



COISTE CHONTAE AONTROMA

CUMANN LUTHCHLEAS GAEL

A chairde,

Over the past month there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of youths gathering in and around the bog meadows, St James, St Galls and Falls Park areas.

The majority of these young people are all from the greater west Belfast area and a sizeable number of them are members of our clubs.

There has been a number of serious assaults and health emergencies during these gatherings and it is probably only a matter of time before a tragedy happens unless we work together to tackle this.

Naomh Gall have been working over the past number of weeks with Belfast City Council, Youth Justice Agency, local MLA's, Ulster Wildlife Trust, Antrim GAA, local business and residents and all the relevant emergency services to try and deal with this problem and now we ask for the Belfast clubs to work with us to address these issues.

This is not a problem for the bog meadows area - this is a problem for greater west Belfast because these crowds are transient and will probably move to another area after a while.

The youths that are gathering are not "other people's kids"they are our kids and the vast majority of them are good, well behaved individuals but they endanger themselves and their future when they congregate in such large numbers and there inevitably is alcohol and drug abuse taking place.

Belfast City Council had spent in the region of £30,000 since December 2015 clearing up the vandalism in Falls Park and the figure for the loss of perception of public safety is near incalculable.

We ask of you to put this message out to your teams from U12 upwards and hopefully put this photo on to your club Facebook or web page!

All of us face this issue together because these children come from every club. We want to promote the laughter of our children but we do need to address this serious issue to enable us as an organisation and as a community to move forward stronger!!

Proinsias O Coinne
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