



## Meath County Council

### Draft Litter Management Plan 2019 – 2021



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*Our mission is to drive the Economic, Social and Cultural Growth of County Meath, to protect and enhance the Environment and to achieve this in a balanced manner that is inclusive of all our citizens. This Litter Management Plan aims to set out objectives to educate people to prevent and control litter in this the Royal County so as to make it a place people desire to visit, live, work and invest in.*

## INTRODUCTION

County Meath, located on the east coast of Ireland and in the greater Dublin region, occupies an area of 234,490 hectares (579,425 acres). Its population, according to the 2016 Census was 195,044, with 73,757 dwellings. There are 118 primary schools and 21 second level schools in the county which cater for approximately 40,000 school children.

The physical landscape of the county ranges from a short coastline of 12km in the east to tracts of peat land and raised bogs in the southwest, rolling drumlin hills in the north, and the rich pastures of the Boyne and Blackwater valleys.

Meath County Council have a vision of County Meath being recognised locally, nationally and internationally, not only as excellent place to live, but also to visit and to invest in.

As well as being renowned for the quality of its employment opportunities and the strength and viability of its communities, its culture, scenery and in particular its heritage, are great attractions for tourists to visit here.

Our mission is to drive the economic, social and cultural growth of our County, to protect and enhance the environment and to achieve this in a balanced manner that is inclusive of all its citizens.

### Costs associated with litter

Each year Meath County Council spends in the region of €2.5 million in litter management throughout the county. This equates to 5% of the entire County Council's annual spend. €1.5 million is spent on street sweeping, with the remainder spent on waste enforcement and other litter related services including the warden service.

**To the Environment Staff of Meath County Council, this picture is commonplace. Every day calls come into the office regarding illegal dumping. Not only is it costly to remove, it destroys the County in which we live and it potentially put off Tourists and Investors and jeopardises future economic development.**



**Blight on the Landscape**

## **Why Protect Our County?**

The county is steeped in heritage and history. It is rich in archaeological sites, including many passage tombs such as the historical Newgrange, and the acclaimed Hill of Tara. The towns of Kells and Trim are designated heritage towns, and scattered throughout the rest of the county are many historical sites such as of castles, abbeys and high crosses of great national and, in some cases, international importance. The role of tourism, therefore, as a source of employment and revenue for the county is not insignificant and Meath Tourism, along with other tourist service providers in the county, are continuously promoting and developing the county as a tourist destination.

## **Effects of Litter on the County**

For all the County's beauty and natural resources, litter remains a serious threat. Its presence devalues our living environment, generates a negative impression of our County and places a huge financial burden on County Council finances. Litter pollution does not just affect towns and villages but also our roadsides, protected areas, amenity areas, beaches, bogs, etc. By allowing this very visible form of pollution to continue, it will have an adverse affect on us who live and work in the county and also those who visit us and who are critical to our economy during these difficult economic times.



*Donaghmore Round Tower © Alan Russell Photography*



## LEGISLATION

The **Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as amended)**: Section 10 of the Litter Pollution Acts, 1997-2009, requires each local authority to review its Litter Management Plans every three years. This Plan covers the period 2019 – 2021.

The first LMP for Meath was made in 1999 and has been reviewed five times since. The Litter Management Plan 2021-2021 will build on the experience gained from and from the considerable investment and improvement in Anti Litter Activity across the county and country.

The Process for the Litter Management Plan 2019-2021 is as follows:



**Bye-Laws** Where any issue of litter is already legislated for under existing Bye-Laws, this Litter Management Plan also gives recognition to, and supports existing Meath Bye-Laws such as:

- The County of Meath (Presentation and Collection of Household Waste and Commercial Waste) Bye-Laws 2008
- Parks and Playground Bye-Laws 2014
- Meath County Council Foreshore Bye-Laws 2010

- Waste Management (Storage Presentation and Segregation of Household and Commercial Waste) Byelaws 2018

Eastern Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan 2015- 2021 – This Litter Management will have regard to all provisions of the EMRWP.

## **PENALTY / ON SPOT FINES**

Leaving or throwing litter in a public place or in any place that is visible from a public place is an offence which can be subject to an on the spot fine of €150 or a maximum court fine of €4,000. A person convicted of a litter offence will also be required to pay the local authority's costs and expenses in investigating the offence and bringing the prosecution to court, including legal fees.



*Hill of Slane at Night © Alan Russell Photography*

## Evaluating the Main Litter Challenges

Before evaluating any issues to be tackled we first consider the definition of Litter. The definition of litter is quite wide and includes graffiti, fly tipping, domestic refuse placed in County Council receptacles, casual pieces of paper or cigarette related litter, signage and anything else, large or small, which is, or is likely to become unsightly.

Section 2 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 defines litter 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 or is likely to become unsightly, deleterious, nauseous or unsanitary, whether by itself or with any such substance or object, and regardless of its size or volume or the extent of the deposit”.

We also consider the Impact of Litter, which as well as being unsightly, has many detrimental aspects which affect the ability of the County to develop to its full potential –

- ❖ The Social Impact on a town, community and individual and the negative effect on the psyche.
- ❖ The desire of the County to market itself better as a tourist destination will continue to be hampered by a careless attitude to litter.
- ❖ How potential investors with options of places to invest in will view a clean vibrant county as opposed to a dirty polluted one.
- ❖ Litter attracts more litter, which attracts more litter, ad infinitum...
- ❖ Money spent on cleaning up litter could be better spent on providing enhanced amenities in our towns and villages.



While evaluating the existing litter problem areas in the County the following methods of evaluation were referred to:

- Complaints raised and logged on our in-house call logging system (Sugar)
- Complaints forwarded through the EPA Litter line Reporting System (NECL), Fix your Street and other bodies
- Surveys carried out by our Litter Warden, Irish Business Against Litter and National Litter Pollution Monitoring Surveys
- Submissions and Complaints received from local Voluntary and Representative Groups.
- Activity of Councils Waste Collection Service – from illegal dumping and agreed Clean Up collections.

The following have been determined as the main generators of litter in Meath County Council:

**Illegal dumping** in the countryside including forests– the most visible, costly and damaging type of litter and the subject of most complaints with known Litter Blackspots in particular need of attention.

**Passing Motorists and Pedestrians tipping** –the largest causative factors of litter, which involves single use packaging litter – disposable coffee cups, plastic drinks bottles, cans, chewing gum, sweet and crisp papers etc. ‘Dashboard Dining’ is now a high level litter generator and will be targeted in this plan.

**Dog Fouling** – Dog Fouling can be seen as a major source of litter in urban areas, generates a significant amount of complaints, notwithstanding an increasing number of anti-fouling measures.

**Illegal and Unauthorised signage** – the proliferation of unauthorised signage along the public road for events, businesses etc are the cause of many complaints. A number of signage policies and procedure documents or County Meath are affixed at Appendix to this Plan.

**Convenience Food Outlet** – The high numbers of such facilities has seen a sharp increase in the volumes of litter disposed along sides of roads and footpaths within one mile radius of towns and villages. A campaign to tackle this litter at point of sale is being considered on a regional basis at present.



**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 Act 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 and Minor Events generating litter** – Events such as sporting events, concerts, festivals etc. can generate a substantial amount of litter. The nature of the litter is usually casual and package related. Events Management Plans deal with waste and litter arising as part of the planning process for large events.



*Headfort Bridge Kells © Alan Russell Photography*

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **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 of 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 Meath 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.

## CURRENT INITIATIVES

Meath County Council in partnership with different stakeholders are involved in a wide range of litter related activities in society raising awareness of litter and its effects and ensuring that the streets, footpaths and roads in our town and villages are kept clean and tidy. The initiatives include those objectives of previous plans and which have been added to and are currently being undertaken such as:

- Green Schools Campaign – Most schools in County Meath are either registered for or actively participating in this initiative, with support from Meath County Council.
- Anti Litter Initiative –the numbers participating has increased year on year – with over 130 taking part annually. This initiative incorporates action and awareness around litter and is considered to be hugely effective in improving the appearances in our towns and villages. It takes place early in the year (Spring), ensuring volunteers are out working early each year in advance of spring growth.
- National Spring Clean – co-ordinated by An Taisce –equipment provided by the Council including litter pickers , gloves, skips etc. This is in conjunction with the Councils Anti Litter Initiative.
- Pride of Place – There are normally 140 groups participating in Pride of Place in any given year, – The considerable achievements gained from this competition together with the Tidy Towns has greatly enhanced the appearances of our County.
- Beach Clean ups in association with An Taisce, Community Groups and individuals, Schools, local Sports Groups and Beach Management Committee.
- Amenity, Lawnmower, Tidy Towns and Community Grants Scheme – provides funds annually for upkeep and enhancement of public areas, through the Community Section.
- Local Agenda 21 – an environmental partnership grand fund which encourages partnership projects between local community groups,

environmental non-government organisations and County Council for projects which support and compliment national environmental policies such as litter, waste, energy, biodiversity.

- Anti Dumping Initiative (ADI) – Grant Scheme aimed at tackling dumping blackspots, in conjunction with DCCAE and local communities. The scheme aims to clean up dumping, implement prevention measures to prevent reoccurrence, installation of CCTV to prosecute offenders and to increase awareness and vigilance locally.
- Dog Fouling – a number of initiatives put in place including stencils, signage, doggie bag dispensers, community events with dog warden and dog behaviourist.



- Additional staff have been recruited which will boost enforcement in the dog-fouling area.
- A contract is in place for the prompt removal of litter deposited in the countryside and following thorough examination of the contents to identify those responsible for such deposition. This service also collects litter and waste from established community clean up operations.
- Facilitating members of the public in using modern technology such as 'Fix Your Street', and 'See it Say it' in reporting littering.
- Use of Social Media including the Councils Web-site, Twitter, Facebook etc as well as the print media in promoting the anti litter message.
- The contract for the operation of the Councils three Civic Amenity sites at Navan, Kells and Trim includes a requirement for the operators to produce education and awareness strategies on environmental issues including Litter over the duration of the Plan.



- Regular bulky waste collections for householders – mattresses, couches, kitchen and bathroom, nursery equipment, household hazardous materials.
- A commitment to ensure all new bins are supplied with appropriate cigarette disposal mechanism.
- New Parks and Playground Bye Laws were adopted in 2014 and which will compliment litter control initiatives in this plan.
- Anti Litter, Anti Dumping, Anti Car Littering and Anti Dog Fouling signage is provided to each Municipal District for erection in appropriate areas.



*Blackwater Park, Navan © Alan Russell Photography*



## **OBJECTIVES**

### **of the Litter Management Plan 2019 – 2021**

The overall aim of the Litter Management Plan is to make County Meath a litter free County with the support, cooperation and involvement of the local authority, businesses, communities and individuals.

The following five cross cutting themes underpin the individual objectives of the **Litter Management Plan 2019 -2021:-**

- 1 Education and Public Awareness**
- 2 Litter Prevention and control**
- 3 Enforcement**
- 4 Community Participation and Partnership**
- 5 Recycling and recovery**

#### **(1) Education and Public Awareness**

##### **Objective**

**To raise public awareness of the negative effects of litter on the local environment and to motivate a change in littering behaviour so the littering is perceived as socially unacceptable.**

##### **Actions :**

##### **Education –**

**Schools** - Meath County Council will continue the already well established programme of working with local schools to encourage and engender a good attitude of anti-littering, waste prevention and recycling in their pupils through various initiatives which we hope will then be brought home and seep into the family consciousness. Almost every school in Meath is either registered or actively participating in Green Schools, with 30 receiving their Green Flag in 2019.

**Brown Bin/Stop Food Waste Campaigns** - Meath County Council fully supports the roll out of Brown Bins across the County. In addition a brown bin service is available to users of Navan Recycling Centre with the BioNova Digester. This provides a food waste solution to householders who use the Recycling Centre to manage their waste rather than a waste collector. The Council supports Stop Food Waste Campaign and regularly host Food Waste Awareness Events in the Community.

**In-house initiatives** – The Council by its own activities recognises the importance of limiting the creation of litter, and in an effort to practice what it preaches Meath County Council is also engaged in Energy and Waste Awareness within the organisation with schemes such as Reusable Coffee Mugs, Waste Segregation in Canteen and Offices, Biodiversity Project at Council Offices.

**Dog Litter Awareness** – Meath County Council has procured and used stencils at widely used amenity areas that grab the attention of the public on issues relating to Dog Fouling which have been used in appropriate places in towns and parks. There have been a number of successful Dog Awareness Events with dog warden, behaviourist, vet, animal charity. These events will be an annual event.

**Media** – Media campaigns, in particular social media, radio advertisements, newspaper articles, billboard and cinema advertisements will be extensively used to highlight Environmental issues, such as dog fouling, littering, dumping, bogus collectors etc. Consideration is being given to publishing details on social media where successful prosecutions have been made for litter and waste fines to discourage other polluters.

**Really Rubbish Film Festival** - Aimed at TY Students, this initiative consists of a 2 day workshop in each participating school (in conjunction with Songschool), which will provide training on the development of an advert in relation to litter for TV, radio and print, using Ipads and will pitch their ideas to a panel of judges. Students learn about the environment in a way which appeals to them and take action to increase awareness and interest among their peers.

**Tidy Towns Conference** - Over 400 delegates from across the region attended the first Regional Tidy Towns conference which was held in Trim in 2019. This event will take place every 2 years, providing up to date information and capacity building opportunities for Tidy Towns Groups in Meath and neighbouring counties.

## 2. Litter Prevention and Control

### Objective

In addition to the efforts made in raising public awareness of the litter problem, there is also a requirement to undertake litter prevention and control measures.

### Actions

- **CCTV** – Placement of CCTV at places such as Bottle banks and litter blackspots as a deterrent measure is a costly but necessary tool used by Meath County Council in preventing and controlling litter, and from which prosecutions have been secured.
- **Solar Powered Litter Bins** - Extend the roll out of these environmentally friendly and more cost efficient bins to other towns and villages in the County following their successful introduction in Ashbourne and Navan, these can now be fitted with a recycling option for dry recyclables, in addition to cigarette butts.



- **Litter Complaints** – to ensure where possible that all complaints relating to litter or illegal dumping are dealt with promptly, effectively and efficiently.
- **Contractors** have been engaged for the prompt collection of litter and waste illegally deposited and having initially carried out thorough checks with a view to identifying those responsible and retaining the evidence for prosecution purposes.

- **Technology** - To continue to facilitate members of the public in reporting on litter and dumping the use of modern technology will be strongly promoted including Fix my Street and the EPA app 'See It, Say It' both of which enable the public report incidences of littering and dumping via I-Phones, I-Pads and etc. The Council has invested in new technology including drones and CCTV which will is now used to detect, prosecute and deter illegal dumping.
- **Use of the Customer Relationship Management tool 'SUGAR'**, a software package which records and tracks all environmental complaints and reports.
- **Distribution of Pooper Scooper** dispensers and bags at key amenity areas including parks and beaches.
- **Cigarette Butts** - Working with owners of businesses, houses and public houses in trying to reduce the extent of this form of litter and where necessary putting in place bins at the more seriously littered black spots. Stencils have been acquired to target this type of litter specifically.
- **Community Grant Scheme and Tidy Towns Grant Scheme** – A new scheme has been launched to support work of active tidy towns and community groups who are undertaking enhancement works in their town or village. A streetscape paint scheme has also been launched in support of this work.
- **Cleansing Rotas and Bin Replacement Schedule** – Meath County Council will review the current cleansing rotas to ensure that resources are used efficiently.
- **Using the Small Business Support Scheme** which is distributed to all rate payers with a small business, we will write annually reminding of their obligation under the Litter Pollution Act 1997 as amended part 2, S6(4) to keep the outside of their property litter free for up to 100 meters. Spot checks will then be carried out with enforcement procedures instigated for repeat offenders.
- **Meath County Council** undertakes waste prevention schemes aimed at single use items such as disposable coffee cups and water bottles. These items form a large part of litter occurring on our streets. Further schemes will be undertaken in conjunction with Refill Ireland and Conscious Cup Campaign to further extend these schemes.

### 3. Enforcement

#### Objective

**Carry out effective enforcement which will secure prosecutions to discourage polluters and in order to prevent and control litter.**

- **Employ Enforcement Staff** - The policy of Meath County Council is to issue fines and/or to prosecute persons for littering offences. To that end Litter Wardens are employed who, with the assistance of administrative staff, ensure that action is taken against those caught littering. Where fines are issued and not paid and/or where the littering instance is deemed serious enough to warrant instant court action prosecution is sought under the Litter Pollution Acts 1997 - 2009. There have been many successful prosecutions brought under the lifetime of the last Litter Management Plan, and subject to resources we will seek to expand activities in this area during the lifetime of this plan and working with other agencies including the Gardai where necessary. We are constantly striving to improve and expand procedures and technology to ensure those responsible for littering and dumping are held accountable for same.

The Litter Wardens and in consultation with the Waste Management Enforcement team for larger cases will inter alia –

- Carry out street patrols of towns and villages
- Engage with members of the public to encourage reporting of littering with a view to issuing fines, and taking legal action.
- Engage with owners/ occupiers of land to ensure their land is kept free of litter where it is visible from a public place.
- Issue on the spot fines of €150 where evidence is available as to person responsible for the littering.
- Attend Court and bear witness against litterers which can result in fines of up to €4000 being imposed on polluters.
- Remove signs and issue fines against people responsible for unauthorised advertising and contrary to the provisions of the Councils Signage policy.
- Take action and issue litter fines against Dog owners who fail to clean up after their pets.

Litter Wardens also conduct litter surveys in line with the National Litter Pollution monitoring scheme.



- **Enforcement Campaigns** - This County Council has undertaken, over the lifetime of this plan, to move resources to carry out specific campaigns targeting polluters. Two of the specific proposed campaigns are as follows:

1. **Anti-Dog Foul Campaign** – recent calls for greater levels of enforcement in the area of dog fouling have not gone unheard and it is intended to increase the number of fines imposed. There are Mutt Mitt bag dispensers at popular dog walking locations, beach, Blackwater Park, Johnstown Park.
2. **Operation Litter Black Spot** – while the Enforcement Staff will continue to investigate and pursue all reported incidents of illegal dumping, it is intended to pick some of the more seriously littered black spots and carry out covert monitoring of same with a view to catching and prosecuting the worst offenders and deterring others.

Notwithstanding these two campaigns other campaigns will be organised and arranged as and when need is recognised and resources become available.

- **Advertising Signage Policy** - The Litter Management Plan incorporates a new Policy on Advertising which seeks to regulate the procedures relating to the erection of temporary and permanent advertising signs and is shown at Appendix I to this document.
- **CCTV** - Meath County Council has invested in CCTV and drone Technology which will be used at locations which are subject to continual littering or dumping. This has resulted in several successful prosecutions in court and this will continue to be used to pursue those littering our beautiful county.
- **Parks and Playgrounds Bye-Laws 2014** - These Bye Laws adopted in July 2014 for regulating the use and enjoyment of Parks, Playgrounds and Playing Pitches provide complementary actions to the Litter Management Plan in tackling litter issues
- **Meath County Council Foreshore Bye-Laws 2010** – These Bye Laws adopted in June 2010 for regulating the use and enjoyment of Meath Coastal Areas provide complementary actions to the Litter Management Plan in tackling litter issues.

- **Meath County Council Waste Presentation Bye-Laws, 2008** - The Council will seek to enforce through the Meath County Council Waste Presentation Bye-Laws, 2008 issues of litter arising from the presentation of household and commercial waste for collection.
  
- **Public Participation** – Meath County Council cannot be everywhere and often littering occurs out of hours, and to this end we actively encourage reporting of incidences of littering and provide assistance to persons who witness such incidents and who wish to report same. Where persons are willing to bear witness Meath County Council will issue litter fines against such offenders and if necessary pursue them through the courts.
  
- **Bogus Collectors** – The Council has engaged in an awareness campaign using social media, press, radio, billboard – highlighting the damage caused by Bogus Collectors and the onus on each household or commercial premises to ensure their waste is managed by an authorised collector or facility. This campaign has resulted in a reduction in the number of bogus collectors advertising and operating in the Meath area. Together with free bulky waste collections at recycling centres and increased vigilance for householders the aim of the council is to put the man in a van out of business in County Meath.

## 4. Community Participation and Partnership

### Objective

**To work in partnership with community groups, tidy town committees, residents, local business/commercial interests, etc to provide a litter free environment for all.**

### Actions

Each year a large volume of illegally dumped waste and litter was collected at considerable cost to the Council however sufficient evidence was only available in circa 10% of the cases to enable follow up enforcement to take place.

Meath County Council provides litter picking equipment, waste collection service to all interested individuals and groups in support of their work to improve and maintain the appearance of their areas. The council acknowledges the enormous contribution these groups make in the fight against litter with their participation in the Anti Litter Initiative, National Spring Clean, Pride of Place, Tidy Towns Competition etc.

Financial support may also be given for community Recycling days where there is clear evidence that the materials collected are being brought to an authorised facility for such material.

Support and assistance will also be given by the Councils Environmental Education Awareness Officer to Communities involved in promoting environmental awareness raising initiatives including litter as part of Local Agenda 21.

Graffiti continues to be a problem in many areas of the county, and is witnessed more in larger towns and playgrounds. The Council will work with local groups in tackling this problem and consider the merits of such initiatives as Graffiti Walls which have been the subject of positive comments in Tidy Town reports.

The 10km coastline and particularly the stretch of beach from the mouth of the River Nanny to the sea wall at Mornington is one of the most popular recreational areas in the county and the Council will continue to work with local communities who regularly partake in clean ups of this area as well as litter control activities carried out by the Beach warden including Dog Fouling.

Cognisance will also be taken of any litter related recommendations arising from a new Beach Management Plan which is currently being finalised for this amenity area. This includes increased bin capacity in Summer Season and additional big belly bins at the entrance to Bettystown Beach. A new community building at Seaview Terrace will include waste segregation units and residual litter bins.

Every effort will be made to increase the numbers participating in Green Schools, Pride of Place, Spring Clean, Green Dog Walkers Programme and other such environmental campaigns all of which are hugely effective in the fight against litter.



*Laytown Thatch © Alan Russell Photography*

- **Pride of Place Initiatives** – Meath County Council will continue to encourage groups and individuals to become involved in enhancing and maintaining their area by becoming involved in the Pride of Place Initiatives. The diverse range of competitions includes schools, urban areas, rural areas, housing estates, public buildings etc. There are highly contested Municipal District competitions across the 6 Regions in the County. Groups are also nominated annually to take part in the National and International events - Entente Florale, All Island Pride of Place.



## 5 Recycling and Recovery

### Objective

**To promote usage of the recycling infrastructure provided and subject to resources to extend this infrastructure so that all towns and villages are adequately served with easily accessible recycling facilities**

### Actions

#### ➤ **Operate Civic Amenity Sites/ Recycling Centres /Bottle Banks**

Meath County Council runs Civic Amenity Sites/ Recycling Centres and Bottle Banks at various locations throughout the County –the operation of this infrastructure is the subject of contract with a private waste Company and with a strong emphasis in the contract on Public Education and Awareness Campaigns over the lifetime of this plan.

In recent years the entry fee has been reduced to €2 per visit, making the service very economical to householders.

Food Waste has been added as a waste stream for visitors to Navan Recycling Centre and this may be expanded to other sites in due course.

Meath County Council has a strong history of raising public awareness of Recycling Initiatives with amongst others the ‘Reduce Reuse Recycle’ campaign, Brown Bin Awareness Campaigns, Packaging and Food Waste Prevention Events etc.

Recycling Facilities locations are advertised widely on the Councils website [www.meath.ie](http://www.meath.ie) together with [www.mywaste.ie](http://www.mywaste.ie) and [www.repak.ie](http://www.repak.ie)

It must be noted that while the provision by Meath County Council of 33 Bottle Bank Facilities throughout the county, and three Civic Amenity Sites in Kells, Navan and Trim, has been welcomed and widely utilised by the general public, this presents other issues. Unfortunately not every citizen is civic minded and abuse of Recycling Facilities by persons illegally leaving receptacles behind them, with dumping domestic and commercial waste onsite a on-going problem, costly to both Meath County Council and ultimately the tax payer. CCTV is used across the network to detect and deter dumping at these facilities.

There is a comprehensive review of recycling facilities across at present, with sites in each county under close examination including the Kells Recycling Centre, In time this will lead to streamlining of services and funding to ensure value for money is being achieved in terms of the services provided.

Bulky Waste Events now form a key part of the calendar at Meath Recycling Centres, with a number at free events each centre throughout the year including Couches, Beds & Mattresses, Toys, Household Hazardous, Baby & Nursery Equipment, Kitchen and Bathroom Fittings etc.



- **Additional Recycling Facilities** – The Council will continue to look for appropriate sites for the installation of new recycling facilities across the County, making visits to your local bring bank as convenient and efficient as possible.

## Summary

This Plan will succeed by building on existing individual, community and business partnerships in order to combat litter at source. All sectors of the community must work together to develop and maintain a clean healthy living environment for all citizens.

## Useful Links

Meath County Council

[www.meath.ie](http://www.meath.ie)

An Taisce National Spring Clean

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

Green Schools

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

Tidy Towns

[www.tidytowns.ie](http://www.tidytowns.ie)

Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment

[www.dccae.gov.ie](http://www.dccae.gov.ie)

Irish Business Against Litter

[www.ibal.ie](http://www.ibal.ie)

National Waste Collection Permit Office

[www.nwcpo.ie](http://www.nwcpo.ie)



**comhairle chontae na mí**  
*meath county council*

## **MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **POLICY ON ADVERTISING SIGNAGE**

#### **Introduction**

Advertising is an accepted part of business and a means of providing information to the general public. However, advertising signs, separately or in groups, can often cause injury to amenities and can detract from the appearance of an area or building. They can also be a major distraction to road users. It is the policy of Meath County Council to control all advertising signage in the county to minimise dis-amenity to the environment and danger to road users.

This policy will be implemented by the following departments of Meath County Council

- Roads Department
- Planning Department
- Environment Department

#### **Legislation**

The legislation governing Advertisements and the erection of Signage is as follows:

- The Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2010
- The Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2011
- Roads Act 1993 and associated regulations
- Litter Pollution Act 1997 – 2003
- Meath County Council Development Plan 2013 - 2019

### **Permanent Advertising Signs on Private Property**

Permanent Signs can be defined as signs erected on metal, wooden, plastic or other durable poles with concrete base or permanently fixed to the ground, including large hoarding type signs or finger post signs.

Examples of permanent signs may include tourist attractions, accommodations, industrial estates, sports facilities and public buildings.

In general, permanent signs on private property will require planning permission, unless it is listed under the Exempted Development – Advertisement Regulations – Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2011 (see Appendix 1.1)

The normal planning process applies and a planning fee will apply based on the size of the proposed structure in accordance with fees laid out in the County Development Plan 2013 – 2019.

Application forms for a permanent advertising structure are available from the planning section Meath County Council 046 9097000 or [www.meath.ie/countycouncil/planning](http://www.meath.ie/countycouncil/planning)



### **Permanent Advertising Signs on Public Property**

These are signs that are placed on any part of a public road or street including verges, footpaths, hard shoulders, lay-bys, roundabout islands, public car parks, median areas or islands, public right of ways or any location that is deemed by Meath County Council to be a public area.

A licence is required from the planning department of Meath County Council (Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 – 2010 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2011) prior to erection of signage.

[www.meath.ie/CountyCouncil/Planning/PlanningPermissionApplicationForms/File,3854,en.doc](http://www.meath.ie/CountyCouncil/Planning/PlanningPermissionApplicationForms/File,3854,en.doc)

### **Fees**

- A licence for a Finger Post sign (not exceeding 1metre in length) which indicates a tourist accommodation currently costs €50
- A licence for any other sign currently costs €630 on application. This is an annual fee.

### **Unauthorised Development**

Unauthorised Advertising Signs / Structures will be dealt with under the enforcement provisions of the Planning Acts 2000 – 2010.

The person, company or business responsible for erecting unauthorised signs on public property shall be issued with an enforcement fine and shall be requested to remove the sign within 7 days. Failure to comply with this request will result in further fines being issued. All signs erected without a licence on public roads / places will be removed. Cost for removal of signs may be recovered by Meath County Council.

### **Temporary Signage**

Temporary signs or short term signs include small advertising signs, auctioneer signs, billboard type signs, signs on motorised vehicles, signs mounted on trailers, bridge drapings etc and generally promote events which are to be realised in a relatively short period of time including sale of property, agricultural or other shows, circuses, concerts, meetings, fundraising, sporting or recreational events.

Any signs erected on private land which is visible from a public place such as a road may have an impact on road safety. They may also have an effect on the environment or amenity of the area. A sign may be erected without planning permission if it conforms to the exempted development requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations. However if the sign impacts on road safety, Meath County Council may take action to have the sign removed. Advice should be sought from Meath County Council prior to erections of same.

In the event that the sign impacts negatively on the local environment or the amenity of the area a notice shall be issued to the landowner requesting removal of the sign under the Litter

Pollution Act 1997 as amended. In the event the sign has been erected without permission from the landowner the notice will be issued to the person, company or business responsible for erecting the sign.

Meath County Council has agreed guidelines for Auctioneer signs with representatives of the local auctioneering profession (Appendix 1.2)

Temporary Signage may be permitted on public land for charity, sporting or cultural events taking place in the community. There is a policy and procedure in place for this type of event signage which is administered by the Environment Section, Meath County Council (Appendix 1.3). Any organisation wishing to promote this type of event must apply to the Council and signage should not be erected until a letter of approval is received by the applicant. There is no fee for this application. Successful applicants must remove all signage within 3 days after the event to prevent litter fines.

### **Cars for Sale**

If it is an offence under Section 71 of the Roads Act 1993 to offer vehicles for sale on the public road. Under the provisions of this Act vehicles may be removed and stored by Meath County Council or An Garda Síochána. There will be a fee for the release of a vehicle impounded under this legislation.

### **Election Advertising**

It should be noted that this policy does not apply to signs which relate to a presidential election, a general election, a bye-election, a referendum, an election of members of the European Parliament unless the sign has been in position for 7 days or longer after the latest date upon which the relevant poll was taken. After 7 days action may be taken under the Litter Pollution Act 1997 as amended.

## APPENDIX 1.1

### EXEMPTED DEVELOPMENT - ADVERTISEMENTS

The following list are the exempted advertisement developments permitted under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Schedule 2, Part 2: Exempted

Development - Advertisement and subject to Article 6 of the Regulations.

Note that all exemptions must be confirmed by Meath County Council, Planning Authority.

Column 1 Description of Development	Column 2 Conditions and Limitations
<p><b><u>CLASS 1</u></b> Advertisements (other than those specified in classes 2, 3 or 5 of this Part of this Schedule) exhibited on business premises, wholly with reference to the business or other activity carried on or the goods or services provided on those premises.</p>	<p>1. The total area of such advertisements exhibited on or attached or affixed to the front of any building on the premises shall not exceed an area equal to 0.3 square metres for every metre length of such front, less the total area of any such advertisements exhibited on the premises but not exhibited on or attached or affixed to a building, and in any event shall not exceed 5 square metres.</p> <p>2. The total area of such advertisements exhibited on or attached or affixed to any face of a building on the premises other than the front thereof shall not exceed 1.2 square metres and the total area of any such advertisements on such face which are illuminated shall not exceed 0.3 square metres.</p> <p>3. The total area of such advertisement which are not exhibited on or attached or affixed to a building on the premises shall not exceed 3 square metres, of which not more than 1.5 square metres shall consist of advertisements which are illuminated.</p> <p>4(a). No part of any such advertisement which is not exhibited on or attached or affixed to a building on the premises, or of an advertisement structure on which it is exhibited, shall be more than 2.5 metres in height.</p> <p>4(b). No part of any such advertisement which is exhibited on or attached or affixed to a building on the premises shall be more than 4 metres in height above ground level.</p> <p>5. Where any such advertisement projects more than 5 centimetres over any public road, the sign or other advertisement structure on which it is exhibited shall not be less than 2 metres above the level of such road and shall not project more than 1 metre over such road.</p> <p>16</p> <p>6. Where any such advertisement consists of a circular sign and projects more than 5 centimetres over any public road, the diameter of such sign shall not exceed 1 metre and no other such advertisement shall be exhibited on a sign or other advertisement structure projecting more than 5 centimetres over such road.</p> <p>7. Where any one or more such advertisements are</p>

	<p>exhibited on a swinging or fixed sign or other advertisement structure (other than a circular sign) projecting more than 5 centimetres from any external face of a building, the total area of such advertisements shall not exceed 1.2 square metres and the area of any face of any such advertisement shall not exceed 0.4 square metres.</p> <p>8. No such advertisement shall contain or consist of any symbol, emblem, model, logo or device exceeding 0.6 metres in height or any letter exceeding 0.3 metres in height.</p> <p>9. No such advertisement shall cover any part of any window or door of any building on which the advertisements exhibited or to which it is attached or affixed.</p>
<p><b><u>CLASS 2</u></b> Illuminated advertisements exhibited as part of any shop or other window display on business premises and other advertisements affixed to the inside of the glass surface of a window of a business premises or otherwise exhibited through a window of such premises.</p>	<p>The total area of any advertisements so exhibited shall not exceed one quarter of the area of the window through which the advertisements are exhibited.</p>
<p><b><u>CLASS 3</u></b> Advertisements displayed within a business premises and which are not visible from outside the premises.</p>	
<p><b><u>CLASS 4</u></b> An advertisement in the form of a flag which is attached to a single flagstaff fixed in an upright position on the roof of a business premises and which bears no inscription or emblem other than the name, device or logo of a person or business occupying the business premises.</p>	<p>Not more than one such advertisement shall be exhibited on a business premises.</p>
<p><b><u>CLASS 5</u></b></p>	<p>1. No such advertisement shall exceed 0.3 square</p>

<p>Advertisements, exhibited at the entrance to any premises, relating to any person, partnership or company carrying on a public service or a profession, business or trade at the premises.</p>	<p>metres in area. 2. Not more than one such advertisement, or, in the case of premises with entrances on different road frontages, one such advertisement for each such frontage, shall be exhibited in respect of each such person, partnership or company on the premises.</p>
<p><b><u>CLASS 6</u></b> Advertisements relating to any institution of a religious, educational, cultural, recreational or medical or similar character, any guesthouse or other premises (other than a hotel) providing overnight guest accommodation or any public house, block of flats, club, boarding house or hostel, situated on the land on which any such advertisement is exhibited.</p>	<p>1. No such advertisement shall exceed 0.6 square metres in area. 2. No part of any such advertisement or an advertisement structure on which it is exhibited shall be more than 2.5 metres in height above ground level. 3. Not more than one such advertisement or, in the case of premises with entrances on different road frontages, one such advertisement for each such frontage, shall be exhibited in respect of any such premises.</p>
<p><b><u>CLASS 7</u></b> Advertisements exhibited on land wholly or for the most part enclosed within a hedge, fence, wall or similar screen or structure (not being land which is a public park, public garden or other land held for the use and enjoyment of the public, or a part of a railway undertaking's enclosed land normally used for the carriage of passengers or goods by rail) and not readily visible from land outside the enclosure wherein it is exhibited.</p>	
<p><b><u>CLASS 8</u></b> Advertisements exhibited within a railway station, bus station, airport terminal or ferry terminal</p>	



and which are not readily visible from outside the premises.	
<p><b><u>CLASS 9</u></b>            Advertisements relating to the sale or letting of any structure or other land (not being an advertisement structure) on which they are exhibited.</p>	<p>1. The area of any such advertisement shall not exceed —            (a) in the case of an advertisement relating to the sale or letting of a house, 0.6 square metres,            (b) in the case of an advertisement relating to the sale or letting of any other structure or land, 1.2 square metres.</p> <p>2. Not more than one such advertisement shall be exhibited on the structure or other land.</p> <p>3. No such advertisement shall be exhibited, and no advertisement structure erected for the purpose of exhibiting such advertisement shall remain on the structure or land, for more than 7 days after the sale or letting to which the advertisement relates.</p>
<p><b><u>CLASS 10</u></b>            Advertisements relating to the sale on or before a date specified therein of goods or livestock, and exhibited on land where such goods or livestock are situated or where such sale is held, not being land which is normally used, whether at regular intervals or otherwise, for the purpose of holding sales of goods or livestock</p>	<p>1. No such advertisement shall exceed 0.6 square metres in area.</p> <p>2. Not more than one such advertisement shall be exhibited on the land concerned.</p> <p>3. No such advertisement shall be exhibited, and no advertisement structure erected for the purpose of exhibiting such advertisement shall remain on the land, for more than 7 days after the date specified.</p>
<p><b><u>CLASS 11</u></b>            Advertisements relating to the carrying out of building or similar works on the land on which they are exhibited, not being land which is normally used, whether at regular intervals or otherwise, for the purpose of carrying out such works.</p>	<p>1. Where only one advertisement is exhibited, such advertisement shall not exceed 3.5 square metres in area and shall not be exhibited more than 6 metres above ground level.</p> <p>2. Where more than one advertisement is exhibited, no such advertisement shall exceed 0.6 square metres in area, the total area of such advertisements shall not exceed 3.5 square metres and no such advertisement shall be exhibited more than 4 metres above ground level.</p> <p>3. No such advertisement shall be exhibited, and no advertisement structure erected for the purpose of exhibiting such advertisement shall remain on the land, for more than 7 days after the completion of the works.</p>
<p><b><u>CLASS 12</u></b>            Advertisements for the purposes of announcement or direction or warning exhibited</p>	

by a statutory undertaker in relation to the operation of the statutory undertaking.	
<b><u>CLASS 13</u></b> Advertisements for the purposes of identification, direction or warning with respect to the land or structures on which they are exhibited.	No such advertisement shall exceed 0.3 square metres in area.
<b><u>CLASS 14</u></b> Advertisements relating to an election to the office of President of Ireland, an election of members of Dáil Éireann, the Parliament of the European Communities, a local authority or Údarás na Gaeltachta, or a referendum within the meaning of the Referendum Act, 1994.	No such advertisement shall be exhibited, and no advertisement structure erected for the purpose of exhibiting such advertisement shall be left in place, for more than 7 days after the date of the election or referendum to which the advertisement relates.
<b><u>CLASS 15</u></b> Advertisements required to be exhibited by or under any enactment, including advertisements the exhibition of which is so required as a condition of the valid exercise of any power, or proper performance of any function, given or imposed by such enactment, or for compliance with any procedure prescribed by or under any enactment.	
<b><u>CLASS 16</u></b> Advertisements other than advertisements specified in class 17 of this Part of this Schedule, announcing any local event of a religious, cultural, educational, political, social, recreational or sporting character, and advertisements relating to any temporary matter in connection with any	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No such advertisement shall exceed 1.2 square metres in area.</li> <li>2. No such advertisement shall be exhibited more than 2.5 metres above ground level or be glued, pasted or otherwise affixed to any structure other than an advertisement structure.</li> <li>3. No such advertisement shall be exhibited, and no advertisement structure erected for the purpose of exhibiting such advertisement shall be left in place, for more than 7 days after the conclusion of the event or matter to which it relates.</li> </ol>

local event of such a character, not in either case being an event promoted or carried on for commercial purposes.	
<b><u>CLASS 17</u></b> Advertisements consisting of placards, posters or bills relating to the visit of any travelling circus, funfair, carnival, show, musicians, players or other travelling entertainment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No such advertisement shall exceed 1.2 square metres in area.</li> <li>2. No such advertisement shall be exhibited more than 2.5 metres above ground level or be glued, pasted or otherwise affixed to any structure other than an advertisement structure.</li> <li>3. No such advertisement shall be exhibited, and no advertisement structure erected for the purpose of exhibiting such advertisement shall be left in place, for more than 7 days after the last performance or closing of the entertainment.</li> </ol>
<b><u>CLASS 18</u></b> An advertisement relating to any demonstration of agricultural methods or processes on the land on which the advertisement is exhibited.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No such advertisement shall exceed 0.6 square metres in area.</li> <li>2. Not more than one such advertisement shall be exhibited on the land concerned.</li> <li>3. No such advertisement shall be exhibited, and no advertisement structure erected for the purpose of exhibiting such advertisement shall remain on the land, for more than 7 days after the date of the demonstration to which it relates.</li> </ol>

## **APPENDIX 1.2**

### **GUIDELINES FOR AUCTIONEER ADVERTISING SIGNAGE**

All Auctioneer Advertising on Council, ESB and Eircom Poles within the County shall be prohibited
Advertising signs shall only be permitted within the boundary of the property for sale, except as allowed hereunder
Within town and village boundaries (within speed limit), advertising shall only be permitted on the property for sale
Advertising outside towns and village boundaries (outside speed limit) will be by way of directional signs plus advertising on the property as normal (subject to number and size restrictions hereunder)
For properties outside town and village boundaries, no more than 3 directional signs per property shall be permitted
Directional signs shall be standardised, and are to be no larger than 16 inches x 8 inches (0.4m x 0.2m) for finger signs and 26 inches x 18 inches (0.7m x 0.45m) for flag signs. They will be free standing and no more than 3 feet (0.9m) from ground level. The location of directional signs shall have regard to traffic safety requirements
Roadside verge advertising shall be prohibited except for directional signs and where signs within the property boundary would be obscured by high trees or hedges
All roadside verge advertising, including directional signs, shall be prohibited on National Primary Roads, except in the case of properties fronting the road, and in the case where signs within the boundary of the property would be obscured by high hedges or trees. All advertising on secondary roads will be considered in line with this policy.
Advertising signs to be removed within 7 days of the sale of the property (exchange of contracts)
The maximum advertising sign size to be displayed on the property shall be as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) In the case of advertising relating to the sale or letting of a dwelling, the sign shall not exceed 0.6 sq.m. in area</li><li>(ii) In the case of advertising relating to the sale or letting of any other structure or land, the sign shall not exceed 1.2 sq. m. in area</li></ul>
In the case of an advertising sign erected on private property not in ownership of the vendor (or Agent) documentary evidence of the landowners permission to erect the sign shall be submitted to the Council prior to erection of the sign
Directional signs shall be standardised, and are to be no larger than 16 inches x 8 inches (0.4m x 0.2m) for finger signs and 26 inches x 18 inches (0.7m x 0.45m) for flag signs. They will be free standing and no more than 3 feet (0.9m) from ground level. The location of directional signs shall have regard to traffic safety requirements
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Advertising signs to be removed within 7 days of the sale of the property (exchange of contracts)

The maximum advertising sign size to be displayed on the property shall be as follows:

- (iii) In the case of advertising relating to the sale or letting of a dwelling, the sign shall not exceed 0.6 sq.m. in area
- (iv) In the case of advertising relating to the sale or letting of any other structure or land, the sign shall not exceed 1.2 sq. m. in area

In the case of an advertising sign erected on private property not in ownership of the vendor (or Agent) documentary evidence of the landowners permission to erect the sign shall be submitted to the Council prior to erection of the sign



### **APPENDIX 1.3**

#### **EVENT SIGNAGE – POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Application must be in writing on prescribed application form to Meath County Council Environment Section, form can be submitted electronically.
Applicants should be for charitable or public events that are not inflammatory or likely to cause offense to other members of public. [Political advertising does not apply as requirements for election posters are set out under section 19 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 and the Electoral (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 2009.]
Permission for Signage should only be granted on approach roads into urban areas within speed limit areas, But not within town/village centre.
Sign must not exceed 1.2 square meters in area and cannot be erected any more than 2.5 meters from the ground and must not be glued or pasted to any other structure.
The signs shall not be erected upon roundabouts, or affixed to any traffic signs or traffic lights
The signs shall be erected at locations that do not conflict with sight lines at roundabouts, junctions or entrances or in any other place that might impede visibility of road users from other road users or in any place that might hinder pedestrians
The applicant shall erect, maintain and remove the signs in a proper and safe manner so as not to give rise to a danger or nuisance to any person.
The applicant shall be responsible for any damage caused to the public road, footpath or any underground services arising from the erection, placing or maintenance of the sign.
Meath County Council will accept no liability for any persons harmed during erection or removal of posters, or indeed any persons harmed resulting from placement of signs.
The Protection of the Environment Act 2003 requires that an article or advertisement carries the name and address of the person who is promoting or arranging the event or in any other case carries the name and address of the person on whose behalf it is exhibited
On receipt of Completed Application form, MCC acknowledge and process. A letter of Approval or Refusal goes out.
Road traffic and planning legislation should be adhered to by applicants and letter of approval will specify details and conditions of approval
Any letter of approval will be authorise erection of signage from the earliest date of 21 days before event only, and for up to 3 days after event.
All Event Signage must be removed by close of business on 3rd day after event.
There will be no fee on application; however any sign remaining after the prescribed 3 day post-event period will be subject to individual litter fines of €150.
Approval will only be granted for events of a religious, cultural, educational, political, social, recreational or sporting character not promoted or carried out for commercial purposes.
Refusal of application will be based on grounds contradicting item above.

## **APPENDIX 1.4**

### **ANTI DUMPING AND ANTI LITTER SIGNAGE – POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Meath County Council Environment Section will provide bi-lingual signage with Anti Litter, Anti Dumping and Anti Car Litter message.

Requests for signs arising from members of Meath Co Co and members of the public will be passed to each MD for consideration.

All new signs must be erected with due consideration given to safety of all persons - pedestrians, drivers, cyclists etc.

A proliferation of signage is undesirable and consideration should be given to the amount of existing signage in an area before installing new signs.

The MD should be satisfied that there is a genuine need for a sign due to on-going or repeated littering or dumping in the area before installing same

In general amenity areas and 'resting locations' for vehicles will present a suitable location for anti litter signage.

Litter wardens may see fit to install signage highlighting use of CCTV where appropriate, in line with above considerations.

Signs will be placed on public property only.