

Case study: Port Stephens litter reduction



Boomerang Park, Raymond Terrace

Port Stephens Council achieved a 94% reduction in littered items at Boomerang Park.

Free Wi-Fi for litter reduction efforts

Port Stephens Council worked with the community to reinforce anti-littering actions and make permanent changes in behaviour.



Extension of concrete pathway to solar powered Wi-Fi bin

What was the problem?

- Port Stephens Council has recently invested a large amount of time, money and resources in the redevelopment of Boomerang Park. One aspect of the redevelopment was the inclusion of a new cutting-edge skate park which has attracted a high number of users to the area.
- This has resulted in a lot of extra litter in the area. Litter in our recreational centres is of concern in Port Stephens. It creates significant financial cost to Council and the community to clean-up, as well as affecting the area's environment and visual amenity.

What did we do?

To address the litter issue, Port Stephens Council

- installed a Big Belly Wi-Fi-enabled bin using free Wi-Fi as a reward for users to keep the skate park clean
- provided compliance staff in-house litter prevention training with AELERT
- utilised in-car "Litter from vehicle" detection dash cameras
- installed Permanent Litter Prevention signage and bin messaging
- distributed in-car litter bags and litter prevention mail-out flyers locally.

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.



Litter Patrol and Enforcement in action.

What did we achieve?

- Local Litter Checks show a 94% reduction in litter at the Boomerang Skate Park. Our target was a 40% reduction in litter which was more than double.
- We engaged the skate park users to become part of the solution by depositing less litter through a positive reward system using free Wi-Fi.
- Our final Local Litter Check user surveys indicate that most people are aware that littering is an issue, noticed the range of activities Council was employing and made particular note of two main initiatives being the free Wi-Fi reward system and the ranger/compliance litter patrols.

How was the project evaluated?

- We recorded the activities delivered against those proposed in our plan.
- We utilised Local Litter Checks to determine the ultimate success of our project, in particular the 94% reduction in litter by volume.
- We used Local Litter Check site user surveys to determine whether people were aware of the project and its intended purpose. The surveys provided compelling evidence of the project's success.

What did we learn?

- The free Wi-Fi delivered through the Big Belly self-compacting litter bin was highly successful in drawing interest to the grant and engaging the community in the campaign.
- Engaging the skate park users did build a sense of ownership of the issue, as identified by their comments when surveyed. In particular the skaters indicated that the park was their "territory".
- In-car litter bags continue to have a greater benefit when used correctly than just their original purpose, starting conversations around litter.
- The site user surveys provided the best indicator (in conjunction with Local Litter Check data) of what we had achieved over the life of the project.
- Survey Monkey as a link on our litter brochures did not work as intended.

What is the project's legacy?

The new infrastructure will continue to deliver this project's litter messaging.

The education/engagement that has been delivered to the Boomerang Skate Park users on the importance of litter prevention will also have an ongoing effect, which will in turn be re-enforced by the above new infrastructure.

The newly developed relationships formed, particularly with the new Skate Park users has highlighted the importance of working together on issues such as litter prevention. We worked together towards a common goal. The individual relationships developed will be utilised in Council's future litter prevention campaigns to build on what we have formed in this round.

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ISBN 978 1 922260 91 8 | EPA 2019P1774
July 2019

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