

Scottish Fleet, Waste and Grounds Seminar 2022: Report Back (Grounds)

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in Scotland. For information only to England, Northern Ireland and Wales

Key Issues:

On 18th and 19th May 2022, APSE held its annual Scottish Fleet, Waste and Grounds seminar in Aviemore. This briefing provides a short summary of the seminar's grounds speakers and the topics covered at discussion forums. There are three separate briefings for the fleet, waste and grounds sections. Links to all of the presentations can be found [here](#).

1.0 Presentations

[Expert panel perspectives on the new revised Litter and Fly Tipping strategy](#)

Kim Young, Manager - Litter and Flytipping Prevention, Zero Waste Scotland

A presentation slide with a white background and a blue and green title. The title is 'Partnership working – Zero Waste Scotland perspective'. Below the title is a bulleted list of five points. To the right of the text is a vertical image showing a scenic view of a town with stone buildings and a lake in the background under a blue sky with white clouds.

Partnership working – Zero Waste Scotland perspective

- Getting to this stage has required increased collaboration between Scottish Government, Keep Scotland Beautiful, SEPA and Zero Waste Scotland
- This needs to and will continue
- Need further support and expertise from partners across Scotland
- National collaboration needed for national campaigning- consistent and amplified messaging
- National collaboration needed for monitoring and evaluation on both litter and flytipping

Kim Young from Zero Waste Scotland set the scene starting with the review of the 2014 strategy. A Programme Management Group was set up to begin engagement and consultation, with almost 20 separate engagement events between July 2021 and March 2022. The consultation was closed on 31 March 2022 with an analysis of responses due in June with 3 times the expected number of responses, and a strategy launch planned for later in the year.

As part of the Towards a Litter-Free Scotland Review, they know they need an agile strategic framework, properly defined actions, monitoring and evaluation, improved ownership of and collaboration on actions, improved and consistent national data to monitor results, and separate and distinct actions on litter and flytipping.

Getting to this stage has required increased collaboration between Scottish Government, Keep Scotland Beautiful, SEPA and Zero Waste Scotland which will need to continue. They need further support and expertise from partners across Scotland. National collaboration is needed for national campaigning, and for monitoring and evaluating both litter and flytipping.

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



Paul Wallace from Keep Scotland Beautiful spoke next and provided some statistics to show that this is a matter of significant public concern. 70% of respondents believe that litter is a problem locally and 88% believe that it is a problem nationally. 50% believe that levels of litter have stayed about the same in the past 12 months, however, 38% report that litter is becoming more common, especially in urban areas. There is a clear appetite for greater action to tackle and prevent litter in Scotland, with support for improving waste disposal facilities and educational campaigns. Individuals and consumers are considered most responsible for preventing litter, while individuals and local authorities are deemed jointly responsible for cleaning it up. The Scottish population believe litter to have the largest impact on the natural environment and animals, and is thought to have a smaller though still notable impact on house prices and local economic activity. 87% of people living in the most deprived communities in Scotland believed litter to be a problem in their area, compared to 63% in the most affluent fifth of neighbourhoods. People living in urban areas were also more likely to report that litter was a problem in their area, with 72% of urban respondents saying so, compared to 60% of rural respondents.

Changes in levels of littering
Proportions of respondents reporting seeing more and less of certain types of litter.

	More common	Less common	About the same	Don't know
Personal protective equipment (PPE)	77%	5%	16%	2%
Food containers, wrappers and packaging	34%	8%	54%	3%
Drinks bottles and cans	35%	8%	55%	3%
Litter in general	38%	11%	48%	2%
Dog fouling	33%	11%	52%	3%
Single-use (hot and cold) drinks containers	22%	13%	51%	4%
Food waste	18%	15%	61%	6%
Cigarette butts	20%	19%	57%	3%
Chewing gum	13%	20%	62%	6%
Plastic carrier bags	16%	28%	52%	4%

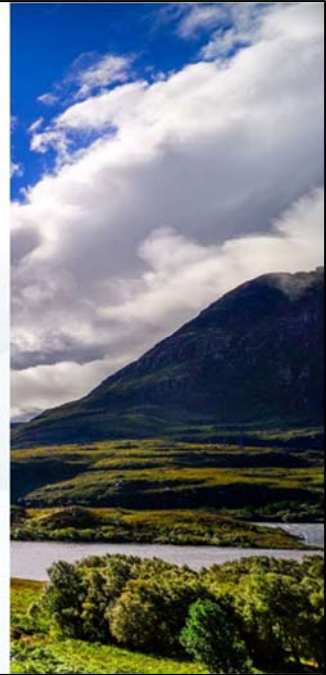
People are reporting a sharp increase in discarded personal protective equipment like masks and a moderate increase in food and drinks packaging. Paul explained some of the factors driving the decline such as: an absence of co-ordinated action across all sectors, ongoing decline in public resources at a national and local level, long-term societal trends around consumption, convenience and single-use, and the impact of the pandemic. He also explained why it is so hard to fix, reasons for this include that no one organisation alone can fix this, litter affects different communities differently, the scope of behaviour change required and that poorly maintained places are likely to attract more litter. Keep Scotland Beautiful believes that a positive and inclusive engagement process is needed alongside recognition that national and local collaboration is needed to tackle these challenges. There needs to be clear support for actions at a strategic level with a focus on strengthening the capacity and capability of communities and a sustained, resourced action in the medium to long term.

Craig Fraser, Policy Officer, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency

How we work together

Reporting & Responding

- Setting out roles and responsibilities
- National database for flytipping
- More effective partnership working - SPARC rural partnerships
- Support for private landowners



Craig Fraser from SEPA presented on the different ways we work together. In terms of services and infrastructure, there is flexible waste disposal, skips in communities and amnesty days. In terms of reporting and responding, there is the national database for flytipping, more effective partnership working through things like the SPARC rural partnerships as well as support for private landowners. Finally in terms of enforcement, we need to look at what enforcement tools different authorities need, how to make existing tools more effective and focus on sharing data on investigations and enforcement.

Stephen Egan, Head of Parks and Streetscene, Glasgow City Council

A presentation slide titled "Clean Glasgow Programme" with a list of bullet points and a photograph of a bridge over a river. The slide has a white background with a light blue cloud-like pattern on the left side. The photograph on the right shows a modern bridge with a large arch and cables, spanning a river with buildings in the background.

Clean Glasgow Programme

- Board re-established in April 2021
- Quarterly Meetings chaired by Leadership
- Reps from Business, KSB, ZWS – Expansion planned
- Sub-groups reporting into Board
- 'Cleaner, Greener and Better Glasgow'
- People Make Glasgow Greener Brand

Stephen Egan provided some context for Glasgow with the COVID impact and focus on refuse collection and other essential works, the introduction of bulk charging in June 2021, ongoing budget pressures, cleansing crisis and COVID Recovery Plan. The board for the Clean Glasgow Programme was re-established in April 2021 with quarterly meetings chaired by the leadership. Representatives from business, Keep Scotland Beautiful and Zero Waste Scotland attend with plans for expansion, and sub-groups reporting into the board. Glasgow operates under the 4 E's – Enhancement, Education, Engagement and Enforcement. In terms of existing partnership working, they are working with Keep Scotland Beautiful on a programme, Zero Waste Scotland on litter prevention plans and Marine Scotland on the River Clyde Boom Project. Stephen identified a few things that are needed in the strategy including a review of enforcement in all areas, national litter and flytipping campaigns, national database for flytipping, a litter and flytipping summit each year as well as funding for all of the above.

[Undertaking our strategic review of play areas](#)

Debbie Sutton, Amenities Manager, Highland Council

Outcomes of the Review

- Reduced asset
- Awareness of current 'state of play'
- Increased investment
- Play Team
- Improved reporting
- Community involvement
- Toolkit and website



Debbie presented on Highland Council's strategic review of their play areas. In October 2019 Highland commenced a strategic review of Amenities; in January 2020, approval was given by the Resources Governance Board to insource annual inspections; in August 2020 the team was appointed and in October 2020 an agreement was reached for unspent COVID-19 funds to be redirected to play projects; in November 2020 the Play Inspection App was procured and downloaded. In March 2021, the start of the annual inspections identified serious issues with surfacing and numerous closures were instructed. In April 2021, the council commenced monthly briefings with ward members to review all sites. In September 2021 the Scottish Government allocation was confirmed, and in December 2021 the allocation was divided between wards and the Community Toolkit was launched. Highland are working with communities and ward members on an ongoing basis to carry out repairs and make improvements.

Highland Council has 339 equipped sites and 139 non equipped sites. It is not a statutory function but there is a legal Duty of Care once installed. The budget has reduced by £255,000 (40%) since 2016. There is no capital budget, and a revenue budget for

2021/2022 of £177,000. An ongoing annual maintenance budget is required based on an asset value of £2.47m. Highland are operating on a 'care and maintenance' basis only.

[Monitoring streetscene through apps](#)

Debbie Johns, Head of Performance Networks, APSE

Description;



- A Memorial Inspection Safety Tool (MIST App)
- A simple App installed on a tablet or phone in the field.
- Proposed at previous advisory groups, Cem/Crems Annual Seminar and PN Seminar and received a great deal of interest.
- Deferred initially due to Covid-19
- Would require selection from simple pre-determined questions to assess the safety of the memorial.
- The questions will all require agreement/development from the working group.

www.apse.org.uk

Debbie Johns of APSE presented on monitoring streetscene through apps. Debbie spoke about the Land Audit Management System, which is a consistent quality audit of grounds and streets maintenance standards. It was developed in Scotland and rolled out on a UK wide basis. It monitors grounds maintenance with a simple and effective performance measuring system. It measures 'what the public would see' rather than requiring a technical inspection. Debbie played a video showing how the randomiser function on the app worked. A map opens with all of the inspection locations marked. The navigate function on Google Maps will give you travel directions to the area, and then you press start to begin the inspection. You complete the survey as usual and save or send when complete. A 48-hour countdown appears against the randomiser of any locations still in progress.

The Play Inspection Management System (PIMS) is an app for children's playgrounds. You can carry out an asset survey (playground-wide), an equipment inspection survey (per piece of equipment), a quality survey (playground-wide) and you can assess play value. This is with the principle that you would use any number of the four fields available as and when required by your service. The cost of the app is £600 per year per authority, this includes training, you can have unlimited users and you must be a member of Performance Networks for Parks. 12 councils have already signed up to date. To ensure the app will meet service needs APSE is grateful for member authority support to assist with field testing the app in June and July 2022 with the rollout scheduled for September 2022.

The Memorial Inspection Safety Tool (MIST) is a simple app installed on a tablet or phone in the field. It was proposed at previous advisory groups and seminars, and it received a great deal of interest. It requires selection from simple pre-determined questions to assess the safety of the memorial with the questions requiring agreement and development from the Performance Networks working group. The app would allow comments on observations, the ability to take photos of each memorial's condition, to enable data to be set and stored, provide results in a simple database view and for the data to be exported into Microsoft Excel for reporting. The data would also be hosted externally in a cloud-based system. The app could provide the following survey options:

- Option 1 – complete an overall inspection of the burial ground (including gates, pathways, signage, bins, access, etc)
- Option 2 – to complete a detailed individual inspection of each memorial scheduled
- Option 3 – simplified memorial survey (pre-loaded information provided by the local authority and built into the app e.g. site, section, asset number, latitude/longitude etc)

The authority would save time and money on inspections, fulfil its duty to inspect every 5 years, could plot memorials using GPS data, have more reliable and accessible data, and be able to report performance better. Nationally there would be a recognised system with uniformity of inspection that allows you to monitor performance with an evidence-based approach; it would allow for national benchmarking and feed into award criteria. It could

also link into the APSE performance indicators for Cemetery and Cremation services. Previous discussions with the working group generated a sample memorial inspection process which was shown to attendees. The points of consultation were to include time, date, location (GPS), cemetery name, section number, grave number plus photographs of each memorial's condition. Differing burial ground types would need to be selected in the template (e.g. churchyard, closed churchyard, cemetery, etc). It should also include the section number, grave number or where section information isn't available to identify where it is in the cemetery. It should include different types of memorials (e.g. monuments, headstones, kerbed memorials, etc), the type of headstone (e.g. sandstone, granite, etc) and it should include benches. It would require selection from simple, pre-determined questions to assess the safety of the memorial. It should also include a comments box for other issues not listed in the pre-determined questions, a data field for any areas of concern, the ability to flag for re-inspection for 3, 6 or 12 months and to plot completed memorial inspections using coordinates. The cost of this is £600 per year per authority, it includes training, supports unlimited users and you must be a member of Performance Networks for Cemeteries & Crematoria. 22 councils have signed up to date. The next steps to ensure the app meets service needs is to finalise the questions to be included in the inspection form with the app supplier, and to field test the app once it is built.

2.0 Discussion forums

Parks, Streets & Grounds discussion forum

The Parks, Streets & Grounds discussion forum was organised to debate the latest challenges and opportunities for the sector. This featured a large-scale discussion about asset management tools.

Litter Managers Network discussion forum

The Litter Managers Network discussion forum featured continuations from the previous litter managers network meeting, with discussions about reaching out to other organisations to allow the group to achieve wider ownership over and above local authorities and the organisations already participating. It was emphasised how important

it was for Scottish Government to attend these meetings, and there was discussion on regional collaboration for publicity and education.

3.0 APSE Comment

APSE encourages our membership to engage with the best practice lessons shared by our membership at this event. The presentation slides are available online [here](#).

Discussions are continued at APSE Scotland's [Parks, Grounds & Streets](#) advisory group which is free to attend for APSE members. Previous presentations and discussion topics can be found on the APSE website. Within our [briefing service](#) APSE has recently covered the [National Litter and Flytipping Strategy consultation report](#) as well as [Risk assessments and training requirements for litter picking along dual and single carriageway roads](#).

Through our training suite, advisory groups, research programmes and benchmarking service, membership of APSE can bring significant benefits to those who work in local government – from officers to directors to elected members to chief executives – by helping them comprehensively get to grips with the latest policy and technological developments. Not a member? [Sign up today!](#)

Garry Lee
Research & Coordination Officer

Louise Melville
Principal Advisor (Scotland)