



# **SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL**

## **Litter Management Plan 2007 – 2010**

CONTENTS	PAGE
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Background	
1.2 Functional Bodies	
1.3 Functional Area	
<b>2 CURRENT SITUATION</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Litter Status	
2.2 The effects of Litter	
2.3 Rationale	
2.4 Broad Anti-litter Mechanisms	
<b>3 AWARENESS &amp; EDUCATION PROGRAMMES</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Rationale	
3.2 Objective	
3.3 Strategies	
<b>4 SUPPORT &amp; ASSISTANCE OF VOLUNTARY ACTION</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1 Rationale	
4.2 Objective	
4.3 Strategies	
<b>5 ENFORCEMENT OF RELEVANT LEGISLATION</b>	<b>7</b>
5.1 Rationale	
5.2 Objective	
5.3 Strategies	
<b>6 PREVENTION &amp; CONTROL MEASURES</b>	<b>8</b>
6.1 Rationale	
6.2 Objective	
6.3 Strategies	
<b>7 LINKING WITH NATIONAL INITIATIVES</b>	<b>8</b>
7.1 Rationale	
7.2 Objective	
7.3 Strategies	
<b>8 CONCLUSION</b>	<b>9</b>

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

Responsibility for the control and management of litter lies with Local Authorities. Under Section 10 of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997-2003, Local Authorities are required to adopt Litter Management Plans for their functional areas. The purpose of this plan is to improve the litter status of County Sligo. This can be achieved by setting targets and providing resources in a co-ordinated and strategic manner.

### **1.2 Functional Bodies**

This Litter Management Plan refers to Sligo County Council being the Litter Authority for its own functional area. However, Sligo County Council is the Waste Management Authority for both Sligo Borough Council and Sligo County Council areas.

### **1.3 Functional Area**

This litter management plan refers to the Local Authority functional area of County Sligo, a geographical area covering some 1,836 km<sup>2</sup>. Sligo with its population of 60,863 (and Sligo Borough population of 17,894) is flanked by approximately 195km of coastline and Counties Mayo, Roscommon and Leitrim. County Sligo is rich in biodiversity with many protected sites and archaeological features (with over 5,000 recorded sites) and boasting some of the richest concentrations of pre-historic monuments in Western Europe. Predominately these include one of the oldest and largest megalithic cemeteries at Carrowmore and the monastic complex at Inishmurray, which not only demonstrates early Christian life but is also a site of very high ornithological value. County Sligo also has several conservation designations including 19 Special Areas of Conservation, 8 Special Protected Areas and 20 National Heritage Sites. Under the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, Sligo has also been designated Gateway Status.

## **2 CURRENT SITUATION**

### **2.1 The effects of Litter**

Litter has long been perceived as a major threat to the tourist economy and is eroding our international image as a green and unspoilt environment. County Sligo depends heavily on tourism and this in turn is dependant on the dramatic and natural landscape, the availability of out-door/ coastal activities and the visual appearance of our County. It is imperative that Sligo County Council continues to make sustained efforts to further reduce littering across the county as the tag of littered areas does not bode well for potential investors.

### **2.2 Rationale**

For economic and aesthetic reasons, the control and improvement of the litter status in our county is of vital importance. Litter and illegal dumping also pose a significant threat to the many sites designated with special protections as a result of their biodiversity and ecological contribution to Sligo's natural environment.

### **2.3 Broad Anti-litter Mechanisms**

Sligo County Council is engaged in a number of activities and initiatives at targeting the problem of litter. Over the duration of this plan it is intended to further develop, strengthen and expand these initiatives.

This multifaceted approach employs the following:

- Awareness and education programmes.
- Support and assistance of voluntary action.
- Enforcement of relevant legislation.
- Prevention and control measures.
- Linking with national initiatives.

## **3 AWARENESS AND EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

### **3.1 Rationale**

Sligo County Council recognises that it has a duty of care to make citizens aware of the environmental damage and deterioration that is caused by litter pollution.

### **3.2 Objective**

To increase awareness of impact of litter pollution and its associated environmental damage thus encouraging changes in attitudes and habits.

### **3.3 Strategies**

- Provide up-to-date anti-litter literature.
- Use local media opportunities to promote waste management and anti-litter messages.
- Deal with public complaints and queries in timely and proactive manner.
- Support and facilitate the green schools programme.
- Support county involvement with national anti-litter initiatives e.g. tidy towns and national spring clean
- Instigate Blue Flag Beaches anti-litter events.
- Continue to enforce and extend the initiative '*Operation Clean-Sweep*' (the strict enforcement of Section 6 of the Litter Pollution Act, requiring all business to keep the front of premises litter free).
- Continue to monitor litter performance through patrols, routine inspections and litter pollution/quantification surveys.
- Maintain up to date information concerning litter on the Sligo County Council website.
- Initiate programmes against specific litter problems, i.e., cigarette butts, chewing gum, fast food wrappings, illegal dumping at bottle banks, etc.
- To provide financial support to groups who apply to local Agenda 21 - Environment Partnership Grants and Anti-Litter Awareness Grants to educate public in a dynamic manner.
- Support and develop pro-active projects including educational initiatives to engage communities in specific 'problem' areas.

## **4 SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE OF VOLUNTARY ACTION**

### **4.1 Rationale**

Within the functional area of Sligo County there are over 600 community and voluntary groups. Many of these groups have formed around the ideal of enhancing and protecting their localities. The environment is a core consideration and consequently many volunteers are engaged in a constant effort to eradicate litter. Sligo County Council recognises the very valuable contribution from these dedicated individuals. They are continually supported by Local Authorities, the Voluntary Bureau and County Sligo Community Forum. Thus we would aim to work with appropriate umbrella bodies to communicate effectively to a large number of community and voluntary groups across the county e.g. Community & Enterprise Department of Sligo County Council; Volunteer Bureau; Sligo Youth Council.

### **4.2 Objectives**

To communicate and work effectively and efficiently with a wide range of established voluntary groups across county Sligo in association with the Community & Enterprise Department & County Sligo Volunteer Bureau to encourage the development of new voluntary action.

### **4.3 Strategies**

Address litter concerns raised by voluntary groups and individuals including:

- Target litter black spots in co-operation with community groups/tidy towns committees.
- Encourage regular clean-up events.
- Provide clean-up materials.
- Provide financial assistance through grant aid or in kind.
- Publicise the voluntary efforts of groups.
- Increase participation in annual events both voluntary and financially aided by Local Authorities (i.e. National Spring Clean, County Competitions, Race Against Waste, Tidy Towns, Anti-litter Awareness, Local Agenda 21 - Environment Partnership Fund).

## **5 ENFORCEMENT OF RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

### **5.1 Rationale**

To utilise enforcement powers to prevent, limit and remedy the environmental damage and nuisance caused by litter.

### **5.2 Objective**

To penalise litter offenders by effective use of relevant legislation, i.e. the Litter Pollution Acts 1997 - 2003, Waste Management Acts 1996 - 2007 and the Protection of the Environment Act 2003.

### **5.3 Strategies**

- Operate a Litter Warden service with full administrative backup.
- Conduct regular and widespread litter patrols.

- Investigate all complaints.
- Issue on-the-spot fines, legal notices and prosecutions.
- Implement and enforce associated relevant Bye-laws e.g. Sligo County Council (Presentation of Waste for Collection) Bye-laws 2005, Beach Bye-laws 2007.
- Consult with sectoral organisations and Chambers of Commerce on litter issues and new initiatives.

## **6 PREVENTION AND CONTROL MEASURES**

### **6.1 Rationale**

Citizen co-operation is a major contributor in solving the litter problem, and much emphasis is placed on action in the community. Sligo County Council has responsibility for instigating prevention and control measures.

### **6.2 Objectives**

To ensure the appropriate provision of litter infrastructure, as far as resources will allow, throughout the county.

### **6.3 Strategies**

- Develop and implement anti-litter policies.
- Provide litter receptacles in appropriate locations in consultation with Sligo County Council and the local community.
- Liaise with appropriate department to provide a schedule of street cleansing.
- Establish financial guarantees (by way of bonds) for major events, which may give rise to litter.

## **7 LINKING WITH NATIONAL INITIATIVES**

### **7.1 Rationale**

A number of programmes have been introduced to support and strengthen Sligo County Council's efforts to combat litter pollution. These serve to develop a national and co-ordinated campaign against litter.

### **7.2 Objectives**

To implement and utilise the support of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in challenging litter at a local level.

### **7.3 Strategies**

- Publicise changes to litter legislation including increases of on-the-spot fines and summary convictions.
- Liaise with Enforcement Network Team on issues of illegal dumping.
- Administer co-funded public anti-litter awareness grants.
- Promote the dedicated litter website [www.litter.ie](http://www.litter.ie).
- Implement the National Litter Pollution Monitoring system through pollution and quantification surveys and reporting to the monitoring body.

<b>8 CONCLUSIONS</b>
----------------------

In conclusion, Sligo County Council gratefully acknowledges the voluntary efforts of communities in challenging litter but furthermore recognises that more co-operation and commitment is needed from communities to significantly improve our litter situation. Sligo County Council will invest in the voluntary efforts of the many concerned residents and groups of Sligo by supporting their anti-litter activities. The Local Authority will also work proactively to develop anti-litter initiatives including education projects in problem areas. Sligo County Council will also continue to implement the national guidelines including the polluter pays principle policy by enforcing anti-litter legislation and penalising litter offenders. Sligo County Council will, as far as possible, endeavour to provide the resources and financial assistance to improve county Sligo's Litter problem.