

Case study: Litter reduction in Queanbeyan



Newly improved park seating area and bins

Queanbeyan Council increased pride and ownership with local Indigenous groups.

Clean river bank inspiring local pride

Queanbeyan Council worked together with takeaway shops and local Indigenous groups to reinforce sustainable behaviour around litter disposal.

What was the problem?

- A recent Local Litter Check undertaken by Queanbeyan Council identified a high number of littered items at hotspots in Morriset Street and beside the river bank.
- The items, which included cigarette butts and bottle tops from local takeaways, were not far from the vicinity of the Indigenous gathering place. It is common for people to buy items from takeaway shops and walk back towards the river to the meeting place.

What did we do?

Council's aim was to reduce the amount of littered items by 20%. They achieved this by

- engaging with Indigenous groups, takeaway retailers and other users of the park to conduct Local Litter Checks

Local Litter Check

The EPA's easy-to-use Local Litter Check is a free online tool to help understand your local litter problem. Details can be found on the EPA website.



The bin was tailored to the community's needs

- consulted with Indigenous groups to design and construct butt bins in the local meeting place
- conducted enforcement and education sessions with local fast food restaurants.

What did we achieve?

- an 89% reduction in litter was observed at Morriset Street and a 93% reduction in litter was observed along the river bank
- a 42% increase in registered litter reports
- an increase in pride in the area by the Indigenous group as they felt they played a large role in improving litter outcomes.

How was the project evaluated?

- Surveys of users in the park identified behavioural actions and changes throughout the implementation of the program.
- Local Litter Checks were conducted to monitor changes in the amount of litter.
- The area's users also noticed that it was much cleaner than before the project, and more people were using the bins or portable butt bins instead of throwing them onto the ground.

What did we learn?

- Working with Indigenous groups can be challenging but rewarding, due to the inter-relationships and hierarchies.
- Keeping it simple with infrastructure and involving the target group in decision-making is critical in achieving effective outcomes.

What is the project's legacy?

The message has spread throughout the community and has been adopted by local takeaway shops. Local Indigenous groups have taken extra pride in the area they spend time in and are now making a concerted effort to keep it clean.

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