



## 'Bin Your Butt' Campaign Report

### Background

The Bin Your Butt campaign was launched in October 2020 as a collaborative campaign by Litter Free Dorset (LFD), Litter Free Coast and Sea (LFCS), Wimborne War on Waste (WWOW) and Litter Free Purbeck (LFP). The aim of the campaign was to reduce incidents of cigarette litter in Dorset, and to raise awareness of the harmful environmental impacts that occur as a result of cigarette butts being littered onto pavements and down drains.

**Over a 10-week period, the campaign saw up to a 72% decrease in cigarette butt litter in bus shelters.**

Alongside a month-long social media campaign, campaign artwork and messages were displayed on posters in bus shelters, local convenience stores Co-op Supermarkets (within the Purbeck area), and some pubs. To accompany posters in local convenience stores, supermarkets and pubs, stubby packs were distributed to be handed out to smokers, free of charge. Campaign beer mats (displaying the artwork and key messages) were also circulated to pubs in both Wimborne and Purbeck. Due to Covid-restrictions, however, many of these beer mats have been saved to hand-out to pubs in a second 'Bin Your Butt' push for once Covid risk has eased, and pubs can reopen in a safe way. Volunteers from the community groups LFP and WWOW monitored the effectiveness of the campaign at bus shelters in Purbeck and Wimborne. The campaign key messages were:

- Cigarette butts are the biggest plastic polluter – they do not biodegrade
- Cigarette butts travel from street drains into rivers and the sea
- Cigarette butts harm wildlife that mistake the butts as food

### Campaign Artwork

The campaign artwork used the same 'Bin Your Butt' logo as used for previous Litter Free 'Bin Your Butt' campaigns. The posters and beer mats also featured the three key campaign messages (above).



### Press Coverage and Social Media

#### **Press Coverage**

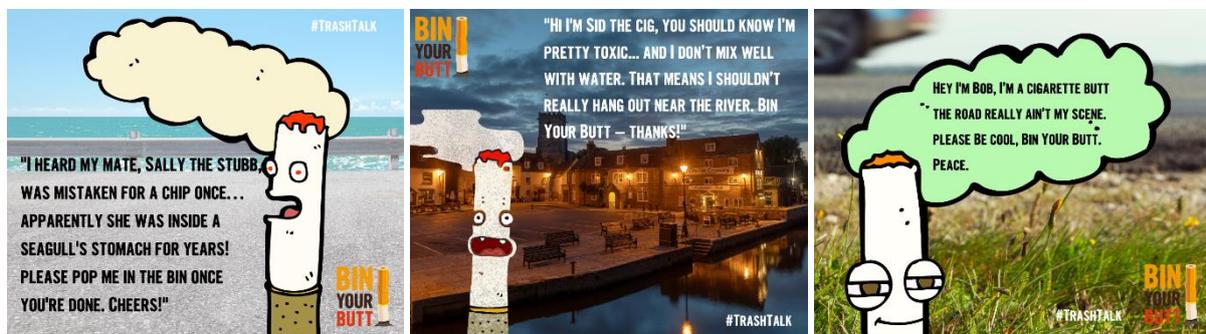
Our press release was shared with local news organisations. It was picked up and published online by Mags4Dorset, Swanage News, Keep106fm, and broadcast on radio by Purbeck Coast FM. Sarah Wise from WWOW also took part in a radio interview about the campaign with Forest FM.

## Social Media

For the campaign, each organisation ran their own social media campaign. LFCS Dorset focussed their online campaign about responsible butt disposal, using tins and stubby trays if no bin available, while LFP and WWOW shared posts expanding on their campaign monitoring activities, while also engaging with local businesses to distribute stubby packs, beer mats and posters to local shops and pubs. LFCS Somerset's social media campaign reflected topics highlighted in their [Bin Your Butt animation](#), exploring three different themes: types of smoker, the environmental impacts of littering butts and how to responsibly dispose of cigarette butts.

LFD's social media campaign focussed on raising awareness of the environmental impacts associated with littered butts, and to really focus in on the fact that even if you litter your butts inland, they will often find their way down street drains, entering our waterways and ultimately ending up in the sea.

Alongside more serious posts, LFD ran a series of #TrashTalk, featuring Bob the Butt and friends, exploring some of the issues associated with littered butts, to reach a younger audience.



In total the LFD social media campaign reached 39K people.

- **Facebook:** 16 posts were shared reaching an audience of 30.3k people  
The launch post was boosted for £50 for 5 days – this post reached 14.7K people
- **Instagram:** 12 posts were shared reaching an audience of 2,685 people
- **Twitter:** 12 posts were shared reaching an audience of 6,166 people

Although we don't know how many people's behaviour have been influenced by the social media posts, we can see that these posts been interacted with and shared by a range of audiences and demographics. The below graphic (right-hand side) shows the range of ages of people that our boosted campaign launch post reached via Facebook.

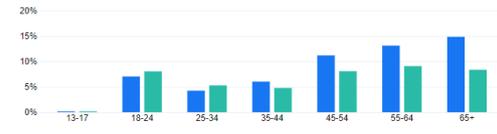


### Audience

This ad reached 6,486 people in your audience.

People Placements Locations

56.4% Women 43.6% Men



### Audience details

Location – Living in  
United Kingdom: Dorchester, Dorset (+37 km) England

Age  
18-65+

## **Monitoring**

LFP and WWOW recruited volunteers to take part in bus shelter monitoring, to see the impact of our campaign on behaviour change. The hope being that the campaign posters, installed at bus stops, with shelters and bins, would reduce the number of littered butts in and around each shelter.

## **Method**

Monitoring took place over a 10-week period, with cigarette butt counts occurring every two weeks at each shelter. Both LFP WWOW followed the same method, to ensure results were comparable. The steps taken for monitoring were:

1. Week 0: Count the butts and sweep clean (to remove historical litter).
2. Week 2: Count butts, sweep clean and put up poster.
3. Week 4: Count butts, sweep clean, check poster and replace if necessary.
4. Week 6: Count butts, sweep clean, check poster and replace if necessary.
5. Week 8: Count butts, sweep clean, check poster and replace if necessary.
6. Week 10: Count butts, sweep clean, check poster and replace if necessary.

Alongside counting the number of butts, other factors were also considered and noted, including weather observations, notes about bins and nearby infrastructure.

Once data had been collected, percentage reductions were calculated for numbers of butts at each shelter within the study, and discussion between LFD, WWOW, and LFP was had to explore the possible reasons behind the results.

## **Results**

### ***Litter Free Purbeck***

Within the Purbeck area eight bus shelters were included in the study, with five volunteers covering the route. The survey commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020, with the volunteers starting on various days to suit themselves.

Due to the introduction of the second lockdown, some volunteers decided to stop monitoring before the ten-week mark. Both Stoborough Green and Wareham Station shelters were monitored for the full 10 week schedule, while monitoring at the Swanage Bus Station, Corfe Halves Cottages and Corfe East Street shelters concluded with a final count at week 6 and the two Langton shelters (Langton Post Office and Langton Steppes Hill) were monitored up until week 4.

In Langton with the counts virtually at a flat line, and the introduction of the second Covid-19 Lockdown, the survey was abandoned. Similarly, the Sandford survey had only just begun at that point and with an initial count of zero this also ceased.

A sample of results below show the number of butts counted at week 2, the final count at these bus shelters, plus the percentage difference between these figures.

### **Key results (full table can be viewed in Appendix 1):**

- Corfe East Street: Cigarette butts decreased from 8 (week 2) to 3 (week 6) – a 75% reduction in number of butts counted
- Wareham Station: Cigarette butts decreased from 27 (week 2) to 19 (week 10) – a 30% reduction in number of butts counted

- Stoborough Green: Cigarette butts increased from 17 (week 2) to 20 (week 10) – a 17.6% rise in number of butts counted

With the exception of Swanage and Stoborough, all areas showed a consistent, overall reduction in littered butts between the count at week 2, when posters were displayed, and the final count for each shelter. Although there was no overall steady decline, Corfe did show a steady decline but with such low numbers, it is difficult to draw a conclusion from this. For some reason Swanage showed an increase over the period. A contributory factor may be that people tend to sit on the seat or congregate away from the shelter before the buses arrive so wouldn't see the poster.

### ***Wimborne War on Waste***

Within the Wimborne area, five shelters were scoped for monitoring - three in the town centre and two slightly further out. Five volunteers undertook the monitoring, with four of the five shelters completing the 10-week programme, while the high street shelter was monitored up to week 4.

A sample of results below show the number of butts counted at week 2, the final count at these bus shelters, plus the percentage difference between these figures.

#### **Key results (full table can be viewed in Appendix 2):**

- Gordon Road: Cigarette butts decreased from 18 (week 2) to 5 (week 10) – a 72% reduction in number of butts counted
- St John's Church on St John's Hill: Cigarette butts decreased from 20 (week 2) to 10 (week 10) - a 50% reduction in number of butts counted
- The Square (town centre): Cigarette butts decreased from 16 (week 2) to 15 (week 10) – a 6.25% reduction in number of butts counted

Three of the five shelters monitored in Wimborne did show an overall decrease in numbers of butts counted, and between weeks 2 and 4 there was a large decrease in butts counted at the same three stops, suggesting the posters were very effective in this initial period at positively changing behaviour. Between weeks 2 and 4, cigarette butts at the Gordon's road stop reduced from 18 to 3 (an 83% decrease), at St John's Church on St John's Hill, butts reduced from 20 to 6 (a 70% reduction), and The Square stop saw a reduction from 16 to 2 butts (an 87.5% reduction).

Below, limitations, some out of our control, will be discussed, however one factor that does need to be taken into account when interpreting Wimborne's results is a secret street sweeper! While out displaying the Bin Your Butt posters, WWOW met this Wimborne resident who independently litter picks around the town centre daily. Although informed of the campaign and monitoring programme, this enthusiastic litter picker decided to continue to include bus shelters within the monitoring programme in his daily picks. Although this will have impacted results, this individual's actions can be seen as a positive outcome of the campaign, as it has led to further community cohesion within Wimborne. Now both WWOW and this independent litter picker are aware of each other, and could, if they wanted to, work together on future projects.

### **Discussion**

When looking at the data, from both Purbeck and Wimborne, there is a general trend, between week 2 (when posters were displayed) and the final week of monitoring that numbers of discarded butts have reduced, indicating potential behaviour change.

A couple of shelters within the study do show a decline in butts counted between each two-week period. Example shelters for this include Corfe East Street where cigarette counts of week 2 – 8,

week 4 – 3 and week 6 (final count) – 2 were observed and Corfe Halves Cottages, with cigarette counts of week 2 – 5, week 4 – 4 and week 6 – 2. For most shelters though, there is fluctuation in results between each two-week period. For these shelters, one week's count might show low numbers of littered butts while the next count had much higher results. An example of this is at Wimborne's The Square Shelter, where the counts were as follows: week 2 – 16, week 4 – 2, week 6 – 18, week 8 – 8, week 10 – 15. The exact cause of these fluctuations can't be definitively determined however they are most likely a result of behaviour change coupled with other factors and limitations, which will be discussed below.

As expected, within the Purbeck area, the shelters in town centres, such as Swanage Bus Station and Wareham Train Station had much higher footfall than the shelters located in more rural locations. From week 2's count, when posters were displayed, to week 10's count, the number of littered butts counted at Wareham Station decreased from 27 to 19, a reduction of 29.6%. Swanage Station, on the other hand, saw a 23% increase in butts counted from week 2 (17 butts) to week 6 (21 butts). In comparison with these two shelters, the other shelters in the monitoring programme, experienced lower numbers of cigarettes. Corfe East Street, for example, which experienced the largest percentage reduction from week 2 to week 8, started off with 8 butts counted at week 2, to 2 butts counted at week 8.

Wimborne's shelters, on the other hand, observed similar counts to that of the town centre locations in Purbeck, if not more. This will most likely be due to the location of shelters within the WWOW programme, as all shelters included are within an urban area with higher density populations than that of some of the more rural bus stops in the Purbeck area. Examples include The Square shelter, where counted butts reduced from 16 (week 2) to 15 (week 10), with large fluctuations in numbers counted in weeks between, for example at week 4's count, there were only 2 butts counted. West Borough, similarly, to Swanage Station saw an overall increase in numbers of butts, increasing from 21 at week 2 to 42 at week 10. As previously mentioned, the secret street sweeper needs to be taken into consideration when looking at Wimborne's results.

This study did have limitations including the weather, Covid, unknown local litter pickers, and bin and poster placement.

Wind and rain can easily move and transport cigarette butts, meaning that if there had been a large rain or wind event in the days before the volunteers returned to a shelter to sweep and count butts, the butts present may have been scattered outside of the monitoring area, with some butts actually being transported down drains and entering water systems (one of our key messages).

A second limitation was the impact of Covid and the ongoing pandemic. This will almost certainly have played a factor in the results of this monitoring study. The second UK lockdown commenced 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020, within the first week of the monitoring programme. This will have caused irregular and less frequent travel, with most members of the public working from home if possible, while non-essential retail and other facilities and services were forced to close. As a result, the data collected in this monitoring programme will most likely not be truly representative of the behaviour change witnessed at each of the shelters included in the monitoring programme, in comparison with during Covid-free times.

Local litter pickers, unaware of the monitoring programme being undertaken may also have impacted results as they continued to clean areas included in the monitoring survey. As mentioned before, this was proven in Wimborne, where a local member of the public undertook daily picks around the town centre.

Also found to influence the likelihood of a smoker to litter when in and around a bus shelter were both placement of the bin and poster at each shelter. For the Swanage Station shelter, it was noted that people tended to congregate away from the bus shelter while waiting for the bus, and therefore often did not see the posters. This could explain the lack of a reduction in number of butts counted at the Swanage shelter. In Wimborne, it was suggested that shelters with bins at the opposite end to where people boarded the bus, were often more littered with cigarette butts, than shelters with bins next to where the public boarded the bus. This may be due to the public not noticing the bin located at the opposite end of the shelter, as they queue facing towards the door to the bus, and as a result of lack of awareness and possession of portable ashtrays, once they have finished with their cigarette, they flick it onto the floor before boarding the bus.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

### **Conclusions**

- The campaign posters did result in most bus stops experiencing an overall decrease in numbers of littered cigarette butts
- Various factors may have influenced the results, such as weather (wind and rain), Covid (impact of second national lockdown and 'staycations') and other community litter pickers
- Community cohesion – awareness was gained of who is litter picking in the local area
- The campaign was cost efficient - low cost while still resulting in positive behaviour change and a reduction in cigarette-related litter

### **Recommendations**

- Ensure campaign signage is in a visible location to where smokers congregated
- Bin placement in bus shelters is very important. If possible, ensure bins located in shelters are at the same end of the shelter as where people board the bus

If you would like to implement the 'Bin Your Butt' campaign in your local area, please get in touch with Litter Free Dorset by email at [litterfreedorset@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:litterfreedorset@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk).

To find out more about our other projects and campaigns, please visit the Litter Free Dorset website and check out our social media channels.

Web: [www.litterfreedorset.co.uk](http://www.litterfreedorset.co.uk)

Facebook: @LitterFreeDorset

Twitter: @LitterFreeDrst

Instagram: @litterfreedorset

## Appendix 1 – Results from Litter Free Purbeck’s monitoring programme

Bus Shelter	Campaign timeline	Date	Weather Observations	Cigarette Count	% reduction week 2 to week 4	% reduction week 2 to week 6	% reduction week 2 to week 8	% reduction week 2 to week 10	% reduction week 4 to week 6	% reduction week 6 to week 8	% reduction week 8 to week 10
Swanage Bus Station	Week 0	09/10/2020	Dry, sunny, slight breeze.	32	-64.70588235	-23.52941176	N/A	N/A	25	N/A	N/A
	Week 2	23/10/2020	Dry, sunny, breeze.	17							
	Week 4	07/11/2020	Dry, sunny, breeze.	28							
	Week 6	24/11/2020	Dry, sunny, cool	21							
	Week 8										
	Week 10										
Langton Steppes Hill	Week 0	05/10/2020	Dry.	3	66.66666667	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Week 2	21/10/2020	Very poor with heavy rain and strong winds.	3							
	Week 4	30/10/2020	Very poor with heavy rain and strong winds. Lots of c	1							
	Week 6			Survey abandc							
	Week 8										
	Week 10										
Langton Post Office	Week 0	03/10/2020	Dry, slight breeze	2	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Week 2	19/10/2020	Not recorded but lots of other comments.	2							
	Week 4	30/10/2020	Very poor with heavy rain and strong winds.	2							
	Week 6			Survey abandc							
	Week 8										
	Week 10										
Corfe Halves Cottages	Week 0	05/10/2020	Clear and dry	6	20	60	N/A	N/A	50	N/A	N/A
	Week 2	19/10/2020	Drizzle	5							
	Week 4	02/11/2020	Overcast	4							
	Week 6	16/11/2020	Wet	2							
	Week 8										
	Week 10										
Corfe East Street	Week 0	05/10/2020	Clear and dry	0	62.5	75	N/A	100	33.33333333	100	N/A
	Week 2	19/10/2020	Drizzle	8							
	Week 4	02/11/2020	Overcast	3							
	Week 6	16/11/2020	Overcast	2							
	Week 8										
	Week 10										
Stoborough Green	Week 0	01/10/2020	Fine	23	58.82352941	47.05882353	23.52941176	-17.64705882	-28.57142857	-44.44444444	N/A
	Week 2	14/10/2020		17							
	Week 4	28/10/2020	Showery with a light breeze.	7							
	Week 6	11/10/2020	Dry but windy	9							
	Week 8	25/11/2020	Damp	13							
	Week 10	00/01/1900		20							
Wareham Station	Week 0	01/10/2020		64	18.51851852	51.85185185	40.74074074	29.62962963	40.90909091	-23.07692308	N/A
	Week 2	14/10/2020		27							
	Week 4	28/10/2020	Showery with a light breeze.	22							
	Week 6	01/11/2020	Dry but windy, added another poster facing out from	13							
	Week 8	25/11/2020		16							
	Week 10	00/01/1900		19							

## Appendix 2 – Results from Wimborne War on Waste’s monitoring programme

Bus Shelter	Campaign timeline	Date	Weather Observations	Cigarette Count	% reduction week 2 to week 4	% reduction week 2 to week 6	% reduction week 2 to week 8	% reduction week 2 to week 10	% reduction week 4 to week 6	% reduction week 6 to week 8	% reduction week 8 to week 10
Gordon Road	Week 0	01/10/2020	sunny, warm little wind	21	83.33333333	83.33333333	72.22222222	72.22222222	0	-66.66666667	0
	Week 2	17/10/2020	overcast, little breeze	18							
	Week 4	31/10/2020	very wet and windy then sunnier by 2pm	3							
	Week 6	15/11/2020	sunny and dry, but has been v wet and windy	3							
	Week 8	29/11/2020	sunny, dry, no breeze	5							
	Week 10	13/12/2020	damp and grey	5							
St John’s Church on St John’s Hill	Week 0	01/10/2020	sunny, warm little wind	76	70	40	35	50	-100	-8.333333333	23.07692308
	Week 2	17/10/2020	overcast, little breeze	20							
	Week 4	31/10/2020	very wet and windy then sunnier by 2pm	6							
	Week 6	15/11/2020	sunny and dry, but has been v wet and windy	12							
	Week 8	29/11/2020	sunny, dry, no breeze	13							
	Week 10	13/12/2020	damp and grey	10							
West Borough	Week 0	30/09/2020	dry but been raining all day	18	-76.19047619	-233.3333333	-180.952381	-100	-89.18918919	15.71428571	28.81355932
	Week 2	14/10/2020	sunny but windy during day	21							
	Week 4	30/10/2020	very wet, windy & puddles	37							
	Week 6	11/11/2020	damp and grey	70							
	Week 8	25/11/2020	rain	59							
	Week 10	07/12/2020	cold and dry	42							
The Square	Week 0	30/09/2020		21	87.5	-12.5	50	6.25	-800	55.55555556	-87.5
	Week 2	14/10/2020	windy	16							
	Week 4	28/10/2020	very wet and windy	2							
	Week 6	11/11/2020		18							
	Week 8	25/11/2020		8							
	Week 10	09/12/2020		15							
High Street	Week 0	00/01/1900		1	-100	N/A	N/A	N/A	NA	NA	NA
	Week 2	00/01/1900		1							
	Week 4			2							
	Week 6										
	Week 8										
	Week 10										