

TULLAMORE TOWN COUNCIL

Comhairle Baile na Tulai Máire



LITTER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2011-2013

ADOPTED BY TULLAMORE TOWN COUNCIL - 19TH MAY, 2011

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Introduction

It has long been acknowledged that a clean environment is essential to the social and economic well being of any town. Experience has shown that no one agency alone can tackle the issue of litter and with this in mind the Town Council has initiated and developed a number of inter-agency partnerships within the town. Collectively with these like minded groups and organisations many successful litter abatement initiatives have been undertaken. Through a combination of individual and collaborative efforts the attractiveness of Tullamore has been greatly enhanced over the past five years in particular, a fact reflected in the town's performance in the IBAL Anti-Litter League and Tidy Towns Competition. Tullamore was a bronze medal winner in the 2010 Tidy Towns Competition and was placed 9th in the overall IBAL 2010 rankings giving the town the accolade of being 'Clean to European Norms'.

Both the Tidy Towns and IBAL reports acknowledge the improvements being made each year but they also highlight the need for vigilance in a world of ever increasing consumption and rising waste disposal charges, a situation which unfortunately leads to indiscriminate littering and illegal dumping of household waste. To ensure that Tullamore can compete with other towns both nationally and internationally as a place to live, visit and do business in, it is essential that anti-litter policies be constantly reviewed and improved so as priority is given to maintaining the tidiness and cleanliness of the town.

This Plan is being prepared under the Litter Pollution Act 1997 which requires a local authority to prepare and implement a Litter management Plan for its functional area. This plan must be reviewed at least once every three years to reflect changing demands. The Plan is divided into three broad areas namely :-

- 1. Prevention and Control of Litter**
- 2. Measures to Encourage Public Awareness**
- 3. Strategy for Attainment of Objectives over the life of the Plan**

A number of specifics are addressed under these headings including :-

- Initiatives taken and methods employed to identify and pursue litter offenders
- An appraisal of the effectiveness of the initiatives and methods currently in use
- Educational and information awareness measures in particular those aimed at young persons
- Statistics on litter enforcement proceedings over the previous three years
- Details of waste disposal and recycling facilities provided by the Offaly Local Authorities in the Tullamore Area
- Litter prevention and control measures undertaken by other groups and organisations operating in the town both individually and in partnership with the Town Council
- Annual Town Council expenditure on litter management, street cleaning and associated works during the previous three years

Much of the educational and awareness programme is carried out by the Town Councils Community Liaison Officer in conjunction with the Litter Wardens. Assistance is provided by Offaly County Council's Environment Department who employ specialist staff. Litter pollution is closely aligned with waste Management. As the Town Council is not a Waste Management authority under the terms of the Waste Management Act 1996 as amended, the Council works closely with its parent authority Offaly County Council, the Waste Management Authority for the county on matters that are more appropriately dealt with under Waste Management legislation as distinct from the Litter Pollution Act.

The Town Council will endeavour at all times to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to attain our objectives and target areas of greatest need. As this plan is being prepared during difficult economic times, any funds assigned to the Litter Management function by the Members in the annual budget will be used as efficiently and effectively as possible to ensure that value for money is achieved.

1. Prevention and Control of Litter

The Town Council takes a two-pronged approach to the control and prevention of litter in its functional area:-

- i. Encouragement and support of local initiatives*
- ii. Direct action*

i. Encouragement and Support of Local Initiatives

Developing Partnerships

The prevention of litter in Tullamore requires a partnership approach between a wide range of statutory, community and voluntary organisation, the general public the Town Council and our parent authority Offaly County Council. Such organisations include the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, Tidy Towns Committee, Residents Associations, Waterways Ireland and community and voluntary groups. The Council acknowledges the important contributions made by all these bodies in recent years and will actively seek to build on the various formal and informal arrangements that exist whilst at the same time seeking to establish new partnerships and ventures which the Council believes there is still considerable scope for and which are always welcome.

Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) - Anti Litter League

This league was an initiative of IBAL, an alliance of companies who came together in 1996 with the common aim of tackling the Irish litter problem. The Companies believed this was having a significant detrimental affect on our economic well-being, given that Ireland has always highlighted our 'clean green' image as a major asset in attracting both business and tourists alike. This alliance came to the view that education and promotion alone would not solve the problem but that the rigorous enforcement of the litter laws by local authorities would go a long way towards solving the problem.

One of the major initiatives of IBAL was the Anti-Litter League which commenced in 2002. This annual survey ranks the performance of 53 (initially 55 but now reduced to 53) towns and cities throughout the country and this initiative is now co-funded by the DoEHLG.

Details of Tullamore’s performance since the first official survey results in 2003 were as follows :-

Year	Ranking
2003	39 th
2004	53 rd
2005	53 rd
2006	54 th
2007	44 th
2008	42 nd
2009	23 rd
2010	9 th

In 2009, the Council set up a local Inter-Agency group to focus on improving Tullamore’s position in this annual litter league as the town’s lack of progression between 2003 and 2008 was a matter of grave concern to the community at large. The group included representatives of the Tidy Towns, Chamber of Commerce, Offaly County Council and Waterways Ireland.



Tullamore IBAL Inter-Agency Group

Back Row – Cllr. Tommy McKeigue, Chairperson Tidy Towns, Cllr. Tony McCormack President Chamber of Commerce , Louie Byrne, Waterways Ireland

Front Row – Caroline Clancy, Offaly County Council Rose O’Keeffe and Claire Hughes, Tullamore Town Council

The targeting of a number of specific ‘black spots’ identified in the IBAL report were agreed and each agency worked together to eliminate these. The Council for example reviewed its street cleaning schedule to ensure a more focused and targeted approach in black spot areas. Mobile surveillance units were engaged to record evidence of litter offenders. Waterways Ireland and the Tidy Towns arranged for joint clean-ups along the Grand Canal in the town. The initiative was a huge success and this was reflected in the town’s performance in the league where the town jumped from 42nd in 2008 to 23rd in 2009

and 9th in 2010 and is now classified as 'Clean to European Norm' standard. Future community partnerships will be build on this successful model.



Pictured at the 2010 IBAL Award Ceremony from L to R are :-

Dr. Tom Cavanagh, IBAL Chairman, Mr. Gabriel Conlon, Tullamore Town Council, Cllr. Molly Buckley, Cathaoirleach, Tullamore Town Council, Patricia Oliver, An Taisce

Tidy Towns

The Council has a particularly close relation with the Tullamore Tidy Towns Committee and supports the Committee's campaign by way of a direct cash grant, provision of litter picking equipment, assistance with scheduled clean-ups and summer planting and maintenance programmes which include not only the town centre but approach roads and roundabouts. Both organisations utilise every opportunity to promote awareness of litter and the damaging effects on not only the environment but on the impression of the town generally.

ii Direct Action

The following are the main areas where the local authority takes direct action in the area of litter prevention and control:-

Litter Wardens

The Town Council currently employs two Litter/Traffic Wardens whose duties include investigating and detecting littering incidences, issuing of on the spot fines and preparation of reports for court prosecutions. Fines can be issued for a wide range of activities including littering, indiscriminate dumping, fly-posting, unauthorised signage and other offences as defined in the legislation. The Gardai also have extensive powers under the Litter Act including the issue of on the spot fines and the Council encourages the Gardai to use these powers where possible through regular discussions at the Tullamore Joint Policing Committee.

Litter Surveillance

The Council supplement the work of the Wardens through co-operation with the Garda and local business CCTV camera networks and also engage the services of undercover mobile surveillance units. This service is particularly effective as it targets known 'litter black spots' on a 24/7 roaming basis. Unfortunately the Council's proactive approach to the provision of bring banks in the town has been undermined somewhat as these areas have become popular litter 'black spots' with increasing trends in indiscriminate dumping

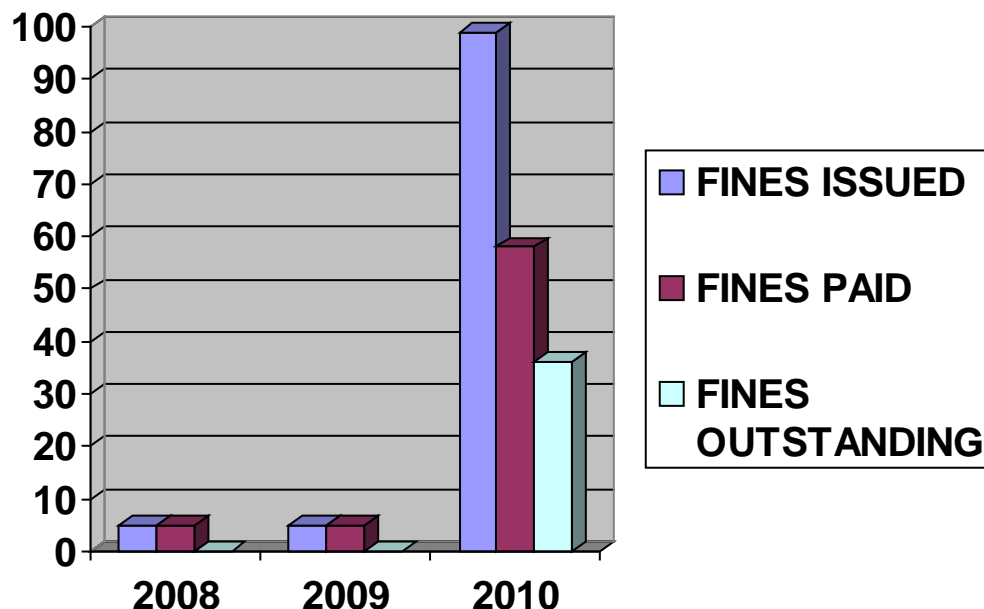
at these locations. However additional monitoring is carried out in these areas to detect offenders.



Tullamore Town Council operates under the 'polluter pays' principle. It is therefore the Council's policy to pursue litter offenders through the courts where litter fines have not been paid or the littering incident was of such a serious nature that it warranted immediate court action.

The following table outlined details of fines issued between 2008 and 2010:-

	2008	2009	2010
Fines Issued	5	5	99
Fines Paid	5	5	58
Fines Outstanding	0	0	36
Total Paid	€750	€750	€12,400



Street Cleaning

The Town Council carry out an extensive street cleaning programme 364 days every year. To maximise the extensive resources that are allocated to this function annually the Council has invested in a fleet of vehicles to cater for all areas of the town including

smaller 'green machines' to access the difficult to reach areas such as narrow laneways in the older parts of town. This coupled with a committed and flexible workforce who carry out this work early in the mornings when the streets are clear, has proved very effective in terms of meeting our objectives of keeping Tullamore litter free. Considerable resources are also spent by the Council on removing illegally dumped waste throughout the town not only in terms of the staff and machinery costs involved but also in relation to landfill fees which have to be paid by the Town Council.

Shops and Fast Food Outlets

The Council regularly remind shop owners by way of direct contact and through the Chamber of Commerce of their responsibilities under the Litter Pollution Act to keep the areas in front of their premises litter free. Some businesses tend to contribute to the litter problem by the nature of the product they sell for example fast food outlets or other food outlets or supermarkets selling take away foods, particularly those located near schools. The situation has been exacerbated since the introduction of the smoking ban which has resulted in an increased number of cigarette butts on the pavement arising from smokers standing outside public houses and restaurants.

Litter Bins

In order to reduce incidences of littering in the street, the Council provides 124 litter receptacles throughout the town. The location of litter bins throughout the town is outlined in *Appendix 1*. All bins are lined and emptied at a minimum once a day and twice and three times in busy areas. Bins are of sturdy construction with covered tops in order to deter vandalism, dumping of domestic refuse and interference by birds and vermin. The Council has an on-going programme of bin replacement as resources permit and every effort is made to ensure the style of bin provided is compatible with the character of the area in which it is located. Particular emphasis is put on the placing of adequate receptacles in the vicinity of fast food outlets, shops offering take away foods, schools and other areas prone to generating high volumes of litter.

Waste Management

Since 1996, Town Councils are no longer Waste Management Authorities and this function is carried out by the County Council on a countywide basis. Waste collection services in the county are provided by the Private Sector and regulated by the County Council. Recent Waste Management Bye-laws adopted by the Council introduced stringent controls on the manner in which waste is segregated and presented for collection. This should assist in a reduction in littering incidences resulting from inadequate storage and presentation of waste for collection.

Derelict Sites

Powers available to the Town Council under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 are used to compliment the Councils litter management programme and request owners of unsightly properties or sites to clean up their areas. Over 30 letters have issued to local property/land owners in 2010 and it is anticipated that a number of these will be formally placed on the Derelict Sites register in 2011 where they have not responded to the Council's request.

Advertising Materials, Fly-posting & Signage

The Council discourages the distribution of advertising materials which give rise to litter. Member of the public are encouraged to make the Council aware of such activities and if possible provide a copy of the material as evidence with their statement. Auctioneers are also regularly reminded of the requirements of the Litter Act in relation to the placing of advertising signs on public property. Fly posting on the exterior of vacant buildings is an on-going problem and one which is vigorously pursued by the Council. Powers under Roads and Planning legislation are also used in conjunction with the Litter Act in relation to tackling some types of unauthorised signage.

Dogs

Dog fouling on public footpaths, housing estates and in particular Lloyd Town Park is an on-going issue. On the spot fines can issue to owners of dogs and the irresponsible actions of some dog owners in the Town Park is of particular concern to the Council because of the potential health issues for young children. The situation will be reviewed on an on-going basis and dogs may have to be excluded from the park if the situation does not improve. Consideration will also be given to appointing some of our Parks and Open Spaces Team as Litter Wardens to enable the issue of on the spot fines for offenders. The Town Council's tenancy agreement has also been recently updated in relation to the number of dogs that can be kept by tenants.

Waste Disposal & Recycling Facilities

The following facilities are currently available in Tullamore and Environs:-

FACILITY	LOCATION
Landfill Site	Derryclure
Civic Amenity Site	Derryclure
Bring Bank	Daingean Road Car Park
Bring Bank	Bury Quay
Bring Bank	Tesco Car Park, Cloncollig



Before dumping



After dumping

Major Events & Festivals

Considerable costs can be incurred by the Council in cleaning up after large public events such as the Fleadh Ceoil na h-Eireann which took place in Tullamore for three years in a row from 2007-2009. Due to the success of this event an increasing number of events and festivals are taking place in the town each year with Lloyd Town Park proving a popular venue. In 2009 for example a new 'Discover Tullamore Day' festival took place for the first

time and was re-branded and held again in 2010. This event centred around Kilbride Plaza, Bury Quay and the Canal. The annual Phoenix Festival took place in Lloyd Park for the first time in 2010 along with several other free family fun days including the 'Mad Pride' event in August, all of which drew huge crowds to the town. Such events are a boost to local commercial activity and promote Tullamore as a tourism and recreational centre and the Council acknowledges this.

The Council proudly supports such events and has traditionally provided additional street cleaning and park supervision services when such events take place to supplement the litter management arrangements of the organisation hosting the event. Organisers of major events are required to have their own litter management plans and are expected to put in place certain recycling and waste receptacles to supplement the Council's programme. A financial contribution or approved bond may be required in certain instances. All event advertising must be the subject of Town/County Council approval depending on its location. Signs erected without the Local Authority's permission will be removed immediately.

Local Authority Expenditure on Litter Management, Enforcement & Clean Up Costs

As can be seen from the table below, the Town Council has increased its expenditure over the past three years as part of its anti-litter campaign. These services will continue to be given priority in future budgets due to very positive impact they make on the overall town environment.

Activity	Expenditure 2008	Expenditure 2009	Expenditure 2010
Street Cleaning	€283,949.65	€307,248.51	€389,077.84
Landfill Fees	€38,000.00	€38,000.00	€44,714.17
Staff Costs	€8,177.03	€21,353.72	€17,740.42
Surveillance Costs	€0.00	€0.00	€9,874.51
Other	€1,189.98	€0.00	€335.97
TOTAL	€331,316.66	€366,602.23	€461,742.91

2. Measures to Encourage Public Awareness

Education

The Town Council work closely with the Environmental Awareness Office in Offaly County Council's Environment Department who sits on the Tullamore IBAL Inter-Agency Group and who also supports the Town Council's Community Liaison Officer in School visits to promote the Green Schools Programme, recycling, responsible waste management, litter abatement to mention but a few. The Town Council has recently updated its tenancy agreement to strengthen the provisions in relation to waste management and includes this topic as a specific module in mandatory pre-tenancy training for all new tenants.

Community Grants & Competitions

The Council jointly sponsors the annual Tidy Tullamore Competition along with Tullamore Credit Union. In 2010 the Council also gave a number of specific grants to local authority Residents Associations to carry out environmental improvements in their estates, as part of a planned estate management programme. The results of this were reflected in the Tidy Tullamore Competition with a number of local authority estates receiving prizes for the first time. This Competition attracts much publicity and the importance of a litter free town is promoted at every possible opportunity.

3. Strategy for Attainment of Objectives

The following objectives and strategies for their achievement are proposed for the duration of the plan:-

2011

	Objective	Strategy
1.	Increase awareness of litter and its implications amongst young persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the use of Facebook or similar social networking working sites to engage interactively with youth and get the anti-litter message across to them • Design a children's competition aimed at primary schools and focussed on recycling and litter
2.	Encourage a greater level of reporting of littering incidents from members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a dedicated e-mail address for reports to the Town Council • Agree protocol with Offaly Co. Council for use of countywide 'hot-line' number for reports in Town Council functional area
3.	Put in place measures to reduce littering in specific 'black spots'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a works programme for the year for the IBAL Inter-Agency group, focussing on at least two specific 'black spots' • Encourage shop owners to maintain the areas outside their premises to an acceptable standard
4.	Improve methods of recording and capturing data relating to litter pollution	Develop a database to record and track all fines, payments and location of offences
5.	Provide sufficient resources in the annual budget to enable the local authority carry out an effective litter management programme	Provide sufficient budgets for street cleaning programme, employment of wardens, mobile monitoring and prosecution of offences
6.	Provide assistance and support to other groups and agencies involved in litter abatement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance, advice and a cash grant to the Tullamore Tidy Towns Committee • Co-sponsor the annual 'Tidy Tullamore' competition with Tullamore Credit Union • Encourage and support local authority residents associations with estate 'clean ups' and

		participation in annual ‘Tidy Tullamore’ competition
7.	Utilise the legislation to its fullest to target and prosecute litter offenders	Pursue unpaid fines in the court system
8.	Assess adequacy of Council litter related programmes at least once every year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review street cleaning schedule and alter as necessary • Carry out a Litter bin survey • Carry out a litter related signage survey • Assess adequacy and suitability of current bring bank locations

2012

	Objective	Strategy
1.	Increase awareness of littering and its implications amongst young persons	Organise a children’s competition aimed at primary schools and focussed on recycling and litter
2.	Encourage a greater level of reporting of littering incidents from members of the public	Review effectiveness of new reporting methods and implement changes where necessary
3.	Put in place measures to reduce littering in specific ‘black spots’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a works programme for the year for the IBAL Inter-Agency group, focussing on at least two specific ‘black spots’ • Encourage shop owners to maintain the areas outside their premises to an acceptable standard • Carry out an educational and awareness programme with the County Dog Warden Service on dog fouling specifically targeting Lloyd Town Park and housing estates • Erect signage relating to littering, cctv camera monitoring in strategic locations identified in the 2011 signage survey
4.	Improve methods of recording and capturing data relating to litter pollution	Review effectiveness of database set up in 2011 and make improvements where necessary
5.	Provide sufficient resources in the annual budget to enable the local authority carry out an effective litter management programme	Provide sufficient budgets for street cleaning programme, employment of wardens, mobile monitoring and prosecution of offences
6.	Provide assistance and support to other groups and agencies involved in litter abatement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance, advice and a cash grant to the Tullamore Tidy Towns Committee • Co-sponsor the annual ‘Tidy Tullamore’ competition with Tullamore Credit Union • Encourage and support local authority residents associations with estate ‘clean ups’ and

		participation in annual "Tidy Tullamore" competition
7.	Utilise the legislation to its fullest to target and prosecute litter offenders	Pursue unpaid fines in the court system
8.	Assess adequacy of Council litter related programmes at least once every year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review street cleaning schedule and alter as necessary • Replace or upgrade litter related signage and litter bins where necessary

2013

	Objective	Strategy
1.	Increase awareness of littering and its implications amongst young persons	Organise a children's competition aimed at primary schools and focussed on recycling and litter
2.	Encourage a greater level of reporting of littering incidents from members of the public	Review effectiveness of reporting methods and implement changes where necessary
3.	Put in place measures to reduce littering in specific 'black spots'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a works programme for the year for the IBAL Inter-Agency group, focussing on at least two specific 'black spots' • Encourage shop owners to maintain the areas outside their premises to an acceptable standard • Carry out an educational and awareness programme targeted at fast food and other litter generating outlets in particular • Upgrade/replace signage relating to littering, cctv camera monitoring as necessary
4.	Improve methods of recording and capturing data relating to litter pollution	Review effectiveness of database set up in 2011 and make improvements where necessary
5.	Provide sufficient resources in the annual budget to enable the local authority carry out an effective litter management programme	Provide sufficient budgets for street cleaning programme, employment of wardens, mobile monitoring and prosecution of offences
6.	Provide assistance and support to other groups and agencies involved in litter abatement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance, advice and a cash grant to the Tullamore Tidy Towns Committee • Co-sponsor the annual 'Tidy Tullamore' competition with Tullamore Credit Union • Encourage and support local authority residents associations with estate 'clean ups' and participation in annual "Tidy Tullamore" competition
7.	Utilise the legislation to its fullest to target and prosecute	Pursue unpaid fines in the court system

	litter offenders	
8.	Assess adequacy of Council litter related programmes at least once every year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review street cleaning schedule and alter as necessary • Replace or upgrade litter related signage and litter bins where necessary

4. Conclusion

This plan has been prepared on the basis of realistic and achievable objectives and actions. The plan provides a local authority response to a persistent problem which although caused by only a minority of the community can have devastating consequences for the community as a whole. This blight on society can only be addressed by broad based community action under the leadership of the Local Authority.

In summary, the Councils response to litter pollution abatement and management can be summarised as follows :-

To minimise litter generation through a combination of education, awareness and enforcement

To maximise community, state agency and business input through the promotion and encouragement of direct actions and responses

Tullamore Town Council through the measures outlined in this plan will work in partnership with all sectors to strive for a litter free environment in our town.

Appendix 1

Append drawing currently being prepared to draft plan when going out for public consultation