

# \_\_\_\_ Graffiti Vandalism Management Plan \_\_\_\_\_





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This plan provides direction to ensure graffiti vandalism is managed consistently across Council and its partners. This plan will assist in a significant reduction of graffiti vandalism in Wellington.

Progress will be monitored through annual graffiti audits, StopTags data and the Residents Satisfaction Survey. Reporting will be through the Quarterly and Annual Reports.

The Ministry of Justice Stop Tagging Our Place (STOP) Strategy has a main objective of preventing graffiti vandalism in New Zealand where it identifies that the most effective crime prevention strategies involve communities working together.

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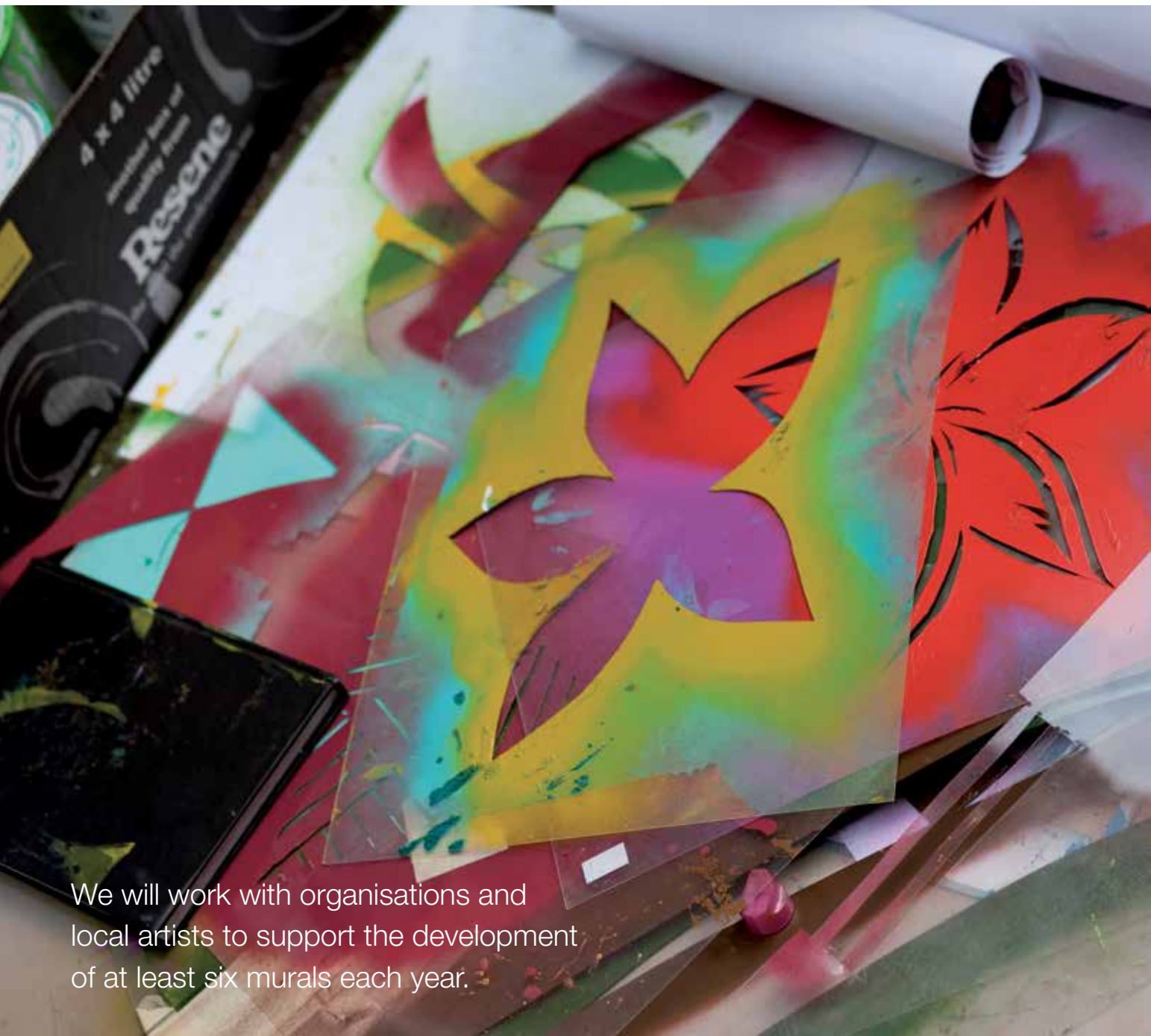
Left: Berhampore School students working on Paint up: A schools mural project, 2013

Cover: Volunteers from Te Menenga Pai Trust remove graffiti from the Wellington Hospital emergency water supply tank as part of the Newtown Clean-Up project.

“The most effective crime prevention/reduction campaigns involve partnerships between local councils, community organisations and community members such as businesses, schools, sports clubs and private individuals – all with a focus on community engagement, ownership and action. As a start, Police and local government should collectively identify areas targeted by graffiti vandalism offenders, then coordinate opportunities to engage with volunteer organisations and paid staff to prevent and remove graffiti vandalism”

**– Ministry of Justice STOP strategy**





We will work with organisations and local artists to support the development of at least six murals each year.

# 1. Leadership



The Council has an important role in providing leadership on all graffiti interventions within Wellington City. Leadership is crucial in driving initiatives which will integrate actions between and across agencies, local authorities and the community.

## Area

## Actions

Active participation in the Regional Forum

The Council will actively participate in the Regional Graffiti Forum.

Consistent approach with regional stakeholders (utility companies, Wellington Regional Council etc.)

The Council will advocate for consistent regional approaches to be adopted with utility businesses and the Wellington Regional Council/Kiwirail (Railway stations and corridor) so that a similar graffiti management approach is developed and adopted with these organisations across the region.

Local forum and a consistent approach

The Council will develop a local forum of property owners, key residents and business association representatives, the Police, and youth agencies to coordinate the approach to managing graffiti vandalism.

Partnership with the community

The successful management of graffiti requires a community based approach. The Council will work with the community in locations where there is a high incidence of graffiti to develop strategies to report and remove graffiti, to identify those who are tagging and to more effectively enforce this issue.

## 2.\_\_\_\_prevention of graffiti vandalism

The goal of these initiatives is to reduce the number of people engaging in graffiti vandalism and reduce the amount of graffiti vandalism occurring in the city.

The most effective prevention strategies involve communities working together and should engage the whole community, including young people, media and business groups.

### Initiative

### Actions

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Reduce access to tools

Partner with Police and other organisations to assist spray can retailers and educational institutions in understanding and complying with the spray can sales restrictions under the Summary Offences Act.

- Information is available on-line and as part of a tool kit of resources for business, retailers, property owners and the community
- Promote the Ministry of Justice resources and provide information on the STOP Strategy to retail premises managers and staff
- Assist retailers by providing information and posters on the prohibition of spray can sales to minors
- Provide information for school boards of trustees and governing bodies on their obligations in selling spray cans to enrolled students for their coursework.

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Incorporate best practice design principles

Integrate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles through out Council:

- CPTED will be considered and included where possible when developing policy, strategy, action plans and design guidelines
- Develop a best practice guideline for a whole of Council approach to Graffiti management
- Develop comprehensive resources to assist the public in considering CPTED principles in private developments – online and printed materials
- Promote the use of protective coatings (laminare, graffiti – resistant paint) in hot spots and new developments and on all Council's assets.

## Initiative

## Actions

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Education and use of media

Council will ensure:

- Consistent messaging to graffiti vandals regarding zero tolerance
- Images of graffiti vandalism will not be used for Council sponsored marketing and or media
- Graffiti awareness is seen as a priority and the message promoted to residents, retailers and community groups whenever possible
- Leverage off partnerships with schools and youth groups and raise awareness that graffiti is a crime.

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Working with the community

Develop partnerships and programmes with the community in areas where graffiti is an identified issue:

- Developing a community response plan to report, eradicate and enforce measures to reduce graffiti vandalism locally
- Support volunteer activities that assist in managing graffiti. This could include initiatives such as adopt a spot, street clean ups and community murals
- Develop a graffiti vandalism removal volunteer programme
- Work with community organisations to support initiatives that use green walls to deter and control graffiti vandalism
- Work with organisations, the police and local artists to support the development of at least six murals each year
- In consultation with the residential and business community identify and target graffiti hotspots.

The further development of graffiti walls will not generally be supported and removal of graffiti from community murals is a priority.

The Council's preference is to support image-based murals over graffiti-style text based or 'wild-style' works, however it depends on the context for these artworks.

Prompt removal is the most effective way of managing graffiti vandalism.





### 3. \_\_\_\_\_ eradication of graffiti vandalism

Prompt removal is the most effective way of managing graffiti vandalism. International research and best practice shows that the fresher the graffiti is, the more easily it is removed; the presence of graffiti attracts more graffiti; and prompt removal deprives the graffiti vandals of the recognition they seek.

Initiative	Actions
Whole of Council Approach	Streamline and standardise response to graffiti to deliver a rapid and efficient eradication service.
	Develop a collaborative approach with owners of the city's telecommunication, transport and rail infrastructure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– standardise responses and removal times</li> <li>– take advantage of economies of scale with contractors, resources and supplies</li> <li>– connect with community driven responses.</li> </ul>
Working with partners – removal of the tag and restoration of the damaged area	Establish a process for rapid response and consistency for eradication with residents groups and private property/asset owners.  Develop opportunities and partnerships with Corrections and Police diversion schemes.  Work with the Police to ensure graffiti eradication becomes a key objective through the apprehension of offenders and youth aid programmes.
All graffiti vandalism from Council-assets will be removed promptly	Offensive graffiti will be removed within 4 hours. Highly visible graffiti on Council assets (or adjoining Council property) will be removed with 24 hours. All other Council managed assets (or adjoining Council property) will be removed within 3 working days. Council contractors' equipment and work sites will be free of graffiti vandalism – formalised through contracts.

**Note:** There may be exceptions to these timeframes in the case of graffiti vandalism over murals, etching on glass, graffiti vandalism in hazardous locations, and/or where a traffic management plan is required.

Determining whether or not the graffiti vandalism is 'highly visible' will be based on the volume of traffic (including pedestrian) in the area, the size of the message and the determination will be made by Council Officers.

Council assets include property, machinery and equipment, local legal roads (not state highways) and footpaths, parks, reserves and playgrounds, and buildings and structures.

## 4. \_\_\_\_\_ enforcement

Enforcement is reliant on effective reporting and collaborative relationships between the community, business owners, the Council, Corrections and the Police.

### Initiative

### Actions

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Partnerships

Support the Police to ensure graffiti vandalism offenders and hot spot locations are targeted.

Utilise Police and Corrections diversion schemes

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Fully utilise the information and data captured through StopTags

Record and share information and data on incidents of graffiti vandalism to include:

- Photo of the tag and possible identification of the tagger
- Location and date
- Graffiti method used (medium and surface)
- The approximate size of the graffiti vandalism
- The message and the tag

Geo-code StopTags information and map 'hot spots'

Identify and share information on repeat offenders.

Share all data information regionally and share with partners, especially the Police

Encourage residents and businesses to report graffiti to assist in identifying and addressing frequently tagged sites and taggers.

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Utilising current and new legislation

Apply existing legislation where appropriate which include age restrictions on the sale of spray cans. This will include working with schools to make sure teachers and pupils are aware of and understand the legislation around the sale and use of spray cans.

In conjunction with our stakeholders, consider options to further restrict the sale of spray paint and other graffiti materials, including online sales.

Seek compensation and restitution from graffiti vandalism offenders through the restorative justice process. Options for offenders should include graffiti eradication and other community projects.

## Initiative

## Actions

Explore different options for the eradication of graffiti on private property including but not limited to:

- new graffiti vandalism bylaw legislation
- explore ways to recover costs Council has incurred when graffiti is removed from private property
- partnerships and MOUs with property and asset owners across the city

This would be accompanied with information including a step-by-step guide to assist in home removal and engaging with neighbours.

**Note:** The Summary Offences Act 1981 (as amended in 2008) for lower levels of damage, and the Crimes Act 1961 comprise the legal framework for graffiti vandalism enforcement.

The Police will take primary enforcement for Sections 11, 11A and 11B of the Summary Offences Act.

Local Authorities will take primary enforcement and compliance monitoring responsibility for Sections 14A and 14B of the Summary Offences Act.

Police and local authorities to be primarily responsible for enforcing graffiti offences, but the law does not specify a particular agency.

Graffiti enforcement action should not unnecessarily bring children and youth into the formal criminal justice system.

Below: Wellington City Council funded greenwall at Victoria University. Greenwalls serve as an effective barrier to tagging.



# \_\_\_\_\_and finally\_\_\_\_\_

## our partners

### Agency

### Role

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#### Wellington City Council

The Council has a primary role to:

- promptly remove graffiti on Council property
- negotiate agreements with regional property owners
- facilitate community responses to address graffiti
- provide advice to property owners
- manage reporting via the StopTags database and share this information with the Police
- liaise with and assist police on enforcement

It will also work with community groups and agencies working with at risk youth with an aim to educate and reduce graffiti vandalism.

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#### Neighbouring local authorities

Those people who vandalise with graffiti do not recognise Council boundaries. A consistent approach needs to be taken across closely neighbouring councils for a management plan to be effective.

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#### Retailers

Retailers need to comply with legal requirements to not sell spray cans to minors.

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#### Commercial Building Owners/Occupiers

Commercial buildings are a prime target for vandalism. The same levels of intervention need to be taken by building owners for the plan to be effective.

The Council cannot enter private property to address this without the property owner's permission and it is also the property owner's role where possible to address vandalism although the Council will support action.

Property owners need to report incidents of graffiti to increase the effectiveness of enforcement.

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#### Private Home Owners

Private property in key locations including walking routes and properties bordering parks are targeted for vandalism. Fences, garages and street facing buildings in these areas are prime targets. The same levels of intervention need to be taken by different building owners for the plan to be effective.



## Agency

## Role

Private Home Owners

— continued

The Council cannot enter private property to address this without the property owner's permission and it is also the property owner's role where possible to address vandalism although the Council will support action.

Property owners need to report incidents of graffiti to increase the effectiveness of enforcement.

Kiwirail/ Wellington Regional Council

The rail corridor, railway stations, subway/underpasses and trains are prime targets for vandalism.

Utility Providers  
(power/gas, phone, water)

Utility equipment and facilities are convenient spots for vandalism as they are usually unstaffed, in accessible locations and have clear faces to tag.

Schools and Agencies working with  
at-risk youth

Schools provide an opportunity for early intervention and education with youth that are or are likely to undertake this practice. Support for agencies working with at risk youth can assist by providing alternative creative opportunities.

New Zealand Police

The Police have the enforcement role, but can only be effective with robust reporting from property owners.

Below: Artists in front of their work at the Newlands Community Centre 2009.



[Wellington.govt.nz/graffiti](https://www.wellington.govt.nz/graffiti)



Te Menenga Pai Trust creating the Newtown water tank mural.