

## SOUTH KERRY INDEPENDENT ALLIANCE

Clasheen,  
Cill Árne  
Co. Chiarraí.

Ms Heather Humpheries, T.D..  
Minister for Arts Heritage and an Ghaeltacht.  
7 Ely Place,  
Dublin 2.

Dear Minister,

With reference to your request for submission relating to Section 40 of the Wildlife Act---- Burning and Cutting Controls, I wish to make the following observations/ suggestions/ proposals:

1: County Kerry had 4,000 Kms of county roads many of them being no more that 3 metres in width. These roads are invariably carrying two- way traffic. Foliage and branch growth when it trespasses onto the roadway damages the paintwork and panels of vehicles. Repair work can be quite expensive.

2: Tourism is the lifeblood of County Kerry and the narrow roads as mentioned in 1 above carry much of the tourist traffic—vehicular, cycling and pedestrian. Safety is a major responsibility of Local Authorities. It is very difficult to ensure safety when branches and briars are invading the space meant for traffic.

3: Cycling is an ever-growing form of tourism and is also a form of transport highly recommended for all of us in the interest of personal well-being. It is very difficult and highly dangerous to cycle on roads where briars and branches invade the space intended for free movement. All Councillors have received complaints from disgruntled and briar scratched cycling tourists.

4: Our local and national economy is fragile enough without causing it further damage through neglect of our roadways and through endangering our visitors.

5: Visibility at junctions and the approach to junctions are of vital importance. Poor visibility at junctions is undoubtedly a major cause of accidents, Hedges should at all times be cut back at junctions and the approach to junctions.

6; School Buses have been a transforming reality in the educational life of country children. The Buses need to be able to travel safely - i.e. proper visibility and without risk of being damaged. In order to ensure safe passage for these vehicles the hedge cutting date should be brought to at least the middle of August. If not earlier. The 1<sup>st</sup> of September is too late.

7: Consideration should be given to introducing a ten year [10] programme towards achieving manicured roadside hedges that would then be relatively easily maintained. The present system can on occasions lead to brutal attacks on hedgerows and the end result can be extremely unsightly.

8: Birds **Do Not nest** on the twigs and branches that extend from the parent growth onto the roadways.

9: I am not quite sure if the following point is relevant to this precise matter but it is vitally important in Country areas that Back Yard burning continues to be ALLOWED for Briars, Twigs, Nettles and Potato Holms [Stalks] as advised by the Department of Agriculture and Food.

Le Gach Dea- Ghuí

Michael Gleeson [Cllr]