

Litter Prevention Toolkit Discussion Guide - Communities

A Guide for Engaging Communities in Litter Prevention

Communities hold the power to create meaningful, lasting change in the fight against litter. By working together, we can protect Melbourne's environment, improve public spaces, and foster a sense of pride and ownership.

This guide equips community members, groups, and organisations with practical tools and messages to engage their neighbourhoods, reduce litter, and protect local waterways.

While not exhaustive, this guide provides prompts and strategies to kickstart community-driven initiatives and support the broader goals of the "Bin It or Bring It Home" campaign.



Why Communities Matter

Context

- Environmental Impact: Litter travels from streets to waterways, harming wildlife and polluting rivers and oceans.
- Community Wellbeing: Clean spaces encourage outdoor activity, strengthen community pride, and deter antisocial behaviour.
- Economic Savings: Preventing litter reduces clean-up costs and allows resources to be redirected to other vital community needs.

What's in It for Communities?

- Cleaner Neighbourhoods: A litter-free environment improves liveability and safety.
- Stronger Connections: Community clean-up events foster collaboration and build relationships among neighbours.
- Empowered Action: Local groups have the opportunity to lead by example and inspire others.



The Bigger Picture: Benefits of Litter Prevention

1. Protecting Local Ecosystems

"Every piece of litter removed from the streets reduces pollution in our waterways and protects wildlife from harm."

2. Building a Sense of Pride

"Communities that care for their environment reflect their values, making them more attractive places to live and visit."

3. Creating Safer Spaces

"Clean areas deter littering, reduce hazards like broken glass, and enhance the safety and beauty of public spaces."



How Communities Can Make a Difference

Engaging Activities for Community Groups

1. Neighbourhood Clean-Up Events

- Host regular clean-ups in parks, streets, and shared spaces.
- Partner with local councils for resources like gloves, bags, and bins.
- Audit litter collected to understand what common items are regularly found and where they might be coming from. Create a Source Reduction Plan.

2. Adopt-a-Spot Initiatives

- Encourage groups or families to take responsibility for keeping a specific area clean.
- Recognise and celebrate their efforts with community awards.

3. Education Campaigns

- Use local newsletters, social media, or noticeboards to share tips on proper waste disposal and recycling.
- Highlight the environmental and social costs of littering.
- Promote the Bin it or Bring it Home Campaign

4. Community Challenges

- Organise competitions, such as 'Most Improved Street' or 'Best Waste-Free Event.'
- Reward winners with community recognition or small prizes.

5. Creative Projects

- Encourage art installations made from recycled materials to raise awareness of litter's impact.
- Use murals or signage to promote anti-littering messages.



How to Engage Your Community

Approaching Safely and Effectively

- Start by connecting with local leaders or influential community members.
- Share the goals of the "Bin It or Bring It Home" campaign and how it benefits everyone.
- Be inclusive—listen to community concerns and adapt your messaging to reflect shared values.

Key Messages to Share

1. "Litter-free streets create safer, more enjoyable spaces for everyone."
2. "Every piece of rubbish kept off the streets protects our rivers, bays, and wildlife."
3. "Together, we can inspire change and build a community we're all proud of."
4. "Small actions—like using bins or organising a clean-up—can lead to big results."



How to Engage Your Community - cont.

Overcoming Objections with the RICH Model – Recognise, Intention, Challenge, Hope

- **Recognise:** "We understand that litter might seem like a small issue compared to other challenges."
 - **Intention:** "This isn't just about picking up rubbish—it's about creating a cleaner, safer place for everyone."
 - **Challenge:** "Imagine if every piece of litter was left unchecked—our parks and streets would be overwhelmed."
 - **Hope:** "Your efforts, no matter how small, are part of a larger movement making a tangible difference."
-



Resources and Support

- Visit Melbourne Water's Citizen Science Projects to learn how you can contribute to litter reduction.
 - Tangaroa Blue Source Reduction Plan - <https://tangaroablue.org/source-reduction-plans/>
 - Visit <https://www.melbournewater.com.au/litter-toolkit> to see how your local community can support our campaign.
-



Thank You

Thank you for supporting the "Bin It or Bring It Home" campaign. Your actions - big or small - make a real difference in reducing litter, protecting our waterways, and strengthening the fabric of our communities. Together, we can build a cleaner, healthier Melbourne for future generations.