responsibility businesses can play a significant role in proactively tackling this growing social problem.

The independent litter composition analysis took place between the 21st January–4th March 2019 and was designed and delivered by RPS Consulting Engineers. The analysis aims to measure the composition of different types of litter and estimate the number of littered items on NI streets at any one time. No similar analysis study has been conducted in NI to date.

A TOTAL OF **10,626** LITTERED AND BINNED ITEMS WERE ANALYSED¹



**SURVEY TIMES
(2019)**



TRANSECTS WERE LOCATED IN 745 OF THE 890 SUPER OUTPUT AREAS (SOA)³

¹ The figures outlined above highlight both littered items and items placed in bins.

² This analysis does not cover every possible transect throughout NI. However, we can gauge how well it represents the litter problem on a national scale by using two important statistics – the survey's margin of error and confidence level. Surveying 1,108 transects and using an industry standard confidence level of 95%, provides a resulting margin of error of plus or minus 2.95%.

³ Northern Ireland is split into 890 SOAs. SOAs were developed by Northern Ireland Statistics & Research (NISRA) to improve the reporting of small area statistics.

We estimate that...

1.3 million⁴

items of litter are on our streets at any one time

28 tonnes

of litter are on our streets at any one time

71%

of littered items contain plastic

£45 million⁵

annual cost of street cleansing in Northern Ireland

From our litter analysis we estimate that...

368,610

drink items are littered on our streets

137,437

are non-alcoholic drinks packaging

114,693

are plastic bottles

Other items included in drinks packaging are: single-use disposable cups; alcoholic drink packaging; Tetrapaks; polystyrene drink cups; drinking glasses

164,404

food packaging items are littered on our streets

115,018

are confectionery/crisp foil wrappers

20,469

are items such as yoghurt and sandwich containers

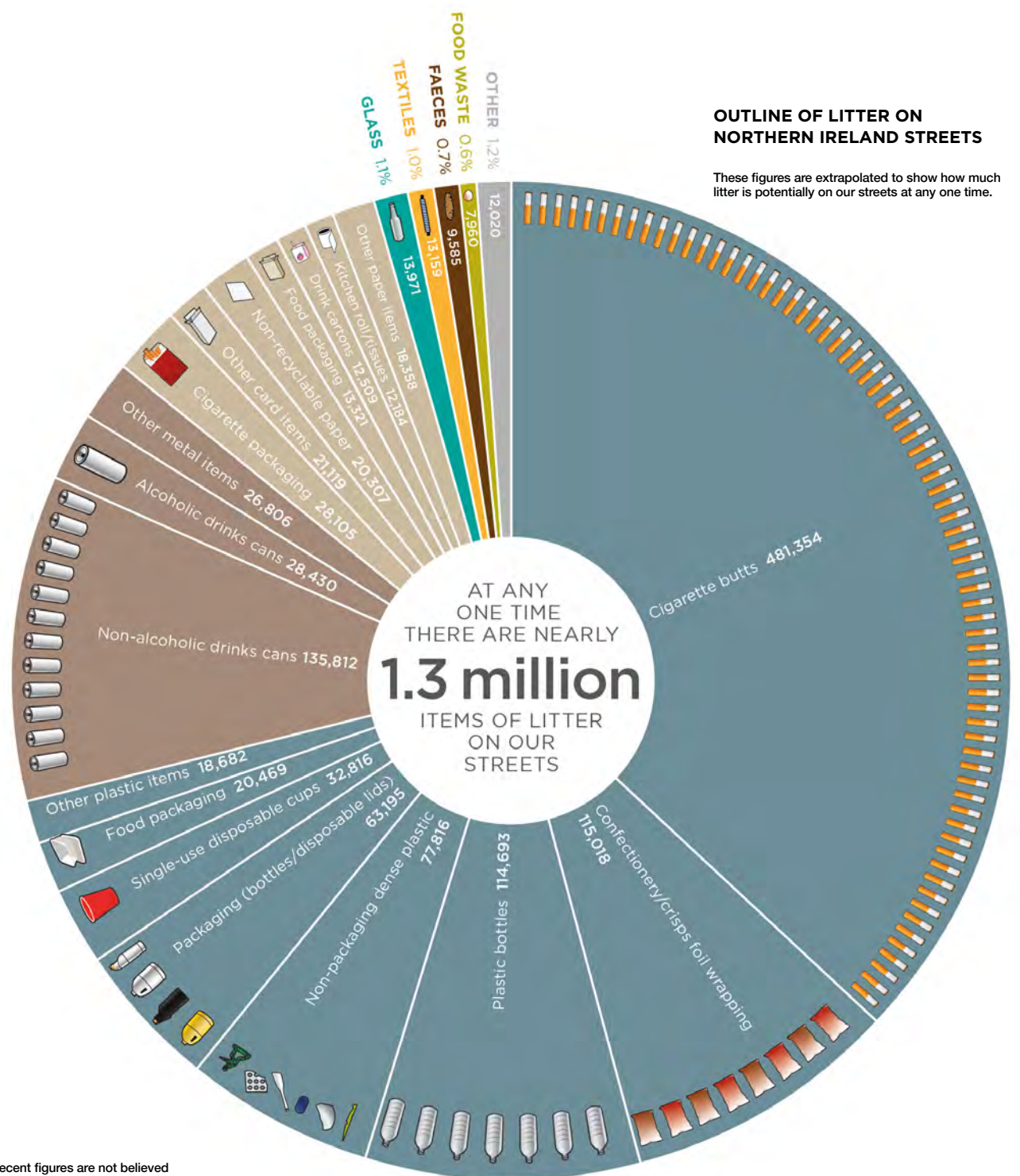
Other items included in food packaging are: polystyrene packaging and card packaging

⁴ The number of littered items is extrapolated to show how much litter is potentially on our streets, at any one time. Extrapolated figures are based on 9,000 km of roads across NI.

⁵ Most recent figures suggest cleansing costs could be lower than this. However, after investigation, these more recent figures are not believed to be a true reflection of costs. This cost currently falls on local authorities. It does not include costs incurred by other bodies who play a part in the removal of litter from our environment, such as other major landowners, Translink and NGOs supporting voluntary clean-ups.

OUTLINE OF LITTER ON NORTHERN IRELAND STREETS

These figures are extrapolated to show how much litter is potentially on our streets at any one time.



Marine litter

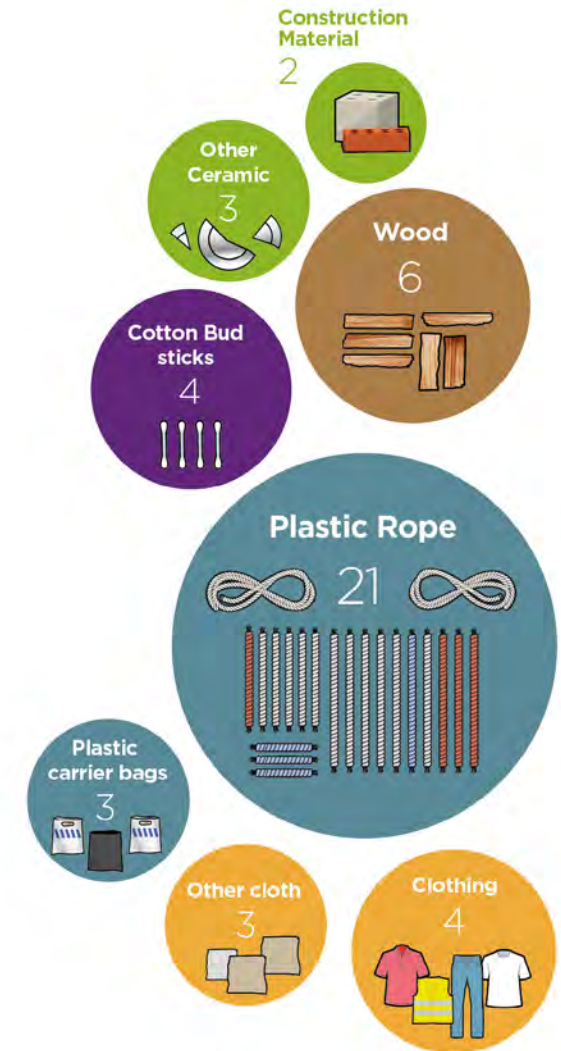
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful conducts seasonal surveys on reference beaches every year on behalf of the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

As part of the OSPAR Convention over 70 beaches, in the North-East Atlantic, monitor litter on 100m stretches of the beach, following common monitoring guidelines. In Northern Ireland 11 beaches are currently being surveyed for litter four times a year. The monitoring records all litter within 112 predefined item classifications, across 11 categories: plastic, metal, paper, wood, sanitary waste, cloth, rubber, glass, pottery/ceramic, medical waste and faeces. Our results provide a baseline figure against which to measure progress towards what is termed Good Environmental Status (GES) under the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

The 2019 Marine Litter Report is available on our website – www.KeepNorthernIrelandBeautiful.org/marinelitter. The report highlights the main effects of marine litter and plastic pollution, including the harm it poses to wildlife, along with the particular issue of microplastics.



Volunteers enjoying a beach clean. In 2019 There was on average 508 items of litter per 100m beach per survey of which 78% were plastic. The figures in the bubble diagram (right), just show an average breakdown combining all beaches and seasons. Visit: www.KeepNorthernIrelandBeautiful.org/marinelitter



Foam sponges
2



Plastic food containers
8



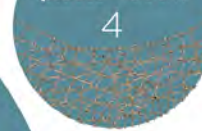
Plastic and polystyrene pieces

< 2.5cm

78



Fishing net pieces < 50cm
4



Other plastic
7

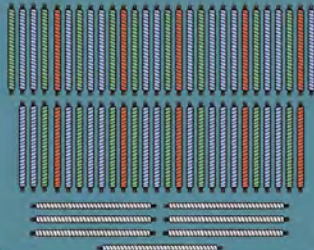


Strapping bands
2



Plastic string and cord

61



Fishing line
7



Plastic drinks caps and lids

25

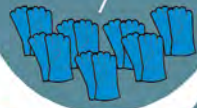


Plastic drinks containers

18



Plastic gloves (heavy duty)
7



Shotgun cartridges
3



Metal Cans

17



Other glass items

44



Plastic and polystyrene pieces > 2.5cm

55



Cutlery, trays, straws
4



Other rubber pieces
6



Tyres and belts
3



Cigarette butts
1



Other metal pieces < 50cm
4



Plastic food wrappers

16



Toys
2

Tangled fishing nets/rope/cord/string
3

Live Here Love Here

The Live Here Love Here initiative is underpinned by a growing movement of people who are together building community pride and improving local environments through positive practical action.

Media Campaign

Through partnership working and 'one voice' messaging across a strong variety of media channels such as TV, social media and billboards, we can build strong relationships with the public as we develop the kind of place we want to live.

In 2018, we introduced an unforgettable irate, magenta puppet – disgusted by all things litter and not afraid to tell you so! The character delivers memorable messages and appeals to all age ranges, raising awareness and driving the behaviour change we all need in our communities.



130,128

volunteers



44,820

litter bags collected



271

metric tonnes of rubbish collected equivalent to approximately 22 Ulster buses

Adopt A Spot



233

groups supported by the Adopt A Spot programme



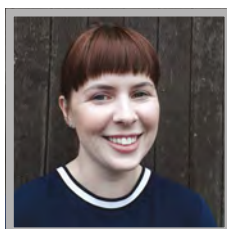
1,504

hours of volunteer time (each group carries out 4 clean ups a year)



£65,800

financial support for Adopt A Spot groups across Northern Ireland



For more information on our work contact:

Emma Johnston
OPERATIONS MANAGER

emma.johnston@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org



LIVE HERE LOVE HERE

Live Here Love Here Partners (2019)



Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council



Antrim and Newtownabbey BOROUGH COUNCIL



Belfast City Council



Ards and North Down Borough Council



DAERA
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Derry City & Strabane District Council
Comhairle Chathair Dhoire & Cheantar an tSraítha Bala
Derry Cille & Strábane Districc Cionail



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



Housing Executive



KEEP NORTHERN IRELAND BEAUTIFUL



Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council



Mid & East Antrim Borough Council



Comhairle Ceantair Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster District Council



Comhairle Ceantair an tUir, Mhúrn agus an Duín
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Fermanagh and Omagh Litter Heroes Award Winner 2019

Trevor Foster (Blue Green Yonder)

Keen canoeist, Trevor has made a significant impact on the appearance of the waterways in and around Enniskillen with the help of his group Blue Green Yonder, organising young people and groups from local businesses such as BT staff to undertake the collection and removal of debris and litter from the waterways in canoes.

Trevor has been quietly and diligently organising the clean ups of Enniskillen's waterways, removing debris and items like shopping trolleys, tyres, plastic and other types of litter for many years. This type of clearance is difficult and not without risk, but saves the council significant costs, for which they are very grateful.



Mid Ulster Litter Heroes Award Winner 2019

Vicky Seviour-Crockett

Vicky has carried out litter picks for nearly 5 years, showing her dedication to Adopt A Spot and her example has motivated others to get involved. She has even introduced “plogging” to her running group. She recycles what she finds on litter picks with Terracycle who in turn make a donation to her chosen charity. She has raised over £1000 for “Kicks Count” from biscuit wrappers alone, a charity that promote baby movement awareness to reduce still birth, without which her son William may not be here today to help litter pick beside her. Now William is at school, she child minds and teaches the children about protecting the environment.



“Winning the Mid Ulster Litter Hero award was incredible. It was such an honour to be recognised (for things that have become part of my everyday life) and it spurred me on to keep going and encourage others to get involved in their communities”

Vicky Seviour-Crockett Winner of Mid Ulster Litter Heroes Award 2019.

Beach and Marina Awards



Blue Flag Award

A Blue Flag is a symbol of excellence worldwide. In 2019 12 beaches and marinas around Northern Ireland were awarded the Blue Flag. Beaches and Marinas with a Blue Flag are demonstrating their commitment to sustainability. Every year Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful carry out control visits to ensure each site is fulfilling strict criteria based on water quality, environmental management, education, safety and access. The Blue Flag programme is operated under the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and every year each Blue Flag beach and marina must provide special activities and events to help visitors understand the importance of our coastal and marine environments, and what we can all do to protect them. A Blue Flag can only be flown at sites where all the Blue Flag criteria have been met.



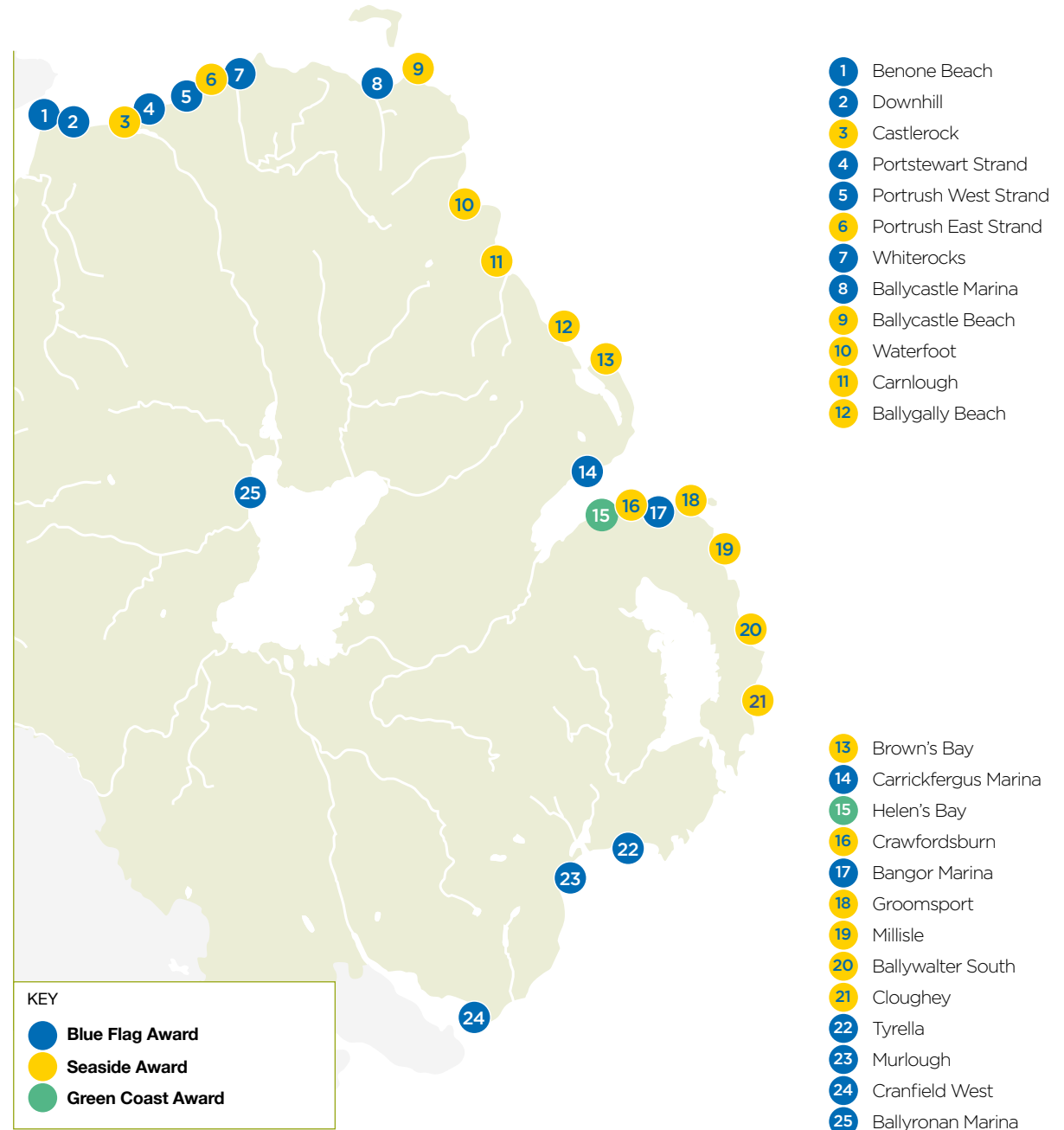
Seaside Award

The Seaside Award is the national standard for beaches across the UK. The flag ensures visitors are guaranteed to find a clean, safe, attractive and well managed coastal environment with varied levels of facilities provided depending on the location of the beach. Seaside Award beaches are likely to have facilities such as toilets and parking. In 2019, 11 beaches were awarded the Seaside Award.



Green Coast Awards

This Award recognises beaches where the local community has made a commitment to protecting and promoting the environment, rather than developing visitor infrastructure. As such this Award aims to recognise more rural, natural beaches that retain their unspoilt character and excellent bathing water quality. In 2019 1 beach was awarded the Green Coast Award.



Green Flag



Green Flag Awards

The Green Flag Award recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across Northern Ireland, the UK and around the world.

Any green space that is freely accessible to the public and has a site specific management plan is eligible to apply for a Green Flag Award. Parks and Green Spaces are judged against set criteria in areas including biodiversity, sustainability, standards of management and cleanliness.

As the population grows accessing safe, quality green space is increasingly important for local communities, visitors, people's health, outdoor learning and of course, leisure activities.

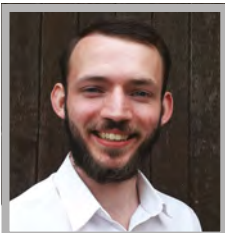
The Green Flag Awards in Northern Ireland

The Green Flag Award scheme was launched in Northern Ireland in 2008, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful has locally managed the Green Flag Award scheme since 2012. There are currently 76 Green Flag Award Sites in Northern Ireland and these include both heritage sites and community sites.

Each Green Flag site is assessed on eight key criteria:

- 1. A welcoming Place**
- 2. Healthy, Safe and Secure**
- 3. Well Maintained and Clean**
- 4. Environmental Management**
- 5. Conservation and Heritage**
- 6. Community Involvement**
- 7. Marketing and Communication**
- 8. Management**

Sites can apply to be a Green Heritage Site which focuses more on good conservation standards, historic features given prominence and the restoration / re-creation of landscape features. There is also the Green Flag Community Award, which does encompass seven of the eight criteria for Green Flag (is not assessed on Marketing and Communication) but is more focused on the work of the community groups involved at the site.



For more information on keep Northern Ireland Beautiful's certifications programmes, including the Beach and Marina Awards and the Green Flag Award please visit our website or contact our Local Environmental Quality manager Jamie Miller.

Jamie Miller

LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY MANAGER

Jamie.Miller@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org



Carnfunnock Country Park



Slieve Gullion Forest Park



Cave Hill Country Park

Young Reporters for the Environment



**Young Reporters
for the environment**

Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) is an international award-winning programme coordinated by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). The programme empowers young people to take an educated stand on environmental issues they feel strongly about and gives them a platform to articulate these issues through the media of writing, photography or video. Youth between the age of 11–25 can join the programme in their countries through their school, youth group or as individuals by contacting the relevant National Operator. In Northern Ireland Young Reporters for the Environment is delivered by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

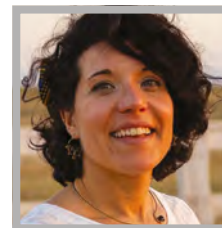
A Youth Strategy for the Environment

Forty young activists, including some Young Reporters for the Environment from St Dominic's Grammar School for Girls and Ulidia Integrated College, met with policy makers at Stormont on 17th January to set out their demands for safeguarding the environment, as they play their part in shaping Northern Ireland's first ever environment strategy, which is currently out for public consultation. Students gave suggestions about what they thought should be included in the strategy by working in groups to answer questions on this topic.

Supported by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, Ulster Wildlife and the Belfast Hills Partnership, the passionate and environmentally conscious young people, aged 11 to 24, have already been taking action to improve hundreds of local green spaces and tackle environmental issues, such as climate change. Some of these improvements have been possible through litter pick events and community action days supported by Wrigley Mars Foundation.

A representative of these young activists advocated to act now on the climate crisis, because catastrophes, such as the fires in Australia, will become more commonplace across the world, changing ecosystems beyond repair. They also commented on the need to improve the recycling facilities in Northern Ireland, so we can stop wasting money, energy, and resources by making things from scratch. It is possible: Sweden recycle 99% of their waste, so why can't we? Young people have great ideas too; they just need to be listened to more!

The youth-led movement is calling for three key asks to be included in the forthcoming strategy: more time for young people learning in and about nature, more support for young people to get environmental jobs, and more opportunities for young people to be heard and play an active role in society. It's time to speak up!



For more information contact:

Francesca Di Palo

ECO-SCHOOLS PROJECT OFFICER

Francesca.DiPalo@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

Volunteers Taking Action

Big Spring Clean Competition Winner 2019

“The answer to why I get involved is quite simple : It is the correct thing to do if we want to have the chance to preserve some dignity to our neighbourhoods. I don’t want to live in an environment filled with litter. It is an eye sore. It is unhygienic and it is a threat to flora and fauna. I know there are many others who feel this way. On top of that, the adopt-the-spot scheme encourages me to get out and exercise, to meet other people, to help communities and to promote our concern. Being part of an organisation like “Live here, love here” has transformed my life positively because it keeps acknowledging that what we do is helpful and valued.”

Hubert Giraudeau
Greencycling and
Greenthinking, Lurgan.



Ards and North Down, Holywood Residents Association, Holywood Recycles Gum and Butts

This project is a recycling initiative for the Holywood community. Using eye catching receptacles local adults and children will have the opportunity to contribute in a novel way to recycling plastic and as a result, to reduce littering. Well labelled bins for cigarette butts and for chewing gum will be placed at selected locations in Holywood which have been identified through research. The contents will be sent to the specialist recycling partners (Terracycle and Gumdrop). Prominently placed Ballot Bins will invite smokers to make a choice which may appeal to some. The project will be launched through a poster campaign, surveys of cigarette butt and chewing stain numbers on the streets and a litter pick up for the butts. There will be a launch meeting for local societies, groups, businesses and Ards and North Down Borough Council representatives. Schools will be offered a visit to promote the project.



“For the Residents’ Association our plastics recycling project has led to strong connections within the town and has been a catalyst for action by others. The local council really liked the cigarette Ballot Bin and has installed 35 throughout the Borough. We have developed strong links with our location partners. For example we recently planted up a litter hotspot in partnership with Translink. Priory College, a location partner for Gumdrop bins, made some enormous cigarette butt models to help us publicise our bins. And, to date, 11,600 cigarette butts have been sent for recycling, thanks to the small grant scheme.”

Holywood Residents’ Association

Enagh Youth Forum, Derry and Strabane District Council

Our Live Here, Love Here project took place between Monday 22nd of July and Saturday 27th of July. The week long programme of events formed the 'Strathfoyle One Big Clean Up Week' 2019. The project engaged 47 young people aged 14–17 throughout the week. 71 people including young children and families participated in the 'Window Box Challenge' event held at Strathfoyle Library which was a great success. One notable highlight of the project was the extent of improved partnership working that occurred between local youth and community groups working together with the Northern Ireland Grounds Maintenance Team and Derry City & Strabane Council Street Cleansing Team, both of whom were on the ground doing their bit throughout the week. The message was that it is everyone's responsibility to help keep Strathfoyle Safe, Clean & tidy! A total of five community clean ups were held and included litter picks, graffiti removal and a summer clean-up of Enagh Lough. This project has helped promote environmental awareness amongst young people and their families and we would like to thank the Live Here Love Here team for their continued support!



Local businesses tackling pointless plastic

As part of our Tackling Plastic NI project we've been reaching out to local business communities across Northern Ireland to tackle pointless plastics. We've created a toolkit that businesses can use to help them get started in reducing their own pointless plastic, either customer facing, internally, or both. Businesses can easily adapt templates and use materials to suit their business – demonstrating their commitment to helping the environment.

The toolkit is a handy guide with 5 easy steps and it's self-assessed. Since we issued the Litter Composition Report in March 2020, we've had an influx of local businesses seeking advice on changes they can make to their daily business routines to join the effort to tackle plastic. In response, we've created this toolkit that gives businesses the tools they need to understand how they can make changes for the better as a business and as a member of our community.

The toolkit help businesses audit their current situation and highlight where change is needed – it then rewards their efforts with official certificates and stickers to promote to customers and other businesses that they are joining this fight and evoking change. Businesses will also be added to our new interactive app, showcasing 'local businesses doing good' throughout NI.

In Northern Ireland alone, nearly 80% of litter found on our beaches contains plastic. We all need to play our part – be part of the solution and tackle plastic in your workplace.



Want to join this environmental initiative?
To find out more please contact:

Claire Hudson
SINGLE USE PLASTIC COORDINATOR

T 028 9073 6920

www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

Policy developments

With Stormont back in action it is time for new legislation to be developed and enacted to help move towards a cleaner country. It is time for a new decade and new approach to protecting our environment.

Northern Ireland:

■ **New-decade-new-approach**

Stormont's first policy since returning aims to find a coordinated and strategic approach to the challenge of climate change. As part of the executive plan, a plan will be created to eliminate plastic pollution.

■ **Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland**

DAERA's Environment Strategy acknowledges the issues of litter and dog fouling as both an aesthetic issue but also as a health issue. Although there is currently no litter strategy there is currently a Marine Litter Strategy. This is an opportunity for a joined up approach with policies as 80% of marine litter on the beaches comes from land based sources.

■ **Deposit Return Scheme**

Initial consultation has occurred for a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) to be introduced in Northern. Currently a second consultation is being considered in 2020, following this the DRS would be introduced in 2023. The DRS would mean that consumers pay an up-front deposit for an item such as a sealed drink at purchase and is redeemed on return of the empty drinks container.

United Kingdom:

■ **25 year environment plan**

Two major outcomes of this are to work towards a target of eliminating avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042. The second is to significantly reduce and where possible prevent all kinds of marine plastic pollution.

■ **UK Marine Strategy**

The goal of this strategy is to ensure that the U.K. as a whole work towards creating and maintaining "Good Environmental Status" for our seas.

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

DAERA intend to progress with this policy proposal and introduce an extended producer responsibility scheme for packaging in 2023. The policy will place the responsibility on producers for the cost of managing their products once they reach the end of their life and gives producers an incentive to design their products to make it easier for them to be re-used or dismantled and recycled at the end of their life.

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

Ban on the above items will come into force in England in October 2020.

Recommendations

These are some of the recommendations that Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful believe are necessary to meaningfully reduce littering, dog fouling and related environmental damage to Northern Ireland.

1. Litter legislation

There is a need for a joined-up approach in the creation of a litter strategy to help tackle the causes of litter in Northern Ireland. This would need to include education, enforcement, public engagement, working closely together and sharing scarce resources.

2. Compliance with the EU Plastics Directive and Waste Directive changes

There is a need to incorporate all actions on litter included in the EU Plastics Directive and Waste Directive. This includes the creation of a circular economy around recycled items.

3. Courts must produce coherent guidelines for the treatment of litterers

This needs to include which fines and penalties can be issued during court proceedings. This is to ensure that fair and reasonable penalties are applied consistently to avoid anyone from finding ways around the system to receive a smaller cost than the original fixed penalty notice.

4. Support campaigns which are directed at the reduction of common and harmful litter

More work needs to be invested in supporting those that are creating and running campaigns that address the issue of litter and offer viable eco-friendly solutions and best practices.

5. Joined-up approach for councils on the enforcement of litter issues

There needs to be a harmonisation across all councils to ensure that best practices on enforcement of litter and dog fouling is followed. These practices need to be made clear for all to follow and rule out any ambiguity for the public regarding the treatment of offenders.

6. Prioritising behaviour change above additional disposal facilities

Behaviour change through education needs to be a priority for tackling the issues of dog fouling and litter. The results from this report have shown that the presence of extra bins and disposal facilities do not affect the amount of litter counted along a transect. With this in mind more work needs to be put in to rewarding people for better behavioural changes around litter.

7. Funding behavioural change

As great as it is for funding to be invested in cleaning up litter this is not the solution as it is only funding us to stand still. This is an opportunity for funding to be reallocated into projects and campaigns which work towards changing the behaviour of individuals as well as corporations.

8. Act to make your own council single use plastic free by 2023 and ensure alignment with requirements in legislation

Encourage supply chains and the high street to adopt these policies. 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.

9. Clear obstructions from streets to improve cleansing outcomes

In 2019 approximately half of all transects surveyed were fully obstructed preventing mechanical sweeping from occurring. Encouraging more people to use parking that is off street and manage any on street parking to maximise value.

10. Be active in tackling pollution: Live Here Love Here

Tackling litter pollution at the source is the best solution and this can be as easy as education and encouraging everyone to use less, recycle more and be more conscious about their waste.

BELFAST CITY CENTRE



BANGOR HARBOUR
IN HARBOUR AREA



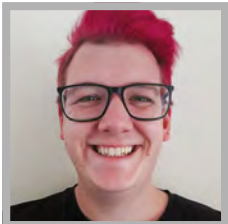
Welcome to

NORTHERN IRELAND

HANNAHSTOWN, BELFAST



KILKEEL



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

Conor Bush

LOCAL ENVIRONMENT QUALITY OFFICER

conor.bush@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

T 028 9073 6920

www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

**KEEP
NORTHERN
IRELAND
BEAUTIFUL**



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