

Volunteer Clean-Up Program: Love Your Place



The 'Love Your Place' clean-up program aims to reduce litter in public spaces through responsible citizenship and creating a sense of increased community pride and ownership.

What is the program about?

The volunteer clean-up program promotes community litter clean-ups through an organised volunteer program where residents get to nominate a park or street. The program focuses on volunteers working together to remove litter and report illegal dumping, graffiti, damaged facilities and anti-social behaviour in the nominated site. The nominated sites are Council approved public spaces such as parks, foreshore areas and local streets.

The clean-ups should serve as a catalyst for permanent changes in attitudes and behaviour, encouraging adoption of practices (eg: recycling, choosing to reuse, etc.) that can have a profound effect on litter in the community. It is also designed to be an ongoing cooperative on going activity that encourage the local community to take pride and care of their local spaces/areas. They also provide an opportunity for socialising and cross cultural learning between clean-up participants and increase a sense of belonging.

What are the objectives of the program?

- To promote an inclusive community based environmental action program for cleaner public spaces;
- To raise awareness about litter reduction in the local area;
- To foster a sense of community ownership, encouraging volunteer and community participation; and
- To track the volume and type of litter in City of Canada Bay's public space.

How does this link to the Community Strategic Plan?

Through the community strategic plan, residents told us that they wanted to help protect our local environment. The following two key themes relate to this program;

- **Theme 1** Our diverse community enjoys a range of inclusive and accessible social, recreational and cultural opportunities and is actively involved in the life of our City. People have a sense of belonging, share strong relationships in friendly neighbourhoods and our local town centres are vibrant and prosperous.
- **Theme 2** Our community shares a collective responsibility to protect our environment and actively participates in innovative programs to mitigate climate change. These programs, along with our well cared for and cherished, active and passive open spaces and waterways, are sustaining our future.

What are the benefits of participating?

- Sense of pride and achievement gained from protecting our local environment and keeping it clean
- Build a sense of belonging to the community by engaging with like-minded residents
- Fosters local partnerships between Council, local businesses and community members

Duties

- Removal of litter in approved local parks, foreshore and public spaces.
- Collect litter data and report back to Council after each clean-up.
- Report illegal dumping, graffiti, damaged equipment/facilities and anti-social behaviour through an online platform.

Types of clean-ups

Ongoing

- Community clean-ups that occur at least twice a year at a Council approved site for as many hours as desired by the volunteer group.
- Ongoing clean-ups can register with Council as part of this program.
- Clean-ups should be done on any day, during daylight hours.

One-off

- Community clean-ups that occur once a year or less
- One-off clean-ups can be registered with Clean Up Australia and will not be included in the Love Your Street/Park program.

Who can volunteer?

Anyone can start or join a clean-up group! The program is designed to be inclusive and community based. You can gather your friends, family, neighbours or engage with a local community group to participate in this community project. For your own safety, Council requires:

- Clean-ups are carried out by groups of resident volunteers (minimum of 2-3 adults) working together in their nominated location.
- Children under the age of 14 years old need to be supervised by a responsible adult.

What is expected from a group?

Once Council has approved a site, each group will be expected to:

- Formally appoint a site supervisor to lead and supervise the clean-up team on site and induct members using the safe work method statement;
- Set dates for the clean-up;
- Distribute tools and equipment from the clean-up kit to clean-up team;
- Complete a litter data form to record some information about your clean-ups;
- Complete an online survey to let us know:
 - When and where you did the clean-up
 - How many people were involved
 - How much litter you collected
 - What were the main litter items
- Sort waste into recyclables and non-recyclables for data purposes;
- Report illegal dumping, graffiti, damaged facilities and anti-social behaviour at the nominated site.

Location

It is important to choose a clean-up site that a group can reasonably do in one day and that is appropriate to your level of physical ability. To be part of this program, the site is required to be approved by Council and should not be on any private land/property. Volunteers are advised to take particular care when cleaning around mangroves and saltmarsh to avoid

damaging this protected vegetation. Guidelines for avoiding damage to salt marsh and mangroves are listed in the Volunteer Induction Package.

What is expected from Council?

Council provides registered groups with free support materials including the following clean-up kit:

- First-aid kit
- Clean-up bags
- Trash picker
- Poop Scooper
- Gloves
- Sharps container (if requested)
- Hi-vis vest
- Paperwork kit – consists of litter clean-up data form, promotional posters, incident forms, risk warning poster.

Collection

Council will provide registered groups with free waste litter collection from a registered site only.

- Council will provide the collection of waste after a clean-up through an approved request. As a collection takes time to plan and organise, the group leader should notify Council in writing of a planned clean-up a week in advance or set a regular collection day each month where there will be ongoing clean-ups.
- Collection of waste will be scheduled according to Council resourcing availability.
- This process will be through logging a customer request with Council's customer service team on 99116555. This will be placed into a workflow for collection to the Cleansing Team to be picked up at an allocated point on the next business day.
- The site supervisor will be required to nominate a collection location on site approved by Council and ensure all waste is contained securely in the bags and notify Council if the clean-up is cancelled. Bags left away from the collection point will be classified as litter.
- Collection of rubbish may be required to be separated between recyclables and non-recyclables for data collection purposes.
- Reports of graffiti and illegal dumping will be sent to Council through the Neat streets app which can be downloaded from the app store.

Risks

Please refer to the Risk Assessment for further information.

Policies

- Your Future 2030: Community Strategic Plans
- Litter Strategy
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) for 2017-2021

For more information, contact Council's Sustainability Projects Officer on 9911 6555 or email enviroment@canadabay.nsw.gov.au.