



Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 071591
Date 16 July 2015

Waste – Plastic Bags

Request and response in 'blue':

Please note, for the purpose of this inquiry the definition of litter is: “waste in the wrong place, caused by human agency” as used by Keep Britain Tidy. So here what is sought is information on plastic carrier bags that do not end up in domestic, public or commercial waste collection bins.

Please answer as many questions as you can. If exact information / data is not available, provide estimated values, but please indicate this in your response. Though the focus of this enquiry is specifically on plastic bags, in some of the questions both plastic bags and plastic films are mentioned because quite often these products are not distinguished.

Please provide some basic contact details here:

Name: [Paul Hodgetts](#)

Role / Position: [Service Manager](#)

Address / e-mail / phone: paul.hodgetts@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Please describe or provide a map of the geographical area your authority responsible for.



Quantity

1. Could you please quantify the collected litter? (e.g. volume, weight, bags / year / month / week, etc) (Please type your response here).
Collected litter (includes litter bins and precinct sweeper detritus collected) = 1,952 tonnes
2. In light of the definition above how much of the total municipal solid waste collected is litter (rather than directly from households, public bins etc) (volume / mass / percentage)
Not known (litter bin waste and litter picked up is combined upon collection)
3. Who is responsible for litter collection within the borough / county?
Wolverhampton City Council, Public Realm Services
4. Do you have your own employees for this purpose, (if yes how many?) or do you use contractors / subcontractors (if so, please provide details)
Council operatives totalling 59 full time equivalent
5. How many miles are travelled on average to collect litter per annum / month / week (please specify) and what type of vehicle is used for this purpose (make, model and fuel type)?
Information not held
6. Is the composition of litter recorded? If yes, could you please provide the composition data for the different types of litter?
Litter composition is not recorded
7. Where and how the collected litter is finally disposed of?
Crown Street incinerator
8. Are there any NGO's or volunteer groups who help with the collection of litter? Could you please name these groups?
12 volunteer groups (mainly 'friends of parks' groups) have been involved in community clean ups so far this year.

Role

9. What are your legal waste management responsibilities: collection, disposal or both? Both
10. Are there any arrangements in place within your authority to recover plastic film from the residual waste stream? No

Litter prevention actions

11. Do you take enforcement action against littering offences?
Yes – we issue fixed penalty notices in respect to littering offences. We generally prosecute when the Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid.
12. Do you have any other tools or actions in place to prevent littering (patrols, education, extra waste collection bins, signs / notices etc..)
Yes – School poster competition – winner displayed on refuse vehicles. Also social media campaign: 'Cleaner, Greener, Better' encouraging people to use litter bins, Stickers on litter bins, Raffle tickets issued to litter bin users to promote and encourage use – monthly winner £75 financed by sponsors.

See links below for more detail:

<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/article/7264/School-girls-join-the-fight-against-litter>

<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/article/7142/Cash-win-for-using-a-bin>

<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/article/6557/Clearing-up-confusion-on-dog-poo>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/WolverhamptonToday>

<https://www.facebook.com/opspringclean>

Costs

13. How much does the litter collection cost to your organisation monthly / annually?

£2.586m annual cost (Financial Year 2014/15)

14. How much does your authority spend on litter prevention a year / month?

£6,000 annual cost (Financial Year 2014/15)

Consequences of littering

15. Have you encountered any problems (e.g. disruption of services, loss of wildlife, damage to machinery or services etc) caused by littered plastic bags / films? If yes, could you please describe them?

Not known

16. How many, if any, litter-related complaints do you receive annually?

For 2014-15 Corporate Complaints Team received three corporate complaints as follows

One complaint regarding dog litter bin

One complaint regarding replacement litter bin

One complaint regarding action of litter removal

For 2014-15 Customer Services received the following service requests – see below

Service Area	Enquiry/Complaint	Total no. of Enquiries/Complaints
Public Realm	Litter bin emptying	111
Reactive Maintenance	Litter bin enquiry	6
Public Realm	Litter bin install/replace	78
Public Realm	Litter pick/manual sweeping	467
Public Protection	Littering - I have got a fine for littering, how can I appeal?	18
Street Cleansing	Littering/Leaves/Syringes - Can you clean up.....	2477

17. Are you aware of any accidents / incidents / complaints specifically caused by plastic bags / films? Yes

Other

18. Does your organisation consider littered plastic bags / films to be a significant problem within your jurisdiction? No

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

19. Do your answers here fly-tipping or do keep separate data on fly-tipping?
[Separate data kept on fly tipping.](#)
20. Any other comments?
[None](#)

Please also do send me any information that you think will be helpful to my study and reviews of this area (e.g. references, websites, publications, policy documents etc...)

[Environment Agency](#)

[CIWM](#)

[Defra websites provide lots of waste and litter related information](#)

[Keep Britain Tidy](#)