



Love  
where  
YOU  
Live

# The wider cost of litter

---

**A summary paper**

November 2014

# 1. Introduction

Keeping our streets, parks and other public spaces clean and tidy costs England almost £1 billion each year. The proportion of this cost spent on clearing litter and fly-tipping is unknown, however if litter was reduced we believe a significant proportion of this cost could be saved. Keep Britain Tidy released the report *Which Side of the Fence are You on?* in 2013 and in it we explored many of the direct costs of litter and what these equate to.

To give just a few examples, the Highways Agency, clears more than 180,000 sacks of litter from our motorways and major 'A' roads every year, at a cost to the taxpayer of more than £10 million<sup>1</sup>. Fly-tipping on land owned by Network Rail costs more than £2.3 million each year to clean<sup>2</sup>.

With local authorities facing even greater budget cuts from April 2015, tough decisions will have to be taken between keeping our streets clean and other vital services such as social care and education. There are also significant costs to farmers, retail and industrial sites, pubs and restaurants and other private sector landowners who need to clean up litter and to public bodies such as the Highways Agency, Network Rail and the NHS.

But the cost of litter doesn't just stop with the direct costs to clean it up. There are other, more indirect costs, such as the cost for a water company if a plastic bag becomes caught in drains causing flooding. We are only just beginning to understand the wider indirect social and economic costs of litter but indications from recent research in Scotland suggest the direct costs of cleaning up litter are just the tip of the iceberg<sup>3</sup>.

Therefore Keep Britain Tidy commissioned Eunomia Research & Consulting Ltd. (Eunomia) to explore the indirect costs of litter in England. This brief summary paper provides an outlines the approach taken, presents the findings and makes a number of recommendations as to how further research could give more precise estimates for specific categories of indirect costs. The full report is available [here](#).

We hope this report provides further evidence to demonstrate the cost and burden of litter on society and we call on all relevant sectors to join us in the fight to prevent littering and keep it tidy.

---

<sup>1</sup> Highways Agency, 2011. <http://www.highways.gov.uk/our-road-network/environment/bag-it-bin-it/>

<sup>2</sup> National Rail, 2011. <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/Love-where-you-live.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> Zero Waste Scotland, 2013 Indirect Costs of Litter in Scotland.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.2 Approach

The research consisted of two stages. Initially a mapping exercise was done in which the activities involved in littering and flytipping were linked to the potential consequences of litter on amenity, residents, economic sectors and wildlife. Both litter and fly-tipping were mapped against urban, rural and marine contexts. The aim of the mapping exercise was to trace through the potential impacts of litter and fly-tipping as a means of highlighting where potential financial costs may arise, and to identify what information might be needed in order to estimate those costs.

This initial exercise framed the second stage, which was a review of literature from which data on potential impacts identified was sought. As a desk-based study, use was made of published data, backed up by direct communication with stakeholders where necessary. In the full report by Eunomia, for each category of indirect cost under consideration, we show the steps involved in calculating the likely scale of costs.

### 2.1 Definitions

The following distinction was made between direct and indirect costs of litter:

1. Direct costs of litter are the costs to local authorities and other duty bodies of engaging in the clean-up of litter and clearance of fly-tipping, including additional treatment /disposal of the associated waste; and
2. Indirect costs are those costs visited on other actors in the economy (and on nature and wildlife), for example the costs of repairing a bicycle puncture or the lost revenue from tourists avoiding a littered beach resort.

A further distinction is made between the indirect costs that are 'internalised' to some extent, and others which we consider to be external costs, as follows:

1. Internalised costs are those that are already experienced through market transactions (for example, the cost of dealing with injuries to the public caused by litter, or falling house prices in a littered environment); and
2. Externalities, which are the costs that are not 'internalised' in market transactions (for example the sense of 'welfare loss' by the public associated with the visual disamenity of a park being strewn with litter).

### 2.3. Managing Uncertainty

One of the key aims of the project was that, where possible, for each cost category, initial, indicative estimates should be made as to the likely scale of indirect costs. In a number of cases, for example, in respect of crime and mental wellbeing, it is clear that litter is a contributory factor, but there is a lack of explicit evidence as to the extent of the contribution.

The approach taken is to always err on the side of caution. In the full report, based on the evidence reviewed, a feasible range in terms of the contribution made by litter of the cost to society is presented for each category, e.g. crime. Typically this range extends from 0.1% to 10% of the total cost identified. Within this range, Eunomia states where it feels the true cost is likely to lie, and its confidence in the estimate.

It is also worth noting that, in respect of data gaps, the absence of evidence should not necessarily be taken to indicate evidence of the absence of impacts from litter. As is made clear through the report, in the cases where a need for further research is identified, this is based on strong indications of litter making a contribution to overall costs.

## **Applicability of Data to England**

Much of the evidence is drawn from studies that focus on countries outside of England. For example, much of the literature on the causal links between litter and crime relates to the USA and the Netherlands. In estimating the contribution of litter to the costs of crime in England, we make use of a figure from a study in Massachusetts. Such an approach is clearly open to criticism in that there may be differences in demographics, the extent of deprivation, the types of crime etc. These criticisms are not invalid. In the absence of more appropriate studies, however, this is a useful, and not necessarily inaccurate, way of determining an initial estimate.

## **Extent to Which Costs Are Cumulative**

It is not necessarily possible to sum together all of the identified costs to arrive at a total cost. While the costs incurred in some categories are clearly separate and distinct, there are others where there may be inter-relationships. For example, there could well be an overlap between the costs of crime and of poor mental health, and the contribution that litter makes towards these. The summation of costs presented is therefore not recommended.

It is entirely consistent for all of the 'internalised' costs to be encompassed, and represented, within the estimates provided for 'external' costs. When individuals state a willingness to pay for a reduced level of litter in their neighbourhood, they are not just registering a preference in terms of visual disamenity. They may quite

reasonably take account of a number of negative attributes that they associate with litter, which could include concerns about crime and safety, the perceived effect on mental wellbeing and the effect on house prices.

## 3. Key Findings

### 2.3. Identification of key impacts

The key potential impacts identified were:

- Litter as a causal factor in crime
- The impacts of litter on mental wellbeing
- The indirect costs of drug-related litter
- The cost of litter-related injuries
- Costs of injuries to duty body staff
- Costs of litter-related road traffic accidents
- Costs to repair punctures caused by litter
- Indirect costs of litter to the rail network
- Litter-related costs of vermin: rats
- Litter-related costs of vermin: pigeons
- Indirect costs to business
- Litter as a cause of wildfires
- Loss of material resource
- Costs of dealing with impacts of litter on wildlife and livestock
- Costs of clean-ups to volunteer organisations
- Costs of litter-related flooding
- Effects of litter on house prices
- Impacts of litter on tourism
- External Costs of Litter (Reflecting Disamenity Impacts)

### 2.3. Estimating the indirect costs of litter

Based on the calculations undertaken, a number of estimates have been made of the likely scale of the indirect costs of litter for specific impact areas. These figures are provided in the table below, where the possible range is also discussed.

Table 1: Estimates of Annual Indirect Costs of Litter by Category

Impact Area	Headline Figures (£ per annum)	Best Estimate (£ per annum)	Comments
Internalised Costs			
Crime (Overall Costs)	Between £3.48 m and £348 m	Given the studies reviewed we feel it likely that the contribution of litter to these costs lies in	Based on evidence associated with litter as a causal factor in crime

Impact Area	Headline Figures (£ per annum)	Best Estimate (£ per annum)	Comments
		the upper half of this range.	
Mental Wellbeing (Overall Costs)	Between £105 m (0.1% of total costs) and £10.5 bn (10% of total costs) per annum	While it is very difficult to be precise we suspect the true figure might be closer towards 0.5% of total costs, i.e. £526million	Based on assumptions linking local environmental quality to mental wellbeing
Road Traffic Accident Costs	Between £7.8 m and £51 m	We suggest that a figure towards the lower end of this range may be a reasonable approximation of costs	Based on assumptions due to litter as a cause of accidents
Punctures (Car and Bike)	Between £389,000 and £38.9 m	Evidence is sparse but we would imagine the real cost may be closer to £8 million per annum	Due to litter (typically glass)
Rail Network	Between £1,166 and £576,000	We feel the true costs are likely to be towards the top end of this range	Based on evidence of damage to rail infrastructure, and associated delays, due rats whose existence can be attributed to edible litter
Vermin – Damage from Rats	Between £10,450 and £20.9 m	We feel that a mid-point estimate of £10 million would not be unreasonable	Based on evidence relating to the damage caused by rats, and the proportion of the population whose existence can be attributed to edible litter
Vermin – Treatment Costs of Rats	Between £34,000 and £3.4 m	We suggest that £2.5 million might be an appropriate estimate	Based on evidence relating to the expenditure on tackling rats, and the proportion of the population whose existence can be attributed to edible litter
Vermin – Damage from Pigeons	Between £21,000 and £2.1 m	We feel that the real figure is likely to be towards the top end of this range.	Based on evidence relating to the damage caused by pigeons, and the proportion of the population whose existence can be attributed to edible litter
Indirect Costs to Business	Above £4.5 m	We calculate that McDonald's alone spends between £3.9m and £5.1m per annum	This is based solely on the expenditure of McDonald's restaurants on anti-litter activities
Wildfires	Between £738,000 (0.1% of total cost) and £73.8 m (10% of total cost)	Approximately £10 million	Due to limited data it is not possible to place a high level of confidence in this figure
Refuse Fires	Approximately £70.6 million	This figure is already apportioned to loose refuse and so represents the best estimate	Based on the average secondary outdoor fire cost and the estimated number of refuse fires attributed to loose refuse in England
Loss of	Approximately	This is the figure	Figure will vary based on material

Impact Area	Headline Figures (£ per annum)	Best Estimate (£ per annum)	Comments
Material Resource	£12.8 m	calculated but there are uncertainties over composition	prices and recycling rate
Wildlife and Livestock	Approximately £958,410	Based on circa £958,410 for wildlife rescue	Limited data available for impacts on livestock in England
Voluntary Clean-ups	Approximately £825,500	Rather than a cost per se, this can be seen as a lower bound estimate of the utility derived by participants. Could reasonably be considered as a 'constrained willingness to pay'	Based on valuation of volunteer time involved in MCS Beachwatch and the Big Tidy Up, using median average hourly wage, plus administration costs
House Prices	£1 billion (illustrative only)		If 1% of the housing stock were devalued by 2.7% due to litter
<b>External Costs</b>			
Local Disamenity	£702 m - £7.6 bn	Towards the top end of the range, perhaps close to the £5.1 bn estimate based on the valuation of a 'one level' improvement in the amount of local litter.	Intuitively this would be higher than the valuation of the disamenity of beach litter alone. In the absence of further research it is not possible to reduce this range. We would suggest, however, that the true value is likely to be closer to the higher end of the range.
Beach Litter Disamenity	£521 m - 1.1 bn	Given the available evidence we feel that the true value lies towards the top end of this range	Encompassing both use and non-use values. Based on conservative estimates, so may be higher. Further research to provide greater understanding on the relative weight of use and non-use values would be helpful
Greenhouse Gas Damage Costs	£3.2 m	This figure assumes a 43.2% recycling rate. As the recycling rate rises, the benefit foregone will similarly increase	GHG benefits foregone from material that is currently littered and sent for disposal, rather than being appropriately discarded and sent for recycling

## Case studies

We have provided some of the case studies used in the report to better understand and estimate figures for the indirect costs of litter in England. There are many more in the main report.

### Case Study: Massachusetts 'hotspots' – the relationship between crime and litter

In a real-life example in Massachusetts, USA, 34 crime 'hotspots' were identified by police and researchers based on the number of emergency calls made by the public.<sup>4</sup> These hotspots suffered from litter-strewn streets, broken street lights, abandoned buildings, public drinking and loitering, along with more serious crime, and accounted for 23.5% of the total crime and disorder calls made to that police department during 2004. As the hotspots only accounted for 2.7% of the total area the police department covered, it was clear that the concentration of crime in these areas was high.

In the course of the randomised research study, officials focused on cleaning up these low-level problems in half of the neighbourhoods identified with the other half remaining untouched as a control. The intervention lasted for one year and the areas were monitored for six months afterwards. The areas that were subject to the clean-up saw a 19.8% fall in calls to the police with, importantly, no associated increase in surrounding areas. These areas also saw a 26.8% post-test reduction in litter in the hotspots, compared with an 11.4% increase in the control areas.

The study concluded that cleaning up the physical environment has a greater effect on localised crime than misdemeanour arrests would have. Importantly, it appeared to reduce crime rather than simply displace it.

To calculate the indirect cost of litter in terms of crime Eunomia assumed the overall cost of crime in England to be approximately £76 billion per annum. Based on the studies in Massachusetts, we assume that 4.6% of crime can be attributed to the local environmental condition, which includes the level of litter. 4.6% of £76 billion gives a figure of £3.48 billion. Again, if litter contributed to between 0.1% and 10% of this impact, the cost would be between £3.48 million and £348 million per annum in England. Again, given the evidence presented, it is felt likely that the contribution of litter lies in the upper half of this range.

### Case Study: The cost of refuse fires in England

A significant number of fires occur in loose accumulations of waste and fly-tipping. Around 93% of these are deliberately set.<sup>5</sup> In England in 2011/12 we estimate that 33,400 such fires were attended by the fire services.<sup>6</sup> Using the average cost of

---

<sup>4</sup> Anthony Braga et al (2008) *Policing Crime and Disorder Hot Spots: A randomized Controlled Trial*

<sup>5</sup> Proportion taken from Scottish data which is available in more detail.  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubFires>

<sup>6</sup> Total number of refuse fires in GB 85,400, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-statistics-great-britain-2011-to-2012>; Proportion of refuse fires that are loose rather than contained rubbish is 45% , taken from Scottish data, which is available in more detail. Figure then adjusted on per capita basis to England.



responding to secondary outdoor fires (i.e. refuse fires) of £1,700 as estimated for 2003 by a government report<sup>7</sup> and inflating to 2012 prices,<sup>8</sup> we can use the resulting figure of £2,113 per turnout. This leads to an overall estimate of cost of £70.6 million for England.

These fires will also release greenhouse gases, toxic compounds and airborne particulates into the atmosphere; it is not possible to quantify this however as there is no data available on the tonnage or composition of refuse involved.

Additionally the fire services will attend a number of non-fire emergency incidents involving the fly-tipping of hazardous or potentially harmful waste and chemicals.

### **Case Study: The loss of material resource by littering**

There is also a cost associated with a loss of material resource by littering that could otherwise be captured and recycled, reused or turned into fuel and energy through anaerobic digestion.

Litter either remains in the environment or it is collected and (typically) managed as residual waste; either way, the material resource is likely to be lost. This is especially important owing to the ever-increasing cost of raw materials, as well as the environmental benefits of using secondary materials in preference to raw material extraction.

Eunomia calculated the loss of material resource by working out the potential value of the littered material if it were to be disposed of correctly and recycled in line with current recycling rates.

It is estimated that approximately 550,253 tonnes of street sweepings and litter were collected in England in 2010/11.<sup>9</sup> Of this, around 61.64% by weight falls into litter-type categories, such as plastic, glass and paper. This gives an estimate of 339,176 tonnes of litter collected in England per year of potentially recyclable materials.

---

<sup>7</sup> ODPM (2005) *The Economic Cost of Fire: Estimates for 2003, 2005*, <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/145111.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> HM Treasury (2013) GDP Deflators - December 2013

<sup>9</sup> Resource Futures (2013) *National compositional estimates for local authority collected waste and recycling in England, 2010/11*, Report for DEFRA, February 2013

Using recent reports focusing on the composition of municipal solid waste including litter by Resource Futures<sup>10</sup> and WRAP's material pricing data<sup>11</sup> it is possible to calculate the potential value of recycled material lost to littering.

Currently therefore we estimate that the value of litter is between £12.8 million and £14.8 million per year depending on the current recycling rates in England. As recycling rates get higher and resources become scarce, in line with Government commitments, this is likely to increase.

### Case Study: Marine litter

In this report we have not *explicitly* addressed the costs associated with marine litter, although it is likely that a considerable proportion of marine litter *is* derived from land based activities (possibly up to 80%).<sup>12</sup> However it is difficult to determine the proper attribution of costs to littering behaviours as a result of a lack of research in this area.

Secondly, the full impacts of marine debris are very difficult to quantify because:

- a) The amount of marine debris is itself not well quantified; and
- b) The extent and nature of the impacts are likewise incompletely understood.

It is known that entanglement and ingestion are causing lethal and sub-lethal effects on a large number of species whether fish, birds, turtles, whales or dolphins, but the information about the prevalence of these impacts within populations is patchy and there are almost no estimates of the effects of debris on populations.<sup>13,14</sup> The evidence base for some of the impacts of marine litter is also only just being established, notably in respect of:

- The passage of plastics up the food chain
- The toxicological effects of plastics on wildlife and commercially fished species

---

<sup>10</sup> Resource Futures (2013) *National compositional estimates for local authority collected waste and recycling in England, 2010/11*, Report for DEFRA, February 2013

<sup>11</sup> WRAP (2014) *Materials Pricing Report* - February 2014

<sup>12</sup> UNEP (2005) *Marine Litter: An Analytical Overview*, 2005

<sup>13</sup> STAP/GEF (2012) *Impacts of marine debris on biodiversity: Current status and potential solutions*, Report for CBD, 2012

<sup>14</sup> Butterworth, A., Clegg, I., and Bass, C. (2012) *Untangled - Marine Debris: a global picture of the impact on animal welfare and of animal-focused solutions*, Report for WSPA, 2012, [http://www.wspa-international.org/Images/Untangled%20Report\\_tcm25-32499.pdf](http://www.wspa-international.org/Images/Untangled%20Report_tcm25-32499.pdf)

As one study found that 33% of the cod in the English Channel had ingested plastic, resolving these issues, at least to the extent that they may impact on commercially important species, is clearly of great relevance to the public.<sup>15</sup>

## 4. Recommendations for Further Research

We recommend that the following areas merit further consideration.

### Better Understanding of Significant Costs

There are some categories where the indicative scale of the costs, and indeed the range in the costs identified, suggests that an improved understanding is required.

### Mental Health Impacts

In the longer term, developing a better understanding of the links between litter and mental health and wellbeing will be important, not least because the extent, and cost, of mental health problems is expected, in the absence of wide-scale interventions, to continue to increase in the coming years.

The bulk of the impacts of litter on mental health and wellbeing appear to be negative, relating possibly to a sense of a lack of control over one's local environment. By contrast, one particular area of interest is the potential for voluntary litter-picking, undertaken either as a solitary activity or as part of a group, to have a beneficial effect on mental wellbeing. There are indications that this may indeed be the case, and one can readily perceive the possible reasons why this could be. Intuitively participant satisfaction could result from one, or a combination of the following:

- Sense of purpose;
- Mindful engagement in an outdoor activity;
- Knowledge of the environmental benefits;
- Feeling of contribution to the local community; and/or
- Enjoyment of the 'teamwork' aspect - if carrying out the activity in a group context.

---

<sup>15</sup> Foekema, E.M., De Gruijter, C., Mergia, M.T., van Franeker, J.A., Murk, A.J., and Koelmans, A.A. (2013) Plastic in North Sea Fish, *Environmental Science & Technology*, p.130711150255009

## Crime

This is an area where we expect there to be widespread public understanding of the arguably intuitive link between levels of litter and criminal activity. Moreover, given the potential scale of the cost of crime that could be attributed to litter, and the general public willingness for crime to be tackled, this would seem to offer good prospects for subsequent application of well-designed research.

## Disamenity Values

The evidence reviewed indicates that external costs, namely the disamenity values, are the most significant cost categories. To an extent, these should also be the most straightforward categories for further investigation, as the methodological approaches required are well developed, with significant expertise available in the UK research community.

Obtaining a more accurate overall understanding of the disamenity value of litter will allow for better comparison of the relative merits of undertaking further actions to tackle litter. For example, a better understanding of specific types of litter, or locations for litter, that cause greatest unhappiness for the population would help target interventions to where they are most wanted.

## 5. Informing policy and action

While we still require more research and evidence to fully understand the indirect costs of litter, the data presented within this paper demonstrates there is likely to be significant indirect costs associated with litter. Coupled with the direct costs of litter it provides additional evidence that to not tackle litter is a cost for communities, businesses and our economy.

Though litter is ultimately the responsibility of the individual it will take a collective approach to reduce littering from all stakeholders working together if we wish to reduce it. Local authorities are beginning to struggle to be able to afford to clean up after people and further budget cuts are coming. Therefore more support is required from national government and businesses that produce littered items working alongside land managers, civil society organisations and volunteers.

Keep Britain Tidy believes national government has a critical leadership role in reducing litter by emphasising the importance of the issue and providing a clear

framework for local players to take more effective action. The profile of litter in the government's policy agenda needs to be raised.

Tackling litter requires a high public profile and we would urge government to develop a litter strategy, focusing on reducing littering, that encourages greater action from other stakeholders; especially producer and consumer responsibility. Changing behaviours to prevent littering will require greater evidence and resources to design and deliver effective localised specific interventions and nationally led campaigns.

## Recommendations to tackle litter

### National Government

While we acknowledge funding is tight in government, there are many policy actions that Defra and DCLG can take to demonstrate commitment and leadership to reduce litter and fly-tipping. We recommend a national litter strategy for England be developed. It should focus on the prevention of litter including building the evidence base of solutions and the circumstances in which they work and encouraging greater producer and consumer responsibility. Secondly Defra should continue to fund the annual Local Environmental Quality Survey of England (LEQSE survey), which is in its 13th year, to monitor the state of litter present in England and the effectiveness of litter prevention measures. This is a unique database that is published yearly and made widely available. Quick wins for the government could include reviewing and expanding the use of Penalty Charge Notices currently used in London to the rest of England to assist in enforcement against vehicle littering by rapidly bringing forward proposals to make the owner of the vehicle responsible for littering from that vehicle. Defra should continue to support a programme of collaborative social behaviour experiments to develop good practice and practical design-led solutions for adoption locally.

### Local authorities

Local government has a statutory duty to keep our streets, parks, beaches and other public places clean to a minimum standard. This is becoming increasingly difficult in times of austerity and successive budget cuts set to continue. Since the abolition of National Indicators, many local authorities have continued to monitor cleansing standards via a NI 195 style survey and we advocate this continuing. Results from these surveys and LEQSE suggest that standards have been broadly maintained despite cuts to services although cracks are now starting to appear.

Though local authorities have to date managed to do more with less to maintain service levels, this cannot continue indefinitely and we are aware of councils reducing the frequency of cleansing services to balance budgets. This is a highly visible service and the public do notice when standards fall. Furthermore, cuts to education and enforcement activities that go hand-in-hand with keeping our streets clean may further contribute towards increasing levels of litter and fly-tipping in the future. We also believe more local authorities need to explore new models of delivery such as how they can transition from delivering services for residents to working in partnership with the community to deliver services. Love Clean Streets, developed originally in the London Borough of Lewisham to enable residents to report local issues like fly-tipping, or the Community Freshview project in the Lambeth (England's first Cooperative Council), are interesting examples and worth other councils considering.

## Businesses

Companies that make or sell products or packaging that end up as litter also need to play a greater role in reducing littering. Evidence suggested that litter can adversely impact on the bottom line of a business and negatively damage brand reputation<sup>16</sup>. Secondly packaging such as metal cans have an economic value as a commodity for businesses. When they are littered they are essentially landfill, where no value is produced unlike being captured and reused or recycled through a more circular economy. And if litter is picked and then recycled, the costs are substantially higher. A recent Keep Britain Tidy study in partnership with Coca Cola Enterprises indicates that bright, attractive and branded litter may be acting as an environmental cue that suggests littering is socially acceptable<sup>17</sup>. We believe that such businesses should be expected to work on litter prevention with their designers and suppliers, their customers and stakeholders to influence littering behaviours for the better.

We welcome the support some businesses are providing to proactively play their role in reducing litter or cleaning it up. However these business leaders are few in number and most businesses largely ignore the issue of litter apart from using the 'Tidyman' symbol on their products. Some carry out cleaning around their own premises. Keep Britain Tidy launched a Litter Prevention Commitment in spring 2014 although as yet only five businesses have signed up. Much more could be done by businesses, but without encouragement from the government for greater producer responsibility this is unlikely to happen and local authorities and tax-payers instead of businesses will continue to carry the cost burden. Good examples

---

<sup>16</sup> Roper and Parker 2012. Doing well by doing good: A quantitative investigation of the litter effect.

<sup>17</sup> Keep Britain Tidy and Coca Cola Enterprises, 2014. Understanding soft drinks littering behaviours. To be published.

we have been involved in include McDonald's work focusing on cleaning up litter by their staff and communities, Coca Cola Enterprises recent efforts to better understand littering behaviours through ethnographic studies, and the long-running Chewing Gum Action Group partnership that has seen businesses work together proactively to reduce littered gum.

## **Civil Society Organisations**

Keep Britain Tidy has had a long history of working with other charities, community groups and social enterprises to improve the management of local environmental quality and engage local people in environmental action. Keep Britain Tidy remains the 'go to' organisation for the media on matters relating to litter and we endeavour to meet their demands for spokespeople, interviews, photo-opportunities and facts and figures. Wherever possible and when finance can be secured, we continue to carry out relevant research, analysis and surveys and to publish them, and to co-ordinate campaigning work with local partners.

### **Keep Britain Tidy**

Keep Britain Tidy is the leading national anti-litter charity in England. Following the withdrawal of grant from Defra, we have had to change our approach to delivering our charitable objectives and to financing our work. We believe our role is as follows:

- To better understand the issues we face, what drives behaviours that lead to littering and fly-tipping and how we can, in partnership with others, influence them positively.
- To use design thinking to innovate and evaluate interventions on the ground that reduce littering in specific circumstances.
- To seek funding for a nationwide behavioural change campaign that demonstrates good behaviours using social cues e.g. positive peer pressure from celebrities.
- To use our network and business solutions team to facilitate innovation, share best practice, scale positive change and influence national policy.
- To positively influence businesses, government and other stakeholders to act to prevent littering and work in collaboration with them towards common goals
- To support local groups and volunteers to take action.

### **People and local community organisations**

Recent years have seen an upsurge in community groups getting involved in litter action, largely due to Keep Britain Tidy schemes such as The Big Tidy Up and similar local authority or volunteer programmes. Most campaign by using social media, many organise regular volunteer clean-ups. Each has its individual

contribution to make to anti-litter messaging. They have a vital role to play and represent the communities they serve. Litter is seen by the public as a local problem and local community groups can and do play an important role in cleaning up and bringing communities together to act. We are also seeing far more local authorities working more closely with their residents through community groups and local charities to deliver services in partnership. Keep Britain Tidy believes that co-operation and collaboration between the various groups is an important way of making the best use of resources and achieving our common aims.

We believe this is a most welcome and optimistic trend that bodes well for the future when communities may well have to shoulder more clean-up responsibilities themselves. It is important, however, that these groups are supported and given every encouragement and that reliance on this approach does not unfairly disadvantage poorer communities or hard-to-reach groups.





**Printed on 100% recycled material**

This report was first published in 2013 by Keep Britain Tidy

Copyright © 2013 Keep Britain Tidy

No part of this report may be reproduced in any form whatsoever without prior permission in writing from the publisher. Permission will normally be given free of charge to charitable and other non-profit making organisations.

Keep Britain Tidy is a registered charity. No. 1071737.

## **Keep Britain Tidy**

Elizabeth House  
The Pier  
Wigan WN3 4EX

T 01942 612621

Development House  
56-64 Leonard Street  
London EC2A 4LT

T 020 7549 0300

[enquiries@keepbritaintidy.org](mailto:enquiries@keepbritaintidy.org)  
[www.keepbritaintidy.org](http://www.keepbritaintidy.org)



[facebook.com/keepbritaintidy](https://www.facebook.com/keepbritaintidy)



[@keepbritaintidy](https://twitter.com/keepbritaintidy)