



CleanupUK Spring Newsletter

Welcome to our latest CleanupUK newsletter which we send to our friends and supporters every now and then to keep you posted on our progress. We hope that you will find it useful as a means of staying informed of our activities. Please feel free to send any comments you may have to me at george.monck@cleanupuk.org.uk and do please let me know if you don't want to receive any further updates.

All the best.....and keep it clean !

George

What CleanupUK is all about

CleanupUK has travelled down a fascinating path since we started out in 2007 as a charity tackling the problem of litter. We still do our bit to encourage and support people all over the UK in keeping their community free of litter and convincing others not to litter in the first place.

But CleanupUK's major thrust now is to help people who live in the less affluent areas to get together, go out and pick up the litter in those parts of their community that the local council doesn't cover and so make their community not only cleaner but also stronger and safer. We have called this project The Beautiful Boroughs Project - please read on to see how the project has developed and to read about an exciting expansion to this work that we are now about to undertake.....

The Beautiful Boroughs Project

CleanupUK's major current project is the Beautiful Boroughs project, aiming to support people in the 5 London boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Waltham Forest and Greenwich in tackling their local litter problem. So far, CleanupUK's work on the Beautiful Boroughs project has resulted in 37 groups of residents accepting the challenge to get together and take regular action against litter where they live and has resulted in more than 2,600 bags of litter being collected at more than 150 litter-picks.

To date, the majority of the project's activity has been in Tower Hamlets (14 residents' groups) and Newham (10 groups). We have also been building up the project's reach in the other three boroughs, engaging 7 residents' groups in Greenwich and 3 apiece in Hackney and Waltham Forest.

Here are some highlights of our work on the project.....

Litter-Picking with Lorraine

Litter-picking in east London might not be as glamorous as starring on Emmerdale or appearing in I'm A Celebrity, but that didn't stop Lorraine Chase from rolling up her sleeves to help a local CleanupUK group, Ocean Litter Pickers, to tidy their area recently.

Lorraine donned her hi-viz jacket and helped to remove rubbish and litter from the streets of Stepney with local residents.

Lorraine said: "Great feeling getting all that rubbish off the streets. But please all stop dropping it and bin it !"

Polly Martin, of Aston Street, E14 from the Ocean Litter Pickers group said: "This group was started in order to help tidy up our estate - it has now become a social event that locals can all take part in and enjoy.

"I'm delighted that Lorraine was able to see the impact CleanupUK can have on our community."

Since August 2013 this group of Stepney residents has been meeting weekly to clean up the corners of Stepney, filling bags with bottles, cans, sweet wrappers and crisp packets.



Ocean Litter Pickers Group

Poplar Pick Up Party

If you feel like being invited to a party and having some fun, while doing something worthwhile then the Poplar Pick Up Party, meeting every Wednesday since March 2013 could be just for you!



CleanupUK have been instrumental in helping to set up the Poplar Pick Up Party, by providing equipment and publicising the weekly litter pick on Facebook and Twitter. This has enabled this redoubtable group of local residents to achieve the incredible feat of amassing around 400 bags of takeaway food wrappers and packaging, drink cans and bottles, crisp bottles and plastic bags from local streets in their weekly cleanups.

Poplar Pick Up Party.

Founding member and Poplar resident Mel Glass explained, "It was really easy to set up. Emma from CleanupUK was very helpful and provided guidelines to enable me to start the group. I had five people turn up in the first week, and we have averaged around four people each week since then. Finding CleanupUK has been very good because we feel we belong to a bigger initiative. We feel that it's not just cleaning up our local area as we know that there are other people in different areas doing just the same thing."

What distinguishes the Poplar Pick Up Party from other local litter picking groups, however, is that many of the group's more active members, including Mel and his daughters Rosie and Jessica, are Property Guardians and live in Anderson House which is earmarked for demolition between now and 2016. Property Guardians are local residents guaranteed a low rent in property due for demolition and redevelopment, and committed to helping serve their local community with four hours of community work each week. It is evident that the face of the local environment is changing rapidly, as a mosque, youth club, school and community centre across the street from Anderson House has already made way for new development.

According to Mel, "As a Property Guardian and local resident of Anderson House, I started this group because I not only needed to make my commitment to the local community, but I wanted to join with the local litter picking as well. There are at least 20 Property Guardians in Anderson House and we get about four or five of them booking in to help with the litter picking each week."

Moreover, it is evident that all the litter pickers within this local group are enjoying themselves, and having really good fun, with the litter picking resembling beach combing, as you are never quite sure what curious objects you may find next. The Poplar Pick Up Party has found an array of unusual objects among the rubbish, including a motorbike crash helmet, a chandelier, an abacus,



and even a plastic bar of gold!!

Quite apart from the array of curious objects found, the Poplar Pick Up Party is inspirational in the way in that it is empowering local residents' community spirit and pro-actively encouraging their involvement in the local problem of litter infestation. As Mel commented, "Not only have I gained a personal attachment to my local area, but it is a great way of making new friends. We have been going to the pub after each weekly clean up. The effects of what we are doing are clearly visible, and we are making a dramatic difference in our local community in picking up the rubbish locally and helping clean our neighbourhood. Being part of this group has definitely given us all a greater attachment to our local community."

For anyone interested in setting up a local litter picking group, there is further encouragement from Mel, as he concluded, "We're still a very new group, and just becoming established. If anyone outside this immediate area wanted to start up a group, I would encourage members of my group to turn up and help out to assist them in starting up a new group."

Beautiful Boroughs Project - what the participants think

When we asked those people taking part in the Beautiful Boroughs Project what they had got out of working with us, we were quite surprised by some of the results.

It was, perhaps, predictable that 84% of the people said that they now have contact with more people in their local community and that 74% said that they now feel differently about litter.

But what was really gratifying was that 70% of people said that they now feel their actions can help to change their community and 68% said that they are now more willing to act on issues in their community.

We feel that these are important outcomes as it shows that The Beautiful Boroughs Project does indeed result in more than just a clean neighbourhood - it is beginning to make people feel differently about where they live and what they can themselves achieve.

More Beautiful Boroughs.....

We are delighted that we have gained the agreement of the boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Redbridge to expand The Beautiful Boroughs Project into their boroughs later in 2014. We are currently recruiting a

second Project Coordinator and we hope to start work in these 5 boroughs in July.

The LitterAction website

We now have over 640 volunteer litter-picking groups from around the UK registered on the LitterAction website who have, between them, collected more than 120,000 bags of litter.

The screenshot shows the LitterAction website homepage. At the top, there are logos for 'Campaign to Protect Rural England' (CPRE) and 'litteraction.org.uk' with the tagline 'working together to beat litter'. To the right is the 'CleanupUK' logo. A green navigation bar contains links: home, get involved, volunteer groups, information centre, news, contact us, search, help, blog, login.

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- welcome to litteraction**: A text block explaining the website's purpose and a green button labeled '→ Register your group'.
- groups in action**: A photo of a group of people participating in a litter-picking activity, with a caption 'See Clean Up'.
- find your nearest litter group**: A map of the UK with a search box and a 'search →' button. Below the map, it says '639 litter groups so far'.
- progress report**: Two green boxes. The first shows '123,909 bags & counting...' with an image of litter bags. The second shows 'LitterAction events calendar' with an image of a calendar.
- latest blog posts**: A list of three posts with titles like 'Rubbish Verse', 'Aberdeenshire Litter Initiative - ALI', and 'Some Street Friend Stories from Gosport, Fareham, Colchester & Suffolk'.
- latest news**: A list of four news items with dates and titles, such as 'April 2014: Beachwatch 2013 Report' and 'February 2014: "If you drop litter you're an idiot"'. Each item has a 'Read more' link.
- Utility boxes**: Three green boxes at the bottom with arrows and titles: 'Litter picking tips', 'Resources available', and 'Litter Abatement Orders'. Each box contains a brief description of the resource.

At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with copyright information: '© 2011 LitterAction | links | contact us | about LitterAction' and 'Site by webstars*'. The bottom of the page is decorated with a green grass border.

LitterAction is the place where dedicated, long-term volunteer litter groups can access the information they need to run their group, set up their own free webpage, communicate with their members, recruit new members and keep everyone up to date with news and photos. The website is key to individual groups' success and we will continue to provide this valuable service.

Do have a look at www.litteraction.org.uk and let us know what you think.

Dirty movie

I couldn't resist telling you about what I think is one of the best short anti-littering films I have seen. Thomas Black, a retired Yorkshire businessman, persuaded Leeds-based film-maker David Varley to shoot the film at Denton, near Ilkley. Do please have a look at it - it's only a couple of minutes long :

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EXZAb1kNcE>

And if you want to write to us.....

We have changed our postal address, so please do update your records. Our new address is :

CleanupUK
41 Church Lane
Teddington
Middlesex TW11 8PA

Please follow CleanupUK !

We have been tweeting about our work over the last few months, as well as Facebooking. If you're not yet following us, please do link up with us via the following :

Twitter : @Cleanup_UK

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/cleanupcrew.uk>

And do have a look at my monthly blog on our website – <http://www.cleanupuk.org.uk>

And finally.....

Thank you very much to all our funders, supporters and friends. Our plans are progressing well and we are confident that we are making a real difference to the lives of people for whom life isn't so easy.

Quick Link ...

www.cleanupuk.org.uk

Contact Information

If you have any queries or comments, please e-mail me at:
george.monck@cleanupuk.org.uk