Introduction

On behalf of Keep Scotland Beautiful, I was delighted to chair the first National Stakeholder Event on Dog Fouling on Friday 18 September 2015, at the Stirling Highland Hotel.

The wide range of stakeholders who chose to attend this event (including national organisations, councils, housing associations, fellow charities, community groups and young people) reflects just how important tackling the issue of dog fouling is to us all.

A key focus of Keep Scotland Beautiful’s work is local environmental quality – working with communities and partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors to drive practical action to improve the quality of local environments across Scotland.

Evidence from national and local research shows that the impact of dog fouling is consistently one of the most important environmental issues to communities. Keep Scotland Beautiful recognises that precious time and resources are being spent by many organisations to tackle dog fouling. We understand that a louder, collective voice and more effective and efficient use of existing resources is needed.

This is why we brought a diverse and engaged group of delegates together for a stakeholder event – the first of its kind in Scotland - on the issue. Our aim; to identify the key objectives and outputs which could be used to create a National Action Plan on Dog Fouling.

Tackling dog fouling and irresponsible dog ownership is a national issue that requires leadership and coordinated action; there is an urgent need to develop a new approach that provides a framework for action, informed by robust evidence, which has the support of all the necessary stakeholders.

The key output from the Stakeholder Event was a call to action endorsed by all those in attendance that focuses on three key areas – Partnership, Evidence and Action.

I’d like to thank all the delegates who attended for contributing their knowledge and expertise and giving Keep Scotland Beautiful the mandate to lead on taking the call to action forward – we will work collaboratively with other organisations to build a national coalition of stakeholders who will ensure the issue of dog fouling is tackled through a National Action Plan.

There are already a number of activities planned over the next twelve months by stakeholders, including audits, behaviour change pilot studies and education campaigns, and we look forward to sharing the outcomes with all members of the coalition.

I would also like to thank the Scottish Government, and in particular Mr Paul Wheelhouse MSP, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, for agreeing to consider the findings detailed in this report.

This is the start of a journey to tackle Scotland’s dog fouling problem – this is not a dog issue, it is a people issue. We look forward to working with you, to create a National Action Plan on Dog Fouling; to improve local environments across Scotland creating clean, safe and healthy communities.

Derek A Robertson
Chief Executive
Keep Scotland Beautiful
Background

Scotland has a growing dog fouling problem as a result of irresponsible dog ownership.

Evidence from national and local research shows that the impact of dog fouling is consistently one of the most important environmental issues to communities.

In Scotland, 69% of people rate dog fouling as the item on streets, parks and beaches that bothers them the most\(^1\).

It is estimated that there are between 6.5 and 7.4 million dogs in the UK\(^2\). That is around 1,000 tonnes of faeces being produced per day. In Scotland, there is roughly one dog for every five people generating an estimated 135 tonnes of faeces a day.

In 2014 it was found that dog fouling affected an estimated 1:6 urban sites in Scotland\(^3\). On the 85,000 sites which have been surveyed since 2010 instances of dog fouling have doubled\(^4\).

It is a common perception that dog fouling is a more significant issue in urban areas than in rural areas; this is not always the case. In rural areas, dogs are more likely to be exercised off the street - no national surveys have been carried out which assess the extent to which dog fouling is a problem across greenspaces in Scotland.

Furthermore, a significant amount of Scotland’s land is agricultural which is not covered by the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003. This creates a problem for land owners who cannot legally demand that dog owners pick up after their pets.

Research from the NFU Scotland undertaken with Keep Scotland Beautiful found that 65% of farmers felt that dog fouling was a problem on their land\(^5\).

There can be no doubt - Scotland has a dog fouling problem. It is one of the most offensive forms of waste in our communities and it is getting worse.

Despite the best efforts of communities and organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors, who have undertaken a range of innovative projects locally, the issue has continued to worsen across Scotland.

Dog fouling, is a national issue that requires leadership and coordinated action; that is why Keep Scotland Beautiful believes there is an urgent need to develop and implement a new approach to dog fouling that provides a national framework for action, informed by robust evidence, which has the support of all the necessary stakeholders.

Why organise a stakeholder event?

Given Keep Scotland Beautiful’s unique perspective on dog fouling, developed through our work on this issue with key stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors, we were able to organise a national stakeholder event to kick off a conversation about urgently developing and implementing a new co-ordinated approach to dog fouling.

The primary objective of the stakeholder event was to identify key aims, objectives and outputs which could be used to create a National Action Plan on Dog Fouling.

The event provided an opportunity to:
- Consider the need for leadership on this issue at a national level;
- Discuss what a more joined up approach to tackling dog fouling would look like;
- Debate the need for a more robust evidence base on this issue;
- Strengthen the links between key agencies, organisations and communities; and
- Start the process of developing a National Action Plan on Dog Fouling.

In addition to representatives of Keep Scotland Beautiful, 22 delegates representing 19 organisations attended which allowed for detailed and constructive discussion to take place during the event (a full attendee list can be found in Appendix 1).

A number of organisations indicated that although they were unable to make the event (The Carnegie Trust, Glasgow City Council, and Dumbarton Road Corridor Environment Trust) they were keen to be kept advised of progress.

Structure of the Day

The Stakeholder Event was held at the Stirling Highland Hotel on September 18 2015 and was opened by Derek Robertson (Chief Executive, Keep Scotland Beautiful).

Carole Noble from Keep Scotland Beautiful outlined the most up to date research and evidence on dog fouling and Douglas Forrester from the Scottish Government highlighted work currently being undertaken on legislation and regulations.

Following a panel Q&A, three workshops explored issues around:

1. Campaigns and Education
2. Service Provision
3. Legislation and Enforcement

This was followed by a plenary session that allowed all participants to discuss some of the issues arising from the workshops and to reach agreement on how they felt a new co-ordinated approach to dog fouling should be developed.

\(^1\) Keep Scotland Beautiful, Public Attitudes to Litter and Littering in Scotland, 2007.
A growing problem...

Dog fouling is a problem which affects communities across Scotland.

Despite the best efforts of public, private and voluntary organisations it remains one of the most important environmental issues to local communities; both in terms of its prevalence and action to address the problem.

A National Issue

No single area in Scotland has a monopoly on the dog fouling problem.

A recent poll conducted by YouGov on behalf of Keep Scotland Beautiful found that 47% of people from across Scotland rated dog fouling in their local communities as a ‘fairly bad problem’. Only 11% of those who were polled said that it was ‘not a bad problem at all’.

Broken down by regional (Scottish electoral) area these figures demonstrate that people from all over Scotland perceive dog fouling as a problem. For example, 74% of those polled in Glasgow; 53% of those polled in South Scotland; 49% of those polled in the Lothians and 45% of those polled in North East Scotland said that dog fouling was a ‘very or fairly bad problem’ in their local area.

A great deal of good work and innovative action has been undertaken in recent years to try and tackle dog fouling and irresponsible dog ownership. This includes campaigns carried out by local authorities all over Scotland, while the Scottish Outdoor Access Code provides guidance to dog owners and walkers on their rights and responsibilities in relation to dog fouling (in both urban and rural settings).

Yet, the problem has continued to get worse. In 2013, 1,889 Fixed Penalty Notices of £40 were issued. Half of them still remain unpaid.

A Local issue

Dog fouling is consistently identified as an issue by communities in citizen panels and other surveys undertaken by local authorities across Scotland.

In West Dunbartonshire, 78% of people described dog fouling as the most common form of anti-social behaviour they had experienced; and in South Ayrshire 55% of people described dog fouling as a ‘fairly/big problem’.

In Glasgow, 27% of people rated dog fouling as a ‘significant problem’ and in East Ayrshire 82% of people were unsatisfied with the way dog fouling was dealt with.

Less than 50% of people in the Scottish Borders said they were satisfied with the way in which dog fouling was dealt with; while 38% of people in Clackmannanshire identified dog fouling as one of the most significant issues in their neighbourhood.

Urban

Every year Keep Scotland Beautiful and local authorities conduct a Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) Survey which records instances of dog fouling on streets, pavements and adjacent grass verges. This information is then collated into a national benchmarking report.

The 2013/2014 Report found that 1:17 sites assessed recorded dog fouling on hard surfaces or an adjacent grass verges. Furthermore, in 2013 a Ditch the Dirt Survey of urban green spaces showed that one instance of dog fouling was observed on average every 20m walked (based on walking 11,200).

Rural

In Scotland’s People and Nature Survey, Scottish National Heritage (SNH) estimated that during 2013/2014 almost half of visits to the outdoors in the UK included a dog (48%), equating to an estimated 188.9 million visits over a twelve month period.

Although there is significant evidence on dog fouling in urban areas (with the exception of greenspaces) it is clear that much more work is needed to gather evidence and assess the extent of dog fouling in rural areas.

The Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003 states it is an offence for the person in charge of a dog to leave its mess without removing it (with exceptions for working dogs). The Act also does not cover land being used for the purposes of agriculture.

In Scotland 73% of the land is agricultural – this means 5.6 million hectares are not covered by the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003, which poses a real challenge, in terms of consistent messaging encouraging people to pick up their dog’s faeces.

Dog fouling tends to be left, rather than bagged and binned, on rural and agricultural land. A NFU Scotland survey identified that almost 40% of farmers asked had livestock that had suffered disease as a result of dog fouling which had been left on grazing lands.

18 West Dunbartonshire: Community Safety, Town Centres and Alcohol and Substance Misuse, 2014.
19 South Ayrshire 2012 Quality of Life Survey.
21 East Ayrshire Council – Community Planning Residents Survey December 2014 and 2011 Reports.
23 Clackmannanshire Alliance: Tenth Survey of the Clackmannanshire Citizens’ Panel, 2013.
Public Perception
The public do not perceive that current enforcement measures, investment in infrastructure and local campaigns are adequate to tackle dog fouling.


Of those who responded to the consultation 96% indicated that they were aware local authorities had the power to deal with dog faeces. However, 65% of consultation respondents felt that these powers were being used ineffectively in their area while 67% believed that more could be done to address the issue.

As an outcome of the consultation on promoting responsible dog ownership, the Scottish Government has committed to take forward action to amend the provisions of the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003 to increase the level of Fixed Penalty Notice.

The Scottish Government has also written to local authorities asking for examples of measures being taken to tackle dog fouling in their respective local authority area. They are currently co-ordinating responses, before sharing them with local authorities to provide examples of best practice.

The evidence shows that dog fouling is growing problem that affects everyone in Scotland no matter where they live.

It is clear that the existing approach to tackling dog fouling – characterised by individual organisations or communities pursuing activities focused on a geographical area or specific aspect of the problem - is not achieving the results that all stakeholders want to achieve.

There is a need to urgently develop and implement a new co-ordinated approach to tackle the issue of dog fouling and irresponsible dog ownership.

To stimulate discussion about a new co-ordinated approach to dog fouling, and what a National Action Plan might look like, delegates participated in workshops focused on Campaigns and Education, Service Provision and Legislation and Enforcement.

The workshops were designed to capture the main issues and challenges in relation to dog fouling, the barriers to change, potential opportunities and solutions and examples of good practice. A summary of the outputs from the workshops can be found under each theme below, with full details in Appendix 2.

The workshops enabled multiple views to be collated and evidence from lots of different perspectives to be examined.

Anonymous, Stakeholder Event Feedback Survey.

1. Campaigns and Education
Delegates identified the key issues as: a lack of sustained campaigns, the inconsistency of campaign messaging (geographically and between stakeholders), and the limited audiences that current campaigns reach.

The main barriers identified were the absence of a single national survey from which to establish baseline data on dog fouling in Scotland, confusion over who owns (and is responsible for) national campaigns, and furthermore the absence of resources to support sustained national campaigns.

Campaigns with strong civic messages, based on evidence and backed by refreshed and sustained partnerships working across organisational types were seen by delegates as solutions to the dog fouling problem.

A more detailed summary of workshop discussions on this theme can be found in Table 1 in Appendix 2.

2. Service Provision
Inconsistency in approach and a lack of resources and funding were identified as being two of the key issues faced in relation to service provision and its impact in helping to reduce instances of dog fouling.

Delegates suggested that identifying hotspots and providing supporting infrastructure in these areas would be one way in which to reduce dog fouling in certain locations.

The absence of robust national data, research and national infrastructure were perceived as barriers to tackling dog fouling in Scotland. That no single organisation was leading the efforts to combat this problem was considered a significant issue.

Solutions identified were establishing a national steering group to provide leadership and co-ordinate efforts to combat irresponsible dog ownership and dog fouling, and stronger partnerships between stakeholders and the pooling of resources.

A more detailed summary of workshop discussions on this theme can be found in Table 2 in Appendix 2.

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A call to action

Delegates at the Stakeholder Event welcomed the opportunity to meet for the first time to discuss how they could work in partnership to tackle dog fouling. There was strong support for a collaborative approach that recognises the public and private sectors, voluntary organisations and communities all have a role to play on this issue.

It was agreed by delegates the most significant challenge associated with tackling dog fouling and irresponsible dog ownership is that it requires an integrated package of action that cuts across different organisations and policy areas – there is no magic bullet, no single piece of legislation or regulatory change that will solve everything.

They also agreed that tackling dog fouling and irresponsible dog ownership is a national issue that requires leadership and coordinated action; there is an urgent need to develop a new approach that provides a national framework for action, informed by robust evidence, and which has the support of all stakeholders.

3. Legislation and Enforcement

Delegates felt that the key issues were that: the Fixed Penalty Notice fine level was too low and that there was a lack of enforcement in relation to non-payment. They also identified that there was an issue with Fixed Penalty Notices not being applicable on agricultural land.

The main solutions identified were closer co-operation between local authorities and the court system, improving partnership working between local authority services, and consistent communications and messaging as part of a single national campaign.

A more detailed summary of workshop discussions on this theme can be found in Table 3 in Appendix 2.

We are pleased to give our full support to Keep Scotland Beautiful’s proposal to lead a national campaign that will help bring much needed attention to the issue of dog fouling which is caused by a minority of dog owners failing to scoop the poop. As the leading charity in the UK for the welfare of dogs, we promote the importance of owners being responsible for clearing up after their dog, so we have an obvious concern when owners fail to do the right thing. As a leading environmental charity, Keep Scotland Beautiful is quite correct to bring a national focus to this issue in Scotland and we look forward to working with them to ensure the message about the importance of responsible dog ownership is carried across the country.

Adrian Burder, Chief Executive of the Dogs Trust

The key output from the Stakeholder Event was a call to action endorsed by all those in attendance that focuses on three key areas.

Partnership

Stakeholders have called for:

■ Strong leadership and co-ordinated action at a national level on dog fouling and irresponsible dog ownership;
■ A lead body to develop a National Action Plan and co-ordinate implementation; and
■ A national coalition or forum of stakeholders to work together to implement changes which address the social, health and financial challenges that dog fouling causes.

The National Stakeholder Event on Dog Fouling, brought together people from many areas to discuss the challenges and possible solutions of the issue. I hoped to raise the profile of the challenges of dog fouling on farmland; the behavioural; legislative and economic challenges. The event allowed me to do this.

Looking forward I would like to see Scotland lead the way in tackling dog fouling issues. I believe Keep Scotland Beautiful is ideally placed to take this work forward with the support of a range of organisations including ourselves.

Anne Gray, Scottish Land and Estates
Evidence
Stakeholders have called for:

- Further research to identify the scale of the dog fouling problem in Scotland, to create a standardised assessment of the issue and to assess the level of service provision that currently exists across Scotland;
- Research to understand what type of national campaigns are effective in conveying behaviour change messages and to examine the root causes of dog fouling;
- Consideration to be given to effectively and efficiently utilising existing resources (pooling and sharing where possible); and
- Any National Action Plan and supporting activities to be evidence-based.

Action
Stakeholders have called for:

- A national approach to tackle dog fouling which encourages collaborative working between key stakeholders;
- A full review of the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003, including whether or not it should be extended to cover agricultural land;
- National campaigns which are clear, concise and targeted in their messaging, and are sustained over a long period of time;
- A scaling up of regional activity where appropriate, to capitalise on the success of local campaigns;
- The direction of resources to appropriate geographical locations through improved targeting of dog fouling hot spots; and
- The undertaking of an audit of bin use and identification of organisations which provide free dog poo bags.

Conclusion
To tackle dog fouling, strong leadership is needed to bring together all national partners and stakeholders to build a coalition, create and maintain a robust evidence base, and to implement a range of measures which balance behaviour change, enforcement and infrastructure improvements.

Delegates at the National Stakeholder Event have given Keep Scotland Beautiful the mandate to lead on taking these actions forward.

Keep Scotland Beautiful will work collaboratively with other organisations in 2016 to develop a national coalition of stakeholders who will ensure the issue of dog fouling is tackled through a National Action Plan.

Appendix 1.

Attendee list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Franca Cianni</td>
<td>Falkirk Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin Lafferty</td>
<td>Forestry Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penny Johnston</td>
<td>NFU Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darah Zahran</td>
<td>Scotland’s Towns Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Gray</td>
<td>Scottish Land and Estates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Douglas Forrester</td>
<td>Scottish Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon Galloway</td>
<td>Dogs Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawn Jamieson</td>
<td>Fife Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Hamill</td>
<td>National Dog Warden Association Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Robertson</td>
<td>Police Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Kewell</td>
<td>Scottish Natural Heritage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marjory Robertson</td>
<td>Brighter Bothwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Maclean</td>
<td>Falkirk Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth Grant</td>
<td>Glasgow Housing Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Darke</td>
<td>Essential Edinburgh BID</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andy Price</td>
<td>Scottish Community Safety Network (SCSN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigel Spencer</td>
<td>SPORT Aberdeen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Tonner</td>
<td>Dogs Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin Rennie</td>
<td>Fields in Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamie Mutter</td>
<td>Glasgow Housing Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alastair Lee</td>
<td>North Lanarkshire Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trudi Togneri</td>
<td>Stirling High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iona McCormick</td>
<td>Stirling High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4th year pupil)</td>
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## Summary of workshop discussions

### Table 1. Campaigns and Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>What Works?</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban/Rural Dimension</td>
<td>Green Dog Walkers</td>
<td>No national survey to establish baseline data</td>
<td>Identify methodology from other campaigns that have been successful e.g. smoking, drink driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability of current campaigns</td>
<td>National Campaigns</td>
<td>Confusion over who owns national campaigns</td>
<td>Create campaigns with strong civic pride messages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaching the right people</td>
<td>Media partners/celebrities</td>
<td>Campaigns are not being funded properly/ only being funded for a short period of time</td>
<td>Partnership working across organisational types</td>
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<tr>
<td>Costs/funding cuts</td>
<td>Dog Watch</td>
<td>Local campaigns...has to be a national campaign</td>
<td>Use of effective language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reinventing the wheel</td>
<td>TV/Radio campaigns on the implications of dog fouling</td>
<td>Campaigns need to be better researched</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weaknesses in overarching campaign messages/ inconsistent messages</td>
<td>Targeted</td>
<td>Refreshed and sustained partnerships</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Campaigns limited to a local audience</td>
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### Table 2. Service Provision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>What Works?</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bins removed or damaged</td>
<td>Appropriate facilities</td>
<td>Don’t have enough evidence to better resource service and level of planning</td>
<td>Clear partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of resources/funding</td>
<td>Increase FPN in line with litter payment</td>
<td>Culture of service provision</td>
<td>Close working between LA’s and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistency in the use of FPNs</td>
<td>Keep on top of dog fouling – broken window effect</td>
<td>Resources – feet on the ground</td>
<td>Consistent national leadership of service provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability of service provision</td>
<td>Involving communities/ partnership working</td>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>National framework/ standardised approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inconsistency in approach</td>
<td>Audits and guidance</td>
<td>Lack of enforcement</td>
<td>Pool resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different types of bins for dog waste can cause confusion</td>
<td>ID hotspots and provide infrastructure</td>
<td>No single organisation leading/coordinating</td>
<td>Infrastructure in the right places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Any bin will do’</td>
<td>Lack of data/research/ national infrastructure</td>
<td>Behaviour change research on dog fouling</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Staffing/training</td>
<td>Explore examples out with Scotland</td>
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<td>National Steering Group</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>National consistent message and focus</td>
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### Table 3. Legislation and enforcement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>What Works?</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unclear on who can issue FPNs</td>
<td>How we communicate the legislation to communities</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Closer cooperation with the court system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine is too low</td>
<td>Proactive dog wardens</td>
<td>Lack of leadership – planning, resources</td>
<td>Allow other organisations to issue fines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consistency for ‘dogs under control’ is an issue</td>
<td>Overt enforcement</td>
<td>Sheriff/courts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of follow through</td>
<td>Naming and shaming</td>
<td>Lack of a nationwide evidence base</td>
<td>Improved partnership working between departments e.g. litter/dog fouling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limitations of FPNs</td>
<td>Utilising existing groups e.g. green dog walkers</td>
<td>Fear of approaching owners</td>
<td>Consistent national campaigns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of consistency from LA’s</td>
<td>Lots of valuable information available</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Wider community involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enforcement of non-payment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of follow through</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource implications</td>
<td></td>
<td>Standard definition needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural land</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enforcement messages unclear</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No ‘real’ consequences</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-policing difficult</td>
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</table>
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 more sustainable.