



### Preserving Heritage with Eco-Friendly Cleaning

Heywood Gardens in County Laois is a historic estate with elegant stonework, walking paths and classic garden structures. Managed by Ireland's Office of Public Works (OPW), it draws tourists and locals alike. Over time, moss and ivy overgrew, threatening the site's beauty and safety. The OPW sought a solution to restore the gardens without damaging their historic masonry or the environment.

**Industry:** Government / Heritage Site Management.

**Location:** Heywood Gardens, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois, Ireland

**Client Profile:** The OPW maintains Ireland's parks, gardens and heritage sites. At Heywood Gardens, their goal is to preserve the stone terraces, pathways and architectural features for public enjoyment. Key priorities include protecting historic materials and ensuring year-round visitor safety.

### Problem/Challenge

The stone slab walkways and decorative walls at Heywood Gardens were suffering from biological overgrowth:

- **Slippery Moss & Mould on Paths:** Thick moss and black mould covered shaded stone and brick paths, creating slip hazards and obscuring the original stonework.
- **Damaging Ivy on Walls:** Ivy had spread across historic walls, risking structural harm. Removing it carelessly could damage the masonry.
- **Gentle Solutions Needed:** Traditional methods like power-washing or chemicals risked harming the stone and surrounding plants. The OPW needed an eco-friendly, non-destructive solution.

### Goals and Objectives

The goals set by OPW for this project included:

- **Safe pathways:** Remove slippery moss and mould to protect visitors.
- **Wall preservation:** Clear ivy without damaging historic masonry or using harmful chemicals.
- **Eco-friendly methods:** Avoid pesticides or harsh cleaners to protect the garden's ecosystem.
- **Visual restoration:** Refresh paths and stonework to enhance visitor appeal.
- **Long-term results:** Slow regrowth to minimise future maintenance.

## Solution

Foamstream's gentle, chemical-free approach combined hot water (98°C) and low-pressure washing:

- **Path cleaning:** Hot water killed moss and sterilised spores, followed by soft scrubbing. Safe for historic stone, it removed growth without damage.
- **Ivy removal:** Hot water weakened ivy before careful manual detachment, preserving mortar. Walls were then rinsed to remove residue.
- **Sustainable care:** No chemicals ensured soil and plant safety. The team advised on future maintenance to control regrowth.

## Client Testimonial

*The OPW team at Heywood Gardens was highly satisfied with the outcome. Eoin Long said “Have used this company at Heywood Gardens the past few years for both weed control and hot washing paving slabs, ornaments etc. I have found the results excellent and the team very professional. Would highly recommend”*

## Results and Impact

Heywood Gardens underwent a remarkable transformation after treatment. The previously moss-covered pathways were restored to their original condition, eliminating slip hazards while revealing the intricate stonework beneath. Walls were carefully cleared of invasive ivy without damage to the historic masonry, preserving both their appearance and structural integrity.

The results proved both immediate and lasting. Visitors immediately noticed the improved safety and aesthetics, with many complimenting the gardens' renewed elegance. Unlike traditional methods, the treatment prevented rapid regrowth, ensuring the site remained pristine for longer while maintaining its ecological balance.



