

## **ButtsOut for cleaner streets**

An innovative product with the potential to make a real difference to the condition of the nation's streets, pavements, parks and other public places has been adopted by the Conservative party.

The quirkily designed, fire-resistant box for cigarette ends, known as a ButtsOut, has been made available to smokers within the Conservative Party Campaign Headquarters, as the party continues to champion its social and community responsibility agenda at a local and national level.

According to Charles Hamshaw-Thomas of CSR Solutions, the company marketing ButtsOut in the UK, "A recent survey showed that people rated clean streets as one of the top three factors making somewhere a good place to live, above education and public transport. So it makes a great deal of sense for a political party to endorse the ButtsOut, which has been shown to radically reduce the levels of cigarette litter on community streets the length and breadth of the UK."

Local authorities throughout the country have used the ButtsOut in over 150 anti-litter campaigns that have regularly more than halved levels of cigarette litter. Says Hamshaw-Thomas, "This is an extremely important issue - every day in the UK, a staggering 122 tonnes of cigarette butts, packets and matches are dropped on the UK's streets - a figure that's risen by 20% over the last four years."



"It's time to do something really powerful about it, particularly with the implementation this year of smoking bans in enclosed public places in Wales, Northern Ireland and England. Evidence from around the world shows that littering increases even further after a ban - in Dublin, for example, it rose by another 20% in the first year after the Irish ban began in 2003. The ButtsOut is part of the solution."

The ButtsOut was created on an Australian beach in 2001 and a major Australian supermarket chain has been selling over 4,500 each week for the last two years. Over 2 million ButtsOuts have been put in the hands of smokers in 18 countries worldwide and the product is due to hit UK retailers this summer.

Says Hamshaw-Thomas, "the ButtsOut is a smart solution to a serious environmental problem and can play an important role in improving the quality of life for everyone. Above all, it's a great way of enabling smokers to change their littering behaviour and dispose responsibly of their cigarette ends. I'm really delighted that the Conservatives have recognised the potential of the product and have chosen to endorse it in this way."  
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