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**Report To:** Planning, Leisure & Environment Committee      **Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Contact Officer:** Paula Harrison

**Subject:** Bins, Flytipping & Litter Review

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## 1. Changes to Recycling

1.1 Parish Councillors will be aware of the changes instigated by Swindon Borough Council in reference to waste and recycling services in November 2023. These changes introduced blue recycling sacks for plastic and metal and amended dates of collection for some households.

1.2 Challenges in managing collections over Christmas and the New Year have had a direct impact on the Parish Council's day to day services.

### 1.3 Flytipping & Plastic Waste

Councillors are asked to note the following

- *Historically, the Parish Council's most frequent flytipping came from non licensed operators illegally dumping waste or waste that was tipped over fences (most commonly where there is a neighbouring tree line in public open space.*
- *Since the changes introduced by Swindon Borough Council, and the policy to not collect any plastics presented in clear/white sacks, extra waste has been created for the Parish Council team to collect and has increased the volume of litter across the Parish*
- *Incidents of flytipping have increased exponentially – often adding to piles of non collected waste*
- *Misuse of public litter bins is rife – see photos – one team member has reported that he hurt his back attempting to lift a bin bag out which has hidden car brake parts*
- *Leaving waste sacks containing waste or household items next to public litter bins is happening regularly*
- *Reports from other Parishes is that this is a problem for other Parishes too.*

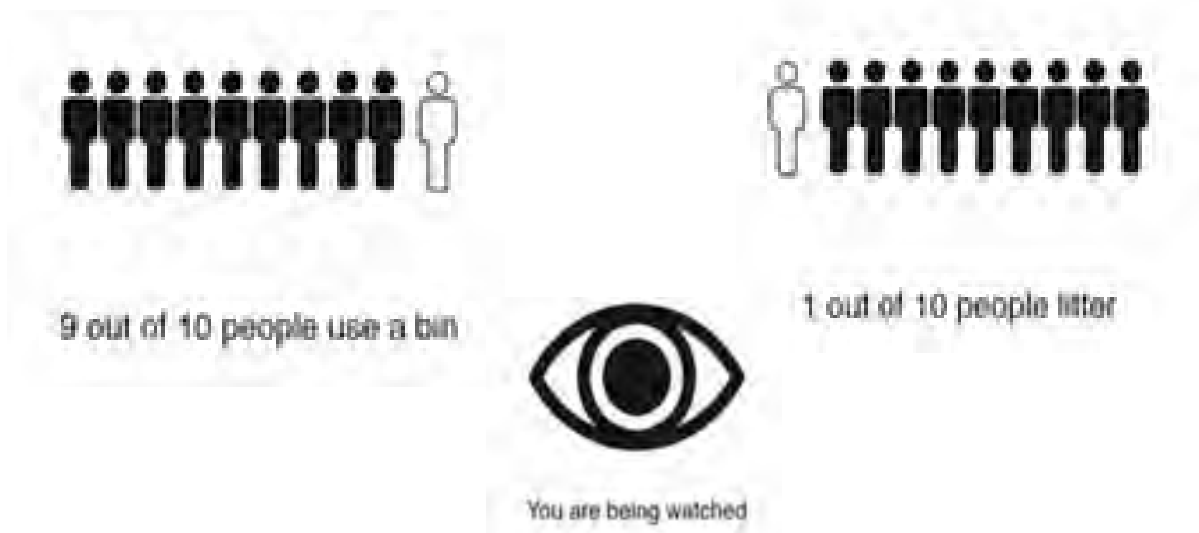
Typically, some neighbourhoods such as Toothill and Freshbrook create more litter and waste than other parts of West Swindon. The current recycling problems have added to this.



- 1.4 In reality, this is a daily occurrence. The presence of a public bin is also a magnet for adding non litter related waste as shown in the photographs. Adding bins to public open space needs careful consideration as it often creates more of a nuisance than solves the problem. Once a bin has been installed it is difficult to remove as people will often leave their waste where the bin was previously.
- 1.5 The practice of volunteer litter pickers leaving filled sacks by public bins may be contributing to accumulations or people doing the same with household waste as it is not visibly identifiable as volunteer waste.

**Options**

- 1.6 Where bins have had a repeated problem, the Parish office have distributed letters requesting that households do not use bins for any purpose other than the disposal of litter. Where there is a single perpetrator this can work. Unfortunately the widespread occurrence is creating an issue that is unlikely to be resolved by letter drops.
- 1.7 Enforcement is very difficult as most waste is not identifiable to a single household. Where there is a strong likelihood e.g. neighbour complaints, the Parish Council can write to a specific household asking for any inappropriate use of litter bins to cease. The Parish Council has no powers to instigate fines.
- 1.8 The Parish Council could post signs in problem areas. Some areas post anti littering messages ‘Don’t be a Tosser’ or ‘Don’t be a litterbug’ although reports indicate that negative messaging does not create or stimulate behaviour change. Positive reinforcements are reported to make the greatest difference, examples below.





## **Bin Requests**

1.9 The Parish Council reviews bin requests periodically. There are over 200 bins in the Parish currently. Those in high footfall areas such as schools and village centres are emptied daily Monday to Friday and others once or twice a week. There are two outstanding Councillor requests for bins. These are

- Liskeard Way bus stop
- Toothill village centre

The team do not expect an extra bin at Toothill Village Centre to improve any overflow of bins or littering.

For Liskeard Way, the bus stop is not well placed to add a bin – see photograph



## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the information and considers whether there should be any changes to the Parish Council's response to litter and flytipping e.g. signs
- 2.2 The Committee approves additional bin locations.
- 2.3 That the Committee considers lobbying Swindon Borough Council to better manage household related waste, in whatever form it is presented.
- 2.4 The Committee considers using a different method for volunteer waste collection e.g. printed waste sacks

Paula Harrison Parish Manager