



## **COMMUNITY INFORMATION PACK**

# FOREWORD

Regardless of the outstanding natural beauty East Lothian has to offer, a minority of the population still feel it appropriate to blight the natural and built landscape with the effects of their anti-social behaviour. Whether it is vandalism, littering, dog fouling or graffiti, the effects are detrimental to that beauty, endanger the environment and cost significant sums of public money to deal with. East Lothian Council is determined to eradicate this behaviour and ensure its resources are spent in a sustainable manner.

However, while the Council can act as a natural focus for civic life in East Lothian it is hard for one agency to tackle problems that have developed over a number of generations. Therefore, working with various partners, the Council is embarking on a series of initiatives designed to tackle anti-social behaviour.

In the particular case of littering, one of our strongest partners will be the general public. Feedback to the Council clearly indicates that litter related problems are high on the agenda of public concern.

While the Council has to be a major player in the fight against litter, it can't be effective without direct support and action from residents. Acting as a focal point for the community, supporting local efforts, targeting resources where they're most needed and diligently enforcing legislation will go a long way towards addressing the problem. However the wider community can also make an enormous difference with minimal individual input.

The East Lothian Litter Initiative has been developed as a way of encouraging such direct action and jointly giving us the tools to really make a difference.

Adopt ELLI into your organisation's constitution or just into your daily life and help make East Lothian an even better place to live and visit.

*This document was adopted by the previous administration of East Lothian Council and signed by its former Leader and Chief Executive*

# **EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL**

## **EAST LoTHIAN LITTER INITIATIVE**

### **THE CAMPAIGN**

East Lothian Litter Initiative – “ELLI”

### **THE AIM**

To provide safer cleaner streets and a clean green environment

### **THE METHODOLOGY**

Initially through efficient use of Council resources and subsequently through education, change of culture and enlisting / maximising good citizenship, clear the public open space of litter and minimise future incidences of littering.

### **BACKGROUND**

East Lothian Council currently spends in excess of £2 million a year on removing other peoples rubbish from the towns, villages, beaches and public areas of the county.

While some of this budget goes towards emptying bins, clearing natural detritus, leaves, seaweed etc, a significant amount of time and money is wasted cleaning up after people who chose to dump rubbish. Whether through ignorance, peer pressure, culture, financial gain or simply not caring, a minority of local residents and visitors force the Council to spend money on cleaning up behind them.

Recognising that this financial and environmental burden cannot be sustained in the long-term, East Lothian Council is launching ELLI and enlisting the support of the community in tackling this blight on our landscape.

### **FACTS AND FIGURES**

Litter can be described as rubbish in the wrong place and 87% of litter is created by pedestrians and drivers who drop, throw, deposit or leave rubbish that defaces the environment.

Smoking related litter is the most common form of litter found at 77% of locations, followed by confectionery at 53% of locations, and drinks related at 35% of locations.

Litter has been estimated to last for the following periods of time before breaking down into invisible but still potentially harmful components

- Cigarette Butts 12 Years
- Plastic Bags 10 – 20 years
- Tin Cans 50 years
- Aluminium Cans 100 Years
- Plastic “Six-pack” Holders 450 years
- Glass 1 Million years



Encams, the former Tidy Great Britain Group, estimates that 40% of all litter is cigarette related.

Encams further estimates that 122 tonnes of butts and other cigarette-related litter is left on Britain’s streets every day.

General litter attracts vermin and provides not only food but also material for them to build their nests.



There are around 60 million rats in the UK and the numbers are growing as the amount of rubbish on the streets increases.

Britain’s rats are getting fat - on the left over burgers, chips, pizzas and crisps we dump on the street.

Every bit of food that’s on the ground is a potential next meal for a rat.

Litter may lead to other types of environmental crime. Research has shown that people are more likely to drop litter in an area that is already perceived as dirty or uncared for. Fly tipping, graffiti and vandalism are more likely to occur in these places.



An estimated 69,000 injuries are treated every year on domestic pets as a result of contact with litter and 95% of Vets reported having treated pets for such injuries

**Every day** injured wild animals are rescued by Scottish SPCA inspectors

## **COUNCIL STRATEGY**

The main focus of the Council will be on efficient and effective distribution of resources, ensuring high standards of cleanliness through a combination of front line collection, enforcement of legislation, education initiatives and promoting public ownership of the problem

- Ignorance of the problems caused by littering will be dealt with through education and broadcasting of information
- Dealing with inappropriate peer pressure through changing the behaviour of those who behave in an anti-social manner
- Culture can be changed by demonstrating a zero tolerance approach from the wider community
- Financial gain from businesses dumping waste rather than paying for proper disposal will be tackled by diligent enforcement and demonstrating the hidden costs to businesses
- Lastly, the attitude of those who just don't care will again be dealt with through enforcement, fines and criminal proceedings.

## **PUBLIC OWNERSHIP**

Over the last 40 or so years, many residents of our beautiful county have forgotten what true citizenship is all about. Whether not cleaning up after their dog, vandalising amenities or throwing litter on the streets, many "citizens" selfishly ignore their responsibilities.

However, the tide is beginning to turn, with more and more community minded people taking direct action to improve quality of life for themselves and those around them.

Sports groups, Gala Committees, Community Councils, In Bloom groups and Tenant and Resident Panels, to name but a few, have established community structures that will safeguard the beauty and amenity of their areas for years to come.

Indeed, without the selfless efforts of such groups, life in many communities could border on intolerable.

So how could you as a group or individual contribute and build on the established success of such organisations? Certainly you could join in and offer time to help organise and run such a group. However, as with many of your neighbours, time is precious and contributing to the wellbeing of your community needs to be achievable without the need for significant personal effort. So, here's the solution and it'll take only a few seconds each day.

Litter is high on the public agenda of concerns, one of the biggest sources of complaint that the Council has to deal with and something that endangers the environment, causes injury to our children and blights the landscape of our towns and open spaces. Something that there is simply no reason or excuse for. The good citizenship of every 10 people who use a bin is spoilt by the one who doesn't and it's that one whose habits we need to change.

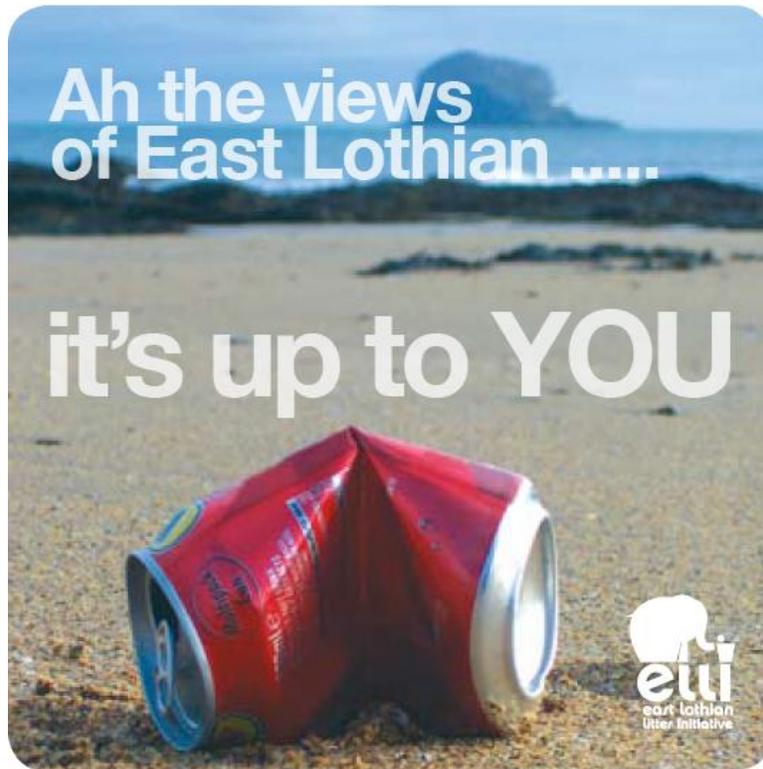
Determined efforts are being made to educate and counsel offenders, but 40 years of bad habits can't be changed overnight. Meantime the few dedicated souls who spend their time to remedy the problem need help and that's something you can easily give.

Here's the plan.....

Sign up to the East Lothian Litter Initiative Good Citizen Campaign, promising to pick up at least one piece of litter a day and also promising to enlist at least one other person to do the same.

Councillors, employees of the Council, their friends and family are already signing up to ELLI and more will follow. As an established group, your organisation, whether a Community Council, sports based organisation or residents group to name a few examples, already acts as a focus for community activity across a broad cross section of the public. Imagine the impact this number of people will make collectively, yet each individual participant will barely notice their own time input. More importantly, such efforts and behaviour will eventually become second nature.

So go on, sign up today, become a real citizen and show that, as a citizen you really care about East Lothian.



## **HOW TO JOIN**

Joining the ELLI campaign couldn't be easier, simply visit [www.eastlothian.gov.uk](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk) and view the ELLI Pledge Form download.

Alternatively, complete the form at the back of this pack and send it to the address shown.

## **TOOLS TO ASSIST YOU**

Whether joining the ELLI campaign, organising one of the many existing Spring Clean exercises or just needing help to control a litter problem in your area, the Council has a number of resources available to help you

If you're looking to organise a Spring Clean or similar event, the Council can provide reflective safety bibs, gloves, bags and litter pickers and arrange to uplift any litter collected. The Council will also provide risk assessments and safety guidelines that will ensure your efforts go without a hitch

Interested in adopting a beach, street, park or just a small bit of open space then phone us with your ideas and someone from the Council will be able to offer guidance and support on organisation, establishment and possibly even funding. If you have a problem neighbour who pollutes your area with litter or dog fouling, contact us for information and advice on how such matters can be dealt with.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

For further information on ELLI or to discuss any matter relating to litter, dog fouling or fly tipping

Write to:

East Lothian Council, Amenity Services, John Muir House, Haddington EH41 3HA.

Telephone:

01620 827430

Email:

[landscapeandcountryside@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:landscapeandcountryside@eastlothian.gov.uk)

Or visit:

[www.eastlothian.gov.uk](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk) where updated information on the campaign will be posted, community initiatives publicised and details of how the fight against litter is progressing will be available.



A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO MINIMISING LITTER IN EAST LoTHIAN

## GOOD CITIZEN CAMPAIGN

I would like to pledge my support to the ELLI Good Citizen Campaign and act as an example to people who damage our environment with their litter.

I promise to pick up at least one piece of litter a day in East Lothian, disposing of it properly and to encourage at least one other person to join ELLI

By joining ELLI I am contributing a few seconds of each day to making East Lothian a better and safer place to live.

Name:.....

Signature:.....

Town / Village of Residence:.....

East Lothian Council employee: Yes / No

By making this pledge you will not be contacted by anyone or asked for additional support in any form.

Your details will be held securely, your name will not appear on any publicly available list and membership details will only be made public in the form of numbers of people pledging from each community.

Please return this form to:

ELLI  
East Lothian Council  
Amenity Services  
Block C  
Brewery Park  
Haddington  
EH41 3HA

