

Get rid of the filth of graffiti

Paul Nicolaou



A Sydney council recently took to social media to boast of the sparkling results of their neighbourhood beautification campaign.

Yes, the footpaths, the gutters and the roadways gleamed, but adjoining private properties were still adorned with ugly graffiti.

All far from the urban vista the council claimed, but then Sydney seems to have sadly become desensitised to graffiti.

Asked why graffiti was left untouched, a council official said they could remove graffiti only on council property.

Is it any wonder we are losing the battle against graffiti attacks in our otherwise beautiful city? So, what do we do about it?

If councils don't have authority already, they should be empowered to order private

property owners to remove disfiguring graffiti in a timely fashion, or take a paint roller to it.

Premier Chris Minns and Transport Minister John Graham could lead by example with a major crackdown on graffiti attacks on public property.

As The Daily Telegraph reported recently, offensive graffiti has dramatically risen, with reports of vandalism promoting hate speech, extremist views and sexually explicit messaging.

Snap Send Solve – an app that lets people report graffiti attacks – received 15,673 reports across NSW from March 2025 to February 2026 – a 9 per cent increase. Clearly, Sydney needs stronger policing of graffiti vandalism, more successful prosecutions and penalties that

act as a real deterrent.

When it comes to deterrence, the government could set the tone that graffiti vandalism is not welcome in our city.

It should start by removing graffiti from publicly owned property. Our rail corridors are a mess, reminiscent of New York City in the 1970s.

Road corridors are as bad and, again, it's a problem the government could address.

These corridors are often the first impression visitors have of our city. Let's present our best face, not a mish-mash of painted images redolent of urban decline.

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