



Litter Strategy

2022 – 2027

Introduction

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 imposes duties on local authorities to keep clean the public highways for which they are responsible.

This Litter Strategy sets out Oadby and Wigston Borough Councils' approach to achieving this duty via a combination of education, community engagement, infrastructure and enforcement action.

The strategy takes into consideration the 'Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse' published by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and considers ways in which the council can meet the advisory standards set out in the Code. It covers the period 2022 to 2027 and progress against the aims and objectives will be reviewed regularly.

Behind the Litter Strategy sits the Council's:

- Corporate Plan
- Public Realm Strategy
- Environment Strategy
- Anti -Social Behaviour Policy

Our vision is:

'Our Borough – the place to be' and our purpose is to 'provide a sustainable council by listening, being engaged and putting our customers first, enabling us to focus on local needs and priorities.

The Corporate Plan is in the process of being refreshed and this policy will be updated as required when the new plan is approved, however, the following strategic objectives of the new plan that are relevant to the Litter Strategy are:

Our council:

- to ensure that we provide high quality, value for money services that meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

Our communities:

- to provide a clean and safe place for everyone.
- to support any activities that enhance the health and wellbeing of our borough.

Our economy:

- to make our borough an inviting place to visit.

Our environment:

- to be seen to be green.

Our partners:

- to develop, maintain, and enhance partnerships to help support delivery of our objectives.
- to ensure we are engaging and listening to all sections of the community.

At the heart of this strategy is the principle that litter is an eyesore that detracts from the environment of the Borough, making people feel less safe in their community. Removing litter costs the taxpayer thousands of pounds each year which could be better used to support other local services.

Litter Strategy 2022 – 2027

Litter Strategy Aims and objectives:

The overall aim of the litter strategy is to reduce the number of people who litter through a combination of education and enforcement, to ensure the right infrastructure is in place for people to deposit their litter correctly and to engage the community in promoting a litter free environment so that the Borough fulfils its vision of **‘The place to be.’**

In order to do this, we will seek to:

1. **Educate** – promote the anti-litter message to residents, businesses and visitors.
2. **Infrastructure** – ensure that we have provided the right bin in the right location with regular litter picking and bin emptying schedules.
3. **Community engagement** – work with volunteers, community groups and businesses to make the Borough a cleaner environment.
4. **Enforcement** – carry out enforcement against offenders.

Underpinning the main objectives above are the principles that:

- We want our Borough to be a safe and green place and recognise that the environment in which people live, work and visit has an impact on their quality of life.
- Dealing with litter places a significant burden on the council and costs the taxpayer thousands of pounds each year which could be better spent on other services.

- We need to make it easy for people to dispose of litter by providing the appropriate facilities in the right places.
- We need to collect litter and empty litter bins in a timely fashion.
- We need to change the behaviour of people who feel it is acceptable to drop litter by sending clear messages.
- We can use enforcement action to deal with offenders if required.

Context:

Litter: There is no definitive definition of litter, but it is generally considered to be waste which has been inappropriately discarded. It includes dog waste, fast food waste, smoking and drug related waste.

Fly tipping: Fly tipping is controlled waste (household, commercial, industrial, chemical) that has been illegally dumped and includes household furniture and white goods.

What the council can do:

- Identify litter hot spots and provide bins in the right places.
- Carry out regular emptying of street and park litter bins and dog bins.
- Provide additional waste receptacles for events.
- Provide education on the correct way to dispose of litter and dog waste.
- Encourage recycling.
- Work with householders and businesses to promote the correct methods of waste disposal.
- Promote anti-litter campaigns.
- Carry out enforcement action for fly tipping, litter and dog waste offences.
- Work with community groups and volunteers to help us to keep our Borough tidy.

What the council cannot do:

- Collect or dispose of litter from private land
- Dispose of domestic (household) waste as street arisings.

Our current position:

Each of the three town centres has a dedicated member of staff working on foot attending to litter and street cleanliness. These staff work Tuesday to Saturday inclusive.

A further staff member is dedicated to highway bin emptying including town centre bins. This service operates Sunday to Friday inclusive, whilst two staff cover parks and green spaces Monday to Friday with their roles being to both empty bins and litter pick.

A road sweeper and operative carry out sweeping duties on the highway and a footway sweeper and operative carry out sweeping of pavements.

Across the Borough there are a total of 543 litter bins (at 1 April 2022). These range from floor mounted single and double bins as well as post mounted litter and dog waste bins.

- 72 bins are located in the town centres (emptied once per day, 6 days a week)
- 261 bins are situated on highways
- 210 bins are located on parks and open spaces

In a typical week 1,354 bins are emptied across the Borough.

All our litter bins are designated to take both litter and dog waste meaning that bagged dog faeces can be placed into any litter bin.

For the financial year 2021-2022 the revenue cost to the council of operating the 'Clean Service' was £347,463 excluding depreciation.

Actions moving forwards:

The following reflect the key objectives and activities we will focus on in order to fulfil our vision going forward:

Objective 1: Education – promote the anti-litter message to residents, businesses and visitors.

We will do this by:

- Using social media to communicate regular anti-litter messages.
- Promote and support key campaigns run by other organisations (such as Keep Britain Tidy and the Great British Spring Clean).
- Work with schools and community groups to support national clean-up days and national anti-littering campaigns.
- Develop targeted anti-litter campaigns for problem litter hot spots.

Objective 2: Infrastructure – ensure that we have provided the right bin in the right location with regular litter picking and bin emptying schedules.

We will do this by:

- Use the 'Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse' published by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to set standards for cleanliness of our streets and report progress on meeting the standards to committee on a regular basis.

- Publish our progress against the Code of Practice standards on our web site.
- Complete an audit of litter bins to include location and condition and develop a rolling replacement programme based on condition.
- Following the audit, remove dog bins in locations where they are located immediately next to litter bins in order to save on operative time.
- Ensure all litter bins are labelled to advertise the fact that dog waste can be placed into them.
- Monitor bins to ensure they are safe to use, emptied at the correct frequency, properly maintained and free of fly posting and graffiti.
- Publish information on litter and litter bin collection schedules on the councils' web site.
- Improve the process for the public to report instances of littering and fly tipping.
- Work with our grounds maintenance and cleansing teams to ensure incidents of the shredding of litter during grass cutting is reduced.
- Carry out continuous training of our litter collection operatives on to ensure high quality services are achieved.
- Purchase and install split litter/recycling bins in each of our town centres as a pilot scheme. Monitor their use and roll out to other areas if successful.
- Investigate the possibility of including a requirement to provide public litter bins (and a contribution to on-going collection and maintenance costs) as part of the planning conditions for premises that are likely to generate a high volume of waste, particularly applications for fast food premises.
- Encourage businesses to support anti-litter initiatives including sponsoring litter bins.
- Investigate the option of installing 'smart bins' that have wireless technology to alert the back office when they require emptying.
- Use the criteria set out in Appendix 1 when assessing requests for new litter bin locations.

Objective 3 - Community engagement: work with volunteers, community groups and businesses to make the Borough a cleaner environment.

We will do this by:

- Continuing to build on relationships with community groups such as Pride of the Borough, South Leicestershire Litter Wombles and Brocks Hill volunteers.
- Producing a written guidance document for use by volunteer litter collectors.
- Providing briefing sessions to explain the guidance and give training to litter volunteers, including South Leicestershire Litter Wombles.
- Promoting and participate in key campaigns such as Keep Britain Tidy and the Great British Spring Clean, encouraging the community and our own staff to take part.
- Working with business to reduce packaging.
- Supporting the work of Plastic Free Oadby.
- Engaging with businesses to tackle certain types of litter, including fast-food packaging and litter near their premises.
- Continue to apply for Green Flag accreditation for Brocks Hill, which includes addressing littering as part of the criteria.
- Encourage businesses to assist in dealing with local litter problems.

Objective 4 - Enforcement: Carry out enforcement against offenders.

We will do this by:

- Using the powers provided to the council under The Environmental Protection Act 1990 to carry out enforcement against offenders. These range from fixed penalty notices, direct action to remove littering/fly tipping at the offenders' expense to court action.
- Ensuring all enforcement action is taken in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy.
- Use social media and our web site to explain the types of litter offences and how we carry out enforcement action.
- Publicising enforcement action once it has been taken, in order to act as a deterrent.

Appendix 1: Criteria for assessing new litter bin locations

Requests are regularly received for the installation of new litter bins. Before new locations are agreed the following should be taken into account:

- The need for each bin has been clearly demonstrated through a litter survey.
- The siting of the bin should not pose a risk to disabled or visually impaired pedestrians nor should it impede the sight lines for motorists or pedestrians.

Bins will only be considered in areas of high pedestrian flow such as:

- Bus stops
- Near shops that are likely to generate litter from customers
- At places that attract large numbers of people on a regular basis
- Close to seating areas
- On school routes
- In known dog walking areas
- At entrances or exits from parks or large open spaces.

New bins will not be located closer than 50m to an existing bin unless a particular need can be demonstrated.