

**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL  
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF HOWTH/MALAHIDE AREA COMMITTEE  
(SERVICES B – STRATEGIC AND GENERAL MATTERS)**

**WEDNESDAY, 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY, 2017**

**GREY SQUIRRELS. AI033856**

**ITEM NO. 3**

**Question: Councillor D. Healy**

“To ask the Chief Executive to provide a report on activities by or supported by the Council in relation to red and grey squirrels in Howth in recent years and currently?”

**Reply:**

In a National Squirrel survey in 2008, the Howth peninsula was identified as one of 2 remaining strongholds left in the greater Dublin region for populations our Native red Squirrel.

In 2009 a study was carried out in Howth by University College Dublin (UCD) to further examine the populations of Squirrels in Howth. Both red and grey Squirrels were found at the time. The red Squirrels were tagged and released and the very small number of greys found were removed.

In 2010 the SAAO management committee commissioned a comprehensive survey of the wooded areas of the peninsula. The survey used a trap, tag, release method and recorded a viable population of breeding red Squirrels and a small number of greys, which were removed from site. The survey resulted in a management plan for the area, which included recommendations for planting for food and habitat for reds and culling of greys. The report also outlined the importance of continued monitoring of both the red and grey populations.

In 2011 a walk-over of the site was commissioned by a contract mammalogist. A viable number of reds and a very small number of greys were recorded.

In 2014 a walk-over of the site was commissioned by a contract mammalogist. A viable number of reds and an increasing number of greys were recorded.

It became apparent in Q4 2015 that grey Squirrels were becoming more aggressive and numerous on the peninsula and it was agreed by the SAAO committee to organise a 'cul'. Lack of resources from within the SAAO budget delayed the process.

A tender is currently being prepared for 2017 for a comprehensive management plan for the trapping, surveying, tagging and recording of all red Squirrels and the trapping and culling of all greys on the Peninsula.