Cork County Council’s Environmental Awareness & Research Unit are this month spear heading a community lead initiative on dog fouling and much need behavioural change of our dogs owners.

The initiative is under licence from Falkirk Council in Scotland who originally designed the project. Cork County Council is running this initiative County wide from October which co-insides with World Animal Safety and protection Month.

Green Dog Walkers (GDW) is a non-confrontational, friendly way to change attitudes about dog fouling. Volunteers wear a GDW badge which signifies that they have "Taken the Pledge" to always:

* clean up after their dog’s poo
* Always bring a waste poo bag
* Dispose of the waste poo bag in a bin.

The initiative is being run under the guidance of Dr Mary Stack, Senior Scientist with Cork County Council and has responsibility for implementing the Council’s environmental awareness strategy and heads up the Environmental Awareness & Research Unit established in 2005.

Dr Stack says “Green Dog Walking is going Countywide with schools & local communities getting involved.

So how can the public get involved and what exactly is Dr Stack requesting dog owners & communities to do.

“ Our Green Dog Walkers Badge may be worn by the dog or owners and volunteers. It will act as A Friendly Reminder to please pick up after your Dog”

We encourage dog walkers & volunteers:-

To carry extra dog waste bags,

* be happy to be approached to 'lend' a dog waste bag to those without,
* Be a friendly reminder to other dog walkers to clean up after their dogs.

Cork County Council libraries are participating. Pledge forms and badges will be available in local library and all of the Council’s libraries will participate in the coming weeks.

On Millstreet Tidy Town Website and Facebook page you will be able to find web links to the Council veterinary department web site where the public can find out more about the health risks from dog poo. Pet owners are also encouraged to ask their local vet about negative health impacts of dog poo. Visit www. LOVEMYPET.ie

As the Council increase both public awareness and enforcement of littering offences to try to get to the bottom of this puzzling behaviour, the Green Dog Walkers Project is raising awareness that ANY BAG and ANY bin policy may be used by the general public on amenity walkways, parks and recreational areas County wide.

If you would like more information on the Green Dog Walkers Project you may contact EARU section on earu@corkcoco.ie