



Litter Action Guide

For groups and residents' associations in the district's villages



Canterbury City Council is working together with local residents' groups and Serco to tackle the problems of litter, flytipping and graffiti. The purpose of this guide is to help residents report problems, organise initiatives and flag up ongoing issues that require further investigation.

In this document you will find information and contacts to help you get the right message to the right people. The information is broken down into three parts:

- Reporting litter or litter-related issues
- Getting involved, and
- Getting the message out.

Each part has questions that regularly come up and we have answered them and provided contacts and information you may find useful. This guide will be updated from time to time with the most recent copy available to download from the council's website at canterbury.gov.uk/litter

If you have comments on this guide, or have suggestions on council litter policy, please contact **Councillor Ben Fitter-Harding** (litter and enforcement liaison councillor) via email, ben.fitter@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk or by phone on **07793 494 640**

Printed copies will be available to residents' associations after each major update.

Cover image: Chartham Against Litter at Bold Hill. Joy Troth, Harry the Dog, Terry and Tina.

Reporting litter or litter-related issues

Questions

- 1 What are the main email addresses and phone numbers I need to know for litter issues?
- 2 There are so many organisations involved. If I store one email and phone number to my mobile, which one would be best?

Information

Serco should always be the first point of contact and the council's online forms and emails receive the same priority as a phone call, but take much less of your time. You can also attach photos to emails to show exactly what the problem is.

Website:
Email:
Serco freephone:

Flytipping

- 3 I've seen lots of rubbish that looks like it's been dumped illegally – what should I do?
- 4 There is a lot more rubbish than a bin bag or odd pieces of litter, and it might be dangerous too. How do I report this?

Information

Flytipping, where more than a large bagful of waste has been left in a place it is not supposed to be, is illegal, and where possible the council will seek to catch and prosecute offenders. Reporting flytipping as soon as you can helps the council to achieve this. Serco can only remove flytipping from public land. If you're not sure whether land is public or private, report the flytipping online anyway as sometimes we have arrangements in place with private landowners. The litter and enforcement liaison councillor can also ask officers to look into other ways to manage the situation if this is a recurring problem.

Website
Serco freephone:
Litter and enforcement liaison councillor:

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Roads and laybys

- I've spotted litter on the road. Who do I report this to?
- Is this a city council or county council issue to sort out?

Information

The city council is responsible for litter on roads, verges and roundabouts. However, not all roads and verges are as easy to clean as others, which may cause delays to clean-ups.

Roads with a speed limit over 40 mph

These roads carry significant risks for Serco staff and so are usually cleaned overnight. Dual carriageways need to have lane closures or traffic calming in place. It costs a considerable amount of money to close a lane and operate overnight, so we usually do these cleans when the roads are also closed for maintenance (which is the responsibility of the county council except in the case of the A2).

Urban roads – 30 to 40 mph

These roads require risk assessments for staff and specialist protective clothing and equipment. If reported, Serco will attend as soon as possible; otherwise roads are cleaned to a schedule.

Urban roads – 30 mph or less

These roads still require risk assessments for staff and the right clothing, but these roads can more easily be accessed and will have cleaning schedules. If reported, Serco will attend as soon as possible.

Information

Laybys and slip roads

A dedicated crew attend all laybys along the A2 and Thanet Way each week. If litter is a problem, please report it to Serco so it can be attended to appropriately. Serco staff have undertaken specialist training to ensure they can operate safely in these areas.

Website:
Email:
Serco freephone:

Shops and takeaways

- 7 How can local shops and businesses be encouraged to clean up around their premises and get on board with our anti-litter messages and campaigns?
- How do I get abandoned supermarket trolleys collected? supermarket's to collect and remove trolleys?

Information

You or your group may want to contact shops or their head offices directly. Or you can speak with your ward councillor to raise any concerns you have. Businesses have a responsibility to manage their waste and the litter their businesses generate. If you see businesses abusing this, you can report them to the council's enforcement or environmental health teams to investigate. Supermarkets should collect their abandoned trolleys but it can be difficult to find their contact details.

If you are unsure, contact Serco directly. They will collect them and reclaim a fixed cost from the supermarket.

Contact:

Speak to the store manager or email their head office. Many businesses have Twitter accounts and this can be an effective way of persuading them to take action

Website: canterbury.gov.uk/litter
Serco freephone: 0800 031 9091
Email: help.canterbury@serco.com



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Litter bins

- 9 How do we get a new litter bin in this area to reduce littering /cope with the extra demand?
- 10 A litter bin is full /overflowing or is damaged. How do I get it sorted as this is probably one of the reasons there is so much litter here?

Information

There are thousands of bins across the district. The council will often review bin locations and move them as needs change. However, to have a new bin installed we need to assess the location to ensure it is required, safe to install and doesn't block access for others. Whilst there is a cost involved in buying a bin, it is the emptying, or paying for the bin to be checked for emptying, that creates the ongoing cost to the council. In the first instance, you may want to discuss the need for a new bin with the litter and enforcement liaison councillor.

Serco regularly check litter bins and empty them, although there will always be occasions when a litter bin has more waste than expected. If the litter bin is full or overflowing then please report it to Serco using any of the contact methods on this page. In the city centre and surrounding residential area. Serco are expected to rectify the problem within three hours. If the bin is damaged or broken, then the same contacts can also be used to report it. Again, Serco will assess and will either fix or replace it as soon as possible.

Contact:

Website: [canterbury.gov.uk/litter](https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/litter)

Serco freephone: 0800 031 9091

Serco email: help.canterbury@serco.com

Council contact: litter.support@canterbury.gov.uk

Abandoned cars

- 11 What do I do if an abandoned or burnt out car appears in the area in where I live?



Information

If you see an abandoned car, please report it to Serco.

Contact:

Website: [canterbury.gov.uk/litter](https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/litter)

Serco freephone: 0800 031 9091

Email: help.canterbury@serco.com

Dogs out and about

12 Can my dog go on the beach?

13 Does it have to be on a lead?

Information

Nothing upsets people more than piles of dog mess dotted around the district. Up until recently, our enforcement officers had to catch offending owners in the act of letting their dog defecate before taking action which made their task almost impossible.

But a new public spaces protection order (PSPO) gives our enforcement officers and the police the power to tell people to stop misbehaving. If they don't, they commit a criminal offence.

Under the new PSPO, enforcement officers will be able to ask people walking their dogs if they have the appropriate means to clear up after their pet ie at least two dog waste bags.

Officers will obviously try to be sensible in policing this policy but owners need to beware of the new rules.

Under this PSPO, there are areas where dogs will need to be kept on leads or are banned including some beaches, promenades and children's play areas.

Contact:

Website: canterbury.gov.uk/litter

Email: streetsceneenforcement@canterbury.gov.uk

Rivers

14 I've seen rubbish in the river. What should I do?

Information

As a rule of thumb, the city council is responsible for rubbish in the river within the city walls, the Environment Agency for the remainder of the river in the district. Please contact Serco for any litter issues that fall within the council's remit.

Rivers can be dangerous, and we would advise people not to enter the river but to contact the relevant authority to remove waste as those staff are trained and have access to the right safety equipment.

Some groups organise litter picks that include the river banks and safer areas of the river. The council can put you in touch with those groups.

Contact:

Environment Agency: 0800 80 70 60

Website: canterbury.gov.uk/litter

Serco main switchboard: 0800 031 9091

Email: help.canterbury@serco.com

Council contact: litter.support@canterbury.gov.uk

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Open spaces and parks

- 15 There is litter scattered about in our parks/open spaces. Who do I call?

- 16 Our parks/open spaces are looking overgrown or full of weeds – who deals with that?

- 17 Can we release sky lanterns?

Information

A host of community groups complement the work of the council. The volunteers involved in organisations like the Sturry Road Community Park Trust, give up their time to pick up litter, remove graffiti and put on a wide range of events.

Animal welfare campaigners, farmers and the volunteers who help clean up, are worried about the dangers posed by the mass release of helium balloons or Chinese lanterns. That is why events of this kind have been banned on land owned by Canterbury City Council or at the events it operates since September last year.

Animals can suffer horrific deaths if they eat lantern or balloon parts. And once the helium escapes or the flames have gone out, balloons and lanterns quickly turn into litter.

An internet search will come up with other environmentally-friendly ways of celebrating an event or saying goodbye to a loved one.

Contact:

Website: canterbury.gov.uk/litter

Serco main switchboard: 0800 031 9091

Email: help.canterbury@serco.com

Council contact: litter.support@canterbury.gov.uk

Litter left by refuse collections

- 18 The bin crew have collected my rubbish, but there are now lots of pieces of litter left behind. Shouldn't the crews pick it up?

- 19 How do I report what has happened, and to whom?

Information

Bin crews shouldn't leave a mess behind, but sometimes this can happen, especially on days with poor weather. Usually Serco are aware of the issues and already have street cleaning crews following behind. However, if this isn't the case you should contact Serco using the contact methods mentioned below.

If this is a regular occurrence, or Serco have not responded that day, you can take the matter further to the council's Contracts and Commissions team using the council email address below. The council will report the problem and monitor that it has been completed.

Contact:

Website: canterbury.gov.uk/litter

Serco freephone: 0800 031 9091

Email: help.canterbury@serco.com

Council contact: rubbish&recycling@canterbury.gov.uk

Rented properties

- 20** A property that is council let /rented to students/ privately let is regularly causing litter problems. How do I get the right person to deal with the problem?

Information

People should put their bins out by 7am on their collection day, and bring them back in that evening, if emptied. If a bin is left out on the street for a long time, you can report it to the council who can take action.

Contact:

Unsure? rubbish&recycling@canterbury.gov.uk
Council house or estate: canterbury@eastkenthousing.org.uk
or 01227 862 142

Student or private rented:

University or landlord (or council if unsure)
University community liaison contacts:
University of Kent: contactus@kent.ac.uk or website -
kent.ac.uk/studentservices/community/
Canterbury Christ Church University:
communityliaison@canterbury.ac.uk

Graffiti

- 21** How do I get graffiti removed?

Information

Graffiti can very quickly have an effect on people's quality of life and affect the perception of an area. We try to remove offensive graffiti within two hours of it being reported and other graffiti as soon as possible.

There have been occasions when we have been happy to help community groups to remove graffiti in their area and we are always grateful for their efforts.

If you see someone doing graffiti you should report it to the police by calling 101.

It is the owner's responsibility to remove graffiti from private property.

Contact:

Sercos main switchboard: 0800 031 9091

Getting involved



Contact:

Email: litter.support@canterbury.gov.uk
Council contact: 01227 862 253

Litter picking

- 22 We would like to organise a regular litter pick, but don't have the equipment and/or information to start one. Where do start?

Information

Organising a litter pick event can sound daunting, but the council and active residents' associations can help point you in the right direction – including accessing equipment for free.

Different groups operate in different ways. Some residents' groups allocate streets to individual volunteers, while others organise a weekly rota.

If a group already exists and wishes to take part in formal organised activity with the support of parish councils.

Support, including litter picking equipment, clear sacks for disposal and the collection points for picked waste, can be arranged by the council if notified in advance. Local associations can tell you about what you need to consider and the best way to organise your own picks, or join in with a scheduled one.

A short council risk assessment must be completed prior to the pick to ensure volunteers are aware of risks, safety concerns and important dos and don'ts for a successful community litter pick. For a litter pick information pack and the risk assessment form, email the contact on this page.

Informal litter picking

- 23** I don't want to be part of a formal group but would just like to do my bit in my community from time to time. What help is available for me?
- 24** I just need a litter picker and to know what to do with the litter I collect. What help is available for me?

Information

We would advise you to take part in formal litter picks with organised groups as this ensures you are aware of the risks and have the appropriate equipment and it means that Serco will remove the litter you collect.

However, if you accept the risks involved in doing it on your own, then the council's litter and enforcement liaison councillor can provide a litter picker. Anything you collect will need to be put in a litter bin, or can be discarded with your own black bin waste. The county council household waste and recycling sites (tips) won't accept litter pick waste as this is officially classed as commercial waste. It isn't waste you have personally generated.

Contact:

Litter and enforcement liaison councillor:
ben.fitter@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk

Council involvement

- 25** How do we get a councillor or council officer to meet with us?
- 26** We have an active community group/residents' association. How can we share information and concerns with the right people?

Information

To find out who your local councillor is, see the web link below.

Councillor Ben Fitter-Harding is the Rural Area Member Panel's litter and enforcement liaison councillor. He can act as a direct strategic liaison between community groups, individuals, senior council officers and Serco managers. A council officer can be invited to attend a meeting. Contact should initially be made through the council's Contracts and Commissions team using the litter support email address or phone number.

Contact:

Litter and enforcement liaison councillor:
ben.fitter@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk
 Council contact: 01227 862 253
 Local councillors: canterbury.gov.uk/cllr

Parish and town councils

- 27 How do I find out if my town or parish council gets involved in litter picks?
- 28 What support is available to parish and town councils?

Information

Most parish and town councils have their own websites or they publish their activities outside village halls and on noticeboards. Canterbury City Council wants to do all it can to support parish and town councils to organise litter picks in the same way as resident and other groups.

That means the provision of litter-picking equipment and clear sacks for disposal. Collection points for the waste that has been collected can be arranged with Serco in advance.

A short risk assessment must be completed before the pick.

Contact:

Website: canterbury.gov.uk/parishes
Email: litter.support@canterbury.gov.uk
Council contact: 01227 862253

Shops and takeaways

- 29 How can local shops and businesses be encouraged to clean up around their premises?
- 30 Is there a way to get local businesses on board with our anti-litter messages and campaigns?

Information

You or your group may want to contact local shops directly, or speak with your ward councillor to raise any particular concerns you have.

Businesses, like everyone else, have a responsibility to manage their waste and the litter their businesses generate. If you see businesses abusing this, you can always report them to the council's enforcement or environmental health teams to investigate.

Contact:

Local councillors: canterbury.gov.uk/cllrs
Litter and enforcement liaison councillor:
ben.fitter@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk

Getting the message out



Contact:

Council contact: rubbish&recycling@canterbury.gov.uk

Community Committee: canterbury.gov.uk/community

Rural Area Member Panel: canterbury.gov.uk/ampr

Sharing concerns

- 31 There must be other people locally who share the same frustrations and concerns as me regarding litter. Is there a way to connect with those people?
- 32 I just want to highlight problems in my area, or get more interest on the topic with a wider audience or local councillors. How should I do this?

Information

If you want to contact like-minded people, or raise issues for public comment or discussion, the Canterbury 'grot spots' group on Facebook might be helpful. It is run independently from the council, and residents from across the city use it to share concerns, issues and photos. Both Serco and the council monitor this page and note concerns, although they do not respond directly. A number of councillors take part in discussions and will often provide feedback. This group is public, but you will need to request to join the group before you can post.

Issues related to litter are often discussed at the council's Community Committee and Rural Area Member Panel meetings. These are public meetings, which you can attend and register to speak at if you wish.