



# Graffiti Management Plan

## 2017 – 2022



**The 2017-2022 Graffiti Management Plan was adopted by the Tamworth Regional Council at its Ordinary Council Meeting on 27/06/2017**

Comments about this Plan are welcome.

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## 1 Acknowledgements

The presence of graffiti can result in people feeling unsafe. It often creates a perception that nobody cares about the area, and if left unattended it may attract more graffiti and may even promote other more serious crimes.

So, in keeping with the vision of our Community Strategic Plan to provide “safe places to live, work, play and visit”, Tamworth Regional Council is pleased to present this Graffiti Management Plan which provides a clear and consistent framework for the management of graffiti within the Region.

This Plan provides an integrated approach to graffiti management and aims to maintain the unique character, identity and culture within Tamworth city and our surrounding towns and villages.

Tamworth Regional Council would like to acknowledge the hard work and effort made by all members of the Tamworth Crime Prevention Working Group and other agencies in developing this Plan. These include representatives of the following:

- Oxley Local Area Command - Crime Prevention Team;
- NSW Department of Justice;
- NSW Department of Family and Community Services;
- Tamworth Aboriginal Community Consultative Committee;
- Tamworth and District Liquor Accord;
- Tamworth and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and
- Tamworth Taxi Industry.

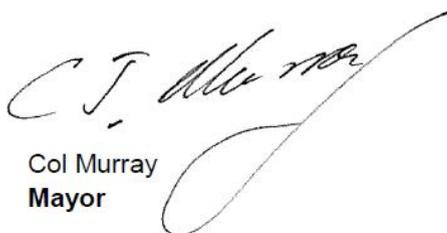
## 2 Mayor's Message

Tamworth Regional Council is committed to providing safe places to live, work, play and visit for residents and visitors. As part of this commitment, we recognise the negative impact that graffiti poses to the amenity of our towns and villages, and the threat it places on the tourism value of our region.

Council's Graffiti Management Plan 2017-2022 has been developed based on community consultation, our past experience in dealing with graffiti locally, as well as best practice principles to prevent and manage graffiti across four key areas; eradication, engagement, education and enforcement.

This document is designed to explain what constitutes graffiti and why some of it is a problem. It explains the distinction between when and where graffiti art is considered an engaging part of the community, and when it is deemed vandalism and wilful damage. The Plan also examines community expectations, the role of enforcement and how we can best measure the effectiveness of the strategies being implemented.

While Council recognises that it is not possible to completely eliminate graffiti, I believe this Plan outlines the best way for us to continue working proactively with the community and other stakeholders to manage the problem. Of course the community has its role to play, and I strongly encourage you to take the same zero tolerance approach to vandalism by reporting it in a timely manner and with as much detail as you can.



Col Murray  
Mayor

## 3 Background

The 2017–2022 Graffiti Management Plan has been formulated to enhance Tamworth Regional Council’s environment by minimising the impact of graffiti. This Plan provides Council with a framework through which to respond to the ongoing prevalence of graffiti across the Region, while ensuring adequate opportunity for engagement and communication with the community.

The 2017–2022 Plan is the second produced by Tamworth Regional Council. The first was developed and endorsed in 2010. This Plan forms a key strategic component of the broader Tamworth Regional Crime Prevention Plan.

### 3.1 What is Graffiti?

Graffiti refers to the act of marking property with writing, symbols or graphics. Graffiti is not a new phenomenon and can be linked to an activity which has a long history. The word ‘graffiti’ derives from the ancient Greek (‘graphein’, meaning ‘to write’) and from Latin (‘graffito’, meaning to ‘scratch’). When done without the permission of the property’s owner, graffiti is illegal and categorised as a form of vandalism or malicious damage.

Examples of graffiti include any inscription, word, figure or design that is marked, etched, scratched, drawn, sprayed, painted, pasted, applied or otherwise affixed to or on any surface of any infrastructure and includes any remnants of same such as adhesives, glues, tape, shadows or colour variations remaining after removal.

Graffiti is often performed in dangerous and difficult to access locations, such as alongside railway lines and on high buildings. Individuals who manage to tag in higher and more difficult locations achieve a higher stature amongst the graffiti subculture. In NSW, all graffiti on public or private property, unless done with the consent of the property owner, is a criminal offence.

## 4 Purpose of Plan

The Plan provides Council staff and community partners with a framework for responding to graffiti across the Tamworth Local Government Area. The primary purpose of the Plan is to deliver a range of actions which are designed to work effectively together to reduce graffiti vandalism across our region. A key theme of Council’s approach is one of collaboration and partnerships.

Overall, the aim of this Plan is to create and maintain better neighbourhoods for residents, businesses and visitors by effectively managing lawful graffiti and reducing incidents of graffiti vandalism.

## 5 Principles

The Graffiti Management Plan is based on the following principles:

- a. the need for an integrated program that considers a broad range of community interests including removal of graffiti from privately owned properties;
- b. addressing the concerns of residents and business operators in relation to graffiti and their right as the owner/occupier to maintain graffiti free assets;

- c. employing graffiti management strategies which are efficient and cost effective;
- d. the importance of community consultation including the involvement of youth;
- e. the need to involve all directorates within Council and key Government agencies regarding innovations to deter graffiti vandals, by way of design and planning concepts;
- f. the proven strategies of: Eradication, Education Engagement and Enforcement (New South Wales Premier's Department, 2000); and
- g. distinguishing between the need to remove graffiti applied without permission and street art or murals placed on walls and infrastructure with the approval of property owners in accordance with Council's planning laws and Public Art Engagement Strategy 2017 - 2021.

## 6 Current State

### 6.1 Scale of the problem within the TRC area

There is a constant and widespread level of concern from the community regarding the prevalence of graffiti across our region. In particular, the community has expressed their frustration with the type of graffiti that appears on publicly owned assets, especially graffiti which contains offensive content.

During the 36 month period between 1 July 2013 and up until the 30 June 2016, there were 290 incidents of unlawful graffiti recorded by Council across our region. The total cost to TRC for the removal was \$75,844. In addition, local business and community groups assisted by volunteering resources to remove graffiti from TRC assets providing an estimated saving of \$20,000 for TRC in graffiti removal works. When both totals are combined the true cost for graffiti removal for TRC during the 36 month reporting period reached \$95,844.

In order to reduce incidents of graffiti, Council regularly engages the community in formal and informal consultation aimed at identifying community concern. Concerns in relation to the prevalence of graffiti in the region are frequently expressed. Comments include the need to clean up prominent locations, the need to undertake rapid removal works, the need to identify offenders and have those individuals participate in remedial or constructive activities.

### 6.2 What is TRC doing now?

Tamworth Regional Council is involved in the following activities in an effort to proactively reduce incidents of graffiti across our region:

- a. establishing relationships with internal and external partners with the view to increase community awareness of the graffiti issue;
- b. ensuring that unlawful graffiti is removed as quickly as possible;
- c. ongoing 'Target hardening' programs designed around public spaces, utilising a variety of strategies to protect those assets from incidents of graffiti;
- d. the establishment of a legal graffiti wall adjacent to the public carpark in Solander Drive which was established as a result of consultation with the community;

- e. identifying young people at risk and engaging those individuals in diversionary programs which are designed to provide opportunities to participate in lawful and productive activities. This engagement has produced graffiti removal projects in Coledale and the development of a legal graffiti precinct at the existing Tamworth Skate Park in Peel Street;
- f. installation of new and the upgrading of existing closed circuit television, as well as the deployment of mobile CCTV in areas identified as potential 'hot spots';
- g. strengthened relationship with local Police which has led to the identification and prosecution of individuals involved in unlawful acts of graffiti;
- h. increased media around graffiti including coverage of incidents where offenders have been prosecuted; and
- i. creation of both graffiti and tag registers which makes possible the linking of separate incidents of graffiti to a common offender.

Over the past 3 years these strategies have contributed to a 73.1% decrease in reported incidents of unlawful graffiti and a decrease of 72.3% in the cost of graffiti removal across the Region.

## 7 Recording and Removal

### 7.1 Existing methods of recording and removal used by TRC

TRC currently uses the Customer Request Management System (CRMS) for the recording and subsequent removal of graffiti on Council property across the region. Council's CRMS is not only a great tool for Council to record, respond to and track the amount of graffiti in the region it also assists Council in fulfilling its statutory obligations with regard to recording information on graffiti. All councils have an obligation to maintain a Graffiti Register and report graffiti incidences and the removal along with tracking associated expenditure of that removal.

The CRMS process comprises the following:

- a. on receipt of the request or complaint through Council's Customer Service division staff generate an electronic work request for the removal of graffiti through the CRMS. The CRMS is used for the recording of any requests or complaints;
- b. the request is forwarded to the appropriate staff, who after completing the internal reporting mechanism and reporting the incident to Police will arrange for the removal;
- c. the works are then either attended to immediately (in the case of offensive graffiti) or programmed for removal at a later date; and
- d. on completion of the work, the request is finalised in the database.

## 8 Understanding Graffiti

### 8.1 What are the types of graffiti?

Type	Description
Pieces	These are large, mural-style works that may incorporate a signature. The term 'pieces' is short for masterpieces.
Slogans	Word(s) describing an issue (often political or social commentary), and can involve obscene, racist, or threatening themes.
Stencils	Where a template is made and a design spray painted on to a wall.
Tags	A tag is the signature or nick name of a graffiti writer often written or etched on almost any surface using implements such as pens, spray paint or permanent marker. The tag may appear to look just like 'scribble' but each tag has a personal meaning for the graffiti writer. A tag is a graffiti writer's signature. This is the most common form of graffiti; throw-ups are a 'fat' bubble style outline of a word (usually a tag name) drawn quickly. Tags can also be gang or group related.
Other forms	There are other forms of graffiti such as etching (scratching of a surface through use of rock, etching tools and or sharp objects), stickers and billposters.

### 8.2 Who writes Graffiti?

Most profiling suggests that offenders are usually male, aged from 12 to 25 years and from a broad range of social backgrounds.

Tagging is more common amongst teenagers, while street art, stenciling and slogan writing is often done by people in their late teens and twenties. There is evidence that writers with an aptitude for the activity will continue well into their 20s and 30s.

The vast majority of persons are introduced to graffiti by friends and acquaintances.

Many of those involved in unlawful graffiti as disengaged from education and the work force.

Once exposed to graffiti production, many make the conscious decision to continue engaging in the activity because they derive pleasure from it. Graffiti is an activity which often evokes strong feelings of self-esteem, satisfaction and gratification.

### 8.3 Why do people carry out Graffiti?

There are a variety of reasons why people carry out graffiti including:

- a. malicious intent;
- b. notoriety or recognition by peers (fame);
- c. a response to boredom or social outlet;
- d. thrill seeking linked to risk taking behaviour;
- e. an outlet for artistic expression and a recreational pursuit;
- f. rebellion (gang related and to be part of a group); and

- g. other reasons which may include a dare, to make a statement (social or political expression), retaliation to compete, to annoy others (particularly adults) and peer pressure.

## 8.4 Why is Graffiti a problem?

Graffiti is widely considered a ‘Gateway Crime’, that is a crime that on its own may seem innocuous however often leads to more serious crimes. Graffiti is a social issue with wide spread impact on public and private infrastructure in communities across the world.

Unlawful graffiti is one of the most visible of all crime and disorder issues that may occur in a community. Graffiti as vandalism impacts negatively on perceptions of safety and wellbeing. Graffiti may also be perceived as being indicative of a general decline in the quality of public spaces.

Community concerns about the presence of graffiti include:

Consequence	Impact to Community
Damage to property	Graffiti is a problem for property owners because it damages their property, can cost a significant amount of money to remove and may have a negative impact on the value of their property.
Costs to the community	The financial costs of graffiti are significant with the impact felt in a variety of ways such as resources including staff (reporting, removal, and monitoring), Police (enforcement), the legal system, corrections, insurance premiums, and the treatment of properties for prevention. The removal process can be costly and can also create costs through damage to the original surface and costs associated with replacing vandalised signage.
Unattractive and unsightly	The presence of graffiti can have a negative impact on the presentation of the region.
Community perception of disorder and criminal behaviour	Graffiti adds to community perceptions of “disorder”, fear of criminal activity and feelings of general “lawlessness” in our society. Unchecked, graffiti in a neighbourhood can send a signal that the authorities (such as police and local councils) are not managing the environment properly. Many people, particularly the elderly, feel that an area with graffiti is unsafe, and that the graffiti is symbolic of a society that is “out of control”. Property which has deteriorated and appears uncared for is therefore seen as an easy target for vandalism, which leads to further deterioration of the property.
Graffiti may involve young people in cross offending behaviour	Young people who are involved with graffiti may also be involved with other offences such as shoplifting for materials, fighting between gangs or individuals, vandalism and forceful entry to private property. It may also encourage vulnerable youth to engage in more serious crime.

## 9 Legislative Framework

There are a number of pieces of legislation that directly impact on the management of graffiti at a local level. The main act is the *Graffiti Control Act 2008* (the Act) which was proclaimed on 10 February 2008. The Act consolidated previously existing graffiti-related offences into one Act, extending the reach of graffiti offences to cover more than just those that involve the use of spray paint.

### 9.1 Graffiti Control Act 2008 Part 2

Part 2 of the Act deals with graffiti-related offences which include:

Section of Act	Description of section
Section 4 <i>Maximum penalty</i>	Damaging or defacing property by means if graffiti implement <b>4 penalty units or 20 penalty units or imprisonment for 12 months in circumstances of aggravation</b>
Section 5 <i>Maximum penalty</i>	Possession of a graffiti implement <b>10 penalty units or imprisonment for 6 months</b>
Section 6 <i>Maximum penalty</i>	Posting bills (affixing placards or paper etc) <b>4 penalty units</b>

*Please Note: One penalty unit is equivalent to \$110*

### 9.2 Graffiti Control Act 2008 Part 3

**Part 3** of the Act makes it illegal for anyone to sell or supply spray paint cans to persons under the age of 18 whilst placing restrictions on the manner in which retailers can display spray paint cans. This part of the Act also provides Police with the power to seize spray paint cans from minors.

Section of Act	Description of section
Section 7 <i>Maximum penalty</i>	Sales of spray paint cans to persons under 18 <b>10 penalty units</b>
Section 8 <i>Maximum penalty</i>	Unsecured display by retailers of spray paint cans <b>10 penalty units</b>
Section 8A <i>Maximum penalty</i>	Supply of spray paint cans to persons under 18 <b>10 penalty units</b>
Section 8B <i>Maximum penalty</i>	Possession of spray paint cans by persons under 18 <b>10 penalty units</b>

*Please Note: One penalty unit is equivalent to \$110*

### 9.3 Graffiti Control Act 2008 Part 4

The Act provides councils with the power to remove graffiti where the graffiti can be seen and accessed from a public place. The removal of graffiti from private property is set out in Part 4 of the Act.

Section of Act	Description of section
Section 11	Empowers council with the agreement of the owner or occupier to carry out graffiti removal work on private property.
Section 12	<p>Empowers council to carry out graffiti removal work without agreement of the owner or occupier.</p> <p>The conditions for which this may occur are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a local council may, without the agreement of the owner or occupier of any land carry out graffiti removal work to property on that land if the graffiti concerned is visible from a public place;</li> <li>• the graffiti removal work referred to in sub-section 1 may only be carried out from a public place;</li> <li>• the local council concerned is to bear the cost of graffiti removal work referred to in sub- section 1;</li> <li>• if a local council carries out graffiti removal work in accordance with this section the council must, within a reasonable period, give the owner or occupier of the land concerned written;</li> <li>• notice that the work has occurred; and</li> <li>• a local council must pay compensation for any damage caused by the council in carrying out graffiti removal work in accordance with this section.</li> </ul>
Section 13	<p>Requires a register to be kept of graffiti removal work. The conditions for this section are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a local council must keep a register of graffiti removal work carried out in accordance with this Part;</li> <li>• the register is to specify in respect of each incidence of graffiti removal work carried out:</li> <li>• the owner or occupier of the premises on which the graffiti was situated; and</li> <li>• the nature of the work carried out; and</li> <li>• the actual cost, or an estimate of the cost at current market rates, of carrying out the work, and</li> <li>• in the case of graffiti removal work carried out in accordance with section 11, the actual amount charged by the local council for carrying out the work.</li> </ul>

## 10 Graffiti Management Strategy

There are six broad themes which provide the framework for the Graffiti Management Strategy. These themes along with associated objectives are listed as follows:

Themes	Objectives
Removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assist in the removal of graffiti on council owned property, businesses and local households;</li> <li>remove graffiti as quickly as possible as a deterrent;</li> <li>remove graffiti using environmentally sustainable methods to minimise harm to the environment;</li> <li>promote a do-it-yourself approach in responding to illegal graffiti issues at a local community level.</li> </ul>
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increase the reporting of graffiti incidents to the Oxley Local Area Command and TRC;</li> <li>maintain a comprehensive reporting mechanism to ensure incident details are captured accurately so as to be used in developing future strategies.</li> </ul>
Education and Community Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improve community access to information about graffiti;</li> <li>reduce fear of crime;</li> <li>provide information and support to other groups and individuals who are reporting and removing graffiti.</li> </ul>
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>development of strategies aimed at reducing the opportunity for graffiti;</li> <li>enhance the region's built and natural environment by reducing incidents of graffiti;</li> <li>conduct target hardening audits at identified hot spots;</li> <li>reduce the social, environmental and economic impact of graffiti;</li> <li>involve the local community and young people as partners in reducing graffiti;</li> <li>develop Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) procedures for new developments.</li> </ul>
Diversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>divert and discourage those who may have a predilection towards graffiti;</li> <li>divert graffiti vandals and potential graffiti vandals away from anti-social and potentially criminal activity, towards positive and productive pursuits improve life skills and opportunities.</li> </ul>
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work within the legislative framework and with the Oxley Local Area Command to achieve enforcement.</li> <li>utilise CCTV to monitor existing and emerging 'hot spots'.</li> </ul>

## 10.1 Removal

There are a range of options associated with the removal of graffiti on private and public property. The key options are outlined as follows:

Themes	Objectives
Rapid Removal	<p>The prompt removal of graffiti is important in order to discourage repeat offences. Removal of graffiti should be done as soon as possible because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• solvents dissolve paint more easily if it is not completely dried and hardened;</li> <li>• the appearance of the property and the neighbourhood is improved, making it a less likely target for future acts of vandalism; and</li> <li>• illegal graffitists will be deprived of the reward/satisfaction of recognition.</li> </ul> <p>Rapid removal counteracts one motivation of the graffitist, which is peer recognition. Rapid removal also dispels the sense of disorder, which can evolve in communities where unwanted, illegal graffiti remains. For these reasons it is important that residents and businesses act responsibly to promptly remove illegal graffiti from their property, or at least to report the presence of illegal graffiti in their neighbourhood as soon as it appears.</p>
Graffiti Removal from Council Property	<p>TRC currently uses its Customer Request Management System (CRMS) for reporting graffiti incidents from which an electronic work request for the removal of graffiti on Council property is generated.</p> <p>The request is forwarded to the appropriate division, where it is referred to the relevant staff for attention. Removal works are then either attended to as a priority (in the case of offensive graffiti) or programmed for removal at a later date. On completion of the work, the request is finalised from the database.</p> <p>Council's CRMS is not only a great tool for Council to record, respond to and track the amount of graffiti, but the system also assists Council in fulfilling its statutory obligations with regard to recording information on graffiti.</p>
Graffiti Removal from Private Property	<p>Graffiti is the responsibility of not only Council but also government agencies and private property owners. It is the responsibility of the owner of the property to remove illegal graffiti including billposters.</p>

Themes	Objectives
Removal by Agreement with Council	<p>Council acknowledges that the removal of graffiti from private property can be costly and time consuming for the owner. Section 11 of the <i>Graffiti Control Act 2008</i> allows Council, where it is appropriate, to remove graffiti from private property with the consent of the owner. As graffiti removal works may be damaging to building surfaces, Council will not undertake any works unless it is in the public interest and a legal agreement between both parties is in place. The agreement will allow Council to remove the unlawful graffiti at no cost to the property owner. It should be noted that this will only occur in limited circumstances.</p> <p>When removing graffiti, Council will take all precautions to avoid any damage to private property and where possible will tailor graffiti removal to the building requirements. However, prior to any works being undertaken a signed agreement will require the property owner not to seek compensation from Council for any damage caused as a result of the graffiti removal.</p> <p><b>Section 12</b> of the Act allows Council in certain circumstances to conduct graffiti removal work without the consent of the owner or occupier. These works can only be conducted under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sub section 1</i> - a local council may, without the agreement of the owner or occupier of any land, carry out graffiti removal work to property on that land if the graffiti concerned is visible from a public place;</li> <li>• the graffiti removal work referred to in subsection 1 may only be carried out from a public place;</li> <li>• the local council concerned is to bear the cost of graffiti removal work referred to in subsection 1;</li> <li>• if a local council carries out graffiti removal work in accordance with this section, the council must, within a reasonable period, give the owner or occupier of the land concerned written notice that the work has occurred;</li> <li>• a local council must pay compensation for any damage caused by the council in carrying out graffiti removal work in accordance with this section.</li> </ul> <p>Works under Section 12 will only be carried out in extreme circumstances.</p>
Removal Methods	<p>There are a number of methods to deal with the removal of graffiti. These include but are not limited to chemical removal, painting over, replacing the object damaged or removal of the object altogether. An Easy Graffiti Removal Guide is provided on the next page. An alternative for private property owners is to engage Council to remove graffiti through a Graffiti Removal Agreement.</p>

# Easy Graffiti Removal

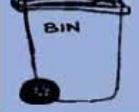
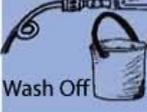
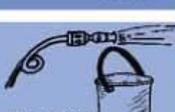
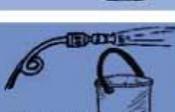
Surface	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
 <p><b>Traffic Signs</b></p>	 <p>Apply Methylated Spirits</p>	 <p>Rag</p>	 <p>Wash Off</p>		
 <p><b>Steel &amp; Aluminium</b> (Including Steel Playground Equipment)</p>	 <p>Apply Methylated Spirits</p>	 <p>OR</p>	 <p>Wash Off</p>		
 <p><b>Plastic Garbage Bins</b></p>	 <p>Apply Methylated Spirits</p>	 <p>OR</p>	 <p>Wash Off</p>		
 <p><b>Plastic Playground Equipment</b></p>	 <p>Apply Graffiti Remover</p>	 <p>OR</p>	 <p>Wash Off</p>		
 <p><b>Colorbond Fence</b></p>	 <p>Apply Graffiti Remover to SMALL AREA</p>	 <p>Very soft Brush</p>	 <p><b>WARNING</b></p>	 <p>Wash Off Straight Away</p>	 <p>Paint Over</p>
 <p><b>Unpainted Brick</b></p>	 <p>Apply Graffiti Remover</p>	 <p>5 MIN</p>		 <p>Wash Off</p>	 <p>Repeat Steps 1-4 until clean</p>
 <p><b>Painted Brick</b></p>	 <p>Paint Over</p>	<p>OR</p>	 <p>Methylated Spirits + soft brush</p>	 <p>Wash Off</p>	
 <p><b>Telstra, RTA Control Boxes</b></p>	 <p>Apply Methylated Spirits</p>	 <p>Rag</p>		 <p>Wash Off</p>	
 <p><b>Footpaths, Besser Bricks</b></p>	 <p>Apply Methylated Spirits</p>	<p>OR</p>  <p>Graffiti Remover</p>		 <p>Wash Off</p>	
 <p><b>Unpainted &amp; Painted</b></p>	 <p>Paint Over</p>				

Chart developed by **Blacktown City Council**

**Notes:**

Always read the labels on the graffiti removal products and follow safety directions.

Council acknowledges the development of the Guide by the Blacktown City Council.

## 10.2 Reporting

Reporting is essential for effective management of graffiti in our community. Council encourages the reporting of graffiti by members of the community as well as internal staff.

Council has a Customer Request Management System (CRMS) which is used to register reports of graffiti. Reports of graffiti on Council buildings, plant & equipment are forwarded by the Customer Service staff using the CRMS generated work request to the appropriate staff member to remove accordingly. Any reports of graffiti on non-council property are recorded for information purposes only, with the exception of that deemed to be offensive in which case Council may remove in the interest of the broader community. The CRMS is also used to generate reports on the incidence of graffiti.

### 10.2.1 Graffiti Register

**Section 13** of the *Graffiti Control Act 2008* requires Council to develop and implement a graffiti register. Council has implemented a graffiti register which will continue to operate in order to record graffiti incidents and provide regular reporting to the local Police, Council and the community.

A tag register involves digitally photographing tags and cataloguing details such as location (GPS), date, and material used. Should an offender be identified, Police may be able to link the person to multiple offences. It also enables the mapping of graffiti vandalism events. Police support the establishment of a database of illegal graffiti photos, which forms a useful source of intelligence for use in enforcement.

### 10.2.2 Public Enquiries and Reporting

Where graffiti has been discovered on Council owned property, members of the community are encouraged to report those incidents to Council on Council's Customer Service Lines (02) 6767 5555. Reports may also be made via e-mail ([www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au)) or through smart phone Apps. Those incidents reported will be given a priority rating and referred to the appropriate staff for attention.

Reporting of graffiti vandalism taking place or information on graffiti offences should be reported to the Oxley Local Area Command Police on (02) 6768 2999.

## 10.3 Education and Community Awareness

### 10.3.1 Education

Graffiti offenders are often young people of school age. Council acknowledges that education is a key strategy in order to address unlawful graffiti across our region.

Council will liaise with the Education Department and School Liaison Officers to provide schools with support in developing an Anti-Graffiti Education Program to schools.

It has also been recognised that many of the young people involved in graffiti are disengaged from main stream education. The challenge is to find alternate pathways to reach those individuals. One of the strategies being developed to target disengaged youth involves the development of inclusive diversionary projects.

### 10.3.2 Community Awareness

A better informed community is more likely to adopt prevention measures and change from being passive victims to becoming active participants combating illegal graffiti within their community. To achieve a positive and tangible impact on behaviour, the public must be aware of the extent to which the graffiti problem exists. They also must also be armed with knowledge and skills to prevent unlawful graffiti as well as having the confidence reported incidence will be investigated.

The Council's Graffiti Management Program will be promoted to residents and Council's Community Development Committees as part of Council's regular communications such as newsletters, social media and traditional media outlets.

## 10.4 Prevention

Prevention is an important component of any graffiti management plan. The rationale behind the preventative technique is to ensure the risk outweighs the reward which gradually changes the attitude and behaviour of graffiti vandals, while empowering the community to actively engage in the prevention of graffiti. There are a number of techniques which can be employed to prevent people vandalising property. These strategies can be used by both private residential and commercial / business property owners.

Preventative techniques refer mostly to environmental measures that are used to minimise the opportunity or occurrences of graffiti vandalism. Preventative techniques include design, education and diversion strategies which are dealt with further in this Plan.

### 10.4.1 Prevention through Design

There are a many design and management techniques that can be utilised to reduce the incidence of graffiti and vandalism. These methods can be used to discourage or limit the severity of graffiti. One highly successful method is implementing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

The CPTED principles include the following measures to reduce incidents of graffiti.

#### Lighting

Lighting can be an effective prevention technique. Dark areas are often targets for graffiti due to low visibility from the residents or pedestrians. Graffiti is often conducted under the cover of darkness, to lessen the risk of getting caught or reported. Therefore a well-lit area will discourage graffiti.

#### Addressing Blank Canvases

The design of walls can influence the mindset of an individual considering an act of graffiti. Textured surfaces can impact adversely on graffiti and as such walls can often seem less inviting to those individuals.

A further recommended preventative technique for blank walls is painting them certain colours such as grey or dark green. Whilst not effective against all colours, painting your wall or fence a dark colour may provide a poor base for colours often used by taggers. This can result in the graffiti standing out less which detracts from one of the individual's main goals of recognition.

### Landscaping

Planting trees and shrubs along walls and fence lines is a successful graffiti prevention strategy which is designed to limit access to walls and blank canvases. Landscaping can be used as a barrier due to its density, height and texture, which can deter offenders. Graffiti is often created to gain recognition amongst peers. The planting of certain types of vegetation does not allow graffiti to be seen, therefore removing a key motive for graffiti, discouraging potential offenders.

Selection of vegetation is important and care needs to be taken to ensure that landscaping does not produce an unwanted consequence and create a hiding space for potential offenders.

There are a number of plants which are considered appropriate for screening purposes. It is recommended that advice is sought from a local nursery about what type of plant you require.

Some recommended native varieties of screening plants include:

- a. **Climbing Plants** (these may need a surface to assist coverage): Clematis or Travelers Joy, Kangaroo Vine.
- b. **Screening Plants** (choose a plant suitable to the height of the fence and available space surrounding the affected area): Grevillea, Banksia, Bottlebrush, Casuarina or She-oak.
- c. **Spiky Plants** (choose a plant suitable to your circumstance): Acacia, Banksia, Bursaria, Grevillea, Hakea, Lomandra, Melaleuca or Solanum.

#### **10.4.2 Anti-Graffiti Coatings**

There are many companies who supply anti-graffiti coatings that can be applied to surfaces which are regularly subjected to acts of graffiti or are at risk of being vandalised. Anti-graffiti coatings are a clear paint like substance that can make it easier to remove graffiti as it does not allow graffiti paints to soak into the building material.

Graffiti coatings fall into two categories: Permanent and non-permanent coatings.

- a. Non-permanent or sacrificial coatings are usually made of an acrylic base with either silicon or wax compound. These products will be partly removed when you remove the graffiti, making it necessary to reapply the graffiti coating to the area. Non-permanent coatings are usually cheaper than permanent coatings and are usually safer for do-it-yourself application.
- b. Permanent or non-sacrificial coatings last longer and will not have to be applied again for some time. These products are often more hazardous, and may need to be applied by a professional graffiti removal company. Park furniture, signs, bus shelters or walls can be coated with an anti-graffiti coating.

It is recommended that professional advice is sought prior to any anti-graffiti coatings being applied.

#### **10.4.3 Design of Public Furniture and Equipment**

Public furniture and equipment is often a target for graffiti and wherever possible design should include the use of materials that are easy to remove for graffiti management and which are difficult to graffiti. For example, use materials such as

mesh to cover blank walls. Mesh will provide a textured surface that is more difficult to graffiti.

#### 10.4.4 Murals

There is research available to suggest that the painting of murals may be an effective deterrent for graffiti. Respect for the artistic and the creative thought that has gone into the mural may act as a deterrent to graffiti tags. Murals could be considered in high graffiti areas, and consulting youth for designs of these walls will promote an element of ownership.

Murals are a proactive strategy in minimising graffiti while also brightening up a dull area or wall. Business or commercial property owners can commission artists to have the mural designed in a way that promotes the business to the public.



Commissioned art work on a privately owned building in Brisbane Street, Tamworth

## 10.5 Diversion

Evidence indicates that the most effective strategies for the reduction of illegal graffiti are by rapid removal coupled with diversionary programs or activities. Diversionary programs create opportunities to undertake constructive and legal activities.

Examples of such activities are:

- a. the development of murals;
- b. establishment of legal walls for street art;
- c. legal street art programs;
- d. sponsored graffiti competitions;
- e. graffiti art workshops; and
- f. graffiti programs during holiday periods.

These activities are aimed at changing the attitudes and behaviours of vandals through valuing skills and encouraging self-improvement.

Diversion focuses on engaging potential graffiti vandals to participate in positive community based projects; developing a positive community image for youth, and implementing education about graffiti throughout the community.

Council recognises that graffiti is an element of youth culture and as such aims to provide acceptable, legal opportunities for engagement and expression.

Successful diversion programs aim to:

- a. develop and promote recreation and personal development activities for youth in an attempt to positively involve youth in the TRC Local Government Area;
- b. investigate and promote opportunities for local youth involvement in public art projects;
- c. keeping potential graffiti vandals occupied through engagement in positive community- based projects;
- d. raising the self-esteem of young people;
- e. promoting a sense of responsibility for ownership of community resources;
- f. develop a positive profile of graffitiists in the community;
- g. provide graffiti education initiatives at the primary, secondary and tertiary level; and
- h. involve graffitiists in the development of graffiti management programs.



Commissioned art work at Granny Munro Park, Tamworth

### 10.5.1 Managing legal walls

The public display of graffiti is an integral part of the culture to which graffiti belongs.

Tamworth Regional Council recognises the need to work closely with young people and graffiti artists to increase the effectiveness of diversionary programs.

Legal walls may deter graffiti incidents such as tagging by providing a legal outlet but only when the wall is maintained. Council aims to effectively manage existing and future legal walls.



TRC's legal wall which is located adjacent to Solander Drive, Tamworth

### 10.6 Enforcement

Enforcement is a necessary part of graffiti management. It provides a deterrent to potential offenders. Unlawful graffiti is illegal in New South Wales with most graffiti related offences in NSW prosecuted under the *Graffiti Control Act 2008*. It is Council's intention to build upon an already strong partnership with the local police providing assistance to identify and prosecute offenders.

Council has invested in technology including CCTV, GPS interface and other tools for use by TRC staff. This will assist in gathering intelligence on graffiti incidents which may be used by Police in the prosecution of graffiti vandals.

## 11 Graffiti Management Plan Action Matrix – Tamworth Regional Council

The timeframes are presented Immediate – 1 to 2 years; Medium 2-4 years and Long-Term 4+years.

1. Strategy: Removal					
Objective: Assist in the removal of graffiti on Council owned property, businesses and local households.					
Ref	Action Description	Lead Agency	Partnership Opportunities	Priority	Performance Indicator
GMP1.1	Rapid removal of graffiti undertaken on Council owned assets.	Council	Local cleaning contractors, Community Groups.	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in graffiti on Council owned sites.</li> <li>Targets met: Council will endeavor to remove graffiti from Council priority areas (Appendix) within five (5) to seven (7) working days of registering the incident in the CRMS.</li> <li>Council will aim to remove offensive graffiti from Council buildings and infrastructure within 24 hours of registering the incident in CRMS.</li> </ul>
GMP 1.2	Trial the provision of graffiti clean-up kits for local residents and businesses	Council	Police, Chamber of Commerce, Local Residents, Community Groups.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase removal rates of graffiti on local businesses and residential areas</li> </ul>
GMP 1.3	Undertake a comprehensive clean-up of priority areas where graffiti occurs.	Council	Community Groups, Local Residents, Chambers of Commerce, Local Cleaning Contractors and State Government Agencies.	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graffiti removed from identified priority areas.</li> </ul>
GMP 1.4	Promote graffiti removal from community assets.	Council	Local Community Groups.	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual community clean-up events.</li> </ul>
GMP 1.5	Engage with existing government and NGO agencies to encourage and assist with graffiti removal.	Council	Local Cleaning Contractors, Chamber of Commerce, Government Agencies and NGOs.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number of project partners for graffiti removal.</li> </ul>

## 1. Strategy: Removal

**Objective: Assist in the removal of graffiti on Council owned property, businesses and local households.**

Ref	Action Description	Lead Agency	Partnership Opportunities	Priority	Performance Indicator
GMP 1.6	Encourage the removal of graffiti by using environmentally sustainable methods to minimise harm to the environment.	Council	Local Cleaning Contractors, Chamber of Commerce, Government Agencies and NGOs.	Long	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number of sustainable graffiti removal methods and products used.</li> </ul>

## 2. Strategy: Reporting

**Objective: Increase the reporting of graffiti incidents to Police and Council**

Ref	Action Description	Lead Agency	Partnership Opportunities	Priority	Performance Indicator
GMP2.1	Encourage reporting of graffiti incidents to Council and conduct a promotional campaign publicising Council's various contact options.	Council	Councilors, Council staff, CDC's and 355 Committees.	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in the number of reported incidents on the CRMS.</li> </ul>
GMP2.2	Develop a Tag Register of offenders.	Council	Oxley Local Area Command.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register of local tags developed and maintained.</li> </ul>
GMP2.3	Review existing policy on vandalism and develop a Policy on Graffiti Management.	Council	Local Residents.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vandalism Policy reviewed.</li> <li>Graffiti Management Policy adopted.</li> </ul>
GMP2.4	In consultation with Police, develop a graffiti information sharing protocol.	Council	Oxley Local Area Command.	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graffiti information sharing protocol developed and signed by Council and Oxley Local Area Command.</li> </ul>

### 3. Education and Community Awareness

#### Objective: Improve community access to information about graffiti

Ref	Action Description	Lead Agency	Partnership Opportunities	Priority	Performance Indicator
GMP3.1	Provide graffiti prevention and management tips on Council's website, including a link to <a href="http://www.graffiti.nsw.gov.au">www.graffiti.nsw.gov.au</a> .	Council	Oxley Local Area Command.	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website information up to date</li> </ul>
GMP3.2	Liaise with local primary and secondary schools to develop and provide an education package and/or competition and/or presentation for students about graffiti and its negative impacts on the community and the local area.	Oxley Local Area Command	Education Department, Local Schools and Council.	Long	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of schools that received the packages / presentation / competition</li> </ul>
GMP3.3	Provide training for staff in CPTED and other relevant areas as required to assist with graffiti management.	Council	Oxley Local Area Command.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of staff through training programs.</li> </ul>
GMP3.4	Prepare education packages for local businesses about graffiti management.	Council	Chamber of Commerce & Oxley Local Area Command.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of packages distributed to local businesses.</li> </ul>

#### 4. Prevention

**Objective: Development of strategies aimed at reducing the opportunity for graffiti.**

Ref	Action Description	Lead Agency	Partnership Opportunities	Priority	Performance Indicator
GMP4.1	Undertake assessments of development applications using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.	Council	Oxley Local Area Command.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations made on developments and upgrades to reduce opportunity for graffiti.</li> </ul>
GMP4.2	Undertake CPTED assessments and make recommendations on identified graffiti 'hot spots'.	Council	Oxley Local Area Command & Chamber of Commerce.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remediation of factors that contribute to graffiti and vandalism.</li> </ul>

#### 5. Diversion:

**Objective: Divert and discourage those who may have a predilection towards graffiti**

Ref	Action Description	Lead Agency	Partnership Opportunities	Priority	Performance Indicator
GMP5.1	Provide assistance to youth service groups to undertake street art projects in the local area and further investigate appropriate means of provision and management of street art.	Council	Youth Centre consortium, PCYC and Schools.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of approved murals developed in the LGA.</li> </ul>
GMP5.2	Identify locations for the placement of street art in public spaces.	Council	Youth Centre consortium, PCYC, Schools and Media.	Long	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of locations identified across the LGA.</li> </ul>
GMP5.3	Encourage opportunities for positive street art activities through Council's Public Art Engagement Strategy 2016 - 2021.	Council	Youth Centre consortium, PCYC, Schools and Media.	Long	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program developed to provide opportunities for positive community based art activities.</li> </ul>

## 6. Enforcement:

**Objective: To work with the legislative framework and with the OLAC to ensure enforcement**

Ref	Action Description	Lead Agency	Partnership Opportunities	Priority	Performance Indicator
GMP6.1	Investigate and employ technology including CCTV, computer and GPS interface to gather intelligence on graffiti incidents which may be used by Police in the prosecution of graffiti vandals.	Oxley Local Area Command	Council, Security Businesses.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of offenders prosecuted.</li> </ul>

## 12 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Graffiti Management Plan will be monitored in the following ways:

- a. Council's Annual Report and Annual Operational Plan;
- b. a report to Council on an annual basis;
- c. progress reports on a bi-monthly basis to the Crime Prevention Working Group; and
- d. community feedback via media and received communications.

This Plan has a projected life span for an initial six year period with review and amendment as required in 2022.

## 13 Appendix

### 13.1 Priority zones

Priority zones have been identified in this plan as they are graffiti hot spot areas and therefore of high concern to Council and the Community.

Zone	Description
Gateways to the Tamworth city, towns and villages (primarily road signs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRC region</li> </ul>
Community centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tamworth Regional Youth Centre</li> <li>• Tamworth Regional Community Centre</li> </ul>
Commercial centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Business Districts across the TRC region</li> </ul>
Shopping centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRC region</li> </ul>
Council infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs</li> <li>• Bike paths</li> </ul>
Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The play equipment, public amenities buildings, barbeque facilities, bus shelters and private property fronting these public spaces are targets for graffiti.</li> </ul>
Public Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sporting Fields</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• Museums (Regional Art Gallery, Powerstation Museum)</li> <li>• Recreational areas</li> </ul>
Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major arterial roads</li> </ul>

Zone	Description
State Government Infrastructure -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These high visibility infrastructures are a prime target for graffiti. The high risk involved in accessing these areas also adds to the attraction.</li> <li>• Railway Pylons at Viaduct Park</li> </ul>

## 14 Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
Graffiti Register	A Graffiti Register is a register which is developed and maintained in accordance with section 13 of the <i>Graffiti Control Act 2008</i> .
Hip Hop	Hip hop is the name of the youth subculture which involves rap music, a particular style of slang language and a visual artistic style often referred to as aerosol art.
Legal walls and murals – Street Art	Legal walls are provided for painting and may be managed or have limited or little supervision. Murals are those paintings which are commissioned by private organisations or carried out as community art projects by local councils and community groups.
Other forms	There are other forms of graffiti such as etching (scratching of a surface through use of rock, etching tools and or sharp objects), stickers and billposters.
Oxley LAC	Oxley Local Area Command Police.
Pieces	These are large, mural-style works that may incorporate a signature. The term 'pieces' is short for masterpieces.
Slogans	Word(s) describing an issue (often political or social commentary), and can involve obscene, racist, or threatening themes.
Stencils	Where a template is made and a design spray painted on to a wall.
Tags	A tag is the signature or nick name of a graffiti writer often written or etched on almost any surface using implements such as pens, spray paint or permanent marker. The tag may appear to look just like 'scribble' but each tag has a personal meaning for the graffiti writer. A tag is a graffiti writer's signature and can be gang or group related. This is the most common form of graffiti.
Throw-ups	'Fat' bubble style outline of a word (usually a tag name) drawn quickly.
TRC	Tamworth Regional Council.
LGA	Local Government Area.
CRMS	Customer Request Management System (managed by the Tamworth Regional Council).