

Litter Strategy for England

Brief

Our goal is to achieve a substantial reduction in litter and littering in England, ensuring that our communities, natural landscape, roads and highways are free of litter.

Our strategy is to apply best practice in education, enforcement and infrastructure to deliver a substantial reduction in litter and littering behaviour, so that in the coming years we see demonstrable improvements in tackling litter.

Through the litter strategy we will:

- Send a clear and consistent anti-litter message, by:
 - **Developing and delivering a world class national anti-littering campaign**
 - developing an anti-littering culture which aims to educate young people about litter and encourage them to participate in caring for their communities
 - inspiring and engaging local communities, and empowering them to take action, including introducing a new '**litter innovation fund**' to pilot, implement and evaluate small scale local projects that could be replicated more widely
 - making a compelling business case for businesses of all kinds to invest in anti-litter activity
 - exploring voluntary and regulatory measures that aim to increase recycling and reduce litter, such as litter-reduction targets, or deposit return schemes
 - encouraging the development and testing of 'innovative techniques' to tackle littering behavior (like 'nudge')

- Clean up the country, including:
 - **exploring the ways in which packaging and packaging design can contribute to reducing litter.**
 - supporting national clean-up days
 - working with Highways England to put in place measures to deliver a lasting improvement in cleanliness at **25 priority litter hotspots** on the Strategic Road Network, including **updating the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse to clarify the expected standards** of cleanliness on the Network
 - producing **new guidance on “binfrastructure”** (the design, number and location of public litter bins and other items of street furniture) for local areas to help them reduce levels of litter
 - working with the relevant industries to tackle certain types of particularly problematic litter, including fast-food packaging, smoking-related litter and chewing gum
 - exploring the ways in which packaging and packaging design can contribute to reducing litter.

- Improve enforcement against offenders, including:
 - **providing improved guidance for councils on how use their enforcement powers proportionately and appropriately**
 - raising councils’ and magistrates’ awareness of the range of sanctions available to tackle littering and fly-tipping.
 - **Government will review the case for increasing fixed penalties for littering and related offences**
 - **Government will introduce new regulations to help councils tackle littering from vehicles**

Q+A

How has the strategy been developed?

The Government set up a Litter Strategy Advisory Group with representatives from private, public and voluntary sector organisations to help develop a strategic approach to tackling litter in England. The Group has met five times since February 2016. All the comments offered by members of the Litter Strategy Advisory Group were considered by Government during the development of the Strategy, but ultimately the Strategy is the Government's publication.

How will the Strategy work in practice?

- The Litter Strategy will bring about a culture change through education, enforcement and infrastructure to deliver a substantial reduction in litter and littering behaviour.
- The Litter Strategy is ambitious and brings together communities, businesses, charities and schools to bring about real change.
- A big focus will also be on education and behaviour change –a new national anti-littering campaign will be launched to bring about behaviour change.

Why are there no targets to reduce litter by in the Strategy?

- Measuring how much is littered is complex, and that's why the first part of the strategy is developing a baseline we can measure our progress against for future years. We expect the baseline to be ready in Spring 2017.
- After this, the Government will continue to monitor litter in England according to the methodology set out by the Data and Monitoring working group, and will consider the feasibility of litter-reduction targets for commonly-littered items.

Why doesn't the Litter Strategy contain...?

- The Litter Strategy doesn't list every action that can be taken towards achieving our goal – this is set to be delivered over a generation, it is not a document to gather dust and will continually evolve.

Why does the strategy feature an anti-litter campaign?

- A good anti-litter campaign is part of almost all successful international approaches to tackling litter. We remember big anti-litter campaigns from a few years ago, and think it is time for a world class national anti-litter campaign to help deliver sustained behaviour change for this generation.

Plastic bottles are one of the biggest sources of litter on our streets and beaches – but there's very little reference to them in the strategy –will there be some kind of deposit return scheme?

- The Government is establishing a new working group to look at different voluntary and economic incentives to reduce the amount of packaging that commonly gets littered. As plastic bottles are often one of the main culprits, the group will explore evidence for deposit return schemes for these, as well as other regulatory and voluntary measures.
- While the potential impacts and benefits of deposit return schemes remain inconclusive, this new expert group will consider the evidence as to whether these schemes could be practical and beneficial for England.