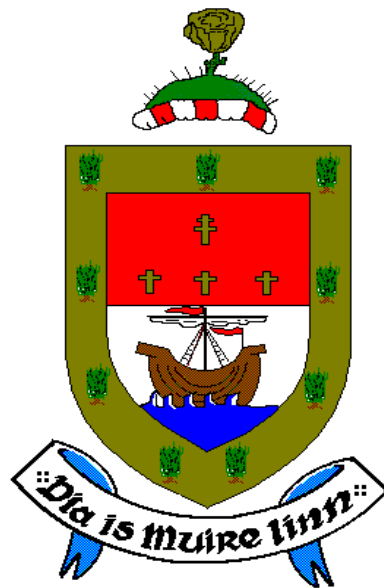




Litter Management Plan

2011 – 2014



Mayo County Council



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***Further information relating to Litter
Management in Mayo is available from:***

***Environment Section,
Mayo Co. Council,
The Mall,
Castlebar,
Co. Mayo***

Telephone: 094 – 90 24444

Litter hotline: 1800 - 400 256

Email: Environment@mayococo.ie

***[http://www.mayococo.ie/en/Services/Environment/
ComplaintsandEnforcement/](http://www.mayococo.ie/en/Services/Environment/ComplaintsandEnforcement/)***



1.0 Background to Mayo County Council Litter Management Plan 2011 to 2014

1.1 Introduction

A new Litter Management Plan has been drafted to supersede the Plan of 2007 to 2009 for Mayo, as required under sections 10 to 13 of the Litter Pollution Acts, 1997 to 2009.

The control and prevention of litter pollution in Mayo is an ongoing challenge, encompassing an array of measures and involving all members of the community. Historically, litter pollution was regarded as a nuisance controlled and managed by local authorities, but in recent years it has been recognised as the responsibility of each and every person in Mayo, including visitors to and investors in the county.

Mayo although one of the largest counties in Ireland has a low population density with a population of 123, 839 inhabitants (CSO, 2006). The principal urban centres are Castlebar (population of 10,655), Ballina (population of 10, 056) and Westport (population of circa 5,163) and the smaller towns, Claremorris, Ballinrobe, Belmullet and Swinford. The present review focuses on the entire county, with the exception of Ballina, Castlebar and Westport who are the litter authorities for their areas.

All surveys and inspections which were undertaken throughout the 2007 to 2009 period have been sought and analysed for the sole purpose of improving the current litter status in County Mayo. The National Litter Pollution Monitoring System, An Taisce National Tidy Towns Awards, Foundation of Environmental Education (FEE) Green Schools and Blue Flag Awards and Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) Anti-Litter League focus, either wholly or to a large extent, on the litter status of all aspects of our environment and therefore have played integral roles in identifying successful litter management strategies, as well as targeting sectors which necessitate improvement.

To conclude, this Plan again emphasises the great need for engaging community involvement and stresses the pivotal role that private individuals, business community, elected representatives, students, voluntary organisations, NGOs, an Garda Síochana and all local authority staff play in the effective and successful management of litter pollution in Mayo and a national concentrated campaign for litter awareness.



1.2 Litter and the Law

The Litter Pollution Act, 1997 was enacted to replace the rather restrictive Litter Act, 1982. Following initial promulgation of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997, amendments were made to the Act by the Waste Management (Amendment) Act, 2001 and Part IV of the Protection of the Environment Act, 2003. Additionally, the Litter Pollution (Increased Notice Payment Order) 2007 resulted in the substitution of Section 28 (1) (b) of the 1997 Act.

Under the Litter Pollution Acts, 1997 to 2009, litter is defined as;

'a substance or object, whether or not intended as waste that, when deposited in a place other than a litter receptacle or other place lawfully designated for the deposit, is or is likely to become unsightly, deleterious, nauseous or unsanitary, whether by itself or with any other such substance or object, and regardless of its size or volume or the extent of the deposit',

and the responsibility for litter control and prevention is placed on all members of the public in addition to local authority personnel; including enforcement staff and outdoor employees.

Members of the public are required by law to keep premises (footpaths, pavements and gutters) free of litter. Owners of private premises must ensure that litter is not visible from a public place. Litter also includes posters and signs for the purpose of advertisements which must only be placed with prior authorisation and for limited periods in many cases. The careless discarding of dog litter is prohibited and cigarette butts, chewing gum and items of paper, cardboard and packaging must be either placed in a public street bin or in one's municipal waste receptacle, which is presented for collection by an authorised waste collection permit holder.

Part III of the Litter Pollution Acts, 1997 to 2009 focuses solely on the functions and responsibilities of local authorities in the area of litter control and prevention while



in Sections 10 to 13 attention is given to the reserved function of a local authority in preparing and implementing a litter management plan in respect of its functional area.

To conclude, leaving or throwing litter in a public place is an offence which may be subject to an 'on-the-spot' fine of €150 and a maximum fine of €3,000 through the courts (conviction on indictment for litter offences carries a maximum fine of €125,000). A person convicted of a litter offence may be required by the Court to pay the Council's costs and expenses of investigating the offence and in bringing the prosecution.

1.3 Structure of the Litter Management Plan 2011 to 2014

The Litter Management Plan is presented as follows. Section 2.0 focuses on the national litter statistics, examining the latest National Litter Pollution Monitoring System results of 2009 (DoEHLG, 2010). Some data are compared and contrasted with 2008 and analyses have been performed on the main constituents of litter, as well as the principal causative factors.

Section 3.0 concentrates on litter in Mayo, describing current strategies employed to prevent and control litter pollution in the county. It delves into the incentives deployed to encourage litter prevention and promote litter awareness on a national and local level, examining ongoing projects and endeavours, and discussing the successes and benefits of such schemes.

The subsequent section explores the previous Litter Management Plan of 2007 to 2009, looking at specific targets set and examining the performance of the Plan, identifying the objectives achieved as well as challenges encountered. It also reveals a number of additional projects undertaken; surveys, multi-disciplinary clean-ups and other ventures / promotional endeavours.

In Section 5.0, the Plan illustrates the main objectives to be achieved for the 2011 to 2014 period and the specific measures deployed to succeed, while the succeeding sections briefly describe the consultation process for adopting a Litter Management Plan and conclude with a current list of Bring Centres in Mayo and one example of a completed bin survey undertaken in summer 2008.

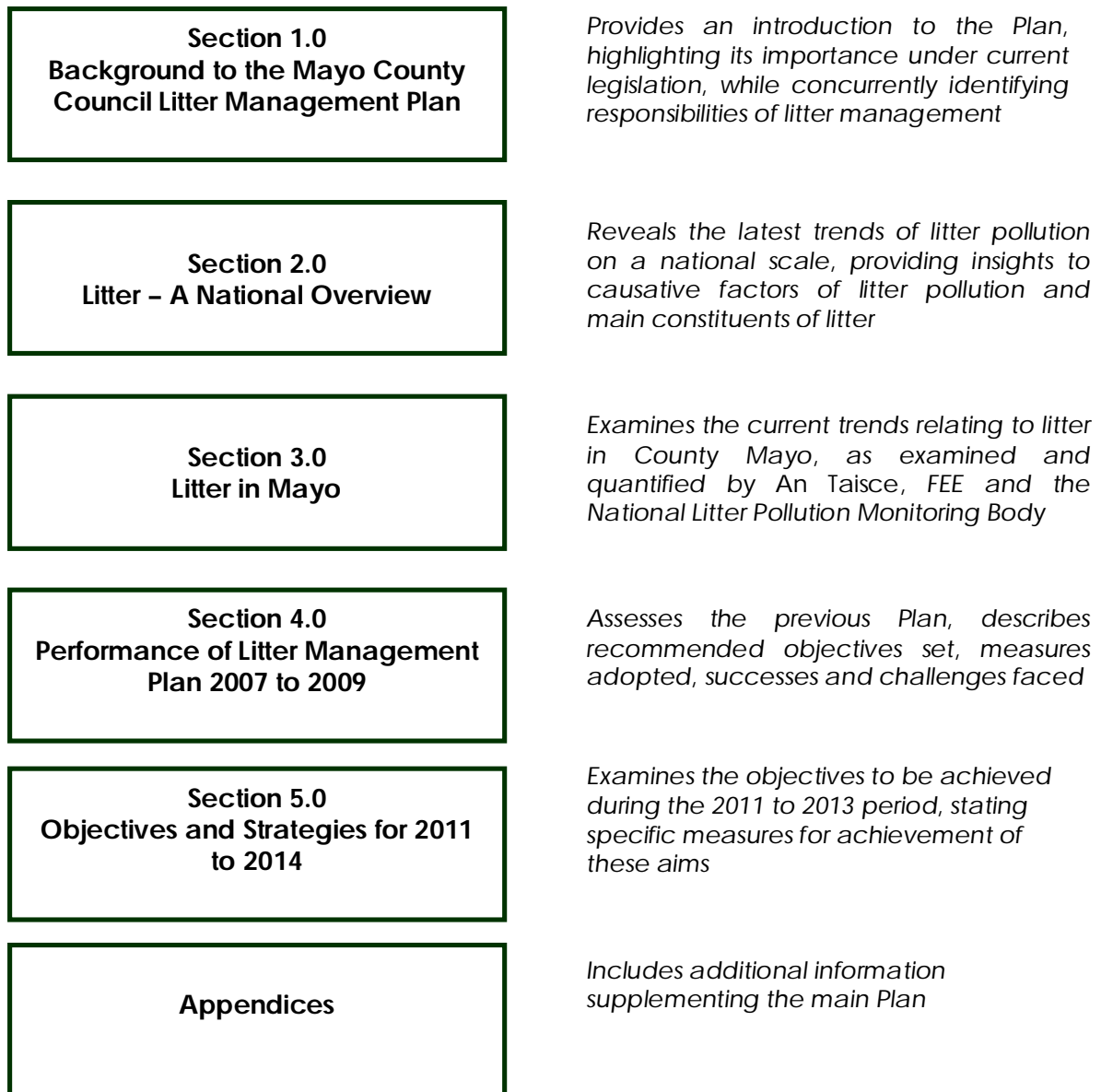


Fig. 1.1 Structure of Mayo County Council Litter Management Plan 2011 to 2014

2.0 Litter – A National Overview



2.1 Litter in Ireland

The national situation regarding litter has been monitored and quantified in detail by the National Litter Pollution Monitoring Body (NLPMB) under the auspices of the DoEHLG following a national litter conference in 1999 and the realisation of the need for a litter monitoring system and a patrolling body to coordinate all local authorities, in addition to serving in an advisory and liaison role. Specifically, the function of the NLPMB is to enable local authorities to generate accurate and reliable statistics relating to litter pollution levels in each functional area. Data are analysed and presented in readily accessible format, and each local authority can draw contrasts and comparisons with the national trends in litter pollution.

Most recent publications from the NLPMB include the System Survey Results of 2009 which identify, using a Litter Pollution Index (LPI) from 1 to 5 to describe the extent of litter pollution as follows:

- 1 unpolluted or litter free;
- 2 slightly polluted;
- 3 moderately polluted;
- 4 significantly polluted, and
- 5 grossly polluted.

Table 2.1 Summary table illustrating all data for the most recent 2009 survey, with percentages of locations at LP1 through to LP5 inclusive, contrasted with the data of the previous year of 2008

Litter Pollution					
Index	LP1	LP2	LP3	LP4	LP5
Status description	Unpolluted / litter free	Slightly polluted	Moderately polluted	Significantly polluted	Grossly polluted
Percentage (%) 2009	6.8	63.5	25.7	3.7	0.3
Percentage (%) 2008	6.6	62.6	26.6	3.8	0.5

The above data are obtained from over 4 858 litter pollution surveys undertaken during the year by staff from 70 local authorities or over 78 % of all local authorities in Ireland and illustrate the sheer volume of data collated in addition to confirming that the status



of 2009 is very favourably contrasted even to the previous year. Almost 7 % of locations surveyed were deemed litter free or unpolluted by litter, while only 0.3 % of areas were described as grossly polluted (heavily littered). Regarding the slightly polluted areas are classified when only small items of litter are present and are deemed 'not visually intrusive', whereas a moderately polluted area is one where larger litter items are present which can be regarded as visually intrusive. A significantly polluted litter status is assigned to an area with large litter items present throughout the survey area. Worryingly, this status represents 3.7 % of all locations surveyed in Ireland, but a reducing trend in contrast to the 3.8 % assigned in 2008, and 4.6 % and 7.4 % in 2007 and 2006 respectively.

2.2 Main constituents of Litter

The constituents of litter in Ireland have been examined with a view to determining the composition of the litter for the purpose of mitigation measures in addition to campaigns to target the prevention of such littering. For example, if most litter items are cigarette-related litter, the target group for an anti-litter campaign would be smokers only, whereas an item such a sweet wrapper could originate from any member of the population. The composition of litter was investigated for all local authority functional areas during 2009 and a breakdown of all constituents was generated. It was seen that, similar to 2008, the main item discarded indiscriminately was found was cigarette-related, estimated at 45.4 % of all litter items identified. This was followed by food-related litter, deemed to account for over 29.2 % while a combination of sweet-related litter, packaging, paper litter, deleterious litter, miscellaneous litter, large and plastic litter items accounted for more than 25.4 % of all litter items dropped. Almost incredibly, cigarette-related litter represents almost half of litter items identified throughout the country, constituting cigarette butts, cigarette boxes, in addition to matches. It is worth stating that one cigarette butt takes approximately from 10 months to 12 years to decompose, while some would argue that the filter, principally composed of acetate, never breaks down completely. Cigarettes are not biodegradable, are polluting material and are a serious litter nuisance. Some sources have gone so far as to have said that cigarette butt litter is the world's greatest environmental litter problem



with approximately 4.3 trillion cigarette butts discarded onto roads, pavements, beaches, parks, forests and in waterways every year.

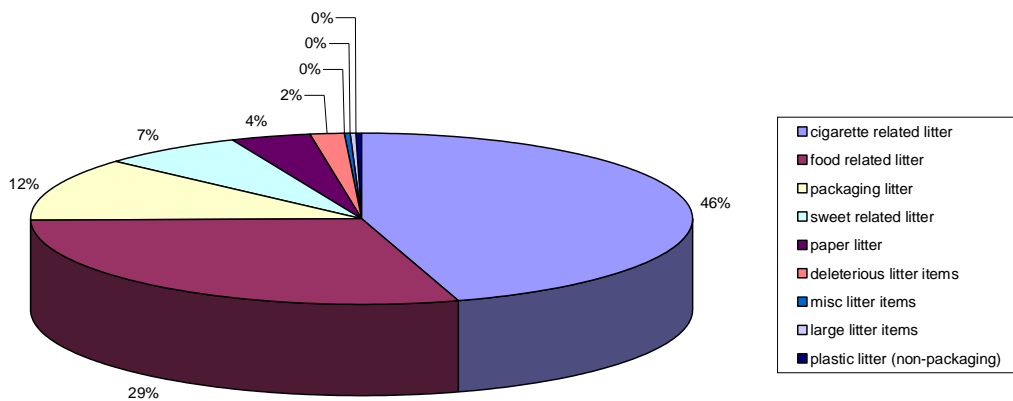


Figure 2.1 Principal constituents of litter into categories – 2009 data

2.3 Principal Causes of Litter Pollution

The causative factors of litter pollution have not demonstrated any noticeable change since the initiation of quantitative and qualitative monitoring by the NLPMB. While there may be spatial contrasts between local authority areas – Dublin local authorities might illustrate problems at bus stops and at bus / train stations whereas County Councils outside the capital would not observe such issues; bring banks are examples of problem areas in these constituencies in addition to leisure / entertainment venues, the single causative factor of litter pollution is from passing pedestrians which accounted for 38.3 % of litter pollution in Ireland in 2009.

Additional causative factors established include passing motorists at 18.3 %, retail outlets at 11.0 %. Unfortunately, most causative factors have shown increases in 2009 in



comparison to 2008, with litter from schools / school children at 5.4 % in 2009 (5.1 % in 2008), fly-tipping at 1.1 % in 2009 (0.9 % in 2008) and bus stops at 3.5 % in 2009 (3.3 % in 2008). Exceptions, however, were also noted which included gathering points at 7.7 % in 2009 (8.1 % in 2008), fast food outlets at 5.2 % in 2009 (5.4 % in 2008) and places of leisure and entertainment at 4.6 % in 2009 (5.0 % in 2008). The most recent data relating to litter causative factors are shown in Figure 2.2.

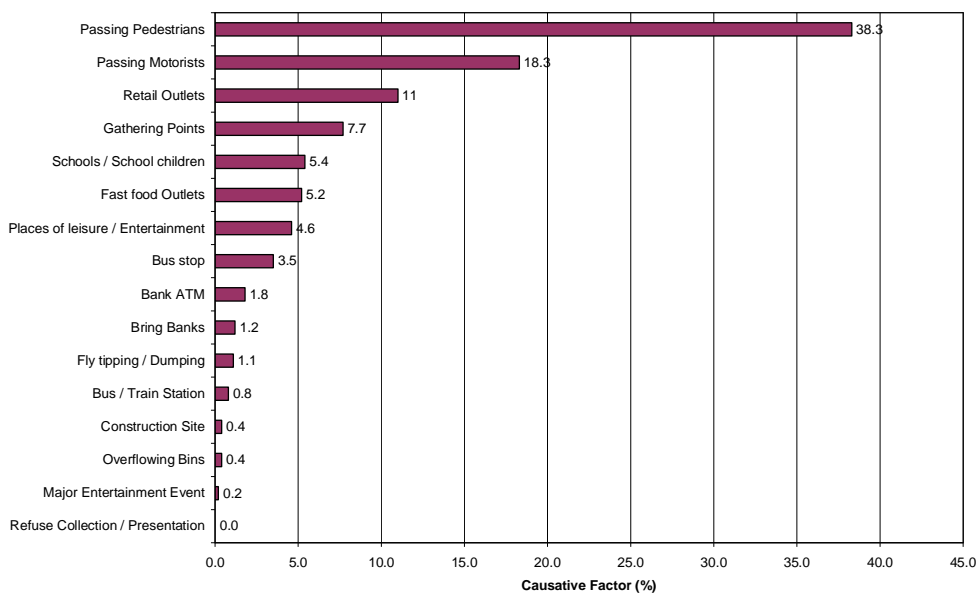


Figure 2.2 Causative factors of litter pollution across all Local Authorities – 2009 data

3.0 Litter in Mayo

3.1 National Tidy Towns Awards

Mayo has been a very successful participant in the National Tidy Towns Awards promoted and funded by An Taisce. In 2009, a total of nine prizes were awarded to Mayo towns and villages, not least a Gold Medal Award for Ireland’s Tidiest Large Town in Ireland, a Regional Award for the West and a County Award all of which were awarded to Westport. Additionally, 2009 saw Mayo prize-winners in many other categories including a Bronze Medal Award received by Murrisk, a County Award to Aughagower



and Murrisk, an Endeavour Award to Polranny and two Special Awards to Bangor Erris and Market Square and Hopkins Road, Castlebar; specifically presented as a Gum Litter Taskforce Award and an Architectural Award respectively.

In 2008, an even greater sense of achievement was merited. Westport were awarded the National Award for the Tidiest Town in Ireland and also secured five other victories including a Gold Medal, Regional, County and two Special Awards. Four additional towns were recognised in other categories which altogether contributed to a total of 13 prizes.

For Mayo, the 2007 Tidy Towns Competition was important in recognising the diversity of projects and awards presented. Special Awards which included 'Best Bring Bank Award', 'Building a Bilingual Society Award' and 'Notice Nature Biodiversity Award' were presented to Mayo recipients including Partry, Eachleim and the Rosmurrevagh Dunes at Mulranny. In total, 11 awards were accepted for Mayo achievements during the year.

While the National Tidy Towns Awards are presented for general appearance of towns, cities, villages and other areas, the main criteria on which judgement takes place include overall developmental approach, the built environment, landscaping, wildlife and natural amenities, tidiness, residential areas, roads, streets and back areas, general impression and litter control. While litter control is deemed an important criterion in its own right and worth a total of 50 of a maximum of 400 marks, it is also identified as playing an integral role in the attainment of the total score, since litter is taken into account when the residential areas, tidiness, general impression and roads, streets and back areas criteria are assessed.

To conclude, the successes achieved in the National Tidy Towns Awards in recent years have been directly and ultimately due to the efforts undertaken to mitigate litter pollution throughout Mayo.

3.2 Green School Programme



The Environment Section of Mayo County Council, particularly the Environmental Awareness Officers have been closely involved with primary and secondary school students and teachers in an advisory and supportive role for the purpose of acknowledging whole school action for the environment.

The Eco-Schools programme is an international scheme under the responsibility of FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education), a non-profit organisation with the principal aim of promoting sustainable development through environmental education: formal school education, training of staff and general awareness-raising. FEE certifies school achievements of environmental education and management standards by awarding them the Green Flag. Currently the programme is being implemented by 46 delegations in 43 countries around the world, involving 27,000 schools, 6,000,000 students, 400,000 teachers and 4,000 local authorities. In Ireland, this long-term programme is managed by *An Taisce* and over 3,459 primary, secondary and special schools in Ireland (> 80 % of all Irish schools) are currently participating in the programme while 2,049 schools have been awarded the Green Flag. Currently, there are 176 schools registered for the Green Schools in Mayo with 123 having been awarded the prestigious Green Flag.

While criteria met for achieving Green Flag status include four principal themes of *Litter & Waste, Energy, Water* and *Travel*. The *Litter & Waste* theme is vital and recognised as a substantial environmental challenge. Furthermore, the *Litter & Waste* theme is the first in the sequence of four themes which must be completed in order to achieve or retain a Green Flag.

3.3 Blue Flag Beaches

Another incentive to promote environmental awareness and mitigate litter pollution is the Blue Flag Beach campaign, again an eco-label award promoted and funded by FEE and in Ireland by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

In 2009, 2808 beaches and 650 marinas were awarded the Blue Flag internationally. In all, 41 countries have fully implemented the Blue Flag Programme throughout the world.



Nationally, there are presently 74 blue flag beaches and two marinas in Ireland. With one of the longest coastlines of the country, Mayo has maximised its Blue Flags at 13. While the Blue flag award focuses mainly on water quality, provision of recycling areas and lifeguard patrols, litter management is also a very important element and adequate litter receptacles, appropriate bin emptying and other active litter management measures serve to contribute to the overall aesthetic appearance of a beach.

3.4 National Litter Pollution Monitoring System - Mayo

The National Litter Pollution Monitoring System is an innovative method developed by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and TES Consulting Engineers to enable local authorities to manage litter pollution in a systematic, structured manner. The information gathered provides essential data to facilitate decision making in relation to litter management at local, regional and national levels. Using a specially designed GIS application each local authority's functional area is mapped and then surveyed annually using Litter Pollution Surveys and Litter Quantification Surveys. The data produced by the System allow local authorities to gauge:

- the extent and severity of litter pollution in their functional area;
- the types, most likely sources and causes of litter;
- the changes in litter levels from location to location and over time;
- the location of litter black-spots, and
- the impact of new anti-litter measures.

Specifically, Mayo County Council has been participating in this programme for over 10 years.

The results in 2009 for the County were as follows:

Litter was broadly made up of packaging 50% cigarettes 35% and food 15%. Compared to the results of other county councils the survey showed that in all areas of litter Mayo



County Council were lower than the average but substantially high in the packaging items category.

4.0 Performance of Litter Management Plan 2007 to 2009

4.1 Review of 2007 to 2009 Litter Management Plan

The Mayo County Council Litter Management Plan of 2007 to 2009 set a programme of seven measures for the control, alleviation and prevention of litter pollution in Mayo. Specific objectives regarding to management of litter in Mayo were not, at the time of publication, described in detail but one main aspiration of reducing, controlling and preventing litter pollution was set. It was recognised that litter pollution is the responsibility of all; it is not merely regarded as an enforcement or active control function of the local authority. The measures described encompassed all members of the community and included *inter alia* voluntary, active control and enforcement measures.

In order to focus on the seven main measures and achieve the principal objective, namely to alleviate, control and prevent litter pollution insofar as possible, approximately 30 initiatives were proposed for the 2007 to 2009 period. It was identified that of these initiatives, many were already being addressed and undertaken, but the primary goal of the 2007 to 2009 Plan was to maintain and supplement the existing initiatives, in addition to improving performance by inclusion of additional proposals and ventures.

The following table illustrates the seven measures proposed in the previous Plan and provides an insight into the proposed initiatives and proposals established to achieve the ultimate goal; to alleviate, control and prevent litter pollution. Where the proposed initiatives were already established, a resolution was made to continue with these initiatives and improve or supplement them whenever necessary and realistically achievable.

Table 4.1 Litter control, alleviation and prevention measures and initiatives proposed for the 2007 to 2009 period



Litter alleviation, control and prevention objectives	Proposed litter control, alleviation and prevention measures
1 Public awareness and advisory measures	Circulation of Environment Newsletter
	Promotion of Litter projects, information and legislation on www.mayococo.ie
	Advertisement of litter projects, information and legislation by local media; press, radio etc.
	Posting of signage to promote litter legislation information where appropriate
	Circulation of litter advisory letters as deemed appropriate
2 Youth Education Measures	Promotion of Green School Award
	Promotion of additional young persons' litter projects
3. Community and Voluntary Group Cooperative Measures	Anti-litter Awareness funding and support
	Promotion of Cleaner Community Awards (Best-Kept School, Best-Kept Burial Ground, Best-Kept Housing Estate, Environmental Endeavour Award, Recycling / Environmental Slogan Competition and 'Adopt a Mile' Competition) and Litter Action League
4. Partnership & Consultative Measures / Planning	Support and cooperation with the National Litter Pollution Monitoring Body
	Support Connaught Waste Management
5. Enforcement Measures	Employment of additional litter wardens
	Issue of litter fines and prosecution of litter offenders when sufficient evidence is available
	Deployment of efficient litter complaints medium / public complaints system



	Advertisement of online and telephone complaints systems in the public domain
	Introduction of litter pollution by-laws
6. Active Control Measures	Continuation of efficient street cleaning and emptying of litter receptacles in all areas
	Review of town and area litter control regime
	Undertaking of a bin audit in Mayo
	Undertaking of a pilot study of compartmentalised bin in Mayo town
7. Miscellaneous Measures	Maintenance of Blue Flag beaches
	Support of Tidy Towns / voluntary groups
	Continuation of Mayo County Council staff litter education and advice
	Establishment of Litter Prevention Board within Mayo County Council

4.2 Initiatives undertaken

In the 2007 to 2009 period, litter control and prevention was indeed a priority of Mayo County Council. The proposed initiatives were examined and the three-year plan welcomed the continuing litter awareness projects in addition to the strict enforcement of litter legislation, enthusiastic community involvement and much-deserved successes of the county in both local and national competitions.

The succeeding section will examine each proposed initiative and describe the success of each individual task.

Public Awareness and Advice



Firstly, the Public Awareness and Advice aspects of the previous Plan have been extremely successful. Every effort is always made to educate and advise individuals, elected representatives, voluntary organisations and students on every aspect of the environment, not least on litter. Detailed advice is readily available by qualified staff that may provide direct advice by phone, email or letter. Furthermore, more general advice and information on environmental and litter matters is available at the website of Mayo County Council www.mayococo.ie and in the main County Council building in Castlebar, in addition to area offices throughout the county. Other media are used for the purpose of litter information including local newspapers and radio, and also the cinema theatres are on occasions utilised as a medium to highlight litter awareness. In addition, advisory letters are directed to appropriate companies intermittently and litter legislation signs are posted at identified black spots, urging the public to be mindful of litter prevention and informing them of fines and possible prosecutions.

Since gathering points and entertainment events have previously been mentioned as causative factors of litter throughout the country as well as in Mayo, gatherings of people at bonfires in June and October are just two examples when enforcement staff among others are mindful that awareness and advice at these times is crucial.

Youth Education

Youth education measures are vital in the bid to control, alleviate and prevent litter pollution. The students of the present will be responsible for the environment in the future and education has been cited as one of the most important tools in tackling litter problems. Students are continually advised on the importance of preventing litter, segregation of waste and the significance of maintaining a litter-free environment. Projects to involve young people are ongoing and include photograph exhibitions, poster competitions and other creative and imaginative endeavours which captured the attention of younger members of the community.

The aforementioned Green School Programme is just one such example of what may be achieved with the work and cooperation of students when education, support and advice is provided by Mayo County Council. With a total of 123 Green Flags flying in Mayo, this county has an enviable record when compared with the national count of 2,049.



Community and voluntary group cooperation

Cooperation with voluntary groups within the community has, and continues to reap many rewards. Prime examples of competitions held annually by Mayo County Council which promote a sense of community involvement include the Cleaner Community Awards (now in its 20th year in existence) and Litter Action League. Firstly, the Cleaner Community Awards encompass a range of contests such as the Best-Kept School, Best-Kept Burial Ground, Best-Kept Housing Estate, Environmental Endeavour Award, Recycling / Environmental Slogan Competition and 'Adopt a Mile' Competition. The awards are designed to include all members of the community; primary and secondary school students, residents' associations, retired members of the community while the 'Adopt a Mile' competition specifically targets post-primary school students who wish to undertake clean-ups of a stretch of road / footpath not less than 1 mile in length. The Litter Action League, initiated in 2003, incorporates approximately 30 communities competing against each other in a tournament-style competition. Groups include large towns (group A), smaller towns of 500 to 1000 inhabitants (group B), large villages (groups C) and smaller villages / communities (group D) with two eventual semi-final winners in a final competition, prizes for which are generally presented at a ceremony in the latter months of the year. These competitions are examined and reviewed periodically, in an attempt to improve and enhance the competition in any way possible.

More generally, residents associations, voluntary committees and interested individuals become involved in organised clean-ups of housing estates, public parks, schools and burial grounds, keeping them litter-free and maintaining their overall appearance. To encourage and to express appreciation, an Awards Ceremony is held as an annual event with monetary prizes which further incentivise involvement. Cleaning items such as gloves, litter pickers and refuse sacks are available from Mayo County Council and funding is made available for cleaning endeavours whenever possible, in addition to free collection during April when a voluntary organisation registers with *An Taisce* 'National Spring Clean'. The Spring Clean Campaign was an initiative of Mayo County Council which was adopted nationally from the Council's Cleaner Community Campaign.



Partnership and Consultation / Planning

On the subject of partnership and consultation with national and regional bodies, Mayo County Council aims to continue a close relationship with the National Litter Pollution Monitoring Body, providing invaluable data whenever requested and updating data when new information becomes available. Mayo County Council has close ties with the Connaught Waste Management Group (Connaught Waste) and as a nominated authority under the Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations, 2007 and Waste Management (Collection Permit) (Amendment) Regulations, 2008 Mayo County Council is responsible for the issuing, review and monitoring of permits for the collection of waste in Connaught in addition to a number of multi-region waste collection permits. Waste facility permits and certificates of registration are also issued, reviewed and monitored by Mayo County Council under the Waste Management (Facility Permit and Registration) Regulations, 2007 and Waste Management (Facility Permit and Registration)(Amendment) Regulations, 2008.

While previously discussed in Section 3.4, the participation of Mayo County Council with the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System is a high priority in the sharing of information and the contribution of data from surveys utilising software customised by the LGCSB (Local Government Computer Services Board) and the DoEHLG. Mayo County Council participates annually in the highly detailed litter monitoring system and administrative, litter wardens, GIS and other technical staff play their roles.

Litter Quantification and **Litter Pollution** surveys are both undertaken; the former with the aim of identifying the type and origin of each individual piece of litter in a 50 m stretch of road or footpath surveyed within a functional area of Mayo County Council, while with the latter the determinants are the severity and extent of the litter present. Mayo County Council is also responsible for submitting a report for each survey undertaken to the NLPMB (National Litter Pollution Monitoring Body) on the principal findings, in addition to the continuous liaison with the Monitoring Body on items such as work timetables as well as an advisory role to local authorities.

Enforcement



The issue of enforcement of litter legislation is instrumental in the management of litter pollution. Currently three environmental enforcement officers enforce environmental legislation in Mayo, of which litter is only one priority. In 2009 five full time and part time litter wardens were employed by Mayo County Council. In addition to three Environmental Enforcement officers who also enforce litter legislation. The number of fines issued in the past 3 years and the % paid is as follows:

Year	Litter Fines Issued	% Paid
2007	190	40%
2008	160	48%
2009	227	55%

The increased percentage of fines paid is due to improved protocols for detection and evidence management.

All technical environmental staff are authorised officers, empowered to issue litter fines to any person. As stated in a previous section, the population of Mayo is approximately 100,000 (excluding populations of towns not included in the current plan) and the employment of additional enforcement personnel has been topical for some time. Unfortunately, the current economic downturn is likely to prevent any such new posts for the foreseeable future.

Litter fines and prosecutions made under the Litter Pollution Acts, 1997 to 2009 increased significantly during 2007 to 2009. Members of the public have at all times been encouraged to report cases of littering and inappropriate waste disposal. An online Complaints System, free litter hotline (**1800 - 400 256**) and the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database, launched in early 2009, have resulted in more efficient and accurate policing of litter offenders in addition to maintaining a reliable record for the purpose of statistical analyses of county litter and reporting trends.

To date, litter by-laws have not been introduced, but with improvements in litter control evident in national, regional and local competitions and surveys, it was deemed superfluous to introduce new legislation which may not be entirely necessary or enforceable at present.

Active Control



Active control measures encompass routine street cleaning, bin emptying and general maintenance of outdoor areas by Mayo County Council staff. Currently, different maintenance regimes are in operation in different areas, some involving automatic street sweepers, while other towns and villages utilise more customary methods of cleaning using brushes and shovels. While busier towns and villages necessitate daily cleaning, other areas may be maintained on a less frequent basis. The regime is at the discretion of the town or area engineer, and the general consensus from a survey undertaken was that the current cleaning regimes are successful and adequate.

During the summer months of 2008, a bin audit was undertaken by a number of third level students on placement with Mayo County Council. In a bid to identify problematic areas and to evaluate the current trends of litter pollution in Mayo, a concise project produced a good deal of raw data on litter-free towns and villages, the examination of the *person: bin* ratios and its potential contribution towards a less littered environment in addition to the most preferable litter receptacle to prevent wind-blown litter or tampering by animals were all investigated for 19 towns and villages throughout Mayo.

Principal findings from the research included the conclusion that the location and type of litter receptacles were paramount in the control of litter pollution; a larger number of bins were not always reflected in the litter status of an area. One town which had 10 bins for a population of circa 1,000 was assigned a 'good' or 'litter-free' status, while a second example included a town which was designated a 'poor' status and had a 34:1 *person: bin* ratio. Obviously, clean ups by local authority personnel and others would contribute significantly to the overall appearance of a vicinity. Bin surveys were undertaken at different times of day, on various days and objectively by three different individuals, and repeated whenever necessary for 'litter black spots' for fairness. Recommendations made on the findings of this survey were that some of the better scoring towns had advertisements posted such as 'Keep Your Town Tidy' and the dominant waste type were paper, packaging and plastic bottles while cigarette butts were a ubiquitous nuisance. Additionally, the most ideal litter receptacle for capacity, visibility and facilitation of all litter types and cigarette butts was the blue rectangular bin (pictured). This was also a good option which was not easily vandalised or structurally damaged and was described as 'low maintenance'.



Most 'successful' bin type

Miscellaneous

Some specific projects / campaigns which have been undertaken in recent years are discussed in more detail in Section 4.4.

Table 4.2 Summary of Litter Management Plan (LMP) measures, initiatives in place in 2006, and proposed initiatives for 2007-2009 period and current 2011 comments



Litter Prevention, Control & Alleviation Measures	Current Initiatives	Proposed Initiatives 2007-2009 LMP	LMP 2011-2014 comments
1. Public Awareness & Advisory Measures	Environment Leaflet & Newsletters	Increase/supplement present advertising	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
	Mayo Co. Council website www.mayococo.ie	Expand / supplement environment page	Environment page is continuously updated and supplemented
	Local press, cinema and radio advertising	Increase/supplement present advertising	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
	Appropriate signs	Black spots are identified and appropriate signs erected	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
	Environmental Awareness Officer (EAO)	Continue with current advisory measures, approval for additional EAO sought	Continue with current advisory measures, and 2 nd EAO if possible
	Litter Advisory letters	Continue	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
			Initiate a cigarette-related litter educational campaign
2. Youth Education Measures	Green Flag Initiative	Continue and expand	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
	Photograph / Poster competitions for students of all ages	Continue and expand	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
	Other Youth Education projects e.g. 'Adopt An Area'	Continue and expand	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
3. Community And Voluntary Group Cooperative Measures	Anti-litter Awareness funding	Continue all support, financial and otherwise	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative insofar as possible – with current financial challenges
	Community Group Awards	Continue, increase promotion and expand competitions	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
4. Partnership & Consultative Measures / Planning	National Litter Monitoring Body	Continue support and involvement	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
	Connaught Waste Management	Continue support and involvement	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
5. Enforcement Measures	Litter Wardens - enforcement	Employ additional wardens as a priority	Increase numbers if possible.
	Environmental Enforcement Officers	Continue with current litter control and prevention strategies	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
	Litter Line 1800 400 256	To advertise this number within the public domain insofar as possible	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative



		Initiate Environment Public Complaints Procedure	CRM system introduced in 2009 to manage and analyse complaints data
		Use alternative strategies for littering by underage offenders	To be examined
		Introduce byelaws	To be examined
		Prosecute all offenders when sufficient evidence is available	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
6. Active Control Measures	Routine of bin-emptying, street sweeping and cleaning undertaken as efficiently as possible	Continue and improve insofar as possible	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
		Review and examine current cleaning plans in Mayo	Keep under Review
		Undertake a bin audit to examine need for additional bins	Area directorates to be requested to continue.
		Undertake a pilot study with compartmentalised bin in designated Mayo town	An objective to be dealt with during 2011 to 2014
7. Miscellaneous Measures	Blue Flag Beaches	Maintain current status	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative – currently 11 Blue Flags in Mayo
	Tidy Towns Committees	Continue/maintain present support	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
	Maintain local authority responsibility with respect to litter prevention and control	Educate all employees on litter pollution and encourage cooperation on all litter initiatives	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
	Mayo Co Council to 'lead by example'	Continue and progress with staff educational and awareness campaigns	Continue with 2007-2009 initiative
		Develop a Litter Prevention Board within Mayo County Council	Have annual meetings of board.

4.3 Challenges identified

Litter management has encountered a number of challenges throughout the years, not least the economic strains of recent years and the need to employ additional staff as aspired in the Litter Management Plan of 2007 - 2009. Financial challenges to the public at large have seen an increase in illegal dumping, presumably due to inability to pay for an authorised household waste collection service. After-hour littering appears to be an ongoing problem, with littering occurring at weekends and evenings by passing pedestrians. Many people do not regard the discarding of cigarette butts as littering, and



dog owners allow their dogs to foul public areas, oblivious to the littering aspect of this and the legal obligation to remove the material.

Prosecutions are quite expensive and on occasions the cost of attending a court on a litter-related offense may exceed the damages from a court of law but these prosecutions must be continued.

The greatest challenges identified is the conveyance of an anti-litter message to the public at large – a ‘sense of pride’ is next to impossible to instil and constant messages of negative ‘don’ts’ and ‘shall nots’ are certainly not heartening to those who obey and respect litter laws.

Additionally, in a circular from the DoEHLG (WP 20.10) sent on 01 July 2011 made reference to the ‘naming and shaming’ policy of some local authorities contravenes the principles of data protection as set down in the Data Protection Act, 1988 as amended by the Data Protection (Amendment) Act, 2003 (Section 2A). While a ‘name and shame’ strategy was considered for underage offenders in the past, this is now not a viable or legal consideration.

These challenges, while problematic, are not localised and confined to Mayo but are part of the course for those involved in the control, alleviation and prevention of litter pollution. These challenges are tackled and dealt with on a case-by-case basis as encountered and, in general, do not impact too much on the objectives of any litter pollution mitigation strategy.

4.4 Specific Litter projects undertaken

Cigarette Litter Campaign

A cigarette litter awareness campaign was undertaken to educate and raise awareness of the very serious issue of this litter type. With the tagline – “Is your butt worth €150?” – the awareness campaign was run by the Environment Section of Mayo County Council with the support of the Mayo Branch of the Vintners Federation of Ireland. Personal ash trays carrying the winning slogan from Mayo County Council’s Cleaner Community Awards “Bin your litter, recycle your waste, make Mayo a magic place” were circulated and posters bearing the slogan were placed at conspicuous locations in Mayo. Cigarette litter is the most pervasive type of litter found identified in the county; constituting almost 46 % of all litter items.



Gum Litter Taskforce Campaign

The Gum Litter Taskforce (GLT) campaign aims to tackle gum litter in the most sustainable way, by changing behaviour, the root cause of the issue and also by encouraging people to dispose of their gum responsibly in the bin. At a briefing seminar of the GLT in April 2009, the campaign was proposed to include media support in the form of press releases and radio advertising, poster advertising was to be included and details of the GLT website was to be promoted, in addition to the provision of GLT merchandise such as pens and banners. The onus was on local authorities to dedicate time and resources wherever feasible and to play a lead role in launching the campaign in a public place, while also erecting posters for public information. Held during the summer of 2009, the campaign in Mayo was launched on Main Street, Castlebar at a busy location for optimal interaction with the public at large. Also, because of the timing of the launch, it was a positive first duty for the newly elected Mayor of Castlebar Town Council.



Car Bins

The problem of car throw litter is a constant issue and the circulation of car bins to area offices and community groups was very well received in 2009.

The logo on the bins “Bin your litter, Recycle your Waste, Keep Mayo a Magic Place” was the winner of a category in the Cleaner Community Campaign.

Dog Scoops

Dog litter is a constant nuisance and the Council have continued to supply community groups with scoops and advice on this issue.

5.0 Objectives and Strategies for 2011 to 2014

5.1 Objectives for 2011 to 2014

The aforementioned objectives for this current plan are detailed in Table 4.2. Because of the detailed measures and initiatives established during the 2007 to 2009 period, it was concluded that as cigarette butts, chewing gum and food packaging are the main causative factors of litter, an awareness campaign on the litter caused by takeaway packaging would be undertaken in the plan for 2011 – 2014.

This goal was reached earlier than anticipated as the launch of the ***“It’s a Takeaway, Not a Throw Away”*** campaign got under way in 2011. A simple yet effective awareness raising strategy encompassed the placing of anti-litter stickers on



all takeaway packages and the availability of car bins to prevent inappropriate discarding of the packaging.

It is an objective to focus and direct attention on all existing initiatives insofar as possible.

As new litter monitoring strategies and legislation develop or evolve on a national or European level, it will be an objective of the Mayo County Council Litter Management Plan 2011 to 2014 to cooperate with strategies and adhere to any and all legislation introduced or amended as appropriate.

5.2 Conclusion

Litter pollution is a national problem which has been identified as a pervasive nuisance for decades. Stemming from the mindless discarding of unwanted and useless packaging, unwanted materials and also recyclable items, litter is a constant eyesore. At a time when potential sources of revenue are reduced, eco-tourism is a very viable opportunity for attracting visitors, investors and leisure-seekers to Mayo. Only by the cooperative actions and dedication, hard work, interest and pride of all residents, business persons, investors, environmental organisations, elected representatives and all others in and travelling to Mayo can the aspiration of a litter-free environment be strived for and achieved; a litter-free county which we can all be proud of.



Appendix I Replacement of Litter Management Plan – a reserved function

From:
Litter Pollution Act, 1997 to 2003 (No. 12/1997 and No. 27 of 2003)

- 10.**—(1) Where, on the date of the coming into operation of this section, no litter management plan within the meaning of *section 11* has been made and implemented in respect of the functional area of a local authority, the local authority shall, within 6 months after this section comes into operation—
- (2) A local authority shall review its litter management plan at least once in each period of 3 years after the plan is first implemented and, if the local authority deems it necessary after the review, shall amend or replace the plan.
- 12.**— (1) Where a local authority proposes to make, amend or replace its litter management plan under *section 10*, it shall—
- (a) publish in one or more newspapers circulating in its functional area a notice of the proposal and arrange for the broadcasting of an announcement in respect of the proposal at least once on 3 successive days on one or more local radio stations broadcasting in that area, and
- (b) consult with such voluntary and representative bodies as the local authority deems appropriate concerning the steps which the local authority and the bodies that agree to participate in the consultations are to take in connection with the plan.
- (2) A notice of proposal under *subsection (1)(a)* shall indicate—
- (a) whether the proposal is to make, amend or replace a litter management plan,
- (b) that a copy of a summary of the proposed plan, amendment or replacement plan, as the case may be, may be obtained from the local authority free of charge, and
- (c) that written submissions made to the local authority in relation to the proposed plan, amendment or replacement plan will be taken into consideration by the local authority before the plan is made, amended or implemented.
- (3) A local authority, in its absolute discretion, may permit any person who has made submissions referred to in *subsection (2)(c)* to make oral presentation on the submissions to, or to discuss specific proposals with, the local authority.
- (4) After considering the submissions referred to in *subsection (2)(c)* and any discussions referred to in *subsection (3)*, the local authority may, as the case requires, make and implement the litter management plan, make and implement such amendment to the plan or implement such replacement plan as the local authority deems appropriate in the circumstances.
- (5) As soon as possible after the making, amendment to or replacement of a litter management plan under this section, the local authority concerned shall publish and distribute the plan, amended plan or replacement plan, or a suitable outline thereof, as widely as possible in its functional area to such extent as will, in its opinion, give adequate publicity to the plan.
- (6) An outline referred to in *subsection (5)* shall indicate—
- (a) the extent and purpose of the plan,
- (b) the methods by which the plan is proposed to be implemented, and
- (c) the place where copies of the plan may be obtained.



Appendix II Sample Bin Audit Survey

Location: Balla
Survey time: 15:30
Survey date: 28/07/2008
Reference number: 036, 037
Photograph reference numbers: 989-994

Summary of Results:

- There were 11 bins in total on Main Street, three black rectangular bins, two silver round bins, five cigarette butt bins and one *shop* non-public bin.
- All black rectangular bins and silver round bins were full to capacity.
- Three of the cigarette bins were full; all others including the shop bin were empty.
- At the tennis court there was an overflowing *shop* bin.
- The dominant waste types in the bins were paper, cigarette butts and food packaging.
- Bin maintenance was poor.
- There was quite an amount of litter visible on Main Street.

Conclusion:

- More bins are needed in Balla.
- Bin rating 3 (*where: 1 Good, 2 Fair, 3 Poor*)
- Surrounding area rating 3 (*where: 1 Good, 2 Fair, 3 Poor*)
- Second inspection necessary



Appendix III Bring Centres in Mayo

Town/Area	Recyclables accepted	Location
Achill	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Ted Lavelle's Pub
Achill	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Caravan Park Keel
Achill	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Curanne Shore Road
Achill	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Dooagh ESB substation
Achill	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Doogort Camping Site
Achill	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Polranny ESB Substation
Aughagower	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Handball Alley Carpark
Balla	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Main Street
Ballina	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Adjacent to Swimming Pool
Ballina	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Carpark off Teeling/Bury Street
Ballina	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Humbert St. Carpark
Ballina	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Tesco Car Park
Ballindine	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Heneghan's Centra Supermarket
Ballinrobe	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars, textiles	Church Lane Carpark
Ballinrobe	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Mace Garage, Castlebar Rd
Ballinrobe	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Mayo Co Co Carpark, Kilmaine Rd
Ballycastle	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Town Hall Carpark



Ballycroy	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Front of Church Carpark
Ballyglass	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Outside football pitch
Ballyhaunis	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars, textiles	Carpark off Main St.
Bangor Erris	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Opposite Church
Bar Na Tra	Beverage Cans, glass bottles/jars,	Opposite Healys Funeral Home
Barnacarrol	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre Carpark
Belmullet	Beverage Cans, glass bottles/jars, textiles	Mayo County Council Offices, Church Rd
Bofeenaun	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Bonniconlon	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Tubbercurry Road
Breaffy	Beverage Cans	St. Johns National School
Brickeen, Claremorris	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars, textiles	Community Centre
Bunacurry	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	near the Udaras na Gaeltachta Site
Carnacon	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre Carpark
Carracastle	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	National School
Carramore-Lacken	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Beside Football pitch
Carrowteige	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	An Siopa
Castlebar	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Carpark off Market Square
Castlebar	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars, textiles	Co.Co. Carpark



Castlebar	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Dunnes Carpark
Charlestown	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Old Railway Station
Clare Island	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	The Pier
Claremorris	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Luine na Greine, Mayo Co.Co. Offices
Claremorris	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Playground on Ballinrobe Road
Claremorris	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	SuperValue
Clogher,Claremorris	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	GAA Grounds
Cong	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Church Carpark
Crimlin, Ross West	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Church
Cross	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	O Malley's Pub Carpark
Crossmolina	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Beside Bridge opposite Church
Cuslough	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Community Centre
Derrinumera	Civic Amenity Site	Landfill site, off Newport Rd
Drummin	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Near the Church
Eachleim	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre Carpark
Elly Bay	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Carpark adjacent to Blue Flag Beach
Elly Bay	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	UISCE Adventure Centre
Foxford	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Centra Carpark



Garrymore, Claremorris	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	GAA pitch
Geesala	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Glenamoy	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	GAA Football Pitch
Glenhest	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars, textiles	Community Centre
Glenisland	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Rear of Church
Irishtown	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Church Carpark
Islandeedy	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Church Carpark
Keenagh	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Opposite Church
Kilasser	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Kileen, Louisburgh	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Beside the Bridge
Kilkelly	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Freemans Filling Station
Killala	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Wards Foodmarket Carpark
Killawala	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Opposite Church
Kilmaine	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Community Centre
Kilmovee	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Carpark at rear of Community Centre
Kiltimagh	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Supervalu Carpark
Kincon, Killala	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Village
Knock	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Basilica Carpark



Lahardane	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Lismirren	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	O'Dwyer Chesire Home
Louisburgh	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Health Centre Carpark
Manulla	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Mayo Abbey	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	GAA pitch
Meelick Swinford	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Moygownagh, Ballina	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Mitchells Garage & Shop
Mulranny	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Adjacent to Blue Flag Beach
Mulranny	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Carpark opposite Dohertys
Newport	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Old Campus Service Station, Westport
Parke	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	GAA pitch
Partry	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Rathroeen	Civic Amenity Centre	Civic Amenity Centre
Rosmoney	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	The Pier
Rosspport	Beverage Cans, Glass Bottles/Jars	Secondary School Car Park
Roundfort	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Shrule	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Swinford	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Corrib station



Swinford	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Mellots Carpark
The Neale	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Mellots Pub
Toreen	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Tourmakeady	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Community Centre
Westport	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Centa carpark, Quay
Westport	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Leisure Park
Westport	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Sacred Heart School
Westport	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Supervalu Carpark
Westport	Beverage Cans, Glass bottles/jars	Tip top Petrol Station