

Spring Clean Scotland 2023



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Overview

Scotland is facing a litter emergency, our Clean Up Scotland Programme's annual Spring Clean Scotland serves as a call to action in communities across the country. The [Scottish Litter Survey](#), which we published last year, highlighted the negative impact litter is continuing to have across the nation. Litter remains a significant issue of public concern with 67% believing that litter is a problem in their local area, while 87% think that it is an issue across Scotland.

The 2023 Spring Clean Scotland campaign took place from 17 March - 17 April and incorporated the themes of Young People, Heath & Wellbeing, Source2Sea and Business. In addition to our usual opportunities to get involved, we had our inaugural Litter League Challenge for young people to challenge them to be a Regional or National clean up champion through their school, nursery, play group or youth group and a new information pack to support businesses who wanted to get involved.

"It's an honour to share this fantastic report which summarises the achievements of our most recent Spring Clean Scotland event.

"Each year we try to do more and work with people across Scotland to make a big impact and the numbers for this year are staggering. We set a target of 20,000 sign ups and beat that target by more than 10,000. We also saw a great response from young people to our new Litter League competition which gives us so much enthusiasm for the future.

"To every single person who took part in Spring Clean Scotland 2023, I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you. Collaboration is key to what we do at Keep Scotland Beautiful and your support is sincerely appreciated."



Barry Fisher

Chief Executive, Keep Scotland Beautiful

More than 30,000 people including
16,000 young people



1,700

events across all 32 local authorities



280

tonnes of litter collected



363

business Clean Ups



97%

increase in Marine Clean Ups



43%

of Clean Ups in low (deciles 1-3)
SIMD areas



60,610

estimated volunteer hours - worth the
equivalent of £660,649*

17 March – 17 April 2023

*based on Scottish living wage

Spring Clean Scotland Launch

Spring Clean Scotland is a key part of our wider [Clean Up Scotland](#) programme, and is delivered in collaboration with the [Great British Spring Clean \(17 March – 2 April\)](#).

This year we launched Spring Clean Scotland with a litter pick in Edinburgh outside the Scottish Parliament and around Holyrood Palace, and we were joined by MSPs Paul McLennan and Foyso Choudhury.

To raise awareness and promote Spring Clean Scotland we had four main themes to inspire action. Over the course of the four weeks volunteers and partners from across Scotland used the themes to build and promote their events.

1

Young People
In partnership with Play Scotland and Decathlon.

2

Source 2 Sea week
In partnership with Beyond Adventure, Willowgate Centre, Ancrum Activity Centre, and thanks to funding from Crown Estate Scotland.

3

Business
As part of our call for more corporate action which was one of our goals at the end of Spring Clean 2019.

4

Health & Wellbeing
In partnership with Decathlon.



Highlights



Upstream on the Tay

Supported by funding from Crown Estate Scotland, we were able to work with three local outdoor providers, all of whom are local [Anchor Groups](#) for our [Upstream Battle®](#) campaign, to provide places for members of the public to take part in a water or land-based litter pick. The event involved six picks, over three locations in one week. More than 150kg of litter was removed from the River Tay, which would otherwise have made its way downstream and into the sea. The picks were in Aberfeldy with Beyond Adventure, Perth with Willowgate Activity Centre, and Broughty Ferry with Ancrum Outdoor Centre.



Cumbernauld Clean Up

[Our perception survey](#) on litter in Scotland, published in 2022, indicated the public considered the impact of litter on animals and the environment the most concerning. We partnered with Cumbernauld Living Landscape on a litter pick at Scottish Wildlife Trust's Seafar Wood Wildlife Reserve, Cumbernauld. Joined by members of the local community, elected members and members from the local Nature Ninjas group, a total of 68 bags of litter was collected from the reserve. A second pick later in the campaign removed a further 63 bags from the reserve.



Great Angus Beach Clean

The eighth Great Angus Beach Clean was planned to coincide with Scotland's Spring Clean in 2023. More than two tonnes of litter was collected from beaches. Much of the litter weight came from creels and fishing ropes. More than 195 people took part in the Great Angus Beach Clean including volunteers who are part of the Community Clean Up Hub Network. The event ran over two weekends followed by a second beach clean. A second beach clean at BarryBuddon/ Monifieth took place on 8 April.

Young People

Young people across the country have always been committed to protecting the environment and they are increasingly aware of the challenges and risks associated with the litter emergency. Young people had several opportunities to get involved in the Spring Clean Scotland campaign.

Litter League

Young people across Scotland were encouraged to help tackle the litter emergency and compete for clean-up glory. They were asked to track their bag counts from the 13 March – 31 March and submit their entry online. There were seven awards available, one National Spring Clean Champion and six Regional Spring Clean Champions. Schools or youth groups from **23** local authority areas entered into the competition, with more than **2,600** people taking part. An estimated **3.5** tonnes of litter was picked by young people involved in Litter League across 103 picks which took place both on school grounds and in the wider community.



Crossgates Primary School, Fife
National Winner



Methlick Primary School
Aberdeen and Northeast Winner



Woodmuir Primary School
Edinburgh and Lothians Winners



Hilltop Primary School
Glasgow & Strathclyde Winner



Lomond Primary School
Highlands and Islands Winner



Shawhead Primary School
Scotland South Winner



Our Lady RC – Tay
Central and Fife Winner



Live Lessons

As part of our [Climate Action Schools](#) programme, we delivered a series of lessons every day for a week. Open to all ages the aim was to inspire pupils to take part in the annual campaign and join the fight against litter. A total of **654** schools registered for the Live Lessons with more than **5,000** pupils attending across every local authority area.



V&A Dundee activity day

We hosted an educational engagement event which focused on litter's journey from 'source to sea', for Dundee schools at the V&A Museum. More than **40** pupils from **5** schools across the city joined in with a morning of activities which included creating a 'craftivism' collage, inspired by wildlife artist Paul Bartlett.

Local authority impact

We tracked the activity both nationally and within local authorities and at the end of the Spring Clean Scotland we had top 5 lists and three categories.

The first was for the greatest number of Clean Up Scotland registered events.

Volunteers used our map to promote their own activities as well as find opportunities in their area. [The Clean Up Scotland map](#) remains one of the best resources to promote litter picks.

We also had a Total Clean Ups top 5 list which is the total number of known clean ups that took place as part of the campaign and a top 5 beach Marine Clean Ups list. There are a range of methods and resources used by local authorities to support local litter pickers.

Registered Clean Ups		Total Clean Ups		Top 5 Beach Cleans	
Dumfries and Galloway	240	Glasgow	525	Dumfries and Galloway	25
Falkirk	132	Renfrewshire	317	Highland	21
North Lanarkshire	100	Dumfries and Galloway	240	North Ayrshire	13
Aberdeen City	54	Falkirk	132	Aberdeen City	7
West Lothian	33	North Lanarkshire	100	Falkirk / South Ayrshire	6



The types of local resources and support for volunteers

Community Clean Up Hubs.

Local Anchor Groups.

Local Authority programmes
(Team Up to Clean Up, Clean
Up Aberdeen).

Local and national
campaigns (My Beach Your
Beach, Upstream Battle®).

Neighbourhood
Improvement Volunteers.

It;s Your Neighbourhood/
Beautiful Scotland Groups

Collaboration between
communication and
operative teams.

Strong commitment to
partnership and achieving
shared goals.



Perception and Reach

The dates for Spring Clean Scotland 2023 were announced in January and this was followed by four months of social media promotion which had the opportunity to reach 14,458,456 people.

Spring Clean Scotland Media



189

media articles



7

interviews: BBC Radio Scotland,
That's TV, STV



14,458,456

potential reach

In addition, AWF Digital offered a 4-week digital billboard display to promote the campaign on Cambuslang Road, Rutherglen to promote Spring Clean Scotland and encourage people to get involved with the reach potential of **142,000** per week.

Perception survey

75%

surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they felt part of the national movement that is taking action to tackle litter.

"My personal preference is to pick on my own, but Spring Clean Scotland presented an opportunity to target particularly bad areas with others." SurveyMonkey reply 2023

82%

surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more connected to their community.

"I feel it brings the community together as well as teaching people to have a healthy respect for environment." SurveyMonkey reply 2023

89%

surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that getting outdoors helped them to de-stress, relax and unwind.

"As a wild swimmer, clean swim areas are important to me. I took part in Spring Clean Scotland to tackle issues around my local swim patch. I did not expect litter picking to have a similar de-stressing effect as wild swimming. Doing something for the environment is a bonus" Chloe Atkins, Paisley Swim Buddies.

The top 3 ranked reasons people supported Spring Clean Scotland were:

1

I want to clean up and improve my local community.



2

I want to demonstrate to others that we all have a part to play.



3

I want to remove litter that could harm wildlife.



Maintaining momentum

Spring Clean Scotland has provided a strong platform ahead of the forthcoming National Litter and Flytipping Strategy. The campaign has set an example for what can be achieved when communities, businesses, local government and charities come together to tackle litter and littering behaviour.

Spring Clean Scotland might have ended on 17 April, but groups and individuals nationwide are continuing to act. There have been **56** additional events registered on the Clean Up Scotland site and we have more than **100** Community Clean Up Hubs ready and willing to support local people with litter picking efforts. There are also a range of community, charity and local authority campaigns which complement and support our campaign to tackle Scotland's litter emergency.

- Renfrewshire Council held their Team Up to Clean Up month of action with hundreds of volunteers getting involved across the local authority on 17 April.
- Shetland's annual Dunna Chuck Bruck event launched on 22 April and **200** groups registered to take part in the weeklong action.
- Paws On Plastic has attracted **16,000** people to pledge to pick up some litter as part of their daily dog walk.
- Horizon's Great Stonehaven Spring Clean to bring communities together and create a lasting volunteering legacy from the Coronation Weekend.
- Play Scotland continues to promote Pick and Play for young people to improve the quality of play areas and promote a child's right to play in safe and clean environments.



Summary

We would like to thank all our volunteers and supporters who took part in Spring Clean Scotland this year. Without the efforts of community groups, individuals, businesses, and local authorities our Spring Clean would not have been such a resounding success. All your contributions are helping us achieve our vision of a clean, green, and sustainable Scotland.

The continuing increase in organised events and participants shows that the litter problem remains of paramount importance to communities, businesses, and public bodies in Scotland and that we need to continue to support those who try to tackle it. Our Clean Up Scotland programme supports and encourages individuals, groups and businesses to organise Clean Ups all year round. Furthermore, litter picking and Spring Clean Scotland is not only an opportunity to get involved in litter picking within your community, it can also lead to wider environmental volunteering.

Looking ahead we will be partnering with more businesses throughout 2023 and 2024 to help make Spring Clean Scotland 2024 an even greater success. We will also reach out to all local authorities and ask that they promote and engage with our campaign next year and challenge them to achieve top 5 status. We also look forward to building on the success of Spring Clean Scotland as we move forward in supporting the delivery of the new National Litter and Flytipping Strategy.

If you'd like to get involved and support the Clean Up Scotland campaign check out our [Clean Up Scotland map](#) for events near you. Alternatively, take a look at our [toolkit](#) to find out how to organise your own Clean Up.





We support the Sustainable Development Goals.

Keep Scotland Beautiful is your charity for Scotland's environment. We work with you to help combat climate change, reduce litter and waste, and protect and enhance the places we care for.



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