



## Hazelhatch & Celbridge & Ballybrophy Stations: Chemical-Free Cleaning Initiative

Hazelhatch & Celbridge and Ballybrophy are busy commuter train stations operated by Irish Rail in County Kildare. With hundreds of daily passengers, maintaining clean and safe platforms and car parks is essential. Irish Rail committed to reducing harsh chemicals in maintenance and sought a modern approach that aligned with safety, environmental goals and minimal public disruption.

**Industry:** Public Transportation (Railway)

**Location:** Hazelhatch & Ballybrophy, Co. Kildare, Ireland

**Client Profile:** Irish Rail (Iarnród Éireann) manages national rail infrastructure. Hazelhatch & Celbridge and Ballybrophy stations serve a key commuter route, welcoming local passengers, tourists and pets. Clean, hazard-free stations are vital to Irish Rail's service standards and public image.

### Problem/Challenge

The station's stone platforms and parking areas had built up moss, weeds and grime, creating slip risks and looking neglected. Traditionally, chemical cleaners or herbicides might be used, but Irish Rail wanted to avoid chemicals to protect people, pets and the environment. Additionally, they needed a method that could be carried out during the day without closing the station. The cleaning solution had to:

- **Ensure Safety:** Remove slippery moss and weeds to prevent accidents.
- **Avoid Chemicals:** Clean effectively without using harsh or toxic substances.
- **Minimise Disruption:** Be carried out during daytime hours while the station was open, without endangering passengers or staff.

### Goals and Objectives

Irish Rail's objectives for this project were clear:

- **Public Safety:** Eliminate slip hazards to protect the public
- **Chemical-Free Cleaning:** Adopt a chemical-free, environmentally safe approach
- **Operational Efficiency:** Perform cleaning efficiently and **keep surfaces cleaner for longer**, reducing how often maintenance is needed.
- **No Service Downtime:** Conduct maintenance in daylight and normal operating hours, avoiding expensive night shifts or station closures.
- **Protect People and Pets:** Ensure the process is safe for passengers, workers and animals that might be on site.



## Solution Provided

Foamstream Ireland Ltd carried out a tailored cleaning programme using a soft wash system with hot water and biodegradable foam. This herbicide-free technology met all Irish Rail's criteria. Key steps included:

- **Preparation:** Crews worked during off-peak hours, isolating small work zones to keep public areas accessible.
- **Application:** The team applied near-boiling water combined with natural foam to stone paving, platform edges and car parks. The foam acted as insulation, retaining heat long enough to kill moss and weeds at the root. The plant-based foam was safe for people, pets and surrounding surfaces.
- **Surface Cleaning:** As the heat worked, grime and biological growth were loosened. Crews gently brushed and rinsed surfaces using low-pressure hot water, protecting the stone and sterilising moss spores.
- **Public Safety:** The station remained open throughout. With no chemical odours or risks, passengers moved safely around active cleaning zones, demonstrating how non-toxic methods support public access.

## Client Testimonial

*As a Facilities Department within the Railway we are always looking for ways to improve our services and work practices, to show our customers that we care for the environment. One way was to look at ways to move away from using Chemicals to keep our stations clean and weed free.*

*We have been working with Noel from Foamstream for about 4 years now, from the outset we have been really pleased with the product, and Noels outlook and professionalism towards all the projects that he has been on with us.*

*The Railway is a high risk area, and we take safety seriously, Noel always has safety at the forefront on every project.*

*I would have no hesitation in recommending Foamstream & Noel for any project. Going forward we will be using Foam stream for any upcoming projects at stations that require a chemical free weed removal solution and low pressure hot washing.*

*Gerard Lynch*

*Buildings & Facilities Regional Maintenance Manager South*

*Charleville station*

*Co. Cork*

## Results and Impact

*The transformation was immediate. Stonework and parking areas were visibly cleaner and moss-free. Platforms looked brighter and safer, improving the passenger experience. Slip risks were eliminated and no morning algae reappeared. Since the treatment destroyed spores as well as weeds, regrowth was significantly reduced compared to traditional pressure washing. This extended the time between cleans and lowered long-term maintenance costs. Crucially, the station remained operational with no service disruptions, showing that sustainable, chemical-free cleaning can deliver excellent results in public spaces.*

**Before**



**After**



## Before



## After

