

Case Study - Deep Cleans

Deep Cleans were introduced after the change of administration in May 2003. Residents' surveys in the run up to the election showed that the state of the environment was a concern. This concept brings together community groups and Council services for a week long blitz on targeted areas within the Borough.

Deep Cleans are carried out in addition to regular planned maintenance and are intended to smarten up areas and encourage residents to take more pride in their environment. They also offer an opportunity to undertake small ancillary tasks not included in routine contract schedules.

Community involvement is key to the project, from asking residents what they would like to see undertaken in both the long and short term, to engaging their help in the actual clean up itself.

The first Deep Clean took place in Swanscombe in July 2002. The area included many "out of the way" garage areas - prime sites for dumping and graffiti. Many of the streets were congested with cars preventing access to channels for street sweepers.

Meetings were held with Ward Members and Town Council representatives in advance of the Deep Clean and efforts were made to engage community groups.

Several local clubs and a playgroup were given sacks, gloves etc to carry out a clean up of their locations, however the short notice period seemed to preclude activity by schools and other groups. The involvement of young people, reportedly, led to 'peer pressure' on those involved in graffiti, reducing the problem.

The second Deep Clean took place in late August in Wilmington Village. This is a far smaller area than Swanscombe and generally had less graffiti and street cleansing, litter and dumping problems, nevertheless a successful clean was carried out. October and November saw Deep Cleans in the Darenth and West Hill Wards. All of the projects have been specifically tailored to the areas they cover and have been generally welcomed by the communities to the extent that more are planned for Stone (January 2004) and Heath (March 2004).

In September 2003 Cabinet approved funding for Deep Cleans in 2003/04 and a growth bid is to be submitted to sustain this programme throughout 2004/05.

Front line Council sections and services involved in Deep Cleans are:

Environmental Contracts	street sweeping; graffiti removal; clearance of dumping and fly tipping; grounds maintenance; tree works; abandoned and untaxed vehicles
Housing	external building maintenance; garage areas; external painting
Highways	gully emptying; general street repairs; removal of redundant street furniture
Community Services	liaison with community and other groups; supporting long term community involvement in the upkeep of public space
Public Relations	press releases; coordination of media events; production and distribution of information material to the public

Positive Results:

1) Photos of typical graffiti clearance



Before



After