
GRAFFITI VANDALISM PREVENTION

1. Purpose of Report

This report informs the Committee of progress and next steps for effectively reducing graffiti vandalism in Wellington City. This report requests the Committee's approval to support the draft Regional Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Strategy (in Appendices 1 and 2) that will be submitted to the 23 November 2012 Regional Mayoral Forum.

2. Executive Summary

Background to the draft Regional Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Strategy

You are being asked to support the draft Regional Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Strategy (in Appendices 1 and 2). This draft strategy has been agreed to by a regional working group of graffiti vandalism prevention officers from Councils and network utilities across the region, and has been endorsed by the Police.

The strategy will promote region-wide collaboration and consistency for reducing and preventing graffiti vandalism. This will be through targeted leadership, engaging with communities, prompt removal and effective enforcement.

Graffiti vandalism crosses territorial boundaries. Each organisation signing up to this strategy will play its part in reducing graffiti vandalism in the wider region. For example, the Police, KiwiRail and Councils can use different and complementary tools to tackle graffiti vandalism.

Process from here

The regional working group is seeking approval of this draft strategy from each relevant Council and other organisation before taking the strategy to the Mayoral Forum on 23 November 2012. To-date, other Councils are comfortable with the strategy as it is currently drafted. Any recommended changes to the draft strategy need to be made now, so that those recommendations can be taken to the 23 November 2012 Forum.

Each territorial authority and other participating organisation will, according to local circumstances, adopt the strategy through their local action plans and other efforts to prevent and reduce graffiti vandalism. Each organization will

also evaluate and measure their progress of implementing this strategy and report back on progress to the regional working group each year.

Wellington City Council will, by March 2013, develop operational guidelines to adopt the above regional strategy for effectively and efficiently reducing graffiti vandalism.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Agree to support the draft Regional Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Strategy (in Appendices 1 and 2).*
3. *Note that officers and the Police will ask Mayors to support the above strategy at the 23 November 2012 Regional Mayoral Forum.*
4. *Note that Wellington City Council will, by March 2013, develop operational guidelines to adopt the above regional strategy for effectively and efficiently reducing graffiti vandalism.*

4. Background

Graffiti vandalism problem

Graffiti vandalism is the act of a person damaging or defacing any building, structure, road, tree, property or other thing by writing, drawing, painting, spraying or etching on it, or otherwise marking it:

- a. without lawful authority; and
- b. without the consent of the occupier or owner or other person in lawful control.¹

Graffiti vandalism can reduce civic pride, sense of personal safety and deter people from visiting spaces. Some people can also view graffiti vandalism as an “indicator” of the potential for more serious crimes to affect the community².

Wellington has a graffiti vandalism problem. The scale of this problem been independently measured by Tasman Research³. Out of a score of 100 (being best), Wellington only achieved 72, whereas recently Auckland scored 96 and Lower Hutt scored 90. The average for UK local authorities is 92. Officers

¹ Ministry of Justice, STOP Strategy: A Strategy for Change and Auckland Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Plan - July 2012.

² Auckland Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Plan - July 2012.

³ Tasman Research and Consultation - A Survey of graffiti vandalism in Wellington, August 2012

estimate that graffiti removal costs Wellington City Council around \$600,000 to \$800,000 every year⁴.

Our Council's business units carry out activities to prevent and remove graffiti vandalism. Examples include (but are not limited to) ensuring that graffiti vandalism is removed from our assets, using a "Stoptags" database that stores photos and intelligence around tags and taggers, and working with youth agencies and artists to promote legitimate street art. Our objectives are to increase consistency and efficiency in tackling graffiti vandalism across the whole region.

5. Discussion

Cross-regional work and research into graffiti vandalism prevention

For the last two years, a regional working group of graffiti vandalism prevention officers from the Police, Councils and network utilities across the region has been working together to determine how we increase prevention and reduction of graffiti vandalism. We have also consulted with other organisations such as Auckland City Council.

Evidence here and overseas shows that graffiti vandalism can be most effectively prevented by:

- enforcement – identification and / or prosecution of graffiti vandals
- prompt removal – discourages more graffiti vandalism from appearing (as graffiti attracts more graffiti and vandals want their graffiti to be seen)
- education – such as reporting and removing graffiti vandalism and youth programmes offering alternatives to illegal graffiti (such as murals or art workshops)
- community partnerships – including volunteer programmes (e.g. adopt a spot), community clean ups.

Regional Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Strategy

There is a need to apply the above targeted approach at a regional level due to:

- high movement of residents, property owners, and graffiti vandals between the cities in the region
- the Police, Kiwi Rail, Wellington Electric and other service providers having an important part to play in preventing graffiti vandalism and having assets and interests spread throughout the region

⁴ This estimate includes direct costs and also costs of officer's time (across different business units) in removing and preventing graffiti vandalism.

- opportunities for more effective and efficient graffiti vandalism prevention through sharing resources and information
- the combined efforts of regional Mayors providing a stronger voice in lobbying for appropriate penalties and greater deterrents for graffiti vandalism.

For the above reasons, the draft Regional Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Strategy (in Appendices 1 and 2) has been developed with the purpose of promoting region-wide collaboration and consistency for reducing and preventing graffiti vandalism. Wellington City Council has engaged with and incorporated feedback on this Strategy from graffiti vandalism prevention officers from the Police, other Councils and network utilities in this working group.

Next Steps

The regional working group is seeking approval of this draft strategy from each relevant Council and other organisation before taking the strategy to the Mayoral Forum on 23 November 2012. To-date, other Councils are comfortable with the strategy as it is currently drafted. Any recommend changes to the draft strategy need to be made now, so that those recommendations can be taken to the 23 November Forum.

Each territorial authority and other relevant organisation will, according to their local circumstances, adopt the strategy through their local action plans and other efforts to prevent and reduce graffiti vandalism. Each organisation will also evaluate and measure their progress of implementing this strategy and report back on progress to the regional working group each year.

Leading by Example

By March 2013, Wellington City Council will develop operational guidelines to implement the Regional Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Strategy in our city and achieve the following objectives:

- set prompt and consistent time standards to remove graffiti vandalism (if graffiti vandalism is left for a long time it tends to quickly spread)
- improve value for money (such as sharing and rationalising contracts for removing graffiti vandalism)
- incorporate graffiti vandalism prevention planning into environmental design (e.g. graffiti protective coating on walls to easily remove graffiti, lighting, not placing benches or bins in positions that will encourage graffiti vandalism)
- send consistent messages (what is / isn't acceptable, what constitutes legitimate art, not featuring graffiti vandalism in media etc)

- have effective education and art programmes (e.g. around negative effects of graffiti vandalism and running smart mural / art projects)
- make better use of the StopTAGs database - mapping graffiti vandalism hotspots and other evidential information that will lead to apprehensions
- effectively partner with communities, private building owners, Police, neighbouring territorial authorities and other organisations for preventing and removing graffiti vandalism
- identify indicators that will measure progress of reducing graffiti vandalism.

Since implementing a local graffiti vandalism reduction plan similar to Wellington's proposed approach, Auckland has seen a significant decrease in the amount of graffiti vandalism in their city. This is after previously having a graffiti vandalism problem on a similar scale to Wellington's current problem. Melbourne's Graffiti Management Plan is another good example that will inform our new operational guidelines⁵.

Our new operational guidelines will aim to help reduce graffiti vandalism in Wellington City. Reduced graffiti vandalism contributes to our City's appeal of place. This helps make the city more people-centered with healthy and safe communities (a goal under the Wellington 2040 Strategy).

Contact Officer: *Mark Jones, Senior Policy Advisor, Policy and Planning.*

⁵ See

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/licencesregulations/GraffitiManagement/Pages/Home.aspx> and

http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/strategies/Documents/graffiti_management_plan_2009_2013.pdf

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

Reduced graffiti vandalism contributes to our City's appeal of place. This helps make the city more people-centered with healthy and safe communities (a goal under the Wellington 2040 Strategy).

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

There are no long term financial implications and the operational guidelines will guide activities within existing baselines.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

The draft policy does not raise any specific issues related to mana whenua or the Treaty of Waitangi.

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Consultation on the draft Regional Graffiti Vandalism Prevention Strategy has been among the organisations and territorial authorities that will sign up to this.

b) Consultation with Maori

The draft policy raises no specific Maori or Treaty of Waitangi issues.

6) Legal Implications

There are no legal issues with the Regional Strategy. Legal advice will be obtained during the development of our operational guidelines.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This paper raises no inconsistencies with existing policy.

WELLINGTON REGIONAL GRAFFITI PREVENTION STRATEGY 2013-17

Our Vision:
**PREVENTING GRAFFITI
VANDALISM TOGETHER**

HOW WE PREVENT

LEADERSHIP	ENGAGEMENT	ERADICATION	ENFORCEMENT
Provide direction	Consistent messages	Prompt removal	Apply the law
Agree activities	Effective partnerships	Quality services	Seek reparation
Share resources	Share and learn	Cost effective	Focus on hot spots
Ensure accountability	Targeted education	Community action	Target repeat offenders

BENEFITS/OUTCOMES

HOW WE MEASURE

SUSTAINABLE GRAFFITI REDUCTION	Crime data Graffiti audits Shared 'Stop Tags' database
IMPROVED ENVIRONMENT	Community feedback Graffiti audits Shared 'Stop Tags' database
IMPROVED SAFETY PERCEPTIONS	Perception of safety audits Community feedback Crime data
ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES	Community feedback Crime data Graffiti removed (\$ and time)
VALUE FOR INVESTMENT	Total spending Graffiti removed (\$ and time) Crime data Shared 'Stop Tags' database Graffiti audits Community feedback Perception of safety audits

WHO WE ARE



Appendix 2

Wellington Regional Graffiti Prevention Strategy 2013-17: Principles, Definitions and Implementation

Purpose of Strategy: To promote region-wide collaboration and consistency for reducing and preventing graffiti vandalism.

Principles and Definitions: The organisations with logos appearing on the Strategy's front page have signed up to this Regional Strategy. Each of those organisations will adopt the principles and definitions (below) as part of their local action plans and other efforts to prevent graffiti. No activities should be inconsistent with those principles and definitions.

Guiding Examples: The examples are for guidance around how to implement the principles. There is no expectation, however, that organisations signing up to this Strategy implement all of the examples, particularly if other projects better suit local circumstances.

The definitions and examples below will generally be relevant for communities and stakeholders such as: territorial authorities (TAs), Wellington Regional Council, KiwiRail, Wellington Electric, other utility companies, NZ Police, government organisations, businesses, schools, residents associations and youth clubs.

Implementation and Evaluation: Organisations signing up to this strategy will annually evaluate progress using the measures on the Strategy's front page that are relevant to them (for example crime data, graffiti audits, shared 'Stop Tags' database). Annual progress will be reported back to the regional working group.

Overarching Principle	Definition	Sub-Principles	How principles can be implemented (Examples)
Leadership	Provide region - wide direction and guidance to address graffiti vandalism in neighbourhoods, communities and businesses.	Provide direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give best-practice and consistent advice on how to tackle local graffiti effectively. • Promote region-wide activities (including the Graffiti Prevention Strategy, Governance Group and quarterly reporting).
		Agree activities	Undertake initiatives, such as the following, to help divert people from graffiti vandalism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murals • Community programmes • Youth activities • Education projects • Partner with businesses.
		Share resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share data/analysis (e.g. StopTags information), communication and advertising materials.

Overarching Principle	Definition	Sub-Principles	How principles can be implemented (Examples)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have common funding streams. • Share contracting services.
		Ensure accountability Ensure accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have local graffiti policies. • Clearly define who is responsible for what. • Measure policy success and feed this back to the community.
Engagement	Work collaboratively with communities and stakeholders to promote ownership and action in preventing and removing graffiti vandalism.	Consistent messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use standard format for messaging. • Do not use real graffiti images in published materials or media.
		Effective partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve stakeholder groups in community work or projects. • Work with young people in school holidays.
		Share and learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give permission for other councils/businesses to use your printed materials. • Share and learn from successes and things needing to be done differently. • Share ideas, principles and initiatives. • Seek feedback and learn from communities.
		Targeted education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate school children and communities about the negative effects of graffiti and how to tackle graffiti. • Advise communities on how to remove graffiti.
Eradication	Prompt removal of graffiti vandalism to promote a sense of ownership and safety.	Prompt removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set and adhere to time standards.
		Quality services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have consistent and effective ways of removing graffiti across all assets.
		Cost effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline removal methods. • Target surveillance. • Bulk-order products.
		Community action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate a volunteer programme (adopt a spot) and encourage the reporting of offences and offenders. • Work towards regionally consistent practices for public access to resources to eradicate graffiti.
Enforcement	Effective use of legislation in	Apply the law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosecute, prevent and deter graffiti vandalism.

Overarching Principle	Definition	Sub-Principles	How principles can be implemented (Examples)
	<p>enabling communities to be free of graffiti vandalism.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the Police by providing information on offenders or offences. • Ensure retailers do not sell spray paint to underage customers.
		<p>Seek reparation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always seek reparation after a specific amount of damage. • Penalties should be commensurate with the level of offending (e.g. penalties under the Crimes Act for significant damage, Summary Offences for less significant vandalism).
		<p>Focus on hot spots</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use StopTags to identify and concentrate resources on areas of concern. • Councils to inform the Justice sector about the impact of graffiti on communities.
		<p>Target repeat offenders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 10 offender lists