



# Litter Management Plan 2024-2027

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## Wexford County Council Litter Management Plan 2024-2027



*South-East Local Authorities Roadside Litter Campaign.*

### **A. Introduction**

Litter and waste pollution are local, national and international problems, almost every resident in County Wexford will find it objectionable to see litter and waste carelessly discarded on their street, estate green, local beach or scenic area. Wexford County Council like other local authorities in Ireland uses the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System to measure the extent of litter in the County and the breakdown of the main types of litter found.

The most recent survey results from 2022 (over 300 surveys in total for the County) show 24% of the County is Litter Free with 64% slightly littered, 11% moderately littered, just over 1% significantly littered and no areas grossly littered. Cigarette butts are the largest element of litter followed by packaging litter. The results for County Wexford are better than the national average and this together with around 3,000 litter & waste complaints received by the Council every year, clearly indicate that the County has a litter problem. The most recent EPA State of the Environment Report shows that litter pollution is still one of Ireland's main environmental problems. It costs Wexford Co. Council €3.3 million to deal with the effects of litter and waste, it damages the environment, it can be a health hazard, affects tourism, causes visual pollution and it can lead to other social problems.

The Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as amended) requires that a local authority must review, amend or replace its Litter Management Plan every 3 years. The Council set up a **Litter and Waste Action Sub-Committee** to look at Litter and Waste problems in Co. Wexford in April, 2021. The Committee consisting of 6 Councillors and 4 Environment Section Staff met on 6 occasions and a Final Report with 23 recommendations was adopted on 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2023. The recommendations are incorporated into the new Litter Management Plan Actions.

Wexford County Council's Corporate Plan 2019-2024 (Pillar 2) has the aim *"to work to provide a healthy environment through education and regulation; to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment; and provide high quality recreational infrastructure for the benefit of the community and visitors"*. Wexford County Council now proposes to adopt a new Litter Management Plan for the period 2024-2027 with the mission to reduce the effects of litter pollution on the environment of County Wexford and to cultivate a broader civic minded attitude towards littering and waste among the public. The Draft Litter Management Plan has been prepared in cognisance of the following Plans;

- Wexford County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024
- Wexford County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.
- A National Plan for a Circular Waste Economy.
- Wexford County Council Corporate Plan 2019-2024.
- County Development Plan 2022-2029.

## **B. Some facts about County Wexford**

Wexford is a coastal county on the South-East corner of Ireland of 2,367 sq. km in area, surrounded by counties Carlow, Kilkenny, Wicklow and Waterford and bounded by the Irish Sea and the Atlantic. It has a population of 163,527 (CSO 2022 census up 9.5% on 2016) with the main towns being Enniscorthy, Gorey, New Ross, Wexford and Bunclody. Around 62% of the population live in rural areas outside of the main towns. It has an international ferry port in Rosslare Europort. Wexford has a thriving agri-business sector with the retail, service sectors and tourism making a big contribution to the local economy.

With a mainly sandy coastline of 260 km and known as the "Sunny South-East", with 8 Blue Flags and 10 Green Coast Awards to boast of, Wexford has much to offer the visitor. Attractions include the famous Curracloe Strand, Wexford Opera House, Johnstown Castle, John F. Kennedy Park, the Irish National Heritage Park, Hook lighthouse, Loftus Hall, Wells House, Ferns Castle, Vinegar Hill, Enniscorthy Castle, the Dunbrody Famine ship in New Ross, Kilmore Quay, the Saltee Islands and much more.

## **C. What should be in a Litter Management Plan.**

Under Section 10(1) of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as amended) ("the Act") a local authority shall "make and implement a litter management plan in respect of its functional area".

Wexford County Council's functional area includes the Municipal Districts of Enniscorthy, Gorey-Kilmuckridge, New Ross, Rosslare and the Borough District of Wexford.

Wexford County Council now intends to make and implement a Litter Management Plan for the period 2024-2027. Under Section 11 of the Act it is intended that the Litter Management Plan shall;



- a) Specify such objectives as the local authority deems appropriate to prevent and control litter in its functional area.
- b) Specify measures to encourage public awareness with a view to eliminating litter pollution, including educational and information measures directed at young persons.
- c) Specify the measures or arrangements that are to be undertaken by the local authority in order to attain the objectives of the plan and
- d) Include information on, or to be formulated having regard to-
  - i. An appraisal of all existing litter prevention and control programmes being operated by the local authority.
  - ii. The policies and objectives of the local authority in relation to the prevention and control of litter.
  - iii. The measures which, in so far as the local authority can determine, will or may be taken during the relevant period by persons other than the local authority for the purposes of preventing and controlling litter.
  - iv. The facilities at which waste may be deposited by members of the public for recovery or disposal within the meaning of the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended).
  - v. The steps to be taken by the local authority to enforce the provisions of this Act in its functional area and
  - vi. Any incidental and ancillary matters.

A litter management plan may specify objectives to be attained in litter prevention and cleanliness for designated areas within its functional area and different objectives may be specified for different areas or classes of areas. A local authority shall take such steps as it deems appropriate and necessary to attain the objectives.

#### **D. Definition of litter?**

Under the Litter Pollution Act 1997 ("the Act") litter is defined under Section 2 as;

*"a substance or object whether or not intended as waste (other than waste within the meaning of the Waste Management Act 1996, which is properly consigned for disposal) that, when deposited in a place other than a litter receptacle or other place lawfully designated for the deposit, is likely to become unsightly, deleterious, nauseous or unsanitary, whether by itself or with any other such substance or object and regardless of its size or volume or the extent of the deposit".*



Litter is really “waste left in the wrong place”. It can be anything from a crisp bag on a public street to a sofa thrown into a forestry entrance in a rural area.

### **Responsibilities relating to the prevention of Litter**

#### **The Responsibilities of the Local Authority are:**

- To take all practical measures to allow for the prevention, control and correct disposal of litter,
- Take steps to promote awareness of litter pollution and its effect on the environment,
- Encourage participation from the public and businesses of the County in preventing and overcoming litter pollution,
- To provide access to appropriate facilities/receptacles and waste bins for its citizens and to arrange for regular emptying and cleaning,
- Enforce the law and apply the necessary penalties and legal sanctions.

### **Responsibilities of businesses include:**

- To keep the immediate area and up to 100m from the premises litter free.
- To keep any private land visible from public place free from litter.
- Persons owning, operating or in charge of mobile outlets and those who organise major events have additional responsibilities.
- To ensure there is no placement of unauthorised advertisements or public notices in public places.
- Not to place advertising flyers on cars.
- To ensure that transporting material does not cause litter and that the material is sufficiently secured and does not cause litter.

### **Responsibilities of the public include:**

- Any owner or occupier of property which can be seen from a public place is obliged to keep the property free of litter. Failure to keep property free of litter can result in a fine or prosecution by Wexford County Council.
- Not to create litter in a public place or a place visible from a public road.
- The public must ensure that waste material is disposed of in a waste receptacle or bin, or in an authorised waste facility.
- Dog owners shall be responsible for the removal of dog faeces from a public place and ensure it is disposed of properly.
- The public must ensure that they only give household waste including recyclable materials to collectors with the necessary authorisations to collect such waste and exercise caution in leaving out waste items based on leaflet drops through their letter box from individuals and Companies purporting to represent charitable organisations.

## **E. Litter Management Plans - Review of Last Plan (2017-2020)**

This draft Litter Management Plan is the fifth Litter Management Plan to be prepared by Wexford County Council since the introduction of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as amended). The focus of any Litter Management Plan is to minimise the effects of litter pollution on a particular local authority area. Wexford County Council like other local authorities, uses the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System (details provided in the next section) to measure the progress in improving the overall litter situation. The NLPMS has shown that Co. Wexford has improved from 0% of the County Litter Free in 2004 to 37% in 2014 and to 24% Litter Free in 2022 from 70% of the County slightly littered or better in 2004 to 88% in 2022.

***E.1 Initiatives and measures taken since the last Litter Management Plan include;***

- Anti-Dumping Initiatives (ADI) -Wexford Co. Council is participating in the Department of Environment, Climate & Communication's ADI since 2017 – Mattress Amnesty, Bikes for Africa, Clean Up of Black-spots, CCTV and using Audio Warning Devices.



- Dog Fouling Campaigns with other Councils – “Bag it, Bin it or Bring it Home”.
- New Environment Warden Structure in Place 1 North and 1 South of County.
- Use of Audio Warning Devices and small VMS signs for dog fouling and helping keep Bottle Bins Sites Clean.
- Environmental Clean Up Crew introduced in 2018 – clearing up reported incidents of fly-tipping as part of their duties - 10 staff involved.
- Wexford Waste Presentation Bye-Laws effective from 1-1-2019 and they have become a useful tool in waste enforcement compliance for households.
- Use of CCTV and Audio Warning Devices in Waste/Litter Enforcement up to 2020.
- Anti-Roadside Litter Campaign “Calling out Litter Louts”.
- Installation of 6 Drinking Water fonts at Blue Flag Beaches (Waste Prevention).
- “Green Your Picnic” outdoor activities litter campaign 2020-2021.
- Litter Infrastructure Grant DECC 2021 additional bins purchased.



- Additional Temporary Beach Wardens at Curracloe and Morristcastle
- New Wexford Co. Council Beach Bye-Laws introduced 2022.
- New Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment SPC structure introduced 2020.
- Increased participation in Community Clean ups 2021 - 1,331 groups and 2022 - 1,023 groups.
- Mattress amnesties 2017-2023 over 13,500 mattresses recycled and 2,118 sofas and easy chairs.
- The Clean Up of 46 Litter Black-spots 2017-2023 with over 400 tonnes of waste material removed.
- Introduction of go2 re-usable cups in County Hall, Wexford.
- New Litter & Waste Action Sub-Committee formed, met 6 times and reported in June 2023.
- Environmental Services continued to operate through COVID-19 Restrictions 2020-2022.
- The Environment Clean Up Crew expanded to deal with illegal dumping incidents.
- Over 90% of actions in 2017-2020 Litter Management Plan implemented.
- Improved results through National Litter Pollution Monitoring System Reports.

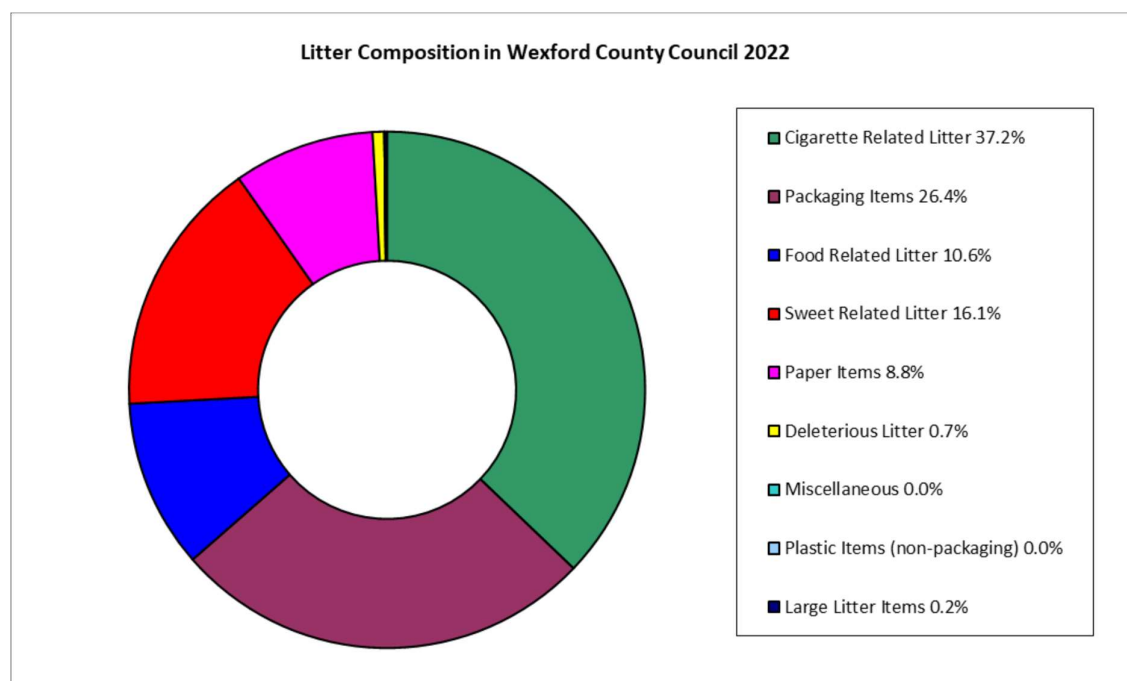
## ***E.2 Litter Pollution Monitoring System - Measuring the problem***

Since 2001, local authorities have been using the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System to measure how bad the litter problem is in the County and the make-up of litter found. The system uses GIS maps and a computerised database to generate locations (potential litter generators) where litter is likely to occur. In County Wexford over 300 locations are surveyed annually to measure the nature and extent of litter in the county. The results are shown overleaf. The former Town Councils carried out a similar exercise for each town.

## Wexford Co. Council – National Litter Pollution Monitoring Surveys 2004-2022 Percentage of County Littered (Litter Pollution Surveys)

Year	Litter free	Slightly littered	Moderately littered	Seriously littered	Grossly littered
2022	24.2%	63.4%	11.3%	1.1%	0%
2021	6.9%	74.1%	15.5%	3.4%	0%
2020	9.4%	68.8%	18.8%	3.4%	0%
2019	9.8%	67.9%	18.8%	1.5%	0%
2018	10%	70.5%	17.7%	17.7%	0%
2017	18.3%	67%	14.7%	0%	0%
2016	12.10%	65.9%	21.9%	0.4%	0%
2015	10.60%	65.90%	18.43%	5.07%	0%
2014	37.40%	50.41%	12.30%	0%	0%
2013	51.92%	39.43%	7.69%	0.96%	0%
2012	26.79%	60.71%	12.50%	0%	0%
2011	7.5%	82.5%	10%	0%	0%
2010	13.2%	53.9%	28.9%	3.9%	0%
2009	0%	75.3%	21.0%	3.7%	0%
2008	9.4%	55.2%	26%	9.4%	0%
2007	5.4%	60.9%	17.4%	16%	0%
2006	0%	53%	23%	20%	3%
2004	0%	23%	56%	21%	0%

The standards for litter free, slightly littered, moderately littered and grossly littered categories etc. are referenced to a series of photos used by all local authorities. It can be seen that since 2004 the percentage of the County that is litter free, has progressively increased from 0% in 2004 to 24.2% in 2022 and the slightly littered category has improved from 23% in 2004 to 63.4% in 2022, with no areas grossly polluted in 2022. Towns and rural areas were combined for surveying purposes for the first time in 2015.. Cigarette butts followed by packaging litter (beverage cans, bottles, cartons, cardboard, plastic film etc.) were found to be the most common item of litter in Co. Wexford in 2022, according to the litter quantification surveys.



## Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) Results 2017-2022 Wexford Towns

Year	Town	Result (Position of 40 Towns)
2022	Gorey	Cleaner than Euro norms 10 <sup>th</sup>
2021	Wexford	Clean to Euro norms 15 <sup>th</sup>
2020	Gorey	Moderately Littered 30 <sup>th</sup>
2019	Gorey	Moderately Littered 30 <sup>th</sup>
2018	Gorey	Moderately Littered 32 <sup>nd</sup>
2017	Wexford	Clean to Euro norms 25 <sup>th</sup>

## Litter Management Statistics over the period 2018-2022

Year	Fines Issued	Successful Prosecutions	Complaints Received	Community Clean Ups
2022	229	43	2,188	1,023
2021	199	19	2,721	1,331
2020	213	20	3,187	628
2019	341	13	2,758	716
2018	324	22	3,050	450

## F. Drafting the Plan and Public Consultation Q1 2024

### 1) DRAFTING THE PLAN

- ☐ Consultation with relevant Local Authority sections and staff
- ☐ Evaluation of current litter problems
- ☐ Review any relevant changes in legislation
- ☐ Review of drafts by staff likely to have responsibilities under the new Plan

### 2) STATUTORY CONSULTATION PHASE

- ☐ Elected Members (SPC & Full Council).
- ☐ Public Consultation

### 3) REVIEW AND PUBLISH THE PLAN

- ☐ Amend the plan, if necessary, based on an assessment of the submissions received.
- ☐ Adoption of the Plan by Council Members
- ☐ Publish final Litter Management Plan 2024-2027

The Draft Wexford County Council Litter Management Plan 2024-2027 was available for Public Consultation in the first quarter of 2024. The Draft Plan was viewable on Wexford County Council's Public Consultation Portal on its website [www.wexford.ie](http://www.wexford.ie)

Members of the public or organisations were able to make submissions to the Draft Litter Management Plan. The submissions will then be taken into consideration in preparation for the Final Plan for adoption by the Members of Wexford County Council.

Wexford County Council received 4 submissions during the public consultation from 13<sup>th</sup> March to 22<sup>nd</sup> April. The submissions were received from Enniscorthy, Gorey and Kilanerin Tidy Towns Groups and 1 from a member of the public. The submissions are available on the consultation portal on the Council's website and the report on the submissions received for Wexford County Council will also be available on the Council website [wexfordcoco.ie](http://wexfordcoco.ie) and the concerns raised are addressed in the Draft Litter Management Plan 2024-2027.

## **G. Strategy for dealing with the Litter Problem in County Wexford**

Some progress has been achieved over recent years e.g. with waste electrical goods (WEEE Returns Scheme), mattresses (mattress amnesties 2017-2023), Litter Blackspot Clean Up and improvements with regard to dog fouling (500,000 pooper scoopers used in Wexford Town each year) yet there remains a significant litter pollution problem. After examining complaints received, the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System results, IBAL results and discussions with Environment Clean-Up Crews, Street Cleaning Staff and Environment Wardens some of the following problems remain prevalent around the County;

### **Priority issues to address in Wexford**

This section of the plan looks at the various scenarios that are likely to generate litter within County Wexford. They are not ranked by actual level of litter found. Current activities to tackle problems are identified together with possible future actions.

#### **Pedestrians**

On urban streets, pedestrians continue to be the largest group of offenders of litter pollution in County Wexford. Public places, footpaths, walkways and other public areas suffer from litter items dropped. Smoking, drinking, and eating all result in litter items being dropped. Cigarette butts and chewing gum are the most common items of litter found in urban areas. Urban streets account for much of the spending for cleansing.

#### **Motorists**

Passing motorists and their passengers are significant offenders in all parts of County Wexford. Quantities of litter are frequently found on roadside verges, with IBAL noting it as a particular issue on approach roads. Eating and drinking in vehicles or 'dashboard dining' is a common feature of modern life. Packaging items such as bottles, hot drink containers and food wrappers are the most common items of litter dropped by passing motorists. Fly tipping by visitors and recreational drivers is an issue in many scenic locations with popular locations such as beaches particularly prone to this issue. The collection of litter from public road verges is a costly exercise. Traffic passing at high-speed causes safety risks for both staff and members of the public.

#### **Illegal Dumping/Fly tipping**

Fly-tipping and illegal dumping is common in rural and mountain areas. It is usually the most visible, costly and damaging type of litter and the subject of the largest number of complaints. Prompt removal of bags dumped can help to prevent more widespread littering when bags get torn apart.





*Dog fouling Stencil used by Wexford County Council for its "Bag it Bin it" Campaign.*

### **Dog Fouling**

Dog fouling is an issue that has been a top priority in many parts of the County particularly in popular urban walking routes. Dog owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets in public areas, but unfortunately some ignore their responsibilities. Toxocariasis is a disease found in animal faeces and is caused by the eggs of the roundworm toxocara. These can be passed from dogs to humans through contact with animal faeces and contaminated soil. Children are particularly at risk and infection can lead to illness and even partial loss of sight. It appears to be a recent common occurrence that people bag the dog faeces then leave the bag in an inappropriate location creating another form of litter.

### **Illegal and Unauthorised signage**

The proliferation of unauthorised signage along the public road for events, businesses, sales, public announcement etc are the cause of many complaints. Illegal signs are removed and fines issued which must be paid before signs can be retrieved.

### **Abandoned Cars**

Cars are often abandoned on roadsides and on public open spaces, including residential estates. End of Life Vehicles are classed as hazardous waste. Abandoning a vehicle is an offence under Section 71 of the Waste Management Acts 1996. Under Section 9 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997, abandoned vehicles in public places can be ordered to be removed to prevent the creation of further litter, and fines may be issued for contravention of Section 6 of the same Act.

### **Major Events / Open Air Events**

Patrons at major events/open air events consume large quantities of food and drink.

Used packaging and food items are invariably left on the ground. Under Section 18 of the Litter Pollution Acts 1997, the promoters and organisers of major events/open air events are required to implement litter control measures at the venue and in the surrounding area. Promoters and organisers are required to implement these controls before, during and after an event. Major events would include festivals, parades, concerts, sporting occasions.

**Poorly Covered Vehicles Carrying Loose Items**

Vehicles carrying waste are required, under the relevant waste collection permit, to keep the waste covered during transit. Poorly covered trucks, either through torn nets or no nets at all, will often lead to wind-blown litter. This type of litter is especially hard to pick up as it can be spread over quite a distance.

**Public Houses**

Smoking is commonly associated with Public Houses and Bookmakers. It can also be an issue outside some work places. As patrons spend extended periods of time in these premises they are forced to go outside to avoid breaching the smoking ban. Some proprietors of these premises have taken measures to ensure that patrons have easy access to receptacles when they discard cigarette related litter.

**Schools lunchtime litter**

Litter generation can be an issue adjacent to some workplaces and secondary schools where large numbers are eating on the go between the school/businesses and local shops. Green areas can sometimes see an accumulation of this type of litter during the summer months as more people eat outdoors.

**Retail Outlet and Take Away consumption of food and drinks**

The retail sector can contribute to litter particularly in relation to food and drinks consumption. A growing trend of eating take away food or consumption of drinks on the go is leading to increased numbers of complaints about its impact. Many local groups report concerns about the growing numbers of disposable coffee cups, drink bottles and cans and take away packaging being found on our streets and roadside verges and being larger items they often make a very visible impact.

**Torn Refuse Bags and overturned wheelie bins**

In County Wexford, some customers of waste collectors use plastic bags for their waste instead of wheelie bins when exempt from use of a wheelie bin due to access issues for use of a wheelie bin collection service. Exemptions from wheelie bins collections can only be granted by Wexford County Council under strict national criteria. Bags are sometimes left out for a couple of days before collection and on other occasions the actual collection does not take place. In such circumstances it is not uncommon for bags containing food to be torn apart by animals. Overflowing wheelie bins or bins that are toppled over can cause similar issues with bins left out too early increasing the risk, particularly during windy weather.

**Overflowing bins and recycling banks**

Overflowing bins can end up generating litter rather than helping to control litter. It is important to place bins in suitable locations with appropriate collection regimes. The design of the bin should not facilitate the disposal of household waste. Recycling banks can have related issues at times of peak demand.

**Places of leisure and gathering point**

Outdoor recreation and leisure is important for both residents of the County and for many visitors. Particularly in good weather, many locations including beaches, coastal walks, heritage sites and the uplands can attract significant gatherings or large numbers of visitors leading to heavy littering on sites that have difficult access and are not easily cleaned.

In order to address these and other problems related to litter, Wexford County Council's Draft **Litter Management Plan 2024-2027** proposes objectives and actions under 4 broad headings including current and new initiatives as follows;

- Environment Education & Awareness Measures.
- Litter Prevention & Control and Provision of Waste Management Facilities.
- Enforcement & Regulation Action.
- Partnership with local community /voluntary groups, businesses and schools.

### **G.1 Education & Awareness Measures**

The Environmental Education/Awareness Unit of Wexford County Council delivers education and awareness on litter throughout the County. All sectors of society including schools, businesses, communities and the general public are included in the programme. Anti-litter campaigns aim to raise the consciousness about the impact of littering, dumping and other deleterious activities on the environment in which we live. The programme encourages personal responsibility and engagement by the people of Wexford in tackling the issues and fosters a sense of pride in the county and at local level.

The issue of litter is linked to wider issues in protecting our environment including better waste management practice and prevention and protecting the natural resources of the County.

**Objective:** The focus of Environment Education & Awareness initiatives is to create an awareness of the problems caused by litter pollution and dumping and to encourage people including young people to deal with their waste in a safe environmentally friendly (prevent, reduce, reuse, recycle) manner using legitimate waste management services. Specific actions and initiatives (current and proposed) in this area include;

<b>Number</b>	<b>Proposed Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Measure output</b>
G.1.1	Establishment of an Environment Education and Awareness Unit in the Climate Change and Environment Section with an Environment Education & Awareness Officer and 1.5 Clerical Officers support.	Senior Engineer/Administrative Officer.	Q2 2024	Completion and establishment of unit.
G.1.2	Continue to participate in An Taisce's Green Schools Programme,	Environment Education/Awareness Unit.	2024-2027 duration of the Plan	Percentage of Schools participating and with Green Flags.
G.1.3	Launch a Campaign about Roadside Litter using radio, local papers, social media, posters and leaflets.	Environment Education/Awareness Officer/ Administrative Officer	Q3 2024	Completion and data on the views on social media, radio adverts etc.

G.1.4.	Continue to promote the “Leave No Trace” outdoor ethics Campaign in Schools through workshops,	Environment Education/Awareness Officer	2024-2027 duration of the Plan.	Completion and number of Workshops held etc.
G.1.5.	Introduce the “Picker Pals” Litter Scheme into Primary Schools	Environment Education/Awareness Officer	Q3 2024 and after.	Number of Schools participating
G.1.6	Continue to Support the National Spring Clean Campaign in April each year and support Community/Voluntary Groups with materials and the collection of Waste gathered.	Environment Education/Awareness Officer	Annually during the term of the Plan 2024-2027	Number of Comm/Vol. Groups taking part etc.
G.1.7	Conduct a Campaign in relation to cigarette litter (most common item of litter) particularly butts and vape litter.	Environment Education/Awareness Officer and AO Environment Section	From Q2 2024 onwards	Impact in relation to NLPMS statistics for cigarette litter.
G.1.8	Supporting Tidy Towns Groups with materials, advice and workshops on various topics.	Environment Education/Awareness Unit.	Ongoing during the Term of the Plan 2024-2027	Performance of Wexford Towns and Villages in the National Tidy Towns Competition.
G.1.9	Continuing Campaigns and Initiatives on the subject of Dog Fouling – Advertising, Social Media Advertising, Green Dog Walker, Environment Warden Patrols, Poop Scoop provision, bins and signage etc.	Environment Education/Awareness Unit.  Environment Wardens  Municipal District Staff	Commencing Q2 2024	NLPMS Statistics for dog fouling & level of complaints received.
G.1.10	Hold an annual “Keep Wexford Beautiful” Competition for Towns/Villages/Estates and Community/Voluntary Groups culminating in the annual Environment Awards in November.	Environment Education & Awareness Unit.	Annually during the term of the Plan 2024-2027	Number of entrants and the number and variety of groups achieving awards.
G.1.11	Assist, Support and Promote the Re-turn Ireland Deposit and Return Initiative for plastic drink bottles and metal drinks cans.	Environment Education & Awareness Unit	From Feb. 2024 onwards	Volume of bottles & cans returned and a possible reduction in litter.



G.1.12	Organise the "Rubbish Film Festival" for secondary schools TY involving a film-making workshop and the production of a short environmental advertisement.	Environment Education & Awareness Unit	Q3 2024	No. of participating schools.
G.1.13	Highlight successful litter/waste prosecutions against offenders on social media and traditional media.	Environment Section	Q2 2024 onwards	No. of prosecutions and consequent publicity.
G.1.14	Continue to organise the Annual Environment Artwork Competition and the Christmas Recycled Christmas Decoration competition for Schools each year.	Environment Education/Awareness Unit	Summer for Artwork and Christmas for Decoration Competition 2024-2027	No. of entrants in each competition.
G.1.15	Attendance at Festivals/Shows/Exhibitions with a mobile unit.	Environment Education/Awareness Unit.	Q2 2024 onwards	No of Events attended.

## **G.2 Litter Prevention & Control**

Wexford County Council operates litter prevention and control measures throughout the County. The five municipal districts of Gorey-Kilmuckridge, Enniscorthy, Wexford, New Ross and the Borough District of Wexford work with Waste Management playing a key role in delivering this service at local level.

They have taken on much of the duties previously undertaken by town councils and ensure that all towns in the county have equal access to a range of services appropriate to their size. Services include street cleaning, litter bin maintenance, the removal of illegal dumping and maintenance of signage.

**Objective:** to improve upon litter prevention and control measures to help prevent the creation of litter, including the provision of a network of facilities to encourage the recycling of household waste by the people of County Wexford. To operate efficient street sweeping and bin emptying services for the County in order to prevent and control litter.

<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Action</u></b>	<b><u>Responsible</u></b>	<b><u>Timeline</u></b>	<b><u>Outputs</u></b>
G.2.1	Review Road Sweeping & Bin Emptying Operations with District Engineers to ensure a comprehensive and efficient service to	Road District Engineers & Admin Officer Environment	Q4 2024	More efficient operations etc.

	prevent & control litter in the County			
G.2.2	Operate and promote the use of the Network of Household Recycling Centres in the 4 main urban centres.	Waste Mgt. Engineer & Environment Section	Ongoing through life of Plan.	No. of visitors through Centres.
G.2.3	Review the operation of the Community Wheel Bin Scheme.	Environment Section	Q2 2024	No of Community Groups active through the Scheme
G.2.4	To utilise the DECC Anti-Dumping Funding to implement preventative measures such as gates, fencing and landscaping at Litter Black-spots.	Environment Section. Environment Crew.	Annually through the life of the Plan 2024-2027,	No. of Litter Black-spots improved.
G.2.5	To review and improve the emptying schedule of the 110 bottle/can sites around the County.	Waste Mgt. Engineer & Environment Crew & Contractor	Q2 2024	No of Complaints about Bottlebins.
G.2.6	To hold more Community and Hazardous Waste (e.g. paints) days through the term of the LMP.	Environment Section & Environment Crew	Q3 2024	No. of days held and amount of material collected.
G.2.7	To provide poop scooper dispensers & bins in towns, parks and Blue Flag Beaches.	Environment Section in co-operation with Municipal District Staff	From Q2 2024	Dispensers provided and bags used.

### **G.3 Enforcement Action.**



*Wexford County Council Environment Section Wardens*

Enforcement of all relevant legislation is a key priority for Wexford County Council's strategy to deal with litter. The Council is fully committed to enforcement of the Litter Pollution Acts 1997, as amended and the Waste Management Acts 1996, as amended and all other relevant legislation or bylaws.

Five enforcement staff with office support patrol the County on a daily basis investigating littering and illegal dumping offences. An Environment Crew of 10 respond to illegal dumping/fly-tipping reports received by the Council. All reports of littering and dumping received directly by Wexford County Council or by the EPA are recorded on the environmental complaints system where they are tracked from complaint through investigation, clean up, and enforcement. Fixed penalty notices plus clean-up costs are issued whenever adequate evidence is found or provided. Direct prosecution is used when deemed appropriate. Prosecution is also taken against those who don't pay.

**Objective:** to use the Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as amended) and the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended) to bring strong enforcement action against offenders involved in littering and dumping and to reduce the number of litter black-spots in the County.

## Actions

Number	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Outputs
G.3.1	Operate a complaint logging system for litter & waste complaints to ensure they are investigated.	AO Environment Section	Throughout the Life of the Plan 2024-2027	Number of Complaints received & closed.
G.3.2	To review the Impact of Anti-litter signage with a view to improving same.	AO Environment Section & Environment Crew	Q2 2024	Design of Signage.
G.3.3	Targeted Patrols by Environment Wardens for dog fouling, casual littering, beach littering, litter outside businesses, the misuse of public litter bins in various areas etc.	AO Environment & Environment Wardens	Q2 2024 onwards	Number of patrols carried out etc. & type.
G.3.4	Adoption of the LGMA Guidelines on the use of CCTV for litter/waste enforcement in conjunction with a Plan adopted for the use of CCTV by the CE of Wexford County Council.	SE Environment Section	Q3 2024 onwards	No of Sites at which deployed.  No. of fines issued & prosecutions taken.
G.3.5	Review of Action taken under the Waste Presentation Bye-Laws 2018 with a view to improving same.	SEE Waste Enforcement.	Q2 2024	No. of surveys, Notices & Fines issued.
G.3.6	Review the problem of Takeaway Packaging and if it is feasible to have the name of the premises on their packaging and that owners are complying	Environment Section and Environment Wardens	Q2 2024	No. of businesses consulted & co-operating.



	with their legal obligations with regard to Litter.			
G.3.7	Review of the Litter/Waste Complaints System to consider improved feedback for complainants.	Environment Section/Customer Service & I.T.	Q2 2024 onwards	Number of complaints Closed.
G.3.8	Deploying 2 Environment Patrol Wardens to implement the provisions of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as amended) and the Waste Presentation Bye-Laws 2018.	AO Environment Environment Patrol Wardens	Throughout the life of the Plan 2024-2027	Number of Fines Issued.  Number of prosecutions taken.
G.3.9	To review the waste collection arrangements for rented properties with a view to encouraging landlords to include waste collection costs in rent arrangements to avoid the build-up of waste at private rented properties	Waste enforcement Team.  Environment Section	From Q3 2024	Reduction in complaints about litter at private rented properties.
G.3.10	Review the issue of illegal commercial signage on public roads in breach of Section 19 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as amended).	Environment Section  Roads Section	From Q3 2024	No of Fines issued under Section 19
G.3.11	Increased use of Anti-Litter Signage with details of penalties thereon.	Environment Section & Environment Crew	From Q2 2024	No of signs erected.
G.3.12	Promote the use of the Council's website, phone number 053	Environment Section	From Q2 2024 on	No. of complaints received by

	9196000 and the EPA "See it Say it" App. to encourage the reporting of Litter and Waste Problems to Wexford County Council			Wexford Co. Council.
G.3.13	Examine the use of branded signage for vehicles for the WCC Environment Service to improve efficiencies and increase visibility.	Environment Section & Machinery Yard	From Q3 2024 on	Number & types of sign used.
G.3.14	Continue with Environment Crew for illegal dumping response and pro-active Litter/Waste Initiatives.	Waste Operation Engineer & Crew	From Q2 2024 onwards.	Number of Clean-Ups. Prosecutions & projects undertaken.

**G.4 Partnership with local community/voluntary groups, schools, businesses and others.**

**Objective:** The objective is to increase involvement with local community groups, schools, businesses and voluntary organisations to help address the problem of litter pollution around County Wexford. There are many groups and individuals carrying out incredible work to help maintain and improve towns, villages, beaches, parks, woodlands and other scenic areas in their local area. Through some existing and some new initiatives Wexford County Council hopes to increase participation in these schemes to help fight against the scourge that is Litter.

***Actions:***

Measure No.	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Outputs
G.4.1	Participate in An Taice's National Spring Clean Campaign Annually.	Env. Educ. & Awareness Unit	Q2 Annually	Increase numbers & tonnages
G.4.2	Run the Keep Wexford Beautiful Competition each year.	Env. Educ. & Awareness Unit	Q3 Annually	Increase no. of groups

G.4.3	Hold an Environment Awards Night for Community Groups, Schools and Individuals	Env. Educ. & Awareness	Q4 Annually	Culmination of KWB Competition
G.4.4	Review of the Community Wheel Bin Scheme for Community Groups to improve effectiveness	Environment Section	Q2 2024	New and Updated Scheme
G.4.5	Provide Support, Assistance and Advice to Tidy Towns Groups for the National Competition.	Env. Educa. & Awareness	Annual Support	Improve participation and Tidy Towns Results
G.4.6	Design and Distribute Information to Business Owners in relation to their obligations with regard to Litter and Waste Legislation.	Env. Educ. & Awareness Environment Wardens	Q2 2024-	Improve Cleanliness outside of businesses
G.4.7	Establish Links with Chamber of Commerce Branches with a view to promoting good environmental practice with waste among Chamber Members.	Env. Educ. & Awareness Unit	Q3 2024 -	No of Meetings & Initiatives with Chamber of Commerce.
G.4.8	Investigate the operation of Adopt a Road/Bring Bank Schemes in other Counties to see if suitable for Co. Wexford.	Environment Section Environment Wardens	Q3 2024	Check out other Counties

## **Details of Some Community based Initiatives.**

### **1). National Spring Clean**

National Spring Clean is a Countrywide initiative held in April each year incorporating a partnership between community/voluntary organisations, resident groups, schools, An Taisce and County Councils. The objective of the programme is threefold;

- (i) To heighten awareness of litter and waste issues.
- (ii) To encourage clean ups during the month of April.
- (iii) To promote sustained practical involvement in looking after the environment.

This initiative has been very successful in Co. Wexford with 1,023 community/voluntary groups participating in 2022, and 1,331 groups taking part in 2021.

Interested groups register with Wexford County Council and An Taisce during the month of April. The groups are provided with help packs with information on health and safety, recycling etc.

The groups are also provided with bags, gloves, litter pickers and National Spring Clean tabards for volunteers by Wexford County Council and arrangements are made to collect waste or allow access to the Council's Waste Management Facility.

Wexford County Council continues to promote this excellent initiative that helps clean up many local parks, roads, estates, beaches and scenic areas during April and early May each year. The Council provides facilities where the waste collected by the groups can be deposited or arrangements can be made to collect the waste from more rural locations.

## **2). Gum Litter Task Force**

The Gum Litter Task Force Campaign involves a partnership between the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), representatives for the Food and Drinks Industry and for chewing gum, County Councils and local community groups. The main objective of the campaign is to reduce gum litter and change people's behaviour towards littering.

The campaign entails national TV and press advertising, local poster campaigns, monitoring local areas for any improvements in gum litter deposits and the distribution of gum pouches and gum wraps in conjunction with schools and local community groups.

Through the National Tidy Towns competition, Wexford town was the winner of the gum Litter Task Force prize for large towns in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016. This campaign will be promoted during the current Litter Management Plan.

## **3). Keep Wexford Beautiful Campaign**

The Keep Wexford Beautiful Campaign has been running for 45 years embracing a wide variety of initiatives to encourage community involvement in environmental improvements in local areas.

The current Keep Wexford Beautiful Campaign includes a competition for Tidy Towns groups, resident associations, estate management groups, development associations, schools, youth groups and other community organisations. The categories in the current competition include;

- Best Environmentally Aware and Presented Residential Area.
- Best Environmentally Aware and Presented Town/Village.
- Best Community Environment Initiative.
- Best Heritage Preservation and Conservation Project.
- Best Community Coastal Management Initiative.
- Best Environmental Improvement in Accessibility by a Community.
- Best New Entry.
- Awards for Outstanding Individual Contribution to the Environment.



The Campaign culminates with a high profile Environment Awards night in November of each year with extensive media coverage. Individual prizes range from €200-€500 with commemorative plaques and certificates in addition to tree vouchers to all entrants. The Campaign is growing in scale and profile each year. In 2023 there were over 63 entrants in the competition which attracts much local press coverage.

#### **4).Community Wheel Bins**

Wexford County Council will provide a community wheel bin and recycling bin to groups who are actively involved in cleaning up their area. To encourage responsibility for long term litter management, community development groups and committees around the County are encouraged to part fund new litter bins in their area. Over 200 community/voluntary groups avail of this scheme.

#### **5).Tidy Towns Competition.**

Wexford County Council has worked very closely with Tidy Towns groups around the County over many years. Thirty-one Tidy Towns Groups took part in the National Competition in 2023 with the village of Blackwater coming out best in Co. Wexford on 373 marks (3 short of overall winner Abbeylax. Results of the National Tidy Towns competition results were announced on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September in Dublin. Wexford Tidy Towns secured a gold medal, Enniscorthy Tidy Towns won a silver medal while Gorey and New Ross groups both secured a bronze medal. Ahare River Biodiversity Group won a “Waters and Communities” Award. Bree Village won an Endeavour Award,

The Council has also assisted groups with professional advice from former Tidy Towns judges and landscapers to help groups with their development plans and Tidy Towns applications. The Tidy Towns is an important focus for many community groups and it helps greatly in encouraging local communities to improve the presentation of their towns and villages. Wexford County Council will continue with its support for Tidy Towns Groups in striving to land some of the big national prizes for a County Wexford Group.

#### **6). Anti Dumping Initiative**

This national initiative supports larger projects that will help to reduce incidents of illegal dumping by providing funding for projects to tackle the problem using a collaborative approach involving local authorities, communities and other state agencies. The initiative focuses on four key areas:

- prevention
- abatement
- education
- enforcement.

Projects can include the cost of removing waste from particular areas, but more crucially, on works that help to prevent a reoccurrence of illegal dumping. This can be projects such as the Mattress Amnesties, Bikes for Africa or Litter Black-spot Clean-Ups with fencing/gates or landscaping works. This initiative commenced in 2017.

## **H. Conclusion**

The objective of litter management programmes and initiatives is to reduce the impact of litter pollution on the streetscapes and landscapes of County Wexford thereby improving the visual aspect of the County for local citizens and visitors to the county. Activities under the headings of Litter Prevention and Control, Environment Education & Awareness, Enforcement Action, Community Involvement and the Provision of Waste Management Facilities above highlight how Wexford County Council is approaching this challenge.

The National Litter Pollution Surveys (2022) showed that 88% (national average 80%) of surveyed sites were “litter free” or “slightly littered” with no areas “significantly” or “grossly” littered. In the Irish Business Against Litter League for 2022 they placed Gorey 10 out of 40 Cleaner than European Norms. While this shows that the situation with regard to some aspects of the problem of litter pollution has improved, there are many areas that require ongoing action. While litter is symptomatic of human activity, it is expected that with the co-operation of Wexford County Council, local community organisations, businesses, schools, families and individuals – improvements in the war against litter pollution can be built upon to make County Wexford a better place in which to live, work, study and visit.

## **I. Performance Measurement**

In addition to the Performance measures listed on individual actions, the following shall be used to measure performance of action set out under the Draft Wexford County Council Litter Management Plan 2024-2027.

- National Litter Pollution Monitoring System Results.
- Irish Business Against Litter Results.
- National Tidy Towns Results.
- Number of complaints received.
- Number of Fixed Penalty Notices Issued.
- Number of Litter/Waste Prosecutions Taken.
- Percentage of Schools taking part in the Green Schools Programme.
- No. of Community/Voluntary Groups taking part in the “Keep Wexford Beautiful” Competition.

## Appendix 1

### Wexford County Council Main Contact Details - Environment Section.

Customer Service Unit	053 919 6000
Wexford County Council Emergency No.	053 919 6000
Email <a href="mailto:customerservice@wexfordcoco.ie">customerservice@wexfordcoco.ie</a>	
Dog Warden	087 6293043
For Details of and advise on recycling see Wexford County council website.	wexfordcoco.ie

## Appendix 2:

### **Wexford County Council Civic Amenity Sites**

#### **Wexford & Rosslare Municipal Districts**

Holmestown Waste Management Facility  
Barntown,  
Co. Wexford.  
Y35 Y28W  
Tel: 053 9196455

#### **Enniscorthy Municipal District**

Enniscorthy Recycling Centre  
Kilcannon,  
Old Dublin Road,  
Enniscorthy,  
Co. Wexford.  
Y21 KC43  
Tel: 053 923 9790

#### **New Ross Municipal District**

New Ross Recycling Centre  
Hewittsland,  
New Ross,  
Co Wexford.  
Y34 HT99  
Tel: 051 440722

#### **Gorey Municipal District**

Gorey Business Park,  
Ramstown,  
Gorey,  
Co. Wexford.  
Y25 KT35  
Tel: 053 9431001