

GRAFFITI VANDALISM STRATEGY 2008

HASTINGS DISTRICT COUNCIL

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DEFINITION OF GRAFFITI VANDALISM

Graffiti vandalism (graffiti) is commonly understood to be markings that are etched, painted, drawn or spray painted on any surface without the owner's permission. Graffiti has become synonymous with urban street culture and the more crude forms have strong links to youth gang activities. In the Hastings district there are four main types of graffiti, in order of detail: tags, throw-ups, bombs/pieces and burners.

PURPOSE

Hastings District Council's Graffiti Vandalism Strategy (the Strategy) has been developed to coordinate current operations, widen the current approach to graffiti reduction and to endorse initiatives and funding applications.

It is acknowledged that the removal of graffiti alone will not decrease the incidence of graffiti vandalism, thus this Strategy focuses on preventative as well as reactive approaches.

Although the Strategy is a Council document, it aligns with the work of the Keep Hastings Beautiful Trust and acknowledges the efforts of several community organisations.

It is recognised that graffiti is a community issue and must be addressed as such.

CURRENT OPERATIONS

Currently, Hastings District Council does not have an adopted graffiti policy. It does however employ painters, who among other tasks, remove graffiti from Council properties and an Environment Enhancement Officer who coordinates the Keep Hastings Beautiful (KHB) Trust efforts to manage removal of graffiti from private properties. Much of the removal of graffiti on private properties is done by work groups provided by the Department of Corrections. The Environment Enhancement Officer also supplies paint to community groups to remove graffiti in their area.

Other than the education package recently piloted by the Keep Hastings Beautiful Trust, it is fair to say that Council's current response is reactive and is focussed on removal, rather than reducing the incidence of graffiti.

Within Council gaps in coordination have been identified and responsibilities of the KHB Trust and Council are often blurred. Externally, coordination of community groups would benefit from being formalised and improved. Regular liaison and communication between Council and the Police is improving and should be encouraged further.

Currently, Hastings District Council is struggling to deal with the consistently high levels of graffiti.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO GRAFFITI VANDALISM

Central Government has recently acknowledged that graffiti is a national concern and as a result is developing the STOP (Stop Tagging Our Place) Strategy. Although the STOP Strategy is yet to be completed, some initiatives have already been released. These include a proposed amendment to the Summary Offences Bill and funds to support local communities and councils in implementing graffiti reduction initiatives.

THE STRATEGY

Mission

To reduce the incidence and presence of graffiti in the Hastings district.

Themes

There are six themes to the Strategy:

- Reporting and Recording
- Removal
- Prevention
- Enforcement
- Education
- Community

Objectives and Goals

1. To increase the accuracy, quality and quantity of data:

- 1.1 Develop an internal procedure for the recording of graffiti and delegation of removal
- 1.2 Encourage members of the community to report graffiti
- 1.3 Maintain a graffiti database

2. To decrease the presence of graffiti:

- 2.1 Ensure rapid removal of graffiti from Council properties
- 2.2 Encourage rapid removal of graffiti from private properties
- 2.3 Promote community responsibility towards graffiti
- 2.4 Investigate additional resources for graffiti removal

3. To prevent the incidence of graffiti:

- 3.1 Limit access to graffiti implements
- 3.2 Promote and support positive and challenging activities for young people
- 3.3 Utilise Urban Design protocols and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles
- 3.4 Reduce the amount of suitable surfaces for graffiti

4. To support effective policing and a safe environment:

- 4.1 Maintain regular liaison between Council and Police
- 4.2 Encourage targeted Police operations
- 4.3 Encourage appropriate and effective retribution for graffiti vandals

5. To promote community education on graffiti vandalism:

- 5.1 Promote and implement education programmes
- 5.2 Work with the media
- 5.3 Provide the community with graffiti prevention and removal advice

6. To encourage community responsibility and pride:

- 6.1 Build capacity within the community
- 6.2 Encourage community members to take ownership of their local area

ACTION PLAN**Mission: To reduce the incidence and presence of graffiti in the Hastings district**

THEMES	OBJECTIVE	GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
REPORTING AND RECORDING	1. To increase the accuracy, quality and quantity of data	1.1 Develop an internal procedure for the recording of graffiti and delegation of removal	Create a list of all assets on Council land showing which ones are privately owned, which ones are Council owned and what colour they are painted	June 2009
			Ensure distinctions between KHB Trust and Council responsibilities are clearly defined and communicated to Customer Support staff	December 2008
			Ensure adequate information is logged in CRM	April 2009
		1.2 Encourage members of the community to report graffiti	Promote the 0508 phone number and www.nograffiti.co.nz website (see "Education")	Ongoing
			Encourage the community to report the specific tags	Ongoing

THEMES	OBJECTIVE	GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
REPORTING AND RECORDING			Ensure Council officers record/photograph tag before removing it	Ongoing
			Encourage Community Patrols to report new incidences of graffiti	June 2009
			Encourage HDC Security Patrols to report new incidences of graffiti	June 2009
		1.3 Maintain a graffiti database	Develop a graffiti mapping system	April 2009
			Develop a cohesive graffiti database	April 2009
			Identify hotspot areas and recommend long term solutions involving community input	December 2009
REMOVAL	2. To decrease the presence of graffiti	2.1 Ensure rapid removal of graffiti from Council properties	Develop a policy statement including a process and timeframe for graffiti removal	December 2009
		2.2 Encourage rapid removal of graffiti from private properties	Investigate creation of a bylaw or legislation changes to allow Council to enter private property to remove graffiti	December 2009

THEMES	OBJECTIVE	GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
REMOVAL			Ensure "owner approval" forms are accessible	April 2009
			Continue to support the use of Department of Corrections workers for graffiti removal	Ongoing
		2.3 Promote community responsibility towards graffiti	Provide the community with clean-up kits	Ongoing
			Encourage "adopt-a-spot" for willing community groups	December 2009
			Recommend public building owners remove graffiti immediately, particularly off historical buildings.	December 2009
		2.4 Investigate additional resources for graffiti removal	Investigate new graffiti removal products	Ongoing
			Investigate the purchase of another van complete with tools/materials	June 2010
			Investigate the utilisation of Work and Income schemes for employees	December 2009
PREVENTION	3. To Prevent the incidence of graffiti	3.1 Limit access to graffiti implements	Support Central Government's legislation changes	Ongoing

THEMES	OBJECTIVE	GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
PREVENTION		3.2 Promote and support positive and challenging activities for young people	Investigate legal 'tagging' walls	December 2009
			Promote activities that engage and challenge young people	Ongoing
			Trial the promotion of graffiti art initiatives	December 2009
			Create art/mural competitions	December 2009
			Support youth service providers	Ongoing
		3.3 Utilise Urban Design protocols and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles	Support the development of a CPTED Policy	December 2009
			Continue to ensure that CPTED is taken into account in Council projects	December 2009
			Continue to provide close circuit television (CCTV) coverage, regular monitoring of footage, three-yearly reviews and upgrades of CCTV cameras and coverage as required	Ongoing
			Provide property owners with CPTED advice (see "Education")	March 2009
			Conduct regular CPTED audits on known graffiti 'hotspots'	June 2010
			Promote regular lighting audits	June 2010

THEMES	OBJECTIVE	GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
PREVENTION		3.4 Reduce the amount of suitable surfaces for graffiti	Commission local artists to paint murals, reflective of the local community, on public and commercial buildings and ensure rapid repair if vandalised	March 2009
			Advise building owners of paint colours that do not encourage graffiti	March 2009
			Encourage plantings against 'hotspot' walls ie. creepers or prickly bushes	March 2009
			Investigate other graffiti prevention inventions	March 2009
			Lobby for power boxes to be cleaned regularly or for murals to be painted on them	Ongoing
			Encourage businesses to paint their logo/advertising on 'hotspot' walls	March 2009
ENFORCEMENT	4. To support effective policing and a safe environment	4.1 Maintain liaison between Council and Police	Share weekly reports of problem areas and prolific tags	Ongoing
			Maintain regular liaison with Community Constables and the Police Youth Aid section	Ongoing
			Support the Police's Youth Diversion Scheme	Ongoing

THEMES	OBJECTIVE	GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
ENFORCEMENT		4.2 Encourage targeted Police operations	Plan specific operations to target known areas of concern	Ongoing
			Utilise mobile cameras, increase Community Patrol and/or Police presence in the area	Ongoing
		4.4 Encourage appropriate and effective retribution for graffiti vandals	Support the Government's new legislation for tougher penalties	Ongoing
			Investigate the accreditation process to become an approved organisation for facilitating community service for convicted graffiti vandals	June 2009
			Investigate the feasibility of community restorative justice programmes	June 2009
			Attend Family Group and Restorative Justice Conferences	Ongoing
			Provide Police with evidence ie. photos of tags, disposed spray cans	Ongoing
EDUCATION	5. To promote community education on vandalism	5.1 Promote and implement education programmes	Develop an education programme utilising the pilot KHB programme and the Hawke's Bay District Health Board 'health promoting schools' model as a basis	March 2009

THEMES	OBJECTIVE	GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
EDUCATION			Encourage school children to “adopt a spot”	June 2009
			Develop a programme to educate graffiti vandals involving role models	March 2009
		5.2 Work with the media	Develop a media strategy	March 2009
		Promote the No-Graffiti hotline and website – posters/ pamphlets/ newsletters/magnets	March 2009	
		5.3 Provide the community with graffiti prevention and removal advice	Encourage media not to print photos of graffiti vandalism, or as a minimum, to alter the image	March 2009
		Establish regular columns in existing newsletters (ie. Outlook, Neighbourhood Safety, Hastings City Marketing, business associations) for graffiti prevention advice	June 2009	
		Promote the Environmental Enhancement Officer as an advisory contact	Ongoing	
		Include information pamphlet in clean-up pack	Ongoing	
COMMUNITY	6. Encourage community responsibility and pride	6.1 Build capacity with the community	Maintain advice on the KHB and Hastings District Council website	Ongoing

THEMES	OBJECTIVE	GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
COMMUNITY			Facilitate workshops with other agencies and organisations to encourage collaboration	April 2009
			Encourage home owners and retailers to remove graffiti themselves immediately	Ongoing
		6.2 Encourage community members to take ownership of their local area	Encourage community groups to report graffiti	Ongoing
			Encourage community 'clean-up' days	March 2009
			Investigate a 'tidiest street' competition	December 2009
			Promote an 'adopt a street' campaign	December 2009
			Support Keep New Zealand Beautiful week	September (annually)
			Promote the establishment of Neighbourhood Safety groups	Ongoing

Measures

- Number of schools receiving the education programme annually
- Feedback from programmes
- Number of incidences of graffiti
- Amount of graffiti removed
- Annual expenditure on graffiti
- Number of CPTED audits completed annually
- Length of time murals remain un-tagged
- Media responses
- GIS Mapping

APPENDIX A:

GUIDING DOCUMENTS

Local Government Act 2002

The Local Government Act states that the purpose of local government is:

To promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future.

Long Term Council Community Plan - Community Outcomes

Hastings District Council works towards to regional community outcomes. These were developed through consultation with the Hawke's Bay community to demonstrate economic, environmental, cultural and social wellbeing. Of the nine community outcomes, the following are particularly relevant to the Strategy:

- A strong prosperous and thriving economy
- A lifetime of good health and wellbeing
- Supportive, caring and inclusive communities
- Communities that value and promote their unique culture and heritage
- Safe and secure communities
- An environment that is appreciated, protected and sustained for future generations.

Community Plans

Each of the Community Plans: Camberley, Flaxmere, Clive and Whakatu; refer to beautification and increase of community pride. The Flaxmere Community Plan in particular has goals specifically relevant to the Strategy:

- Create and maintain a safe environment:
 - *Adopt a zero tolerance policy towards crime*
 - *Lobby for parks to be designed to reduce crime*
- Promote "Beautiful Flaxmere":
 - *Paint murals on public buildings.*

Youth Connect

Acknowledging that graffiti is often the end product of underlying social issues, this Strategy is supported by the goals and objectives within Youth Connect.

Crime Prevention Plan

The Crime Prevention Plan includes "decrease occurrences of tagging/graffiti" as a recommended strategy to minimise the number of youth who offend and re-offend.

Central Business Districts' Safety Plan

Several actions relate to the goal "to decrease the presence of graffiti" within the Central Business Districts' Safety Plan.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Policy

The need for a CPTED policy is currently been investigated through Project CARV (Curbing Alcohol Related Violence).