

Community Safety and Amenity

Graffiti Removal Plan

Description of policy	<p>Nillumbik Shire Council (Council) is committed to providing safe and healthy environments to the community.</p> <p>Strategy 3.8 of the Nillumbik Shire Council Plan 2017-2021 aims to <i>improve the appearance of public spaces</i>. Priority action 3.8.1 aims to development and implement the Graffiti Removal Plan</p> <p>The Graffiti Removal plan has been developed to guide the service requirements and processes in order to achieve an effective and efficient graffiti removal program within the Shire.</p>
Policy applies to	<input type="checkbox"/> All employees, volunteers and contractors
Policy category	<input type="checkbox"/> Revised Policy
Description of revision and Version Number	Version Number: 1.0

Approved by	
Approval date	
Effective date	
Date of last revision	December 2019
Date of next review*	December 2023

*Unless replaced, this policy will still apply beyond the review date.

Related internal procedures and guidelines	Nillumbik Shire Council Procurement Policy January 2019
Related policies	Nillumbik Shire Public Art Policy 2019-2022
Related legislation, standards and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Graffiti Prevention Act 2007</i> • <i>Local Government Act 1989</i> • <i>Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)</i>
External Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Police • Department of Justice • Traders Associations • VicRoads • Melbourne Water • Metro • Education Department • Business Owners • Residents • Successful tender

1. Policy Statement

Nillumbik Shire Council (Council) is committed to the effective management and removal of graffiti from public assets and spaces within the Shire.

2. Purpose / Objectives

The presence of graffiti in public places can effect perceptions of cleanliness, amenity and quality and safety of the physical and built environment.

Implementation of an effective graffiti removal program will improve perceptions of safety and appearance within the Shire.

3. Scope

The scope of the plan is limited to graffiti management and removal only.

Council and its contractors will be responsible for:

- Identifying and removing graffiti from public assets and spaces;
- Providing a rapid response for the removal of offensive graffiti;
- Prioritising the removal of graffiti from high visibility locations and facilities;
- Regular patrols of high visibility areas;
- Reporting graffiti to external stakeholders/agencies (private property);
- Investigate new and sustainable technologies to support graffiti removal;
- Protection of areas not requiring cleaning but application of anti graffiti coating;
- Recording of graffiti removal and protection;
- Detailed reporting to assist identification of offenders and identifying hotspots and the perpetrators of graffiti.
- Where appropriate, carrying out surveillance of graffiti hot spots in order to proactively identify graffiti offenders.

Council will continue to assist Victoria Police by providing documented instances of graffiti. This will include photographic evidence of graffiti and locations to assist with identification of graffiti offenders.

4. Definitions

Reference term	Definition
Council owned assets	Assets on Council land include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council buildings including sporting facilities and associated signage• Parks and reserves• Public toilets• Street furniture (benches)• Litter bins• Playground equipment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpath and bike paths • Sculptures, monuments and art works • Road infrastructure including traffic signage • Council signage
Graffiti	Writing or drawings scribbled, scratched, or sprayed illicitly on a wall or other surface in a public place.
Graffiti removal methods	<p>Graffiti removal methods may include one or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High pressure spray • Chemical removal • Abrasive removal (sanding) • Paint out / paint over
High Visibility areas	<p>High Visibility areas are locations of high public exposure, from the municipality's residents and visitors. These areas include the gateways to the main community hubs of Eltham, Diamond Creek and Hurstbridge as well as main arterial roads throughout Council's suburbs.</p> <p>The most commonly targeted areas are generally highly visible and are often centralized in and around precinct locations such as shopping strips, skate parks, laneways and transport hubs. Typically prime locations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trains and METRO property; • Bus shelters; • Street facing walls; • Public toilets; • Traffic signs; • Statues and public art; • Vending machines; • Park furniture and play equipment; • Electricity poles; • Schools; • Fences.
Land Managed by Government and Private Agencies	Council will work with property owners to seek the removal of graffiti from assets not in Council's ownership. Where structures abut public spaces, Council may with the consent of land owners, remove graffiti. The <i>Graffiti Prevention Act 2007</i> does allow Council to enter private property for the removal of graffiti under certain circumstances under Part 4, item 18 - <i>Removal of graffiti from private property</i> .
Offensive graffiti	Any graffiti deemed offensive and/or obscene. This includes any marking that is defamatory or degrading about race, region, sexual preference and gender, or that releases unwarranted details relating to personal privacy.

Surfaces requiring graffiti removal and or paint out	<p>The following surface types are typical for graffiti removal/paint out in the municipality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete – plain or coloured • Fencing: Colour bond or timber materials • Brick surfaces • Cement rendered surfaces • Power poles – galvanised, painted, timber or concrete • Metal surfaces • Signage – metal, timber, plastic or synthetic materials • Surfaces comprising plastic or synthetic materials • Road surface Materials – Council car parks and roads. <p><i>Note: the above list is indicative only, and not exhaustive of surfaces where graffiti removal and paint out will be required.</i></p>
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5. Graffiti identification

The prevalence of graffiti within Nillumbik continues to present an ongoing issue when maintaining safe community spaces with a high level of amenity as expected by the community.

Council utilises various tools to identify graffiti within the community in order to ensure a timely, effective and efficient graffiti removal program. The following are key to identifying graffiti to ensure its removal:

Council Staff	Many council staff are required to travel throughout the Shire in performing their duties. All staff must lodge service requests when graffiti is identified.
Councillors and Community Members	Councillors and Community Members are able to contact Council directly to report graffiti, or have access to the City Watch App or Snap, Send Solve App to register graffiti.
Council Contractors	Council utilises contractors for various activities such as cleaning Council facilities. All contractors are obliged to report graffiti to Council to have it cleaned.
Graffiti removal contractor	The graffiti removal contractor carries out regular patrols throughout the Shire to identify graffiti and remove it accordingly.

6. Graffiti Removal Parameters

Council and/or its contractors will be required to work within the parameters outlined below.

6.1. Graffiti removal timeframes

Council is committed to removing graffiti from public places and spaces as quickly as possible. Council will prioritise the removal of any graffiti deemed offensive and/or obscene. This includes any marking that is defamatory or degrading about race, region, sexual preference and gender, or that releases unwarranted details relating to personal privacy. Graffiti of this nature will be removed within one business day of being identified or reported to Council. If the offensive graffiti is on private property Council will quickly remove the graffiti through negotiation with the owner/occupier.

Graffiti located in areas infrastructure deemed to be high visibility (as identified in appendix 1), the graffiti will be removed within one business day.

If Council believes street art detracts from the local amenity due to its location, it will be removed within 5 business days of it been reported or identified.

Non offensive or non obscene graffiti will be removed within 5 working days of notification.

Type of graffiti	Timeframe
Offensive	Within 1 working day
In high profile areas	Within 1 working day
All other reported graffiti	Within 5 days
Identified in annual audit	As advised by Council within budget constraints

6.2. Graffiti removal methods

Graffiti can present in multiple forms on a wide variety of surfaces. Methods for the removal of graffiti must ensure the best outcome for each site, minimising permanent damage to the substrate and ensure minimal environmental impacts. Methods can include:

- High pressure water spray
- Chemical removal using cleaning solutions
- Abrasive removal by way of sanding or sand blasting
- Paint out / paint over with colour matching to the existing substrate

Graffiti removal activities must aim to minimize any environmental impact, with water runoff being recaptured wherever possible, and biodegradable chemicals used in order to minimise harm to waterways.

Wherever possible, painting out or painting over graffiti should be a method of last resort, with cleaning graffiti being the preferred method. Where painting out is utilised, every effort should be made to colour match the paint being used.

6.3. Patrol of high visibility areas

A rostered approach will be incorporated for the following

- A dedicated proactive patrol service is to be multiple times each week including areas identified as urgent.
- Patrols will also be required on days prior and post Public Holidays.
- Provide regular patrols of walk bridges, bicycle paths, sporting grounds including fences.
- School crossings (45) will be audited prior to the commencement of each school term.
- Event facilities prior to any major Council or Community festival including:
 - Nillumbik Pet Expo
 - Rotary Eltham Festival
 - Hurstbridge Wattle Festival
 - Diamond Creek Rotary Fair
 - Panton Hill on the Hill
 - Eltham Jazz, Food and Wine festival

6.4. Recording of service delivery

Councils Customer Request System will be utilised to record all reported and cleaned graffiti.

Service Requests received through City Watch and/or Snap, Send and Solve will be actioned in accordance with the timeframes identified above.

All graffiti identified and cleaned as a result of proactive patrols by staff/contractors will be recorded in a graffiti database and details provided to Council.

At a minimum, the graffiti database will be capable of registering the following information about each graffiti occurrence:

- Location – suburb and street address
- Building/structure type
- Surface type
- Name of affected business (if relevant)
- Date graffiti reported
- Date graffiti removed

- Photos, before and after graffiti removal
- Type of graffiti
- Tag identification
- Treatment used to remove graffiti

Data in the graffiti register can be supplied to Victoria Police for evidence in prosecutions of offenders.

6.5. Service Delivery Performance Measurements

Deliverable	Measurement	Target
Removal of Graffiti – Response to requests	Meets Councils timeline requirements	>90%
Reduction in outstanding service requests	Percentage reduction measured monthly	<5%
Before & After Photos of graffiti removal	Provided	100%
Weekly Report to Council	Provided on-time	100%
Reduction in costs over term of contract	Innovation and Technology that reduces associated costs	>15%
Compliance with OHS and safe work practices	Percentage jobs completed with no reported incidents	100%

Data captured through the graffiti removal program will support the development of, and planning for further mitigation activities and programs. The regular review of data will also allow for reallocation of resources if deemed appropriate and within operational capacity.

6.6. Private property (Commercial and Residential)

Council and/or its contractors will work with property owners to ensure the removal of graffiti from assets where it can be viewed from the public domain. Graffiti will only be removed with the consent of the owners.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Residential homes with rear access from laneways;
- boundary fences;
- Commercial premises;
- Industrial premises and perimeter fences;
- Private Schools and perimeter fences;
- METRO property;
- Service infrastructure (water, electricity etc);

- Australia Post property.

Business owners are encouraged to utilise the Department of Justice website (<https://www.crimeprevention.vic.gov.au/resources/graffiti-in-victoria>) for further information on options for assistance.

6.7. Public Assets

Council will work closely with other government authorities to prioritise the removal of graffiti from public infrastructure. Key organisation's include:

PROPERTY	ORGANISATION
Major roads, traffic lights, signal boxes, some road signs	VicRoads
Public transport (train stations trams & buses) and rail corridor	Public Transport Victoria
Glass bus shelters	Adshel
Australia Post mail boxes	Australia Post
Telephone boxes and phone booths	Telstra
Water utilities	Yarra Valley Water, Melbourne Water
Electricity poles, electricity supply units	SP Ausnet
Public Schools	Department of education

All of the agencies listed above have graffiti removal programs in place, and Council actively engages with each authority to prioritise the removal of graffiti. In the event that graffiti is reported by community members on these assets, Council will work with all agencies to ensure the efficient removal of graffiti.

7. Monitoring/Auditing of Graffiti removal

Efficacy of graffiti management will be monitored by Council. Regular reporting by Council and its contractors will include the following information.

- Location of graffiti
- Square metres of graffiti
- Council's Service Request Number for incident.
- Status of graffiti
- Photographs

In addition an annual audit and report will be completed in July of each year to identify all outstanding graffiti within municipality.

Report is to be provided to Council including the following;

- Commentary on the 'Year that was' with supporting comparative results
- Analysis of graffiti activities throughout the shire locations

- Analysis of the offenders activities based on tagging identification and approximated costs to Council to remove graffiti by identified offender
- Report on offenders identified by tagging analysis and any resulting arrests and prosecutions
- Total square metres of graffiti in each suburb;
- Number of incidents;
- Graffiti in the following categories; High visibility, Medium visibility and low visibility; and
- Amount of graffiti on stakeholder infrastructure.

Appendix 1

High Visibility Locations

Throughout Nillumbik Shire the following high visibility precincts are proactively monitored. All ownership and asset types are treated within these precincts. This list varies periodically due to the offender climate at the time.

ELTHAM:

- Along Main Road, Eltham from the Eltham Gateway to Research shops.
- Eltham Town Square and precinct including Woolworths carpark/lift
- Library Place, Senior citizens, St Laurence Lane
- Bible Street and adjacent through roads to Main road
- Bike trail from Susan street oval to Eltham Central Park (Including Bridge st bridge)
- Pedestrian bridge, Homestead Road.
- Railway Pde, Railway Road
- Brisbane Street/Silver street commercial precincts
- Sherbourne rd rail bridge and surrounds
- Beard Street
- Wattletree Road Main Rd to Ryans Rd
- Karingal Drive - Signs, poles, fences through to Weidlich Road
- Allendale Rd to Rail crossing
- Skate park located at Susan Street and BMX track at Pitt Street

ELTHAM NORTH:

- Eltham North Adventure Playground
- Soccer Stadium fences on Wattletree Road
- Wattletree Rd from Main Rd to Ryans road
- Ryans Road from Progress Rd to Allendale Rd
- Wattletree Rd bridge

DIAMOND CREEK:

- Diamond Creek Road from Civic Drive roundabout to Diamond Creek Secondary College, via the Windy Mile and Chute Streets.
- Parkland / Walkway and under bridge in Gipson Street (Through to Rivergum Close)
- Aquaduct Road walkway and fences
- Retail precinct along Waigo Way Carpark (behind IGA)
- Broadgully Road from Main to BlackGully
- Diamond Creek Trail throughout the township boundary
- Fyffe Street precinct

- Diamond Street to Watkins Street and included reserves Diamond, Challenger, Linear, Campbell.
- Diamond Creek Regional Playspace and surrounding facilities
- Marngrook Oval through to Bowls club, dog park and tram café
- Elizabeth Street to Gipson Street
- Heidelberg-Kinglake Road through to WattleGlen

WATTLEGLEN:

- Peppers Paddock Reserve parkland
- Heidelberg – Kinglake Rd to Hurstbridge

HURSBRIDGE:

- 2 x Skate Parks Main Road
- Ferguson Paddock Reserve and surrounds through to skate park
- Monash Bridge
- Ben Frilay oval and surrounds (Graysharps Road)
- “The Hub” complex and Stadium 50 Graysharps Road
- Trail from High Oval through wetlands to Ben Frilay Oval

GREENSBOROUGH:

- Diamond Hills Reserve and fenceline
- Plenty River Drive assets
- Booyan Cres Bridge
- Diamond Creek Road from Civic Drive Rnd About through to Diamond Creek

RESEARCH

- Research Park precinct including tennis and scout hall
- Assets along Route 44 to Eltham College. (Poles, signage, bus stops)
- Retail precinct and surrounds
- Ingrams Rd from Roundabout about to Margaret Street

TOILET FACILITIES:

- **ELTHAM:** Eltham North Adventure Playground, Eltham Lower Park, Alastair Knox Park, Eltham Town Square
- **Diamond Creek:** IGA shopping Centre near Waigo Way, Chute Street and Diamond Street, Campbell st reserve, Elizabeth Street (Skate Park)
- **Wattle Glen:** Peppers Paddock on Kangaroo Ground- Wattle Glen Road
- **Hurstbridge:** Fergusons Paddock off Arthurs Creek Road
- **Research:** Research Park and Retail precinct toilets

Note: Appendix updated 7/10/2020

