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## **Meet the man who's singlehandedly cleaning up Brimbank**

**How Keilor Downs resident Julian Reynolds is helping to clean up Brimbank, one early morning rubbish pick-up at a time.**

*By Bridget Clarke*

For most, the thought of waking up before sunrise on a Saturday morning to pick up rubbish would be enough to make you pull the doona over your head. But not for Julian Reynolds.

"I really want to change things by leading by example, so I took it on myself", Mr Reynolds says.

"My brother calls it non-legally binding community service."

Since March 2023, Mr Reynolds has spent every Saturday and Sunday morning collecting rubbish in the areas surrounding his home suburb of Keilor Downs.



*Julian Reynolds hold up rubbish from a Sunday morning pick-up. Pic: Bridget Clarke.*

The pick-ups start at 5.30am and end about 8am. He collects anywhere between six to eight bags of rubbish, which he disposes of in his own bin.

The issue of littering has always been of concern for Mr Reynolds, who along with running his own finance business with his sister, has volunteered for Clean Up Australia.

But seeing the problem worsen post-Covid spurred him to start his own Clean Up Brimbank initiative.

"Driving out on the freeway and noticing the amount of waste, general litter, fast food waste..."

“It’s a big type of problem to tackle”.

Along with weekly clean-ups, Mr Reynolds has been in contact with the Brimbank City Council, whom he says have been “really good” in working with him to reduce waste and “hold businesses to account”.

Brimbank City Council Acting Director Tom Razmovski says the same of Mr Reynolds.

“At Brimbank City Council, we’re committed to creating a healthy, safe and sustainable environment for our current and future communities.

“Julian is very much a part of the solution and his dedication to cleaning up streets and parks is commendable.

He added, “if just a more few people could learn from (Mr Reynold’s) example, then the rubbish will be where it belongs: in the bin”.

Mr Razmovski says Mr Reynold’s “suggestions and feedback” have prompted the implementation of a “number of improvements” to help better manage litter and dumped rubbish.

But Mr Reynolds says there is still work to be done, pointing to education as a top priority.

Mr Reynolds highlights the fact that many Brimbank residents are unaware that all residential properties receiving a hard waste service are entitled to one free charge a year.



*Dumped rubbish, including a television, at the Keilor Central carpark. Pic: Bridget Clarke.*

“People don’t realise that they’ve got that ticket, so there needs to be education for things like that”.

He also called upon council to allocate more resources by doing “a few more pickups” and having a “dedicated litter team”.

Along with the council, Mr Reynold's hands-on advocacy has caught the eye of Brimbank locals who have celebrated his efforts on social media.

A scroll through Mr Reynold's posts on the Brimbank Community Facebook Group shows many celebratory comments – “what a legend” “a true hero” – with many giving thanks for his efforts, and some getting inspired.

“A friend mentioned to me that they've seen a few other people own in Taylor's lakes with tongs and garbage bags.”

“If I'm inspiring people to do that, that's really exciting.”

Mr Reynolds says beyond “beautifying” and boosting house values, “having a clean neighbourhood helps everyone”.

“It assists the neighbourhood in terms of being proud of where you live,” he says.

“So if this makes people think twice when they throw that little piece of rubbish out and remember that someone's actually picking it up, that's awesome”.