

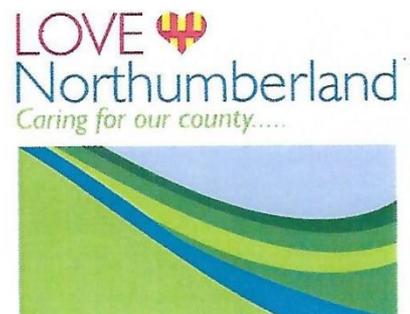
MORPETH LITTER GROUP 2018

A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



A REPORT SPONSORED BY GREATER MORPETH DEVELOPMENT TRUST



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A GENUINE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP!!

(We haven't been able to record all participants so main players only are included)

GMDT/LIONS: DAVID (DAI) RICHARDS —Project Manager and our Keep Britain Tidy Ambassador.

GMDT

- Hugh Edmundson (Environment Director- author of report and sub project manager)
- Simon Cox
- Vanessa Braidwood
- Karen Twedde
- Lindsay Taylor

MORPETH LIONS AND FRIENDS

- Chris Offord
- Richard Nash
- Les and Gay Sage
- Dave and Hilary Wheeler
- Adrian Barnes
- Craig Fraser
- Les and Ann Brindley
- + others

MORPETH JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP

- Janet Hedley
- Mary Ord

KEVI School

- Kate Holmes (Also MTC)
- 6th Form Students
- Teachers

JEWSONS

- Ian Henderson

COCA COLA ENTERPRISES

- David Hunt

MKM BUILDING SUPPLIES

- Alun James

NCC Officers +Councillors

- Nicola Wardle
- Stephen Wardle supported by Carlisle Park , NEAT and Bin Collection teams
- Frances Povey (Area Countryside Officer)
- Councillor Richard Wearmouth (also NCC)
- Councillor David Bawn and family
- Councillor John Beynon

MTC

- Councillor Alison Byard
- Councillor Jack Gebhard
- Town Clerk Tracey Bell
- Assistant Town Clerk Dee Smith

MORPETH SCOUTS – Senior Scout Neil Shashoua and others

MORPETH CHAMBER OF TRADE

- Ken Brown
- Les Sage

PEOPLE OF MORPETH

- Matias Liddle – key supporter who also provides the transit van to carry the numerous bags to Coopies Lane
- Alan, Linda, Tracey Kenny
- Zoe + Jack Freeman
- Jill and Mike Pinkney
- And many others over the past 6 Litter Blitzes



CIGARETTE BUTTS—THE UK'S NO. 1 POLLUTANT

INTRODUCTION

We hope that this report will be viewed as the product of a diverse voluntary community initiative, with partnership assistance from the Town and County Councils, and groups and individuals acknowledged on the previous page, without whom the litter blitzes would not have succeeded.

In January 2018 some members of GMDT and Morpeth Lions became aware that a number of community organisations and individuals in Morpeth were involved in voluntary random litter picking in and around the town. In common with a national trend, those involved believe that the town is experiencing a growing litter problem which is increasingly detracting from the quality of the local environment.

To co-ordinate groups and individuals already involved in litter picking in the town, a decision was taken to organise a series of regular community litter picks under the Morpeth Litter Group (MLG) title. The level of interest from the community was unknown, so in addition to social and other media publicity, a network of contacts with interested parties was established. Additionally, both the Town and County Councils were extremely helpful in providing advice and equipment and agreeing to dispose of collected rubbish. This was boosted by assistance from the private sector (special mention to MKM and Jewson who supplied equipment pickers, bags, gloves, etc.)

Initially our objective was to supplement the Councils' activities in as many areas of the town as possible, and to tie this into the In-Bloom inspections and events such as the Great British Spring Clean (Keep Britain Tidy) and the Lions International Protect Our Planet campaign. As the events progressed it became clear that a number of **major hotspots** which had seemingly been overlooked for years needed more regular attention, and that a number of ideas for possible change relating to the Councils' current litter picking strategy could be advocated.

This report records the results of the six successful litter events, supplemented by the extensive additional work of one individual, and advances recommendations which we hope will be considered seriously by the local authorities. This may require "tweaking" the local authorities' strategies and programmes to cover **major hotspots** in particular, and possibly a change of approach to litter bin design. This will inevitably have resource implications, but we consider from the diverse community feedback we have received that it would be in the public interest to improve litter collection in Morpeth. Implementation could be phased over several years, and we also point out that there are fundraising possibilities available. For example, many other local authorities increase funds by permitting advertising on bins¹.

This community initiative has been formally recognised by the County Council, which awarded the Morpeth Litter Group with runner up prize in the Urban category of the Love Northumberland Awards scheme. This resulted in a presentation of a plaque by the Duchess of Northumberland at The Alnwick Garden, and a cheque for £100 which is being spent on equipment. In addition, David Richards, the MLG project manager, has volunteered to be 1/60 Keep Britain Tidy Ambassadors working at local and national levels having attended the inaugural Ambassador event in Whitehall.

Our hope is that if some of our findings are acted upon by the local authorities it will be possible to reduce our level of activity in 2019 and beyond. It is important that the authorities don't view our work as a permanent supplementary resource, but more as a partnership where we are working together to address the problem of littering.

This report will be published on the GMDT website, and will be disseminated to Northumberland County Council, Morpeth Town Council and King Edward VI School Morpeth, and other groups involved.

¹ See Section 2 of the report

SECTION 1: SUGGESTED BIN DESIGN CHANGE

- 2.1 During our work in 2018 it became apparent that current bins are of only limited use in controlling cigarette butt pollution, the UK's No.1 pollutant according to sources such as Keep Britain Tidy. Butts do not break down and are washed into drains, and then watercourses.
- 2.2 Appendix A6 – Cigarette butt survey-demonstrates the extent of the above problem in parts of the town centre. Although the Town Council has now added stickers to bins to encourage stubbing and binning, our observations are that the problem remains on a similar scale. Part of the reason for this is a reluctance of some members of the public to put stubbed cigarette butts in bins for fear of causing a fire.
- 2.3 As a result of the above issue we decided to investigate alternative bin designs which might reduce current pollution. This entailed visits to other local authority areas, and contact with other bin manufacturers in June and July.
- 2.4 The main bin currently provided by the Town Council is the Glasdon Jubilee model. This has a small cigarette stubbing plate on its top, but no tray underneath to catch stubbed butts. Therefore, butts left on top tend to blow off, are washed off in inclement weather, or are dropped on the ground by people reluctant to put them in the bins in case of fire.
- 2.5 In undertaking this we were at all times mindful of cost implications for the local authorities in terms of replacing existing units with a more effective design, and also practicality of emptying. The cost of a new Jubilee bin is approximately £500. We contacted Glasdon in the summer, who told us that they have a Jubilee bin designed with a large holed perforated tray below the stubbing plate, which authorities have found to be the most effective design .
- 2.6 Glasdon also informed us that existing Jubilee bins can be converted easily to add the perforated tray which catches stubbed butts and is easy to empty. This adjustment takes approximately 30 mins for each bin. Glasdon have offered to demonstrate altering a new bin owned by MTC, either by visiting Morpeth or an NCC/MTC team visiting their factory in Blackpool. The trays costs £67 including VAT As a result of the above, the Trust recommended to MTC that one of the new bins understood to be held in storage could be converted with the new butt tray and trialled in Morpeth Marketplace.
- 2.7 As a result of cost implications, the MLG also decided to explore the option of advertising on bins, and we have already made suggestions to the Town Council. Initially we looked at the possibility of sponsorship—namely permitting commercial advertising on bins to obtain revenue. We became aware of at least two local firms who would be interested in pursuing this. Discussion also took place with Morpeth Chamber of Trade who expressed considerable interest in the possible bin design change, and offered to pay £600 towards a new bin or conversion, subject to permitting an advertisement on the bin.
- 2.8 As stated after Litter Blitz #3, Morpeth Town Council's "**STUB IT and BIN IT!**" poster placed on the top of the bins was an attempt to encourage smokers to put their cigarette butts into the bin, photos below are 2 examples that shows the smokers continue to leave their stubbs on the top of the bin.

SECTION 2: CONCLUSION AND 2019 MLG STRATEGY

- 3.1 The 6 events in 2018 resulted in 401 bags collected, large amounts of fly tipped items, tyres, barbecues etc, with a total of 154 volunteers involved across the 6 Litter Blitzes. We think that the scale of litter around Morpeth is showing a marked reduction.
- 3.2 The trawl also concluded that **4 major hotspots** require more frequent attention, and suggest that additional litter bins (including 2 in KEVI grounds) could be provided in specified locations. To minimise cost these could be cheaper Sulo bins in some cases, and implementation could be staggered over several years.
- 3.3 We are fully aware of the resource limitations of both the Town and County Councils and KEVI High School and appreciate the contribution they have made in helping us this year. We are pleased that KEVI have immediately reacted positively to many of our suggestions, and that a few changes have been made by the Town and County Councils.
- 3.4 Nevertheless, as a result of our findings we appeal to the Councils to give full consideration to our recommendations and to commit/divert resources if at all possible to some of our changes. We also suggest that adding bins in some locations would reduce open space, street, and woodland pollution, facilitating collection, and reducing physical cleaning requirements.
- 3.5 We also appeal to the Chamber of Trade to build upon our initiative, by asking its members to take responsibility for helping to keep the town clean. We are fully aware that the Councils have a duty to fulfil this aim, but the scale of littering today is such that reducing it at source can only help. Therefore, we suggest as an idea that a litter warning poster in all shops which sell packaged goods or takeaway food could assist this? Litter control is expensive and it is in all parties' interest to keep Morpeth clean. While the main streets are cleaned regularly it is the yards (alleys) which we have found to be a particular problem, and which are all extensively used by the public including the many visitors to the town.
- 3.6 **We do not expect all suggestions to be taken up either for resource or practical reasons, but hope that our actions and report have given food for thought. At the least we emphasise that more attention should be given to the major hotspots identified, the town centre yards, and KEVI. The need to do far more to reduce cigarette butt pollution is also very obvious to us.**
- 3.7 We also realise that littering is a symptom of today's selfish throwaway society culture. So we hope that our 2018 project has played a small part in further enhancing the reputation of Morpeth as an increasingly clean attractive place in which to live and work, and to visit.
- 3.8 The first event of 2019 is likely to be in February/ March after fallen leaves have reduced, and foliage is immature.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A1: SYNOPSIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

MONITORING AND CLEANING ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

R1 That the responsible public authorities monitor **MAJOR HOTSPOT 1 - the area covered in this event-- including the Postern Burn and its banks-- and clear litter on a regular basis which is suggested as 3-6 monthly. Additionally, litter prosecution warning signage could be displayed.**

REASONS:

- To reduce pollution which will be causing harm to wildlife and domestic pets
- Pollution is impacting negatively upon the flow and quality of the water in the burn, and may cause blockages which increase the risk of flooding.
- To reduce visual intrusion in a well-used highly attractive public (including tourists) route into and from the town centre and Carlisle Park.
- To discourage the public from viewing the area as an acceptable place to leave rubbish.

R2 That the responsible public authority monitors **MAJOR HOTSPOT 2 (Coopies lane former mineral railway public footpath and clears litter and fly tipped material on a regular basis, which is suggested as 3-6 monthly. additionally, that litter prosecution warning notices could be displayed.**

REASONS :

- To reduce litter pollution which is harmful to wildlife and domestic pets (dogs being exercised).
- To properly control litter in the interests of public enjoyment and safety on a designated public footpath.

R3 That the responsible authority monitors **MAJOR HOTSPOT 3, and clears litter and fly tipped material on a regular basis, which is suggested as 6 monthly. Additionally, litter prosecution warning signs could be displayed, and additional bins placed.....**

REASONS:

- To control litter pollution which is harmful to wildlife and domestic pets (dogs being exercised).
- To control litter pollution to increase public enjoyment of High Stobhill Wood and adjacent public spaces.

R4 That Network Rail or any organisation subsequently responsible for the railway station, and the responsible public body for public areas outside their control in the vicinity of the station regularly monitors and clear litter, which is suggested as weekly. To consider replacing soft landscaping which attracts litter with hard landscaping.

REASON:

- To control litter pollution in an important gateway into and out of Morpeth.

R5 That the responsible body monitors **MAJOR HOTSPOT 4 and clears the Allery Banks open space and ChurchBurn gully on a regular basis (Perhaps 3 monthly?).**

REASON:

- To control litter pollution which is harmful to wildlife and domestic pets (dogs being exercised) and may cause drainage blockages in the burn.

R6 That the responsible authority monitors and clears yards in the town centre and adjacent streets on a regular basis, and that this includes cigarette butts.

REASON:

- To control litter pollution in all public areas of the town centre in the interests of residents, businesses and tourism.

R7 That representation is made to Morrisons management to ask that they put up fine mesh webbing to stop the detritus blowing from its loading bay onto the river frontage and into the river. This would be a permanent solution that removes the need for Tommy to continually clean up this area.

REASON:

- To control litter in the area in the interests of amenity, and reducing river and sea pollution

R8 That the Chamber of Trade asks its members to assist with litter control by displaying a Litter Free Morpeth poster in shops etc (A possible school project in 2019)

REASON :

- To assist in controlling litter at source

R9 That the responsible authority monitors and clears the layby adjacent to the golf course on the Whalton road on a regular basis (perhaps monthly)

REASON:

- To control litter pollution which is harmful to wildlife and detracts from public amenity

R10 That all students are required to undertake litter picking within the school grounds at some point during their education.

REASONS:

- To embed a litter free culture among students.
- To assist in creating a litter free environment within the school.

R11 That the party responsible for maintaining the school playing field is tasked with picking up potentially dangerous litter such as bottles and cans.

REASON:

- To minimise the possibility of injury to students

R12 That the County Council gives consideration to placing anti-litter signage on the approach roads from the A1 to Fairmoor

REASONS:

- To convey the message to motorists that littering is an offence, and that Morpeth takes pride in its environment
- To control litter in the interests of protecting wildlife and the amenity of the area

BIN RECOMMENDATIONS (Traffic light colours are suggested priorities)

RB1 That general waste bins are placed close to the lock up garages on Castle Close and the footpath to the rear of the lock up garages at Rutherford Place (See Appendix A5—Bin Map).

REASONS:

- To reduce pollution which will be causing harm to wildlife and domestic pets
- Pollution is impacting negatively upon the flow and quality of the water in the burn, and may cause blockages which increase the risk of flooding.
- To reduce visual intrusion in a well-used highly attractive public (including tourists) route into and from the town centre and Carlisle Park.
- To discourage the public from viewing the area as an acceptable place to leave rubbish

RB2 That an additional general waste bin is added, close proximity to the café at Coopies Haugh.

REASONS:

- To reduce litter pollution which is harmful to wildlife and domestic pets
- In the interests of amenity of the area (including the nearby public footpath)

RB3 That an additional general waste bin is placed at the southern end of High Stobhill adjacent to the public open space.

REASONS:

- To reduce litter pollution which is harmful to wildlife and domestic pets
- In the interests of amenity of the area

RB4 That the Low Stobhill Bin, currently located on a lamppost is moved to the start of the Ramp on the A192

REASONS:

- To reduce litter pollution which is harmful to wildlife and pets
- To reduce litter pollution by the Low Stobhill access ramp in the interests of amenity. .

RB5 That the bin currently beside a seat on the southern corner of Coopies Lane Junction with the A192 is placed on the northern corner of the junction.

REASONS:

- To reduce litter pollution particularly in the soft landscaping around the station and to improve visual amenity at this gateway into Morpeth, to complement imminent major regeneration of the station.
- to try to reduce the litter generated not only by people walking to and from Stobhill, but also from those exiting the station and Coopies Lane and proceeding to the north.

RB6 That the BIN located on the path going up to the North Bound platform/ rear tunnel entrance is moved to the top of the path.

REASON:

- To reduce litter particularly in the soft landscaping and to improve visual amenity at this important gateway into Morpeth, to complement the major regeneration of the station.

RB7 That a bin is placed on the path as you approach the railway station from the semicircle drop off point. (The scale of cigarette butts is immense where hundreds are littered each week). It is made worse by the heavy bracken around the entrance.

REASON:

- To reduce litter pollution particularly in the soft landscaping and to improve visual amenity in the vicinity of this important gateway into Morpeth.

RB8 That a dog bin is placed on South side of Allery Banks green area,

REASON: As above – scale of dog bags thrown and popularity of the area for dog walking.

RB9 That a dog bin is placed along the path leading from High Stobhill across Whinham Way to Stobhill Farm.

REASON: As above

RB10 That the Town Council evaluates the effectiveness of its current bin strategy in the town centre particularly with regard to cigarette butt pollution (See Section 2 of this report).

REASON:

- To ensure that bin design and location results in more effective litter control.

RB11 That consideration is given to adding a bin to the north east footway on Bridge Street, which could be placed on the west side of the Black Bull Bay Window without obstructing the path.

REASONS:

- To properly control litter pollution on this busy thoroughfare
- To help reduce the scale of detritus in the immediate yard (name to be confirmed)

RB12 That consideration is given to adding a bin on the south western corner of the junction of Wellway and Copper Chare

REASON:

- To reduce litter deposited in St James churchyard

RB13 That At least 2 bins required in St James Car Park.

REASON:

- To properly control litter pollution on this busy car park and thoroughfare

RB14 That a bin is placed in Corporation Yard

REASON:

- To improve litter control on this busy thoroughfare.

RB15 That a general waste SULO bin is added to the layby on Whalton Road.

REASONS:

- To control litter pollution which is harmful to wildlife
- In the interests of visual enjoyment of the countryside.

RB16 That a general waste bin is added to the easternmost point of the public footpath which runs adjacent to St Mary's churchyard.

REASON:

- In the interests of the amenity of the area (including the public footpath)

RB17 That additional bins are placed at each main entrance to the school and at the top of Cottingwood Lane by the field access.

REASONS:

- To control litter pollution which is harmful to wildlife and domestic pets
- To ensure that litter from the school is effectively controlled.

RB18 That an additional bin is placed at the lower west side of Newgate Street

REASON: As above

RB19 That Morpeth Town Council give consideration to trialling a number of bins with the new cigarette tray placed into our existing bins.

REASON: To improve control of cigarette butt pollution

RB20 If the above trial is effective, over the next 5-10 years all bins are modified to have the new butt tray mechanism.

REASONS:

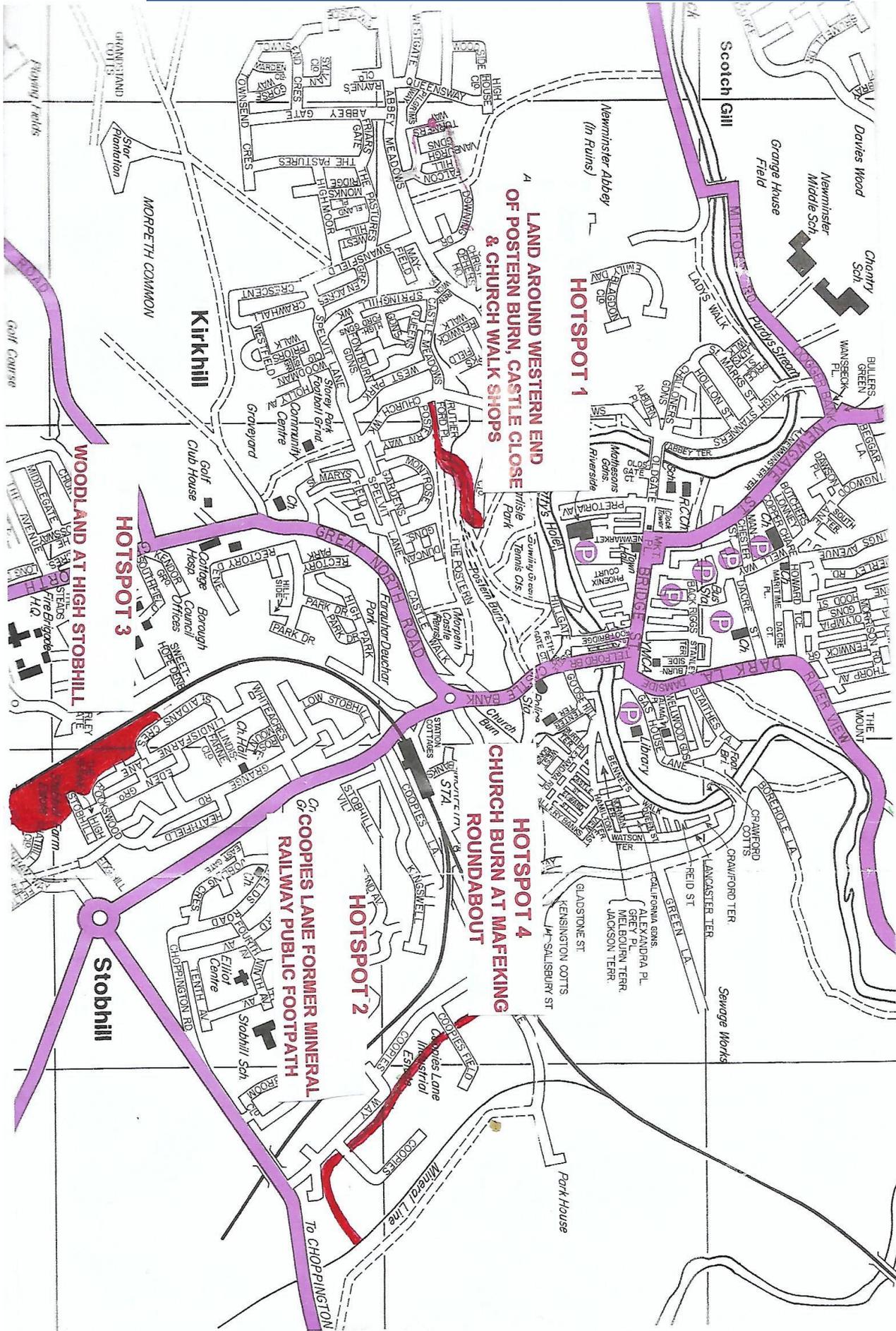
- To budget over the future years a number of bins to be adjusted.
- To improve control of cigarette butt pollution

RB21 Look at options where businesses will "sponsor a Bin".

REASON:

- If above trial is successful could the rollout of the amended bins be completed without impacting too much MTC budgets?

APPENDIX A2: MAJOR LITTER HOTSPOTS IDENTIFIED



APPENDIX A3: POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL BIN MAP (SUGGESTED PRIORITIES BY TRAFFIC LIGHT COLOURS)

