

CPRE's Green Clean campaign

Many park friends groups carry out litter picks, so will be familiar with how much litter is recyclable drinks containers. CPRE is working to raise awareness of this connection and is campaigning for a deposit scheme on drinks containers to help ensure people don't litter them. [Find out more.](#)

Ideas for action on litter and recycling

London parks friends groups have found many ways to tackle litter and increase recycling and reduce waste in parks. Here are some of their ideas. Please email alice@cprelondon.org.uk if you would like to add to this!

- **Polite notices on bins** re: bagged rubbish e.g. "THANK YOU for bagging your rubbish BUT PLEASE do not leave bags by the bin - PLEASE take it home with you and dispose in your home bin when these bins are full. This is because bags left beside bins frequently cause litter because foxes and other wildlife pull the bags apart at night. PLEASE ALSO HELP OUR ENVIRONMENT BY RECYCLING YOUR CANS AND BOTTLES AT HOME." Or simply say "Keep our lovely park tidy - thank you for not littering!"
- **Install water fountain/s** with a water bottle refill nozzle. Make them visible. Use communications / posters to explain that you are trying to reduce waste and littering and want to encourage people to refill their bottles.
- **'Adopt an area' approach to litter picks:** The Friends of Richmond Park organise and run a scheme called *Adopt an Area* which divides the park into areas and members 'adopt an area' as their own to keep free from litter. The team of 50 people collects large amounts of litter every week which visitors have failed to place in one of the many bins. They operate in support of the Park's full time litter contractors. More information is available at: <http://www.frp.org.uk/news/1462-adopt-an-area>.
- **Systematic monitoring to identify litter sources and hotspots and then plan litter picks and litter reduction measures.** Friends of the River Crane (FORCE) have been collecting litter for 15 years but in the last two years have been systematically monitoring what they collect and from where. Rob Gray from FORCE says: "We now have a much better understanding of litter amounts and sources, where the hot spots are and what types of litter we may get in different locations, and this helps us to design our approaches to volunteer days." For more see the Floating Plastic Litter report here <https://www.force.org.uk/wildlife/wildlife-surveys/>
 - Hot spots are often linked to specific sites e.g. a wall or railings next to a walkway or a bus stop, or to one or more key individuals with long term littering behaviours and favourite places and habits
 - Removing litter appears to reduce the amount that comes back. It also encourages pro-social litter removal by others



Friends of the Bow Back River litter pick with CPRE London Sept 2018, part of the CPRE Clean Green campaign where litter was separated and weighed to show how much of it is metal, plastic and glass drinks containers



- There are some fairly consistent numbers for how much accumulates across different areas
- Some success has been had with the use of targeted messaging at litter hot spots
- **Zero waste events** like the Garden Party in Waltham Forest where water could easily be refilled from standpipes, deposits were used for drinks containers (i.e. there were no disposable plastic beer glasses) etc.
- **Parks service manages waste collection**, rather than the waste service - this can be a more effective way of keeping the park free from litter, reducing issues with waste trucks and getting timing right etc.
- **Remove bins altogether** - Trials have been done and this approach works in some places but not in others! Signs are needed saying 'please take your rubbish away with you'
- **A big barometer / thermometer** - showing how much it costs to dispose of rubbish from the park and say what else the money could be used for (this is being trialled by Keep Britain Tidy with Parks for London) and use signs to encourage people to create less rubbish and remove it / not litter
- **Ban disposable BBQs** - Hackney council allows BBQs in London Fields but has now banned disposables because of the damage they cause and the cost of the clean up
- **Community Pay Back schemes** where light criminals do community service picking litter from parks
- **Burp bins** - bins that burp when you put rubbish in, to encourage kids
- **Solar powered crushing bins** - can crush the litter deposited in them which means they can hold much more litter than traditional bins.
- **Slot bins** - See Royal Parks report on website on slot bins which helped increase recycling and reduce contamination in park recycling bins

Other ideas and issues raised at LFGN network meeting

- Suggestion that park cafes can help support with communications or even e.g. give out recycling sacks or set out recycling bins on a busy
- Cigarette litter can be a big issue and tends to be treated separately because smokers who drop their butts don't necessarily litter more generally
- Friends groups also pointed to an increase in e-cigarette vial litter and suggested a ban in parks. Others suggested a communications / awareness campaign might be more realistic.
- Friends groups (via the borough forum if there is one) and the borough officers and contractors where applicable - should meet to discuss options & the contribution Friends Groups can make.
- Friends Groups should work with the council to find ways to reduce the huge cost of clearing up parks after a sunny weekend.
- Problems with dog mess and even human waste are best resolved with adequate dog mess bins for the former and provision of toilets for the latter.

Keep Britain Tidy resources

See overleaf for an extract from a report on what are the triggers and barriers to get people involved with keeping their neighbourhood clean - this could apply to your parks friends group.

Full report http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/sites/default/files/resources/KBT_Breaking_Barriers_2013.pdf

Triggers and barriers

to engagement

With all the research participants, we explored how they became involved. This enabled us to uncover the triggers and barriers to participating in community activities.

It is essential to have a good understanding of these factors if we are to encourage and motivate people to get involved. It also means we can address any concerns or fears they may have.

"It's the difference between expectations and choice. For me expectation says, 'this is a job'. Choice tells me, 'this is volunteering!'"

"If someone I know asked me to help, I would."

"If you are part of a bigger group you can get more done. It makes you feel part of something. It makes you feel like you are being responsible."



Triggers

1. Fun!

Getting involved can create a buzz people get addicted. It is a feeling which people enjoy and triggers them to come back for more.

2. Easy access

Community action is something that happens locally. People are far more likely to feel motivated if an event is on their doorstep or at least near where they live.

3. Incentives

This could be anything from getting to enjoy the outcome of their work, a cup of tea or gaining a skill.

4. Interests

People are much more likely to get involved in activities that feel like a small extension of something they do already. For example, litter picking while walking the dog.

5. Networks (social)

It's all about who you know. People are much more likely to get involved when they know other people or when they can go with people they feel comfortable with.

6. Sense of belonging

Community action gets people working together. People feel part of a movement which they can be proud of.

7. Recommendations

The human touch is a key trigger. People are far more likely to get involved when they have been asked by somebody they know.

8. Well-organised

Time is precious. Think about the logistics that people need to know. Without knowing the details, people may be reluctant to turn up.

Barriers

"These people are just trying to boost their own egos."

"I don't want to be seen as a do-gooder."

1. Perceptions of time and commitment

Many agreed that if they really wanted to engage in activities they would make time.

2. Stigma

There are poor perceptions of those who engage in community activities. This can act as a significant barrier to getting involved for many.

3. Fear of failure

Self-doubt can put some people off getting involved. The fear of having nothing to offer makes some potential volunteers stay at home. Organisers need to reassure participants that they have something valuable to offer.

4. Apathy

People need to have a genuine interest in a project or initiative. Without this it is very difficult to inspire them to get involved. Often people will only participate if they stand to gain or lose something.

5. Red tape

People tend to believe that in order to conduct (and sometimes participate in) community engagement activities you will need to jump through a lot of hoops.

There is a real tension here. Red tape and bureaucracy is extremely off-putting for many, yet organisers need to acknowledge care for health and safety. The welfare of those giving their time is essential.

6. Not connected to community or issue

If people don't feel part of their community or affiliated with an issue, they will not be motivated to get involved.

7. Unrealistic aims

Organisers need to set achievable aims. People are far more likely to get involved if they think they can make a real difference. A specific and realistic target allows people to see their success.

8. Lack of clarity/organisation

Poor organisation and lack of detail puts people off.

