



Meath PPN – Environmental Issues

Date: February 2017
Job Reference: 192416



REDC

Background and Objectives

- / Meath PPN was established to create a new way for the public to engage with Meath County Council. It is part of a broader national programme which facilitates communities to have more of a say in how local government works.
- / Meath PPN has over 400 members comprising of representatives from a variety of community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental groups based across all six Municipal Districts in Meath.
- / With a lack of research available on the prevalence of illegal waste deposition in Co. Meath, Meath PPN commissioned REDC Research and Marketing to better understand this issue and its impact on local communities.
- / This research seeks to gain an insight into the prevalence of this activity in Meath and the opinions of key community stakeholders. This research also provides an opportunity for participants to recommend actions that may help to improve the situation.

Research Methodology

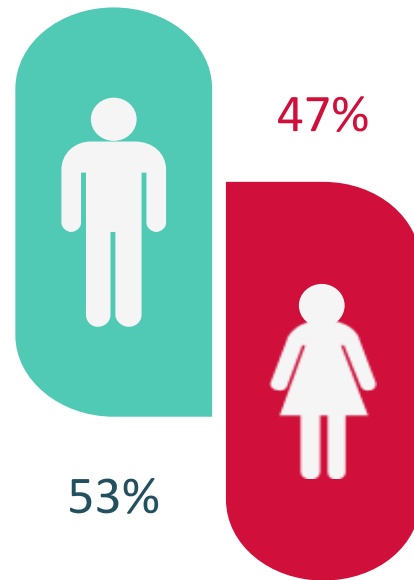
- / RED C Research and Marketing conducted an online survey among a sample provided by Meath County Council and the Meath PPN Secretariat.
- / A total of 903 email invitations were sent. Sample Size of n=175 completes represents a response rate of approximately 19% in total.
- / Fieldwork Dates: 18th January to 9th February 2017.



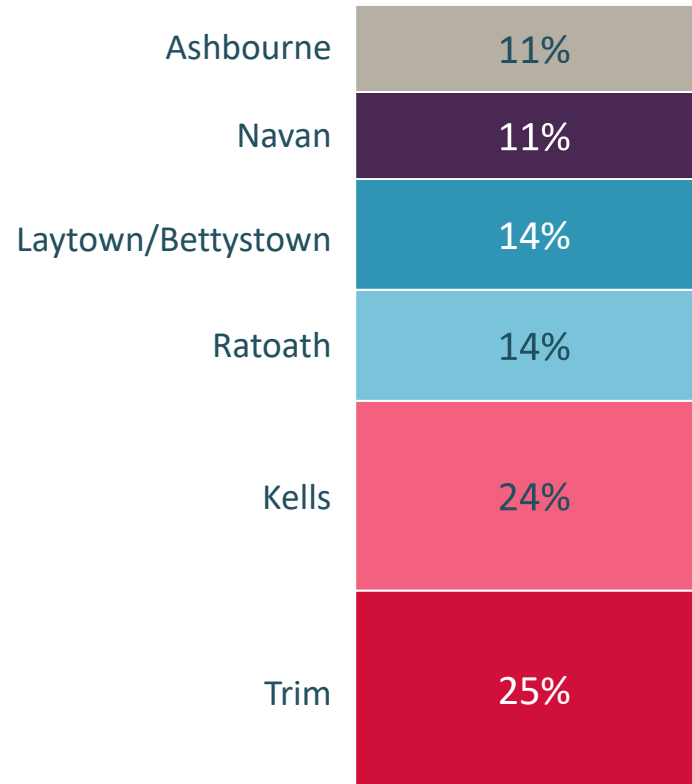
Sample Demographics

(Base: All Respondents n=175)

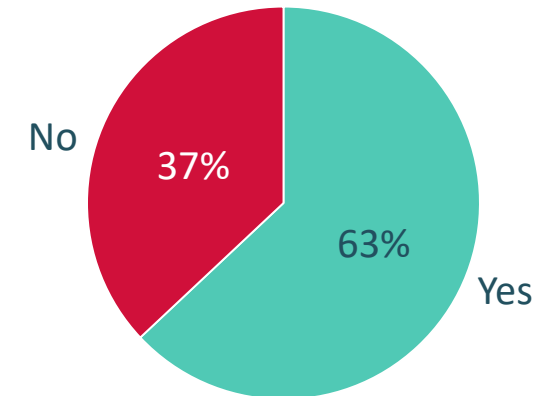
Gender



Municipal District



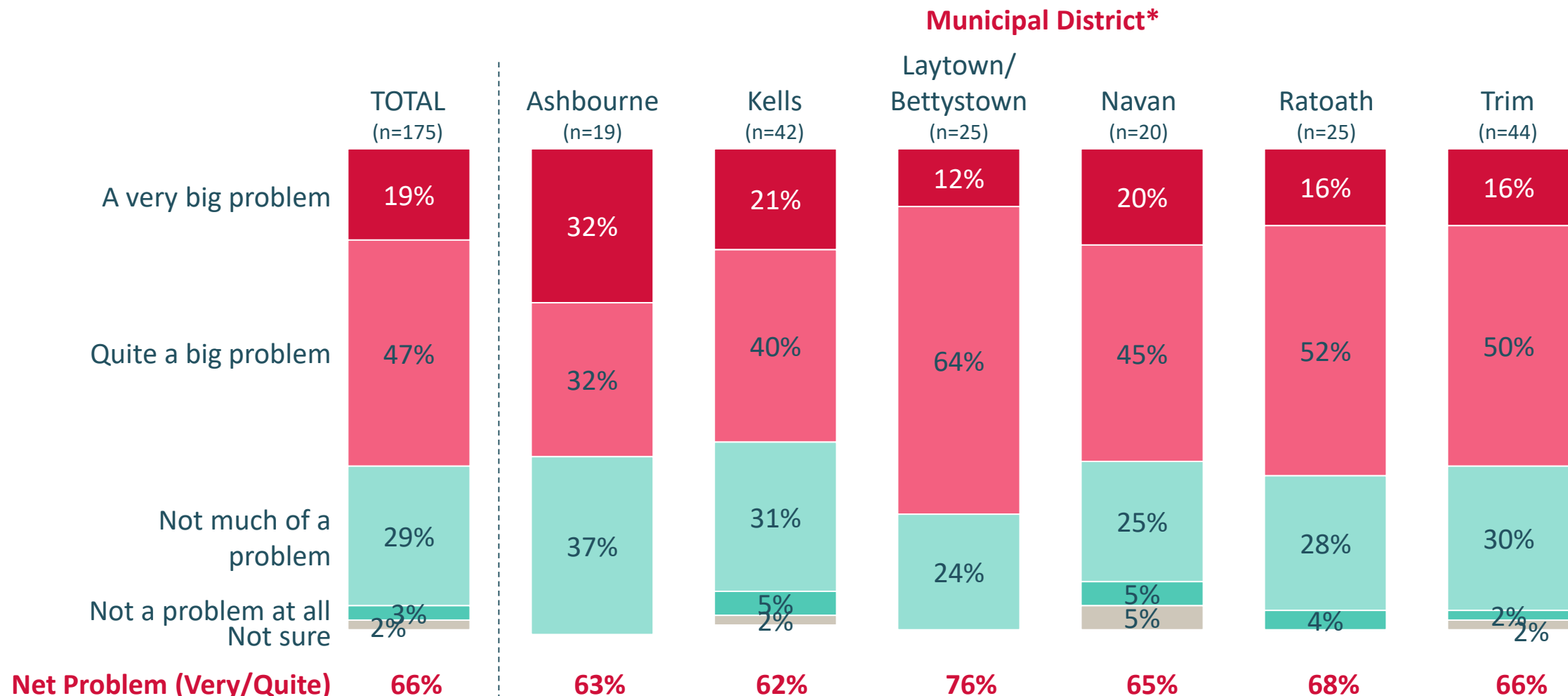
Prefer Anonymity



Illegal Waste Deposition In Your Area

Overall, how much of a problem, if any, is illegal dumping/waste deposition in your area?

(Base: All Respondents n=175)



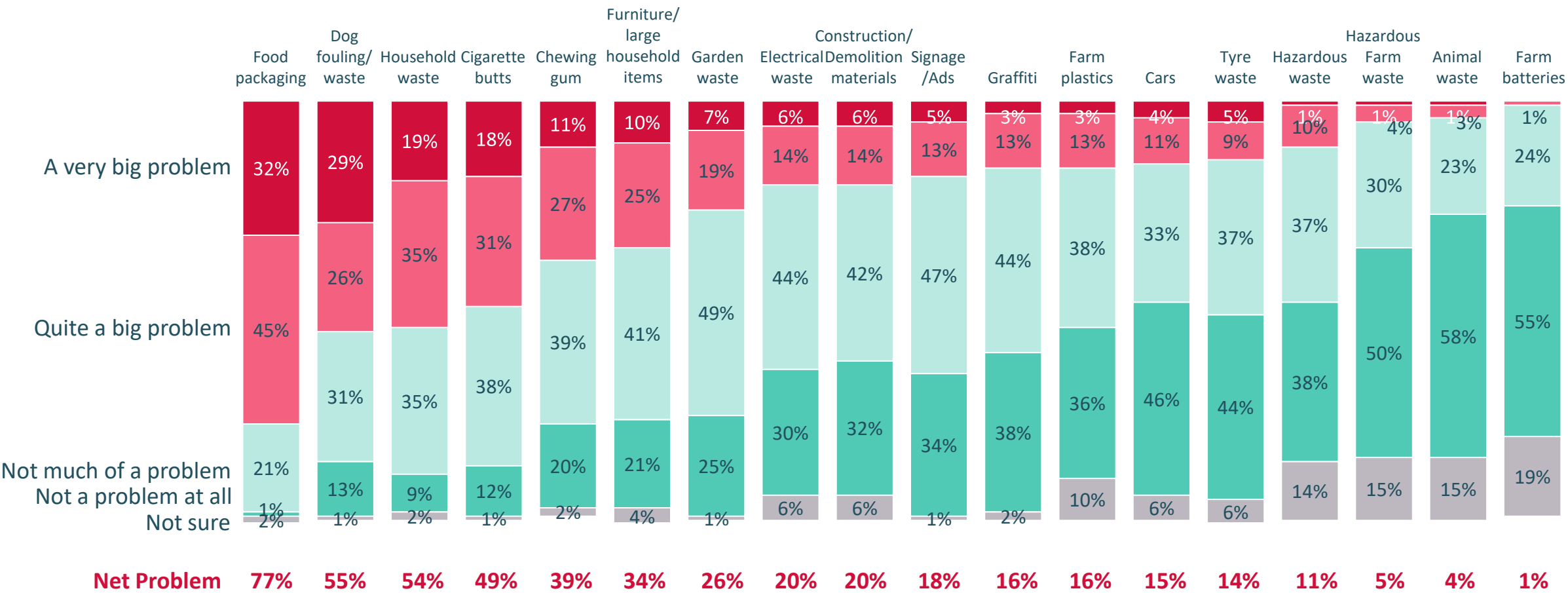
*caution extremely low base sizes

2 in 3 people see illegal waste deposition as a problem in the Meath area with almost 1 in 5 viewing this as a very big problem. When looking at this by Municipal District it is important to note the extremely small sample sizes and this data should be treated as indicative only.

Illegal Deposition of Different Types of Waste In Your Area

Q2. For each of the below types of waste, please select how much of a problem each type is, if at all, for illegal dumping in your area.

(Base: All Respondents n=175)

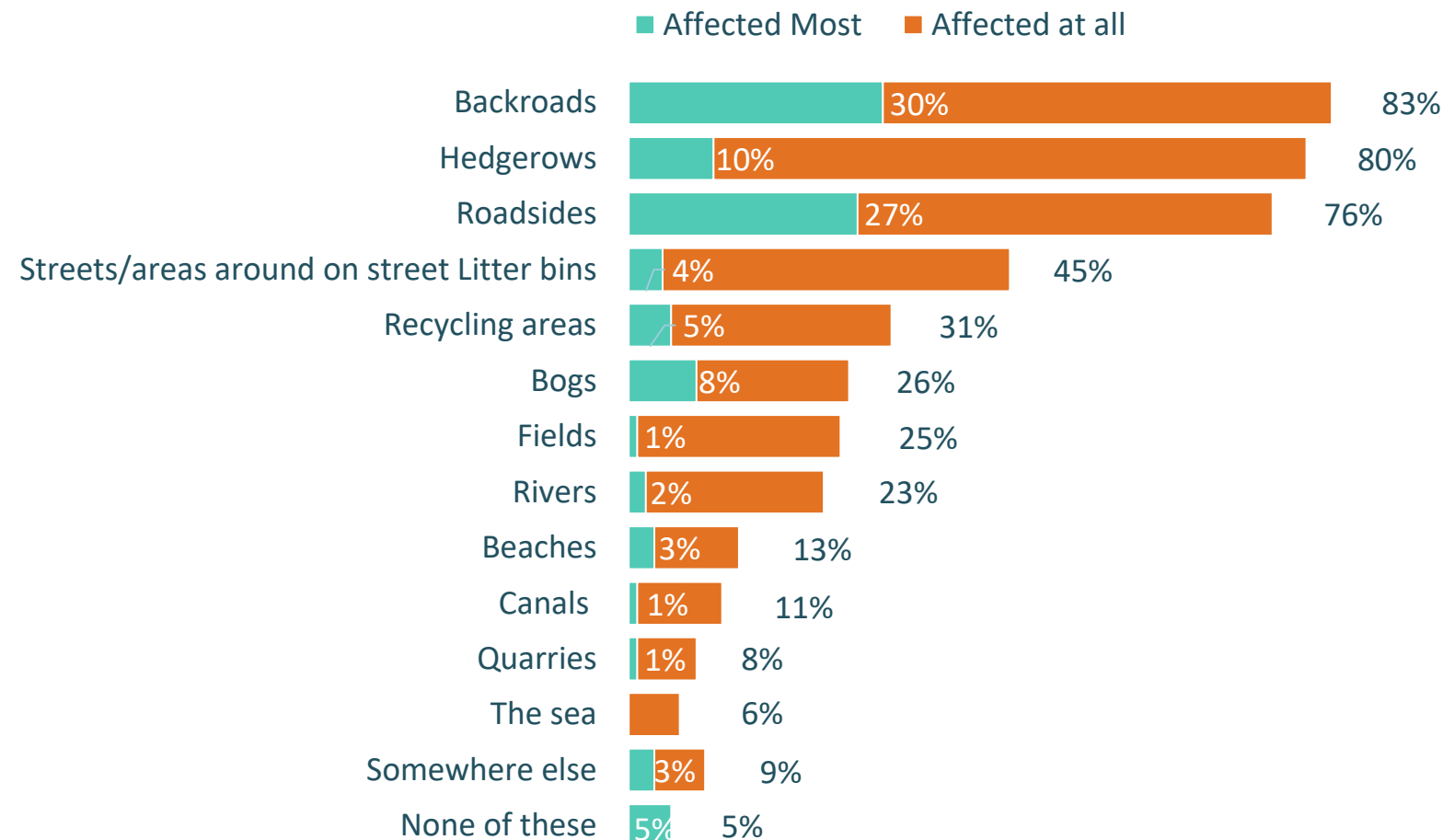


Food packaging, dog fouling, household waste and cigarette butts are viewed as the most problematic types of waste in the Meath region. Hazardous waste, Animal waste and Farm batteries are least likely to be cited as problematic.

Areas Affected By Illegal Waste Deposition

Q3/4. Which of the following areas, if any, are affected by illegal waste deposition in your area? Which area is affected the most by illegal waste deposition?

(Base: All Respondents n=175)



Relative seclusion in the rural areas encourages more irresponsible disposal. Can feel like an invisible perpetrator and no penalty. Track & trace, cameras and prosecution all required to put a stop to this.



Backroads, Roadsides and Hedgerows are the areas of particular concern for illegal waste deposition. Following these it is often areas around publically provided waste disposal facilities that are viewed as most affected. Other specific countryside areas are less likely to be mentioned, although bogs are seen by 1 in 12 to be the most affected area.

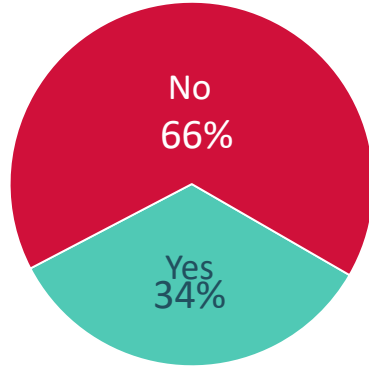
Issues with Water Pollution/Air Quality/Soil Contamination

Q5/7/9. Do you have any issues with the pollution of water/air/soil in your area?

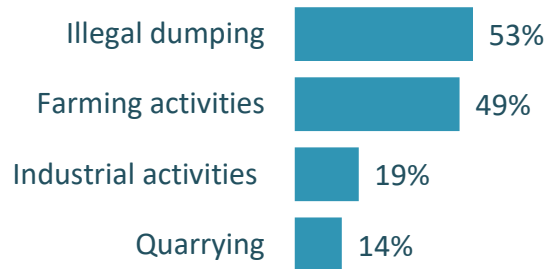
Q6/8/10. Which of the following are contributing to water/air/soil quality issues?

(Base: All Respondents n=175)

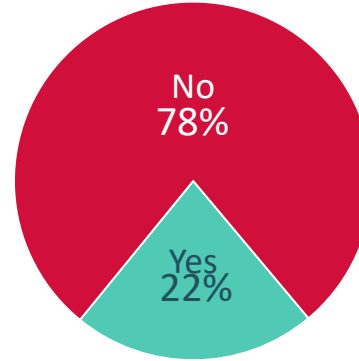
Water Pollution



(n= 59*)



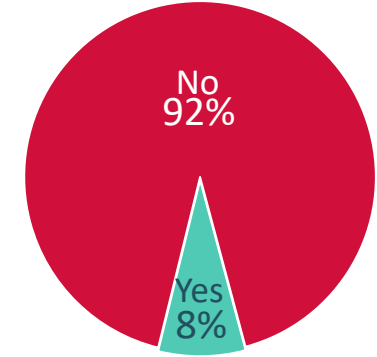
Air Pollution



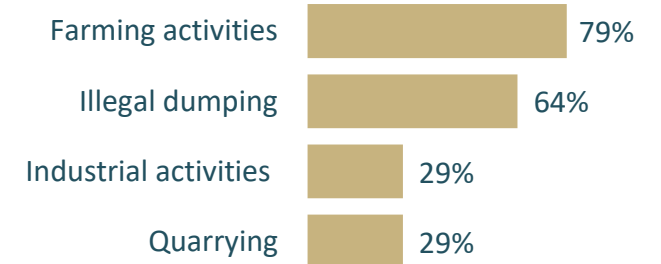
(n= 39*)



Soil Contamination



(n= 14*)

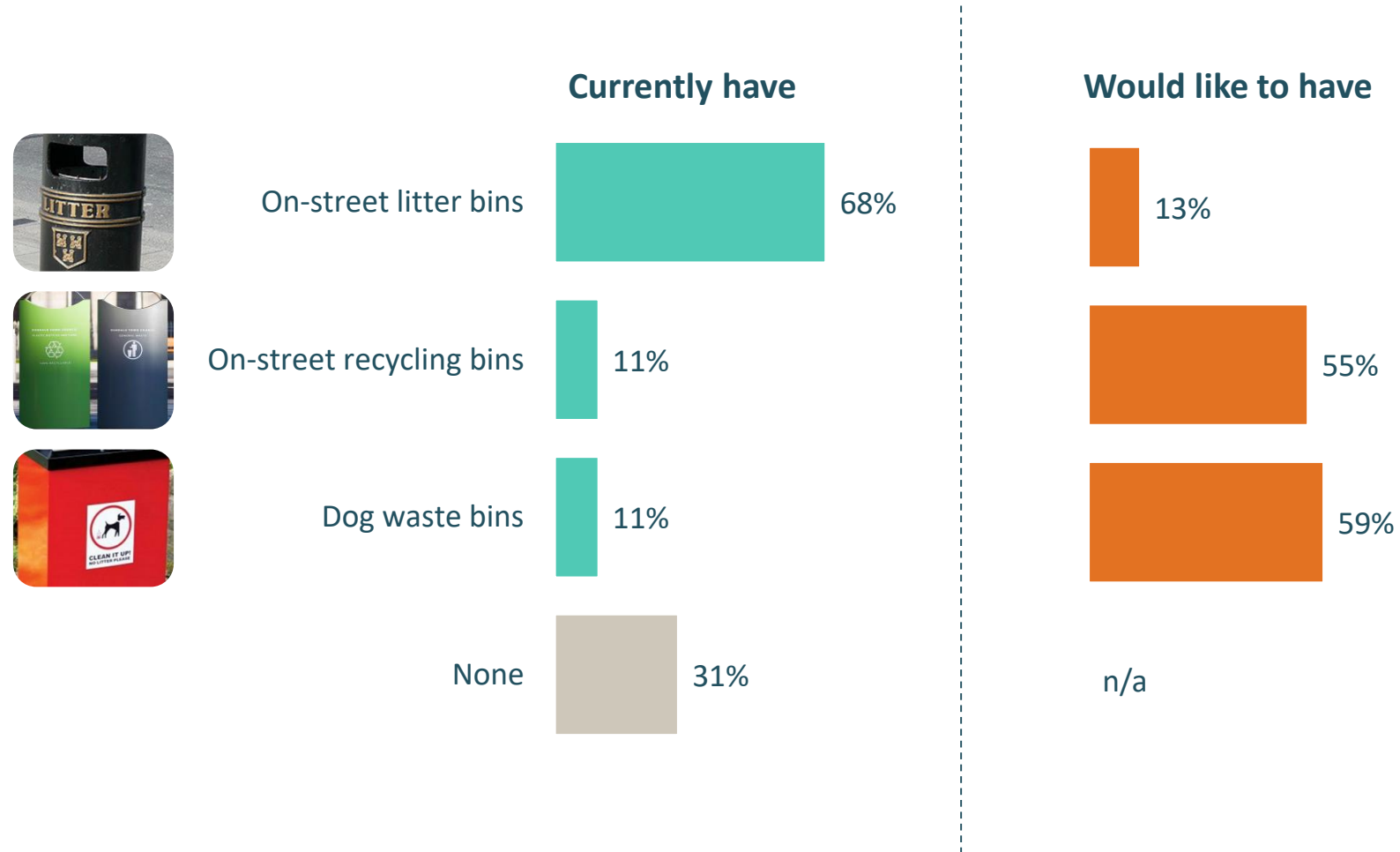


*caution low base sizes

Water and air pollution are viewed as most problematic, with less than 1 in 10 viewing soil contamination as an issue. Illegal dumping is viewed as the main source of water pollution while farming activities are deemed to be an issue across all pollution / contamination types.

On Street Waste Disposal Facilities In Your Area

Q11a. Which of the following do you have in your area?
(Base: All Respondents n=175)



Making waste disposal easy for people is crucial to engagement. Seeing the bins on street will remind of waste disposal, sending out a strong message.

However some fear that more household waste could find its way into on-street bins as an alternative to responsible disposal.

On street litter bins are most prevalent in the Meath area with almost 7 in 10 citing that they are available in their local area however recycling bins are not. On street recycling and dog waste bins fall far below these with just over 1 in 10 having these available locally. Interestingly, almost 1 in 3 say there are no on street waste disposal facilities in their local area.

Improving Waste Infrastructure In Your Area

Q11c. What else, if anything can be done to improve waste infrastructure in your area?

Surveillance and Enforcement of legislation

Not much evidence of any prosecutions for dumping in County Meath - No point having legislation that is not enforced!

Lack of enforcement is the key issue causing frustration. Reporting to the council is risky in neighbourhood areas and is considered pointless as prosecutions are not forthcoming.

The council should have access to private waste companies' customer details to identify those not paying for such services & then investigate how those without service contracts dispose of their rubbish.

CCTV cameras could be used in the worst affected dumping areas.

Identify fly tipping sites and install covert surveillance cameras

Litter wardens need to get out there and just do their jobs properly and if not enough of them, hire more and make it a major three year concerted plan to rid this scourge of our countryside.

Simply - get the litter wardens out and implement the policy fully. If necessary make prosecutions and impose hefty fines to the culprits.

More staff available in litter warden department. It can take 3/4 days for them to respond to a call due to over-demand.

I would suggest CCTV in litter blackspots

Mobile Patrolling to be more visible and more frequent in the locality.

The introduction of CCTV cameras to affected locations and greater enforcement of existing anti-littering legislation more were cited as key ways to address the issue of illegal dumping in County Meath.

Improving Waste Infrastructure In Your Area

Q11c. What else, if anything can be done to improve waste infrastructure in your area?

More Bins and more frequent collections

Availability of bins is essential and regular emptying needed to keep these functional. But need to avoid use of these for household waste disposal - smaller apertures?

I would like to see more public bins available around and that bins are serviced regularly.

Support from local council regarding dog fouling bins and more bins in general.

Meath County Council need to invest in more litter wardens and bins for the area

We would love to have bins and recycling bins installed, but council will not take initiative and put them in. If all voluntary groups were to give up litter picking in morning, just what would council do?

Local Business

Businesses need to adopt a leadership role and demonstrate to the public their commitment to responsible waste disposal. Food businesses are an easy start but work to include factories and offices - educate the staff in a captive audience.

Publicans should be liable for fines if cigarette butts are found outside their premises. It should be compulsory for pubs to have butt boxes at entrances to their premises.

All fast food/takeaway outlets should be obliged to use biodegradable i.e. compostable packaging.

It starts at home or business premises, County Council sites. Clean your own front door and ten yards more!

Increasing the number of on-street bins, particularly recycling and dog waste bins, were highlighted as ways to improve waste infrastructure. Local businesses were also highlighted by respondents as having an important role to play especially fast food outlets and pubs where various types of waste were liable to accumulate.

Improving Waste Infrastructure In Your Area

Q11c. What else, if anything can be done to improve waste infrastructure in your area?

Increase Signage

Signage will declare care and responsibility and act as constant reminders

More roadside signs needed to assist in education of public.

I would welcome some signage along the roadside asking motorists not to throw coffee cups, cans, empty takeaway bags etc. from their cars and to bring it home.

No dog fouling signs to erected on the village green- this is a new problem now that the canal is closed for works people taking their dogs to the green and not cleaning up after them

Charges are definitely a force behind illegal waste disposal - but education and penalty will have to encourage acceptance of these.

The recent increase in charges at the Navan recycling centre are now a major deterrent. Lower charges or none at all would be a major incentive to use the recycling centre.

Free recycling at recycling centres once a month or even every two months. Council to supply compost bins free to households for food waste as private collectors will probably get round to charging for the brown bin before too long

I think the cost of waste disposal is very high and that encourages people to dump illegally if they do not have the financial means to pay to dispose of it.

Lower waste disposal prices

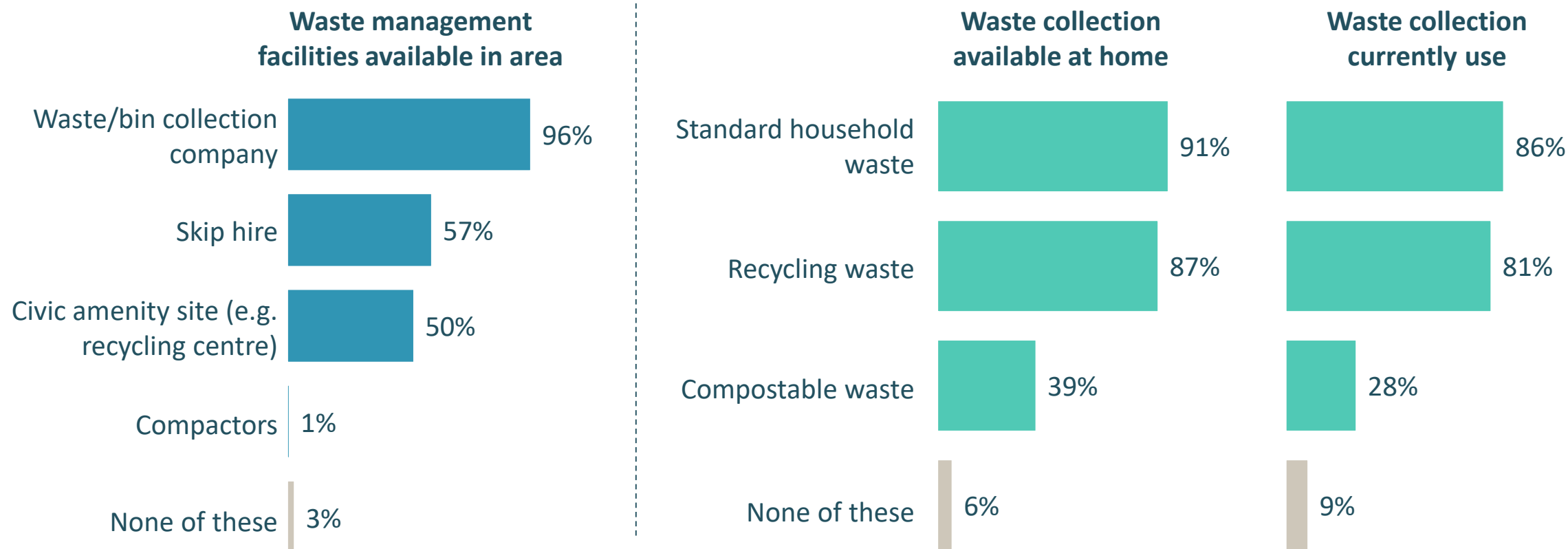
Increasing the amount of signage to provide the public with information on correct waste disposal methods and lowering the prices associated with waste disposal were also viewed as ways to improve infrastructure and alleviate the problem of illegal waste deposition.

Waste Management Facilities Available

(Base: All Respondents n=175)

Q12. Which of the following waste management facilities do you have in your area?

Q13a/b. Which of the following types of waste collection services are available at your home/Which do you currently use?

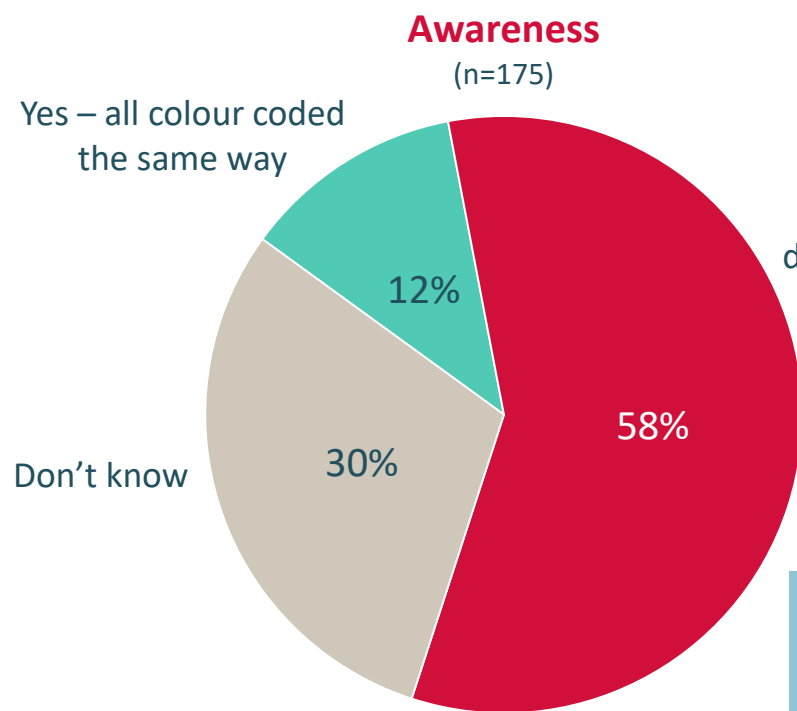


Almost all respondents have some form of waste collection available in their area. 1 in 2 have a civic amenity site locally. Standard household waste and recycling collections are most frequently available at home and there is a strong uptake of these. While compostable waste collection is less widespread the proportional usage is lower than other collection types.

Q12/13a/13b

Colour Coding of Waste Disposal Bins in Meath

Q.15/16 Are waste collection bins in Meath all colour coded in the same way or does the colour coding differ by area?
(Base: All Respondents n=175)

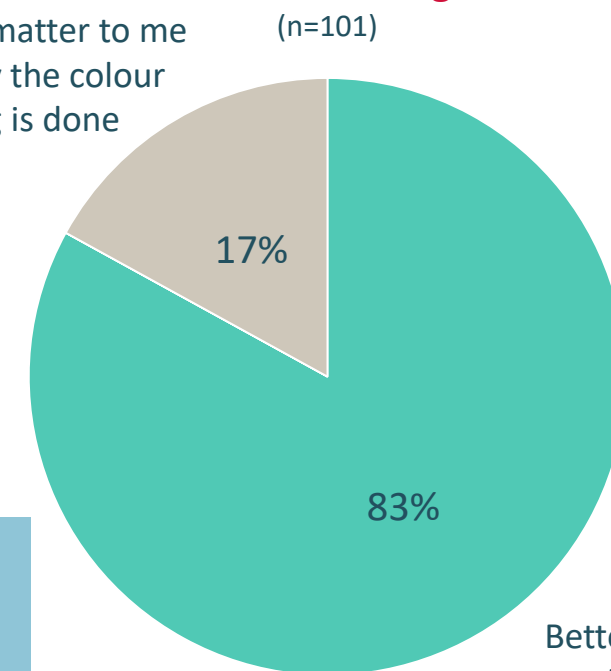


No – colour coding differs depending on area/provider



Independent agencies with inconsistent signals can make it difficult to see a strong and concerted approach to waste disposal. Need to remove any sense of uncertainty or inconsistency

Opinions of Colour Coding



Better if all colour coded in the same way

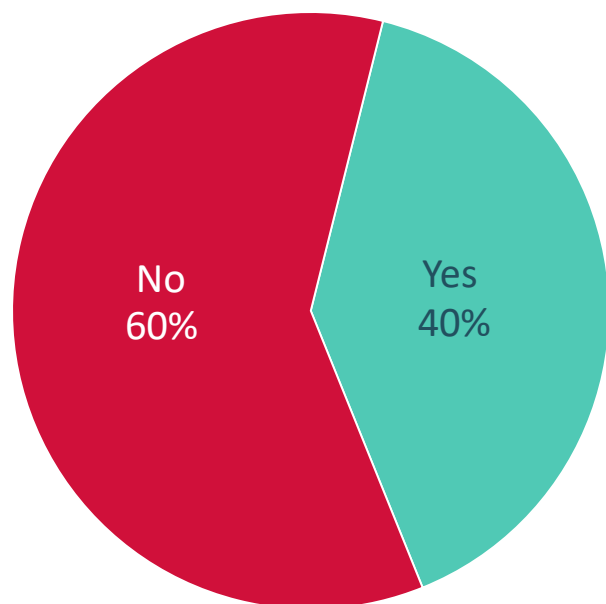
Of those who believe that colour coding is not uniform across County Meath over 4 in 5 believe that it would be better if all bins in were colour coded in the same way.

Awareness of Litter Prevention Awareness and Education Programmes in Meath

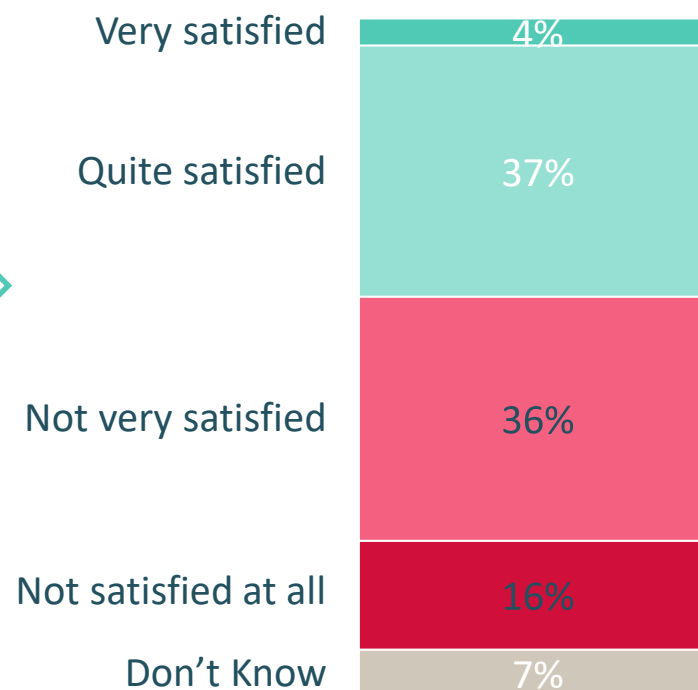
Q17/18. Are you aware of any litter prevention awareness and education programmes in Meath? How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with how these programmes are working?

(Base: All Respondents n=175)

Aware



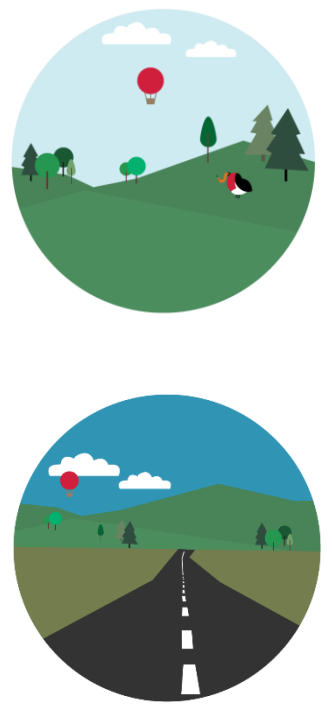
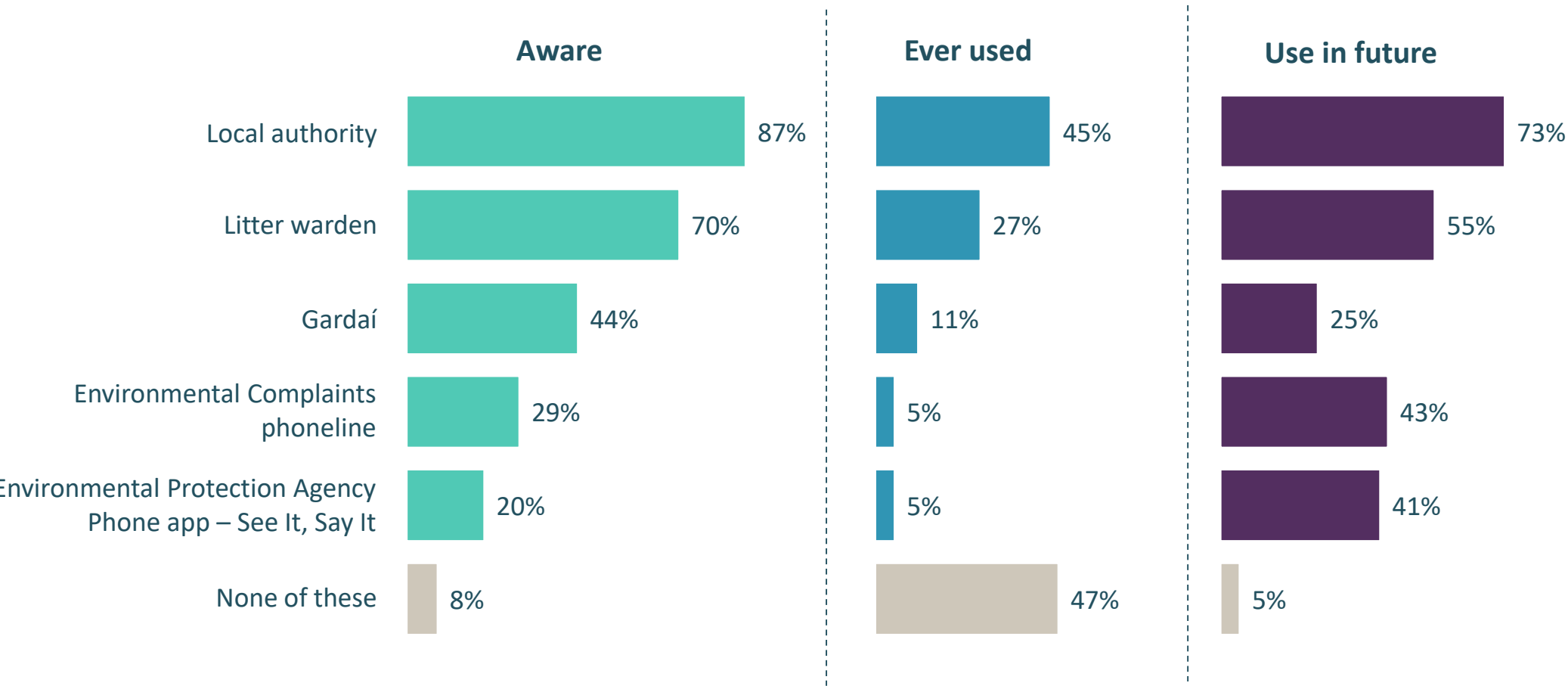
Satisfaction (n=101)



Just 2 in 5 are aware of any litter prevention awareness and education programmes in Meath with only 2 in 5 of those aware of these programmes satisfied with them.

Awareness/Usage of Channels to Report Illegal Waste Disposal

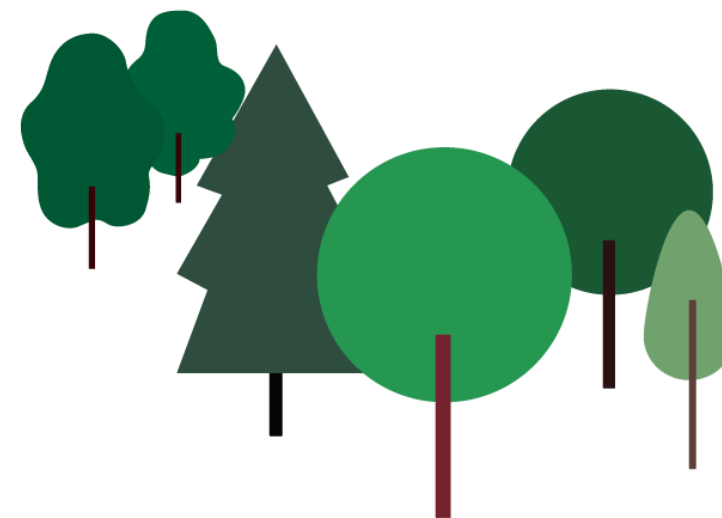
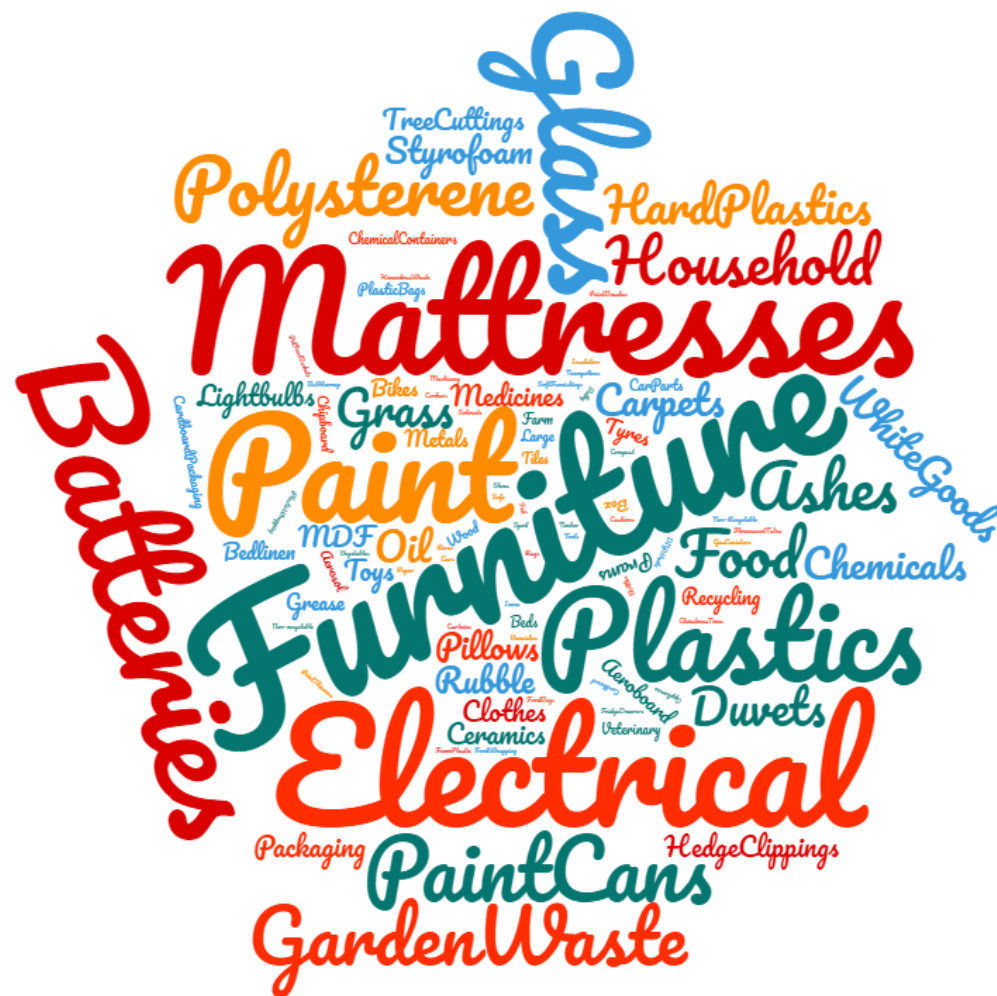
Q.19/20/21. Were you aware that you could report illegal waste disposal through the following means?
Which have you ever used to report illegal waste disposal? Which would you be most likely to use on the future?
(Base: All Respondents n=175)



Awareness levels are highest for local channels with over 2 in 5 having used the local authority channel in the past. When looking to the future local authority and litter wardens remain most likely to be used but propensity to utilise the Environmental Complaints Phone line and the EPA App rise significantly, indicating a need to raise awareness for these channels.

Waste Materials Most Difficult to Dispose of

Q.22 What domestic/waste materials, if any, do you personally find most difficult to dispose of?

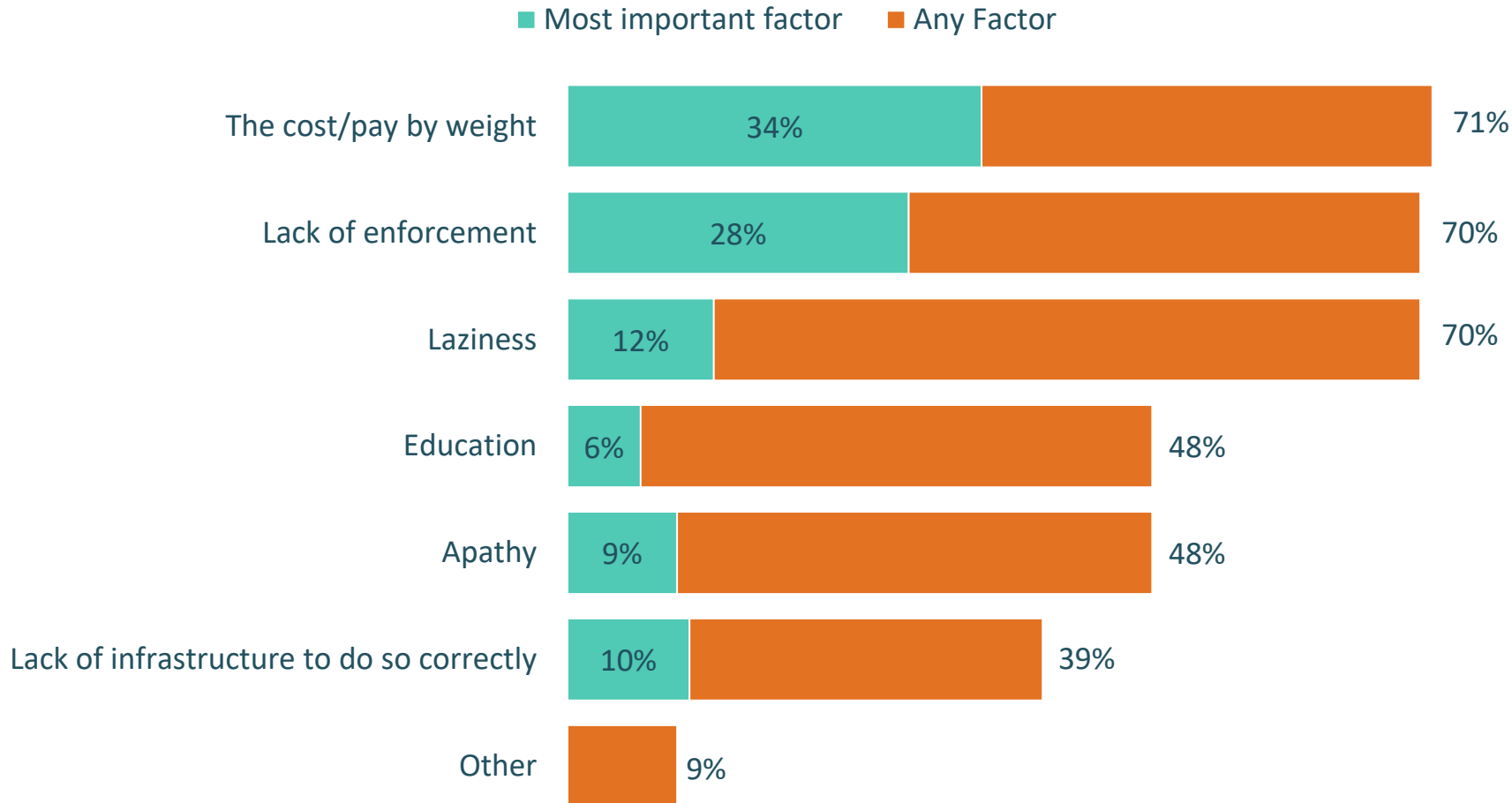


Large items of furniture, mattresses and electrical are most often cited as being difficult to dispose of. Smaller items such as batteries, paint and plastics are also cited frequently with garden waste another category of concern.

What Prevents People from Disposing of Waste Correctly?

Q23. Which of the following things, if any, in your opinion prevent people from disposing of waste correctly?

(Base: All Respondents n=175)

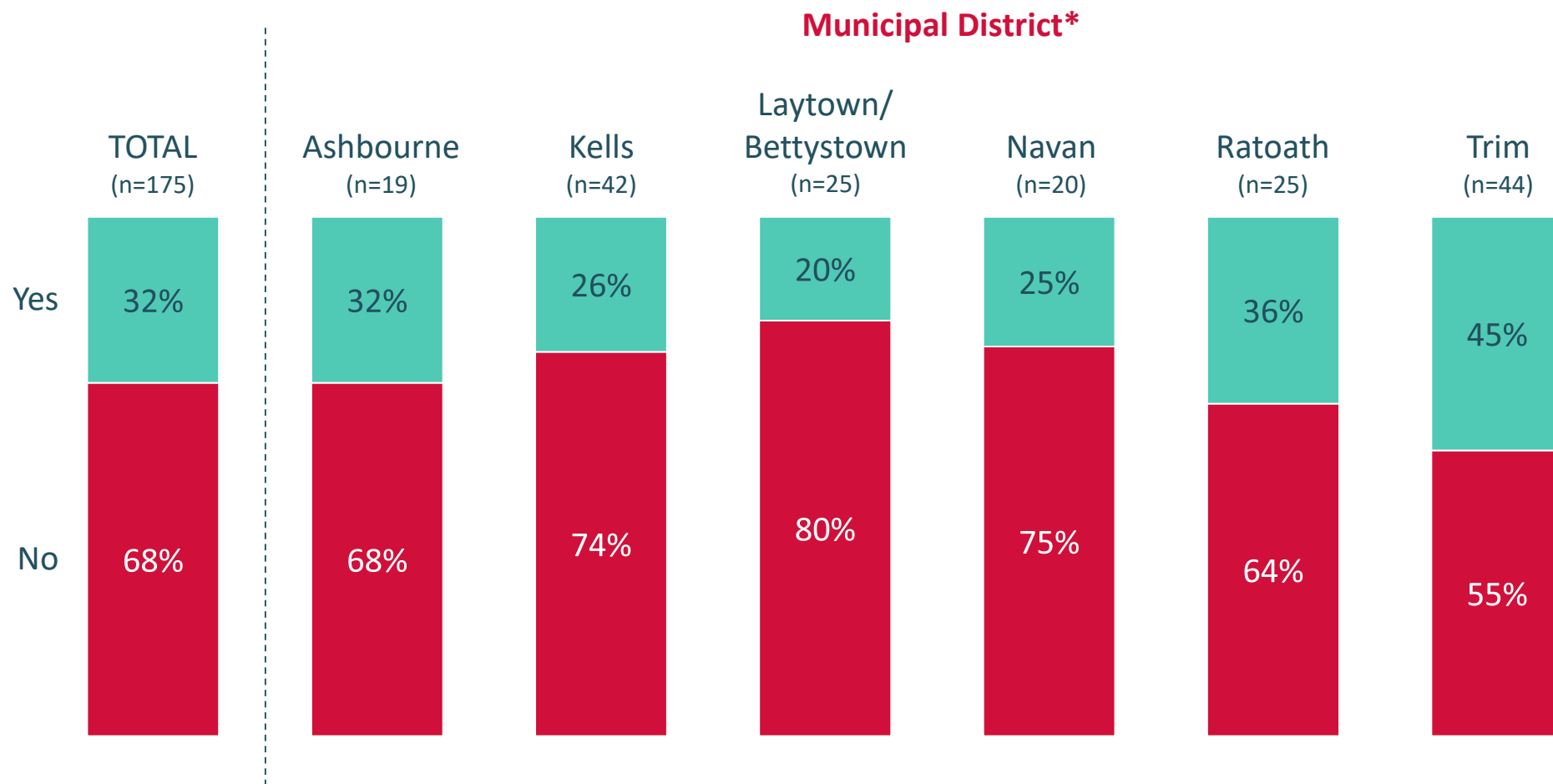


Cost is the primary factor cited that prevents people from disposing of waste correctly. This is followed very closely by a feeling of lack of enforcement being an enabler for many to illegally dispose of waste. Laziness is also cited frequently.

Awareness of Any Unregulated Dumps in Area

Q24. Are you aware of any unregulated dumps or illegal dumping grounds in your area?

(Base: All Respondents n=175)



*Caution extremely low base sizes

Just under 1 in 3 are aware of unregulated dumps in their area. Awareness of unregulated dumps is highest in Trim, however, it is important to take into account the low base sizes for each municipal district when looking at these results.

Further Ideas to Aid in Prevention of Illegal Waste Deposition

Q25. Finally, have you any additional comments to make relating to the prevention of litter/illegal waste dumping in your area?

More support for local groups

More funding is required to keep the community groups cleaning.

Trim Tidy Towns do great work, if it was down to local authority alone the town would be a mess.

As a country amenity group, we take part in the Meath Anti-litter Initiative. The cleaning pack for our group is very sparse. Each year, we ask for more, but no more is handed out! If we had more pickers, we could ensure that each household in the area has access to one and we would find it easier to promote an anti-litter environment in the community.

Local Business

The quarries should be obliged to organise a litter picking operation on the local road network at regular intervals.

More pro-activity by local authority in local areas in conjunction with businesses, farming bodies, schools and local community is required.

Fast-food outlets and shops with delis, need to promote a policy of anti-litter with their customers - it is our experience that waste from these businesses (wrappers, drinking cups and bottles) contributes the most waste in our hedgerows and roadsides.

Increasing the amount of support available to local community groups and creating more links between local businesses, community groups and the council were suggested as ways to prevent illegal waste deposition.

Further Ideas to Aid in Prevention of Illegal Waste Deposition

Q25. Finally, have you any additional comments to make relating to the prevention of litter/illegal waste dumping in your area:

Education

Education is slowly getting there with the next generation. Our generation are responsible for not showing our children how to behave properly as regards waste disposal. An Taisce's schools programme is to be admired.

Annual or Biannual or quarterly newsletter to each household as an educational tool/reminder to INCREASE respect for our planet or suffer the ignominy of self destruction. This publication would continually invite communal OWNERSHIP and RESOLUTION of environmental problems.

Education appears to be done through the primary schools, however, it is needed to reach those who are not associated with the primary schools

Ask Coillte to partnership with Local Authority when visiting schools for Litter Awareness talks

Most important is education such as the Green Schools programme.

Education programmes were suggested frequently as a key way to prevent illegal waste deposition. Interestingly, while schools were viewed as a key space where this should happen, respondents highlighted the need for education through community wide education initiatives to include those outside the school community.

Further Ideas to Aid in Prevention of Illegal Waste Deposition

Q25. Finally, have you any additional comments to make relating to the prevention of litter/illegal waste dumping in your area:

Surveillance
and
Enforcement
of legislation

All communities need the presence of a visiting litter warden visiting on a different day each week.

Actual dumping needs to be policed better and people encouraged to report it and to take responsibility for their own rubbish.

We need to see the names of local people in the local newspaper that are prosecuted for litter offences. There is no enforcement in our area.

Make people who illegally dump waste pay dearly for their bad practice.

In Germany they charge an extra levy at the time of purchase for plastic bottles and containers. This levy is refunded when these items are returned to the shop when empty or used.

Free recycling of electrical waste and mattresses/old furniture. Monthly lorry collection in small towns and villages.

Lower
waste
disposal
prices

Reflecting earlier suggestions for improving waste infrastructure, surveillance, enforcement of existing legislation and lower (free) waste disposal prices were all suggested as ways to prevent illegal waste deposition in County Meath.

Key Findings and Recommendations

- / Illegal waste deposition is viewed as a problem among 66% of respondents with food packaging, dog fouling and household waste key problem areas in need of attention. Hazardous waste, Animal Waste (blood/milk) and Farm batteries were seen as less of an issue.
- / Backroads, hedgerows and side roads are the areas most affected by illegal waste deposition. This ranges from individual items being thrown out of cars to bags of domestic refuse and larger household items such as mattresses.
- / Water pollution was cited as an issue by 1 in 3 respondents, with illegal dumping and farming activities viewed as having the most impact on water quality.
- / There is extremely limited availability of on-street recycling facilities or dog waste bins, however, almost as many would like to have these available as would like to have standard on-street litter bins.
- / Colour coded bins at county level, for household waste collection and on street, seen as a positive to recycling.
- / The cost of waste disposal facilities are viewed as having the greatest impact on people's propensity to dump waste illegally. Free recycling days at local civic amenity sites and lowering the costs of waste disposal by the council were suggested as ways to overcome this barrier.
- / Lack of enforcement is the second most mentioned factor impacting illegal waste deposition. Suggestions to alleviate this problem included surveillance, better education (extending the reach outside of schools), increased signage and stricter enforcement of existing legislation including harsher penalties.

**THANK
YOU**

REDCThe logo for REDC features the word "REDC" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters "RED" are dark blue, and the letter "C" is red. A small teal-colored segment is positioned at the top of the "C", and a red segment is at the bottom, creating a circular or semi-circular shape.