**General Meeting AVCC**

Wednesday 8th June 2016

Wasted - Reducing our Waste and Being Tidy Kiwis

Apologies:

Deane Virtue (Team Leader, Street Cleaning and Growth WCC), Merv and Tony from the WCC spoke to the meeting about their roles in rubbish collection and dealing with illegal dumping.

They explained that twice weekly there is a general sweep of all areas, alongside that is hand cleaning where necessary and there is a 3 monthly turnaround within each suburb.

Illegal dumping is a huge problem especially in the Aro Valley. The WCC is piloting a number of schemes to try and address the issue including use of No Dumping signs, and direct contact with offenders where possible. THey are trialling a bin latch for the big green bins. There are issues when people leave sharp objects in the bags, they’re overweight or they are left out late.To find offenders they rifle through the rubbish looking for personal details. Unfortunately people often move their dumped bags around so they are not in front of their own houses. Bags filled with incorrect rubbish are stickered. The bags are then left for 24 hours.

People are given infringement notices and where possible and if evidence is collected, people will be fined between $100 - 400. If people continue to re-offend they can stop providing a rubbish collection service for them.

WCC believes that face to face contact and providing information is the most effective. In the CBD they attempt to contact property owners, and they would like to see rules on rubbish dumping put into tenancy agreements. They will continue to use a combination of posters in hotspots, leaflet dropping, and door knocking.

Short term renters often create hotspots for rubbish which in turn creates a magnet for other rubbish. The WCC believe that there needs to be more information on the associated costs to society and the environment.

WCC employs 2 contractors to pick up the rubbish and they work in conjunction with each other.

There was a question about the location of public bins. It was noted that there isn’t one on the corner of Karo Drive and Willis Street. WCC do invite and receive suggestions on locations. WCC will consider this location and report back.

Wendy Bertholet is the Waste Educator for the WCC - she is working with the Victoria University students association (VUSA)  educating on waste minimisation, she attended orientation week to promote using the right rubbish bags and provided information and education on composting.

She also runs free compost and worm farm education workshops.

There is information on the VUSA website on recycling and rubbish collection. They have great recycling facilities and hope to champion and initiate more projects.

She is advocating for a student subsidy for rubbish bags.

She is working alongside the Sustainability Trust and VUSA to provide an information pack for first year students - including information on dealing with unwanted furniture.

The meeting called for suggestions from the floor for ideas to reduce waste in the Valley

The following is a list of the ideas received:

* Less plastic packaging in grocery items at the Aro shops - find alternatives
* Design and distribute an Aro Valley reusable shopping bag\*
* Hold a sewing workshop to make reusable shopping bags\*
* Hold an event to bring solid waste to the community centre - garage sale for stuff that can be recycled, upcycled and provide transport to dump the rest
* AVCC provide subsidised bins and bags
* Survey location of rubbish bins in the area
* Communicate with landlords in the area and put a green recycling bin on the list of house chattels
* Provide leaflets to all the new tenants in the area with information on recycling
* Reduce the use of single use plastic bottles
* Make an event of Plastic Free July\*

The AVCC agreed to look at the suggestions at its next meeting and commit to an action it could support.

Ideas to assist with composting in Aro Valley - there are a number of compost bins around - at the top of Epuni street, beside the community centre and up the top of Aro street.

These are well utilised but not well maintained.

Suggestions were to

* Enlist time bank
* Epuni Street compost roster
* Volunteers in the community

Meeting closed at 9.30pm

\*UPDATE POST MEETING - the AVCC agreed to run a number of events for plastic free July focusing on reducing the use of single use plastic bags.

We hosted; a movie night, a make your own fabric bag workshop, a community clean up with pizza and beer and support for those who pledged to go plastic bag free.

We also designed Aro Valley shopping bags and distributed them to the local shops and businesses.