



Safer, Cleaner, Greener: Falmouth Town Council challenges environmental crime

Why on earth would you want to destroy Cornwall's stunning natural environment and make life unpleasant for residents and visitors by dropping litter in the streets or discarding unwanted rubbish in the countryside?

Falmouth Town Council's message for June as part of its year-long **Safer, Cleaner, Greener** public information campaign is that it will challenge anyone who does that in its crackdown on environmental crime.

Litter can be as small as a sweet wrapper, as large as a bag of rubbish, or comprise lots of items scattered about. It looks horrible and spoils the landscape. It can affect people's quality of life and health by attracting animals and insects that carry diseases. It can also harm wildlife, particularly on the coast where fish and other creatures get tangled up in it, or ingest it.

If you see someone dropping litter on the street, or throwing it out of a car window, you are within your rights to ask them to pick it up but do ensure that your personal safety is not put at risk.

Authorised officers can issue fixed penalty notices of £150 for littering offences and failure to pay may result in a prosecution before a Magistrate who can impose a fine of up to £2,500.

Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of rubbish or bulky items on land that is not licensed specifically for that purpose and the depositing of domestic refuse into public waste bins. It can be dangerous, pollutes land and waterways, and has an adverse effect on the community as it costs local residents a significant proportion of their council tax for it to be cleared away.

The illegal dumping of household, industrial and commercial waste is a serious criminal offence that can carry a fixed penalty fine of £400 or fines of up to £20,000 if a case is referred to the Magistrates Court. Fines can exceed that if a case is referred to the Crown Court and offenders can even be sent to prison.

So how can you help?

- If you come across evidence of fly-tipping, obtain as many details as possible and report it but **do not** touch the waste as it may contain syringes, broken glass, asbestos, toxic chemicals or other hazardous substances
- Take care not to disturb the site as it may contain evidence that helps to identify the fly-tippers
- If you see someone in the act of fly-tipping, keep safe and don't intervene but make a note of how many people are involved, what they look like, what has been fly-tipped,

its exact location and whether it is in or near water, as well as the make, colour and registration number of any vehicles involved – and then report it

- If there is an accumulation of litter in your street or area, contact Cornwall Council to arrange for it to be cleaned up.

Who to contact:

Please report any concerns about fly-tipping and litter to Cornwall Council:

- Email: publicprotection@cornwall.gov.uk
- Online: Cornwall.gov.uk/report-it
- Phone: 0300 1234 212

For further information, visit Cornwall.gov.uk and type 'fly tip', 'litter' or 'environmental crime' in the search box followed by 'go'.

- Ends -

This campaign article is issued on behalf of Falmouth Town Council by Curlew PR Limited. For further information, please email curlew@hotmail.com or call Jilly Easterby on 07743 164434

