

Heritage Park Litter Reduction

What was the problem?

This project aimed to reduce litter throughout Heritage Park. Litter inspections revealed cigarette butts were the main litter problem, as well as inconsistency in bin types and signage used.



Before
Bins were varied and unclean with outdated litter messages



After
New enclosures and signage

What did we do?

- Made the bin enclosures more uniform throughout the park, and more visible to patrons
- Installed butt bins and enforcement signage to convey messages
- Installed butt bins and signage near entrances to the park
- Cleaned park paths, benches and BBQs
- Held a community event with specific waste and littering education messaging
- Worked with staff across several departments, including parks and gardens staff, waste collection staff, maintenance staff and enforcement to ensure appropriate bin enclosure placement
- Worked with North East Waste, a regional waste group of councils, to enhance community education day

Project features

Approaches used

- ✓ Cleaning and clean-ups
- ✓ Improved infrastructure
- ✓ Education and awareness
- ✓ Enforcement
- ✓ Community involvement

Project details

Project length and timing

February to December 2014

Cost

\$28 962 plus project management

How was effectiveness/results evaluated

Community surveys
Local Litter Check

What was the result?

- Highly visible bin enclosures and signage
- A cleaner park with clear signage and clean, uniform bin enclosures
- Re-enforced anti-smoking messages through signage and butt bins, and re-enforced penalties
- Litter count numbers from the designated space were reduced by 49%, with all litter items classed as small
- Community survey responses indicated that people had noticed 'Hey Tosser' signage on the sides of the bins; felt there were enough bins in the area; and thought that the park was a lot cleaner

What did we learn?

- Bin positioning is a far more complex process than initially thought, requiring consideration of distance between the bins, collection, maintenance, proximity to tables and playground equipment.
- It is integral to work with a number of different stakeholders in a project like this to ensure the best possible outcome – it is not just a waste issue, but a parks issue, a maintenance issue, and a regulatory issue as well.
- There is great difficulty in reducing butt litter whilst discouraging smoking, which is now an offence in parks and sporting grounds state-wide, making it a broader issue than simply dealing with the litter itself. Designated smoking areas may be a potential solution, as has been demonstrated with initial anti-smoking legislation in bars and clubs.
- Additional funding needs to be invested in enforcement resources if that is to play an integral role in litter prevention in the future, as current resources are not sufficient.

Legacy

This project has become the stepping stone to rolling-out new dual bin enclosures across all of Lismore's major parks and sporting grounds. We will utilise the lessons learnt in this project to enhance these future initiatives. The community will benefit from increased facilities.



Education at community event

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New bin infrastructure

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