

Street Scene and Waste Communications Strategy & Action Plan

Bromsgrove District Council & Redditch Borough Council
Environmental Services
2011-2013

1. Introduction

- 1.1 With the shared nature of Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council's Waste and Street Scene Policy, Performance and Publicity team (PPP), waste and street scheme related communications will be coordinated across the two neighbouring authorities.
- 1.2 This opportunity allows not only financial savings but also the opportunity to synchronize messages to residents in both areas.
- 1.3 2010/11 saw the step change for both authorities with the introduction of the comingled recycling service and much effort was concerted into communicating this change to all residents that would be affected. With support from Worcestershire County Council and WRAP new livery, banners, calendars, service leaflets, letters, residents' magazines, press adverts, road shows were all employed in this effort.
- 1.4 This year also saw a real increase in the use of electronic communications for the service by means of social networking sites as well as the now already established council website. With the two instances of bad snow and ice weather experienced 'e-communications' proved to be the most fitting and convenient method of keeping our residents in touch about our services and will be something we look to utilise more in the future.

2. Review

- 2.1 Both authorities have been separately managing their waste and street scene communications individually although they have often communicated that same messages and the same time of year and often through the same medium.
- 2.2 No formal communications strategy has been adopted by either authority in the past and the relevant officers have managed the communication of messages on a day to day basis and in line with national campaigns and regional waste initiatives.
- 2.3 Successes for the past few years communications have included:

- **Social Network / Email updates** (E.g. Bad Weather Working Plan)

Using social networking sites has become a hugely popular method of communication over the past 2 years and many residents will engage in some way with this kind of networking. Using Facebook, Twitter and other such sites enables us to disseminate message quickly and to provide ongoing updates on a regular basis at no financial outlay to the

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council. The use of emails to disseminate information that can quickly change has been successfully put into place through the bad weather working arrangements.

- **Parish and Village Newsletters for localised and general information** (E.g Changes to waste collection services)

BDC has been criticized in the past for not communicating messages to all its residents and that the local newspapers do not cover the entire district. In order to address this reliance on local press has reduced greatly and instead the use of more localise newsletters has been employed.

- **Actively engaging with residents on the streets** (E.g Dog Fouling Campaign Activities)

RBC have been using innovative methods to target dog fouling issues which have proved effective in stimulating local residents in the issues and engaging directly with those that have the concerns. Standing shoulder to shoulder with residents and being a very recognisable figure enables residents to recognise someone is taking action and the authority is addressing a particular issue. This very visual way of communicating is time consuming and therefore resource intensive however possibly produces the best results.

- **Customer Focus Groups** (E.g Changes to Waste Services)

BDC ran a focus group to engage with residents on how to communicate the 2009 changes to waste services. Although not initially intended as a communication tool, this group proved very effective in engaging with our local community and allow them to have an input into the way in which we communicated our message. Where possible this kind of focus group should be employed to help shape the way we deliver our message and also what messages we deliver.

2.4 Other innovative ideas such as using the Life channel to advertise in GP surgeries to reach target audiences in the community have been employed in an attempt to engage with often difficult to reach groups. Although not quantifiable in terms of how many residents were actually touched by this method of communication, we have statistics to provide an average footfall and demographic make up of the regular visitors to the GP surgeries and we found this useful in targeting females and the elderly.

2.5 It is intended that by planning in the communications for waste and street scene issues we will be able to manage resources more effectively, include all the relevant stakeholders and deliver well though through campaigns which therefore are more likely to deliver the expected results.

3. Strategy

- 3.1 PPP will proactively plan a number of targeted campaigns covering street scene and waste issues for both authorities. A mix of communication approaches will be utilised in promoting services messages. We have a number of different messages to convey at different points in the year and often to different audiences therefore a range of diverse communication tools are required to help us to do this and more importantly to engage with our customers.
- 3.2 Residents Magazines
Bromsgrove: Together Bromsgrove is published 2 times per year Summer and Winter)
Redditch: Redditch Matters is published 3 times per year (Spring, Summer and Winter)
- 3.3 For each edition published at least 1 full page devoted to a service specific issue will be printed and distributed to all residents within each authority.
- 3.4 New Residents Pack
This will be a new feature for both authorities whereby service specific information will be distributed to new residents of the area. In particular information concerning the new householders refuse and recycling service will be of utmost importance.
- 3.5 Social Networking
For both authorities social networking sites (currently Facebook, Twitter) will be utilised in all possible areas as this proves an efficient and quick method of deploying message. Social networking sites will be the particular focus for any service disruption alerts (e.g. disruption to waste collections due to snow and ice)
- 3.6 Council Websites
All areas of both authority website will be kept up to date with relevant and useful service information. This will continue to be a primary source of information for all our residents and Customer Service Centres alike and therefore needs to be current and easily navigable in order to find the desired information.
- 3.7 Direct Emails
Direct mails will be sent to parish councils and elected councillors and where appropriate customer email addresses to update and advise on forthcoming events, service changes etc.

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3.8 Livery

The vehicles used in delivering council services are a valuable asset to each authority, in using the vehicles to advertise and promote our street scene and waste services we are able to take our messages into our communities for relatively little outlay providing vast opportunities to be seen. All future refuse and recycling vehicles will be procured with an in built livery solution installed.

3.9 Events

Each authority has a calendar of annual events which have historically been attended by the waste services department. The PPP team will attend events where appropriate to communicate services message with residents. Such events are valuable in gaining face to face contact with residents and also allows for feedback to be used to improve specific service areas.

3.10 Other opportunities to meet

Other less formal events will also be valuable in allowing face to face communication with residents such as stands at a Customer Service Centre or greeting dog owners in local parks to give advice on dog fouling.

3.11 Local press

Press releases allow messages and photos to be circulated in 78,956 copies in BDC and 97,307 copies in RBC. Although coverage of the local papers is not 100%, use of press release does deliver a message to a high proportion of both areas. Press releases are also circulated to local radio stations and in the past there has been support via this medium although to a lesser extent than newspapers.

3.12 Consultation

There is a need to engage with our customers on a more formal basis to understand fully the effectiveness of our services and to ensure each Council is providing services which are fit for purpose for our customers. **A focus group to fully understand the requirements of our customers will be organised for both authorities. At these focus groups we will gather feedback on street scene and waste services and on the communications strategy and plan contained in this document.**

4. Key Objectives

The strategy intends to focus on 7 key objectives which are outlined in the Environmental Service Business Plan 2011-12 or the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire & Worcestershire. All objective are waste or street scene related issues that are of a concern to residents of both authorities and which are concerns for the authorities themselves.

- 4.1 Understand the requirements of our customers for street scene & waste services
- 4.2 Decrease tonnage of food waste in grey bins
- 4.3 Decrease incidents of dog fouling on pavements and open spaces
- 4.4 Decrease incidents of fly tipping
- 4.5 Decrease incidents of littering
- 4.6 Increase reuse tonnage from household waste
- 4.7 Increase tonnage of recyclables collected from household waste
- 4.8 Decrease tonnage of compostables collected in grey bins

5. Campaign Planner

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5.1

Objective/ Target audience/ Message	Communication Tools	Anticipated Results	Resources Required	Timescales / Frequency
<p>Food Waste</p> <p>3.1 Reduce the volume of food ending up in grey bins. On average £50 of food per family per month is thrown away</p> <p>Target Audience: Procurers, cooks, consumers of food in the home environment.</p> <p>Primarily aimed at females</p> <p>Message:</p> <p><i>Only buy the food you need</i> <i>Perfect Portions</i> <i>Love your leftovers</i> <i>Store food correctly</i></p>	<p>LFHW livery</p> <p>Face to face (events)</p> <p>Link to LFHW website from Council pages</p> <p>Press releases</p>	<p>Reduction of uncooked food and packeted food in grey bins.</p> <p>There is no requirement from WRAP to measure performance therefore success will only be anecdotal.</p>	<p>LFHW Livery Banners Leaflets (Above funded by WRAP)</p> <p>Giveaway bags (Supplies already secured)</p> <p>Staff time</p>	<p>Apr – Jun 2011</p> <p>Aim for 1 event in each district per month for 2011 WRAP Campaign</p> <p>Jan – Mar 2012</p>

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<p>Dog Fouling</p> <p>3.2 Decrease the incidents of dog fouling on pavements and open spaces</p> <p>Target audience: Dog Owners</p> <p>Message:</p> <p><i>Clean up after your dog</i></p>	<p>Anti-dog fouling Livery</p> <p>Press release</p> <p>Repair or replace damaged dog bins</p> <p>Temporary signs</p> <p>Poo Spraying</p> <p>High visibility of 'Dog Wardens'</p> <p>Web Site & social networking</p> <p>Leaflets</p> <p>Dog poo bags</p>	<p>A reduction in observed dog fouling and dog fouling complaints on pavements and open spaces</p>	<p>£2,400 per authority for livery – Agrippa</p> <p>Signs £450</p> <p>Spray paint £ 50</p> <p>Leaflets £ 200</p> <p>Enforcement Team to highlight target sites for RBC</p> <p>Street cleansing to highlight target sites for BDC</p> <p>Reports from Oneserve and M3 to quantify number of complaints.</p> <p>Anecdotal reports of fouling from residents will also be taken into account for site selection.</p> <p>Poo Bags – already procured</p> <p>Hi Vis Vest – already procured</p>	<p>Jul – Oct 2011</p> <p>Street Theatre & Morton Stanley festival</p> <p>Apr - Jun 2012</p> <p>Jul - Oct 2013</p> <p>Arrow Valley Scarecrow Festival</p>
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<p>Fly Tipping 3.3 Decrease the incidents of fly tipping</p> <p>Target audience: Illegal fly tippers, both commercial and household</p> <p>Message:</p> <p><i>Dispose of your waste lawfully</i></p>	<p>Anti-fly tipping livery</p> <p>Covert surveillance with EA & widespread PR coverage of perpetrators</p> <p>Business Rates Leaflet mailer</p> <p>Duty of care checks on builders, tyre fitter, household clearance and waste disposal businesses</p> <p>Website & social networking</p> <p>Banners displayed at prominent fly tipping hot spots.</p>	<p>Reduction in number of fly tipping incidents</p> <p>At least 1 prosecuted fly tipper in each local authority</p>	<p>£2,400 per authority for livery – Agrippa Input required from Legal Team @ BDC</p> <p>EA required for surveillance</p> <p>Revenue department for business rates mailer £300 per authority for postage</p> <p>Print & Design for leaflet</p> <p>Enforcement for duty of care inspections</p>	<p>Jan – Mar 2012</p> <p>Jan - Mar 2013</p>
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<p>Litter</p> <p>3.4 Decrease incidents of littering</p> <p>Target audience: All residents of both authorities</p> <p>All visitors to both authority areas</p> <p>Message: <i>Don't drop litter.</i></p> <p><i>Dispose of litter in a litter bin</i></p>	<p>Anti-littering livery</p> <p>Press release</p> <p>Website & social networking</p> <p>We're watching you campaign (incentivising those using litter bins and issuing FPN's for those that don't)</p> <p>Repair or replace damaged litter bins</p> <p>Organise litter picks</p> <p>Banners in high profile locations</p> <p>Cigarette butt pocket ashtrays</p> <p>Crew Training</p>	<p>General awareness raising on dropping litter</p> <p>A reduction in the occurrence of problem litter at target sites</p>	<p>Enforcement Team to highlight target sites for RBC</p> <p>Street cleansing to highlight target sites for BDC</p> <p>Reports from Oneserve and M3 to quantify number of complaints.</p> <p>Anecdotal reports of fouling.</p> <p>Banners £1000</p> <p>Cigarette Butt pocket ashtrays £1500</p>	<p>Jul – Oct 2012</p> <p>Street Theatre & Moreton Stanley Festival</p> <p>Apr - Jun 2013</p>
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6. Campaign Details

6.1 Love Food Hate Waste

In 2007 WRAP released a report identifying that on average families waste around £50 per month throwing food waste away. This equates to around 8.3 million tonnes of food and drink in the UK each year. The cost of food waste disposal is ultimately passed onto the householder and therefore residents are paying twice for the food they waste.

6.1.1 Timing:

This is a regional West Midlands LFHW campaign coordinated by Shropshire County Council. Funding secured to procure livery, leaflets, fleeces, t-shirts, table cloths, menu cards and give-aways. Launch date 8th March and runs until June 2011 in line with bid requirements.

6.1.2 Focus:

The 2 main reasons for throwing food away are cooking too much and letting food go off before eating it. The majority of people do not admit to wasting food as they do not acknowledge it, those households with children are the worse offenders per household whilst single person households waste the most per capita. Age also plays a part with younger adults wasting more than the older age groups.

The issue of wasting food does quite often need to be teased out of individuals and therefore officers will have to go down a line of questioning to identify what items each particular resident will waste. Aim to be as helpful as possible giving suggestions and advice about food storage, meal planning and using left over's etc but make sure the tone of voice does not come over as preachy or authoritative.

Each authority is to arrange and hold events to speak face to face with residents and engage with them about food waste.

Key behaviours to address:

- Meal Planning
- Writing Shopping Lists
- Checking Cupboards before shopping
- Food rotation and dates
- Freezing Food
- Perfect Portions
- Using Leftovers
- Food Storage

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6.1.3 Aim:

To engage with a minimum of 100 residents of BDC and RBC (inclusive)

To identify food waste within the home

To suggest methods of food waste reduction using ideas from the LFHW website (or personal experience as appropriate)

6.1.4 Plan of Action:

- Livery to be applied to freighters
- Website updates
- Ask local communities (shops, libraries etc) to display LFHW posters.
- Arrange **at least 5 LFHW road shows** in each authority area trying to focus on locations where officers can engage with residents and talk at length. Avoid locations where residents will be short of time and unwilling to talk.
- Keep a tally of the number of individuals spoken to.
- Take photograph of stall / event.
- Where appropriate invite other Environmental Services staff to attend event and assist in manning stands
- Press release

6.2 Dog Fouling

Dog fouling is classed as litter by local authorities but it is the most offensive type of litter that many residents will come across. Where dog owners do not clean up after their pet they subject other pedestrians to treading in the mess and often making the issue worse by spreading the fouling incident. The victims of dog fouling are very often children, pushchair and wheelchair users. Dog mess contains infections (toxocariasis) which can cause blindness, fits and asthma.

6.2.1 Timing:

This campaign is timed to coincide with the better weather where it will be easier to engage with dog owners as opposed to during cold, dark and wet periods when people will be less willing to stop and talk when dog walking

6.2.2 Focus:

It is the responsibility of the dog owner or the person in charge of the dog to clear up any dog fouling left by their dog. If owners fail to clean up after their dog, Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued, or if the case goes to court a fine of up to £1000.00. The regulations state specifically, that being unaware that the dog has fouled, or not having a suitable means of removing the faeces is not a reasonable excuse for failing to clean up after a dog. The intention is to advise dog walkers

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about the illegal side of dog fouling, ensure dog walkers have poo bags with them to clean up after their dog and to make sure they are aware about the risks associated with dog fouling.

6.2.3 Aim:

To engage with as many dog walkers and non dog walkers as possible about the actions being taken

To highlight the abundance of dog fouling in target areas

To reduce the occurrences of dog fouling incidents in selected target areas

6.2.4 Plan of Action:

- Livery to be applied to freighters
- Website & social networking updates
- Repair & replace damaged dog bins
- Select target areas – areas to be chosen through engaging with street cleansing supervisor, enforcement officers, customer complaints and historical information held on areas.
- Officers to be highly visible wearing 'dog warden' vests
- Count number of dog fouling incidents at target location
- Display temporary lamppost signs in prominent locations
- Spray dog foul's with high visibility spray paint
- Post leaflets through residents doors to advise what orange spray paint is for and about campaign
- Actively engage with residents (dog walkers and non-dog walkers alike) to inform them when the campaign is about
- Where dog walkers do not have a poo bag, hand over a poo bag and poo picker and explain why it is important to clean up after the dog
- In 2 weeks return to target location to remove signs, recount and record dog fouling incidents, again actively engaging with residents
- Zero Tolerance on FPN's
- Press release

This high level of action will be sustained for the length of the campaign led by the PPP team. The Enforcement Team and Business Support will be expected to raise their levels of pro active activity in dog fouling issues during the period of the campaign. E.g. actively engaging with residents and being highly visible.

Once the campaign comes to an end, the Enforcement Team should carry on using the spray paint method to identify fouling incidents when ever they are on normal work business and to sustain their high profile dog fouling activities highlighting issues surrounding dog fouling and actively engaging with dog walkers and non dog walkers alike.

6.3 Fly Tipping

Fly tipping offences cost around £143000 across Redditch and Bromsgrove in clean up costs alone (flycapture figure) during 2010-2011. In Bromsgrove fly tipping levels have been an increasing problem with a large proportion of the incidents attributed to commercial waste. In part the levels of fly tipping are encouraged by the large network of quiet country lanes and easy access to the heavily populated conurbations of Birmingham. Redditch suffers less with the problem due in part to the enforcement presence in the authority and also as there is perhaps less opportunity to pass unseen in quiet roads.

6.3.1 Timing:

The campaign will be times to fall immediately before a leaflet concerning business waste that will be included in the business rates invoice in April.

6.3.2 Focus:

There are many different types of fly tipping; this campaign is not concerned with the side waste fly tipping that is considered to be an issue for action under the waste collection service. The fly tipping of concern here is residents choosing to take waste to specific locations to off load waste, aware that this will not constitute part of their AWC service AND commercial fly tipping.

6.3.3 Aim:

To reduce annual levels of fly tipping dumped within the authority

To raise awareness of what fly tipping is

To raise awareness amongst business owners of how to correctly dispose of business waste

6.3.4 Plan of Action:

- Livery applied to freighters
- Website & social networking updates
- Business waste letter sent to all business in authority area
- Enforcement officers to proactively approach business (selected by sector type) to run waste duty of care checks. Evidence of trade waste contracts and waste transfer notes are to be requested and fines issued in accordance with the

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authorities Environmental Enforcement Policy. Records of business checked must be kept to maintain a register of checks undertaken and relevant outcomes.

- Banners displayed at fly tipping hotspots
- Press release

6.4 Litter

6.4.1 Timing:

The campaign is planned to fall at time periods where the days will be lighter longer to make engagement on the streets more achievable for officers.

6.4.2 Focus:

Litter is made up of a multitude of waste materials however a large proportion of litter waste can be attributed to food and drink packaging and cigarette ends. The campaign aims to focus directly on individuals and engage with them at the time they have used a litter bin or at the time they have dropped the litter.

6.4.3 Aim:

To encourage residents to use litter bins

To particularly focus on males 18-34 age groups however not discounting all other residents.

To reinforce the positive behaviour of residents using litter bins

6.4.4 Plan of Action:

- Livery applied to freighters
- Press release to launch campaign
- 'We're watching you'. (Incentivising those using litter bins and issuing FPN's for those that don't).
- Repair or replace damaged litter bins
- Display banners at parks, schools, play areas
- Website & social networking updates
- Contact parish councils, community organisations, local businesses etc to arrange monthly litter picks. Encourage the groups to select an area they feel would benefit from the litter pick
- Contact take away food restaurants, pubs and bars to advise on litter issues
- Recruit voluntary litter wardens and supply with high visibility vest, a supply of black sacks and litter picking stick
- Hand out cigarette butt pocket bins to smokers / those dropping cigarette butts

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- Record how many people have been rewarded and how many have been 'caught' not using litter bins
- Zero Tolerance on FPN's
- Follow up with press release to publish results

This high level of action will be sustained for the length of the campaign led by the PPP team. Enforcement are to sustain the activities by penalising the offenders rather than rewarding the compliers.

6.5 Recycling

6.5.1 Timing:

The main focus of the campaign will run annually throughout November and December in the build up to the festive season to try to encourage residents to recycle the additional waste they will be creating at this time of year. Throughout the year new residents to the authority area will be advised of the recycling service available to them through information in the New Residents Pack.

6.5.2 Focus:

The focus is primarily on Household waste and the kerbside co-mingled green bin collection with some attention paid to bring bank sites and those sites specifically designed for use at multiple occupancy buildings and flats. Due to the time of year some attention will also be paid to other agencies that may be useful in managing household waste e.g. reuse organisations and charity shops etc.

6.5.3 Aim:

To ensure all residents are aware of the materials they can recycle through the council provided collection services
To encourage residents to recycle all materials they can in council provided collection services

6.5.4 Plan of Action:

- Livery applied to freighters
- Press release to launch campaign
- Articles in community newsletters
- Advertise in local press to identify materials that can be recycled in kerbside service
- Crew Training

6.6 Composting

6.6.1 Timing:

Link in with National Compost Awareness Week held each year in May and when residents will be more receptive towards thinking about gardening and garden waste.

6.6.2 Focus:

Focussing on householders with gardens and dealing with the resulting waste created from maintaining a garden, this is a form of waste management that can assist authorities in reducing the total quantity of waste that residents present for collection and disposal.

6.6.3 Aim:

To increase the number of householders home composting their garden waste
To increase the number of compost bins sold through the WCC subsidised scheme
To raise awareness of the range of materials that can be composted at home

6.6.4 Plan of Action:

- Arrange Home composting clinics with WCC at garden centres and allotment sites using Master Composters
- Advertise discounted bins in local press and residents magazines

7. Communications Calendar

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2011												
Bank Holiday Collections	22 nd Good Friday 25 th Easter Monday 29 th Royal Wedding	2 nd May Day 30 th Spring Bank Hol			29 th Summer Bank Hol				25 th Xmas Day 26 th Boxing Day	1 st New Years Day		
Dog Fouling Campaign Launch												
Christmas Recycling												
Fly Tipping Campaign Launch												
National Campaigns		1 st – 7 th May Compost Awareness Week	20 th - 26 th Recycle Now Week									

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	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2012												
Bank Holiday collections	6 TH Good Friday 9 th Easter Monday	7 th May Day	4 th Spring Bank Hol	5 th * Diamond Jubilee	27 th Summer Bank Hol				25 th Xmas Day 26 th Boxing Day	1 st New Years Day		29 th Good Friday
Dog Fouling Campaign Launch												
Litter Campaign Launch												
Christmas Recycling												
LFHW Campaign Launch												

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	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2013												
Bank Holiday collections	1 st Easter Monday	6 th May Day 27 th Spring Bank Hol			26 th Summer Bank Hol				25 th Xmas Day 26 th Boxing Day	1 st New Years Day		
Litter Campaign Launch												
Dog Fouling Campaign Launch												
Christmas Recycling												
Fly Tipping Campaign Launch												

7.1 For all events recorded on above table:

- Update Scripts – RBC only
- Update Customer Service Centre with they information they require
- Liaise with Central Communications Team to issues a press release
- Liaise with Central Communications Team to updates social networking sites
- Send update email to Councillors and Parish Councils
- Send update email to all Environmental Service Staff
- Update website with relevant information

8.0 Campaign Rota 2011-2013

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct*	Nov ○ ◇	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2011												
Food Waste	■	■	■									
Dog Fouling				■	■	■						
Recycling							■	■	■			
Fly Tipping										■	■	■
2012												
Litter	■	■	■									
Dog Fouling				■	■	■						
Recycling							■	■	■			
LFHW										■	■	■
2013												
Litter	■	■	■									
Dog Fouling				■	■	■						
Recycling							■	■	■			
Fly Tipping										■	■	■

Other Service Banners

** Bonfire Banners*

◇ Christmas Lights Switch On