CLEAN UP SCOTLAND

DITCH THE DIRT
2013 REPORT
Keep Scotland Beautiful is the independent charity which campaigns, acts and educates on a range of local, national and global environmental issues which affect people’s quality of life. It is committed to making Scotland clean and green, today and tomorrow.

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INTRODUCTION

Clean Up Scotland is Keep Scotland Beautiful’s national mass engagement campaign to clear Scotland of the litter and environmental quality problems that affect people’s quality of life.

We aim to encourage one million people to support the campaign by participating in clean ups and activity to raise awareness of the environmental quality issues affecting Scotland – including dog fouling.

We want to encourage coordinated joint action on one of our worst problems – dog fouling, and in 2013 tackled this through our Ditch the Dirt mini campaign. Our aim was to highlight the scale of the dog fouling problem and the simple actions that we can all take to reduce mess and change our local environment for the better:

OVERVIEW

- Volunteers from 18 local authorities participated in surveys
- 464 volunteers took part
- 11200m of Scotland’s green spaces was surveyed
- On average 5 incidences of dog fouling were recorded on every 100m surveyed
- 38 articles were published in the media

Ditch the Dirt, two-sided information flyer and poster
SURVEY FEEDBACK

Ditch the Dirt focused on the issue of dog fouling across Scotland for two weeks from 30th September to 13th October 2013 as part of Keep Scotland Beautiful’s Clean Up Scotland campaign.

During this fortnight, volunteers were encouraged to organise a dog fouling survey of their local park or pitch. This year, 146 adults and 318 children participated in a survey totalling 464 volunteers.

Volunteers surveyed 11,200m of Scotland’s green spaces in over 75 surveys. Results were fed back to the team at Keep Scotland Beautiful for analysis.

In total 795 incidences of dog fouling were recorded by volunteers.

Ditch the Dirt surveys revealed that, on average, 5 incidences of un-bagged dog fouling occurred every 100m in surveyed green spaces.

Results also showed that, on average, 1 incidence of bagged dog fouling occurred in every 200m of green space. This figure was surprising as the number of comments about this problem seem to be increasing.

For example, the following comments were made alongside survey feedback:

“Usually have a problem with bags tied to school fence rather than put in dog dirt bin next to the fence.”

07/10/2013
“Surprised there were as many bagged dog poo’s thrown down as there was un-bagged. Don’t understand why people bag the poos just to throw them down or sometimes they put bagged poos on gate posts, trees etc.”

11/10/2013

Bannockburn High School pupils
Between September and November 2013, 38 articles were published in the media regarding the Ditch the Dirt campaign. The estimated reach of these articles is 823,554 readers.
DITCH THE DIRT HERO

Carnoustie’s Scott Smith was named Clean Up Scotland’s first Ditch the Dirt hero in 2013.

Regularly setting up and manning stalls at events, encouraging dog owners to sign the pledge and generally supporting the work of Carnoustie Canine Capers and the messages of Clean Up Scotland, Scott, who has cerebral palsy, also joined Flora Cairnie from Carnoustie Canine Capers at Burnside Primary School, where they ran a Q&A session and launched a poster competition with Primary 4 pupils. Scott was a great hit with the kids and they particularly enjoyed it when he wore a Dalmatian dog suit and the pupils ‘high-fived’ his paws.

Flora Cairnie of Carnoustie Capers, who nominated Scott, said:

“This young man is a true credit to his parents and is a great ambassador for Carnoustie Canine Capers, and Clean up Scotland. He is totally deserving of this award as he is a great inspiration to others.”
Pupils and staff from Stirling High School joined forces with Keep Scotland Beautiful to tackle the issue of dog fouling in their local area. Organising a survey of their playing fields as part of Clean Up Scotland’s, Ditch the Dirt fortnight, pupils were determined to highlight the issue of dog fouling on their school grounds.

In recent research into public attitudes to littering carried out by Keep Scotland Beautiful, almost 7 in 10 people rated dog fouling as the item on our streets, parks and beaches that bothered them most. And with around 7 million dogs in the UK, producing 1,000 tonnes of excrement per day, it’s easy to see why we have a problem with dog dirt. Pupils contributed to designing a three page leaflet which was used to communicate with local residents. Pupils were keen to remind dog walkers that their playing fields are an essential schools resource and in many ways it is a classroom for their Physical Education classes.
In Autumn 2013, Stirling High School officially launched their campaign, coinciding with Clean Up Scotland’s Ditch the Dirt activity. Pupils, teachers, members of the local community council and parents all turned out to help carry out a survey of dog fouling in the schools playing field. Pupils designed flags and used red spray paint to highlight the extent of the problem. Senior pupils also dressed up in costumes to ensure their campaign got off to the best start!

When the survey was over, the schools pitch cleaning service removed all the incidences of dog fouling on their grounds.
CONCLUSIONS

The popularity of the Ditch the Dirt campaign demonstrates that dog fouling is still a major issue for many communities in Scotland.

The participation of volunteers from 18 local authority areas highlights how widespread the issue is.

Ditch the Dirt survey results revealed that, in surveyed green spaces, an average of 5 incidences of dog fouling was recorded per 100m. The majority of areas surveyed were in regular use by adults and children.

In 2014, Keep Scotland Beautiful plans to repeat the Ditch the Dirt survey during the first two weeks of September. Encouraging volunteers to get involved in recording and removing dog fouling will contribute to the Clean Up Scotland campaign objective of securing the support of one million people.