

Abandoned vehicles

Abandoned vehicles pose several problems in the communities:

- ✓ They are danger to everyone (particularly young children)
- ✓ There is a risk of serious injury from explosion or fire
- ✓ They become a beacon for crime and anti-social behaviour (vandalism, graffiti and fly tipping)
- ✓ They can cause damage to the environment from leaks of fluids and fuels into the surrounding area
- ✓ They lower the quality of life in our neighbourhoods
- ✓ They can take up our valuable parking spaces, particularly in resident areas

What is an abandoned vehicle?

There is no legal definition that describes 'Abandoned vehicle'. A vehicle will only be classed as abandoned when an authorized officer from the local authority or police force has identified it as such.

A vehicle can be deemed to be abandoned when it fulfils some or all of the following criteria:

- ✓ It is no longer in a road-worthy condition

- ✓ It is in such a place as to cause aggravation or danger to others
- ✓ It has no valid tax disc on display, is being kept on a road whilst registered with a SORN (Statutory Off Road Notification) declaration (however, a vehicle may be abandoned even with a valid tax disc or SORN)
- ✓ The vehicle or its contents are having a negative impact on the local environment and the visual amenity of a community
- ✓ It is in such a place and condition that it attracts the unwanted attention of vandals and anti-social behaviour
- ✓ There is evidence that the vehicle has not been moved for a considerable amount of time
- ✓ The owner or keeper cannot be identified, or fails to respond to a legal notice

It is not always just cars that are the problem. A 'vehicle' is described in The Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978 as '...a mechanically propelled vehicle... for use on the roads... and includes any trailer intended or adapted for use as an attachment to such a vehicle, any chassis or body, with or without wheels, appearing to have formed part of such a vehicle or trailer'.

This means anything that has belonged, or been attached to something that has driven on a road (even the mechanical parts such as the engine, wheels and tyres.)

Contact details

Nets and Land Services
Grounds Maintenance
Waverly Street Depot
Bathgate
EH48 4JR

To report an environmental concern call free on
0800 616 446

Information is available in Braille, tape, large print and community languages. Please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service on 0131 242 8181.

هذه المعلومات متوفرة بلغة بريل وعلى شريط وبخط كبير وبلغات الجالية. الرجاء الإتصال بخدمة الترجمة على الهاتف 0131 242 8181

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這份資料是可以凸字、錄音帶、大字印刷及社區語言的式本提供。請聯絡傳譯及翻譯服務部，電話：0131 242 8181

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Informacje te mogą być przekazane na język Braille'a, dostępne na taśmie magneto fonowej lub wydane dużym drukiem oraz przetłumaczone na języki mniejszości narodowych. Prosimy o kontakt z Usługami Tłumaczeniowymi pod numerem 0131 242 8181.

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Play Your Part

Stop littering, dog fouling, graffiti, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles...

or you could be fined on the spot!



West Lothian Council has a team of environmental wardens dedicated to cutting down these problems throughout West Lothian.

To report an environmental concern call free on

0800 616 446

West Lothian Council delivers

westlothian.gov.uk



Litter

Litter is 'anything that is thrown down, dropped or deposited and left that causes defacement in a public place'. This accords with the popular interpretation that; 'litter is waste in the wrong place'.

Litter includes mainly synthetic materials, often associated with smoking, eating and drinking, which are improperly discarded and left by members of the public, are split during waste management operations or have escaped from badly presented household, commercial or industrial waste. Litter may also include material that will eventually decay such as food waste and dog fouling.

Some litter last longer than others, often taking many years to degrade. Plastic bottles and bags can last indefinitely, and plastic dropped in a field today could still be there in the next millennium. Aluminium litter such as drinks cans last from 80-100 years, as do nappies.

What can local councils do?

As well as giving rights to the member of the public, the Environment Protection Agency gives power to local councils to take action against individuals and businesses that create litter, and powers to have areas cleaned up.

Leaving or depositing litter is a criminal offence, subject to a maximum fine of £2500. In addition, Fixed Penalty Notices of £50 can be issued by local council staff or the police for littering.

Graffiti

Graffiti is unauthorised writing or drawing on any surface in a public place. It can be a pattern, scribble, message, mural or tag that is painted, written, burned or carved onto a surface. The most common targets for graffiti are blank walls, street furniture, telephone boxes, bus shelters, road signs, monuments, bridges and railway property. To those whose property is defaced by graffiti, the markings are a form of vandalism that is difficult to remove.

Illegal activities

Graffiti is an illegal activity. Offenders can be prosecuted either by the local council or by the police, and the court decides on what their penalty will be. The police also have the power to stop and search members of the public for graffiti paraphernalia.

What's the problem with graffiti and fly posting?

Unightly graffiti and fly posting can have a number of negative effects on a community. As well as costing a lot of money to remove, they can make streets and other public places look neglected, and attract further anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, fly tipping and litter. All of these activities contribute towards the decline of an area and increase the fear of crime among residents. People may also feel uncomfortable or threatened by the display of offensive (e.g. racist, sexist or otherwise explicit) material. The atmosphere that this creates also has implications for trade, tourism and investment in the surrounding area.

Fly tipping

Dumping rubbish is illegal and dangerous and it ruins the appearance of your neighbourhood. **Don't put up with it – report it.** If you report it, the crime can be investigated. If you see someone fly tipping or would like to report an area where fly tipping has taken place, take note of the following:

- ✓ The date, times and places of the occurrence
- ✓ What the waste looks like and how much of it there is
- ✓ A description of any vehicle involved along with their vehicle's registration numbers.

Please report the fly tipping to West Lothian Council on telephone number **0800 616 446**

Fly posting

Fly posting is the display of advertising material in an unauthorised place: that is, on buildings, lampposts, railings, telephone boxes, trees or street furniture, without the owner's consent. Posters may be attached to a surface using materials such as paste, glue or string, or may be pegged into the ground, making them difficult and time-consuming to remove.

Advertising legally

To display advertising materials on public or council-maintained property, you should consult the Town or City Management Department of your local council.

Some councils own special, permitted sites for the display of posters, which enables them to regulate the content and location of displays. Depending on your request, however, they may recommend that you contact the Planning Department to obtain planning permission or advertisement consent.

If you want to put up posters on private property, you should seek the owner's consent, in addition to that of the Planning Department. Advertisements on private land for charitable and community events may be exempt from planning permission, providing that they are of a certain size or height.

Dog Fouling

It is an offence for the person in charge of a dog to leave its mess without removing it. 'Removing' the faeces does not mean throwing or depositing them onto any other open public space, to which the public has access, and any common area such as a close, stair or back green.

Both the police and authorised local council staff can issue a fixed penalty notice to someone whom they suspect of committing an offence. The fixed penalty due for dog fouling is £40. If the notice is not paid within 28 days the penalty is increased to £60.

Even Toy Breeds, such as Yorkshire Terriers, produce about 100g of faeces per day; compared to Giant Breeds such as a St. Bernard, which can produce as much as 1kg per day. This means that approximately 1000 tonnes of faeces are produced by dogs in the UK every day!