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📍 Levenshulme, Manchester

LSRA AGM APRIL 2022 Levenshulme Littering Questionnaire Report

Date: 28th April 2022

On January 1st, 2022, the MEN posted an article detailing local Levenshulme Square residents' disgust after 'dozens of bags of litter' were left in an alley on Mayford Road.

The Levenshulme Littering Questionnaire, Stage 1 was intended to collect feedback from Levenshulme residents about littering, flytipping, and local rubbish hotspots. The information collected would be summarised and followed up on, before approaching the council.

The initial survey was sent out to our Mailchimp mailing list - specifically to the 127 people on the General Updates list - with an open rate of **41.9%** (16.7% over the average non-profit open rate of 25.2%, and 12.2% over the average LSRA open rate of 29.7%), and a click rate of **16.2%** (13.5% over the average non-profit click rate of 2.7%, and 14.8% over the average LSRA click rate of 1.4%.) The survey was also shared on LSRA's Facebook and Twitter pages multiple times over the month it was active, and garnered a reach between **1.8x** and **5.3x** the amount of followers on Facebook, and **0.16x** to **3.45x** the amount of followers on Twitter.

Over the month, **73** individuals responded to the Levy Littering Questionnaire, resulting in **32** pages of feedback.

Results

Question 1: "In order to keep this survey as fair and accurate as we can, please enter your email address below. If you'd like to subscribe to our newsletter as well, be sure to check the box too!"

Of the 73 participants, **62** of which were new subscribers to the mailing list who signed up via the survey.

Question 2: "Are you a Levenshulme Square resident? (The area bordered by Matthew's Lane - Stockport Road - Barlow Road - St. Oswalds Road)"

Of the 73 participants, **50 (68.5%)** marked themselves as Levenshulme locals, and **23 (31.5%)** marked themselves as just visitors.

Question 3: "How are you impacted by flytipping in Levenshulme?"

Each of the 73 responders replied to question three equalling to seven pages of feedback. This feedback was largely negative, with responders expressing a lot of discontentment with the litter in Levenshulme.

Some notable responses:

- "It really brings down the look and feel of the whole area. It's depressing to see people creating so much waste in the first place. We should be using alleyways and green patches to create more biodiversity - grow pollinators and other plants, instead they're just full of mattresses and excessive amounts of waste. I worry about animals being injured and impacted by the rubbish too. "
- "It's a constant eyesore and I'm sick of trying to clean it all up. You can't keep the alleyways or front of house clean with it blowing up the road. Inconsiderate landlords in the area emptying houses in and around communal bins and back alleys prevent residents from using them, leading to overfill and then draws vermin."
- "The area unfortunately has areas full of rubbish being dumped. Across from my road there is a grassy area which frequently has litter dumped as well as other spaces around Levenshulme. Fills me with anger and annoyance. "

Question 4: "If you did witness someone littering or flytipping, would you know who to report it to or where to find this out?"

Of the 73 responders, **60 (82.1%)** responded that they did feel they knew who to report to, and only **13 (17.8%)** people did not. Though most knew where to report, many stated that they felt that reporting was futile -

however in these responses the blame was heavily on the individuals littering and not the council. A lack of pride in the area by those littering was mentioned by multiple responders.

Some notable responses:

- "I would probably look on the local fb community group. I have not yet got registrations or formal evidence of fly tipping. I have challenged people sometimes but this feels risky as people can get aggressive quite quickly and as they are outside my home I worry that they then know where I live."
- "To the council online? Wouldn't know how to report a specific person or pass on a number plate though. Not sure"
- "Apparently it's a waste of time reporting it as people have to be caught in the act according to the police. Reporting to the council - ok if you want to wait weeks for it to be moved."
- "Yes, but getting someone to clear it up doesn't stop the problem. The problem is that no one cares, people have no pride or hope."

Question 5: "Have you ever reported littering, flytipping, or dumping on the Council's website before?"

Of the 73 responders, **49 (67.1%)** marked that they had reported littering, flytipping, or dumping on the Council's website before, and **24 (32.8%)** marked that they had not. A notable number of responders stated that they had and continue to report littering repeatedly.

Question 6: "Regarding residents, what do you think could be done in order to reduce flytipping and rubbish hotspots, and how do you think these spaces could be better maintained?"

Question 6 was another open question that resulted in seven pages of thoughtful feedback detailing what they believed that residents could do in order to reduce Leveshulme's littering problem. In these answers, some of the suggestions that people suggested the most were:

- More information about how to use the communal bins and littering punishment, posted around the bins, distributed to residents in multiple languages, and also taught in schools
- Cameras around hotspots
- Harsher financial/legal penalties
- More community drive so people want to participate
- Alley decorating/gating
- Individual bins
- Reduce Access to hotspots
- More bins around the streets
- More free large pickups by council

- Reduced/abolished recycling centre fees
- Publicity when people are fined
- Target those who advertise tip delivery but instead flytip
- More council street cleanings/roadsweepers/participation etc
- Media campaign to reduce littering/flytipping
- Research into why this neighbourhood specifically
- Bins emptied more often / bigger bins
- Easier tip access

Some notable responses:

- "I think people need to feel they belong in and have some stake in the area. As much we can do as possible to know our neighbours and find ways to help and support each other and foster a sense of community the better. Lev Square does so much of this already it's really fantastic to see."
- "Maybe if there was a big effort to beautify the alleys, people would be less likely to dump rubbish - like planters and flowers, etc."
- "I'm not sure it's always the residents that do it. I understand people with commercial interests dump here because they don't want to pay for rubbish disposal. The council should be doing more to make sure our streets are clean and tidy. I know residents do litter picks but it feels like the council can't be bothered with our area. Educating people about littering/flytipping would be a start. Letting people know it's not ok and to take pride in the area."

Question 7: "Regarding the Council, what do you think could be done in order to reduce flytipping and rubbish hotspots, and how do you think these spaces could be better maintained?"

Question 7 was another open question that also resulted in seven pages of feedback, this time detailing what they believed the Council could do in order to reduce Leveshulme's littering problem. In these answers, the suggestions that people suggested the most were:

- CCTV/Registration numbers recorded
- More financial/legal penalties
- Environmental officers/enforcers/council presence in the community
- Provide information/signage in different languages and increased information drives
- More litter bins
- Publicity when people are fined
- More user-friendly reporting methods like a phone number
- More frequent bin collections
- Target commercial and landlord flytipping

- Better regulations of businesses and rentals - separate commercial and residential waste/contracts
- Better planning in regards to unlicensed housing in commercial spaces without domestic waste provision
- Bringing individual bins back
- Community drives
- Reduced access to hotspots
- Easier tip access, eg. scrapping can for those who don't drive
- Sprucing up the area and gating
- More council street cleanings/roadsweepers
- Tip incentives (like vouchers)
- More filtered streets

Some notable responses:

- "Businesses need more fines and monitoring of whether they have proper refuse collection, [...] and once something is dumped, more stuff starts to appear by magic! There's a chain that needs to be broken so people don't regard Levenshulme as somewhere you can get away with leaving your rubbish, I believe that a lot of the flytipping comes from out of area, more number plate recognition work should be done. I haven't seen an article in the news about anyone being fined for rubbish dumping for a good couple of years now. "
- "Scary big fines. CCTV that is monitored and acted on. Police patrols? Put up more barriers to stop cars and vans. General dropping of litter is very bad. On bin day it gets bad as the litter gets blown about and the bin men don't take everything and let it get blown about if it's windy. People need to be better educated about what to put in each bin. Some people just fill all brown blue green bins with general rubbish. There needs to be a campaign to educate people about which bin takes what. Even door to door chats by local councillors when they do their canvassing or something. Also please do something about the dog poo everywhere too!"
- "Temporary CCTV placed in these hotspots for a few months and prosecution of people who litter or fly tip. Removal of communal bins and replacement with individual bins. "

Follow Up

The anonymised data and full responses were then shared with Mark O'Pray, Levenshulme Neighbourhood Officer at the Central Neighbourhood Team, in a meeting with the LSRA.

In the meeting it was discussed that the data would be considered first-hand testimony and to which contacts it would be best forwarded to in the Central Neighbourhoods Team in order to make the most impact. Mark is already very actively trying to improve the area, particularly with rubbish and flytipping, and the team already has an action plan.

We discussed other, similar projects taking place in Manchester, and how the results of them could also be used to inform local action once the trials have taken place. Other potentials were also discussed, like Community Action days, Skip days, ways to green the alleyways, and NIF (Neighbourhood Investment Funds) that could be applied for. Mark was really grateful for the data, as the responses collected in the survey strengthens his case for something to be done.

The meeting was an interesting and productive one, and on our part has led to the consideration of specific NIF funds, and conceptualising and initial planning of a potential Community Action Day in the run up to Lev Square Fest 2022.

Lauren Kelly

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