

## Organising a Litter Survey

A litter survey can be used to kick start your action on litter. You can find out what sort of litter is causing a problem, where it is found, if there are enough litter bins and if they are in the right places. The results of a litter survey can be used to decide what further action is required e.g. an anti litter campaign, more bins or relocating bins, litter picking and penalties or rewards. Further surveys can be used to monitor the effectiveness of the action taken.

### Making a Start

It is important to decide what sort of information you are hoping to get out of the survey before making a start. This will determine how the survey is organised and in particular how results are recorded. If there is a type or source of litter that you are interested in then adapt the survey record sheet to suit. If you want to compare different locations these need to be chosen carefully to make sure that the comparison is fair i.e. the same size of area surveyed at the same time by the same method.

### Resources

- Map of school grounds or area to be surveyed (available from Litter Education Officer if you don't have your own)
- Survey recording sheet
- Clipboards, pencils and coloured pencils
- Camera

### Choosing the right level of survey

#### Simple Litter Survey (P1-3)

- Divide the playground up into manageable areas with clear boundaries if possible
- Each group of children surveys a different area using a **pictorial tally sheet**
- Collate the results

#### Standard Litter Survey (P4 -P7)

- Areas surveyed may include some outside the school grounds
- Results are recorded on a **standard tally sheet** -this can be adapted to suit the types of litter that the children expect to find

- In addition to tallies for different types of litter record a Cleanliness Grade for each area (A,B,C or D) and the number of litter bins. Dog fouling can be recorded too
- Collate the results and present them in the form of tables, graphs and plans etc

### **Using the Results**

Once you have the results of your survey you can use them to decide on what further action needs to be taken against litter. Follow up surveys can then be used to check whether or not your action has been effective. Results can also be displayed on an 'Eco Notice board', presented at assemblies and included in newsletters to parents, the PTA or School Board. If part of the problem is related to other parts of the community such as a local shop or youths using the school grounds in the evenings you might want to present your results to the community by writing to relevant people that might be able to help and displaying your results in the local library.