**News from the PCA**

**The Velvet Strand**

Where has all our sand gone? This is no doubt a question all our beach lovers are asking themselves. Our Velvet Strand never looked so bad. The exposer of the fibre optic cable in April which was set down almost two metres was an indication of how much sand has disappeared in the past number of months. Our legendary aviators would certainly not have considered Portmarnock for their historic transatlantic flights if they came back now!! Not only have vast quantities of sand been eroded away but rock formations and layers of pebbles/stones are visible mainly at the northern end of the shore line. The storms in late spring were undoubtedly the main reason for this problem. When the rocks were exposed initially they provided a perfect substrate for the growth of sea algae. Some of our members who are constantly measuring the sand levels on the beach have noted that the north-easterly storms that lashed our coast line in the Spring scoured away the entire layer of beach sand, leaving the lime stone rocks exposed. The exposure of these stones caused major difficulties for bathers. Our experts (geologists and scientists) are confident that that with more favourable winds next winter the build-up of sand will return to our beautiful beach. However one positive outcome ironically from all this erosion was the increase of sand levels in the dunes! Many embryo dunes of Lyme Grass have developed along the revetment. The signage put in place by FCC has also helped in protecting this grass to grow. Sports teams and beach goers are asked not to trample on the dunes so as to avoid damaging the delicate roots. It was evident during the hot weather that these signs were ignored by some people from the large quantities of litter deposited in the dunes that we collected during out fortnightly clean-up. The plant biodiversity on the dunes is very healthy and many of the damaged dunes are returning to their former glory.

Apart from the stones and rocks that stunned many of our visitors during the summer, the ‘shelter’/shed (you name it!) near the steps continues to be a real eyesore. The PCA have asked one of our councillors to raise this matter at the monthly meeting of the Howth/Malahide Ward and hope that FCC will do something about it as soon as possible. It needs an urgent facelift. If FCC doesn’t do something we might get a number of volunteers to tackle it.

**Dog Fouling**

Again we have to remind our dog lovers of the bye-laws and their obligations as dog owners. You are requested to carry pooper scoopers with you when taking your dog for a walk and clean up any faeces deposited by your dog. The following is a verbatim submission to our email by an irate parent in Portmarnock:

‘ My children use the large green in the centre of Carrickhill and I’m getting sick and tired of scraping dog faeces off their shoes-not to mention my carpets and floors!!In one instant one of my children ended up with it in his hair after cycling his bike over it. It is just disgusting. Many of the owners of dogs just open their doors and let their dogs out to roam and don’t give a thought to the impact it has on anybody else. I don’t feel confident in approaching these people as in past experience I have gotten bawled out of it’. What a sad reflection on our society!

Until such time as bye-laws are enforced by FCC this problem will continue. There are only six litter wardens for the whole of Fingal!! Maybe employing more litter wardens than having additional councillors would put public money to better use.

**Neighbourhood watch**

Each month a representative from the PCA attends the monthly meeting of Neighbourhood Watch in Malahide Garda Station and reports back to the PCA. At the September meeting the gardai were praised for the way they ‘snuffed out’ (quote from rep.) the drunken loutish behaviour on the beach at an early stage by confiscating drink from would be revellers. The gardai said that crime is down on last year in our area but still there was number of burglaries in Portmarnock during the month of August mainly in houses with no alarms. The thefts from cars in public car parks in Portmarnock and Malahide still continues. People should never leave any valuables in their car booth when going for a walk.Fingal County Council are tendering for CCTV to be installed in some of their car parks.

**Bus Stop in Lower Wendell**

The PCA have learned that the local authorities are now fully responsible for bus stops. Pressure will now continue on FCC to have the bus stop on lower Wendell Ave relocated to Strand Rd near the Martello Tower. This would give residents in the area more peace and provide better choices for bus users as has been stated in Progress many times before

**Contacting PCA**

If you have any issues you wish highlighted or suggestions as how to improve our community why not email us at: portmarnock1@gmail.com