

Scrutiny Briefing Note

The Communities Scrutiny Panel have asked to monitor progress on the following issues. This briefing contains the latest position as at 22/03/2021.

Subject: NELC Litter Strategy

In 2020 NELC published its new Waste Strategy. The 2020 NELC Waste Strategy covered how waste collected by NELC is managed and our ambitions for the future. Amongst other things, the NELC Waste Strategy highlights the role the authority plays in collecting litter and the importance of this, not only to keep our area looking clean but also as part of our environmental responsibility.

We are now drafting a Litter Strategy to complement our Waste Strategy and provide a focused and strategic response to managing litter in North East Lincolnshire.

The strategy is prompted by the government's National Litter Strategy for England (2017) and WRAP's 'The Right Bin in the Right Place' guidance published in October 2020 and aims to frame those documents in terms of a local approach based on the needs of our area and aligned to the wider strategic priorities laid out in our Local Outcomes Framework.

The strategy will focus on:

- The types of litter that occur and their causes.
- How litter is managed by NELC.
- Our visions for the future ensuring we follow the national guidance on litter management, focusing on education through work with schools and community groups and enforcement.
- Monitoring of progress for the lifetime of the strategy.

Street Scene Select Committee

The Street Scene Select Committee findings from October 2018 outlined the second phase of a work programme that included community engagement, education and enforcement regarding fly tipping, littering and dog fouling and litter bin improvements.

In summary the committee recommended:

- 'street cleansing work schedules be reviewed and scheduled on the basis of need and that a culture of continuous improvement be adopted'.
- 'good news stories around ... enforcement of littering and dog fouling be publicised in order to promote effective action with the public'.

The 2021 NELC Litter Strategy aims to build on the programme of work recommended by the committee, setting out litter management plans for the future that are responsive to national and local recommendations. These will be regularly monitored to ensure they are fit for purpose and encompass continuous improvement.

A presentation will be given to Communities Scrutiny Panel on the draft strategy with the opportunity for their input to its development before it is taken to Cabinet in Summer 2021.

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North East Lincolnshire Council Litter Strategy

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

In 2020, in response to the early publication of the 2018 National Waste Strategy (Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England) by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC) published its Waste Strategy. As a Unitary authority, NELC is responsible for the management of all 'Local Authority Collected Waste'. The 2020 NELC Waste Strategy covered how waste collected by NELC is managed and the ambitions for the future. Litter and street collected waste, such as waste collected from public litter bins, form part of the waste collected by NELC. The 2020 NELC Waste Strategy highlights the role the authority plays in collecting litter and the importance of collecting litter, not only to keep streets cleaner but also as part of our environmental responsibility.

In April 2017, the UK government published the National Litter Strategy for England. The strategy aims to reduce litter in England and establish an anti-littering culture, with an aim to educate young people on the importance of not littering and the effects litter can have. The strategy also placed a focus on engaging with local communities with an emphasis on empowering them to aid in tackling litter. This focus was brought about after a national survey found that 81% of respondents are angry and frustrated with the amount of litter in England. In response to the national litter strategy and the guidance provided by WRAP in their 'Binrastructure' guidance document, NELC has produced this litter strategy to complement its earlier 2020 waste strategy and provide a focused and strategic response to managing litter.

1.2. Purpose of The Strategy

Between 2016 and 2017 there were 11,900 incidents of litter in England reported via apps (Source: DEFRA), with 744 items of litter per 100 meters of beach reported during the Great British Beach Clean. It is estimated that the cost of litter between 2016 and 2017 to Local Authorities was £682 million, or £29 per household. These statistics highlight the issue faced

within England from littering and the need to produce an effective strategy to tackle this issue on a local level. North East Lincolnshire (NEL) has a diverse range of areas and environments, with urban towns such as Grimsby and Immingham; the coastal town of Cleethorpes; surrounding villages to these urban and coastal areas; and the Lincolnshire Wolds which is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). With the consideration of the diverse areas of NEL and the current need to tackle litter in England, this strategy will be used to detail how NELC currently manages litter; the extent to which litter is an issue within NEL; and details of planned future projects to aid in tackling litter in line with national and local policy.

The strategy will set out the legal context for how NELC manages litter and what NELC intends to do to manage litter over the lifespan of this strategy. Context will also be provided for how current and future litter management will meet NELC's outcomes framework as well as WRAP's 'binrastructure' guidance: including the right bin, right place policy.

1.3. NELC's 2020 Waste Strategy

The circular economy is central to NELC's 2020 waste strategy, with an emphasis on ensuring the key principle of 'resource recovery and waste management' is fulfilled within the strategy. As part of NELC's commitment to the circular economy it is important to set the strategic framework for managing litter effectively so as to ensure that the waste produced by litter is recovered and managed in an environmentally responsible way that adheres to the circular economy.

In NELC's 2020 waste strategy, six priorities were outlined as the basis for the strategy and were also agreed with by 93.27% of respondents during the waste strategy consultation.

These priorities are that NELC aims to be:

- Resilient
- Customer Friendly

- Environmentally Responsible
- Education Focused
- Collaborative
- Responsible Commissioners and Effective Contract Managers.

This litter strategy will build on these priorities and the circular economy, using them as the basis for the strategic framework for managing litter in NEL.

1.4. NELC's Local Outcomes Framework

In a wider context, we want North East Lincolnshire to be an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest. Our Council's priorities are underpinned by a strategic framework which sets out five high level outcomes:

- Learning and Growing: All people in NEL fulfil their potential through skills & learning.
- Investing in our Future: All people in NEL benefit from sustainable communities.
- Vitality and Health: All people in NEL enjoy good health & wellbeing.
- Economy and Strength: All people in NEL enjoy and benefit from a strong economy.
- Safe and Secure: All people in NEL feel safe and are safe.

The litter strategy has been commissioned to support our commitment to sustainable communities and a strong economy.

The outcomes framework is broad-reaching and includes various indicators which relate to our strategies on waste management and waste related services, including clearing and deterring litter.

Built in to NELC's outcome framework is the commitment to a place-based approach to social value. Social value is defined as "outcomes and activities that will improve the quality of life and life chances of our residents and enhance the economic, social and

environmental sustainability of the local area” (source: Social Enterprise UK). Our Social Value Policy aims to:

- Involve local people and organisations in how we meet the needs of local communities through the commissioning cycle
- Tackle disadvantage and address inequalities of health, wealth, and opportunity across the borough
- Promote the local economy by supporting micro, small and medium sized enterprises, and the voluntary and community sector to thrive
- Further our sustainable procurement objectives to protect and enhance the environment.

In developing our strategy, we have considered these aims and will adopt them as guiding principles when delivering our service priorities.

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2. Legal Context

There are two main pieces of legislation that govern the control and disposal of litter: The Environmental Protection Act (1990) and the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (2005). The details of these pieces of legislation can be seen in the table below.

Legislation/Regulation	Key Details/Targets
<p>Environmental Protection Act 1990</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made it a criminal offence to drop, throw or deposit and then leave litter. • A person found guilty of dropping litter can be fined up to £2500 in a magistrate’s court. • Places a legal responsibility on the six ‘duty bodies’ (this includes Local Authorities) to ensure that land, as far as is practicable, is kept clear of litter. • Section 91 states that a person who is fed up with a long-standing litter problem can use a Litter Abatement Order against those organisations listed under Section 89 (the ‘duty bodies’) if they are failing in their duty to keep that land clean.
<p>Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005</p>	<p>The Act provides local authorities with the power to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue fixed penalty notices for littering and fly tipping. • Immediately remove and impound abandoned vehicles involved in fly-tipping. <p>The Act also gives councils more powers over waste services and recycling.</p>

3. Causes of Litter

This section of the strategy aims to highlight the key causes of litter, particularly in NEL. The causes of litter outlined below are not ranked for importance or priority. The strategy will also set out to identify gaps in knowledge and which issues NELC has the structures, resources, and authority to tackle. The strategy will also outline places where community action, collaborative working and education/stakeholder engagement can be implemented to compliment current work or provide alternative ways of tackling litter as an issue.

3.1. Location of Litter Bins

Wraps 'Binrastructure' guidance document, [The Right Bin in the Right Place](#), notes the importance of having strategically placed bins. Research on the placement of bins shows that the closer people are to a bin, the less likely they are to litter. Not only does the Right Bin in the Right Place guidance document note the importance of how close people are to a bin in preventing litter but it also notes how location is important in the effectiveness of the bin at encouraging people to dispose of their litter in a litter bin. Factors which influence whether a bin is placed in the right location include:

- Messaging/logos on the bin and how these relate to the location.
- The type of bin for the location.
- The types of materials the bin collects.
- The footfall at the location the bin is installed at.

If an unsuitable bin is placed in an unsuitable location, it has been found that people are more likely to litter than if the type of bin and the location of the bin are suitable and convenient for people to use. This places an emphasis on ensuring WRAP's principle that the Right Bin in the Right Place is used to ensure effective placement of bins which would lead to reduced litter.

3.2. Lack of Public Awareness on the Impact of Litter

The National Litter Strategy sets out a need for greater education and public awareness on the issue of litter: indicating that this is in part a cause for littering issues. While there is a public perception that litter is an issue in England, as previously stated in section 1.1, there is still a disconnect in how litter management should be approached and why litter is an important issue to manage.

Smoking related litter was found to be the most abundant form of litter in the 2017/18 [national litter survey](#), carried out by Keep Britain Tidy, with 79% of sites surveyed found to have smoking related litter present: an increase of 6.2% from the 2014/2015 survey. Confectionary packets and related waste were the second most abundant form of litter in the 2017/2018 national survey with 60% of sites found to have this type of litter present. These statistics show that litter is still a prominent issue and more awareness needed. Littering issues are found to be particularly abundant in less affluent areas showing that education and the awareness to tackle these issues needs to particularly focus on these areas.

3.3. Tourism and Leisure

Cleethorpes resort is a historic tourist destination, with 3.41 million people visiting the area in 2017 and 10.2 million people visiting wider NEL. While these visitors form a crucial part of the visitor economy, they also increase the footfall in key areas of the borough: in particular open spaces. An increased footfall generates increased volumes of litter that need to be managed effectively. Furthermore, tourists do not always have access to facilities for disposing of litter. It is therefore important to consider where bins are placed to provide enough facilities for tourists.

3.4. Irresponsible Dog Ownership

Dog fouling can cause serious health problems and is the cause of considerable numbers of complaints about street cleanliness and the cleanliness of Cleethorpes Beach. While there is increasing public pressure and social responsibility for dog owners to clear up dog foul there

remains a small minority of dog owners that either fail to clear up after their pets or clear up but fail to bin it. The presence of dog foul in an area causes concerns around health of people, livestock, wildlife and in some instances water quality. Therefore, it is important to try to tackle dog fouling in a strategic manner: providing appropriate waste facilities for dog foul and educating people on the issues of dog fouling.

Prior to the implementation of the dog control [Public Space Protection Order \(PSPO\)](#) in 2019, NELC consulted with the public and out of 2,955 who responded, 87 per cent said they wanted to see: a more robust, zero tolerance approach on litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling. In a separate consultation 99 per cent of 428 respondents said public places should be safe and free from dog foul and said they wanted to see more enforcement against people spoiling the borough.

3.5. Smoking

As stated in section 3.2 smoking was the most abundant form of littering in the national Keep Britain Tidy survey for litter in both 2014/2015 and 2017/2018. This shows there is a significant issue with some smokers disposing of smoking related litter such as cigarette ends by littering rather than disposing of them at waste disposal facilities such as public bins. While the reason for this is unknown it is possible that a lack of facilities are present for smokers to dispose of smoking related litter or that there is a lack of awareness as to the environmental impact smoking related litter has.

3.6. Eating on the Go

As habitats and behaviours have changed due to more mobile working and lifestyles, there has been an increase in eating on the go. This increase has led to more litter from packaging dropped by people in a rush to eat or by people discarding packaging or other items such as chewing gum from out of their car. To tackle this education and behavioural change is needed so that those who drop litter because of eating on the go understand the implications to the environment and the local area. It is worth noting that this issue has been less widespread during the Covid-19 pandemic, with more people working from home.

It is possible that litter left due to this will become less abundant due to changes in working practices for people because of the pandemic.

3.7. Beach Debris

A specific issue for the Cleethorpes resort is debris that gets washed up on the shoreline due to Easterly winds. Debris that washes up on the Cleethorpes shoreline can include:

- Plastics
- Cans
- Glass
- Industrial Waste
- Animal Carcasses
- Oil (including Palm Oil).

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4. Litter Management in North East Lincolnshire

As of 2020 according to Keep Britain Tidy there are two million pieces of litter dropped per year in the UK which cost over £1 billion per year to manage. Between June 2018 and May 2019 NELC collected 2632 tonnes of litter in street sweepings alone. This figure does not account for other forms of litter collected in NELC such as from litter bins or for litter collected by community group litter picks. To manage this amount of litter, NELC has several management methods and procedures in place to ensure a clean environment.

4.1. Types of Litter Collected

Below is a table which shows the different types of litter collected in NEL.

Types of Litter Collected in North East Lincolnshire		
Plastics (including Plastic bottles)	Discarded Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Chewing Gum
Paper and Cardboard	Clothing	Food Waste
Glass (including Glass Bottles)	General Household Items	Packaging
Polystyrene	Nappies	Drug Paraphernalia
Tetra Packs	Cigarettes	Dog Foul and Human Waste
Bulky Items (including industrial sized appliances)	Gas Bottles	Tyres

It is also worth noting that NELC also removes animal carcasses that wash up on Cleethorpes Beach.

4.2. How NELC Collects Litter

NELC has a variety of methods for collecting litter, this is due in part not only to the types of litter that are collected in North East Lincolnshire but also due to the location of where the litter is deposited. Methods of collecting litter include:

- Mechanical road and pavement sweepers to tackle road and pavement litter.
- Street litter bins and street litter bin compaction vehicles to manage street litter.
- Walk behind pedestrian barrows.
- Caged vehicles for collecting fly tipping waste and bulky items.
- Dedicated clinical waste vehicles and collection crews.
- Dedicated vacuum mechanical faeces removal equipment.
- Hydro static battery powered compact leaf/litter collector.
- Tractor towed beach/surf rake for litter that is left on the beach.
- River boat for any litter deposited in local rivers such as the River Freshney.

All the above litter collecting methods are accompanied by litter cleaning rounds that are carried out by NELC's Street Cleaning team. The rounds include regular checks for litter on streets, roads, Cleethorpes Beach, Parks and in water bodies such as the River Freshney. As with all other waste (detailed in NELC's 2020 waste strategy) any litter collected, at the time of writing this strategy, by NELC's Street Cleansing team is sent to the Energy from Waste Plant in Stallingborough where its disposal is managed.

As well as work carried out by NELC's Street Cleansing Team, there is also work carried out by local community groups for regular river and beach cleans. To support this NELC engages with local community groups and where possible provides equipment and support. Community engagement is a vital part of NELC's response to litter management, helping local communities take a more active role in the management of their local environment. It is also worth noting that community engagement plays a vital role in shaping attitudes towards littering as well as promoting the importance and benefits of a clean environment.

4.3. Litter Bin Locations and Audits

To ensure informed decisions are made on bin locations, NELC collects data from each round that provides information on how full each litter bin is. Data is collected every time a bin is emptied and the 'fullness' of the bin is graded from 6 categories to inform regular bin audits.

Bin Audit Categories.	
1	Empty
2	Small amounts of litter
3	Half Full
4	Nearly Full
5	Full
5+	Full and Side Waste

Once bins have been assessed and categorised the data is stored and used to determine how much each bin is used over a longer-term period. This aids NELC to determine whether a bin is appropriately placed, following the right bin right place principle, and how often the bin needs to be emptied.

Accompanying categorised bin assessments, NELC also collects footfall data in key areas of the borough. Footfall data is used alongside the bin assessments to inform on the number of people that are present across the borough: helping to identify those areas where the highest footfall occurs. Areas with the highest footfall can then be targeted to have more litter bins and more regular bin collections. These areas are usually areas such as Grimsby Town Centre, Cleethorpes Resort and Parks and Open Spaces.

4.4. 'Hammy the Haddock' Project

The installation of a stainless-steel fish in October 2020, designed to act as a place for people to dispose of plastic bottles, along Cleethorpes promenade has been used to promote keeping Cleethorpes Resort clean and clear of litter. Named 'Hammy the Haddock', after former NELC Beach Safety Officer Bernard 'Buster' Hammond, following a public naming competition for the project. 'Hammy the Haddock' has helped to promote recycling and reduce litter along the resort through community involvement and engagement.

4.5. Enforcement

Patrols and enforcement are undertaken in relation to litter left by an individual or left/deposited whilst driving (vehicle litter). Those who are caught littering in NEL are given fines, in the form of £100 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN). During 2020, a total of 1,245 fixed penalty notices were given for littering, 110 of these individuals were taken to court for failing to pay these fines and were prosecutions. On average, offenders came away with court bills of £339 for littering.

NELC also has a dog control [Public Space Protection Order \(PSPO\)](#) in place which is a borough-wide order and covers not picking up dog foul, not carrying the means to pick up after your dog and putting your dog on a lead when told to do so by an authorised officer. There are also PSPOs for specific areas with conditions that exclude dogs from play areas and instruct people to keep dogs on leads during organised events. People who breach the PSPO can be issued with a fixed penalty of £100. During 2020, A total of 145 fixed penalties were issued for dog fouling and dog control offences.

Mobile rapid deployment cameras through the CCTV network are also used as part of enforcement to target litter and fly tipping hotspots along with battery powered cameras which are used in rural hotspots.

On 1st March 2021, a caught-on camera campaign was introduced to help tackle fly-tipping in the borough. The campaign involves releasing CCTV images in connection with fly-tipping incidents asking for the public to help identify people who may have knowledge of the offences committed. During 2020, officers issued a total of 53, £400 fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to people who had been responsible for fly tipping in the borough.

NELC is also part of the SCRAP campaign, an award-winning campaign developed by the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership as a nationwide crackdown against fly-tipping. The campaign aims at reminding people to check whether their waste is being taken away for disposal by a licensed carrier: either by asking to see a Waste Carriers Licence or by looking up the company on the Environment Agency website.

In March 2021, a spring dog fouling campaign was launched, this included increased social media and new signs to remind dog owners to pick up after their pets. Signs have been installed in parks and other hotspots areas to warn dog walkers that they face a fine if they do not carry a dog poo bag or other means to pick up dog foul. As part of the campaign, people are also being encouraged to submit reports about dog fouling problem areas so enforcement officers can target their patrols more effectively.

Enforcement officers are making spot checks and will offer advice and educate dog walkers about the means to pick up rules until the end of April. From May 2021 onwards, any dog walkers found not carrying a bag or other means to pick up after their dog will be given a verbal warning and from June onwards, they will be fined £100.

To promote awareness on littering and help with enforcement NELC's Environmental Education Officers use a variety of literature to advise residents on litter. Social media is used to educate residents and inform them of current litter issues: including updates from NELC on how best to dispose of litter around the borough.

5. Future Litter Management in NELC

To tackle litter in a strategic way, promoting a cleaner environment in North East Lincolnshire, this section will set out the future strategic vision for litter management within the borough of NEL and how NELC plans to fulfil the strategic vision.

5.1. Objectives of the Litter Strategy

NELC recognises that its future strategy for litter management will need to meet the challenges that have been identified and the main aims of the 2017 national litter strategy. To meet these needs NELC will aim to continue providing effective litter management, while integrating the principles of WRAP's the 'right bin right place' guidance. NELC aims to reduce litter over the lifespan of this strategy and continue making progress in the sustainable management of litter. This strategy will also focus on achieving the six priorities outlined in NELC's waste strategy (also outlined in section 1.3. of this strategy).

5.2. Right Bin Right Place

All future 'binrastructure' projects will align with WRAP's 'right bin right place' guidance. New litter bins placed in NEL will only be done following an assessment of the footfall data of the area to demonstrate a specific need for the litter bin to be placed in the selected location. Bins placed at locations where there is an identified need or suitable opportunity for a street litter bin will be placed with ease of access to the bin in mind: with both public access and access for maintenance and emptying of the bin considered.

A standardised approach will be used for most bins in NEL, with most street litter bins consisting of a lockable housing unit with a 240L bin housed within. This approach allows for a more efficient method of litter bin management. However, NELC also intends to expand the number of solar bins present in the borough, particularly in areas such as open spaces and parks where there are high footfall numbers. Solar bins are thought to be suitable for these locations due to the exposure to sunlight and that these are areas where there is

typically less access to the litter bins. Solar bins work by using the energy from sunlight to operate a sensor and compactor inside the bin, this means that a compacting solar bin is more desirable as it reduces the number of times a bin will need to be emptied. At the time of writing this strategy, NELC has 4 solar bins in the borough.

5.3. Projects for the future

Future litter bin projects will focus on targeted litter bin placement in litter hotspots using more environmentally friendly bins such as the placement of solar bins in open spaces and parks. Projects will also focus on areas that are hotspots for litter, with any new bin requirement assessed based on evidence for a lack of 'binrastructure' provision in any area where regular littering is recorded.

Future projects will also explore the potential for the use of underground bins to further use innovative ways to provide litter bin facilities. Underground bins provide a large disposal capacity without the need for a large bin to be placed on a street, meaning bins will need to be emptied less frequently but not be unsightly on the street scene.

All projects will also account for maintenance and cleaning of litter bins: incorporating it into the current maintenance of street litter bins. Appearance, sanitation and 'fullness' of litter bins are regularly monitored, and this will continue over the lifespan of this strategy.

5.4 Communication and Collaboration

To promote awareness on littering NELC will use platforms such as social media and press releases. Collaboration with local companies will also be used to create awareness around how important managing litter in North East Lincolnshire is.

Further communications will include continued utilisation of the advertising space on bin housings to promote the dog control PSPO in place allowing NELC to get the message out regarding localised dog walking, anti-social behaviour and littering. NELC will also increase

'no litter' signage over the lifespan of this strategy, targeting litter hotspots as key places for new signage to try and raise awareness in areas where littering is a persistent issue.

Collaboration will also be a key part of the future strategy for tackling litter in NEL, with partnership working with Highways England, Keep Britain Tidy, Environmental Agency, Anglian Water and Local Utility companies used as a way of building and furthering established partnerships to tackle litter issues.

5.5. Education and Enforcement

To ensure continued enforcement on dog fouling, the dog control PSPO with current measures shall remain in force as a means of tackling a range of dog related offences and will be reviewed June 2022.

NELC currently has Environmental Education Officers who help to raise awareness and provide insight to local residents on environmental issues including littering, fly tipping and dog fouling.

While visits to schools and local community groups not been possible during the Covid-19 pandemic, visits will be carried out once the pandemic has ended, these will focus on delivering presentations to educate on environmental issues. Further plans include a competition for children to enter where they can have their posters displayed in the litter bins at the local parks, to create more community engagement on the issue of littering. NELC's Environmental Education Officers will also continue to promote the bulky waste service at any campaign or event relating to waste and littering to help tackle fly tipping in NEL. NELC also commits to supports future annual Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean campaigns.

Recent campaigns such as the caught-on camera and the SCRAP campaign will continue to be supported with a high likelihood of repeated dog fouling campaigns and other similar initiatives.

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6. Future Monitoring of Progress

Annual progress on the objectives of the Litter strategy will be monitored with continuous reviews of North East Lincolnshire Councils 'binrastructure' in place to ensure that: The Right Bin Right Place guidance, Waste Strategy Priorities and Council Outcomes Framework are being adhered to and that the projects proposed in this strategy are being implemented.

As 'binrastructure' is assessed continuously by NELC's Street Cleansing department, any necessary changes to NELC's current 'binrastructure' to reflect either an operational or legislative need will be made as and when it is necessary to do so.

To reflect changes, expected to be introduced in 2023, to national legislation and policies which govern how NELC must manage litter: NELC will complete a full review and update of this Litter Strategy in 2024.