

My Beach, Your Beach



An intervention to improve bathing water quality
Phase Two Report: Summer 2019

My Beach, Your Beach 2019 Highlights



Partnership

4

project sites; over 20
community partners



Campaigning

98%

wanted to see
ongoing work



Engagement

7,497

social media post
engagements on dog
fouling

Visibility



95%

of beach users noticed
the campaign

Environmental quality improvement since



2018

dog fouling and litter
levels reduced



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The story so far...



My Beach, Your Beach is a behaviour change campaign launched in 2018 to help improve bathing water quality outcomes at Scottish beaches. The campaign aims to change dog fouling, littering and gull feeding behaviours that may negatively affect bathing water quality.

Origin

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) microbial source testing (MST) data showed that, among other sources, **dog fouling** and **seagull excrement** was contributing to **poor bathing water quality** at some bathing water sites.

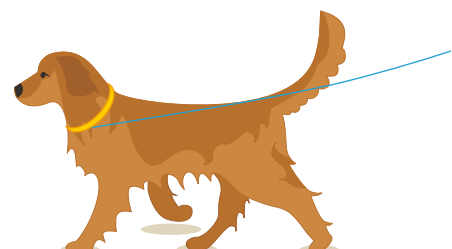
Keep Scotland Beautiful was tasked by the Scottish Government to develop a campaign to address dog fouling, litter and gull feeding at Scottish beaches at risk of poor bathing water classifications.

Following a successful pilot in 2018, we launched a second phase of My Beach, Your Beach in 2019 at Ayr South Beach, Portobello (Central and West) and Fisherrow Sands (Musselburgh), and extended the project reach to cover Kinghorn Harbour.

My Beach, Your Beach takes a community level approach, to encourage responsible behaviours and create a catalyst for local ownership of beaches.

This campaign runs alongside bathing water quality improvement work being progressed by a number of statutory bodies, and has been identified as an important element in a matrix of solutions in progressing bathing water quality improvement in Scotland.

This report outlines the campaign's approach, key findings and recommendations.



Aims

The campaign aims were as follows:

- Encourage behaviour change in relation to littering to remove this source of food for gulls.
- Encourage residents and visitors to bag and bin dog waste.
- Create more community ownership of the quality of local bathing waters.
- Create a campaign that can be replicated in other bathing water locations (including the development of an online toolkit with resources available for use in other locations).

Funders and delivery partners

This work was funded by Scottish Government and carried out in collaboration with Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and with backing from local authorities: South Ayrshire Council, City of Edinburgh Council, East Lothian Council and Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (on behalf of Fife Council).



Site profiles

In Scotland, designated bathing water sites are monitored by SEPA and awarded annual classifications based on faecal indicator organism count in collected samples, according to the Revised Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC). Bathing water quality in Scotland is affected by a number of factors to varying extents (Figure 1).

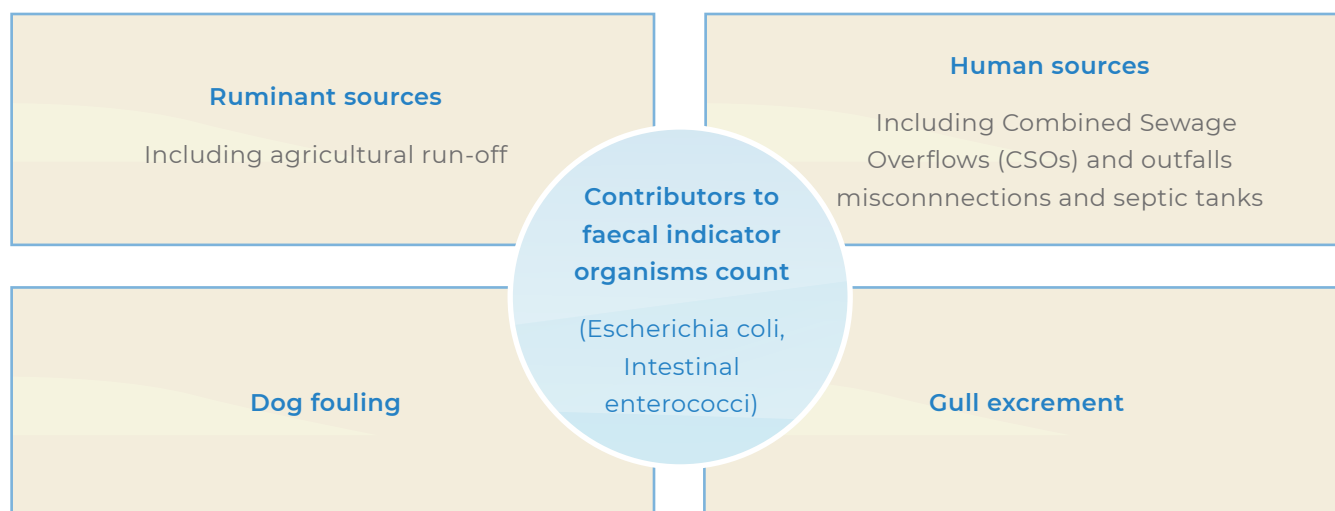


Figure 1 Some of the factors affecting faecal indicator organism count levels in bathing water samples.

Priority bathing water sites at risk of poor bathing water quality were selected to be the sites of this campaign. Recent classifications of the campaign sites are detailed in Table 1.

Location	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019
Portobello (Central)	Sufficient	Sufficient
Portobello (West)	Poor	Sufficient ↑
Ayr (South)	Poor	Poor
Fisherrow Sands	Poor	Poor
Kinghorn Harbour	Poor	Poor

Table 1: Bathing water quality classifications of project sites. Further information available sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters



Ayr

Ayr's South Beach is one of the most popular visitor beaches in Scotland, with good rail links to Glasgow. Stretching over 3.5km, the beach is known to attract thousands of visitors on a sunny day.

Population: 46,500

Beach cleansing regime:

- Regular mechanical cleansing of amenity stretch.
- Bins and toilet facilities maintained by South Ayrshire Council.



Kinghorn Harbour

Kinghorn lies on the popular Fife Coastal Path and offers spectacular views across the Forth estuary. It is home to Kinghorn RNLI Lifeboat station and bounded by a harbour to the East.

Population: 3,000

Beach cleansing regime:

- There is no mechanical cleansing, litter is handpicked regularly.
- Bins and toilet facilities maintained by Fife Coast and Countryside Trust.



Fisherrow Sands (Musselburgh)

Fisherrow Sands is a much cherished beach among locals. The beach offers stunning views across the Firth of Forth and is a popular spot for families, dog walkers and harbour users.

Population (Musselburgh): 21,900

Beach cleansing regime:

- There is no mechanical cleansing, litter is handpicked regularly.
- Bins and toilet facilities maintained by East Lothian Council.



Portobello

Popular with locals and visitors alike, this sandy stretch offers a host of amenities including restaurants, bars and cafes along the promenade. The beach is split into two designated bathing waters (Central and West).

Population (Portobello and Craigmillar): 31,000

Beach cleansing regime:

- Regular mechanical cleansing of the central stretch.
- Bins and toilet facilities maintained by City of Edinburgh Council. Additional capacity bins were installed at this beach for the 2019 summer season.

Our approach

Campaign development:

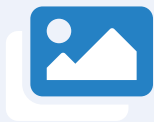
March – June 2019

The campaign design was informed by extensive primary research carried out in the pilot¹, alongside input from local authorities, partner organisations and communities, prior to the beginning of the summer season.

Implementation (Summer)

June – September 2019

A series of interventions were implemented at each location over the summer season. Interventions are categorised into three strands of approach:



Community engagement:

Supporting local Clean Up groups, a presence at community events, running outreach events, and social media.



Business engagement:

Providing materials for businesses, supporting businesses to sign up for #MyBeachYourBeach pledges.



Materials and campaign visibility:

Bin wraps, posters, beach cleaning stations, stickers and other signage.

Monitoring and evaluation

September – November 2019

A mixed-method approach to monitoring was implemented, detailed further on Page 11. Following the implementation period, project evaluation was informed by monitoring data and stakeholder inputs.



Monitoring:

Litter data, questionnaires, media and web analytics.



Stakeholder debriefing

With communities and delivery partners.



¹ My Beach, Your Beach Phase One report (2018) available online: www.keeptscotlandbeautiful.org/mybeachyourbeach

Messaging

On the beach

Aligning with the key aims of the campaign messaging took the form of three simple calls to action for beach goers:



Messaging was adapted to each bathing water site with the supporting local authority logo and adapted for local relevance e.g. Dog poo pollutes the water **at Portobello**.



Off the beach

In addition to on the beach messaging, My Beach, Your Beach has the potential to change habits at home by raising awareness of upstream messaging. Sewage related debris (SRD) and incorrect disposal of kitchen residues such as fats, oils, and greases (FOGs) can have significant impacts on beach cleanliness and can lead to foul-water blockages^{2,3} impacting local bathing water quality.

In 2019, My Beach, Your Beach incorporated several “take home” messages:



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Partnerships

To allow messages to reach a wide and diverse local audience, we worked closely with local networks at the campaign sites. Keep Scotland Beautiful is thankful to the input of the following organisations, groups and communities who have engaged with My beach Your, Beach over the campaign's lifetime:

Partners / supporters / contributors	
Portobello Community Council	Don't Mess with Mussy / Love Musselburgh
Friends of Porty Prom	Keep Porty Tidy
Porty Podcast	The Edinburgh Shoreline Project
Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home	Edinburgh Over Plastic
Fisherrow Yacht Club	Kinghorn Harbour Residents Group (KHREG)
Eskmuthe Rowing Club	Kinghorn Over Plastic
Fisherrow Waterfront Group	Kinghorn Play Parks
Fisherrow Harbour and Seafront Association	Kinghorn Parish Church
Environmental Volunteers Ayrshire	Kinghorn RNLI
RSPB	Marine Conservation Society
Scottish Water	Fidra

Table 2: Partners, supporters and contributors to the campaign

² Scottish Government, Marine Scotland Directorate (2012) Marine litter issues, impacts and actions. Accessed: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/marine-litter-issues-impacts-actions/>.

³ Arthur, S. & Blanc, J., (2013), Management and Recovery of FOG (fats, oils and greases), CREW project CD2013/6. Available online at: crew.ac.uk/publications.



Monitoring

A mixed-method approach to monitoring was used throughout My Beach, Your Beach campaign to capture a range of impacts (Table 3).

This included monitoring litter levels, dog fouling and gull count, as well as other relevant variables such as visitor numbers, event occurrence and weather conditions. Litter levels were measured at intervals throughout the summer (35 counts across four sites) using an adapted Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) methodology⁴.

We encouraged community volunteers to become involved with the process of monitoring campaign outputs, through citizen science data collection of beach litter composition.

Qualitative data was collected in the form of questionnaires conducted face to face at the four locations and online via SurveyMonkey. In total, 162 individuals provided survey responses.

Monitoring Matrix		
Litter data	Questionnaire	Media and web
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Litter count ■ Dog fouling ■ Gulls ■ Weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Online surveys ■ Face-to-face questionnaire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Press coverage ■ Social media interaction ■ Website views

Table 3: Monitoring matrix

⁴ Accessed: <https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/environmental-services/leams>

Community engagement

A summer of interventions

Throughout the summer of 2019, we engaged with the community through a range of events – from attending community events to share information about My Beach, Your Beach, to organising “Dog Days” to meet with local dogs and their owners.



14 May
Friends of Porty
Prom AGM



18 May
Fisherrow
Harbour Festival



13 June
That's TV
Interview



8 June
World Clean Up
Day and Launch



14 June
Blackrock 5
Race Kinghorn



25 June
Volunteer
induction Ayr



22 September

Great British Beach Clean Kinghorn



21 September

Great British Beach Clean Ayr



14 September

Kinghorn Parish Fayre



16 August

Councillor photocall and dog day



1 September

Edinburgh Cat and Dog Home Open Day



15 August

Portobello Dog Day



13 August

Hero of the Month East Lothian



3 July

Lifeboat stall Day



28 July

Fisherrow Funday

Making waves: Our social media presence

Recognising the potential to engage with new audiences via social media, My Beach, Your Beach had a strong emphasis on creating innovative and shareable online content. We used Twitter, Facebook and Instagram as platforms to spread our campaign messages and increase public engagement.

There was a high level of interaction (comments, shares and likes) on My Beach, Your Beach content across social media platforms. On Twitter alone, there were over 97,000 impressions between June and September 2019 in relation to the campaign.

#BagItandBinIt Dog Ambassador competition

We photographed local dogs at campaign sites and conducted subsequent online public votes to choose a #BagItandBinIt ambassador. For the second consecutive summer, this competition has proved to be the most successful social media campaign.



Key Facebook stats



30,143 overall reach



7,479 engagements



949 comments



5,020 clicks

A wider reach

A high level of organic posts of beach users connecting with the campaign online was also observed, using the hashtag #MyBeachYourBeach.



Our 2019 #BagItandBinIt dog ambassadors



Freddie from Tranent

Labrador, 5 months

"I love getting everybody outdoors, so a trip to the beach with Freddie is a firm favourite. The beach is really popular but this popularity can have its downsides - including a rise in litter and dog fouling. I hope that this campaign can help to encourage every one to be more aware and to take their litter home."

Holly, East Lothian (Freddie's owner)



Jock from Edinburgh

Norwich Terrier, 11 years

"We go most days of the week down to Portobello. Jock loves running along the prom and meeting other dogs. Delighted to take part in competition as we have to keep our beaches clean and help spread the news to tidy up after us and raising awareness of environment. We will continue to Keep Scotland Beautiful by clearing up after us."

Angela, Edinburgh (Jock's owner)



Amber from Musselburgh

Fox-red Labrador, 5 years

"We are delighted that Amber will be the face of this campaign. Amber loves playing on the beach and swimming in the sea, we visit there most days. We hope this campaign will help to protect our wonderful and precious beaches so we can all continue to enjoy them."

Catherine, East Lothian (Amber's owner)



Media reach

We used traditional media to distribute My Beach Your Beach key news, with a positive uptake amongst regional newspapers in our four beach areas.



Articles

18



Reader reach

216,828 people

Business engagement

We visited businesses in each area to discuss ways they could get involved with My Beach, Your Beach.

Businesses were encouraged to sign up to three or more “My Beach, Your Beach pledges”. The pledges were actions that could be taken by the business in order to help improve local environmental quality, including bathing water quality. Wider environmental issues were also incorporated, such as the reduction of single-use packaging. Businesses committing to three or more pledges received a supporter pack with window stickers, posters and leaflets available to display in their premises.



A supporting communications pack was also developed for businesses.

In total, five businesses consolidated the My Beach, Your Beach pledges within their businesses operations.

⁵ My Beach, Your Beach Resources Toolkit available for download: www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/mybeachyourbeach/toolkit

CASE STUDY:

Ayr businesses take pledge for beach

Sandgate based Unity Grill and Crunch Salad Bar on Alloway Street signed up to the campaign and committed to three or more pledges.



Angela Iver at Unity Grill commented:

"We work and live so close to the most stunning sandy beach so it's easy for plastic to be blown from the street straight to the sea. We feel very strongly about not only protecting the beauty but also the life that depends on the sea for survival. We appreciate the current climate crisis and do what we can to negate our impact."

Councillor Siobhian Brown commented:

"There needs to be a change of littering culture mentality and we need to encourage a sense of civic pride in our area. Little steps can make a big impression on the appearance of our town and I am delighted that local businesses are signing up to Keep Scotland Beautiful's pledge and taking responsibility for cleanliness of their area."

"The council will continue with our commitment for waste management but this gives a perfect opportunity for local businesses and council to come together and see the impact we can make on our town all working together."

Materials and campaign visibility

A range of materials were put in place at the locations to increase visibility of the issues.

Colourful bin wraps with key campaign messages

Colourful bin wraps were added to existing bin infrastructure at each site. Three design variations covered the key campaign messages:

- Bag and bin dog poo
- Put your litter in the bin
- Don't feed the gulls

Bin wraps were a new addition to Ayr this year, following support by South Ayrshire Council, with positive local feedback from beach users. In Portobello, additional efforts were made to make messaging local, and we teamed up with Keep Porty Tidy to collaborate on design, incorporating “Keep Porty Tidy” messaging.



Bin wraps along Ayr esplanade.

Litter picking stations along beach fronts

Ten litter picking stations were trialled at the East Coast locations of Portobello, Fisherrow and Kinghorn Harbour. Litter picking equipment was installed on a stationary board affixed to fencing at each of the sites. The stations were stocked with litter picking sticks and bags.

These proved to be most visible of all interventions and received significant coverage on social media. Nearly 9 in 10 (89%) beach users were aware of the litter stations at the trial sites.



This intervention had mixed success depending on location, with litter pickers going missing regularly at Portobello. Meanwhile, in less busy beach locations in Fisherrow and Kinghorn, litter picking sticks did not go astray as often. Fisherrow Sands and Kinghorn Harbour communities have chosen to retain the stations under a guardianship arrangement.

The clean up stations seem to lose their equipment quickly and remain empty. Not sure what we can do to help get pickup sticks/bags returned/ replenished. (M, 65+, Portobello via online survey).

The litter pickers were a great idea, however even very early mornings I rarely actually saw the devices (F, 35-44, Portobello via online survey).

The Litter pickers are a fantastic idea. Who knows, it might catch on at other beaches" (Instagram user, Portobello).

I love this. I hope people use this and contribute towards clearing, and cleaning up the environment. Could we have something similar in Leith?" (Twitter user, Leith).



At Fisherrow Sands, Fisherrow Waterfront Group will maintain the three litter stations.



Stickers, posters and leaflets

A range of campaign collateral was produced and made available as part of our toolkit for communities, businesses and local authorities.



Toolkit: Downloadable version available online now
www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org/mybeachyourbeach/toolkit

Findings

Campaign presence

In a face to face and online survey of 163 individuals across four sites, **95% noticed at least one intervention**. The percentage of respondents aware of each intervention is detailed in the table below, alongside the 2018 levels of awareness.

Intervention	Public awareness (2018 levels)	Public awareness (2019 levels)	% Change
Bin wraps	77%	82%	5% ↑
Bathing Water Quality signage (SEPA managed)	54%	60%	6% ↑
Social Media	22%	29%	7% ↑
Events e.g. beach cleans, information stalls	22%	57%	35% ↑
Posters and other signage	19%	26%	7% ↑
Newspaper	14%	12%	2% ↓
Business support	10%	34%	24% ↑
Leaflets	7%	7%	0% →
Litter stations NB this intervention was delivered at three sites only: Portobello, Kinghorn and Fisherrow Sands	N/A introduced for 2019 season	89%	

Table 4: Public awareness change from 2018 – 2019

There has been a significant increase in visibility across interventions in the 2019 campaign in comparison to 2018 levels. Campaign awareness has increased, with the number of respondents noticing at least one of the outlined interventions now reaching 95%, compared to 82% in 2018.

In addition, we have seen an increase in awareness levels of events and of business engagement.

New litter stations deployed in Portobello, Fisherrow Sands and Kinghorn Harbour were highly visible, with this intervention being found to be the most noticeable of all project interventions (89% of respondents were aware).

Objective one: Reducing litter as a source of food for gulls



Context

The distribution of gull populations is affected by a number of variables, including the availability of food source. At urban beach sites, anthropogenic food sources can arise directly e.g feeding gulls, or indirectly e.g deposited litter or overflowing bins. More gulls present means that more gull excrement is concentrated in the bathing water area, increasing the likelihood of a negative effect on bathing water quality.

In 2018, our data found a weak positive relationship between litter count and number of gulls present at the site, and in 2019 a similar trend was observed. This relationship suggests that human behaviours (littering), to some extent, are affecting the number of gulls gathering at bathing water sites, although our dataset has not been collected with the purpose of providing scientific evidence for this relationship.

Trends in litter

Due to the low levels of litter at all sites, it is difficult to ascertain particular trends within the 2019 implementation period. A larger effect is the difference between years 2018 and 2019.

Litter levels were significantly lower in 2019 than in 2018. There was a lower initial count of litter than 2018 baseline levels; 48 – 75% less litter was observed with an average count of just 31 items per 100m² compared to 81 items the previous summer.

Available Marine Conservation Society citizen science survey data in Ayr also tends towards a reduction in litter at this site (5 September 2018 compared to 21 September 2019). In addition, anecdotal evidence from communities at the sites supports this finding. As Kinghorn was a new location of this project, we do not have 2018 data for this site.

This reduction in litter levels recorded in 2019 could be attributed to a variety of factors:

1) Weather: In general weather in summer 2019 was less favourable than summer 2018. As a result, it could be hypothesized that visitor numbers to the sites were affected, and as a result the potential for littering behaviour was reduced.

However, when the litter levels on days of similar weather conditions are compared between 2019 and 2018, the average litter levels are still consistently lower in 2019 than in 2018.

Hot day count: Litter count on hot, dry conditions				
	2018		2019	
Location	Date	Litter count (100m ²)	Date	Litter count (100m ²)
Ayr	27/06/2018	121.5	01/07/2019	28.5
Fisherrow Sands	03/07/2018	57.5	11/07/2019	23
Portobello (Central)	03/07/2018	94.5	15/08/2019	67
Portobello (West)	03/07/2018	107	15/08/2019	41

Table 5: Litter count on hot days

2) Campaign awareness: There was an increased awareness of the campaign in 2019, and this may have affected litter levels at the sites. Increased visibility of interventions, and the introduction of litter stations gave the campaign increased salience.

3) Action from councils and communities: Councils have also made efforts to further reduce litter levels: City of Edinburgh Council installed new bins in 2019 to increase capacity, South Ayrshire Council Safer Shores programme has seen progress with regard to anti-social behaviours, and in 2019 the number of drinks related litter items found in Ayr beach had reduced significantly. Increased community efforts at all sites have not been unnoticed: all of these factors may contribute to the comparatively low litter levels.

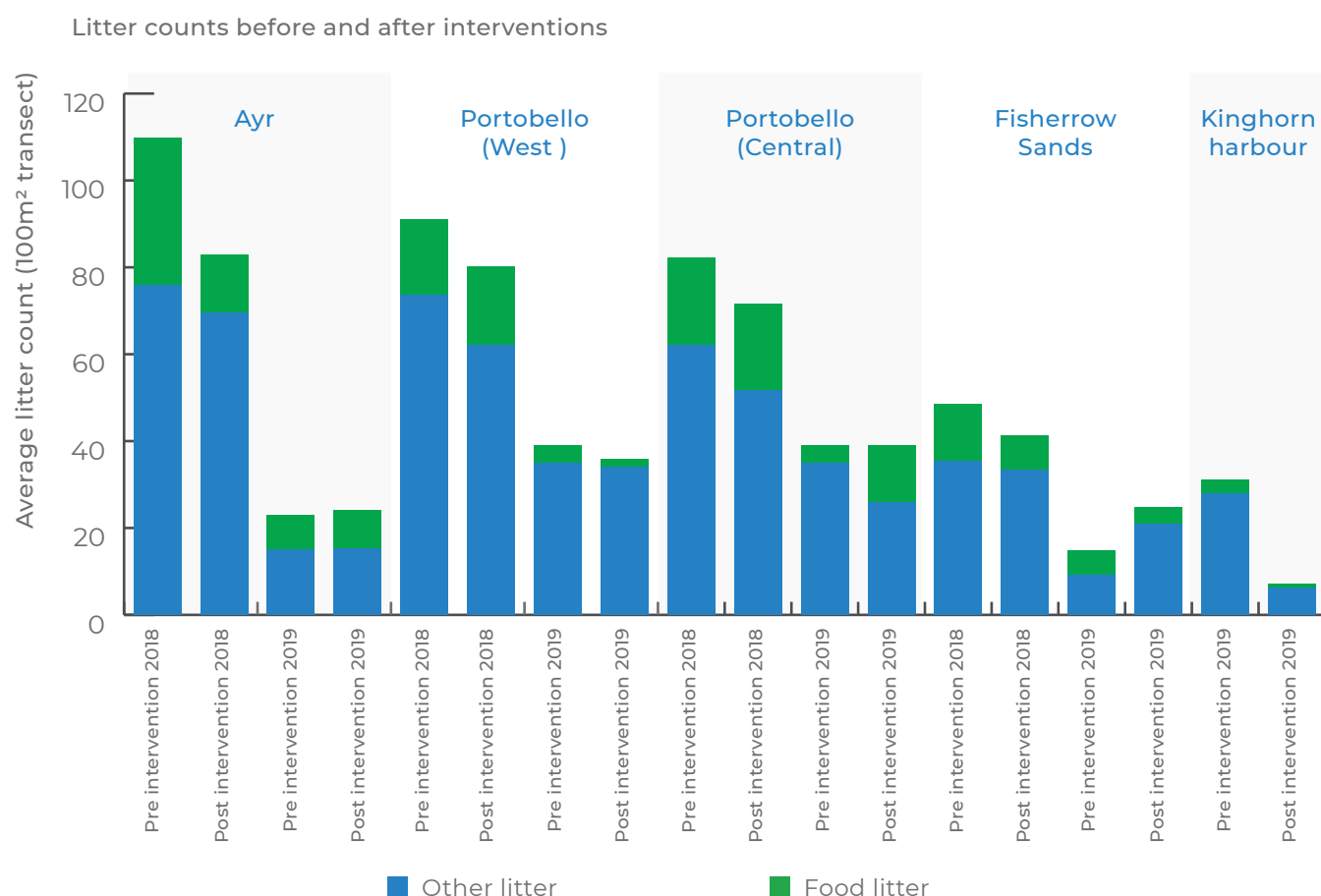
4) Changing behaviours

In addition, an increase in public awareness of environmental issues⁷ may have some impact in littering behaviours.

⁶ Belant, J. L. (1997). Gulls in urban environments: landscape-level management to reduce conflict. *Landscape and urban planning*, 38(3-4), 245-258.



Within the 2019 season, there were small fluctuation of +/- 10 litter items per 100m² before and after interventions, with some sites actually increasing in litter count as the summer progressed (such as at Fisherrow Sands). This is a different trend than observed in 2018, when initially high litter levels dropped significantly following the introduction of intervention measures. This could be because the baseline was already significantly reduced and no further reductions were made. Interestingly, at Kinghorn Harbour, where the campaign ran for its first season, a “year one” type trend was observed following the introduction of campaign interventions.

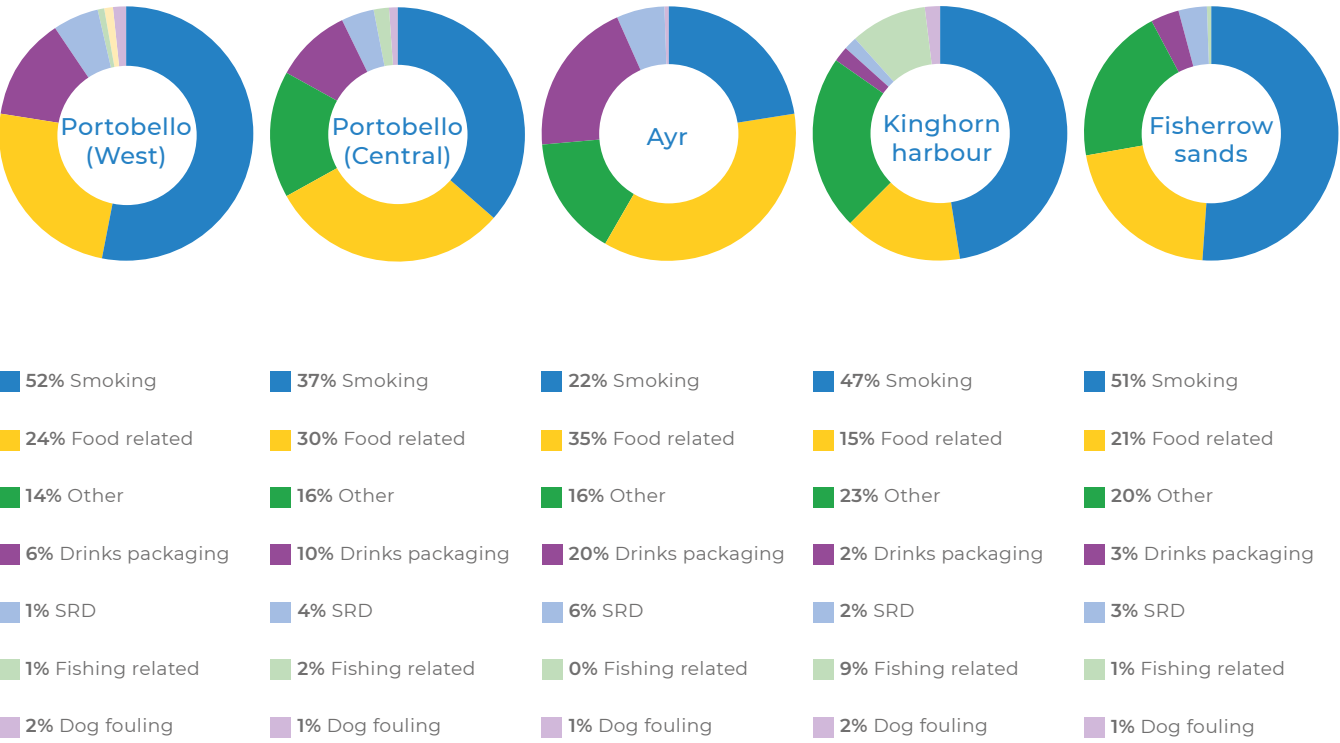


⁷ BEIS Public Attitudes Tracker: Wave 29 (2019) Accessible online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/beis-public-attitudes-tracker-wave-29>



Composition of litter on beaches and amenity areas

Food-related litter made up 15-35% of litter on beaches and amenity areas. South Beach, Ayr, had the highest proportion of food-related litter, at 35% of total count. This composition is not dissimilar from 2018 composition, where food related litter made up 19-29% beach and amenity area litter. Cigarette litter was again the highest contributor (by unit count) of beach litter, with 22-51% of all litter being smoking related.



(SRD = sewage related debris)

The most common food-related litter items found were:	
1	Confectionery packaging (plastic)
2	Confectionery packaging (foil/foil hybrid)
3	Cutlery

Table 6: Most common litter food related items found

Objective two: Encouraging residents and visitors to bag and bin dog waste

As well as potential negative public health impacts of dog faeces, attitudinal surveys show that 69% of people rate dog poo as the item on beaches that bothers them most⁸.

Using a range of methods to engage dog owners, including social media, information stalls, dog photography and outreach events, the campaign had a high on-site reach in relation to dog fouling and a reduction in dog fouling count was observed in 2019, with low levels of dog fouling observed at all sites.

Dog fouling count per 100m ²	Summer 2018	Summer 2019	Change from 2018
Portobello (Central)	0.46	0.33	25% ↓
Portobello (West)	1.35	0.60	56% ↓
Ayr	0.13	0.13	0% →
Fisherrow Sands	0.26	0.10	62% ↓
Kinghorn Harbour	unknown	0.20	

Table 7: Average dog fouling count (100m²)

There was a good general awareness amongst the public of the problems associated with dog fouling. Of dog owners engaged with in face to face surveys, all said they always picked up after their dog. Reasons given were:

- “It’s the law”
- “It’s gross”
- “It could make people sick”
- “Important to pick up everywhere / under every circumstance”

Objective three: Promoting local ownership of bathing waters

Have perceptions of litter and dog fouling changed?

In 2018 and 2019 surveys, we asked communities what their perceptions of litter and dog fouling issues were.

A higher proportion of people were concerned about litter and dog fouling issues in their community in 2019, with more people citing dog fouling and littering as an issue at the beach. This has increased since 2018, despite results showing that the local environment quality has improved at these sites in this time. This increase in concern could be as a result of heightened awareness of these issues and changing public perceptions towards the environment, with record numbers of people now concerned about the environment⁷.

Have perceptions of bathing water quality changed?

People seemed aware of bathing water quality and some of the associated issues, with 60% respondents reporting that they had seen SEPA managed bathing water signage points. Some respondents had changed their routine as a result of poor ratings as a result of poor bathing water quality. One respondent in Ayr commented that the water was “too polluted...would never let the kids swim”. Only a quarter (26%) of respondents reported never considering water quality when visiting the beach.

⁸ Keep Scotland Beautiful (2007) Public attitudes to litter and littering in Scotland.



What were the main themes arising from the public?

Although a high proportion of the public were concerned about littering and dog fouling, comments collected in questionnaires indicated a general theme of satisfaction with beach cleanliness but cited ongoing problems arising on days with high visitor numbers, in relation to litter:

- "I think litter can be a real problem at busy times, but not really at other times".
- "Based on zero tolerance, with litter and dog muck, there's work to do but in general the area is reasonably clean."
- "Bins often look very untidy after a busy weekend, but this has improved somewhat."
- "I think the cleanliness of beaches in Ayrshire is generally very good indeed but, I would hate to see efforts in this area relaxed as it wouldn't take much for standards to slide very quickly. Well done to all involved!"
- "Day to day I don't see a major problem."
- "I always notice how well the workers do at clearing the beach, on hot days when crowds come to the beach it can only be expected to be some rubbish, however there are plenty of visitors who leave rubbish behind."

A number of suggestions were echoed across respondent feedback. These ranged from being directly linked to the campaign outcomes, to wider comments on beach management:

There was a strong enthusiasm for "dog free zones", "dog restriction zones" or "more patrols" (both in terms of dog fouling and littering). Respondents also wanted higher capacity bins, and provision of dog specific bins on the beach itself.

There was an expression of interest for more joined up community approaches at the sites. In addition, there was also a call for greater investment in coastal community facilities, events and amenities, particularly seating and lighting.

Overall, the campaign was positively received with 98% expressing that they would like to see ongoing work in this area.

"I really appreciate the support of our beach and think that such initiatives over time will make our beach an even better place for us all to enjoy."



What communities said about the campaign

"People have made very favourable comments about the presence of information stalls. Its easy to assume that peoples knowledge about subjects is better than it is. Having a brief chat will often spur people to reflect late and consider simple steps to enhance their knowledge or to take action."

Alan McIlravie, Kinghorn Parish Church of Scotland (in relation to a My Beach, Your Beach information stall at the Church Community Fayre)

"It's been fantastic having such strong support from you, it's really added value and kept us motivated! Please let's keep going with the litter picking stations, people are still interested and we can give them a wee boost."

Katie Swann, Fisherrow Waterfront Group

"One thing that is evident that our bins are a lot more colourful with your stickers on them!"

Cllr Siobhian Brown, South Ayrshire Council

We are delighted to see a return of the My Beach, Your Beach campaign again this year, following the success last year. Lots of people engaged with the project and feedback that it helped make the area look better. The dog poster competition was also very well received, and this year we are excited for the arrival of the new litter picking stations to Fisherrow!"

Pauline Crerar, Eskmuthe Rowing Club

Conclusions

My Beach, Your Beach is the first campaign of its kind in Scotland, combining a range of traditional and innovative behaviour change and litter prevention interventions to achieve improved bathing water quality outcomes at four Scottish beaches.

Phase two of the campaign built on the initial progress made in 2018, increasing our support of communities and businesses to improve the places they care for, and contributing to reductions in litter and dog fouling levels.

Through a mixed-monitoring methodology, we gathered quantitative and qualitative data on the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve bathing water quality. These findings allow future work to be primed to focus on interventions which are a) effective and b) endorsed by coastal communities.

The main conclusions are as follows:

- 1) We have developed a campaign and approach which is impactful and dynamic. My Beach, Your Beach has been successful in achieving core improvements in local environmental quality and local ownership, as well as demonstrating the potential to grow and adapt as a campaign to tackle a wider range of associated environmental issues.
- 2) Sustained momentum and an increase in campaign presence across sites has resulted in a better reach of key messages, with 95% of respondents aware of at least one campaign intervention in 2019 – a testament to the success of the campaign.
- 3) Litter levels dropped significantly from 2018 levels. A reduction in dog fouling levels is encouraging. However, food related-litter was still responsible for a sizable portion of recorded litter, pointing towards wider societal issues relating to on-the-go consumption behaviours.
- 4) Social media is an important tool to reach wider audiences. For a second year running, the campaign has achieved significant levels of online interaction, using innovative, visual content as a means of discussing bathing water quality issues.
- 5) The impact of the campaign has been amplified as a result of positive engagement from communities, delivery partners and local authorities. There is further scope to expand community engagement and involve a broader range of groups.
- 6) There is a desire from businesses to get involved. In Summer 2019, businesses voluntarily committed to pledges to reduce their environmental impact as a result of the campaign. There is potential to further develop this aspect of the campaign.

The My Beach, Your Beach campaign evidences the significant importance of, and connection to, beaches for communities in Scotland. The campaign not only works to protect, celebrate and enhance our beaches, but has the potential to have wider benefits on health and wellbeing, tourism and leisure, and heritage.

Partnership working

We extend thanks and acknowledgment to all delivery partners, especially communities we worked with, without whom this campaign would not have been a success. We acknowledge the excellent support and enthusiasm from South Ayrshire Council, East Lothian Council, Fife Coast and Countryside Trust and City of Edinburgh Council. We also thank the Scottish Government and SEPA for their support in the implementation of this campaign, and for recognising the important role of communities in this multidimensional issue.



Our recommendations

Keep Scotland Beautiful is committed to supporting and sustaining ongoing improvements in bathing water quality for Scotland's coastal communities. This is particularly pertinent as we enter 2020, Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters.

Overall, more needs to be done to improve Scotland's bathing water quality. Dog fouling and gull excrement are part of a wider list of sources leading to poor bathing water quality at some Scottish beaches. A collaborative approach involving Scottish Water, SEPA, the Scottish Government, the farming community, local authorities and other players must be prioritised to drive improvements across all source types.

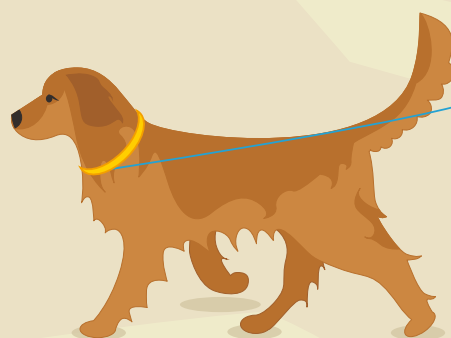
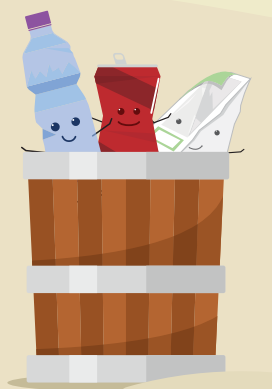
Reflecting on the past two seasons of My Beach, Your Beach, Keep Scotland Beautiful invites stakeholders to consider the following recommendations:

- 1) My Beach, Your Beach has had a positive impact at Ayr, Portobello, Fisherrow Sands and Kinghorn. In order to maintain and develop capacity for long term behaviour change, we recommend that consideration is given to maximizing and expanding this campaign, over a longer term time period of one to three years.
- 2) The campaign is dynamic and has potential to develop and deliver outcomes in the areas of health and wellbeing, on tourism and leisure and on heritage. We recommend that consideration is given to the potential of holistic approach which not only centres on environmental improvement, but also incorporates other interconnected aspects of public well-being.
- 3) The business community have a role to play and are an important stakeholder in helping to minimise litter levels on Scottish beaches, particularly in relation to food-related litter. Further engagement with businesses, including the roll-out of the My Beach, Your Beach pledge-based approach would be beneficial to catalysing these positive changes.
- 4) Community engagement has been fundamental to this campaign. It is recommended that a wider range of community groups should be involved with the campaign, such as sports groups and youth groups, and measures taken to ensure the campaign is inclusive and accessible for all.



A resources toolkit, including downloadable campaign materials and sample communications templates, is available for FREE download online:

www.keeptoscotlandbeautiful.org/mybeachyourbeach/toolkit







We support the Sustainable Development Goals.

Keep Scotland Beautiful is the charity that campaigns, acts and educates on a range of local, national and global environmental issues to change behaviour and improve the quality of people's lives and the places they care for. We are committed to making Scotland clean, green and sustainable



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