

# Service Standards – Streets and Open Spaces Public Realm Enforcement

What you can expect from our Streets and Open Spaces Public Realm services

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This document explains what you can expect of the various public realm enforcement services delivered by Streets and Open Spaces. Whether you are run a business, are an employee, a visitor or a member of the public, we are committed to providing you with an efficient, courteous and helpful service and this document tells you how we aim to do that and what standards you can expect to receive.

## Streets and Open Spaces regulatory services

We deliver regulatory services in a number of areas, including:

<b>Misuse of green and open spaces</b>	<b>Illegal camping</b>	<b>Abandoned and untaxed vehicles</b>
<b>Stray and lost dogs</b>	<b>Dog control</b>	<b>Littering</b>
<b>Fly tipping</b>	<b>Illegal advertising</b>	<b>Domestic and trade duty of care</b>

## How we deliver our services

We make a fundamental contribution to the maintenance and improvement of streets and open spaces, quality of life and wellbeing. Our aims are to:

- Protect the public, businesses and the environment from harm
- Support the local economy to grow and prosper
- Reduce environmental anti-social behaviour

We determine our activities by assessing the needs of local residents and visitors, our business community, and considering the risks that require addressing. We do this through education, engagement and enforcement and through using data and other information available to us and our partners. In this way we ensure our resources are targeted appropriately, in the light of these local needs and of national priorities.

We carry out all our activities in a way that supports those we regulate to comply and grow:

- We ensure that information, guidance and advice are available to help you to meet legal requirements (see [Helping you to get it right](#)).
- We carry out inspections and other activities to check compliance with legal requirements, and we target these checks where we believe they are most needed utilising local intelligence (see [Inspections and other compliance visits](#)).
- We deal proportionately with breaches of the law as set out in our Enforcement Policy, including taking firm enforcement action when necessary (see [Responding to non-compliance](#)).
- We provide a range of services to residents, visitors and businesses, (see [Requests for our service](#)).

Our services will be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the national [Regulators' Code](#).

## **Working with you**

In all your dealings with us you can expect, and will receive, an efficient and professional service. Our officers will:

- Be courteous and polite
- Always identify themselves by name in dealings with you, and provide you with contact details
- Seek to gain an understanding of how your business operates (if applicable) and/or any personal mitigating circumstances
- Provide details of how to discuss any concerns you may have with the service received
- Agree timescales, expectations and preferred methods of communication with you
- Ensure that you are kept informed of progress on any outstanding issues.

We recognise that businesses visitors, and residents will receive advice and inspections from other organisations, and we will do our best to work with them to ensure that you receive the best service.

## ***Helping you to get it right***

We want to work with you to help you to be compliant and successful, whether as a business, individual or household, and it is important to us that you feel able to come to us for advice when you need it. We won't take enforcement action just because you tell us that you have a problem.

We make some information and guidance on meeting legal requirements available on our website at <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/street-and-park-maintenance>

Where you need advice that is tailored to your particular needs and circumstances we will:

- Discuss with you what is required to achieve compliance
- Provide advice that supports compliance and that can be relied on
- Provide clear advice that can be easily understood and implemented
- Distinguish legal requirements from suggested good practice
- Ensure that any verbal advice you receive is confirmed in writing if requested
- Acknowledge good practice and compliance.

## ***Fines and charges***

Charges are made by the City Council in relation to statutory duties that are undertaken by our Public Realm service. Charges set by the council are reviewed on an annual basis. Listed below are the current statutory charges levied through our Streets and Open Spaces Service:

- Charges to the owners of stray dogs that are collected by the dog warden. Full details of the fees, including statutory charges, that apply are available at <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/lost-and-stray-dogs>
- Statutory charges for abandoned vehicles will apply to the registered keepers wanting to claim their vehicle(s). Details of the statutory charges for abandoned vehicles are detailed in [The Removal, Storage and Disposal of Vehicles \(Prescribed Sums and Charges\) Regulations 2008](#)
- Fixed penalty notices can be issued to individuals and/or businesses as an alternative to prosecution, and these notices do not have a statutory right of appeal. The council operates a zero tolerance approach when it comes to environmental crime. Details of how to make a payment and frequently asked questions can be found at <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/fixed-penalty-notice>. Fixed penalty notices are reviewed in accordance with legislative changes.

### ***Inspections and other compliance visits***

We monitor and support regulatory compliance in a number of different ways including through inspections, advisory visits and complaint investigations. These visits will always be based on an assessment of risk – we won't visit without a reason.

When we visit you, our officers will:

- Explain the reason and purpose of the visit
- Carry their identification card at all times, and present it on request when visiting your premises
- Exercise discretion in front of your customers and staff
- Have regard to your approach to compliance, and use this information to inform future interactions with you
- Provide information, guidance and advice to support you in meeting your statutory obligations, if required
- Ensure that any verbal advice you receive is confirmed in writing if requested

### ***Responding to non-compliance***

**Where we identify any failure to meet legal obligations, we will respond proportionately, taking account of the circumstances, in line with our [Enforcement Policy](#).**

**We will deal proportionately with breaches of the law as set out in our Enforcement Policy, available at <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/enforcement-policy> including taking firm enforcement action when necessary**

Where we require you to take action to remedy any failings, we will:

- Explain the nature of the non-compliance
- Discuss what is required to achieve compliance, taking into account your circumstances
- Clearly explain any advice, actions required or decisions that we have taken
- Agree timescales that are acceptable to both you and us, in relation to any actions required
- Provide in writing details of statutory rights to appeal

- Explain what will happen next
- Keep in touch with you, where required, until the matter is resolved

## **Requests for our services**

In responding to requests for our services, including requests for advice and complaints about breaches of the law, we will:

- Acknowledge your request within 7 working days
- Tell you when you can expect a substantive response
- Seek to fully understand the nature of your request
- Explain what we may or may not be able to do, so that you know what to expect
- Keep you informed of progress throughout our involvement
- Inform you of the outcome as appropriate

## **Our Team**

We have a dedicated team of officers who have the appropriate qualifications, skills and experience to deliver the services provided. We have arrangements in place to ensure the ongoing professional competency of all officers.

Where specialist knowledge is required in an area outside of our expertise we will call on neighbouring authorities and other regulatory organisations, for additional support as necessary.

## **Working with others**

We work closely with other regulatory services including Cambridgeshire Police, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue, Conservators of the River Cam, Environment Agency and Cambridgeshire County Council and this enables us to deliver a more 'joined up' and streamlined service.

## **Having your say**

### ***Complaints and appeals***

Where we take enforcement action, there is often a statutory right to appeal. We will always tell you about this at the appropriate time.

We are always willing to discuss with you the reasons why we have acted in a particular way, or asked you to act in a particular way.

We manage complaints about our service, or about the conduct of our officers, through Cambridge City Council's Corporate Complaints Policy. Details are available at <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/compliments-complaints-and-suggestions> or by telephone on 01223 457000.

### ***Feedback***

We value your input to help us ensure our service is meeting your needs. We would like to hear from you whether your experience of us has been good or in need of improvement. This helps us to ensure we keep doing the right things and make changes where we need to. We use customer satisfaction surveys from time to time but we would welcome your feedback at any time. You can provide feedback using the [contact details](#).

## **How to contact us**

You can contact us by:

Telephone: 01223 458282

Email: [enviocrime@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:enviocrime@cambridge.gov.uk)

Web: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/street-and-park-maintenance>

By post: Environmental Crime Team, Streets and Open Spaces, Cambridge City Council, PO Box 700, Cambridge CB1 0JH

We will seek to work with you in the most appropriate way to meet your individual needs. We can make information available in different formats, and have access to translation and interpretation services.

If you contact us we will ask you for your name and contact details to enable us to keep in touch with you as the matter progresses. We treat all contact with the service in confidence unless you have given us permission to share your details with others as part of the matter or there is an operational reason why we need to do so.

Personal data will be managed in accordance with the details set out on the councils [Data Protection](#) webpage.

**Dated:** September 2021

**Name:** Wendy Johnston

**Job title:** Community Engagement and Enforcement Manager

**Review Due:** September 2023