



Graffiti Management Policy

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Review date	May 2026
Responsible officer	Manager Environment & Waste
Policy owner	Coordinator Waste, Graffiti & Cleaning

1. Purpose

To ensure an effective, coordinated, and proactive approach to graffiti management through prevention, education, removal, and enforcement.

2. Scope

This Policy outlines Council's approach to illegal graffiti prevention and associated removal and or responses within the capacity of Melton City Council's General Local Law and the *Graffiti Prevention Act 2007*.

While Council acknowledges the positive contribution of street art to express artistic creativity, the process and management of street art is not within the scope of this policy and is addressed in Council's Public Art Policy.

3. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)	A planning approach that utilises urban and architectural design to assist reduce actual or potential criminal activity and improve perceptions of safety. Interventions can include improved lighting, landscape plantings, surface finishes (i.e. texture and colour), and property maintenance.
Etching	Marking or scratching graffiti into hard surface
Graffiti	Defined in the Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 (the 'Act') as to 'write, draw, mark, scratch or otherwise deface property by any means so that the defacement is not readily removable by wiping with a dry cloth.'
Inaccessible Graffiti	Graffiti that is not readily accessible and/or exposes Council staff or contractors to unacceptable risks to health and safety.
Street Art	Refers to work commissioned with the permission of the person/authority who owns the surface/wall that the artwork is being presented, and with the permission of the local Council (if required).
Murals	Usually occur on walls and fences and are generally within sight of high trafficable and high activity areas such as parks and reserves, skate parks, transport corridors and main roads.
Offensive graffiti	Aimed to cause offence either to certain groups or the broader community. In particular, it often includes defamatory remarks or slurs about race and gender and includes offensive words, phrases, or graphics.
Private Property	Any asset that is not owned by Melton City Council. The Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 outlines the specific circumstances in which Council is permitted to enter private property
Public Art	Refers to works of art in any media that have been planned and executed with the specific intention of being sited or staged in the physical public domain, usually outside and accessible to all.
Rapid Removal	Prioritisation of the removal of offensive graffiti from public land within 48 hours of it being reported.
Stencil Graffiti	Form of graffiti that makes use of stencils often made from paper or cardboard to create an image or text that often relates to a political or social issue and is easily reproducible. The image is transferred to a wall/fence through the use of spray paint or roll-on paint.
Tags/Tagging	A type of graffiti that commonly occurs on walls / fences, bridges, and service authority assets such as light poles, traffic, and signal devices. Tags may be gang related.

Tributes	Usually occur on walls, light poles, fences, road pavements, footpaths and local rocks as a declaration, or other acknowledgment of gratitude, respect, or admiration to a person/s.
Visible by Public	Graffiti that is within view from a public road or park reserve at the discretion of the Operations Manager Environment & Waste.

4. Policy

Council is committed to timely and rapid removal of graffiti wherever possible to discourage further recurrence of graffiti and to enhance community pride and safety.

Council recognises that the presence of graffiti can have negative effects on the community including:

- contributing to poor perceptions of safety
- contributing to reduction in local pride via perceptions of cleanliness and the quality of the physical environment.
- economic impacts associated with the removal of graffiti

Council also recognises the positive effects of legal street art which include:

- creating opportunities for local artists to develop their creativity and experience the artistic work of others
- contributing to the vibrancy and activation of an area
- encouraging local pride
- supported legal street art that creates local identity, pride, and character of local neighbourhoods and or the City.

The objective of this policy is to minimise the negative impacts of graffiti and recognise the need for a coordinated management approach to graffiti through:

1. Graffiti Prevention
2. Graffiti Education
3. Graffiti Removal and Enforcement
 - Council and public property and assets
 - Private property and assets.

4.1 Graffiti Prevention

Best practice graffiti reduction models, both nationally and internationally, recognise the importance of graffiti prevention. Council acknowledges that one of the effective strategies in graffiti prevention is active engagement and development of partnerships to develop a broader approach to the management and removal of graffiti across the municipality.

Council supports the following graffiti prevention principles:

- 4.1.1 Ownership and community pride to enable influence, involvement and promote a sense of collective community confidence, safety, and security.
- 4.1.2 Partnership approach to support a coordinated response to develop solutions and opportunities for graffiti prevention, education, removal, and enforcement.
- 4.1.3 Urban and Architectural Design that assists to reduce the potential of graffiti occurring.

Council will continue to implement and promote graffiti prevention strategies including:

- Developing safe and welcoming public spaces that respond to community need, improve perceptions of safety, and provide opportunity for positive social engagement via implementing CPTED principles.
- Use of commissioned street art in site appropriate locations that contribute to the amenity of the area and prevent graffiti on the site.
- Use of graffiti resistant materials or protective coatings to assist with removal.
- Partnering with stakeholders, such as the Department of Justice and Community Safety, to utilise programs that places offenders under supervision within the municipality to remove graffiti from allocated sites.

4.2 Graffiti Education (Community education and the provision of support resources)

Council recognises the role education plays to inform our community on the negative impacts of graffiti and to appreciate and participate in activities that can assist to reduce it occurring.

As such, Council will continue to provide the following local empowerment initiatives:

4.2.1 Graffiti Education Initiatives

Council seeks to actively engage with schools to run 'incursions' to raise awareness of the negative impacts of graffiti, penalties that exist and the steps that Council and State Government take to reduce graffiti occurring.

In addition, Council delivers graffiti prevention initiatives that connect community, increase participation, build capacity and local pride and ownership of the public realm (i.e. open space improvements, youth street art projects, local art projects including the use of murals and neighbourhood beautification initiatives). Some projects may relate to tributes/memorials and will be considered on a case by case basis.

4.2.2 Report Graffiti

Residents are encouraged to report graffiti on public and private property within the municipality.

Where required, Council will notify the relevant external organisation (e.g. VicRoads, Public Transport Victoria and power companies) to organise removal of the graffiti.

Residents can also directly report graffiti to external organisations.

Graffiti can be reported to Council;

- 1) Phone: 9747 7200
- 2) Email: csu@melton.vic.gov.au

4.2.3 Graffiti Removal Kits and Portable Removal Systems for residents

Council will provide free graffiti removal kits to enable residents to allow them to removal graffiti from private property if they do not want Council to remove it.

Residents can request a free graffiti removal kit by contacting Council Customer Service on 9747 7200. The free graffiti removal kit is available to residential properties only.

Graffiti removal kits are suitable for smaller jobs less than 1m² in size. Removal kits will include safe graffiti removal chemical, scrubbing brush and personal protective equipment.

Larger jobs over 1m² will require specialised equipment and will be undertaken by Council.

Limits on the number kits and/or chemicals supplied to residents will be at the discretion of the Manager Environment & Waste. An induction on the safe use of these items may be required.

If residents do not want to remove the graffiti themselves, they can request assistance from Council, and provided the graffiti is visible from a public place and written consent is obtained in accordance with the Graffiti Prevention Act, Council may assist (Refer to private property definitions in section 4.4).

4.3 Graffiti Removal from Council and public property

To limit the potential for graffiti continuing to occur and to manage the negative effects of graffiti in our community, Council will proactively remove graffiti from Council or public property in a timely manner.

Council will maintain a target of removing graffiti from Council or public property within 48 hours for offensive graffiti and ten (10) working days non-offensive graffiti of the report being recorded as a Customer Action Request (CAR).

To support the apprehension of offenders, Council will maintain a record of graffiti in a central register prior to removal of graffiti from Council or public property.

4.3.1 Graffiti removal on public art assets

Where graffiti is located on public art assets, initial contact must be made with Councils Arts and Culture team.

The Waste, Graffiti & Cleaning team will then work in collaboration to assist with the removal of the graffiti from the artwork.

4.4 Graffiti Removal on private property and assets

In support of private property owners and our community, Council will:

- Proactively use the Act to remove graffiti from private property and assets.
- Ensure appropriate officers are delegated in accordance with section 98(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to proactively serve notices to property and assets owners in accordance with section 18(2) and section 18(3) and section 19 and 20 of the *Act 2007*.
- Incur all costs associated with delegation, administration, and removal of graffiti from private property.

- Maintain a record of graffiti in a central register prior to removal of graffiti from private property.
- If consent is not provided to remove graffiti from private assets, the matter will be referred to Councils Community Safety team to investigate under section 64 of the General Local Law 2015.

4.4.1 Graffiti removal on private assets

Council will utilise the provisions of the Act to remove graffiti by gaining consent from such entities through issuing of notices under sections 18(2) and 18(3) of the Act.

4.4.2 Inaccessible graffiti

Council may enter private property for the purpose of removing or obliterating graffiti if it serves a notice under the Act to the owner or occupier at least 28 days before the action is proposed to be taken; and the owner or occupier of the property has given written consent to do so or does not object.

4.4.3 Accessible graffiti

If entry to private property is not necessary, Council must serve a notice under the Act at least 10 days before the action to remove or obliterate the graffiti is proposed to be taken; and the owner or occupier of the property has given written consent to do so or does not object.

4.4.4 Offensive graffiti removal

Under the provisions of the Act Council can take action to remove or obliterate graffiti from private property when graffiti is deemed offensive in nature' or 'when it is affecting community perceptions of safety.' The removal of obscene or offensive graffiti will be fast-tracked through immediate contact with the property owner or their representative. The *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* may be used to support fast removal which makes it illegal to write racist graffiti in public places.

4.4.5 Graffiti Tributes

Council acknowledges the sensitivity associated with graffiti tributes and recognises that they will occur from time to time, appearing as murals, tags, or stencils. Illegal graffiti tributes will be removed within a reasonable timeframe, as determined by Council, and if appropriate in consultation with the family to whom the tribute relates.

5. Responsibility /Accountability

5.1	Manager Environment & Waste <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible to oversee the implementation of the policy and review it in a consultative and collaborative exercise at identified periodic intervals.
5.2	Council Officers and Council Contractors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for implementation and or adherence to this policy.

6. References and links to legislation and other documents

Name	Location
<i>Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 (Vic)</i>	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
<i>Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)</i>	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Melton City Council: Council and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025	www.melton.vic.gov.au
Melton City Council: Safe City Proud Communities Plan 2020-2024	www.melton.vic.gov.au
Melton City Council: Public Art Policy 2018 – 2021	www.melton.vic.gov.au
Melton City Council General Local Law (2015)	www.melton.vic.gov.au