

Briefing 16/31 July 2016

Dog Fouling: Issues and local authority best practice

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in Scotland, England, Northern Ireland and Wales

Key Issues:

The purpose of this briefing is to advise APSE members on best practice available on tackling dog fouling. This includes:

- Falkirk Council's Green Dog Walkers scheme
- Stafford Borough Council's £75 reward for residents reporting fouling
- City of Edinburgh Council's 'Don't make our city EdinBURGH' campaign
- Corby Borough Council's highlighting the problem of dog waste
- Gedling Borough Council's dog poo tree
- Wirral Council's glow-in-the-dark posters to tackle nighttime fouling
- North West Leicestershire's Dog Watch scheme
- North Ayrshire Council's Report It app

1.0 State of the Market 2016 analysis

Analysis from our most recent Street Cleansing and Parks and Green Spaces State of the Market surveys have shown that dog fouling is a priority for our local authority respondents.

Parks and Green Spaces State of the Market Survey 2016

- 73.0% said 'dog fouling' in answer to the question 'what environmental issues are a priority for your parks and green space service?'

Street Cleansing State of the Market Survey 2016

- 67.9% are planning dog fouling education campaigns in the next 2 years
- 32.4% see growth for their service in tackling dog fouling over the next year

In an effort to share best practice, we have collected some of the more interesting approaches to tackling dog fouling by local authorities across the UK. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

Falkirk Council Green Dog Walkers Scheme



[Falkirk Council's Green Dog Walker Guide – click here to read](#)

Falkirk Council has been running the Green Dog Walkers Project (GDW) since 2008 with close to 1000 individual pledgers in the Falkirk area alone and licensed campaigns running in 19 local authority areas up and down the UK (Durham Council, Swale Borough Council, Moray Council, etc). Volunteers wear a GDW armband (or their dogs wear a GDW collar) to show that they have pledged to:

- Clean up after their dog
- Carry extra dog waste bags
- **Be happy to be approached to 'lend' a dog waste bag to those without**
- Be a friendly reminder to other dog walkers to clean up after their dogs

Their Green Dog Walkers Guide is excellent reading for any local authority looking to set up a successful partnership with a volunteer group with tips on running campaigns, setting up pledge stalls, engaging children and monitoring/evaluation.

Stafford Borough Council £75 reward for residents reporting fouling

Stafford Borough Council run a £75 reward scheme where residents 'receive £75 if the information they provide leads to either a successful prosecution or the issuing of a £75 Fixed Penalty Notice'.

More information is available by [clicking here](#).

City of Edinburgh Council Don't make our city EdinBURGH

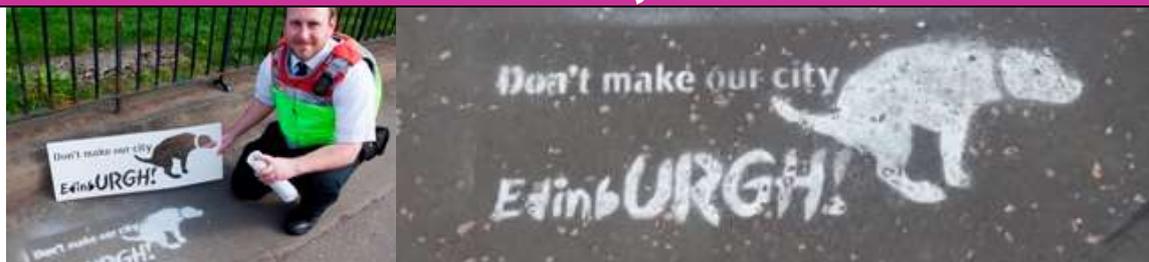


Image credits: [City of Edinburgh Council](#) and [Photobucket](#)

In 2011, City of Edinburgh Council introduced a campaign to tackle dog fouling that involved using chalk stencils being painted onto pavements in areas where people were issued with Fixed Penalty Notices alongside the use of posters in schools, libraries and doctors surgeries, as well as free poop scoops for local residents. Complaints from the public about dog fouling dropped by 80% after the 3-week campaign.

This element is still being used as part of the Council's refocused citywide dog fouling campaign which also includes the examination of use of plain clothes wardens, the use of Council/neighbourhood social media to highlight the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued weekly and the inclusion of dog fouling as a key part of the new Cleansing Strategy being developed by Waste Services.

Corby Borough Council Highlighting the problem of dog waste



Corby Borough Council's Environmental Quality Team organised two patrols (28 April and 2 May) where any dog waste they find would be sprayed a bright colour to raise awareness of how much dog fouling is not picked up throughout the course of a week. Whilst out on the patrols, officers were also handing out tickets to a prize draw to dog owners who were seen picking up after their pets. This was used alongside a letter drop encouraging residents to identify the times/places dog fouling was occurring so the Council could deliver education packs in those 'hotspot' areas alongside enforcement activity. [Click here](#) to view presentation slides on this initiative from a recent APSE environmental services seminar.

Gedling Borough Council Dog Poo Tree



"Did you see our Dog Poo Tree today in Mapperley? Every month we pick up around 60 bags of dog mess around the borough" [@gedlingbc](#)

Gedling Borough Council have been using an eye-catching approach to raise awareness of the issue of dog fouling in the borough; this involves hanging bags of soil from trees to represent the number of weekly dog fouling incidents taking place, with every bag featuring a different dog's name. Park rangers and wardens are on hand at these events to speak to the public about the issue of dog fouling.

Wirral Council Glow-in-the-dark posters to target nighttime fouling



Thoughtless dog owners
We're watching you!

9 out of 10 dog owners
clean up after their dog.
Are you the one who doesn't?

Bag that poo, any rubbish bin will do



Wirral Council (in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy) have been using these posters that use glow-in-the-dark painted watching eyes to encourage people to pick up dog waste at night. These posters were informed by the idea that people behave in more socially conscious ways if they feel that they are being watched. The average number of dog fouling incidents reduced by 46% at target sites as a result of this campaign. A full case study on Wirral Council's approach is featured in the APSE publication 'Park Life, Street Life: Managing demand in the public realm' which is now available freely online at the APSE website: [click here to view](#).

North West Leicestershire District Council Dog Watch scheme (Neighbourhood Watch model)

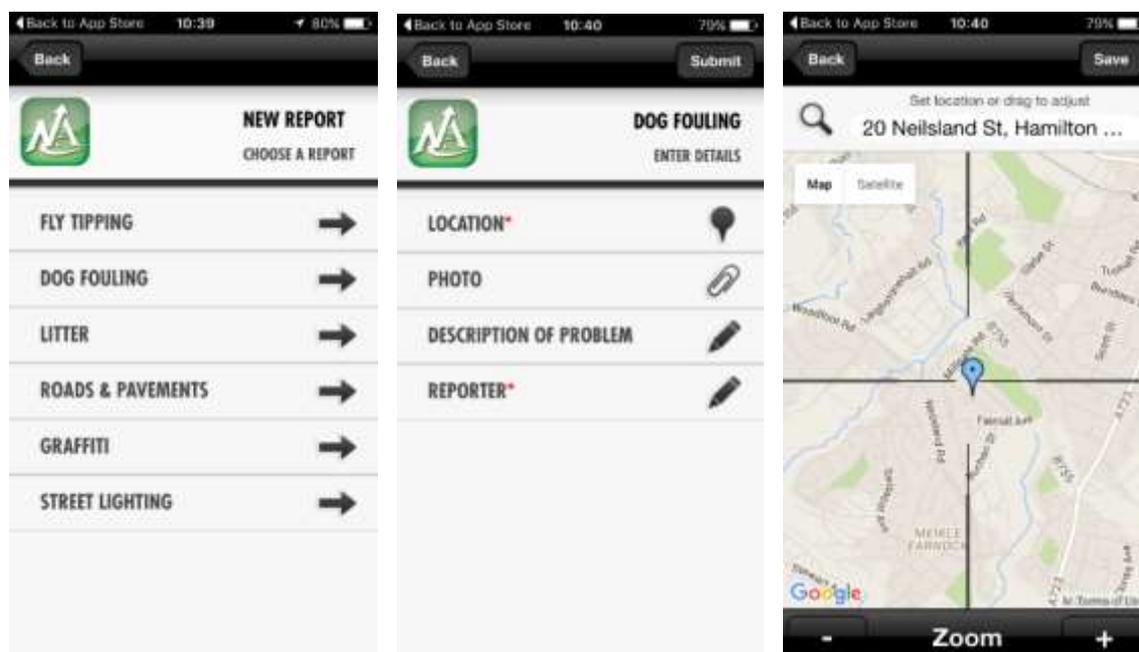
North West Leicestershire District Council recently won the MJ Trading Standards and Environmental Health Award for their Dog Watch scheme “which supports residents to reduce dog fouling in their neighbourhoods”. “As well as educating schools and Tenant and Resident Associations, individual Dog Watch coordinators are provided with training and materials to help them reduce dog fouling in their own area. The toolkit includes:

- Metal stencil and white market spray to spray temporary ‘Dog Watch’ logo onto pavements
- Signs and window stickers
- Leaflets and ‘Report It’ cards
- Dog bags

“[Dog Watch’s] aim is to deter dog owners from allow their dog’s to foul by empowering the community to take matters into their own hands. Using these resources, and a close working relationship with our street environment managers, they become the eyes and ears of the street, reporting back on results in the area and the success of the scheme.”

More information is available by [clicking here](#).

North Ayrshire Council Report It App



North Ayrshire Council were the first Council in Scotland to introduce an app for iPhone/Android platforms for the reporting of dog fouling as well as flytipping, graffiti, potholes, road and pavement faults and street and lighting faults.

It allows you to mark the location of the fouling on a map, include a photo and a description of the problem. Reports are automatically dispatched to the responsible team, and you will receive a notification through the app when the problem has been fixed.

More information is available by [clicking here](#).

3.0 Public Spaces Protection Orders

Some local authorities have made use of public spaces protection orders to tackle persistent issues such as dog fouling, require dogs to be kept on leads at all times and restrict dogs from areas like beaches on a seasonal basis or from areas where **dog fouling is extremely hazardous to health such as children's play areas**.

Extract from the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014:

Power to make orders

- (1) a local authority may make a public spaces protection order if satisfied on reasonable grounds that two conditions are met.
- (2) The first condition is that –
 - (a) **activities carried on in a public place within the authority's area have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or**
 - (b) it is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect.
- (3) The second condition is that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities –
 - (a) is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature
 - (b) is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and
 - (c) justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice
- (4) A public spaces protection order is an order that identifies the public place referred to in subsection 2 ("**the restricted area**") and –
 - (a) prohibits specified things being done in the restricted area,
 - (b) requires specified things to be done by persons carrying on specified activities in that area, or
 - (c) does both of those things

[Click here](#) to view the whole section.

Public spaces protection orders can be in effect for up to 3 years, and may be extended if the local authority has reasonable grounds to do so (e.g. if this is necessary to prevent the occurrence of dog fouling).

As an example, Carmarthenshire County Council recently introduced a Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order on 1 July 2016, which can be viewed in full by [clicking here](#).

4.0 APSE Comment

Dog fouling is a persistent issue for our colleagues in parks and street cleansing, and with the majority (76.0%) of respondents to our Parks State of the Market survey 2016 having expectations of reduced

maintenance and/or frequency of maintenance of grounds, as well as reduced budgets, the worry is that dog fouling could become an even larger problem in the future if not properly addressed.

Opinions on budget decreases from State of the Market survey results 2016

- 88.1% of Parks respondents are expecting decreased funding in service budgets over the next 5 years, with 18.6% expecting a decrease of more than 20%.
- 97.4% of Street Cleansing respondents are expecting decreased funding over the next 5 years, with 10.5% expecting a decrease of more than 20%.

With less funding incoming, local authorities are having to be resilient and creative in their solutions to tackling dog fouling, and the examples above are just a few of the different approaches available. Approach involving taking advantage of the eyes and ears of local communities, employing behavioural change techniques to directly target offenders, increasing the deterrent through charging and public shaming (e.g. publishing of fixed penalty notice offences) have all seen varying degrees of success in their application.

APSE believes that as well as coming up with creative solutions we also need to be mindful of the simpler, common sense actions that are sometimes ignored, such as dog waste disposal bins featuring information on reporting dog fouling or how to get overflowing bins emptied. Local authorities should consider widening their methods for reporting dog fouling to include social media (if they already **haven't**), to capture casual and photographic data on dog fouling in their area that will help to inform future strategies and identify new hotspots and trends that may not be captured through more traditional means of communication.

APSE regularly runs advisory groups on parks and street cleansing throughout the UK where officers and managers can discuss issues such as dog fouling and can share best practice. Confirm your attendance at the next meeting in your area by [clicking here](#).

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