



WASTE CONTRACT

The question of littering and waste collections is an issue to which there is no single, simple cost effective solution. There is a school of thought that says that all waste bins should be removed and the public made to take litter home with them, with the penalty regime stepped up to enforce this solution, but it would be a very brave Council that went in that direction. For us here in West Mersea, the two councils concerned with these issues, Colchester Borough Council (CBC) and West Mersea Town Council (WMTC) have attempted a managed and proactive approach and addressed the hotspots. Unfortunately there will always be peak times when, whatever provision we make, it will not be adequate.

In West Mersea we are grateful of the sterling work carried out by PROUD of Mersea and the CBC Litter Warriors, who carry out regular litter picking throughout the year. In addition, since the Clean for the Queen anti-litter campaign 4 years ago, WMTC and the LIONS have, with the help of many local groups, carried out twice yearly litter picks involving some 100 volunteers, who in the first couple of years removed 4 tons of embedded rubbish from West Mersea and The Strood. The amount collected in later years has greatly diminished which is testimony to our winning the battle. Unfortunately, it is impossible to be complacent. PROUD have at least 2 initiatives in the pipeline to continue the fight to remove litter from our streets. We should also recognise the invaluable help and cooperation we enjoy from the CBC Neighbourhood Zone Team who manage a difficult situation extremely well.

Frequently asked question about litter are addressed below:

1. Frequency of bin emptying - this varies from time of year and from location to location.
For example:
 - a. Seaview car park - 6 bins and 1 BBQ area for used portable BBQs etc. - these are emptied 3 times a week during the high season (17th July to 8th September) down to once a week during the low season. Additional emptying takes place over very busy summer periods, according to demand.
 - b. Monkey Steps and Boardwalk - 4 waste bins currently plus 2 dog bins. This is a very busy area with bin emptying 3 times a week over the period 1st April to 31st October. Additional emptying takes place over very busy summer periods, according to demand.
 - c. West Mersea Park (School Gardens) - currently 2 waste bins - either 2 or 3 times a week, subject to demand, from the 1st April to 31st October.
 - d. Esplanade area - collections are made here on a daily basis during the high season 1st August to 7th September, including weekends and Bank holidays. From the 1st June to 31st July collections are every Monday, Wednesday and Friday plus Sundays and Bank holidays.

2. Library car park recycling bins - none of these are the direct responsibility of WMTC.
The Great Ormond Street paper recycling centre and clothes banks depends on a phone call from the public before it is emptied. The bottle banks are emptied on a 4 week cycle. The can recycling is run by CBC and is regularly emptied.
Unfortunately when individual banks are full the public leaves bags of recycling outside the bins and this is classed as fly tipping. CBC is currently pushing the message that environmental offences such as leaving a refuse bag next to a rubbish bin and bags of goods by charity bins will not be tolerated. It is illegal and will be subject to a fixed penalty notice.
It should be noted that the Upland Road Recycling centre is open 4 days a week and should be used as a viable alternative to the Library car park when those bins are full.
Failure by the public to treat the library car park with respect and the charities to regularly empty their containers, could result in these being removed. The cost of clearing away any fly tipping falls to CBC and ultimately on rate payers. There is an idea that this area could be given over to electric car charging points.
3. Moving forward - More frequent collections by CBC would appear to be a simple way forward but is subject to financial and manpower resources. This is continually reviewed. A number of actions have or will be take place in Autumn/Winter 2019 to mitigate the effect of more visitors and the subsequent increase in rubbish at our hot spots. These include:
 - a. 3 recycling bins having been installed along by the Two Sugars on Victoria Esplanade.
 - b. 2 recycling bins and an additional waste bin plus an area for used BBQs installed in Seaview car park earlier this year. The old 70 litre bin has been replaced with a larger bin.
 - c. 2 recycling bins to be installed in School Gardens, West Mersea Park alongside existing waste bin.
 - d. 2 waste bins have been installed by the Monkey Steps plus an area for used BBQs will be built by summer 2020.
 - e. 2 new replacement large waste bins have been installed at the Boardwalk and the existing dog waste bin re-sited nearer the road and away from the SSSI area.
 - f. A new waste bin at top of Seaview Avenue subject to ECC Highways agreement.
4. Council tax allocation - WMTC contract bin emptying on **WMTC land** to CBC. £3305 is allocated in the precept 2019/20 for this purpose and increases on an annual basis. This arrangement has proven more economical and beneficial than previous in-house attempts to collect rubbish and dispose of it in skips. This figure does not include collection for all the other waste bins situated in West Mersea.
For further details of the specific bins and location collected for WMTC, please contact info@westmersea.org