**Street Waste Action Team (SWAT) at Westminster - Dumping is a waste of space**

***Application for ADEPT President’s Award***

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| **Award category** | 3 - Improving the environment, promoting health |
| **Organisation applying** | Westminster City Council - Veolia UK |
| **Project name** | SWAT – Dumping is a waste of space |
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**Project summary** (150 characters max) :

Since 2017, the SWAT project and its specialised educational team has demonstrated great positive changes in fly-tipping behaviours at Westminster.

**Project overview** (500 words max) :

In 2017, Westminster City Council (WCC) was experiencing unprecedented cases of fly-tipping affecting residential areas. This was despite sustained enforcement by officers which saw WCC become the highest issuing authority in London for fixed penalty notices which only had varying and short term results.

A new project, Street Waste Action Team (SWAT), was commissioned to systematically resolve these issues using behavioural change as its main focus. The new drive proposed to address the cases of both fly-tipping and related duty of care ‘behavioural issues’ by utilising a newly formed team to educate residents about their waste.

Most importantly the project wanted to engage with local resident associations, ward members, and key stakeholders such as hostels, managing agents and other waste producers, using their input to design messaging for signage and to steer the new team to these issues.

The project utilised door knocking resources (450 properties door have been knocked) and 12 pop up events (using a gazebo as a local one-stop shop, to discuss issues, give advice, and provide residents with reusable recycling bags) to begin a drive of local change. More than 8000 leaflets have been distributed so far.

The team itself was comprised of two street based officers that WCC had seconded directly from Veolia, WCC’s cleansing contractor. The benefit of this was that ‘buy in’ was guaranteed and goals were shared. Having a direct link with our contractor, meant that any operational issues such as missed collections or those associated with crew behaviour were quickly identified and resolved at the source.

To accurately measure the progress of these objectives and gauge a true reflection of the street scene, an extensive data gathering through 3500 inspections and bin sensors monitoring was undertaken by SWAT.

This data also helped to focus the SWAT onto the most polluted areas and enabled the bespoke resolution of specific related issues, especially environmental health reports due to poor waste storage facilities provided by landlords.

Comparative auditings, carried out 8-10 weeks after SWAT intervention, have demonstrated great positive changes :

* Fly-tipping around household bin sites reduced by 67.5%
* Poor duty of Care habits around street furniture (litter bins, tree bases, and lamp posts) reduced by 57%
* Waste presentation generally reduced by 32.8%

For longer term measures, SWAT has begun to utilise agreements with mansion blocks and seek answers that puts more responsibility back to the waste owner. That includes the development of information packs that can be distributed to managing agents and landlords so they can be shared with new tenants.

In trialling the project in some of the most problematic areas, we have shown to decision makers what progress can be made when a specialist team is commissioned to tackle specific behavioural issues around waste and environment. The project has also pulled together a sphere of educators and communicators, working across related disciplines, including residents themselves, that have helped SWAT drive forward with positive changes.

Below is a short video on the benefits of SWAT :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLMz8GfeL90&list=PLZbiSjLEY10vmIxOOwJOaqbxKUDnFXxU6>