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MEDIA RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community removes 2.6 tonnes of litter from across Lower Hutt

Saturday 13 December 2025 | Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt

More than 300 volunteers came together for Clean Up The Hutt on Saturday, removing 31,493 litres of litter (about the size of a 20-foot shipping container), weighing 2,656 kilograms, from coastlines, waterways, and underwater sites across nine locations in Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt.

The collaborative event, run jointly by Sustainable Coastlines and Conservation Volunteers New Zealand with key support from Hutt City Council, mobilised volunteers across nine clean-up sites. In Wainuiomata alone, 720 kilograms of rubbish was collected from waterways and surrounds with support from a team from Downers.

Volunteers separated recyclable materials from general waste on the day, reinforcing waste minimisation practices and demonstrating how behaviour change can drive lasting environmental impact.

The initiative took on added significance given recent Litter Intelligence data showing coastal monitoring sites in Hutt City average 453 pieces of litter per 1,000 square metres, with more than 80% of it plastic.

"After auditing the rubbish collected today, we calculated that almost 2.6 tonnes was picked up across all sites," said Sarah Hight, Marketing Coordinator for Conservation Volunteers New Zealand Wellington. "These figures really highlight the scale of the problem and show how important clean-up events like this are for engaging our community in positive, hands-on environmental action."

"This event gave people an opportunity to engage in something positive during difficult times," says Sustainable Coastlines CEO Sam Judd. "But beyond the clean-up itself, we're creating lasting behaviour change. When volunteers see firsthand the impact of plastic pollution and separate out recyclables, they carry

Sustainable Coastlines | 55 Madden Street, Wynyard Quarter, Auckland 1010

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those waste minimisation practices home. That's where the real transformation happens, changing how we all think about and manage waste in our daily lives."

The event included professional marine operations at Matiu / Somes Island and Days Bay Wharf, made possible by marine contractors Underwater Solutions and Neptune Diving, working in collaboration with the Department of Conservation and with permission from Taranaki Whānui.

"This event was a chance to celebrate community spirit, spend time outdoors, and protect the places we love. The huge enthusiasm and turnout from our communities was amazing. We're keen to look into running something even bigger and bolder again next year," said Jörn Scherzer, Hutt City Council Head of Climate, Waste and Resource Recovery.

Volunteers celebrated their efforts at Petone Beach with beach games, a DJ, and kai from Tip Top Trumpet, Phoenix Organics, Raglan Food Co, and Arobake.

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Notes to editors

Event statistics

- 302 volunteers participated
- 31,493 litres of litter removed (about the size of a 20-foot shipping container)
- 2,656 kilograms collected
- 9 clean-up sites across Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt
- 720kg removed from Wainuiomata alone
- 28 organisations collaborated
- Recyclable materials separated from general waste on site

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About the event partners

Clean Up The Hutt was run jointly by multi award-winning charities Sustainable Coastlines and Conservation Volunteers New Zealand, with funding from Hutt City Council, Aon and Hirepool.

Additional support was provided by: Underwater Solutions, Neptune Diving, Tip Top Trumpet, Phoenix Organics, Downers, DOC, Taranaki Whānui, PurposeTech, Spirit of Adventure Trust, Brady Dyer, Ruku Aotearoa, Mediaworks Foundation, Radio Active, Hutt City FM, Wellesley College, The Eastbourne Herald, Wireless Rentals, Hanging Around, The Wellington Stamp Company, Capital Kiwi, Pure Health and Fitness, George Beattie and Benny Salvador.

*Source: insights.litterintelligence.org, 5 November 2025, coastal survey sites across Lower Hutt.