

**CARMARTHENSHIRE  
LITTER MANAGEMENT PLAN  
2014 - 2018**

“Creating a cleaner, greener and safer county”



## FOREWORD



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Executive Board Member for Technical Services



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Executive Board Member for Environmental Enforcement &  
Public Protection

“We have reviewed our Litter Management Plan which sets out the direction of litter management in the county for the next four years.

Our plan has been developed following public consultation with the Citizens Panel and county councillors representing local communities. This plan will be incorporated into the authority’s Waste Management Strategy.

We cannot deliver our litter management plan without the unique contribution of the public and our partners, and together we will continue to work closely to achieve a cleaner, greener and safer environment”.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Carmarthenshire enjoys a high quality natural environment and rich diverse heritage, their protection and condition of which is a high priority.

This plan describes how we aim to protect and enhance our diverse county. It sets out in non technical terms the legal obligations of the council and other organisations. It also highlights the litter problem the council has to deal with on a daily basis and the ways in which it will tackle this to maintain cleanliness standards.

Education awareness and enforcement activities are vital to successfully delivering this plan, as well as the co-operation of the general public.

These activities will be monitored regularly to ensure we achieve our aims and objectives.

## **WHAT IS LITTER?**

**Litter** is used and unwanted items that are not disposed of in an appropriate manner. Examples of litter include cigarette butts, chewing gum, food and sweet wrappers, ATM receipts, cans and drink bottles. Most of this waste can take years to break down and has an environmental impact and can harm wildlife.

However, litter can also denote a wider range of problems that can make a whole area appear untidy, particularly the following:

- Graffiti
- Fly-posting
- Fly-tipped waste
- Abandoned vehicles
- Dog mess (which is also harmful to human health)
- Drug related items
- Balloons and sky lanterns
- Carrier bags (although there has been decline since the Welsh Assembly's introduction of the carrier bag charge)
- Illegal or unlicensed skips
- High footfall areas - gathering/meeting points/town centres

## **LITTER AND THE LAW**

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended by The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005), the council has a legal duty to keep the streets and other areas under its control free from litter and refuse.

Statutory bodies, businesses, educational establishments and individuals have a duty to keep their land clean by disposing of litter and waste safely in a responsible manner.

Anyone caught dropping litter or not cleaning up after their dog can be issued with a £75 fixed penalty notice, or for non payment of this penalty a court fine of up to £2,500. Illicit tipping of larger volumes of litter or waste can incur a maximum fine of

£50,000 and/or imprisonment. Any business not complying to the “duty of care” regulations may also be liable for prosecution which may incur a maximum fine of £5,000.

Private land owners are often victims of illicit tipping and the council’s public protection section will work with the landowner on advising preventative measures.

**Further information on litter laws and obligations can be found in Appendix A attached.**

### **CODE OF PRACTICE**

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 Code of Practice sets out guidelines for local authorities to maintain cleanliness standards for different types of land and response times for cleaning.

The council is to review its existing cleansing regime in order to provide a more efficient and effective service within resources allocated. However, it is important that we encourage everyone to take responsibility to keep Carmarthenshire clean.

### **CONSULTATION**

County councillors were invited to attend workshops on litter and waste management activities which resulted in feedback that was relevant to shaping this litter management plan.

A Citizens Panel survey was also undertaken during August 2013 and we received comments and concerns from each community.

Our Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group to undertake a review of enforcement services. The recommendations are included in the attached action plan.

### **LITTER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

While there is a growing awareness of the importance to keep Carmarthenshire litter free, there is still a need to change attitudes and behaviour to recognise that littering is anti-social and damage to the environment in which we live. Such a change can be achieved by the increase of awareness of littering, its causes and its consequences.

This Litter Management Plan, for the prevention and control of litter, sets out to achieve this in a coherent and comprehensive manner. It sets out realistic and measurable objectives for the following:

#### **Infrastructure – cleaning operations**

The council spent £2.1 million in 2013/2014 on cleansing activities, removal of litter and illicit tipping. The current infrastructure provides the tools to change behaviour. Our council’s Street Scene division has a dedicated team of cleansing staff and mechanical sweeping machines to clean up the county. Litter collected from streets

and roadway verges is recycled as much as possible. The majority of our litter bins are now equipped to dispose of chewing gum and cigarette butts safely.

Our service is monitored both externally and internally, and reviewed for potential improvements. We also work closely with our Keep Wales Tidy and Tidy Towns officers to assist with problem areas.

### **Education – explaining the problem**

Effective education remains our most powerful tool for achieving long term behavioural change within the community. Education includes giving information, introducing incentives and effective communication.

An education and awareness team has been set up to help raise public awareness of the importance of keeping the county clean of litter and refuse, and its consequences of non compliance. There are a number of initiatives and activities undertaken to educate and raise awareness. The team work very closely with the environmental enforcement unit.

### **Enforcement – reinforcing the message**

The environmental enforcement team has the necessary powers and proactive approach to help reduce the amount of environmental crime across the county.

Litter prevention programmes include consequences or penalties to reinforce the message that littering is not acceptable.

### **Partnership Working**

We gratefully acknowledge the voluntary efforts of communities in challenging littering and recognise that a partnership approach involving commitment and co-operation from all sectors is necessary to help eradicate the litter problem.

We are committed to foster good working relationships with external partners and our communities to maintain and improve cleanliness standards. These are the close working partnerships we currently have with organisations and communities:

- Local voluntary and community groups
- County councillors
- Council housing and public protection departments
- Town and community councils
- Businesses/retailers
- Schools, colleges and universities
- Tenants and residents associations
- Keep Wales Tidy
- Fly-tipping Action Wales
- Dyfed Powys Police
- Community Safety Partnership
- Natural Resource Wales
- Mid and West Wales Fire Brigade
- Estate management groups

- Press and media

### **Implementing the Litter Plan**

An annual action plan has been devised to implement our litter management strategy for Carmarthenshire (*see Appendix B attached*). It includes the council's key priorities and sets out realistic measures to monitor action and progress.

### **PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

We use the Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS), developed by Keep Wales Tidy, to help monitor cleanliness standards of its streets. Random selected streets are surveyed bi-monthly by the council and independently assessed by Keep Wales Tidy. A bi-annual report is compiled from the surveys detailing the results which are compared with other Welsh local authorities. The results are available on the Keep Wales Tidy website under Local Environmental Quality (LEQ) surveys.

### **CUSTOMER CARE POLICY**

The council is committed to providing the best possible service, within the resources available, to its customers by informing, listening and responding to their concerns. If you wish to report litter or dog fouling problems, fly-posting, abandoned vehicles, graffiti or illicit tipping of waste please contact either Direct Carmarthenshire on (01267) 234567 or complete an online report form by visiting our website below.

**A copy of this Litter Management Plan is available on our website**

**<http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/residents/recycling-bins-litter/litter/>**

**Please contact us if you require this document in large print, in Braille or on audio tape.**

### **USEFUL LINKS**

[www.naturalresourceswales.org.uk](http://www.naturalresourceswales.org.uk)

[www.keepwalestidy.org](http://www.keepwalestidy.org)

[www.dyfed-powys.police.uk](http://www.dyfed-powys.police.uk)

[www.mawwfire.gov.uk](http://www.mawwfire.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

[www.flytippingactionwales.org](http://www.flytippingactionwales.org)

## **Appendix A**

# **LITTER LAWS AND OBLIGATIONS**

## **Public Places**

If you are the owner or the person responsible for a place to which the public has access you are obliged to keep the place litter free, regardless of origin of litter. This applies to any public place which may include the precincts of a shopping centre, school campus, public park, train or bus station.

## **Private Property**

The owner or occupier of property which can be seen from a public place is obliged to keep it free of litter. Where litter has accumulated on property for whatever reason and the litter is visible from a public place, the county council can issue a notice to the owner or occupier requiring the prompt removal of the litter.

## **Illicit tipping**

Where the county council finds material that is illegally tipped and establishes the identity of the owner of the material, that person is liable for prosecution and a hefty fine. The council may also require a householder or business operator to indicate how and where they are disposing of their waste. They have a "duty of care" responsibility to ensure that the waste collector has a waste transfer note which is proof of the waste being taken to an authorised waste disposal facility. If you see someone tipping illegally, report the matter to the council who will investigate and take any necessary enforcement action.

## **Major Events**

The promoters or organisers of major events are required to ensure that they have litter control measures in place at the venue and in the surrounding vicinity before, during and after the event. This applies to football/rugby matches and other social and sporting events at which large crowds attend.

## **Mobile Food Outlets**

Operators of mobile food outlets selling fast food or beverages, or other such outlets, are obliged to provide suitable litter bins in the vicinity of their outlets. Also, they must clean-up any litter arising from the operation of their outlets within a radius of 100 metres from their outlet.

## **Dog Fouling**

Dog owners must clean up their pets' waste from public places and dispose of it in a proper manner by placing in the appropriate litter bin (excluding recycling bin), or in the absence of a bin to take it home to dispose of responsibly. Anyone caught not cleaning up after their dog maybe issued with £75 fine.

This obligation currently applies to the following places:

- designated public roads and footpaths
- areas around shopping centres
- school/sports grounds



### **Dog Control Orders**

Under the new Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 local authorities will be able to introduce county wide orders and specific orders as appropriate. We would have to consult on our intention to make these orders and publicise when any order has been made.

Further information on this legislation will be made available on our website.

### **Posters and Signs**

The law restricts the placing of posters/signs on poles or on other structures in public places unless you have the written permission of the owner. For privately owned places please consult with the council's planning department.