



19 September 2007

Senior Executive Officer  
Culture, Community Development &  
Amenities Department  
Level 3, County Hall  
Marine Road  
Dun Laoghaire

Dear Sirs

I am writing to make you aware of my concerns about the proposed introduction of bye laws for angling on the beaches at Seapoint, Killiney and Corbawn.

I manage a project known as the Dublin Angling Initiative; the project was set up in 1995 to give young people from the greater Dublin area an opportunity to become involved in angling. Throughout the year the young people participate in fishing courses which give an introduction to coarse fishing on the Dublin canals, game fishing on the various game fisheries in the Dublin area and beach fishing on the Dublin and North Wicklow beaches. Since the project's inception more than 5,000 youngsters have come through these courses.

As part of their training the participants take part in the planning of the fishing trips, they learn about the environment, the dangers, how to stay safe, respect for other users i.e. swimmers and the correct disposal of litter. This is important as these children will go on to become "watchdogs" on our rivers, canals and our coastline in the future.

The majority of the teenagers who sign up for Dublin Angling Initiative fishing courses come through diversionary programmes funded by the Department of Justice, drugs task forces, early school leavers programmes and youth organisations. These groups recognise that angling is an

important tool in their goal in helping young people, particularly from disadvantaged areas, to achieve their full potential.

The beaches in the Dublin area are very important to me in my work. They are the most accessible angling venues by both bus and dart. There are many challenges in introducing young people to a healthy pastime like angling in an urban area like Dublin. Anti social behaviour and drug use are not uncommon with young people who are not engaged in a hobby from an early age. Fishing often appeals to teenagers who don't play football or other mainstream sports. I feel to place restrictions on our beaches would be a major stumbling block in our efforts to get young people out enjoying the fresh air and the coastal environment with a fishing rod and a bucket of worms.

In recent months the Fisheries Boards around the country along with the Department of Education have launched an educational resource pack to educate primary school pupils about our aquatic environment. This resource pack is called "Something Fishy" and since the launch, thousands of primary school children around the country, (10 schools in Dublin), have used the pack as part of their curriculum. Learning about rivers, estuaries, the coastline line and the various fish species which inhabit our coastal waters are important components of the programme with a strong emphasis on angling.

At a time when there is a national and local drive to get our young people out on our beaches, rivers and canals so as they can understand their natural environment it does not seem right that we should be placing restrictions and making access to the resource more difficult. It is worth noting that 95% of calls received by the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board about incidents of pollution and illegal fishing come from anglers.

I have enclosed some letters from youth and community leaders that I have received in relation to this matter who share the same concerns as myself.

I would be happy to make a detailed presentation to you on the work of the Dublin Angling Initiative to you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely

**Des Chew**  
**Project Manager**  
**Dublin Angling Initiative**