



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



COTSWOLD
District Council

Raising Awareness of Duty of Care & Tackling Fly-tipping in a Rural District

Cotswold District Council – Fly-tipping Intervention Grant

Cotswold District Council has the vision that it is free from the unacceptable social, economic and environmental harm caused by fly-tipping. The council carried out a **campaign** in which everyone works together to take responsibility for their waste by **raising awareness of household waste duty of care** through a variety of methods, using SCRAP fly-tipping materials. The council also **installed CCTV to identify offenders** and carried out **stop and search** on potential vehicles involved with fly-tipping. Overall, the interventions were successful with **fly-tipping reducing by 64.2%** across all hotspot locations and the council issued **11 fixed penalty notices (FPNs)**.



The Fly-tipping Issue

The council's district is very rural and spread over 450 square miles, it has a lot of quiet roads, countless gateways and laybys. The remote locations can be accessed quickly by

several major roads that dissect the area from large towns outside of the district which makes the area a prime target for offenders who have the opportunity to dispose of significant quantities of waste without risking being observed whilst doing it. Once an area has been established it can become a 'go to' destination for organised offenders.

The council identified 4 hotspot locations that had experienced repeat incidents of fly-tipping; each hotspot is a quiet remote stretch of road (off the beaten track):

Hotspot 1 is a single rural track road, with high foliage and gateways. The hotspot is located a short distance from a populated area and has been a long-established hotspot for over several years. The type of waste that is fly-tipped here includes a combination of light construction, building waste, hazardous waste, green waste, caravans and household waste.

Hotspot 2, Hotspot 3 and Hotspot 4 became hotspots due to their specific characteristics of being remote, whilst also being a short distance from the main road from high population areas such as Gloucester and Swindon, and the motorway. All three sites have been targeted by cannabis grows and drug related paraphernalia for example. Hotspot 3 and Hotspot 4 have also been subject to the disposal of narcotic related waste following a production site being closed and several offenders being prosecuted at Hotspot 2. Intelligence suggests further hotspots will emerge due to the lucrative nature of narcotic sales. The fly-tips rarely provide documentation to identify an offender or property.

The council believe that commercial businesses, organised offenders and organised drug related criminals are the perpetrators of fly-tipped waste at these locations.

The Intervention

A combination of educational and enforcement measures has proved to be very effective in other localities. The council wanted to raise awareness and influence behaviour change amongst potential fly-tippers. The campaign aims were to remove the excuses for fly-tipping and to empower local communities to act, reduce the supply of waste to 'white van businesses' and obtain high quality evidence to support investigations.

The intervention/campaign consisted of four activities:

Improved Education in Householder and Business Duty of Care

The council have used the communication campaign S.C.R.A.P fly-tipping since 2019 which has led to an awareness of duty of care and therefore wanting to extend the messaging beyond boundaries to areas where the campaign was not being delivered. The council set out to obtain cooperation and agreement from several neighbouring councils to broadcast the message to residents beyond their district. The council promoted the SCRAP campaign via the following methods:

- Social media locations and banners, interviews on TV and radio to reach residents and businesses. Messages were shared on Facebook for over four weeks highlighting SCRAP and householder duty of care responsibilities.
- Advertising on the rear and inside of public transport, such as buses, that travel within and across district boundaries. The advertisement suggested ‘Check who you pay to take your rubbish away’ and alongside promotion of the SCRAP campaign to tackle illegal waste carriers.



- Installed signage in all district car parks with household duty of care messaging to residents and visitors.
- Advertising on 300,000 pay and display car parking tickets, reaching residents, businesses and visitors.



(Advertising on pay and display, in car park)

(Advertising on car parking tickets)

- Sent postcards highlighting duty of care responsibilities to 42,000 residents.



(image of post card front and back)

- Officers patrolled the hotspot locations frequently, communicating with residents, sharing information and raising awareness
- Communication and editorial feature in local newspapers of fixed penalty notices and prosecutions related to fly-tipping and enforcement to act as a future deterrent
- A six-week campaign highlighting SCRAP messaging on three local newspaper websites, reaching cross border residents. The council also sent out hard copies for those who do not engage with the website.



- Engagement and support with local housing providers, handing out duty of care advice and leaflets, including hard copies to those who do not engage with IT or social media.

Fly-tipping signage

Following investigation of a fly-tip the council installed signs and free-standing frames advertising the possibility of CCTV surveillance at the hotspot areas. The free-standing frames were for use on highway verges, they were lightweight and easy to move, and the fixed signs were used on fence posts and gateways highlighting the SCRAP code.

The sign locations were plotted using 'what 3 words' on a GIS map, with an overlay of fly-tipping prone locations, to produce data to test their effectiveness. The signs were moved frequently to demonstrate the council were aware and on site to take action to deter offenders but also used as an ongoing deterrent at locations where CCTV was redeployed. The signs highlight the consequences of fly-tipping to deter and change the actions of potential offenders.



CCTV:

The council installed CCTV at 3 of the hotspot locations to identify offenders committing the offences and provide robust evidence to support prosecution. Due to the remote locations the council required CCTV to be battery powered, capable of capturing images with low natural light and in areas that are without streetlights or heavily wooded/tree lined. The installation of the cameras was carried out by the council; the installation process had met expectations in terms of speedy deployment. The council chose the supplier based on excellent feedback and recommendations from other council enforcement officers. The supplier offered access and support from other enforcement officers who had purchased and used the equipment. The cameras were simple, user-friendly, low-cost and provided good quality images. Due to hotspot 4 being a long stretch of highway where random fly-tips would occur, it was difficult for the council to place the CCTV and predict where the next fly-tips would be, therefore only signage was installed there.

Stop and search operations

The council carried out stop and search of suspected vehicles to prevent waste being fly-tipped and ensure waste carrier documentation compliance. The council collaborated with Gloucestershire Police (rural crime officers) and Gloucestershire Trading Standards to conduct and support the stop and search operations. The targeted locations were main roads leading into the district, one of the locations was within 10 miles of a hotspot location.

The Result

Fly-tipping in a rural district is difficult to prevent and combat and it is not practical to monitor a large rural area using CCTV cameras alone. However, the evidence and data from the interventions trialled demonstrates that a multi-faceted approach involving, CCTV, educational materials, officer presence and community engagement can deliver successful reductions in fly-tipping. The **overall district fly-tips reduced from 235 to 207** after the campaign had run and a significant amount of time, money and resources has been saved on clearance of fly tips in hotspot locations.

The council are confident that residents and businesses have a clearer understanding of their responsibilities to dispose of waste appropriately and are fully informed on the potential consequences of not doing so. The council will be attempting to confirm this by asking residents encountered during the delivery of the interventions.

Positive feedback was received from the Car Parking Enforcement Team from individuals who purchased their tickets and noticed the advertisement on the reverse. There were also positive comments from Housing Officers on the duty of care information flyers given to residents who do not use IT or social media.

Hotspot 1 is very difficult to monitor and manage due to the road being a single track with various gateways and high foliage, making it hard to obtain footage of number plates and needed specific angles to view the correct area of the road. There are 12 gateways making it difficult to predict which one to locate the camera towards; fly-tips also often

appear in the middle of the highway. Over a three-month period, the council had four cameras stolen from this hotspot location.

Hotspot 2 had 2 incidents of fly-tipping and successful investigation was completed, using evidence from the CCTV, FPNs were issued.

Hotspot 3 had no further fly-tips following the interventions.

Hotspot 4 was targeted with drug paraphernalia and the council immediately installed overt deterrent signage at the hotspot. No further fly-tipping occurred.

Location	Intervention	Pre-Intervention Monitoring	Post-Intervention Monitoring	Results
Hotspot 1	CCTV, Signage & Duty of care campaign	1 st January 2024-31 st March 2024 3	1 st July 2024 – 1 st October 2024 3	No Change
Hotspot 2	CCTV, Signage & Duty of care campaign	1 st January 2024-31 st March 2024 6	1 st July 2024 – 1 st October 2024 2	66.6% Decrease
Hotspot 3	CCTV, Signage & Duty of care campaign	1 st January 2024-31 st March 2024 3	1 st July 2024 – 1 st October 2024 0	100% Decrease
Hotspot 4	Signage & Duty of care campaign	1 st January 2024-31 st March 2024 2	1 st July 2024 – 1 st October 2024 0	100% Decrease

Data Source: Inhouse Reporting System

Other Relevant Data

Enforcement: The council issued a total of 10 FPNs between 31st March 2024 and 1st October 2024 for duty of care and fly-tipping incidents based on evidence retrieved from investigations. Due to the 'stop and search' the council also issued a FPN of £300 for failure to provide waste carrier documentation.

Deterrent Signage: The signs were mapped and plotted on 'What 3 Words' and compared to the location of fly-tips over the 6 month period. The data shows that on average, the distance between subsequent fly tips and the deterrent signage increased by 23% from the start of the period (April 2024) to the end (October 2024). This proved to be a statistically significant improvement.

Feedback

What went well?

The council is satisfied that there has been an improvement in duty of care awareness throughout the district and hopefully beyond the borders and that this work would not have been attempted had it not been for the funding. The council will continue with a multi-faceted approach, especially the deterrent signs following incidents appearing.

The council used cost effective engagement using Facebook paid messaging where the internal comms team could post on social media connecting with householders reminding them of illegal white van businesses. From this engagement a total of 1,700 people in a 4-week period logged onto the council's fly-tipping webpage to find out more advice about duty of care. The second social media campaign, using Facebook messaging, over a 6-week period to post advice reminding households of duty of care, extending to neighbouring districts resulted in 4,778 clicks to the council's internal fly-tipping page with advice and guidance.

Advertising on newspaper websites with side banners is also a prominent way to advertise and promote the SCRAP campaign. The side banners were displayed on readers screens for 762 hours, instilling the message of duty of care responsibilities.

The council also notice that as well as a reduction in fly-tipping, there has also been less complaints about environmental crime, a reduced damage to vehicles from punctures from fly-tipped waste and a safer environment for walkers, horse riders, cyclists and dogs.

What key information would you pass on so others can deliver this project?

That collaboration between a diverse set of agencies and teams with different skill sets is key to delivering an effective campaign and its desired outcomes.

The type of crime, such as fly-tipping, does not align neatly to jurisdictional boundaries of single councils and therefore the council would like to see this type of project work backed by other districts in the region and nationally, promoting a wider campaign and the SCRAP message for residents and businesses to be made aware of illegal waste carriers, as the council can demonstrate this is an effective way of reducing the crimes.

The SCRAP fly-tipping materials were brilliant, and the council would highly recommend.

Equipment Inventory

Item	Supplier	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Value
Free-standing Frame Signs	Orchard	819	8	£819.00
Signs for car parks	Orchard	271	10	£271.00
Signs for Parish	Orchard	292	40	£392.00
Signs for Deterrent	Orchard	672	140	£672.00
CCTV Cameras	Wildview	1,338	5	£6,960.00
Adverts on car park tickets	Paragon	2,600	440,000 tickets	£2,600.00
Adverts on stagecoach buses	Global	9,000	37 exterior 165 interior	£9,000.00
Postcard mail out postage to residents	Royal Mail	3,300	42,000	£3,300.00
Postcard Cost	Orchard	2,508	42,000	£2,508.00

Campaign Materials	Orchard	645	100 A4 posters	£645.00
Website Adverts	Newsquest	3,773	42-day duration	£3,773.00

Contact Details

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Defra's Fly-Tipping Intervention Grant: The Fly-tipping Intervention Grant supported projects trialling approaches and interventions to tackle fly-tipping. Administered by Rural Payments Agency (RPA) on behalf of Defra, this grant provided capital and revenue funding for projects at known fly-tipping hot-spots that showed the potential for improving infrastructure, raising awareness, and supporting enforcement activity.