

9 September 2020

Press release; No Rubbish Excuses



Spelthorne Borough Council is stepping up its battle against litter with the launch of the #NoRubbishExcuses campaign.

The Council frequently receives feedback from residents regarding the cleanliness of the Borough and know they are keen for us to do more to tackle littering. We, of course, realise the majority of residents do not drop litter and are grateful for their help and support in keeping local neighbourhoods clean and tidy. There is, sadly, a small minority of selfish individuals who persistently drop litter.

The excuses for dropping litter are akin to 'my dog ate my homework', namely unbelievable because there is no excuse. If the bins are full, make the Council aware and take your litter home with you. We will be focusing our efforts on streets, parks, playgrounds, the river, wildlife and roads with the strapline #NoRubbishExcuses on posters you will see across the Borough.

During lockdown our parks, green spaces and the River Thames were utilised and valued by a huge number of people in the Borough but sadly, alongside this came a substantial increase in antisocial behaviour from some members of the public and the volumes of litter and waste being left behind exceeded anything our enforcement teams have ever had to deal with. As we step into the recovery phase for the Borough with our highstreets back in business, leisure activities kick-starting and schools re-opening, we feel there is no better time to clean up Spelthorne!

There are already regular litter pick events and groups running across the Borough who are energising the community and making a real difference. Local resident Shirley Lunn who recently helped form the Spelthorne Litter Pickers group and is a proud part of the litter picking community, said: "As residents of the Borough we can all play a part in ensuring our community is clean and safe and I welcome this new campaign to spread awareness in Spelthorne. Our group is open to everyone and we have been amazed by the community's response and determination. It has also been enjoyable to meet other like-minded people from our local area. As Margaret Mead, the American anthropologist said - 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has'".

The Council are showing their support by promoting these events through their communication channels and providing equipment for the pick-ups and a point of contact who arranges any help they may require to ensure the tasks are done safely and efficiently. The Great British Spring Clean was postponed this year and has been rebranded as the Great British September Clean. We will be urging residents, businesses and communities to become more litter aware and take pride in their local areas. For details on how to litter-pick safely, please see their website: www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean/coronavirus-guidance

Cllr Richard Barratt, Portfolio Holder for Waste, said: "There are no excuses for dropping litter - it is an incredibly selfish thing to do and damaging for the environment. We hope that our coordinated approach with the community, residents, businesses and stakeholders will see positive results and I ask that all residents support this scheme by sharing our messages, taking their rubbish home with them and, together, we can make a cleaner, greener Spelthorne."

Notes to Editors

- There are about 450 street litter bins in Spelthorne. Depending on the location, they are emptied either every day or once a week. Litter bins should not be used for the disposal of household refuse or trade waste. To report a damaged or overflowing litter bin contact Neighbourhood Services on 01784 446411 or email neighbourhoodservices@spelthorne.gov.uk
- Residents pictured; (top - Kelly Emma McKenna, Shirley Lunn and Jem Jones in the layby on the A308 near Fordbridge Road roundabout, bottom left - Olivia, Rosa and Clara at Fordbride Park, bottom middle - Anya clearing up near Hawkedale School, bottom right - Rohan, Kamrun, Emily and Sarah at Fordbridge Park)
- Poster – visual attached and free to download at; www.spelthorne.gov.uk/norubbishexcuses
- Littering is an offence which can result in a fine of up to £2,500. The Council also has powers to require certain types of businesses to reduce the effects of litter attributable to them.
- Details on the Great British September clean here; <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean>
- Guidance to support all our volunteers to litter-pick in the safest way possible; <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean/coronavirus-guidance>
- Follow us on social media for details of litter pickups in your area and 'Spelthorne Litter Pickers' on Facebook and Instagram.

Keep up to date with all Council news by signing up to our e-newsletter or register for My Alerts at www.spelthorne.gov.uk

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