

Councillor Dr Robert Clegg

Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Climate Action and Nature Recovery

Abbey House

Abbey Close

Abingdon

OXON, OX14 3JE

27 July 2026

Dear Robert,

Thank you so much for getting in touch with us. I am sorry, but not surprised, to hear of your struggles to reduce litter on our road network. It is little short of a national disgrace that our major roads are invariably lined with rubbish, which is not just an eyesore but dangerous to nature and drivers alike.

This issue that you have highlighted is also one we hear from volunteers. They tell us that they are more than willing to carry out litter picks in laybys and alongside busy roads but are prevented from taking action by the logistical and safety challenges. Similarly, it is clearly neither practical nor cost-effective for councils to be responsible for clearing an area over which they have so little control.

Thank you for making us aware that you have written to Heidi Alexander, who I note has stayed in post and I hope has paid attention to your request.

We have worked to develop public awareness campaigns, including "Don't be a Tosser", which reminds people of the legal consequences of littering from vehicles and "Death Trap: Bin it, Don't Kill it" which highlights the impact of litter on small mammals, an estimated 3 million of which are trapped and killed in bottles and cans each year. We have also campaigned for a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers, which has the potential to reduce the littering of cans and plastic bottles by up to 85%.

Thanks to sustained pressure from Keep Britain Tidy and other charities, the scheme will go live next October and will have a visible impact on roadside littering.

We will certainly continue to campaign to reduce roadside littering, both through educating drivers on their responsibility and the consequences of their actions, and through top-down policy changes that disincentivise littering and reduce the amount of packaging waste that is placed on the market in the first place. We are glad to hear that we have an ally in this work.

Yours sincerely,



Allison Ogden-Newton OBE
Chief Executive Officer