

Organisation	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
Project Name/Title	Threemilewater Litter and Sustainable Packaging Project
Project Contact	Joanne Templeton – Waste Education and Awareness Officer, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
Project Summary	<p>Following an enquiry from an elected member about the impact of polystyrene packaging from local takeaways in their local DEA, we developed a project to look at ways to improve the local area by reducing litter, encouraging recycling and promoting sustainability in the packaging materials used.</p> <p>Takeaway Packaging Council provided a number of takeaway businesses in the area with a selection of environmentally friendly food packaging materials, for use during a 2 week trial period.</p> <p>Community Litter Picks Council organised 3 community litter picks in the area to raise awareness of the issues and inspire the community to get involved.</p> <p>School Litter picks Council approached the 4 Primary schools in the area with an opportunity to do their own litter pick on school grounds, or nearby. Participating schools were offered the opportunity for their P7 pupils to visit the RADAR safety programme.</p> <p>School / NI Water Re-Use water bottle talks Council approached the 4 Primary schools in the area with an opportunity to have NI water visit with their Eco-school committee for a talk about the importance of minimising single use plastic and moving towards reusable materials, with a particular focus on water bottles. NI Water would then provide a reusable water bottle to each pupil and teacher in the school.</p> <p>Publicity We used each of the above as an opportunity to publicise the issues in a positive way. In addition we designed posters to reinforce the message to “Keep our place Clean” which were displayed by the participating takeaways.</p>
Aims/Objectives of Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To highlight the issues of litter to the local community, schools and businesses. • To get insight into the prevalent types of materials found in differing areas. • To highlight the issues of single use plastics to the local community, schools and businesses. • To reduce the use of single-use plastic bottle waste in local schools. To get local takeaways to consider the impact of their polystyrene packaging and the litter generated by their business on the environment. • To inspire residents, schools and businesses in all areas of the borough to take pride in their own area by promoting the actions taken in this project area. • To lead by example and have a clear message as lead into the Big Spring Clean Campaign. • To inspire an increase in the number of Council supported litter picks (through Support in Kind applications).
Funding	Part funded by Waste Management with some additional the 3MW DEA funding.

Cost	Cost of takeaway materials: est. £2100 (inc. VAT) Cost of RADAR Visit (and transport).
Target Audience	Local residents, schools and businesses. Borough residents, schools and businesses.
Successes	<p>There was a good turnout for the litter pick in the local park/beach. This attracted volunteers from the local community and further afield.</p> <p>We identified the main type of waste that is problematic in these areas, including the distinction between the residential areas and the park/beach areas. This will help us with further targeted messaging in future.</p> <p>The project provided many opportunities to share the message via social media as the project progressed. We had valuable support and assistance from other teams, within the department, when needed.</p> <p>There has been an increase in support in kind applications for community litter picks. We have been able to foster a closer relationship with some of our local Primary Schools.</p>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with the local takeaways, confirming their participation and their packaging needs was challenging. • The cardboard based packaging to replace the polystyrene materials was difficult to source, although we did source some locally in the end. • The added cost of the packaging materials, is likely to be a prohibitive factor for the takeaways in deciding whether or not to adopt the materials long-term
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article in local Newsletter (also sent to local press but not published). • Social media campaign (ongoing) including photos from the community litter picks and school litter picks. • Internal communications to staff who may live or work nearby. • Posters in local businesses, schools and Council premises. • Stamps provided for packaging materials in use by local takeaways, promoting the “Don’t litter our Place” message.