

Litter and Dog Bin Policy



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1.1 Introduction

Mid Devon District Council has no legal duty to provide litter and dog waste bins but it does have a duty to keep Council owned land and public highways clear of litter and refuse as far as practicable.

Bins are provided, maintained, and emptied as the main method of controlling the litter and dog waste problems that many areas experience. There are approximately 394 litter and 300 dog bins in varying condition across the District with a capital cost in the region of £136,000. This is a large number for the size of the district and as funding continues to be reduced from central government a reduction in the number should be considered.

Whilst the Council is committed to providing sufficient bins to help discharge its responsibilities under the Environmental Act 1990, the Council has never had a policy for agreeing bins. It has often allowed town and parish Councils to locate additional bins, if they pay for the new bin installation and then take the on-going cost for the emptying of the bin. Going forward new bins will only be located in areas where it can be demonstrated that there is a genuine need for one. All locations must be approved by MDDC in consultation with local town and parish Council.

This policy helps to support Government advice in developing an integrated strategy to the problem of litter and cleanliness that includes defining standards and working in partnership with local communities.

1.2 Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to detail how the Council will deal with:

- Requests for new bins
- Emptying and maintaining existing bins
- Replacing existing bins
- Dual dog and litter bins
- Increase Recycling of Litter

2.0 Requests for New Bins

All requests for new bins must be received in writing from either Town or Parish Councils using the form in Appendix A. The request must demonstrate why there is the need for a bin and include:

- Plan of the location for the bin and nearest alternative
- Type of Bin
- Financial Assistance provided by the local Council
- A risk assessment determining any hazards that the placement of the bin may cause to members of the public or MDDC staff
- Survey of litter/dog mess over a three month period

Bins will only be supplied, installed, maintained or emptied if they are on land for which MDDC has responsibility. This includes streets, parks and green spaces, but doesn't include private land such as schools, canal towpaths or riverbanks. Should a third party request a new or replacement bin on their land MDDC will consider the request, and if approved a bin will be supplied and installed at a cost to the third party. The responsibility of emptying such a bin would remain with MDDC and a charge made for this service in advance.

Where deemed appropriate litter bins with recycling facilities may be installed instead of, or in addition to, standard litter bins.

This policy does not suggest public consultation on the installation of bins in general. However in some circumstances, it is recommended, such as when bins are proposed in close proximity to houses.

As there are on-going human and financial resource implications with the installation of any new bin, due consideration should be given to all requests for bins using the criteria detailed below:

2.1 Site Survey:

A site survey, to include the following criteria:

- Suitability of the location including the need to reduce street clutter, particularly in more sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas and near to listed buildings.
- Scale of the litter/dog waste problem- will it make a real impact on litter or can this be addressed in other ways e.g. by enforcement.
- Number and location of existing bins in the area.
- Accessibility to all including collection vehicle.
- Cost of installation.
- Costs for emptying the bin as some in more remote areas can have disproportionate transport costs.
- The possibility of valid objections from neighbours.

If MDDC deems the location to be unsuitable for reasons of safety, such as stopping to empty a bin, proximity to housing or installation difficulties an alternative location may be suggested.

2.2 Alternative Arrangements:

Possible alternatives, including:

- Changing the size/type of existing bins in the area (e.g. dog bin to dual dog and litter bin)
- Moving an existing bin to a different location.

Bins will only be installed on sites which are safe and where there is a genuine need for a bin. We will not install bins on private land or in a location which may encourage the disposal of trade waste. The EPA 1990 makes provision for the collection and disposal of commercial waste, and the Council expects businesses to provide and empty their own bins for the litter they create, including retail premises such as takeaways, kiosks etc.

Once a decision has been made by MDDC regarding the outcome of a request for a bin, that decision will not be reviewed for a minimum of six months.

3.0 Emptying and Maintaining Bins

Only those bins purchased by the MDDC will be maintained and emptied, or those with an agreement with the owner.

Bins will be emptied on such a frequency that will prevent them overflowing. This will be based on their locations and related to the intensity of use. The frequency may also vary according to the time of year and for special events. Monitoring will ensure that these frequencies are sufficient.

All bins will be maintained to a standard that is fit for purpose. When a bin is damaged or stolen it will be replaced only if it meets the criteria above for new bins. Also any bins that have a history of constant vandalism will not be replaced.

Bins that have been supplied, installed and maintained by a Parish Council remain the responsibility of the Parish Council and will not be included in any assessment, replacement, refurbishment and repair process. Should these bins be in need of a replacement a request for a new bin should be submitted.

4.0 Replacing and Removing Existing Bins.

The Council will aim to improve the effectiveness of individual bins through a program of removal and replacement, using larger capacity bins where required or combining separate dog and litter bins into one. We will continually monitor the usage of bins to determine their viability. Bins not being used or being used infrequently may be removed.

Where individual bins are repeatedly targeted with vandalism, a flexible approach to finding a suitable solution should be found. This may include using a different type of bin, moving the bin to a nearby location or removing the bin entirely. When the most appropriate solution is to move or remove the bin, consultation should be carried out with local Council to ensure they support the solution.

If a member of the public, a Parish Council, other interested party or MDDC deems a bin to no longer be needed in a particular location an assessment will be carried out similar assessment as that used for the placement of a new bin will be carried out. If the bin is shown to be in a suitable location it will remain in place. If the assessment shows the bin to be in an unsuitable location an alternative location may be suggested or the bin may be removed entirely following consultation with local people.

5.0 Dual Dog and Litter bins

All dog and litter bins are collected by the same round for each area and the waste is taken to the same disposal point. It therefore serves no purposes to split this waste before collection. Dog owners should be advised that dog waste in bags can be put in any public litter bin, reducing the need for specific dog bins. There are many dog and litter bins in the district which have been located next to each other. A review of bin locations could identify bins which could be removed and a dual purpose bin installed instead.

6.0 Recycling Litter bins

Much of the waste collected in litter bins could be recycled. The Council will consider in high use locations such as town centres the installation of split litter bins (one side recyclables the other for non-recyclables). The recycling of this waste will both benefit the environment but also reduce disposal costs and thus generate an income from both recycling credits and sale of the material.