



Swansea Council

Litter Bin Strategy 2022

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on various organisations, including Local Authorities, to keep land under their control clear and free from litter and refuse so far as is practicable.
- 1.2 The Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse made under the Act identifies grades of cleanliness and defines the timescale within which land that is littered has to be cleared. The Act also creates an offence of depositing litter. Where evidence is available or an offence witnessed, then the Council can consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecution.
- 1.3 Swansea Council (SC) recognises the problems that result from litter (which includes dog fouling) within its area and undertakes a range of measures to minimise these issues:
 - Proactively and reactively cleansing adopted highways, footpaths and other designated areas to remove litter;
 - Promoting, educating and proportionate enforcement where the public drop litter;
 - Provision of litter and dog bins in which the public are encouraged to deposit and recycle their litter where appropriate.
- 1.4 The location and number of existing litter and dog bins within SC has largely arisen over many years, and has taken into account areas of increased footfall (where litter generation is usually greater) and the introduction of new legislation (e.g. Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996). New regeneration schemes have often led to the installation of new bins. This has resulted in a wide range of different litter/dog bins throughout SC all with varying degrees of functionality, practicality and quality.

2 Management of Bin Inventory

- 2.1 **Mapping** – The Service Area is exploring possibilities to plot all bins on GeoDiscoverer or a similar GIS based system, where details of the bin (e.g. type, capacity, material, emptying frequency etc.) and its history (e.g. misuse,

vandalism, repair/relocation/renewal etc.) can be recorded and updated whenever a new activity takes place.

2.2 Bin Removal/Relocation/Replacement - Requests to remove, relocate, or replace litter or dog bins should follow some basic principles. Robust justification and a consistent approach to manage expectations from all parties are essential. No Council Wards will have less overall bin provision as a result. The main principles to consider are as follows:

2.2.1 Dog bins will be phased out and damaged/not fit for purpose litter bins replaced using the following priorities:

- Priority 1 – Replace damaged/not fit for purpose dog bins (and paired litter/dog bins), and dog bins (and paired litter/dog bins) which generate complaints, with new litter bins;
- Priority 2 - Replace damaged/not fit for purpose litter bins with new litter bins;
- Priority 3 - Replace remaining dog bins (and paired litter/dog bins) with new litter bins where there is sufficient space.

It is acceptable to dispose of dog waste in litter bins and appropriate signage on the bins will alert users to this. This will reduce instances of overflowing dog bins and where bagged dog waste is deposited on top of part empty dog bins, and allow resources to be focussed on emptying litter bins.

2.2.2 In cases where an existing dog bin is removed due to disrepair, vandalism, insufficient capacity etc., then it will normally be replaced with a litter bin with appropriate signage as per 2.2.1 above unless there are overriding reasons why a litter bin would be ineffective (e.g. evidence of previous misuse or vandalism at the location).

2.2.3 All Ward Members must be notified where consideration is being given to removing/relocating any bin or replacing an existing dog bin with a litter bin in their area. Reasons are varied but could include that the bin is subject to repeated vandalism or misuse by routinely being filled with household waste and/or attracting fly tipped waste/black bags. In cases where there are opposing views between a Ward Member and the Cleansing Service, then the matter will be referred to the Cabinet Member for Community Services.

2.2.4 Where practicable, litter bin signage should be consistent across the area. All bins on the inventory will be checked periodically to ensure signage is clear and legible. All existing and new litter bins to state that dog waste can be deposited in the bin.

2.2.5 Capacity issues – aside from instances of bin misuse etc., litter bins may be renewed in order to increase overall capacity and therefore reduce the frequency of emptying and the potential for it to overflow. Any renewal of dog bins will ordinarily be replaced by a litter bin of larger capacity.

- 2.2.6 Condition/upgrade – the general condition of litter bins and dog bins will be checked when emptied, and those requiring cleaning, repair, or replacement will be reported to the Working Supervisor for action.
- 2.2.7 Consideration will be given to the removal of litter bins in certain locations where their presence is disproportionate to the benefit e.g. in laybys where they attract associated fly tipping etc. although no Ward would have less bins as a result, unless explicitly agreed with Ward Members.
- 2.3 **Installation and requests for new bins** – Requests/consideration to install additional bins will be considered within the wider context of this policy. For the purposes of consistency, the general principle is that no additional bins will be installed unless there is an identifiable shortfall in the existing provision. The main factors to consider include:
- 2.3.1 Number and location of existing bins in the locality.
- 2.3.2 Number of complaints of litter and dog fouling received in the locality.
- 2.3.3 Requests received from local Ward Member(s) where use of their Community Budget to fund the purchase and ongoing servicing of the bin is intended.
- 2.3.4 Seasonal variations and to service areas where the geographical/urban makeup has changed.
- 2.3.5 No new or additional dog bins to be installed; only litter bins will be considered.
- 2.3.6 Review catalogue of bins periodically and source those that suit the needs of the service where funding is available.
- 2.4 **New Technology** - The Council embraces new technology to improve efficiency and reduce costs where evidence demonstrates a benefit. The following could be considered:
- 2.4.1 Pilot scheme to retrofit sensors to some existing litter bins. These ‘smart bins’ have wireless ultrasonic fill-level sensors which detect how full the bin is and will alert the Cleansing Section when the bin needs emptying. A couple of trial schemes are being developed and one has started in the Marina area.
- 2.4.2 The development or procurement of a digital mobile working solution is being explored. This will incorporate in-cab devices alerting Cleansing Operatives to service requests received, without the need to use paper job sheets. All actions entered onto the database via the device on site.

3 Litter Bin Operations

- 3.1 **Litter Bin Emptying** - Litter and dog bins can become full to capacity at any time. This depends on a number of factors and both proactive and reactive

intervention is required to minimise complaints and maintain effective and efficient service delivery. Servicing bins will use the following interventions:

- 3.1.1 The use of a Rapid Response Bin Team to immediately respond to complaints regarding large scale overflowing litter/dog bins, particularly during times of high seasonal demand is being trialled up to the end of March 2023.
- 3.1.2 An increased frequency of bin emptying in areas of high footfall such as the City Centre and other prestige locations, and at high season in tourist destination areas. Further additional cleansing resource to be allocated in key tourism areas at peak times if considered necessary following consideration of weather forecasts.
- 3.1.3 The use of Parks Operatives to empty any bins they become aware of that are full and within close proximity of the park that they are servicing.
- 3.1.4 Continual and ongoing monitoring by Cleansing Operational Area Managers and Working Supervisors to ensure emptying frequencies align to general bin use so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 3.1.5 Facilities to recycle 'on the go' are available in the City Centre core area and other limited locations. Any further roll out to other areas is not recommended given the high levels of contamination and Welsh Government's intentions to possibly introduce a Deposit Return Scheme for a range of food and drink packaging.
- 3.2 **Bin Repairs and Cleansing** – A clean and well-maintained bin infrastructure will help to maintain a professional appearance and ensure that the public use the bins properly. In order to help achieve this aim, the following methods are proposed:
 - 3.2.1 Notification of damaged bins by the public contacting the Contact Centre and/or via the website/web form.
 - 3.2.2 Reporting of bins requiring attention, by Cleansing Operatives on site when emptying bins.
 - 3.2.3 Dedicated Cleansing Resource to respond to defect/cleaning reports/requests, and to proactively clean bins, including cleaning of the inside of the bin where detritus may have accumulated over time.
 - 3.2.4 Where practicable and whilst still in place, the Rapid Response Bin Team will immediately repair/replace any defective bins on site.

4 **Communications**

- 4.1 Effective, consistent and transparent communication regarding the Council's general aims for bin management are key factors to effectively engage with the public and encourage the correct use of the facilities provided. The Cleansing

Service will liaise with the Council's Communications Team where external promotion is required. General communication strategy to include:

- 4.1.1 Clear and concise bilingual signage on the bins.
- 4.1.2 Ward Member engagement as above.
- 4.1.3 General updates and delivery of key messages to the public from the Cleansing Management Team via the Council's Communications Team and Cabinet Member.
- 4.1.4 Education – clear messages to ensure that the public are fully aware that litter bins can be used to deposit dog waste and that both litter and dog bins must be used as intended and not as an alternative means for individuals to deposit their own domestic waste.
- 4.1.5 Use of the Council's website/web form to encourage the public to report any bin damage/faults and/or when any bin is full and overflowing.

Version Control

Version	Date	Author
Draft	January 2022	Stuart Willingale
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