

Draft Position Statement: Helmdon Parish Council Stance on Litter Management (B4525/Welsh Lane)

1. Objective Helmdon Parish Council (HPC) remains committed to ensuring that the B4525 (Welsh Lane) and its environs are maintained to a high standard. Our ultimate goal is a litter-free environment that ensures the safety of road users, protects local wildlife, and preserves the aesthetic integrity of our parish.

2. Statutory Context HPC acknowledges that the primary statutory responsibility for litter clearance on public land, including the B4525, lies with the Principal Authority, West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

3. Strategic Approach: "Constructive Engagement" It is the formal position of HPC that the most effective way to ensure WNC fulfils its obligations is through a policy of **Constructive Engagement**. To this end, HPC will:

- Maintain professional, courteous, and consistent communication with WNC officers and cabinet members.
- Utilise official reporting channels (such as FixMyStreet) to provide a clear, evidence-based audit trail of litter issues.
- Apply "firm encouragement" when service levels fall below acceptable standards, escalating matters through the appropriate Ward Councillors or senior management only when baseline collaborative efforts have been exhausted.

4. Philosophy of Communication HPC believes that an adversarial or aggressive tone in communications is counterproductive. Such methods risk damaging the working relationships necessary to secure long-term service improvements. HPC will not adopt or endorse communication styles that are inconsistent with the principles of local government conduct and mutual respect.

5. Role of the Parish Highways Representative The Parish Highways Representative is authorised by the Council to act as the primary liaison with WNC. The Representative is tasked with exercising professional judgment in their dealings with WNC, prioritising a pragmatic and persistent approach. The Council reaffirms its support for this role as a conduit for progress, rather than a platform for grievance.

6. Community Support While HPC respects the right of individual residents to take independent legal action (such as Litter Abatement Notices), the Council's role is to represent the collective interest of the village. HPC will support any action that results in a cleaner parish, provided that support remains within the bounds of professional conduct and does not compromise the Council's long-standing relationship with its delivery partners.