

# Graffiti Management Policy

<b>Date adopted</b>	27 April 2026
<b>Adopted by</b>	Council
<b>Review due</b>	May 2030
<b>Responsible officer</b>	Manager Operations
<b>Records reference</b>	9179591

## 1. Purpose

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

## 2. Application And 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 (2025) 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. General Provisions

Council is committed to community safety, amenity and community pride through a coordinated and risk based approach to graffiti management.

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

- Reduced perceptions of safety
- Diminished neighbourhood amenity and community pride economic costs associated with removal of graffiti and asset maintenance.

The objective of this policy is to prioritise the prevention of graffiti and the timely removal of incidents in accordance with the graffiti management framework. Response priorities will be determined by the nature of the content, its location and potential impact on the community.

Council will work collaboratively with residents, property owners, community organisations and relevant public authorities to minimise the incidence and impact of graffiti across the City.

## 4. Graffiti Management Framework

This framework establishes how Council manages graffiti, from prevention and community education to classification and removal ensuring a consistent and timely response across all 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.

## 4.2. Education and Community Support

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. Reporting Graffiti

Community members are encouraged to report graffiti on public and private property within the City.

The community can also directly report graffiti to external organisations.

Graffiti can be reported to Council;

- 1) On our [website](#)
- 2) Phone: 9747 7200
- 3) Email: [contact@melton.vic.gov.au](mailto:contact@melton.vic.gov.au)

All reports will be managed in accordance with the classification and response framework outlined in this Policy.

#### **4.2.3. Graffiti Removal Kits**

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

Residents can request a free graffiti removal kit by contacting Council. The free graffiti removal kit is available to residential properties only.

Graffiti removal kits are suitable for smaller jobs less than 1m<sup>2</sup> in size. Removal kits will include safe graffiti removal chemical, scrubbing brush and personal protective equipment.

Larger jobs over 1m<sup>2</sup> 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 Operations. An induction on the safe use of these items may be required.

If residents are unable 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.

### **4.3. Graffiti Classification and Response Timeframes**

Council will respond to graffiti through both reactive reporting and proactive inspection of identified hotspot locations. Response timeframes apply from the time graffiti is reported, whether through community reports, Council officers, contractors, or programmed inspections.

The following response timeframes apply to graffiti on Council-owned assets, public authority assets and private property, subject to access and safety considerations:

- a) Rapid Response Offensive Graffiti – removal within four (4) hours of reporting.
- b) Offensive graffiti – removal within twenty-four (24) hours of reporting
- c) Non-offensive graffiti – removal within ten (10) working days of reporting.

Hotspot locations will be periodically reviewed to ensure inspection activities remain focused on areas of greatest risk or frequency of graffiti.

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.

### **4.4. Removal Responsibilities**

#### **4.4.1. Council Owned Assets**

Council is responsible for the removal of graffiti from assets owned and managed by Council, including buildings, open space infrastructure, street furniture and signage. Removal will occur in accordance with the classification and response timeframes outlined in section 4.2

#### **4.4.2. 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.

#### **4.4.3. Other Public Authorities**

Graffiti occurring on assets owned or managed by other public authorities including state controlled roads, transport infrastructure and utility providers, is generally the responsibility of the asset owner.

Where graffiti relates to assets owned or managed by another public authority or utility provider, Council will notify the relevant external organisation to organise removal of the graffiti.

Where Council has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with these organisations, Council may undertake removal on their behalf in accordance with the terms of the agreement.

Council may, at its discretion, recover the costs associated with the removal of graffiti from assets owned by other public authorities and will maintain records of all removal activities in line with governance requirements.

#### **4.4.4. Private Property**

Council may remove graffiti from private property in accordance with The Act (sections 18, 19 and 20) and relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020* (sections 11 and 47).

Council will ensure appropriate officers are delegated in accordance with sections 11(1) and 47(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and are appointed as authorised persons under section 19 of the *Graffiti Prevention Act 2007*, to lawfully exercise powers under sections 18(1)– (3) and 20 of that Act, including the service of notices and the removal or obliteration of graffiti from private property visible from a public place.

Removal may occur:

- With the consent of the property owner.
- Where council has issued notices under the Act and the property owner has not objected.
- Without the owner's consent, if authorised by legislative provisions including when graffiti is inaccessible, presents a safety risk or following the issuance of statutory notices under the Act.

Council may, at its discretion, recover the costs associated with the removal of graffiti from private property and will maintain records of all removal activities in line with governance requirements.

#### **4.4.5. 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.

#### 4.4.6. 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.

#### 4.4.7. Offensive graffiti removal

Under the provisions of the relevant legislation, Council can take action to remove or obliterate graffiti from private property when it is deemed offensive or when it affects 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. Writing racist, vilifying, or hateful graffiti in public places is prohibited under Victorian law. This includes criminal offences under the *Crimes Act 1958* and civil anti-vilification protections under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, which support prompt removal and enforcement

### 4.5. Special Circumstances

#### 4.5.1. 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. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)	<p>A planning approach that utilises urban and architectural design to reduce actual or potential criminal activity and improve perceptions of safety.</p> <p>Interventions can include improved lighting, landscape plantings, surface finishes (i.e. texture and colour), and property maintenance.</p>

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.'
Hotspot Location	Any location identified by Council as experiencing a high frequency or repeated occurrence of graffiti within a defined period.
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	Graffiti containing profanity, discriminatory language, or sexual content that does not pose an immediate safety or escalation risk.
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 Response Offensive Graffiti	Graffiti that contains threats, vilification, extremist messaging, or is located in high-visibility or sensitive community locations and presents a risk to community safety, cohesion, or Council reputation.

Stickers	Any adhesive backed material, including decals or labels, applied to surfaces without authorisation, which contains content that is discriminatory, or vilifying.
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.
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 Manager Operations.

## 6. Related Documents

Name	Location
Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 (Vic)	<a href="https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au">Victorian legislation   legislation.vic.gov.au</a>
Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)	<a href="https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au">Victorian legislation   legislation.vic.gov.au</a>
<i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i>	<a href="https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au">Victorian legislation   legislation.vic.gov.au</a>
<i>Crimes Act 1958</i>	<a href="https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au">Victorian legislation   legislation.vic.gov.au</a>
Melton City Council: Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025 - 2029	<a href="#">Home Melton City Council</a>
Melton City Council: Public Art Policy 2025 - 2028	<a href="#">Home Melton City Council</a>
Melton City Council General Local Law (2025)	<a href="#">Home Melton City Council</a>