

16 September 2008

How tidy is your local area?

Defra commissioned ENCAMS (Environmental Campaigns), who run the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign, to undertake an independent **survey of local environmental issues**, such as litter and graffiti, in every district council area in England **between April 2006 and March 2008**.

The aim of this work was to report on how much litter, graffiti and flyposting are found in each council area - on the street, in parks, town centres and other places that the public visit for work and recreation. It will give councils detailed information on the nature and scale of any problems, helping them to target resources effectively and improve standards.

How the results are presented

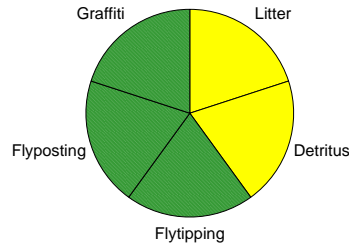
The first page shows a chart highlighting the overall standards for five environmental issues which are often of greatest concern to the public - litter, detritus, fly-tipping, flyposting and graffiti.

The second and third pages show a 'Gauge Chart' and further explanation. This chart provides more detailed information on 32 environmental issues for the council area, giving residents, businesses and visitors a more concise and comprehensive picture of environmental standards.

South East England - Local environment survey 2006/2007

Kent - Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

**Overall Environmental Standards
in Tunbridge Wells Borough Council**



■ Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Unsatisfactory ■ Poor

The chart above shows overall standards of five headline environmental issues, surveyed during the 2006/2007 year.

In essence, the chart gives a “snap shot” of how well an area is performing on the environmental issues which are often of greatest concern to the public where they live.

The five environmental issues covered in the chart above are:

- Litter - Items of litter that have generally been discarded by members of the public;
- Detritus – Generally small items of granular or organic material (grit, old leaf/blossom fall, sand etc.), which, where found, can make an area appear “grubby” and uncared for;
- Fly-tipping – Illegally dumped waste ranging in size from a black bin liner to multiple lorry loads of dumped building rubble;
- Fly-posting – Posters, stickers and notices that are illegally displayed on public and private property – from posters advertising a car boot sale to those advertising a record release; and
- Graffiti – Illegal or unauthorized defacing of public or private property, from juvenile scrawls to large murals.

The key is split into four colours and describes the overall average standard found throughout the council area. A brief description of the four standards, from ‘Good’ to ‘Poor’, is given below:

‘Good’ – **There is an absence, or an insignificant level**, of the relevant environmental issue and therefore most people would not consider there to be a problem; however, isolated incidences of low standards may still be present.

‘Satisfactory’ – **There are low levels** of the relevant environmental issue, which are unlikely to be noticed or to cause offence. Therefore, most of the time, most people would not consider there to be a problem; however, incidences of low standards may still be present.

‘Unsatisfactory’ – Most **people would consider that there is a problem** with the relevant environmental issue. Some may feel standards are poor enough to complain. It is also likely that low standards will be present in a greater number of places.

‘Poor’ – Most **people would consider that there is a significant problem** with the relevant environmental issue. Low standards will be found regularly and there are likely to be widespread complaints.

For more in-depth information on the survey findings, definitions and the gauge chart please [click here](#).

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council – Gauge Chart

The 'Gauge Chart', which follows, provides a far greater level of detail to the previous chart.

It summarises the local environmental quality standards that were found within the Council area across an extended list of 32 environmental issues that are important to most people's quality of life. Some of these issues can also impact on the Council's ability to deliver environmental services, such as the sweeping of its streets.

Presentation of survey results

The 'Gauge Chart' uses the same colour code as the previous chart, with standards falling into one of four categories:

Good	- dark green
Satisfactory	- light green
Unsatisfactory	- yellow
Poor	- red

However, in this chart, each of the four categories are subdivided into four coloured blocks to illustrate where a particular issue falls within the broader classifications of Good, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory or Poor.

For example, if a particular environmental issue has four dark green blocks this means it is graded at the highest end of 'Good'. However, if it has just one dark green block it is at the lower end of 'Good'. If the chart shows just one or two yellow blocks in the 'Unsatisfactory' category, this could mean that there is scope to improve standards relatively easily by better targeting of existing resources thereby taking it out of 'Unsatisfactory' and into 'Satisfactory'.

Similarly, where cleansing standards in relation to litter or detritus are just one light green block into the 'Satisfactory' category, this could illustrate that standards could easily slip to being 'Unsatisfactory' in the absence of proper management of that issue.

The environmental issues

The 32 environmental issues covered in the 'Gauge Chart' fall into seven groups and are described below:

Cleansing – This reports on the levels of litter, detritus (old leaf and blossom fall, grit etc.) and recent leaf and blossom fall found across a council area.

Cleansing Related – This reports on a range of cleansing related issues, the level of weed growth, the levels of graffiti, fly-tipping and fly posting and how well contained domestic and commercial waste (black sacks, wheeled bins etc.) placed out for collection were found to be.

Highways – Here, the survey looked at three factors that can make it difficult to clean an area – levels of obstruction, the physical condition of the highway (paved areas, road channels and carriageways) and levels of traffic. The word 'upstand' in relation to paved area obstruction means a raised edge against which effective sweeping or brushing can take place – its absence, for example, can impact on a council's ability to clean its streets.

Street Furniture – This reports on the condition of signs, benches etc, where they are found on the street.

Litter Bins – This reports on how clean and in what condition they were found, along with their level of fill – this is to say the amount of litter found in them.

Bus Stops – This reports on their general quality across a of range issues, including the levels of litter, staining, graffiti and fly-posting that where found.
































Landscaping – This reports on the general condition of landscaped areas across the council area and the levels of litter found in them.

To view the Gauge Chart please [click here](#)

Notes:

In some cases the Council, particularly if it is a District Council, may not be responsible for maintaining some elements, such as highways and bus stops.

Extended LEQSE 2006/07 - Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Gauge Chart of Environmental Indices for All Areas

Cleansing Standards		
	Litter	
	Detritus	
	Leaf Fall	
Cleansing Related		
	Weed Growth	
	Staining	
	Flytipping	
	Waste Placed Out	
	Flyposting	
	Graffiti	
Highway Infrastructure		
	Paved Areas Obstruction	
	Paved Obstruction No Upstand	
	Channel Obstruction	
	Paved Areas Condition	
	Channel Condition	
	Carriageway Condition	
	Road Marking Condition	
	Vehicle Flows	
	Pedestrian Flows	
Street Furniture		
	Posts & Poles	
	Public Signs	
	Other Street Furniture	
	Buildings & Boundary Structures	
Litter Bins		
	Cleanliness	
	Condition	
	Degree of Fill	
Bus Stops Etc.		
	Litter	 *
	Condition	 *
	Staining	 *
	Flyposting	
	Graffiti	
Landscaping		
	Litter	
	Maintenance	



* Caution, small sample size, there may be limitations on data