# Belfast City Council consults on management of invasive parakeets at Waterworks Park



Belfast City Council is currently consulting with the Northern Ireland Executive’s Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) to determine the future management of a flock of ring-necked parakeets that have recently appeared at Waterworks Park in north Belfast.

The vibrant tropical birds, noted for their bright green plumage and distinctive red beaks, have attracted attention after being spotted in the urban park near Cavehill Road. The presence of the parakeets in this part of the city is unusual, with speculation suggesting that the birds may have escaped from private ownership or an aviary locally. Some experts have even considered the possibility that the birds might have arrived from London, where populations of ring-necked parakeets have been established for several years.

Conor McKinney, founder and chair of the conservation group Wild Belfast, highlighted the ecological risks linked with the birds’ introduction. Speaking to the Irish News, he explained, “We are facing a changing climate, and all it takes is a couple of really warm springs and the population can blossom. We hear every year of record-breaking temperatures, so although these birds are a novelty now, in a few decades they could be a common sight.”

Currently estimated to number around 15, the parakeets are considered an invasive species in both Ireland and the UK. Their growing numbers pose potential threats to native wildlife, including birds such as starlings and various bat species. Mr McKinney noted that starling populations in the UK have declined by over 80 per cent since the 1970s, pointing to competition for limited nesting sites as a concern if the parakeets become more numerous. Furthermore, the birds are known to cause significant damage to agriculture if they spread from urban areas into the countryside.

“The temperate climate is controlling them, but that’s changing and won’t contain them for long. The best thing to do would be for the council, which owns the park, to round them up while they can and possibly put them into captivity at an aviary perhaps at Belfast Zoo,” Mr McKinney added.

A spokesperson for Belfast City Council acknowledged the issue and confirmed that the council is “aware of this concern” and currently “seeking advice from the relevant government department,” referring to DAERA. Efforts to obtain comment from the department are ongoing.

The arrival of these ring-necked parakeets, native to regions of Africa and southeast Asia, underscores questions about urban wildlife management and the impact of invasive species on local ecosystems in Belfast. The consultation process between the council and government officials seeks to establish an approach that balances public interest, biodiversity preservation, and ecological considerations.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/environment/belfast-parakeets-council-in-talks-with-stormont-over-handling-invasive-tropical-birds-in-waterworks-park-5089439> - This article confirms that Belfast City Council is consulting with Northern Ireland Executive’s Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) about managing the ring-necked parakeets found in Waterworks Park in north Belfast.
* <https://group.rspb.org.uk/belfast/visitor-photo/ring-necked-parakeet-belfast-waterworks/> - This source provides detailed information and images of the ring-necked parakeet in Belfast’s Waterworks Park, describing its distinctive green plumage and red beak, supporting the article's description of the species.
* <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/people/tropical-parakeets-have-made-the-waterworks-park-in-north-belfast-their-home-becoming-the-star-attraction-5087732> - This article highlights the presence of tropical parakeets in Waterworks Park, north Belfast, supporting claims about their recent appearance and growing visibility in the urban park.
* <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/ring-necked-parakeet/> - This RSPB guide explains the ecological impact of ring-necked parakeets as an invasive species in the UK, including competition with native birds for nesting sites, supporting the conservation concerns raised in the article.
* <https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/news/2025/council-working-to-assess-ring-necked-parakeets-in-waterworks-park> - An official Belfast City Council update confirms the council's awareness and active engagement with government bodies to assess the situation and consider management options for the parakeet flock.