

Knox Journal

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'We've done graffiti homework' – council

KNOX Council's draft graffiti and vandalism policy has been labelled "inadequate" by an anti-graffiti group but the council refutes the criticism.

Residents Against Graffiti Everywhere (RAGE) founder Steve Beardon said he believed the police should be more involved and the council should clean graffiti off public, private and commercial property, not only council property.

He also said the council's aerosol workshop pilot was a waste of money.

"Knox Council should have also contacted other councils ... to see how they were combating graffiti."

"All this would have been helpful during the drafting of the policy, which should embrace the ideals of eradication, education and enforcement." Mr. Beardon said.

Community worker, graffiti and vandalism Tomas Lopata refuted Mr. Beardon's criticisms of insufficient research being done for the policy.

He said the council has commissioned leading graffiti research Assoc. Prof. Alison Young from the criminology department at the University of Melbourne to conduct a full analysis of graffiti and vandalism programs.

Mr. Lopata said he contacted Knox's neighbouring councils to assess their approach to graffiti and vandalism and denied that the council's aerosol workshops were a waste of money.

"They have been very successful in redirecting a group of young people towards legal avenues, and the relationship between the council's youth worker and these youths is admirable," he said.

"It is a fair point however to consider community suggestions and perhaps these groups (the vandals) should also do a degree of graffiti cleaning as a form of community restitution."

Knox Council spends about \$500,000 a year on graffiti vandalism, with \$200,000 of that spent on cleaning up graffiti.



RAGE: Lobbying for safer, cleaner suburbs