



SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL  
LITTER STRATEGY:  
HIGHLIGHTING THE WORK  
OF OUR PARTNERS

**KEEP SCOTLAND BEAUTIFUL'S  
UPSTREAM BATTLE**





# UPSTREAM BATTLE BY KEEP SCOTLAND BEAUTIFUL

KEEP SCOTLAND BEAUTIFUL TACKLES A WIDE RANGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, FROM REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF LITTER ON OUR STREETS TO CUTTING THE CARBON EMISSIONS THAT THREATEN OUR PLANET. IT WORKS CLOSELY WITH ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND TO DEVELOP AND DELIVER SCOTLAND'S LITTER PREVENTION PROGRAMME.

Launched in 2018 and backed by the Scottish Government, industry and a range of other stakeholders, **Upstream Battle** is an award-winning campaign run by Keep Scotland Beautiful, which draws attention to the journey of marine litter from source to sea. It focusses on the iconic River Clyde and its 38 tributaries, and aims to bring the public, private and third sectors together with communities, schools and residents in a positive, collaborative partnership to raise awareness, gather data and motivate people to get involved.

## Why is it needed?

We know that 80% of marine litter originates on land and 35% of Scotland's population - 1.8 million people - live in the Clyde Valley, so tackling the problem upstream and starting at source makes sense.

The three strands of the campaign incorporate a number of the interventions associated with Scotland's National Litter Strategy: engaging with the schools of the Clyde Valley, raising awareness in communities, and gathering data on the scale of the problem through citizen science.

## What's been happening?

- Keep Scotland Beautiful brought together a coalition of partners in the Clyde Valley, for the first time, to collectively understand and learn about the complex impacts of our throwaway society on the marine environment.
- Keep Scotland Beautiful built capacity for community action by recruiting and training 16 'Anchor Groups' (networks of volunteers) along the Clyde, who are taking action locally by collecting data and sharing knowledge.
- Keep Scotland Beautiful engaged all eight local authorities of the Clyde Valley, and Education Scotland in a Professional Learning Programme, which will build a legacy for the campaign by continuing to support teachers to use source-to-sea litter as a context for developing STEM skills.

### What are the challenges?

The 16 Community Anchor Groups were asked to adopt a stretch of the Clyde to monitor and clean up for the citizen science element of the project. Volunteers were trained to carry out detailed surveys of stretches of the river. It has been a particular challenge to support the groups to complete and return enough surveys to ensure sufficiently robust evidence to inform local litter prevention action plans.

Where the model is working particularly well, the Anchor Groups are leading the way in their local communities, cascading messages through social media and by engaging with local businesses and schools. Keep Scotland Beautiful will continue to work with and support the Anchor Groups, acknowledging that some volunteers simply don't have as much time to commit to our activities as others, while others again need more support.

### What kind of legacy will be left?

By learning from the experiences of this project, continuing to work with Anchor Groups into 2020, and expanding this model to other regions and be used by volunteers in campaigns such as National Spring Clean, Keep Scotland Beautiful aims to continue to grow its litter database and use it to develop further targeted interventions locally and nationally. In addition to the Professional Learning Programme for teachers, citizen science has been highlighted to be a valuable tool to help inform local action and national policy around litter.

The project will continue into 2020 to coincide with Scotland's Year of Coasts & Waters and Keep Scotland Beautiful will use the platform to further highlight the issues and solutions around source-to-sea litter. Keep Scotland Beautiful is currently developing plans for Upstream Battle Phase 2 which is likely to launch on the River Tay in 2020. ●

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### WHO'S INVOLVED

- THE EIGHT LOCAL AUTHORITIES WITHIN THE CLYDE VALLEY AREA AND A NUMBER OF OTHER PUBLIC BODIES
- 16 COMMUNITY BASED ANCHOR GROUPS
- AROUND 2,200 VOLUNTEERS TOOK PART IN A SPRING SOURCE2SEA WEEK, REMOVING 3,300 BAGS OF LITTER FROM 55 LOCATIONS. A FURTHER 3000 ENGAGED IN A WEEK OF ACTION IN SEPTEMBER.
- OVER 20,000 YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE REGION PARTICIPATED A MARINE LITTER ARTWORK COMPETITION.
- 17 SCHOOLS FROM TOOK PART IN 'STEM THE FLOW' COMPETITION, PLUS TWO SCHOOLS TOOK PART IN YOUNG REPORTERS FOR THE CLYDE
- 61 TEACHERS, FROM 57 DIFFERENT ESTABLISHMENTS (EARLY YEARS, PRIMARY, SECONDARY) HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE UPSTREAM BATTLE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMME

**“80% of marine litter originates on land therefore if we want to tackle this problem effectively we need to focus on raising awareness of its pathway from source to sea.”**

**Paul Wallace, Campaigns and Social Innovation Manager,  
Keep Scotland Beautiful**





**“The anchor groups enable communities to take practical action on marine litter at a local level, and hopefully sets them on a journey to get involved in wider environmental activities.”**

Paul Wallace, Campaigns and Social Innovation Manager,  
Keep Scotland Beautiful

### **Want to know more?**

For more information on Keep Scotland Beautiful's Upstream Battle, or their wider litter prevention work, please contact:

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