



Aberdeenshire Council Litter Prevention Action Plan

Approved November 2019

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Introduction

We share the Scottish Government's vision of a litter-free Scotland, laid out in the national litter strategy, [Towards a Litter-free Scotland](#) which recognises the social, environmental and economic benefits of a cleaner greener Scotland.

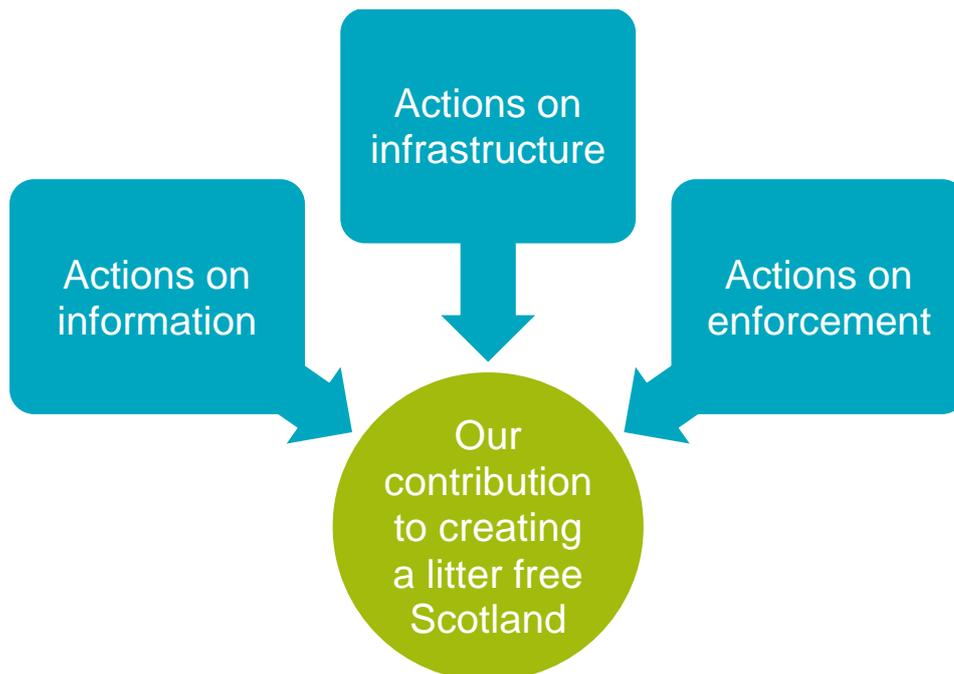
The national strategy outlines three cornerstones of intervention to tackle litter and fly-tipping:

- **Information** - ensuring effective and consistent messaging to prevent littering
- **Infrastructure** - improving the facilities and services needed to reduce litter and promote recycling
- **Enforcement** - strengthening the deterrent effect of legislation

This plan outlines our actions against each of these cornerstones.

We will publish our plan and review it annually to ensure that we are fulfilling our actions, and to help us identify areas where we can make further progress.

We realise we cannot address this issue alone. We will work collectively with the local partners to share resources, deliver objectives, provide knowledge and ideas and influence others.



Our plan

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to litter prevention. The actions within the plan will be reflected across our 6 local areas and all our service directorates, enabling a holistic approach to be taken, embedding prevention directly into service delivery, maximise reach and provide best value.

This plan has a direct link to the Council's vision of 'One Aberdeenshire' where services work together to achieve core principles.

Information actions

Action 1 - Develop a litter and fly-tipping prevention communications strategy

Description

Infrastructure Services will ensure a proactive approach is taken to develop a comprehensive and achievable communications strategy to combat litter and fly-tipping.

- In line with Scotland's national litter strategy, our communications will carry a strong focus on prevention and personal responsibility.
- Ensure an active presence on all our corporate social media accounts - we will regularly promote litter and fly-tipping prevention messages and connect with key partners to raise awareness of initiatives.
- We will endeavour to be cost-effective by making use of the large pool of communications resources that already exists and when developing new materials we will build on existing/recognised materials and messages. In particular, we will take a 'context-specific' approach, to take account of the key audiences, litter types and locations across Aberdeenshire's 6 local areas.
- We will share good practice on litter and fly-tipping prevention, which is available from Zero Waste Scotland and other organisations, and will share the findings of our own activities with others.
- We will communicate the wider benefits of litter and fly-tipping prevention in line with the visions of our Local Development Plans.

Action 2 - Connect with all Aberdeenshire Council services and staff around Litter and Fly-tipping Prevention

Description

Aberdeenshire Council employs approximately 15,000 staff. We will highlight our increased focus on prevention of litter and fly-tipping among our staff and the range of ways different roles can contribute.

Corporately, across the Council, as part of our communications strategy we will:

- Display litter prevention messages on our email signature, intranet, website, digital display boards, signs and posters to engage our employees around the

importance of tackling litter and fly-tipping in the communities where we live and work.

- Include direct communications with our staff, use of staff notice boards and the company intranet, training and other development opportunities and encourage them to come forward with any suggestions and ideas for improvements.

Infrastructure Services

- We will organise a knowledge sharing session with other departments within the council to identify problem areas to allow targeted litter prevention actions and deliver best value.
- We will provide support to other services to help embed litter and fly-tipping prevention e.g. work with Corporate Communications to develop and coordinate a comprehensive communication plan.
- We will encourage our frontline staff to identify hotspot areas across our services e.g. housing, roads, waste and grounds maintenance to allow areas to be targeted.

Education and Children's Services

- We will work with staff within our directorate to ensure litter and fly-tipping prevention message is disseminated to all of our schools and leisure and culture venues.
- We will support our schools to develop their own action plans to show a commitment to tackling the problem in the communities where they are based.

Business Services

- We will help coordinate communications to reach all our staff and encourage behaviour change.
- We will display litter and fly-tipping prevention messaging across our assets.

Health and Social Care

- We will highlight the importance of litter and fly-tipping prevention across our staff and partnerships.

Action 3 - Connect with Aberdeenshire's Community around litter and fly-tipping prevention

Description

Litter and fly-tipping prevention is ultimately everyone's responsibility, as part of our communications strategy we will encourage our citizens and customers to dispose of their waste responsibly and engage our communities on the importance of tackling litter and fly-tipping.

We will support national and local campaigns and communications to improve our local environment and instil pride in our communities.

Infrastructure Services

- We will encourage responsible waste reduction, reuse, recycling and disposal across our 6 local areas.
- We will provide regular information to householders, businesses and other waste producers to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities with regard to domestic and commercial waste presentation and collection, to ensure compliance with duty of care and recycling obligations, and prevent litter (through escaping waste) and fly-tipping. This will include the provision of information on the services available (including Household Recycling Centres, glass recycling points, re-use facilities and bulky uplifts).
- Where we receive reports of significant or regular build-up of litter or fly-tipping in our area we will respond to these promptly and, where appropriate, communicate the outcome.
- We will make it easy for members of the public to report litter and fly-tipping problems to us. If we receive reports about land which is not managed by us, we will pass them on to the relevant landowner/agency for action to be taken.
- We will regularly engage with households and businesses ensuring they are aware of their responsibilities to dispose of waste responsibly.
- We will work with local businesses, schools, community groups and others on local initiatives that prevent litter and fly-tipping. These may include litter picks which target specific areas or hard-to-reach groups; community-led campaigns focusing on issues or areas of local concern; citizen science projects; the use of incentives and wider environmental improvement projects.

Housing Services

- We will regularly engage our council housing tenants ensuring they are aware of their responsibilities to dispose of waste responsibly.
- Our housing teams will proactively work with tenants to maximise the potential for household items to be reused or recycled where possible avoiding fly-tipping and landfill.

Education and Children's Services

- We will explore ways to embed the prevention of littering and fly-tipping into our teaching practices, making links with the curriculum to encourage our pupils to prevent litter and fly-tipping within our communities.
- We will make links with other services to ensure a coordinated message and support local initiatives by encouraging our schools to take part.
- We will engage our customers at our culture and leisure venues.

Business Services

- We will encourage effective litter and waste management at events, we will utilise the guidelines provided by Zero Waste Scotland when organising an event and also require third party event organisers to follow the guidelines.
- Through our communications strategy we will support frontline services in tackling litter and fly-tipping by engaging our communities and supporting local and national campaigns and help our community access the resources and information needed to empower awareness-raising at a local level.
- We will use Council assets at our disposal to do this in a cost-effective way (e.g. vehicle and bin stickers, display screens, posters, newsletters, our website and social media channels).

Health and Social Care

- We will promote the health benefits of cleaner communities and use our community facilities to display information in line with the Council Communications Strategy.

Action 4 - Co-ordinate activities across services and external partners

Description

The impact of any activity can be greatly increased when multiple organisations (or departments within organisations) take action at the same time.

- We will help coordinate Aberdeenshire's Litter Prevention Plan which involves collaboration across multiple sectors to promote litter and fly-tipping prevention across our directorates and 6 local areas.
- We will liaise over shared objectives with all relevant departments within our local authority.
- We will also tackle localised issues in our 6 local areas by working proactively with local organisations and communities in those areas.
- From 2018, Infrastructure 'Street Scene' teams from all 6 administrative areas will meet at the beginning of the year to plan and co-ordinate their maintenance programs across Aberdeenshire's academy towns. This ensures a holistic approach to maintenance so that our communities see real improvement. The maintenance plans will be shared with internal and external partners including community councils and key representatives from the business and voluntary sectors who will co-ordinate community contribution such litter picks, private building and grounds maintenance, and art projects.

Infrastructure actions

Action 1 - Consider litter and fly-tipping prevention when planning service delivery across Aberdeenshire Council directorates

Description

Frontline service delivery in tackling litter and fly-tipping and a commitment to prevention will be included in service delivery plans.

The work undertaken by frontline services involved in the management and prevention of litter and fly-tipping and meeting our Council's statutory duties under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA 1990) will be supported by all local authority services in a number of ways:

Infrastructure Services

- We will assist businesses and organisations to help them minimise potential sources of litter, understand their own statutory duty of care requirements and encourage them to create their own Litter Prevention Action Plan.
- Where appropriate, when planning and designing new infrastructure we will take account of future maintenance requirements e.g. avoid materials/structures that trap litter making removal difficult or ensure adequate storage for bins in new development to avoid escaping waste.
- The standard of cleanliness of Relevant Land will be monitored by the Council's Waste Management and Landscapes Services. Any complaints of littering, fly-tipping and graffiti will be addressed without delay.
- We will coordinate maintenance schedules to deliver efficiencies and best value, e.g. ensure litter picking is carried out ahead of grass cutting or road sweeping with scheduled road closures.
- We will put provisions in place to avoid/remedy escaping waste from collection containers and collection vehicles, e.g. provision of bin straps to secure bins and provision of equipment to clean up any accidental spills
- We have a Litter Bin Procedure in place which outlines the criteria for providing bins on Relevant Land to keep it free of litter. We will provide, service and maintain an adequate number of litter bins to support responsible litter disposal. This will be reviewed periodically to optimise positioning and servicing levels appropriate to the area they serve.

Education and Children's Services

- We will work with our schools to ensure our pupils make use of the facilities available to them to dispose of waste both within and out with school boundaries.

- We will investigate ways to ensure litter and fly-tipping prevention is promoted in our schools e.g. incorporating into School Improvement Plans.
- We will provide the appropriate infrastructure at all of our leisure and culture venues to allow customers to dispose of waste correctly.

Business Services

- We will ensure all of our properties and facilities have adequate infrastructure to allow our staff to dispose of waste correctly.
- We will ensure all of our property and assets are properly maintained to avoid the 'broken window' effect and optimise infrastructure on our sites.
- We will support frontline services to develop and implement a proactive communications strategy across the Council

Action 2 - Encourage all our staff to get involved in initiatives to prevent litter and fly-tipping

Description

- We will encourage staff to get involved in activities to prevent litter and fly-tipping, either within their own communities or as staff members within communities that they serve (Corporate Social Responsibility).
- We will provide our staff with essential equipment when carrying out litter picking activities. We will also ensure that our staff are fully trained and adhere to Health and Safety guidance.
- We will provide sufficient internal and external litter bins and recycling bins to make it easier for people to dispose of waste properly, and will monitor and empty the bins regularly.

Action 3 - Evaluate services available at Recycling on the Go Points and Household Recycling Centres

Description

- We will periodically review the facilities available for householders and businesses customers in line with the Charter for Household Recycling.
- If appropriate, we will provide recycling on the go bins in addition or adjacent to litter bins to encourage recycling of items wherever possible.

Action 4 - Facilitate community-led prevention initiatives

Description

We will provide direct support to litter and fly-tipping prevention initiatives at community level through facilitation and provision of information and resources.

This will include:

- Provision of litter picking equipment and bags; and uplifts of the waste and recycle collected, targeting support where it is most needed (e.g. hard-to-reach communities).

Action 5 - Align with the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (CoPLAR)

Description

As a Relevant Land manager, Aberdeenshire Council recognises its role as a duty body under Section 89 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA 1990) for all of the public land managed by the authority.

- We will comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (CoPLAR), ensure that the standards required are met across all of our public land.
- We will do this by adopting a holistic approach to litter and waste management and prevention as reflected in the actions contained within this Litter Prevention Action Plan.

Ensuring that our grounds and open spaces, education land, public roads, streets, land of leisure facilities and frontage and grounds of our buildings and facilities meet the statutory standards.

In this capacity The Council has a statutory duty to, so far as is practicable:

Duty 1: ensure that its land (or land that is under its control), is kept clear of litter and refuse.

Duty 2: ensure that public roads (for which The Council is responsible) are kept clean.

Duty 1 requires explanations of litter and refuse:

Litter - Litter is considered to be "waste in the wrong place" where individual or a small number of items are thrown down, dropped or deposited in a public place by any person and is left there. In addition, other provisions within the Act require appropriate and sufficient waste collection containers to be used to prevent material from escaping. Escaped materials should be treated as litter. Materials that could be considered as litter are wide ranging, including food packaging, drink containers, smoking related materials including cigarette ends, chewing gum, food items, paper and plastic bags.

Refuse - Refuse should be regarded as waste material or rubbish, including household and commercial waste, fly-tipped waste, dog faeces, animal carcasses and car parts. Refuse tends to be larger items than litter.

Duty 2 requires that public roads, as well as being kept clear of litter and refuse, should be kept clean. A key consideration is that they should be free of detritus. Detritus relates to Duty 2 only; it should not be regarded as litter.

Detritus - Detritus can include dust, mud, soil, grit, gravel, stones, rotted vegetation, and fragments of twigs, glass, plastic and other materials which can become finely divided. Leaf and blossom falls are to be regarded as detritus once they have substantially lost their structure and have become mushy or fragmented.

Relevant Land

The duty to keep land free of litter applies to certain categories of land, termed as Relevant Land, which includes:

- Public roads adopted by The Council, including trunk roads but excluding special roads. The term road includes pavement and lay-by.
- Council maintained car parks.
- Council maintained beaches.
- Council maintained parks and amenity areas.

Cleansing of Relevant Land

Aberdeenshire Council is responsible for maintaining 5400km of roads, 1300km of footpaths, 3,200 hectares of public spaces and emptying 2707 street litter bins in neighbourhoods across the shire.

Aberdeenshire Council will meet its statutory duty to keep Relevant Land clean by using a combination of methods including:

- Mechanical sweeping.
- Manual hand brushing.
- Manual litter picking.
- Provision and service of litter bins.

Cleansing Standards

Aberdeenshire Council will meet cleansing standards in accordance with The Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse 2018 under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Code of Practice provides a cleanliness standard based on land use. It sets out grades of cleanliness and divides land into zones according to usage and volume of traffic. If the cleanliness of an area falls, the Code of Practice sets out a response time that is the target for The Council to restore the land to a particular grade of cleanliness.

The Zones applicable to Aberdeenshire Council are:

Zone 3 - Areas subject to moderate footfall and/or vehicular movement and/or a moderate number of potential litter sources.

Zone 4 - Areas subject to low footfall and/or vehicular movement and/or low number of potential litter sources.

Zone 5 - Areas subject to very low/no footfall and/or vehicular movement and/or few/no potential litter sources.

Zone 6 - Roads over 40mph.

The grades are:

Duty 1 Litter and Refuse Grades: six grades, A to F

Duty 2 Detritus Grades: four grades, A to D

- Grade A - No litter or refuse is present on any type of land.
- Grade B - Small amounts of litter and refuse.
- Grade C - Moderate amounts of litter and refuse, with small accumulations.
- Grade D - Significant amounts of litter and refuse, with consistent distribution and accumulations.
- Grade E - Substantial amounts of litter and refuse with significant accumulations.
- Grade F - Incidents of fly-tipping and hazardous/special waste (drug related waste, broken glass, animal carcasses, car parts, chemicals, and spillages).

Relevant Land will be cleaned when required. If the cleanliness of the Relevant Land in question deteriorates the Council will arrange cleaning within the given response time.

The cleansing service will be provided every day (except Christmas Day) to ensure the relevant standards are achieved.

The Council will arrange for the removal of fly-tipped waste from Relevant Land as soon as practicable after the incident has been reported.

Action 6 - Support the effective evaluation of litter and fly-tipping interventions

Description

We recognise that a key element of successful prevention activity and assessing progress on tackling litter and fly-tipping is good quality data.

- We will support the effective evaluation of litter and fly-tipping prevention initiatives by making use of the measurement and evaluation systems recommended by Zero Waste Scotland and undertaking robust evaluation across our service areas.
- We will consider the use of smart technology to help optimise our frontline services.

This data will:

- Provide key information on the scale of these issues and their root causes at local, regional and national level.
- Improve monitoring data across Scotland.
- Highlight litter and fly-tipping levels within our community and provide valuable data to support prevention activities.
- Allow us to install preventative barriers (including signage) at sites where there have been repeated fly-tipping incidents.
- Allow us to identify and review our infrastructure provisions and maximise route efficiencies.

Enforcement actions

Action 1 - Ensure enforcement activity is robust

Description

We will work with Zero Waste Scotland and other partners to ensure that our enforcement activity is efficient, effective and enhances deterrence.

- We will use data/intelligence which allows us to target our enforcement activity to where it is most needed and focus on litter and fly-tipping hotspots and problem waste and litter types and sources.
- We will review our processes to ensure unpaid Fixed Penalty Notices are referred for further action.
- Review internal enforcement procedures to ensure knowledge sharing between departments is used to enhance the effectiveness of enforcement.
- Improve inter-agency communications to ensure information robust.
- Where required trial new approaches to improve the deterrent effect of enforcement to prevent litter and fly-tipping.
- We will engage in the monitoring of enforcement activity and provide information as requested to assist with the development of more robust enforcement systems across Scotland.

Action 2 - Ensure staff have up to date information and training

Description

- We will ensure all relevant staff receive adequate training to undertake all aspects of their enforcement duties including regular updates.
- We will ensure that enforcement messages are also built into staff communications, policies and procedures.

Action 3 - Inform the staff and the wider community that littering and fly-tipping are crimes**Description**

We will ensure that enforcement messages are built into our wider communications strategy around litter and fly-tipping:

- We will make the public, our customers and our staff aware littering and fly-tipping is a crime and highlight their responsibilities with respect to the waste they produce.
- We will, where appropriate, link these to other waste related offences (e.g. non-compliance with Waste Scotland Regulations) and signpost opportunities to 'do the right thing' (e.g. re-use facilities).
- We will create a litter reporting web page on our website to encourage people to report litter hotspots in their area.
- We will support local and national enforcement campaigns organised by partner agencies. We will look to support these by whatever means it has available on a case by case basis (e.g. by using communications materials or providing information to support enforcement action).