



## (Non)-Recycling at the Hawkesbury Show

### Description

Last weekend was the annual Hawkesbury Show, and what a success it was! Fine weather, well-attended, and a buzzing community vibe as local businesses and exhibitors showed off what's great about the Hawkesbury District.

Also pleasing was the presence of the Hawkesbury Council tent, where we engaged with the community and educated people about the services we deliver and the role Local Government plays in your lives. I am informed that the attendance at the tent was an all-time record of 7164, which is 52% bigger than last year. Our staff should be commended for their enthusiasm and their stamina across the three days of the show.



I noted one particular focus for Council was to encourage showgoers to be good recyclers during the show, with these fliers being distributed:



This sentiment seemed to be backed by the presence of paired bins around the show ground to enable people to do the right thing:



Council had waste education officers in the Council tent, consultants performing surveys about recycling, and bin inspectors going around and looking at bin contents.

Your correspondent is so tragic that even I was going around and taking photos of the insides of the recycle bins to see how well people were taking to the message about recycling by putting the right rubbish in the right bin.



The inside of a recycle bin at the 2017 Hawkesbury Show. Remember, you saw it here first.

Generally, people were heeding the message. This is pleasing.

However, my warm and fuzzy environmentalist thoughts came to a jarring halt when I learned what happened to the collected rubbish. Rural Fire Service volunteers were given the gig to collect bins during the show, in exchange for a donation to the RFS, which is a win-win for the community. And I must say, they did a good job. The showground always looked spic-and-span.

Then, one volunteer drew my attention to the single compactor Council had provided for all the bin-waste at the show. I witnessed the RFS volunteers enthusiastically emptying both types of bins into the one hole, to be sent straight to landfill. We weren't recycling at all! This meant that all the good work that was being put into education and in having paired bins was (excuse the pun), wasted!



The single rubbish compactor at the Hawkesbury Show

Frankly, I was surprised that no one else had raised this, and I immediately made inquiries through Council staff to see what went wrong. My fears were confirmed.

This is a disappointing result. However, there's no recrimination here; only lessons to be learned. We need to plan better to give effect to community expectations about recycling at large events. I have been assured that the post-event debriefing will allow us to learn how to do better at next year's show.

### Category

1. Uncategorized

### Tags

1. Hawkesbury Show
2. Recycling

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