



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## Policy on the Provision of Litter Bins

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## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Council has no legal duty to provide litter and dog waste bins but must keep Council owned land and public highways clear of litter and refuse as far as is practicable. Following changes to the classification of various waste materials, dog waste can be put into general litter bins and disposed of in the same way.
- 1.2 Whilst the Council is committed to providing sufficient litter bins to help discharge its responsibilities under the Environmental Act 1990, dealing with litter places a significant financial and resource burden on local authorities and the Council's capacity to provide litter bins is finite. There are currently 608 litter bins of various types across the district.
- 1.3 This document aims to manage litter bin provision and outlines the principles which will be followed in selecting and reviewing where litter bins are located, ensuring that the correct bin types are used in the most appropriate locations and are located in areas where it can be demonstrated that there is a genuine need.
- 1.4 The type, size and location of litter bins are all linked to how litter bins are used by the public, and in particular, how frequently they require emptying and how much litter is collected. These are the key determinants in supporting service delivery in terms of servicing frequency and the ability to route services effectively and efficiently.
- 1.5 There is a balance between the number and locations of litter bins provided and the ongoing cost of emptying and maintaining them. Ensuring litter bins are appropriately located supports value for money and enables resources to be focused where they are most needed.
- 1.6 Future litter bin sites and reviews will consider, but are not restricted to the following;
  - Operational efficiency
  - Usage patterns
  - Health and safety considerations associated with the servicing of the litter bins
  - Links to other policies, e.g. planning and conservation areas
- 1.7 The Council declared a climate emergency in September 2019. The standards defined in this policy support the efficiency of the Street Cleansing fleet, ensuring it can be optimised to reduce the number of vehicle journeys, further reducing the Council's carbon footprint.

## **2.0 Site Selection**

2.1 It is not possible to define specific sites which will and will not receive litter bins, however, the following factors will generally be taken into consideration:

- Suitability of the proposed location - Taking account of the need to reduce street clutter, particularly in more sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas
- Scale of the litter problem. Will a litter bin make a real impact on litter or can this be addressed in other ways e.g. by enforcement?
- Proximity to potential problem points- Is the proposed site close to shops, schools, bus stops etc?
- Number and location of existing litter bins in the area – In high footfall areas e.g. retail areas and travel hubs, a greater number of litter bins may be necessary.
- Accessibility to disabled people - ensuring the bin is not a hazard or barrier for pedestrians including prams and wheelchairs. A minimum footpath width of 1.5m must be maintained.
- Cost of installation - use of a ground anchor system or any specific permissions that will impact on cost or practicality
- Costs for emptying the bin e.g., more remote areas can have disproportionate transport costs
- Litter bin type
- Land ownership- will be sited on owned or adopted land only
- Location type (e.g., high priority areas as outlined in the document)
- Potential for vandalism and arson

2.2 The following areas will normally be viewed as higher priority to receive litter bins:

- Main arterial routes and other high footfall and through route areas
- Main areas of commerce and retail
- Key routes in relation to schools
- Near fast food and takeaway retailers
- Public transport hubs (e.g. Bus stops and similar areas) where large numbers of people stand for periods of time, particularly in central areas
- Entrances to parks and significant public spaces.

2.3 The following areas will not normally be viewed as high priority for litter bin placements, or may in some cases be ruled out for litter bin placement:

- Exclusively residential areas, except where these become high priority due to one of the reasons above
- Locations where the litter bin is being abused, including inappropriate disposal of household or commercial waste which has not been resolved by engagement or enforcement and sites which are subject to arson or vandalism.

## **3.0 Public Events**

3.1 The provision of temporary litter bins may be considered at specific locations to reflect increased pedestrian flows and litter generation at certain times on land owned by the Council. For example, during events in public parks etc.

3.2 Litter bins will not be provided to collect commercial waste and it must be made clear that event organisers must put in place alternative provision. The provision of bins for commercial events will be subject to a charge.

#### **4.0 Recycling Bins/Specific Waste Streams**

- 4.1 The Council takes a pragmatic view of the effectiveness and efficiency of collecting different types of litter separately for recycling. Along with the small quantities involved, there are particular challenges associated with collecting litter as a segregated stream for recycling while maintaining the relevant high standards of quality required.
- 4.2 Due to high levels of contamination which lead to recyclable materials being disposed of as residual waste, the Council will not generally consider the installation of dual compartment recycling bins (one side recyclables the other for non-recyclables)
- 4.3 The potential future provision of dual compartment bins will be kept under review, particularly in response to any future requirements to segregate waste.

#### **5.0 Dog Waste**

- 5.1 The Council's policy is to maximise efficiency by collecting bagged dog waste alongside general waste in the same litter bin. No dedicated dog waste bins will be provided. Householders may dispose of bagged dog waste in their residual waste bin.

#### **6.0 Emptying, Maintaining and Replacing Litter Bins**

- 6.1 Only litter bins purchased and installed by the Council or where a specific formal agreement has been made with the Parish or Town council will emptied. Where a Parish or Town Council has installed a litter bin without prior agreement or outside of the site selection parameters detailed in this document, the responsibility for maintenance and emptying will remain wholly with the original purchaser.
- 6.2 Any litter bins purchased and sited by Town or Parish councils must be maintained by them, and any insurance remains the liability of the original purchaser. Town and Parish councils that purchase litter bins must indemnify the Council against any maintenance, loss or accident resulting from the installation. Upkeep and maintenance of litter bins includes ensuring the suitable access to the bin.
- 6.3 Town and Parish councils are advised to carry out regular checks of litter bins they are responsible for and maintain them in good condition. In the event of an immediate or serious risk to a member of the public or the operative, the Council reserve the right to cover a litter bin to prevent further use and refuse to empty the bin.
- 6.4 Litter bins will be emptied on such a frequency that will prevent them overflowing. This will be based on their location and related to the intensity of use. The frequency will also vary according to the time of year. Monitoring will ensure that these frequencies are sufficient.
- 6.5 All litter bins installed by the Council (or by a Parish or Town council under agreement) will be maintained to a standard that is fit for purpose e.g., plastic litter bins can suffer damage in some locations while metal litter bins corrode.

- 6.6 When a litter bin is damaged or stolen, it will be replaced only if it meets the criteria for the provision of new litter bins.
- 6.7 Litter bins that are not used, used infrequently or subject to repeated vandalism may be removed.
- 6.8 Relevant Town and Parish councils will be notified where litter bins are removed.

## **7.0 Requests for New litter Bins**

- 7.1 On receipt of a request for a new or replacement litter bin, a site survey will be carried out in accordance with the site selection criteria.
- 7.2 Possible alternatives will be considered in the first instance such as;
- Moving an existing under-used litter bin to/from a different location
  - Changing the size/type of existing litter bins in the area.
- 7.3 Litter bins will only be installed on sites which are safe and where there is a genuine need for a bin. Litter bins will not be installed on private land or in a location which may encourage the disposal of commercial waste. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 makes provision for the collection and disposal of commercial waste, and the Council expects businesses to make their own provision for the disposal of waste.
- 7.4 Where a request or requirement for a new litter bin is considered appropriate, a litter bin will be installed. This litter bin will, as far as practicable, be a standard design and style.

## **8.0 Definitions**

- 8.1 Litter is waste which is disposed of “on the go” either in a litter bin or discarded loose in the environment or as a result of an accidental escape from a premises, a domestic bin, etc.
- 8.2 For the purposes of this document, litter is generally distinct from household and commercial waste, however, there may be some overlap where waste materials have spilled from household or commercial waste collection.
- 8.3 Fly tipping is a separate issue and will be dealt with according to current policy.