

‘Clean Sweep Rotherham’

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has taken a multi-pronged approach to fly-tipping as part of a council-wide strategy, called ‘Clean Sweep Rotherham: The Plan for Encouraging Pride in, and Improving the Cleanliness of, the Borough’. This was achieved through raising public awareness of fly-tipping, removing fly-tipped waste more quickly, increasing prosecutions and preventing access to hotspots. The environmental warden team has been running since September 2001, with the council-wide strategy being finalised in August 2002. The strategy was developed by a team of officers from all council services (to ensure corporate ownership), as well as consulting a number of external organisations.

The council’s press office was brought on board at an early stage, and press releases were sent out monthly. The press office was encouraged to increase the numbers of articles in the local press, to highlight fly-tipping problems, the costs of removal, how to report problems and the results of prosecutions. Advertisements were placed alongside those of waste removal companies in the local press emphasising that waste carriers need to be licensed. They also carried advice on how to pick a reputable company.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council developed and utilised high-visibility signs for hotspot sites. The signs informed onlookers that the area was under surveillance and that fly-tippers would be fined. These signs were put into areas and removed again on a regular basis to increase the perception of surveillance.

A new fast-response team was created, shared between council departments such as housing and environmental services, green spaces and engineering. Streamlined administration enabled a target of 24 hours to be set for fly-tipping removal from all council land and certain private land. The team provided a cost effective method of rapid removal before further fly-tipping occurred. A central intelligence database for further action and initiatives was built up.

The members of the fast response team have been trained in evidence-gathering to enable environmental wardens to pursue the lead, for formal action. Fixed penalty notices for littering have been served for minor fly-tipping offences, such as domestic waste placed outside civic amenity sites. In the 18 months since the environmental warden team became operational, 210 notices were served for litter, of which a significant proportion were for minor fly-tipping.

The council works with a local quarry and JCB hire company to provide large limestone blocks to block fly-tipping hotspots. Innovative methods of preventing re-tipping are promoted on a jointly funded basis with landowners, for example the use of access restrictions by boulders, trenches, mounds and barriers.

For further information, please contact:

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