

Epping Forest Big Litter Pick report 4-6 March 2016

Introduction

Epping Forest Centenary Trust (EFCT) working with the Conservators of Epping Forest (CoL) coordinated and promoted the Epping Forest Big Litter Pick Weekend and provided support to participating groups/events. The timing of the event was chosen to coincide with a national initiative led by Country Life and the Keep Britain Tidy Group, Clean for the Queen. The nationwide programme was designed to encourage communities to spring clean the environment in preparation for celebrations of the Queen's 90th birthday in April. It was anticipated that this link would help to increase the profile of the event. Partners considered that titling the Forest event as Epping Forest Big Litter Pick would attract greater participation.

Aims of the Forest event

The aims were to celebrate the contribution all volunteers groups across the Forest, to take action on litter in the Forest together and to help groups to attract new members. It was also hoped that the event would increase awareness and appreciation of the whole Forest and its volunteer groups.

Roles and activities of the partners

Conservators of Epping Forest:

- Organised Launch Event to promote the weekend through the installation of new rubbish & recycling bins
- Provided strong rubbish bags
- Loaned Litter Pickers to some groups
- Keepers dropped off bags and pickers to some groups
- Keepers organised collection of all rubbish/bags by Litter teams

EFCT

- Wrote to known voluntary groups involved in the Forest seeking their involvement
- Prepared the Forest-wide programme from responses
- Loaned gloves to some groups
- Dropped off bags and pickers to some groups & agreed pickup points with all groups.
- Led one of the events
- Provided liaison and contact point for groups.
- Provided Risk assessment documents, booking & feedback forms to groups
- Collated feedback data, comments and photographs from groups



Friends of Epping Forest at High Beach

The outcomes

A good response from groups for a first-time Forest wide event with a very short lead in time!

9 groups involved (including 1 School),

Over 120 people on 8 sites,

Over 150 bags of rubbish were collected

Friday 4 March [Epping Forest Centenary Trust \(14 people/ 25 bags\)](#) Knighton Lane, Buckhurst Hill

Observations: Many dog poo bags hanging in bushes on eastern entrances to Lords Bushes

Friday 4th March [Forest School \(42 pupils & teachers/ 15 bags\)](#) Forest Rise beside school

Observations: Appeared on London TV BBC News that evening. Building materials found

Saturday 5 March [Epping Forest Outdoor Group/Wren Group \(12 people/ 45 bags\)](#) Empress Avenue/Wanstead Park

Observations: Poor waste management of Stables and Community garden in Empress Avenue.

Fly tipping of waste from allotment over fence

Saturday 5 March [Friends of Epping Forest \(7 people/ 15 bags\)](#) High Beach

Observations: Some items of rubbish had been there some time. Litter spill over from the pub due to several gaps in boarded fence

Saturday 5 March [Epping Forest Centenary Trust \(1 person/ 12 bags\)](#) Bell Common Hemnall Street and High Road Epping

Observations: Rubbish that had been here sometime from criminal activity e.g. piles of clothing tags & handbag.

Also lots of dog poo bags hanging in bushes. Many cans, plastic and glass bottles. Low turnout as advertised late

Sunday 6 March [Bushwood Area Residents Association \(15 people/ 25 bags\)](#) Leyspring/Bushwood

Observations: Some office/commercial waste

Sunday 6 March [Friends of Wanstead Parklands \(2 people/ 20 bags\)](#) Temple in Wanstead Park

Observations: Great effort with so few attending.



EFCT at Bell Common, Epping

Quotes from volunteers

1. The older I get the less I understand people. If they employed half as much energy doing things properly as it must have taken to put the lawnmower in the middle of the bushes, who knows what they could achieve.
2. A very successful Litter Pick this morning with a great turnout from the Committee and Members. Apart from 20+ sacks of cans, bottles and general litter we also hauled a pram, Henry Hoover, suitcases, office drinks machine and.....the proverbial kitchen sink. Well done to all and huge thanks to Julia for organising the event.
3. Seven of us took part in the Litter Pick on Sat 5 March at High Beach. You may remember the day provided sleet, rain and sunshine all packed into one afternoon. Twelve sacks of rubbish were collected along with an old incinerator, plastic boxes and sheet metal roofing. It has made a real difference!

The key challenges

- Timescale –Very short lead in time –reducing participation by groups and on the day
- Getting info from some groups in time
- Communication with groups, with and within CoL and need more diverse ways to communicate
- Post event publicity did not take place although will appear in the next Forest Focus
- Our aspiration to do pop up litter info points on site could not be achieved in the time available



Epping Forest Outdoor Group & Wren Group

Strengths

1. Great to see groups participating across the Forest & more awareness of other groups and the whole Forest
2. Annually seems a good idea and March quite a good month (ready for the summer and before vegetation grows up)
3. Local groups know where the need is and are proud to do their patch
4. Launch event useful, although details of all events were not available at that stage
5. Litter bags were taken off the sites very quickly (well done to the litter cart team and Keepers)



Bushwood Area Residents Association at
Leyspring/Bushwood

For the future

Town Councils really worth contacting in the north, to broaden publicity in advance

Our focus was groups who collect litter (but some have set weekends they do it, so don't need an event to help clean the Forest), but should form part of any future event

Event showed interest from other groups who would be keen to do one off sessions, when supported with bags, pick up etc.

Could expand the number of days, subject to EFCT resources; to include for example, schools

Event was enabled by EFCT's coordinating role and it helped to demonstrate its potential value in future.

Black bags – pickers need to know they are sorted and recycled

More opportunities for education as part of a whole project – why litter harms wildlife , as well as amenity; bird food feeding etc.

Has informed EFCT/CoL more about litter in the Forest and scope for a cleaner Forest – e.g. Site specific issues

Scope for a look at an overall Forest litter strategy.

Thank you

And well done to all those who took part.



Forest School at Forest Rise beside school