



SCRAPbook
targeting coastal litter

Best Practice Guide for Beach Cleans

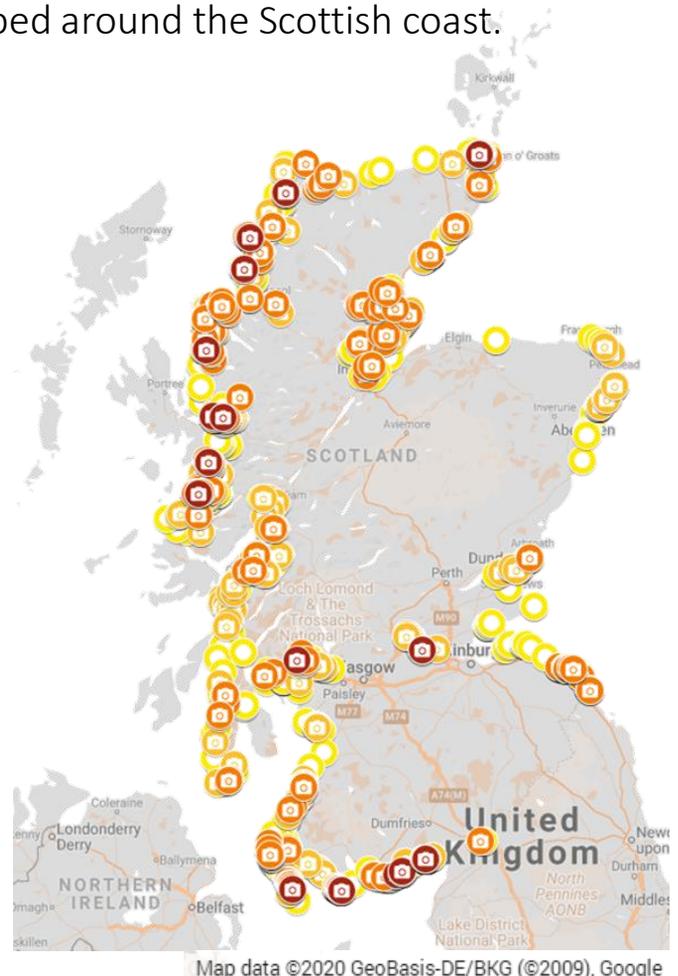
March 2020

The SCRAPbook Project

SCRAPbook (Scottish Coastal Rubbish Aerial Photography) was an initiative founded in 2018 by the **Moray Firth Partnership**, **Sky Watch (UK Civil Air Patrol)** and **Marine Conservation Society** in response to growing concerns about the amount of litter on our coasts. To be able to effectively tackle the problem, better understanding was needed of its extent and character. Funding was awarded by Marine Scotland, and with other donations, SCRAPbook were able to survey the Scottish mainland and create a dataset of coastal litter density around Scotland. The project identified **litter hotspots** using aerial photographs, with citizen scientists categorising the images based on litter intensity and distribution. This data was put onto the [SCRAPbook map](#), a publicly available dataset showing where litter has been mapped around the Scottish coast.

During 2019/20, two Marine Litter Officers were based in Oban, working to clean the worst affected beaches along the Argyll coastline. This guide has been created using knowledge gained from their experiences, to make organising a beach clean an easier process for anyone wanting to help clean up our coasts.

-  Category 2 Localised, medium density litter
-  Category 3 Widespread, medium density litter
-  Category 4 Localised, high density litter
-  Category 5 Widespread, high density litter



Things to think about...

It's important to visit the site you propose to clean before the date of the beach clean, for several reasons:

- **Ground truth the SCRAPbook photographs** – check that the litter shown on the map is actually litter, and is not being used. Also check that the litter seen in the photograph is still there, and look for other items which may have not been visible in the photographs – depending on the time of year, vegetation can screen litter from both the sky and the ground. The location of photographs on the map reflects the location of the plane at the time, so finding the litter may take some time.
- **What kind of waste is present?** Different types of waste require different clean-up approaches. Will specialist equipment or vehicles will be needed to collect the waste? It's also important to consider how the waste will be disposed of once it's been collected. Your local council may be able to remove it, or local businesses may be able to re-purpose items.
- **Who owns the land?** You may need permission of the landowner before the beach can be cleaned. Check with your local council, who may be able to help you with this if they are not the landowners themselves.
- **Would it be easier to approach the area by sea?** It may be that the site has no roads nearby, or steep cliffs with the waste at the bottom. A solution may be to use a boat to access the area– talk to local boat owners or tourism companies who may be able to get involved.
- **What equipment are you going to need?** Some councils can lend you litter picking kits. [Keep Scotland Beautiful](#) can also provide clean up kits.
- **Will you need help?** Individuals and local businesses can provide different skills and tools to help you to clean the area. For example, a local farmer may be willing to use their tractor to help remove larger items, or fishing businesses may be willing to dispose of discarded fishing equipment. Ask around your local area, and publicise your event to help raise awareness.

Several organisations are already proactive in organising beach cleans, and run local events across the country. Check whether the area you've selected to clean is covered by:

- [Marine Conservation Society](#)
- [Surfers Against Sewage](#)
- [Keep Scotland Beautiful](#)

- A **local group** such as a community council or environmental group

If you can't find anyone active in your chosen area, then it's time for you to get together a group to tackle the issue. This could be family or friends, or you may wish to organise something bigger. Contact work colleagues, or use social media to reach new people – anything to help raise awareness of the problem and ensure you have help on the day!

Staying safe

Risk assessment – to keep yourself and others safe, carry out a risk assessment before the beach clean. A useful template can be found on the [Marine Conservation Society](#) website.

Public Liability Insurance – in order to be covered by the [Marine Conservation Society](#) Public Liability Insurance, you must register your event with them and follow their methodology. If you prefer a less structured beach clean, that's fine – just be aware that you would then be liable for your own safety, and that of others helping you to clean. [Keep Scotland Beautiful](#) have more information on obtaining Public Liability Insurance in their [Clean Up Scotland Information Pack](#).

Access – check that the beach can be safely accessed, and that the terrain won't make cleaning up difficult.

Tides – check the tide times for the date of the clean, and ensure that the beach is accessible at low tide long enough to safely clean the area. It's best to organise a beach clean on a falling tide – 2-3 hours before low water.

Hazardous items – check the beach for hazards like oil containers, syringes or dead animals while you conduct your risk assessment and during the event. If you find a hazardous item, do not touch it – contact your local council for advice, and report fly tipping to [Dumb Dumpers](#).

[Marine Conservation Society's Beachwatch](#) programme is a UK-wide, year round beach survey, involving volunteer citizen scientists removing beach litter and recording their findings. This data is collated and analysed in a national database, and the robust methodology allows it to influence national and European legislation. It has also revealed the impacts of litter on marine life, human health, and local economies. Beachwatch surveys can be carried out year round (ideally once per season if you can), including over the Great British Beach Clean event on the third week of September. Surveys are carried out over the same 100m of beach each time, from the strandline to the back of the beach. Use the website to register to clean a beach, or to plan and run an event – training guides are available on the website, and you will be provided with all the resources needed, including advice on what needs to be done in order to be covered by their insurance. Volunteers registered on a Beachwatch clean are given a full health and safety briefing using the resources provided to the beach clean organiser.

Promoting the event

There are a number of ways to promote your event, if you want to get a larger group together for the day:

- Social media – contact or share information via your Local Coastal Partnership, Marine Conservation Society, Regional Surfers Against Sewage Representative or Keep Scotland Beautiful
- Upload your event to the Marine Conservation Society or Keep Scotland Beautiful website
- Get in touch with your local newspaper
- Contact your local community council, local organisations or schools
- Advertise on notice boards or in community centres
- Marine Conservation Society offer templates to help you promote your event on their website

Use event outreach to remind volunteers of where and when to meet, to dress appropriately, what equipment is available, and how long the event will run for.

Waste disposal

Your local council waste management team:

Ask your local council whether they can collect rubbish once you've collected it, and take it to be recycled or to landfill

Item disposal ideas:

Tyres – check your local garage to see if they will take old tyres and dispose of them. Can they collect the tyres or will you need to transport them yourself?

Fishing line – check whether there's an [Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme](#) bin near you

Local community projects may be able to reuse some items

Fish farms may be willing to remove and/or dispose of fishing-related waste

Useful contacts/resources

Local council – to ask about beach ownership

Local council waste management team – they might have litter picking equipment available to borrow

Local Community Council – may have local contacts or resources for the day

[Marine Conservation Society](#) – How to organise a beach clean, risk assessment, resources for on the day, how to record the litter you collect

[Surfers Against Sewage](#)

[Keep Scotland Beautiful](#)

[Dumb Dumpers](#) (fly tipping) – 0300 777 2292

Plan for the day

| | |
|--|--|
| Where will your beach clean take place? | |
| Meeting Place | |
| Date and time (start and finish) | |
| Number of volunteers expected | |
| High tide times | |
| Landowner contact number | |
| Council contact number | |
| Which organisations would you like to get involved? | |
| What litter types are you expecting to find? | |
| How will the collected litter be removed from the beach, and who by? | |

Safety briefing

- Introduce yourself and the event
- Go over risk assessment, highlighting any potential risks and how to mitigate them
- Sign volunteers in and out
- Make sure everyone is aware of the tide times, and when the event will finish

Equipment list

- First aid kit
- Litter picks and bags
- Gloves
- Pencil, clipboard and Beachwatch form (if using)
- Hand sanitiser

Get in touch:

Email info@scrapbook-scotland.org.uk

or visit www.scrapbook-scotland.org.uk for more information



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Founding partners:



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