

Scotland's Beach Awards My Beach, Your Beach



2022 Pilot Report
March 2023

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Introduction

[My Beach, Your Beach](#) (MBYB) is a campaign funded by the Scottish Government and delivered by Keep Scotland Beautiful in collaboration with the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), to support bathing water quality improvements at a selection of Scottish beaches. It does this by raising awareness and encouraging behaviour change in relation to key habits, including littering, dog fouling and feeding of gulls on the beach. [Scotland's Beach Awards](#) (SBA) is a programme that celebrates clean, well-managed and sustainable beaches.

This pilot programme links the MBYB campaign with SBA beaches as a way of encouraging and supporting beach managers to achieve high standards against key SBA criteria. In summer 2022, MBYB materials were made available to eight SBA beaches, in order to test their effectiveness as a supporting resource for beach managers.

The pilot was offered to SBA beaches based on areas where campaign materials could be beneficial for engaging beach users to improve beach stewardship. This pilot was trialled at four beaches in 2021 and expanded to eight beaches in 2022. The beach managers of an additional nine beaches declined to be involved with the 2022 pilot, primarily based on either a lack of budget or capacity to fully participate.

This pilot aimed to:

- Test the potential for MBYB signage and communication to benefit SBA beaches.
- Improve environmental quality at participating SBA beaches.
- Increase recognition of the MBYB campaign across Scotland.

The pilot demonstrated that the messages, signage and communications associated with the campaign were well received, however when it comes to undertaking litter surveys and actively sharing the campaign messages, beach managers don't always have the time, resources or capacity to fully participate in the campaign.

As a legacy of the campaign, a toolkit will be prepared for SBA beach managers aligned with the SBA criteria to support the ongoing promotion of the key messages around binning litter and dog poo and not feeding gulls.

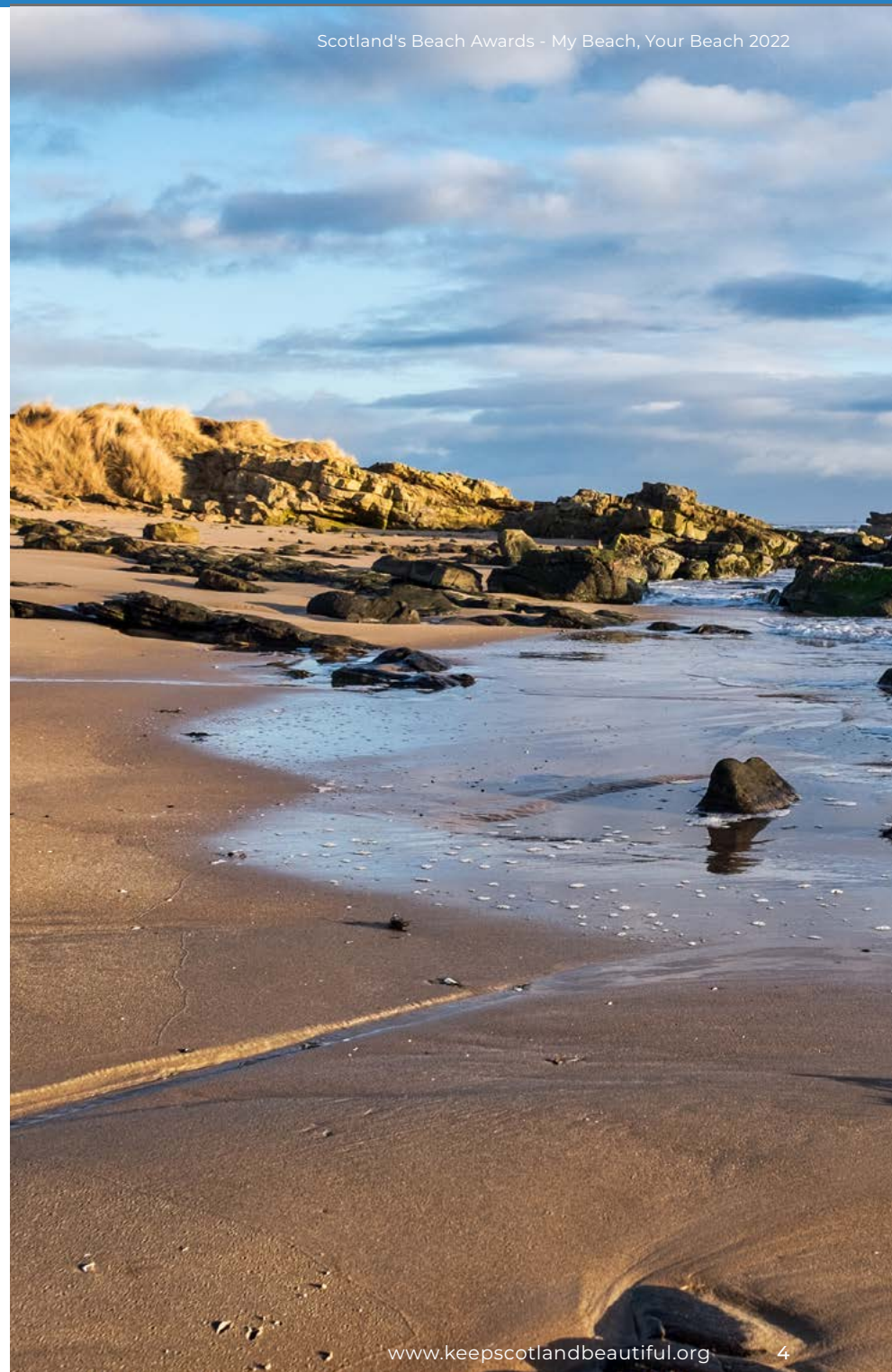
This report outlines key activity, feedback and findings from the pilot at the participating beaches.



The following beaches agreed to participate in the 2022 pilot

Beach	Management Organisation	SEPA Bathing Water Classification
Cruden Bay	Aberdeenshire Council	Good
Fraserburgh Tigerhill	Aberdeenshire Council	Excellent
Stonehaven Beach	Aberdeenshire Council	Good
Dornoch Beach	Dornoch Community Council	Excellent
Coldingham	Scottish Borders Council	Excellent
Non-designated bathing waters		
East Haven	East Haven Together	N/A
Participated in both 2021 and 2022		
Broughty Ferry	Dundee City Council	Excellent
Prestwick	South Ayrshire Council	Excellent

This report outlines key activity, feedback and findings from the pilot at the four participating sites.



Pilot overview

The campaign package offered as part of the pilot consisted of the following elements:

Campaign materials

MBYB signage, focused on target beach stewardship behaviours, was offered to participating beach managers with the potential for the addition of local authority logos to increase relevance of the campaign at each site.

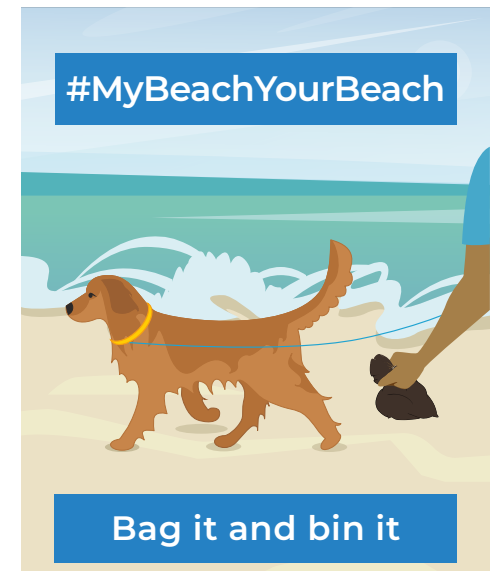
The eye-catching signage was offered as either artwork for production in-house or printed at cost as bin stickers and correx signs.

Monitoring guidance

Participating beach managers were requested to carry out monitoring as part of the pilot, in order to evaluate the impact of their participation in the campaign.

A monitoring guide was provided requesting litter surveys be undertaken on both the beach and the prom before, during and after the bathing water season.

Online perception surveys were shared with beach managers at the beginning and end of the bathing water season to be further shared online with the local community to capture beach user attitudes and perceptions.



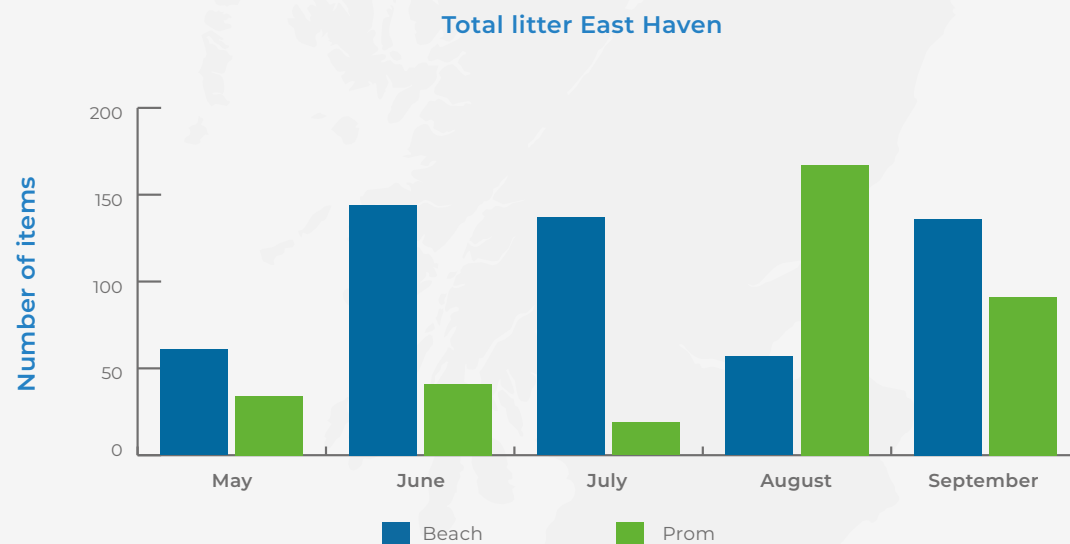
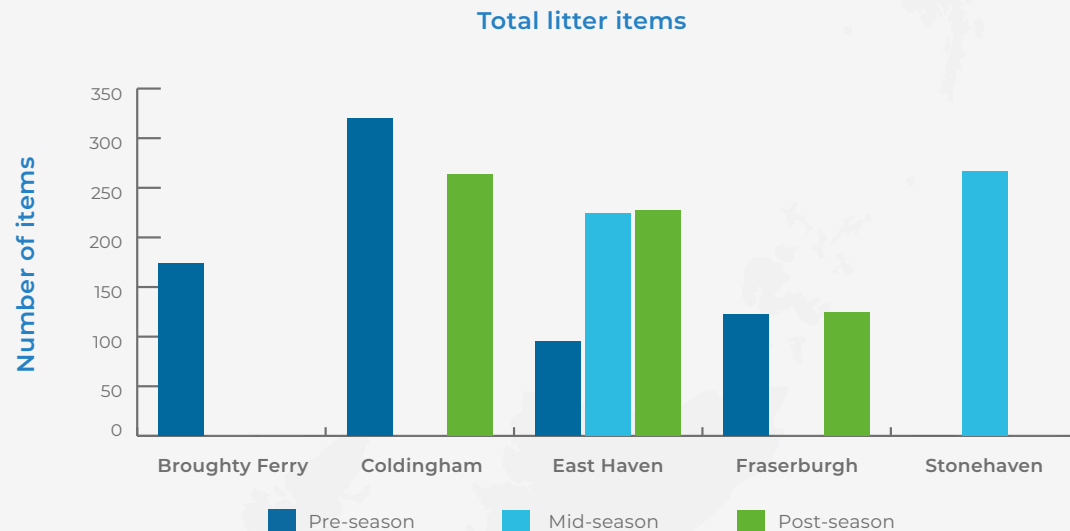
Campaign materials

Results and impact

Litter levels

Litter survey data was submitted for five beaches. The total number of litter items counted along 100m transects at each beach before, during and after the bathing water season can be seen opposite.

A more complete picture of trends through the season on the beach and prom can be seen for East Haven where litter on the prom peaked in August but was the lowest on the beach in the same month.



Litter types

The top ten types of litter recorded over all the surveys submitted for SBA pilot beaches is tabled below.



Wet wipes



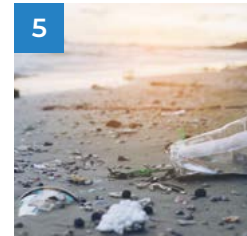
Cigarettes



Plastic snack packets



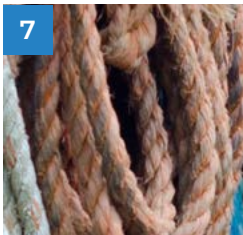
Fishing line



Plastic pieces



Period products
(inc tampons)



String and rope



Cotton bud sticks



Plastic bottle caps



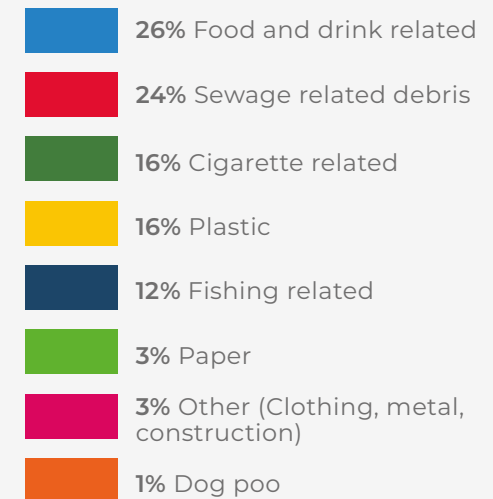
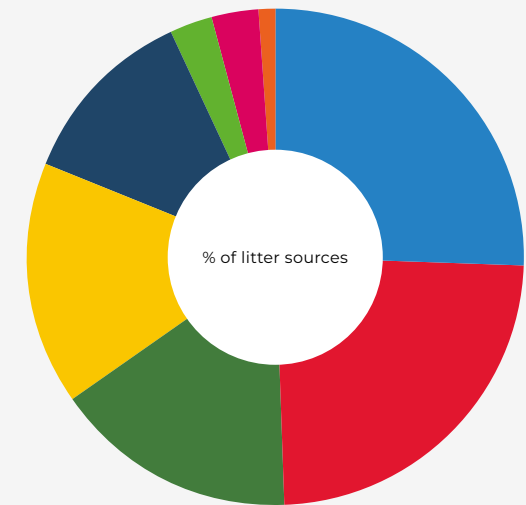
Paper pieces

The top five types of litter recorded for each of the individual beaches is detailed in the Appendix section of this report. Cigarettes and food and drink related litter such as plastic bottles/caps and snack packs were recorded in the top ten of all beaches. In the overall figures, there was a high proportion of sewage related debris, with wet wipes being the most reported item. Wet wipes were primarily recorded at East Haven (av. 16 per survey) and Coldingham (av. 10 per survey). While period products were the 6th most common item overall, this was primarily from 75 items recorded in one survey at Broughty Ferry in March 2022. The majority of cotton bud sticks were recorded from two surveys at Coldingham..

The litter sources across the surveys show just over a quarter of the litter recorded was food and drink related, with a further quarter being sewage related debris, which included wet wipes, period products and cotton bud sticks. While only third in the overall sources of litter, cigarettes were still a significant component of the litter found on the beaches and proms. This finding was reinforced by feedback which identified that signage targeting littering of cigarette butts should be a future priority.



Litter sources



Attitudes and perceptions

Online perception surveys were shared at the beginning of the season (June) and post season (October/November) to gauge locals' perceptions of the key campaign issues.

Less than 35% of respondents thought that there was any issue in relation to litter, dog poo and gulls at the three beaches where responses were submitted. While Broughty Ferry showed the highest percentage of respondents finding litter an issue, at 33%, this was still below the 40% of Broughty Ferry respondents reporting litter as a concern at the end of the 2021 campaign.

While few respondents saw dog poo as an issue, 25% of respondents commenting on their least favourite thing at the beach this summer noted their concern/dislike for dogs on beaches. For Broughty Ferry, where an annual Animal Exclusion Zone is in place on part of the beach from May to September inclusive, half of the comments on respondents' least favourite thing on the beach related to dogs.

“Careless disregard to the rules on where dogs should be kept on a lead”

Respondent from Broughty Ferry

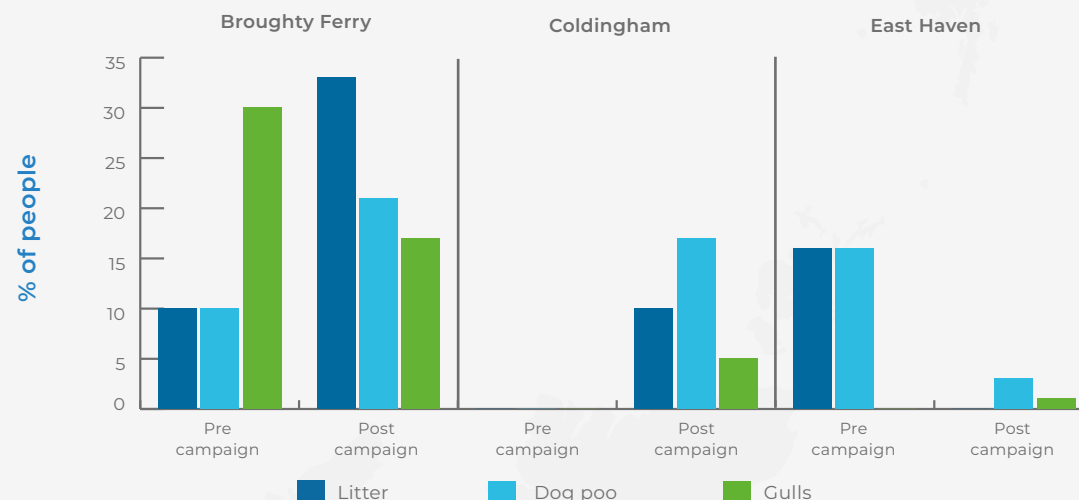
19% raised concern that beach access for dogs had been restricted, while 33% raised concern over irresponsible dog owners and that dogs were still accessing the beach when they should not be. This annual Animal Exclusion Zone has been in place at Broughty Ferry for over 20 years and beach users are made aware of the exclusion zone via a combination of on site signage, online information including social media, and staff engagement with beach users.

“Not being allowed to walk dogs on it but teenagers can drink and fight on it”

Respondent from Broughty Ferry



Perception of issues



Respondents were very positive when asked whether they would pick up litter on the beach or take some action in order to protect the beach (such as sharing social media and organising beach cleans), as can be seen in the table below.

Beach action

Beach	Would pick up litter when visiting the beach (% respondents)	Would take action to help protect this beach (%)
Broughty Ferry	83	92
Coldingham	69	86
East Haven	73	83

A number of respondents highlighted that people should be looking after their own litter rather than leaving it for others.

“wish people would take their rubbish home and not leave it for someone else to dispose off”

Respondent from Coldingham

Bathing water quality

A low proportion of beachgoers regularly check bathing quality (ranging from 20% to 33%) however this rises to between 43% and 60% when referring only to those who go to the beach to swim.

Campaign recall

At the end of the season, survey respondents were asked whether they had noticed the campaign. After being involved in the campaign for two years, campaign recall at Broughty Ferry increased from 53% at the end of the 2021 season to 58% at the end of 2022.

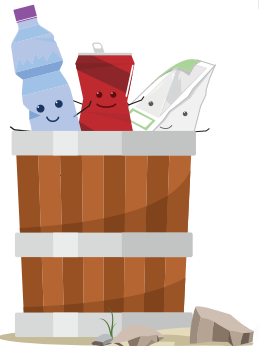
“Excellent addition to the messaging on the beach and well received by stakeholders and visitors”

Beach Manager feedback (anonymous)

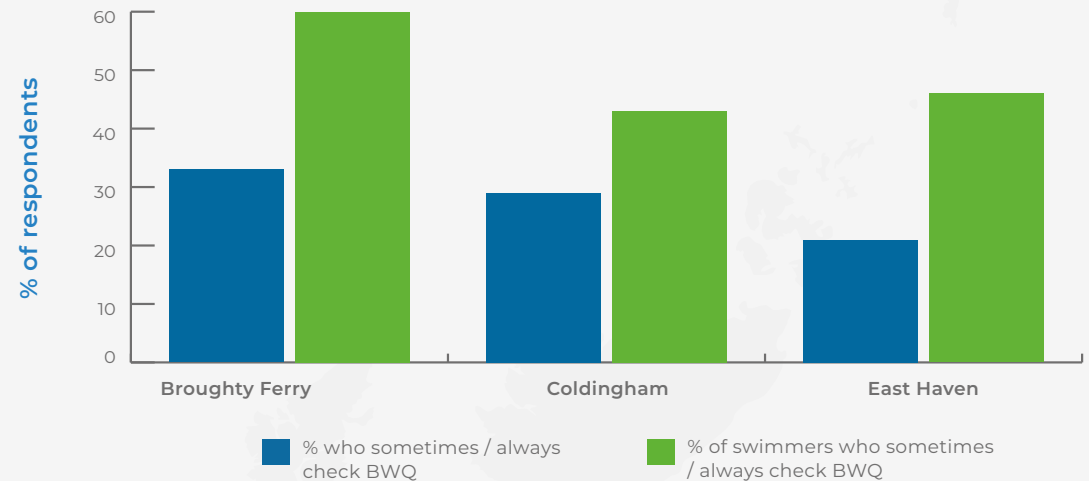
Campaign recall was lower at East Haven and Coldingham than for beaches that were part of the full [MBYB campaign](#). This may be due to the SBA Pilot campaign consisting primarily of campaign signage on-site, without additional social media and in person activities. Some respondents noted that they had not seen the signage at all and that there should be more visible signage as part of the campaign.

“Make signs more apparent. Can't remember seeing any of these.”

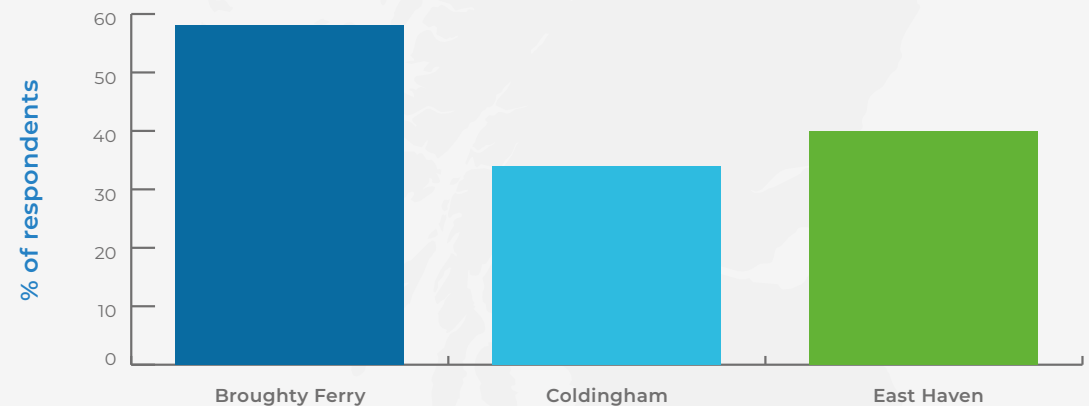
Respondent from East Haven



Respondents checking Bathing Water Quality



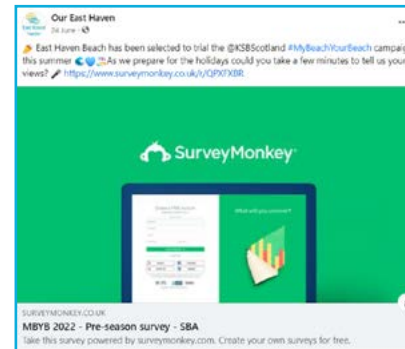
Percentage of respondents who noticed the campaign



Campaign media

Local authorities and community groups shared social media around the campaign as well as promoting the campaign through the press.

Press reach from the Highlands promoting the campaign was 50,707.



Beach manager feedback

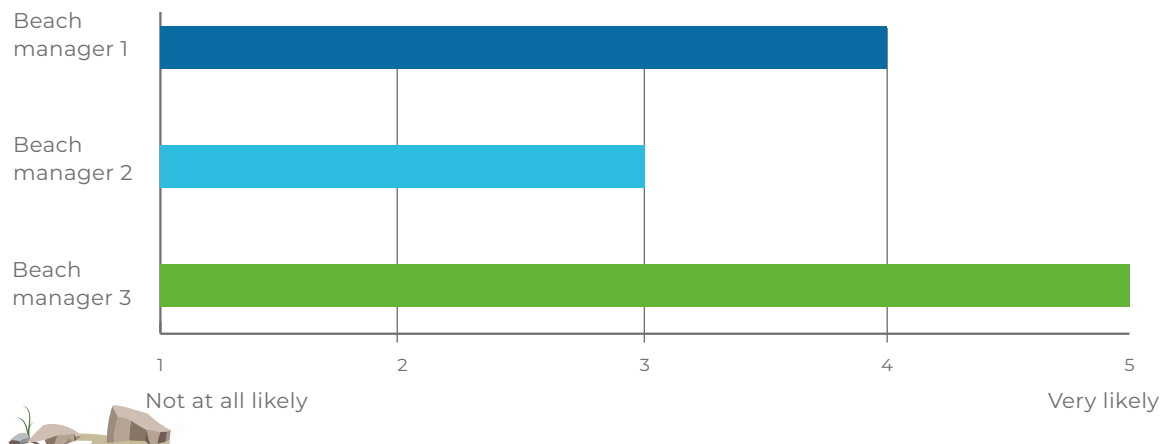
At the end of the pilot project, feedback was sought from the beach managers. The feedback was anonymous and was captured through an online questionnaire.

Responses were received from three out of the six different councils or community groups managing the beaches that were part of the SBA pilot campaign. The different elements of the pilot project were rated, as shown in the table below.

Beach manager feedback

Respondent (anonymous)	Campaign materials	Comms materials	Monitoring templates	Overall support
Beach manager 1	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Beach manager 2	Good	Good	Good	Good
Beach manager 3	Good	Good	Good	Good

Likelihood of recommending the campaign to other beach managers



What was the best aspect of the campaign ?

“Knowing that we were supporting a national campaign to reduce littering.”
Beach Manager feedback (anonymous)



Conclusion

The second year of this pilot campaign linking My Beach, Your Beach campaign messaging with Scotland's Beach Award beaches provided valuable insights into the amount and type of litter at different beaches, as well as the capacity of beach managers to engage with the campaign.

Litter surveys were conducted at five of the eight beaches taking part in the pilot, with pre, mid and post season surveys only conducted at East Haven. Food and drink related litter and cigarette stubs were recorded across all pilot beaches. Sewage related debris was recorded at three of the pilot beaches. Cigarette stubs made up a significant component of the litter found on the beaches and prompts and the beach manager and perception survey feedback identified cigarettes as a key issue at the beaches. Feedback suggested that signage targeting littering of cigarette butts should be included in future messaging, and this will be developed as a legacy of this campaign.

For most of the eight beaches taking part in the 2022 season of this SBA pilot, there was a significant drop in the level of engagement with the campaign throughout the season. As such, in some cases there was not sufficient data or feedback to make meaningful conclusions on aspects of the pilot. It is clear that time pressures, competing demands and basic resource capacity can make it difficult for beach managers to engage with and participate fully in such a campaign. The level of engagement with litter surveys, online perception surveys and the beach manager feedback surveys highlighted this and reinforced the importance of enthusiastic and engaged community groups and individuals to champion the MBYB key messages and enable important citizen science, such as litter surveys, to be carried out.

Positive feedback highlighted the benefits of sharing the key MBYB messages with beach goers and supported the concept that the MBYB campaign package was a worthwhile and impactful resource for supporting the SBA beaches in protecting environmental quality. As such, a toolkit will be prepared for SBA beach managers aligned with the SBA criteria and incorporating access to signage, social media cards and monitoring guidance to support the ongoing promotion of the key messages around binning litter and dog poo and not feeding gulls at Scotland's beaches. An ongoing legacy to help beach managers to protect the sand and sea.



As we found last year, the deployment of a basic My Beach Your Beach campaign package has been shown to be a valuable intervention for improving local environmental quality and improving beach stewardship in the short term.

Broughty Ferry Beach, Dundee City Council

Scottish Beach Awards: Broughty Ferry



My Beach, Your Beach: Broughty Ferry



58% people seen the campaign



5 litter surveys undertaken



34 responses to perception surveys



83% would pick up litter when visiting the beach



92% would take action to help protect this beach

Top five items found in litter survey

- 26% Wet wipes
- 17% Tampons
- 10% Sanitary (other)
- 6% Fishing line
- 6% Plastic sheeting



SEPA bathing water profile: Broughty Ferry



Perceptions and attitudes



Attitudinal surveys were promoted through Dundee City Council's social media at the start and end of the campaign.



10 respondents pre-season



24 respondents post-season



71% visit the beach once per week or more

Top three reasons for visiting the beach



92% Walking



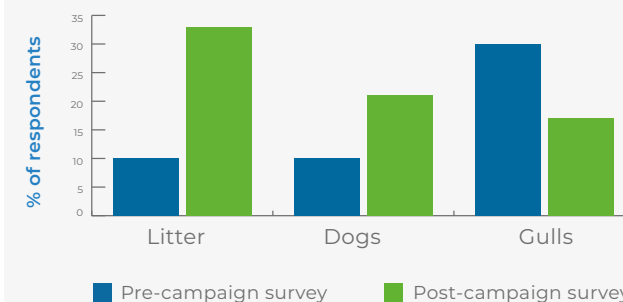
58% Scenery



46% Family time



Perceptions of issues



Coldingham Bay, Scottish Borders Council

[Scottish Beach Awards: Coldingham Bay](#)



[SEPA bathing water profile: Coldingham Bay](#)



My Beach, Your Beach: Coldingham Bay



34% people seen the campaign



4 litter surveys undertaken



58 responses to perception surveys



69% would pick up litter when visiting the beach



86% would take action to help protect this beach

Perceptions and attitudes



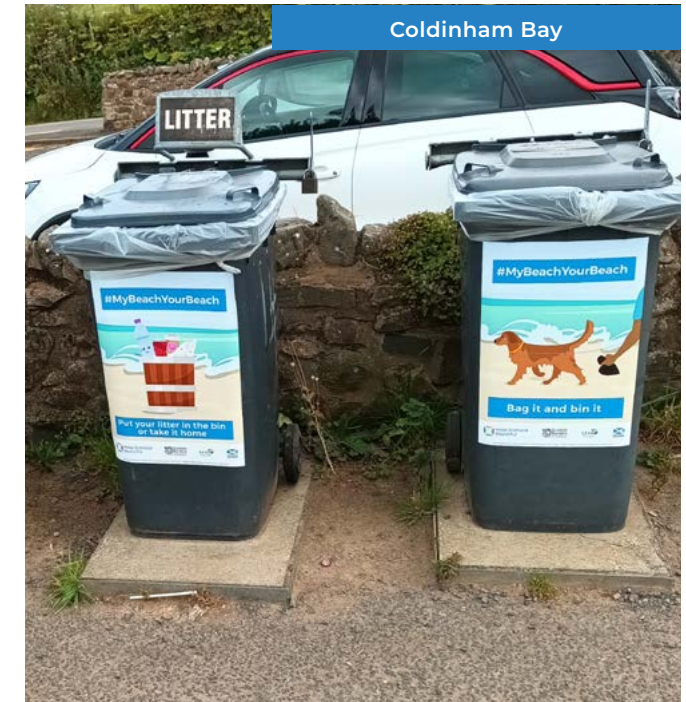
Attitudinal surveys were promoted through the local authority social media.



58 respondents post-season

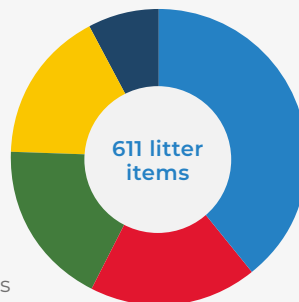


43% visit the beach once per week or more



Top five items found in litter survey

- **26%** Plastic pieces
- **12%** String and rope
- **12%** Plastic snack packets
- **11%** Cotton bud sticks
- **5%** Paper fragments



Top three reasons for visiting the beach



59% Walking

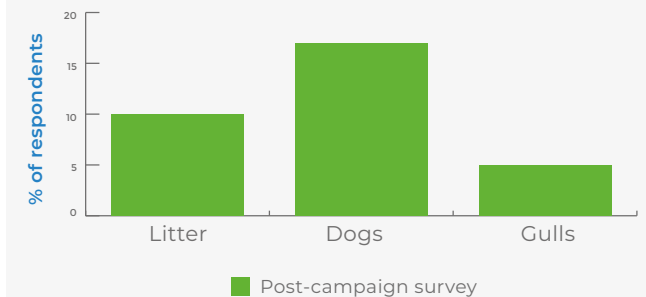


52% Scenery



52% Family time

Perceptions of issues



East Haven, East Haven Together

Scottish Beach Awards: East Haven



No SEPA profile as East Haven is not a designated bathing water.

My Beach, Your Beach: East Haven



40% people seen the campaign



14 litter surveys undertaken



97 responses to perception surveys

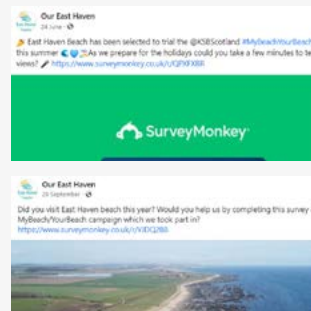


73% would pick up litter when visiting the beach



83% would take action to help protect this beach

Perceptions and attitudes



Attitudinal surveys were promoted through the Our East Haven's social media at the start and end of the campaign.



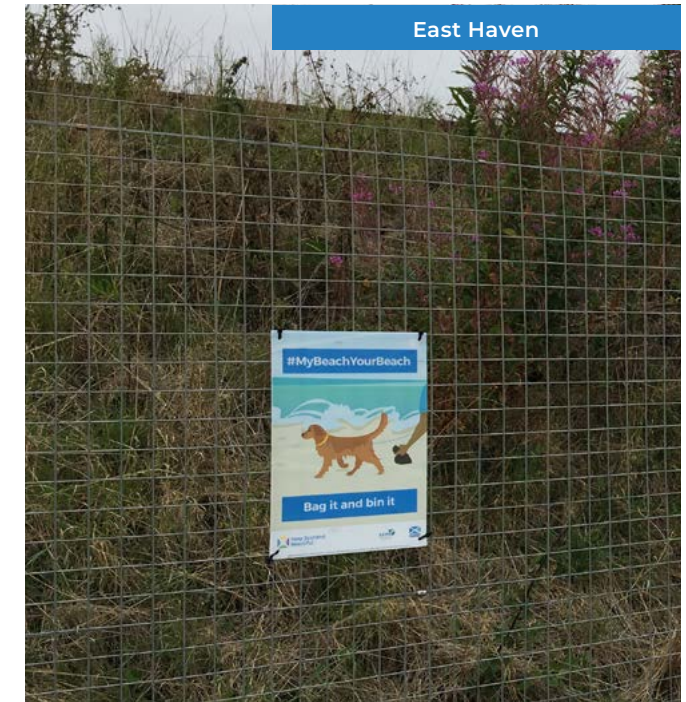
19 respondents pre-season



78 respondents post-season



31% visit the beach once per week or more



East Haven

Top five items found in litter survey

- 20% Wet wipes
- 16% Cigarette ends
- 14% Fishing line
- 11% Plastic snack packets
- 5% Plastic bottle caps



Top three reasons for visiting the beach



51% Walking

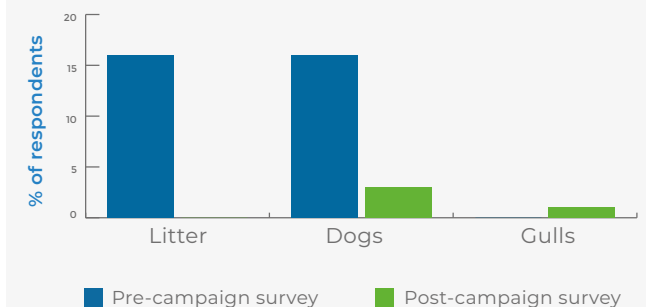


50% Dog walking



44% Family time

Perceptions of issues



Fraserburgh Tigerhill, Aberdeenshire Council

[Scottish Beach Awards: Fraserburgh Tigerhill](#)



[SEPA bathing water profile:
Fraserburgh Tigerhill](#)



Stonehaven Beach, Aberdeenshire Council

[Scottish Beach Awards: Stonehaven Beach](#)

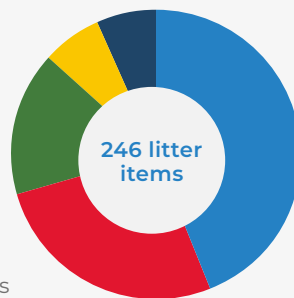


[SEPA bathing water profile:
Stonehaven Beach](#)



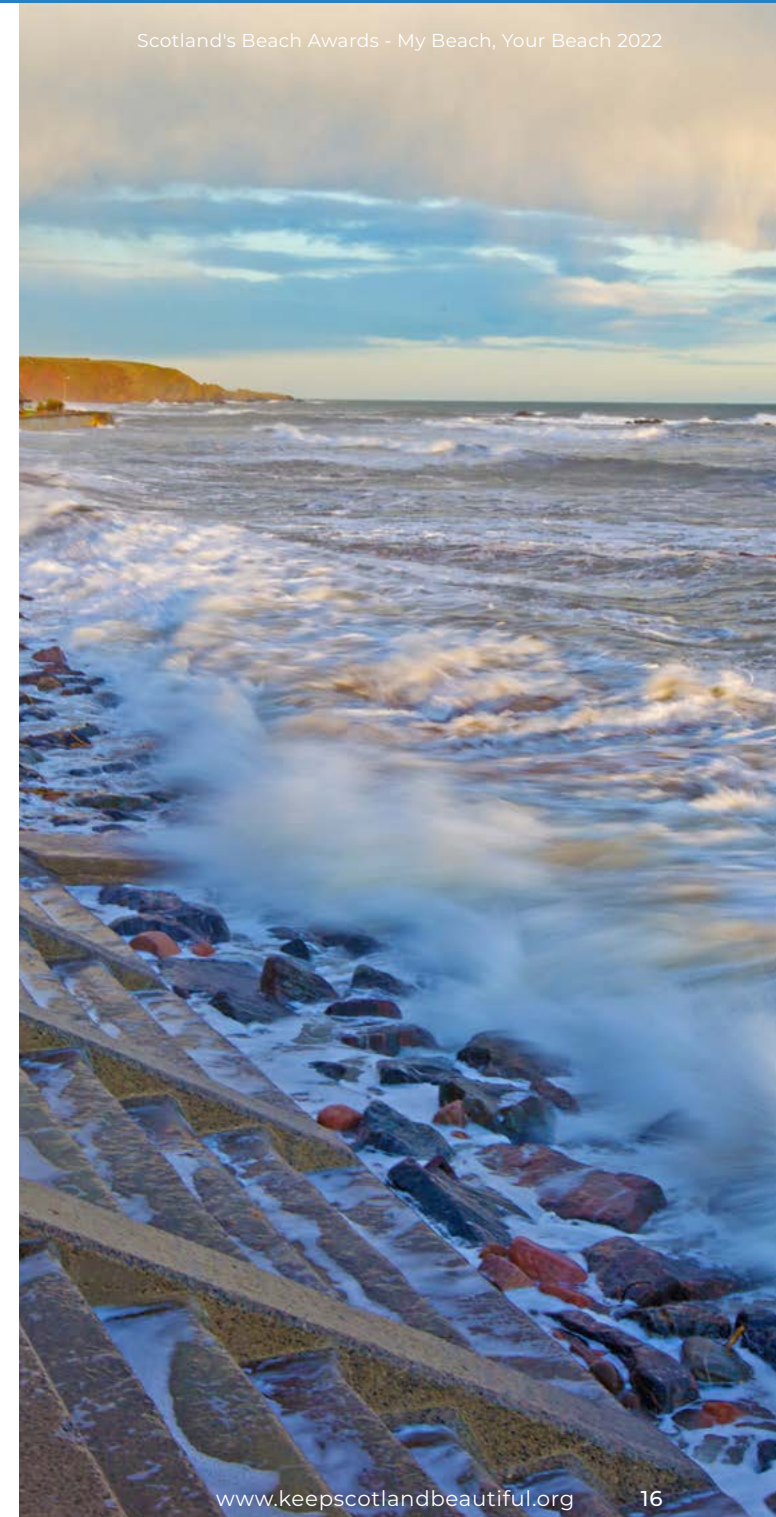
Top five items found in litter survey

- 33% Cigarette ends
- 20% Wooden forks and lolly sticks
- 12% Plastic bottle caps
- 5% Drinks cartons
- 5% Metal drinks cans



Top five items found in litter survey

- 42% Cigarette ends
- 17% Paper pieces
- 14% Plastic snack packs
- 4% Fishing line
- 4% Plastic sheeting



Dornoch Beach, Highland Council

[Scottish Beach Awards: Dornoch Beach](#)



[SEPA bathing water profile: Dornoch Beach](#)



Communications



Highland Council released a number of social media and press articles all over the Highlands Council area throughout July highlighting the aims of the My Beach Your Beach campaign

Prestwick Beach, South Ayrshire Council

[Scottish Beach Awards: Prestwick Beach](#)



[SEPA bathing water profile: Prestwick Beach](#)



Cruden Bay, Aberdeenshire Council

[Scottish Beach Awards: Cruden Bay](#)



[SEPA bathing water profile: Cruden Bay](#)





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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