



Building a more environmentally responsible Northern Ireland by 2023

Our manifesto for the 2019 Local Government Elections



**KEEP
NORTHERN
IRELAND
BEAUTIFUL**



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful is inspiring people to create cleaner, greener and more sustainable communities. It achieves this through public and school-based education, promoting community engagement and improving environmental standards.

The commitments in this manifesto will help local councils play their full part in ensuring that together we can:

- ✓ **build community pride,**
- ✓ **develop responsible attitudes** and
- ✓ **deliver practical local solutions.**

Environmental education

Eco-Schools is an international education programme running in 70 countries across the world. Building on our success in achieving our goal of “*Every School an Eco-School*” we want to see at least half of all schools reach international Green Flag status.

Local councils should:

- ✓ Continue to collaborate on the Eco-Schools programme; in particular, tackling waste and plastic pollution, which poses a real and present danger.
- ✓ Help us develop innovative ways to support the development of the young leaders of tomorrow.
- ✓ Promote the financial, educational and environmental benefits of Eco-Schools, protecting our environment and better managing our local resources.



Communtiy engagement (behaviour change)

As the role of local councils becomes more prominent, we need to build the relationship between government and wider society. The **Live Here Love Here** campaign promotes civic pride and empowers individuals. Greater participation from all eleven councils will ensure that the inspiring work of citizen volunteers is enhanced, directly improving where they live.

Local councils should:

- ✓ Expand the cross-sectoral Live Here Love Here campaign, to attain the scale needed to change people's behaviour around waste, plastics and all aspects of environmental damage.
- ✓ Promote the campaign to residents with a focus in 2019 on tackling the problems of single use plastics.
- ✓ Demonstrate best practice in environmentally friendly policies throughout the next mandate.



Improving environment standards

Street cleansing costs the ratepayer £45m per year. Littering and dog fouling should be regarded as unacceptable as drink driving or smoking in public places is. International accreditation of outdoor green spaces, such as the Green Flag scheme and Blue Flag for Marinas and Beaches, should be adopted to enhance the reputation of an area, increase tourism and act as a lever for accessing additional funding for further regeneration. Councils can lead the way by swiftly developing innovative environmental policies targeting climate change, sustainable development, plastic reduction, and the circular economy.

Local councils should:

- ✓ Continue to impose stiff fines on those caught littering or not cleaning up after their dogs and increase investment in enforcement to act as a credible deterrent.
- ✓ 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 10% of council street cleansing costs in preventing littering, delivering action on a scale that will give results.
- ✓ Reduce littering behaviour, consumption habits and waste throughout the council's sphere of influence – staff, premises, policies - and embrace a culture of efficiency and cost savings
- ✓ Appreciate the global impacts of individual actions, taking time to understand existing behaviour patterns, trialling interventions and evaluating their impact on anti-social behaviour.



5 Positive Policies to make your council greener

In an age of restricted budgets, we understand that it can be difficult to seek ways to promote the environment and know quickly whether these measures are making a difference. At Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful we believe that any action, no matter how small, makes a real difference. We want to work with you to achieve our Manifesto goals.

Here are five positive policies that we would ask every council candidate to endorse, and if elected, implement in their local area;

- 1 Commit to eliminating Single Use Plastics from your council during the next mandate including banning the release of balloons and Chinese lanterns and banning funding for groups engaged in such activities.
- 2 Take action to create a sustainable procurement policy within your council and spread the good practice into local businesses.
- 3 Increase resources to support education and engagement initiatives including **Eco-Schools**, **Green Flag** for public open spaces and the **Live Here Love Here** campaign. Local action is important and prevention is better than cure.
- 4 Focus community planning resources to build self-efficacy in communities and measure success through a new civic pride index.
- 5 Invest resources in developing a circular economy to reduce waste and save resources.



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