



# NATIONAL LITTER STRATEGY PARTNER GUIDE

## PART ONE: ENFORCEMENT

**NEXT**



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# INTRODUCTION

**Scotland is a beautiful country – we all need to do our bit to keep it clean and litter-free.**

However, almost 250 million visible items are littered each year and there are at least 61,000 incidents of flytipping; nearly 170 every single day.

The Scottish Government published its national litter strategy in 2014, to encourage people to take personal responsibility through information, infrastructure and enforcement. As an early action, the fixed penalties for littering and flytipping have increased. This document contains material you can use to highlight that (updates will be provided as the strategy develops).

**On 1 April 2014 there was an increase in Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for littering and flytipping.**

**Anyone who drops litter can be issued with an £80 penalty (up from £50), and the penalty for flytipping was raised from £50 to £200.**

**The message is simple: there's no excuse for littering or flytipping; it's a criminal offence; and it's the responsibility of everyone.**

# WHAT'S THIS GUIDE FOR AND HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Community-wide involvement from people, businesses and organisations like yours is vital to highlighting that litter and flytipping is unacceptable.

We would like people across Scotland to understand that littering and flytipping are unacceptable.

You can play an important role in spreading this message, and we want to make it easy for you to do so. This comprehensive Partner Guide can be used to communicate with your staff, elected members, customers and the general public. Please feel free to tailor your messaging according to your local audiences and communication channels.

**Thank you for your support.**





# KEY MESSAGES

Here are some key messages to help you raise awareness of the increase to the fixed penalty for littering and flytipping.

## TOP LINES

- Scotland is a beautiful country [or adapt to reflect local area/organisation]—we all need to do our bit to keep it clean and litter-free
- Do the right thing—bin your litter or take it home if a bin is unavailable
- Litter can affect our health and local environment —that’s why you risk an £80 penalty for littering.



## GENERAL

- Bin your litter or risk an £80 fixed penalty
- Within Scotland [or adapt to reflect local area/organisation] there is a litter problem—it’s caused by people and we can fix it by binning our litter
- Litter is waste in the wrong place—it includes everything from cigarette ends, drinks cans and bottles, crisp packets, takeaway food packaging and chewing gum to apple cores and banana skins
- Broken glass, discarded food, carrier bags, plastic packaging and other litter is a danger to animals who can cut themselves, suffocate, become trapped or strangled
- There’s no excuse for littering. It damages our environment, reduces our quality of life and is a criminal offence
- Litter can be turned into a resource for Scotland; at least half of litter (by weight) could be recycled, with a value of £1.2m
- If we all do the right thing we can start to make a difference and enjoy cleaner, safer communities.



# KEY MESSAGES

## PENALTY CHARGE (FIXED PENALTY NOTICE, FPN)

- It is a criminal offence to litter or flytip, and it is the responsibility of individuals and businesses to do the right thing
- Anyone who drops litter can be issued with an £80 fixed penalty. If you don't pay it then you may be prosecuted and risk a fine of up to £2,500
- The fixed penalty for flytipping is £200.
- If you don't pay it then you may be prosecuted and risk a fine of up to £40,000.





# KEY MESSAGES

## FLYTIPPING

- Flytipping is the illegal dumping of waste—from a bin bag of household rubbish to large quantities of domestic, commercial or construction waste
- It's your responsibility to do the right thing. If you don't, you risk a £200 fixed penalty.
- Many items that are commonly flytipped could be re-used, repaired or recycled
- There are strong disincentives for flytipping. The £200 fixed penalty complements a range of penalties that reflect the severity of alleged offences
- SEPA enforcement measures will include fixed penalties of up to £2,500 and variable monetary penalties up to £40,000, under the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 takes effect on 1 April 2015
- Landfill tax can be recovered from illegal dumpers - under the Landfill Tax (Scotland) Act 2014.
- Flytipping is a serious environmental crime which not only blights some of Scotland's most beautiful attractions but can pose a risk to humans and wildlife
- At least 61,000 incidents of flytipping in Scotland occur every year—that's almost 170 every single day
- You can report flytipping through the Dumb Dumpers website at [www.dumbdumpers.org](http://www.dumbdumpers.org), by calling the stopline on **0845 2 30 40 90**, or by contacting your local council.



# FACTS/STATISTICS

- Tackling litter and flytipping costs us at least £78m a year
- This includes costs to the taxpayer of £53m a year through education, enforcement and clean-up
- Of this, local authorities spend more than £36m a year on removing litter, and a further £9m clearing flytipping
- The indirect costs of litter amount to at least £25m a year, including impacts on crime, health, wildlife and other areas
- Some 96% of Scottish adults agree that littering is unacceptable
- One in five Scottish adults admits to littering
- At least 250 million easily visible items are littered
- Approximately 50 tonnes of litter is collected from motorway roadsides each month.

- Organised clean-ups are an important part of helping to clear litter from our streets and everyone can get involved. For more information go to <http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/local-environmental-quality/clean-up-scotland/>

All stats included from:

- [Scotland's Litter Problem](#)
- [Rapid Evidence Review of Littering Behaviour and Anti-Litter Policies](#)
- [Exploring the Indirect Costs of Litter in Scotland](#)
- The Omnibus Survey (carried out on behalf of the Scottish Government).





# MEDIA CORE SCRIPT/SOUNDBITES

If you are giving media interviews as part of your communications, you may find the following key points and soundbites useful:

- “ Fines for littering and flytipping increased on 1 April 2014 as part of wider action to encourage people to do the right thing – bin your litter or take it home if a bin is unavailable
- “ Anyone who litters now risks a minimum £80 penalty or, if prosecuted, as much as £2,500. The fixed penalty level for flytipping also increased to £200. Again, if someone is prosecuted they face a penalty of up to £40,000
- “ Scotland is a beautiful country [or adapt to reflect local area/organisation] – we all need to do our bit to keep it clean and litter-free
- “ People should remember that littering is a criminal offence. It can be bad for business and tourism by giving people the impression that an area is rundown and dirty. It can also affect house prices and the value of other property
- “ One in five Scottish admits to littering, whilst some 96 per cent agree that littering is unacceptable.
- “ At least 250 million visible items are littered each year

and approximately 50 tonnes of litter is collected from the sides of motorways every month. Litter and flytipping costs Scotland at least £78 million a year. This includes cleaning up, prevention, and the impact on areas like property values, health, crime and wildlife.



“ Litter costs Scotland at least **£78 million** a year ”

# BRIEFING NOTES FOR STAFF/ELECTED MEMBERS

Please feel free to draw on the above as briefing materials for your staff and elected members. Alternatively, you may find the short briefing notes below useful:

## WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

- One in five Scottish adults admits to littering, and some 96 per cent agree that littering is unacceptable.
- At least 250 million visible items are littered each year, and some 50 tonnes of litter is collected from the sides of Scotland's motorways every month
- Tackling litter and flytipping costs at least £78 million a year. This includes costs to the taxpayer of £53m a year through education, enforcement and clean up. Of this, local authorities spend more than £36m a year on removing litter, and a further £9m clearing flytipping
- The indirect costs of litter amount to at least £25m a year, having an impact on crime, health, wildlife and other areas.
- Litter ruins the look of our environment: it kills wildlife and causes fires; it harms coastlines and communities; and it's bad for business and tourism

- If we all do the right thing we can start to make a difference and enjoy cleaner, safer communities.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

- The fixed penalty for litter is £80; for flytipping it is £200. This updates the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) which gives power to Local Authorities to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) as alternatives to prosecution
- If someone fails to pay their fixed penalty, the case can be referred to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. If prosecuted a person could be fined up to £2,500 for littering and up to £40,000 for flytipping.





# BRIEFING NOTES FOR STAFF/ELECTED MEMBERS

## WHAT SHOULD I BE SAYING AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF MY ORGANISATION?

- “ Please remind people that Scotland is a beautiful country [or adapt this message to reflect your local area and organisation], and that we all need to do our bit to keep it clean, beautiful and litter-free
- “ Be clear about the new penalties and the reasons why they have increased. Remind people that they should do the right thing and bin their litter, take it home or recycle it
- “ It’s also important to highlight the impact litter can have on people’s local communities and their local economies, be that through giving the impression that an area is rundown and dirty or affecting house prices and the value of other property.
- “ Please remind people that much of the litter dropped annually could be recycled and turned into a resource. At least half of litter [by weight] dropped in Scotland is made up of plastic bottles, aluminium cans and other recyclable waste, which has a potential total value of £1.2 million.



# TEMPLATE MEDIA RELEASE

If you're planning to contact your local newspaper or radio station about the changes to fixed penalties for littering and flytipping, you may find this template media release useful. Please remember to tailor accordingly before distribution.

## Notes to editors:

- The litter and flytipping fixed penalties were previously £50 (prior to 1 April 2014). The new levels update the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA). The Act gives power to Local Authorities to issue Fixed Penalty Notices.
- According to environmental charity Keep Scotland Beautiful, 23,000 penalties were issued in 2013
- People who don't pay their penalties risk prosecution and if convicted a fine of up to £2,500 for littering and £40,000 for flytipping
- At least £53m is spent on cleaning up and prevention, and the indirect cost of littering and flytipping—on areas like health, crime and wildlife—amounts to a further £25m a year
- There are 61,000 incidents of flytipping in Scotland every year—almost 170 a day.

## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

<Date>

<Your organisation's name> **URGES RESIDENTS TO AVOID LITTERING OR RISK BIG FINES** Drop litter and risk picking up an £80 penalty warns <your organisation's name>.

People who litter could be fined £80 and anyone flytipping by dumping larger items like fridges or washing machines could face a £200 fine. The penalties were increased during 2014 as part of a drive to tackle a problem which costs Scotland over £78m a year. The increase was backed by public opinion, with two thirds of respondents to the National Litter Strategy Consultation in favour of stiffer penalties for those flouting the law.

<Insert quote from organisation's representative here> "We can all do the right thing and bin litter, recycle it or take it home when no bin is available. Scotland is a beautiful country and we all have a responsibility to keep it clean and litter-free.

"Litter ruins the look of our environment and is harmful to our communities and coastlines—it can kill wildlife, cause fires, and contributes to fear of crime. It can be bad for business and tourism by giving people the impression that an area is rundown and dirty. It can also affect house prices and the value of other property.

"Issuing penalties can help to improve our local environment. If we all do the right thing we can start to make a difference and enjoy cleaner, safer communities."

Litter is waste in the wrong place—it includes everything from cigarette ends, drinks cans and bottles, crisp packets, take away food packaging and chewing gum to apple cores and banana skins. Flytipping covers a bin bag of household rubbish to large quantities of domestic, commercial or construction waste.

Much of our litter could be turned into a resource. At least half of it is plastic bottles, aluminium cans and other items which can be easily recycled, with an estimated value (by weight) of £1.2m a year.



# WEBSITE/NEWSLETTERS/E-ZINE

If you plan to include information on the increased penalties in your newsletters, e-zines or online, you may want to use some or all of the following text:

- Did you know that the penalty for littering is £80 and for flytipping it's £200? It is one of the measures in place to encourage people to do the right thing and bin or recycle their waste.
- There's no excuse for littering. It damages our environment, reduces our quality of life and is a criminal offence. It can be bad for business and tourism by giving people the impression that an area is rundown and dirty. It can also affect house prices and the value of other property
- One in five Scottish adults admits to littering—at least 250 million visible items are littered annually. Tackling both littering and flytipping costs about £78 million a year and some 96 per cent of Scottish adults agree that littering is unacceptable
- People who don't pay their penalties risk prosecution and if convicted a penalty of up to £2,500 for littering and £40,000 for flytipping.
- Do the right thing—bin your litter, take it home if a bin is unavailable, recycle where possible and stop the illegal dumping of waste.

“ Do the right thing — bin your litter, take it home if a bin is unavailable, recycle where possible and stop the illegal dumping of waste. ”



# SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL ASSETS

We'd be grateful if you could also provide support via your social media channels. You can like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter:

- Our Facebook page  
[facebook.com/zerowastescotland](https://facebook.com/zerowastescotland)
- Our YouTube channel  
[youtube.com/user/ZeroWasteScotland](https://youtube.com/user/ZeroWasteScotland)
- Our Twitter handle [@ZeroWasteScot](https://twitter.com/ZeroWasteScot)



Here are a few examples of tweets you can use to let people know about the new littering and flytipping penalty levels, using **#LitterFree**:

- The penalty for litter is £80 and for flytipping it's £200 **#LitterFree**
- Litter costs Scotland at least £78m/year. You risk an £80 penalty for littering **#LitterFree**
- One in five Scots admit to littering, if you do too, you could be fined £80 **#LitterFree**
- Attention flytippers! The penalty is now £200. Do the right thing with your waste **#LitterFree**

Here are some examples of Facebook posts you may want to use:

- The penalty for littering is £80. And if you're prosecuted it could cost you up to £2,500—do the right thing: bin your litter or take it home if no bin is available
- Scots drop 250 million bits of litter a year. The penalty for littering is £80—do the right thing: bin your litter or take it home if no bin is available
- If you flytip you could be fined £200, or more if taken to court—do the right thing: bin your litter or take it home if a bin is unavailable



# Q&A

You can use this Q&A when preparing for media interviews:

**Q: What is the fine level issued to someone caught dropping litter?**

**A:** The fixed penalty for litter is £80 (up from £50 prior to 1 April 2014), but if this isn't paid, the matter can be referred to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), which can result in a fiscal fine or prosecution, with a maximum fine of £2,500.

**Q: Is littering against the law?**

**A:** Yes, littering is a criminal offence. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) gives local authorities power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for litter and flytipping offences.

**Q: How big a problem is littering and flytipping in Scotland?**

**A:** 250 million individual items of litter are cleared up each year and 50 tonnes of litter is collected from the sides of motorways a month. There are at least 61,000 incidents of flytipping each

year—almost 170 a day.

**Q: Who drops litter in Scotland?**

**A:** One in five Scottish adults admits to having dropped litter at some time, whether deliberately or without thinking.

**Q: What is litter and flytipping and what's the difference between them?**

**A:** Litter and flytipping is waste in the wrong place.

Litter is single items (e.g. crisp packets or drinks cans).

Flytipping covers larger sized items and amounts of waste. For example: large domestic items such as fridges and mattresses; tyres; and commercial waste such as builders' rubble.

**Q: What other problems does littering create?**

**A:** Litter ruins the look of our environment, kills wildlife, cause fires and damages cars. It's also bad for business and tourism. And discarded food—such as apple cores and banana skins—attracts rats, mice, gulls and pigeons.



## Q: Are there tougher penalties for more serious cases of littering and flytipping?

**A:** Yes. People can be prosecuted. The maximum fine for littering is £2,500.

There are strong disincentives for flytipping. The £200 penalty complements a range of penalties that reflect the severity of alleged offences.

People who don't pay their £200 penalty may be prosecuted and risk a fine of up to £40,000. SEPA enforcement measures include fixed penalties of up to £2,500 and variable monetary penalties up to £40,000 —under the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.

Landfill tax can be recovered from illegal dumpers - under the Landfill Tax (Scotland) Act 2014.

## Q: Will more fixed penalties be issued as a result of the increase in the charges?

**A:** It is for each council to decide its approach. We want to encourage people to do the right thing: bin your litter or take it home if a bin is unavailable.



## Q: Is this just a way for local authorities to make more money?

**A:** No. The new penalty levels encourage people to do the right thing. Litter and flytipping enforcement costs local authorities around £6.5m a year and the income they receive in income from the penalties does not cover these costs. The risk of receiving a penalty is a disincentive to littering or flytipping.

## Q: Will this lead to higher levels of non-payment?

**A:** The Scottish Government has consulted on measures that could support fixed penalty payments. Action to strengthen enforcement is included within the national litter strategy [Towards A Litter-Free Scotland: A Strategic Approach To Higher Quality Local Environments](#).

## Q: What happens if you don't pay a fixed penalty?

**A:** Organisations with enforcement powers can decide how they manage payments and enforcement, including how people can spread the cost. Ultimately, if a penalty is unpaid, the case could be referred to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) to consider imposing a fiscal fine or prosecution.





## **Q: Who can issue fixed penalties?**

**A:** Local authorities, Police Scotland and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. These agencies can also report directly to the Procurator Fiscal.

## **Q: How many enforcement officers do you have and are you going to employ more?**

**A:** Each organisation will make its own assessment of appropriate staff numbers. *<your organisation may wish to give more detail about your own plans regarding this>*

## **Q: How is littering being tackled in Scotland?**

**A:** The Scottish Government is showing leadership on tackling litter with the publication of the first ever National Litter Strategy in 2014.

This includes a range of measures aimed at reducing litter and flytipping through communication, facilities and procedures and strengthened enforcement.

Environmental charity Keep Scotland Beautiful runs a 'Clean Up Scotland' initiative. It works with people across Scotland to help clean up litter and other antisocial behaviours.

Local authorities and others are involved in action to promote positive behaviour and provide facilities to reduce

problems and boost recycling.

## **Q: How much money is spent dealing with litter and flytipping, and who pays this?**

**A:** At least £53m is spent on cleaning up and prevention, and the indirect cost of littering and flytipping—on areas like health, crime and wildlife—amounts to a further £25m a year.

We all pay for this: either as tax payers or customers of cost goods and services.

## **Q: Would it not be better to focus on education rather than punishment? An £80 fine seems harsh for someone caught dropping a single piece of litter.**

**A:** Increasing the fixed penalties is part of wider action to tackle litter and flytipping. The national litter strategy sets out how we can encourage people to do the right thing through communication, the facilities and procedures provided and through strengthened enforcement.

The Scottish Government also ran a national litter prevention campaign to influence peoples' behaviour and attitudes towards litter.



# USEFUL CONTACTS

## Contact

Email: [flytipping@zerowastescotland.org.uk](mailto:flytipping@zerowastescotland.org.uk)

