



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Litter and Dog Bin Policy

The policy sets out the principles, which will be followed in selecting and siting litterbins in future, reviewing existing litterbin sites, and ensuring that the correct bin types are used in the most appropriate locations.

Litter and Dog Bin Policy

Version: 2.0

Date Reviewed: June 2023

Next Review: June 2026

1.1 Introduction

Bedford Borough Council (BBC) 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 a method of controlling the litter and dog waste problems that many areas experience. There are approximately 1,094 litter, 500 dog, 68 dual recycling bins and 77 layby bins in varying condition across the Borough with a capital cost in the region of over £500,000. This is a large number for the size of the borough and as funding continues to be reduced from central government a reduction in the number should be considered. The average cost to service a litter bin per year is £536.96 within the urban area of Bedford. This is based upon 1 empty per week. This figure includes all associated cost including disposal, labour and bags.

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 BBC 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

The Council's capacity to provide litterbins is finite. It is likely that the demand for litterbins will, at certain times or locations exceed the capacity to provide the service.

All requests for new bins must be received in writing. 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 BBC 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 BBC has responsibility. This includes streets, parks and green spaces, but does not include private land such as schools, canal towpaths or riverbanks. Should a third party or parish council request a new or replacement bin on their land BBC 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 BBC and a charge made for this service in advance.

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

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:

Appendix 1 outlines the factors, which need to be taken into consideration when determining the siting of litter bins.

A site survey, to also 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 (to be observed during a 3 month period) - 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 BBC deems the location unsuitable for reasons of safety, such as stopping to empty a bin, the distance an operative has to manually handle the waste, 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 BBC regarding the outcome of a request for a bin, that decision will not be reviewed for a minimum of twelve months.

3.0 Emptying and Maintaining Bins

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

Bins will be emptied on such a frequency that will best prevent them from 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 and where found to be not sufficient, capacity of bin will be an option to be considered before increase of collections as it needs to be managed within current resource levels.

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. In addition, 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 BBC deems a bin to no longer be needed in a particular location an assessment will be carried out similar to that used for the placement of a new bin. 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 Litterbins

The same round for each area collects all dog and litterbins 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 litterbin, reducing the need for specific dog bins. There are many dog and litterbins in the borough, 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 Litterbins

Much of the waste collected in litterbins could be recycled; however, BBC acknowledges the particular challenges associated with collecting litter as a segregated stream for recycling while maintaining the relevant high standards of quality. Therefore:

- Recycling bins for litter are therefore NOT required at every location, but should be considered at key locations where there are sufficient quantities of key recyclates;
- Segregated litter bins MUST consider following;
 - How the bins will be emptied - under no circumstances can segregated recycling bins be mixed with other waste;
 - Which materials it is most appropriate to target (e.g. cans and plastic bottles in parks, newspapers on main arterial routes and bus stops);
 - Bins must be labelled appropriately for specific target materials, and not labelled just “recycling”;

The Council will consider in high use locations such as town centres the installation of split litterbins (one side recyclables the other for non-recyclables). The recycling of this waste will both benefit the environment but also reduce disposal costs.

7.0 Implementation

This policy will be implemented and maintained by the Council's Environment Service.

8.0 Roles and responsibilities

The Manager for Grounds, Open Spaces & Bereavement Services has overall responsibility for the implementation and maintenance of the policy.

9.0 Related documents

None

10.0 Equalities impact

No direct equalities impacts have been identified as a result of this policy.

11.0 Sustainability impact

These policies are designed to support integrated recycling services as part of an overall waste management service.

Provision of an efficient cleansing service supported by efficient and appropriate use of litterbins assets serves to support the delivery of a clean and attractive local environment.

12.0 Risk assessment

This policy has been agreed by the Environment Committee as part of the policy assurance process which seeks to ensure increased accountability, transparency and efficiencies concerning Council actions and operations.

Failure to operate efficient, reliable and customer focussed services represents a risk to the Council's reputation. This policy will serve to better manage expectations and use of a finite resource.

Appendix 1: Factors for consideration:

- Cost
- Bin density (how far do people have to walk?)
- Bin size
- Bin type?
- Land ownership- owned or adopted land only
- Location type (e.g. high priority areas as outlined in the policy)
- Usage/ demand
- Safety (public and staff)
- Bins creating litter (whether due to capacity, misuse or location).
- Vandalism and arson
- Terrorism
- Evaluation
- Design for recycling
- Proximity to household waste (communal) bins which can perform same
- Function.
- Parks, green spaces, civic areas, squares, plazas, etc.