

THIS WEEK IN "LITTERLAND"

www.litterpreventionprogram.com

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A big weekend for cleaning

They're tidying on two continents today: Australia and the United Kingdom. Clean Up Australia Day and Great British Spring Clean, while distant geographically, share a common goal of drawing attention to the needless damage loose flying garbage imposes on the environment, not to mention the landscape. Wrestling the litter monster to the ground is no easy job, as the volunteer workers at the forefront of the cleanup movement will readily attest. Litter eradication work will be a never-ending cycle unless people who litter change their mindset. That's why countries that care about littering also focus on education and awareness, not cleanups alone.

Searching doggedly for the answer

Weymouth Beach Dog Walkers work to open people's eyes to the problem of litter. They collect fast food and drink containers, bottles and all types of plastic including wet wipes and Nappies. "We regularly organised litter picks on our beach," organizer Linda Stevenson told *Litterland*. "The bag in the photo with Mollie and Bruce was found on the beach, it's say 100% biodegradable but not when it goes in our sea." Photo: Linda Stevenson

[Glasgow pupil wins top prize](#)

Sean Hughes, a P6/7 student, came up the winner of a poster contest for his drawing - a cartoon of a gray garbage can with open arms, its lid in one hand, filled with litter and, topping its contents, a packet resembling a McDonald's chip box and a bottle. Glasgow's Environmental Task Force ran the contest and reached out to area schools for artwork that instilled an anti-litter message for the city's *Love Your Neighbourhood* campaign. Young Sean received £600 and other cool prizes for his Knightswood School where his awareness banner will be installed as part of the reward.

DID YOU KNOW?

[Cardiff](#), Wales managed to double its litter enforcement squad in less than two years. Thirty officers outfitted in new uniforms patrol the streets and ensure solid waste/recycling rules are known and followed. Education is goal #1. They aren't solely out to ticket, but have the power to do so.

HEADLINE LITTER GRABBERS (FEB 26 - MAR 5)

Some of what made our News Reel this week

Bin It For Good registers 40 per cent less litter (2/27)

Uplifting statistics have emerged from Bin It For Good, a project in Selby, UK that rewards charities with cash when people fill special bins with litter. Littering declined by 40 per cent with this model, a three-way partnership: the district council, Keep Britain Tidy and Wrigley urging, ["Don't Be a Waster", Reduce, Reuse, Respect."](#)

Civil libertarians don't like this techno-trend (2/28)

More than half of UK councils (227) provide their officers with body cameras, [says](#) the group, Big Brother Watch.

More people than not would stand idly by (2/27)

An online poll in Ireland in *The Journal* asked, "would you intervene if you saw someone littering?" Of 9,682 voters 52% said no, 34% said yes, and 14% didn't know.

Mayor puts it in writing and gets no reaction (3/2)

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery has a take-away message for fast food establishments in Wollongong, AU. Trying to undo the "fast food mindset" that he links to increased littering, he sent letters to restaurants asking them to help discourage littering by customers. No reply yet, not even a nibble, from any of the eateries.

Vietnam serious about going after offenders (3/1)

A woman in Hanoi received a VNĐ6 million (US\$266) fine for throwing rubbish on pavement as Viet Nam makes good on its February 1 decree to ramp up environmental protection and crack down on litter louts.

See "[Your Space](#)" on Page 2 for Paul Cusack's latest column.

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YOUR SPACE

Experts share their insights and tricks of the trade.

“Understanding your organisation and its capabilities”

by Paul Cusack

This article is a starting point to understand better the capabilities across an organisation tasked with managing litter. Often these organisations have multiple groups which may be responsible for one or two elements of litter management; it's incredibly rare for everything to sit within one section.

The optimal model for improving litter management is where these groups form a united team who are making decision collaboratively. As we identified in “Leverage and Momentum” you need to have your action's and activities capable of leveraging off each other building momentum from each other.

Disjointed sections within an organisation are prone to working on their element perhaps oblivious to the bigger picture and magnitude of what's required to fix litter issues, the potential leverage opportunities are lost, and they rarely add to the momentum.

The fastest way to understanding your organisation is to follow two trails:

- The money, look for budget lines that are associated with anything litter related.
- The workforce, the people and any contract workers involved in all aspects.

If you have knowledge of the money and the people you can start breaking down who's doing what.

Here's a checklist of 25 activities for effective litter management. Your organisation may be doing some of these:

Litter bin collections (including any public place recycling) • Litter clean-up crews in your town city centre • Litter clean-up crews in your parks and open spaces • Litter clean-up activities on roadsides • Litter enforcement and compliance activities • Litter marketing, social media and communications • Litter education • Litter auditing and assessment • Litter research, strategy and planning • Cigarette litter and specialist infrastructure • Bin installation and removal • Bin cleaning and maintenance Infrastructure • Auditing • Illegal dumping clean-up • Illegal dumping investigation and compliance • Mechanical footpath/ bikeway sweeping • Mechanical road sweeping • Footpath pressure washing • Chewing Gum Removal specialists • Business sector liaisons • Community engagement • Community groups and volunteer organisation liaisons • Complaint response • Clean-up events • Political correspondence

The list of actions and activities your organisation is capable of is significant; you will have an idea of who's doing what, where they do it and when they are doing it. Armed with this knowledge you are well positioned to create leverage when needed, you'll know where the momentum is building and can quickly align other elements to gain more momentum.

Knowledge is one thing but if you can develop relationships across these activities, so one of them is aware and supportive of the other's, you'll start to see organisational alignment and a groundswell of momentum. Later in this series I will introduce you to 'your sphere of influence', a lot of what you learn about your organisation will help you make informed and accurate decision in the future when trying to fix litter issues. One last piece of advice, please value all teams, actions and activities. No one element sits atop the tree in litter management. It takes a well-designed, multifaceted approach to create the improvements you are looking for.