

7. RUBBISH-FREE PARKS

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The purpose of this report is to update the Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee on the Rubbish-free Parks initiative that has been in place since November 2002.

In August 2000, the Council recognised the opportunity for Christchurch City to become an international leader in sustainability and become a showcase example of a good place to live. The Council committed to leading a process to build a sustainable Christchurch. Rubbish Free Parks is but one project contributing to our becoming a sustainable city and achieving the objectives of Target Zero.

Rubbish Free Parks initiative involves increasing people's awareness of their impact on the environment and encouraging them to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Rubbish bins were removed from our regional parks in November 2002, encouraging people to take responsibility for their own rubbish by taking it home for recycling. The predicted benefits of this project were environmental education and awareness, reduced maintenance costs, and cleaner parks without unsightly rubbish and its associated problems. To date, there has been near total compliance with this project from park visitors. There have been five negative phone calls arguing against the project.

Relevant Current Policy

The concept fits into the Council's strategic goals as follows:

Strategic Objective C. Environmental Sustainability

C4. Promoting efficient use of physical resources, an increase in recycling and material recovery, and a reduction of waste.

Corporate Environmental Policy Statement

- Promote environmental care through the Council's influence over others.
- Be committed to the internationally recognised waste management practise of source reduction, reuse, recycling, resource recovery and environmentally safe residue disposal.
- Education and Public Awareness – The Council will promote an awareness within the community of environmental matters as they affect the City.
- Open Spaces and Planting – The Council will manage and maintain the open spaces of the city in ways that enhance amenity, avoid adverse effects and minimise maintenance requirements.

Description of the Proposal

The aims of the Rubbish Free Parks project are to:

- Increase awareness of environmental issues,
- Develop a more sensitive attitude towards the environment,
- Provide clean, unspoilt areas by reducing the negative effect of rubbish in our natural and wild regional parks,
- Reduce associated problems with rubbish including visual impact, hygiene, smell, wasps and flies, dogs and rats.

The participating parks are:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Groynes• Bottle Lake Forest Park• Port Hills Reserves• Halswell Quarry Park• Seafield Park | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travis Wetland• Spencer Park• Styx Mill Conservation Reserve• Taylors Mistake |
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Information and education was vital in achieving the goals of the project. It promoted the concept using the following mechanisms:

- Media
- Large banners at the entrances to regional parks
- Signage within the parks
- Using a branding iron to mark park furniture with a rubbish free symbol

- Environmental education programmes
- Information on park brochures re the rubbish free status of the park

It was necessary to ensure that the parks were rubbish-free by engaging a contractor to pick up any rubbish that was discarded in the park. He has reported that the incidence of rubbish being discarded has practically ceased.

CONCLUSION

By maintaining the presence of rangers, signs, and supporting information, the project can only go from strength-to-strength.

Staff

Recommendation: That the Rubbish-free Parks project in the Council's Regional Parks continue.

Chairman's

Recommendation:

1. That the above recommendation be adopted.
2. That the policy be reviewed in 12 months' time.