

# Fourth Report on the Great Angus Beach Clean

And

## Recommendations for Action

### Great Angus Beach Clean 28th-30th May 2021

Let's launch Scotland's Summer Clean with a massive clean of Angus beaches and waterways. Take a look at the [aceangus.co.uk](http://aceangus.co.uk) web-site for advice about getting involved and taking responsibility for your own safety. Use local bins. The ATV will be out to collect litter bags left above the high tide mark between Carnoustie and Arbroath.



Enjoy Scotland's Stunning Landscape  
Wherever you are - Take 4 for the Shore

**Make a Difference - Just do it!**



Arbroath  
Poo  
Fighters



Supporting the Big Summer Clean in  
Scotland 28th May - 20th June 2021

# CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND</b>	Page 3
<b>2. LAUNCH of the EVENT</b>	Page 3
<b>3. WHO TOOK PART and WHERE?</b> Montrose Ferryden Lunan Bay Victoria Park Inchcape Park Queens Drive Elliot East Haven Carnoustie Monifieth Friockheim Park	Page 4 - 8
<b>4. KEY OUTCOMES and DISCUSSION</b>  4.1 Volume of Marine Litter 4.2 Fly-tipping of Food Waste 4.3 Monofilament Fishing line 4.4 Recycling and Disposal of Ghost Fishing Gear 4.5 Impact on Community Volunteers 4.6 The Value and Cost of Cleaning Up	Page 9  p 9 p 10 -11 p 12 p 13 p 14 P 14 -16
<b>5. RECOMMENDATIONS - ACTIONS</b>	Page 17
<b>6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	Page 18
<b>7. APPENDICES</b>	Page 19 - 21

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In this extended year of Scotland's Coasts and Waters, the fourth Great Angus Beach Clean report not only provides a summary of key outcomes but highlights a number of important issues for consideration by Marine Scotland and the Scottish Government. It brings together a mass of data and information which informs the debate about what is happening at a local level.

The launch of the event was planned to coincide with the Big Summer Clean in Scotland which ran from 28th May to 20th June 2021. Over 245 people participated and more than 1.3 tonnes of marine litter was uplifted between Monifieth and Montrose.

The Great Angus Beach Clean is held twice a year and aims to bring together all sections of the community in a collaborative effort to remove as much litter as possible along the Angus Coast. Also, it aims to prevent litter from reaching the sea by cleaning rivers, streams and inland areas. Approximately 90% of marine litter originates from land. In addition, the event raises awareness about sources of litter and attempts to find ways of reducing it. The coastline of Angus is important not just to the people who live here and visit but also to biodiversity, tourism and the economy. Therefore the Great Angus Beach Clean is an opportunity for everybody regardless of age, ability or background to play their part and make a difference. People are asked to take personal responsibility for their own safety and either borrow a litter picker from one of the organised share stations or simply to go out and 'take 4 for the shore'. For those litter picking between Carnoustie and Arbroath, heavy bags can be left above the high tide mark for East Haven's All-Terrain-Vehicle to collect. Make it safe and make it fun is the approach and safety guidance can be accessed from the ACE web-site and that of other organisations such as Turning the Plastic Tide and Keep Scotland Beautiful.

It should be noted that a significant number of people across Angus have gone above and beyond during the pandemic to remove the large amounts of litter which have appeared on our streets and beaches. Following the easing of the first lockdown, littering increased exponentially at the same time as Local Authority resources were reduced. In addition, new forms of litter emerged such as PPE and human waste from workers who were unable to access public toilets. Despite this, over 120 people are now registered on Adopt-A-Street and some of these were out almost every day collecting litter as part of their daily exercise. Angus Council provided 'Adopt-A-Street' stickers and arranged to uplift bags particularly when they contained hazardous waste.

In East Haven residents were out cleaning the beach and surrounds almost every day in 2020 and between January and May 2021 had already removed more than 2 metric tonnes of marine litter of which a large volume comprised ghost fishing gear.

## 2. LAUNCH OF THE EVENT

The event was launched both in East Haven and in Arbroath where Ladyloan Primary school pupils undertook a beach clean at Inchcape Park. In East Haven the All-Terrain Vehicle set out on its first run up to Arbroath at 8.30am and returned in time for filming by STV with a vehicle full of ghost



fishing gear, traffic bollards and a variety of marine litter. Crawford Paris from Turning the Plastic Tide, Cllr Julie Bell, (Marine Species and litter Champion) and Barry Fisher CEO Keep Scotland Beautiful were all present and able to speak to volunteers and the media to help raise wide public awareness.



### 3. WHO TOOK PART AND WHERE?

More than 245 people from aged 3 years to 83 years took part in the event. Many borrowed litter pickers from the share stations along the coast and at Friockheim Park. Participants willingly took personal responsibility for their own safety. Some left heavy bags for the ATV to collect along the shore between Carnoustie and Arbroath and others brought their refuse bags back to the share stations. The 245 people who took part are those who were counted at share stations. It is likely many others simply went out and took '4 for the shore'.



Photo courtesy of Paul Reid. Anas Pictures



#### Montrose

Mobay supported by members of Rotary hosted a litter share station in Montrose where 18 volunteers lifted 40kg of marine litter from the beach. Mairi Gougeon MSP attended and Roo's Leap restaurant provided bacon sandwiches and refreshments for those involved.

Full details of what was collected in each area can be found in appendix 1.



### Ferryden

Two people representing Marine Life Angus were out in Ferryden undertaking a beach clean on the Friday. They collected 2kg of litter including a large amount of small plastic pieces, fishing rope and sweet papers. A lot of work has been undertaken to educate the public on how important it is to remove the very small pieces of plastic which are incredibly harmful to birds and wildlife as they may be ingested or become entangled in the waste.



### Lunan Bay

At least two volunteers were out in Lunan Bay. This long east facing beach is not as vulnerable to tidal litter and ghost fishing gear as the area between Carnoustie and Arbroath. Nevertheless, 6kg of ghost fishing gear and large plastics was uplifted along with a small amount of sweet wrappers and small plastics. Lunan Bay has had a particular problem with dirty camping during the pandemic and with large amounts of picnic and drink items being left in the dunes and on the beach. Residents remain vigilant and remove what they can when these kinds of incidents occur.



### Victoria Park Arbroath (Kings Drive)

Arbroath Poo Fighters, Rotary Club and Cllr Julie Bell (Marine Species and Litter Champion) were amongst the 16 volunteers who uplifted 27.5kgs at Victoria Park in Arbroath. Amongst the items uplifted was a large amount of small plastics, a fish box and a slow cooker. This is an area popular with free overnight motorhome stays.



## Ladyloan Primary School - Inchcape Park

Also in Arbroath, 46 Marine Species and Litter Champions from Ladyloan Primary School helped to launch the Great Angus Beach Clean on the beach across from their school at Inchcape Park. Ladyloan Primary school has been involved in the Great Angus Beach Clean since 2019. The children have also done a lot of work to remove litter from around their school environment and as a result prevent litter from escaping into the marine environment.



The children collected a staggering 18.3kg of marine litter. Amongst the items collected were face masks and gloves, food packaging, clothes and children's toys. A detailed list of what they found can be seen in Appendix 1.

### Queens Drive

Two ACE Volunteers undertook a beach clean in-front of the area where 49 motorhomes parked on the evening of the 29th May 2021. This area has become increasingly popular as a place for free overnight stays especially since the onset of the pandemic. In addition to the usual marine plastics volunteers picked up discarded kitchen utensils and also came across an area of chemical waste from a motorhome cassette toilet. In 2020 chemical toilet waste was observed on a number of occasions in this location along with large volumes of litter. Like dog fouling it is probably a small number of irresponsible users but nevertheless the impact on the marine environment is significant.



### Elliot Beach

Seven volunteers collected 80.5kgs litter from Elliot. This remote area of beach borders a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Kidney Vetch has been planted in the dunes to provide a food source for the rare Small Blue Butterfly. The remote beach attracts people who want to enjoy a picnic and/or party. Although people are willing to carry their drinks and food items a distance to the beach it seems that many are unwilling to carry their litter back where it can be disposed of properly. In addition to food related litter a considerable amount of ghost fishing gear was removed and 5 metal canisters containing food waste. More about these containers is discussed in section 4.2. It should be noted that there was so much litter at Elliot that a working party of volunteers went back out on 12 June and uplifted a further 108kgs. This extended the period of the Great Angus Beach Clean by 12 days but was a worthwhile effort. More details about what was uplifted can be seen in Appendix 1.



### East Haven

East Haven Together hosted a litter station and 17 volunteers took part. A total of 27.4kgs was uplifted and the data uploaded to the Marine Conservation Society web-site. It should be noted that cabbages and fruit waste along with wooden pallets were recorded during this beach clean and that their presence might be connected to the food waste containers found washed up between Carnoustie and Arbroath. More about this issue is discussed in section 4.2. Named Drivers from East Haven also drove the All-Terrain-Vehicle (ATV) picking up all the heavy items. It would appear that there may be an increasing trend towards people leaving not only litter but personal belongings as if they were single use items. For example, wet towels, chairs, blankets, cushions and children's toys. This is not a case of people simply forgetting but making a positive choice to leave them behind.



## Carnoustie

Carnoustie Community Council hosted a litter station on both days over the Great Angus Beach Clean weekend and this attracted 73 volunteers. A staggering 62kgs was collected from the shoreline in addition to a further 17 bags picked up along the sea-front by an Angus Council Waste Operative on the Sunday morning. Carnoustie bay is not normally heavily affected by litter but in 2021 there has been a notable increase both on the dunes and on the coastal pathways. In addition, Carnoustie has also been affected by large items of marine litter including tyres, a burned out model boat and ghost fishing gear.



## Monifieth

An ACE Volunteer hosted the Monifieth Litter Share Station and 13 volunteers collected 16kgs of litter. Much of this consisted of small items such as cotton buds, sanitary items, plastic fishing line and food containers. A number of children took part and the litter was laid out to raise awareness and educate. A number of people expressed an interest in joining the Adopt-A-Street scheme.



## Friockheim Park

Friockheim Park in the centre of Angus held an all day clean up event and invited people to drop in at any time to borrow a litter picker and hoop. Graeme Dey MSP supported this initiative and 90 bags of litter were uplifted along with tyres and other fly-tipped items. This was an incredible community effort and an example of the important work which needs to be done upstream to prevent litter from reaching the sea. It was also a great contribution to the launch of the Big Summer Clean in Scotland in 2021. This group also went the extra mile and separated out dry recyclables from contaminated waste. This enabled 40 bags of of recyclable materials to be collected by Biffa.



## 4. KEY OUTCOMES and DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Volume of Marine Litter

The first Great Angus Beach Clean in 2019 resulted in the removal of 3 tonnes of marine litter. It was assumed that some of this was historic and that larger items such as ghost fishing gear would not accumulate to this level again. The acquisition of the All-Terrain-Vehicle from LEADER funding has enabled the removal of creels and heavy rope which had littered the beach for many years. Table 1 highlights the volume of litter uplifted since 2019 but does not include small beach cleans which have been held along the coast in addition to the bi-annual Great Angus Beach Cleans.

**Table 1: Volume of litter removed since 2019**

Great Angus Beach Clean May 2019	3000 kgs
Great Angus Beach Clean Sept 2019	1225 kgs
Great Angus Beach Clean Sept 2020	714 kgs
Big Beach Clean February 2020 and mechanical removal of ghost fishing gear at Westhaven in April 2021	2100 kgs
Great Angus Beach Clean 28th May - June 12 2021	1303 kgs
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8342 kgs</b>

During the first year of the Covid Pandemic, it was only possible to hold one Great Angus Beach Clean and this was held in September when 714kgs of marine litter was removed. Although the winter of 2020/21 brought a couple of severe storms we could not have envisaged that more than 2 tonnes of marine litter would be uplifted between Carnoustie and Arbroath between January and April 2021 and a further 1.3 tonnes during the Great Angus Beach Clean in May 2021. This volume is staggering and suggests that the level of marine litter on the Angus coast may have increased in recent times.

It should be noted that the ghost fishing gear at Westhaven was of such a scale and so deeply embedded in the sand that it was not possible to remove it without mechanical assistance. A grant was obtained from the Angus Council Community Litter and Fly-tipping Prevention Fund in April

2021. This enabled the community to engage a contractor to remove it with a wheel-digger. Frustratingly a further pile of anchor rope has been found buried deep in sand near the slipway in-front of the Carnoustie

Golf Hotel. Despite best efforts of man and ATV, we were unable to move it during this Great Angus Beach Clean.



## 4.2 Fly-tipping of Food Waste

During week of 24th May 2021 large canisters of rancid food waste began appearing on the beach between Carnoustie and Arbroath. Five were initially collected in Carnoustie and four in East Haven. By the 31st May, 14 foul smelling containers had been washed up containing food waste such as meat, veg and rice. In addition, seven smaller metal canisters containing a hot roll yeast mix were washed up. A number of cabbages and fruit peelings were also picked up in East Haven. One of the food waste containers washed up was in a yellow Olleco bin. Olleco is a commercial food waste collection service and they recycle food waste into energy at anaerobic digester plants.



**Above:** Six of the large metal canisters containing food waste. The lids had all been slit to encourage the canisters to sink.



**Right:** An example of the putrid contents.



**Above:** Five smaller unopened food canisters

**Right:** Two further canisters one of which still had a label on. 'Mountain Maid - Hot Roll Mix'. The second one was opened and also found to contain the same substance.



Angus Council and ACE have worked to try and establish how and why these canisters of food waste came to be washed up across a 7km stretch of Angus coastline over the period of a week. Food waste is a significant cause of methane gas emissions and businesses have a duty of care under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 34 to ensure that their waste is passed to an authorised waste collector licensed by SEPA. It is also requirement to ensure that food waste is not deposited in a public drain or sewer and any breach of this legislation can result in a fine of £10,000.

**At the time of writing this report it appears that there are only three plausible explanations.**

- A local hospitality/food venue has fly-tipped the food waste directly into the sea rather than pay a licensed waste carrier to take it to an authorised centre.
- An unlicensed waste carrier fly-tipped the food waste as they had no intention of paying commercial rates to deposit the waste at an authorised centre.
- The food waste has been fly-tipped over the side of a ship at sea.

It is the view of ACE that the first two explanations are less likely to have occurred in this instance. Firstly there are not that many places along the Angus coast where fly-tipping this volume of food waste in the sea would go unnoticed. It would be a high risk strategy which, if convicted could result in a fine of up to £40,000 and/or imprisonment for up to 12 months.

Secondly, a clue was found in that one of the seven canisters of unopened food was still wrapped in a label from the producer, Mountain Maid. It was only packed on 12 January 2020 and contained a Hot Roll mix. This is a yeast based product which would enable bread rolls to be provided to people in an environment where it is difficult to obtain fresh bread supplies. Mountain Maid is food production company based in North Carolina in the USA. They have a contract to supply the U.S. Defence Logistics Agency Troop Support.

It seems more than coincidental that a large multi-national Nato exercise, 'Joint Warrior', took place in the north of Scotland between 8th and 20th May 2021. Nato war ships were anchored approximately 10 miles off-shore between Carnoustie and East Haven during week beginning 10th May 2021. This was a

large exercise involving the Royal Navy, Air Force, Royal Marines and Army alongside forces from other countries including the US. Troops were accommodated onboard ships. The first food waste containers were picked up within a few days of their departure. The question now for the Scottish Government is which statutory organisation is responsible for investigating this fly-tipped waste? SEPA, Scottish Water or the Local Authority?



### 4.3 Monofilament Fishing line

In 2018/19 one East Haven resident collected 16,000 metres of plastic anglers line and over 60 dangerous hooks from the bay area in East Haven where sea angling is very popular. The monofilament line takes around 600 years to biodegrade and is extremely harmful to wildlife.

In 2021, Alex Shepherd who is a local wildlife recorder has photographed and videoed several birds which have become entangled in fishing line. These birds often die either because they can't feed or they become victim to predators. Several dogs also pick up fish hooks every year and require surgery. East Haven Together has repeatedly tried to engage with anglers to find ways of reducing the loss of hooks and line. However, the majority of anglers say that there is nothing that can be done as lines easily snap and that it is a hazard of the sport. There appears to be a widely held view amongst anglers that they have no responsibility to either wildlife or canines.

ACE is of the view that the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers has a duty to explore ways of reducing harm and making the sport more environmentally sustainable. Their web-site focuses almost exclusively on protecting and promoting the rights of anglers. The absence of any reference to reducing the impacts of the sport on the environment and wildlife is concerning and encourages a culture of entitlement in the sport.



Gull - Arbroath Harbour

Photograph courtesy of Alex Shepherd

## Watch Your Tackle

### Fish hooks can kill more than fish!

Lucy	Bella	Flow
		

We have all been seriously injured by fish hooks left on the beach by sea anglers. East Haven is a shared beach and all users should respect each other. That means no dog poo and no fish hooks. If your line becomes snagged, cut it as close to the water as possible and attach a fluorescent fishing float to highlight its location. Then attach the line to a stone or heavy fishing weight to prevent it from washing up elsewhere. Return at the next low tide to remove it. If you are unable to return at low tide then you can not fish safely at this beach. Equally, if you do not pick up after your dog then you are placing other beach users at risk.

Leave paw prints and foot prints only.



### Fishing in the Ha'en

*Respect and Responsibility*



Welcome to East Haven where the residents manage the beach and local environment to make your visit as enjoyable as possible. Lots of people use the beach for a range of activities such as children playing dog walking, and sea fishing. Everyone has a right to safety and respect and we ask all users of the beach to respect each other by clearing away litter and maintaining a safe environment.

We kindly request that sea-anglers pay attention to the following:

Fish Hooks

When beach fishing it's quite possible to get your hook caught on an obstacle many yards out from the shore making it all but impossible to retrieve when the tide is in. In these circumstances cut the line as close to the water as possible then attach a fluorescent fishing float to the end remaining in the water. Then attach the line to a stone, pebble or heavy fishing weight to keep it from drifting out to sea.

Please return at the next low tide to identify the line highlighted by your fluorescent float and retrieving it safely.

Toilets

We have to close our public toilets between October and March as the building has no heating or electricity. Please bring your own toilet facilities during these months. Please do not wild toilet in and around the village. (try TravelJohn bags)

Litter

Please use the bins provided in the picnic area and car park. Please do not dump your used gear in the dunes or the sea.

East Haven Together - Find out more about East Haven on our web-site [www.easthavenangus.com](http://www.easthavenangus.com)  
Find us on Facebook 'Our East Haven'



Great Angus Beach Clean Report 18 June 2021

12 of 21

#### 4.4 Recycling and Disposal of Marine Litter

Over a period of exactly two years more than 8 tonnes of marine litter has been uplifted from the Angus coastline. Angus Council have supported the community to recycle items items such as tyres, carpets and rubble. However, most bags of mixed marine waste is sent to the Baldovie Waste to Energy unit as it is not suitable for standard mechanical recycling due to contamination. The challenge of finding ways to recycle the millions of tonnes of plastic in the sea is huge but it is encouraging to see an increasing number of



innovative companies who are finding ways to recycle marine plastics into everyday useful products such as spectacle frames and even litter pickers.

The European Union estimates that commercial fishing gear makes up 27% of all beach litter although this figure varies between areas. In Angus, a disproportionate amount of ghost fishing gear is regularly washed up along the coast particularly between Carnoustie and Arbroath. Ghost fishing gear comprises fishing gear which has been deliberately or accidentally lost at sea. It includes nets, ropes and creels which can continue to ‘ghost fish’ for decades if not removed from the marine environment. This mass of ghost fishing gear (right) was found at Elliot and following a huge effort by volunteers was removed and transported from the site in the ATV.



The load was brought back to the car park in East Haven where the ghost fishing gear has to be stored for long periods. It cannot be recycled due to the complex mix of plastic polymers and other materials that they are made of. Neither can it be processed at the new Waste to Energy unit. Currently, the only place ghost fishing gear waste can be disposed of is landfill. However, Angus Council closed its landfill site in March 2018 ahead of the original Scottish Government target to stop sending waste to landfill by January 2021. The Government subsequently pushed back this target to January 2025 to allow more time for Waste to Energy sites to be built. However, this now means that Angus has nowhere to dispose of the tonnes of ghost fishing gear which is washed up along its beaches. The Local Authority therefore has to pay for the waste to be buried in another Local Authority area. Soon there will be no landfill sites left in Scotland so decisions about how to remove and process this complex waste is now more urgent.

#### 4.5 Impact on Community Volunteers

Community Groups applaud Local Authorities for improving and extending their recycling facilities. More and more items such as carpets, e-waste and mattresses are being recycled. However, the dilemma about what to do with ghost fishing gear and marine items such as tyres and containers filled with unknown substances is causing difficulties for Local Authorities. They cannot easily accept these items at recycling centres so community groups are increasingly having to take more responsibility not just for uplifting marine litter but also for disposing of it. The arrangement in Angus only works because Angus Council Waste Management Services maintain a strong working partnership with the volunteer community.

MARINE LITTER ITEMS	WHAT HAPPENS IN ANGUS
Containers filled with unknown fluids which might contain hazardous substances	Designated volunteers take these at a pre-arranged time to a non public area. The Council has to arrange for the substances to be tested before they can be appropriately disposed of.
Tyres	Designated volunteers take these at a pre-arranged time to a non public area. Angus Council pay for them to be sent to a recycling unit.
Ghost fishing gear including creels, ropes, nets, bouys, fish boxes.	The Community group East Haven Together currently store the majority of this waste in an area at the rear of their village car park. This allows fishermen and members of the public to reuse and up-cycle items. Every 18 months or so, Angus Council provide a skip and volunteers move the remaining heavy waste from the car park and under the railway bridge to the waiting skip. This is then transported to a landfill site in another Local Authority area.
Waste bags containing marine litter	The community and the Council work together to minimise the number of bags left beside bins to discourage others from fly-tipping. Volunteers book slots at the recycling centre and take bags in a domestic trailer

In an online forum with other groups across Scotland in late 2020, volunteers from other Scottish coastal communities began expressing concern about the difficulties they were experiencing in disposing of ghost fishing gear. Comments were made such as; “Just do what we do and sneak it in with the other waste” and another volunteer said, “we have problems too but we have found a way of getting it into the recycling centre at night after it has closed”

These comments and concerns from community beach clean groups suggest that there is an urgent need to make facilities readily available for the disposal of all types of marine litter. Volunteers are giving up their own time and energy to clean vast swathes of the Scottish coastline and disposal of what they uplift should be made as easy as possible.

#### 4.6 The Value and Cost of Cleaning Up

The question of who should pay for the cost of cleaning up marine litter and particularly ghost fishing gear is an interesting one. During the Great Angus Beach Clean (May 2021) more than 245 volunteers took part. Individuals contributed between 1 and 10 hours to the event. The economic value the contribution volunteers made could be calculated at £3,118.50 based on the following formulation.

350 hours	Minimum wage £8.91 per hour	£3,118.50
-----------	-----------------------------	-----------

However, direct costs to some individuals and community groups can be considerable and place groups in the position of continually applying for 'one-off' grants for support. Most grant awarding bodies will only award to the same project once and most of them perceive costs such as insurance, service and repair of an All-Terrain-Vehicle such as that in East Haven as a core running cost of the charity which is not eligible for funding.

It is hoped that marine conservation grant awarding bodies will consider this issue and be more flexible and outcome focussed in their approach to criteria and eligibility. The relentless task of hauling litter out of the marine environment is difficult enough for communities without additional obstacles in terms of applying for funding and the challenges associated with waste disposal.

Equally, Local Authorities might also be forgiven for asking the question 'Who Pays?' Many of them don't even own the foreshore on all their beaches. This is the case in Angus where neither the Crown nor the Local Authority own the foreshore between Monifieth and Arbroath. The Land Registry has been unable to identify a private owner and suggest that it may have been in the historic ownership of the estate of the Earls of Panmure but this can't be verified at present.

Marine Scotland are in the process of updating Scotlands Marine Litter Strategy which was published in 2014. There is a desire to strengthen links with Scotland's National Litter Strategy to prevent litter from entering our seas and to remove as much as possible. If the same principles are applied to ghost fishing gear and fly-tipped marine items as they are to fly-tipped items on private land then there would be a duty on statutory bodies to investigate where this has come from. At the moment, responsibility is not clear with SEPA investigating rivers, burns and streams; Scottish Water our drains and sewers; and Local Authorities, land based fly-tipping. It could also mean that private owners of Scotland's foreshore then become burdened with the massive cost of employing licensed waste carriers to remove the waste. Given that Scotland will soon have no landfill sites then licensed waste carriers may not be able to dispose of this type of waste.

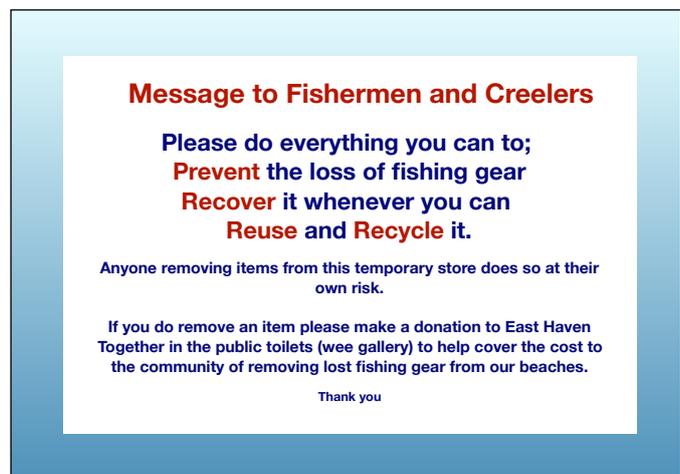
The Scottish Creel Fisherman's Federation describe their industry as profitable and sustainable. If this is the case one has to ask why some of these profits are not returning to communities who help to clean up after them. Volunteers are not unpaid labourers for their industry. In Angus, over 25,000 creels are laid by licensed creelers every week during the season between Monifieth and Montrose. Accidental loss of creels at sea is acknowledged as an occupational hazard and fishermen are motivated to recover lost gear when they can due to its high cost. However, Angus is reported as having a particular problem with gear conflict and sabotage. This means that lines are deliberately cut resulting in the loss of creels and any lobsters/crustaceans that they contain. Marine Scotland issued a consultation in 2014 called 'Measures to tackle Gear Conflict in Scottish Inshore Waters'. In this document they suggested that, 'voluntary agreement is reached locally between protagonists, without the need for intervention by government or other agencies'. This, they said would provide the best route to resolution of conflict situations.

In 2018, ACE met with Fishing Industry Leaders at a meeting facilitated by Graeme Dey MSP at the Scottish Parliament to raise concerns about the impact of gear conflict in Angus waters on both the environment and on community groups constantly clearing it up. During the meeting, leaders eventually acknowledged the problem but warned against trying to engage with any of the individuals involved in these practices. "Blood has been shed on the floor of Arbroath Harbour for less" one said. Disappointingly they had no suggestions or ideas about actions which could be taken to mitigate against conflict and took the view that Marine Scotland should be taking responsibility. However, Marine Scotland does not currently have a role in enforcing gear conflict, despite it being the direct result of a regulated fishing activity.

When the Scottish Government set up a task force to look at the problem in 2015 they said; 'Gear conflict is a long standing fisheries problem. The Task Force concluded that the inability to control and resolve gear conflict under the existing legislative framework and fisheries management activities, and the inability to take action against those responsible for deliberate acts of vandalism, was an unacceptable position in which to place fisheries management'.

They subsequently introduced legislation in June 2020 making it mandatory to mark creels and bouys so that if they are lost in the water they can be tracked back to the harbour and boat owner from where they originated. Only one marker number has ever been seen in approximately 3 tonnes of ghost fishing gear which has been removed and brought back to East Haven since June 2020. It was not a number that we were able to track back to a harbour let alone a specific fishing boat. Some might suggest that the creels must be old and washed up from the sea bed where they were lost. Whatever the situation ACE recommends that a reporting system is established so that ghost fishing gear can be more readily tracked.

In East Haven where the ghost fishing gear is stored at the rear of the car park a notice has been erected on the barrier. The temporary storage site has become well known amongst fishermen some of whom travel a distance to see what can be salvaged. The arrangement has evidenced that fishermen are highly motivated to retrieve fishing gear which has been collected for them by community volunteers. They are often seen taking the best of the haul within minutes of the ATV returning to East Haven. However, although they recognise the value of being able to reuse salvaged fishing gear only one individual has acknowledged the cost to the community of uplifting it all and has donated £20 towards petrol for the ATV. This individual up-cycles creels and sells them back to the fishermen in Arbroath.



ACE agrees with the Scottish Government task force of 2015 which concluded that the current system for preventing gear conflict is not appropriate or fit for purpose. If neither Industry Leaders Marine Scotland or Police Scotland can take any action to reduce conflict and loss then this profitable industry should be making a significant financial contribution to support community groups who are removing their waste from Scotland's marine environment. Contributions could also be used towards the cost of disposal until fishing gear becomes recyclable. It would appear that financial sanctions may be the only way to reduce negative impacts from the industry and perhaps the only way to encourage behaviour change.



## RECOMMENDATIONS - ACTIONS

No	RECOMMENDATION/ACTION	WHO	Ref
1	Ways in which to reduce the risk of motorhome users dumping chemical and other waste types in the marine environment to be considered.	Working group involving multiple stakeholders.	P7
2	East Haven Together to establish a project to recycle and reuse beach items left as waste by the public during the summer of 2021	East Haven Together	P7
3	Ways in which to remove the heavy anchor rope buried off the slip way in-front of Carnoustie Golf Hotel to be explored	Carnoustie Community Council and EHT	P9
4	Work to be undertaken with the Military to establish whether they recognise the food waste as belonging to one of the Nato ships anchored off the coast between Carnoustie and East Haven for exercise 'Joint Warrior'.	ACE East Haven Together	P10 & P11
5	The new Marine Litter Strategy could provide greater clarity on statutory responsibilities for investigating and tracing those responsible for fly-tipping traceable items into the sea. Currently it is a grey area as to whether it is the Local Authority, SEPA or Scottish Water	Marine Scotland	P11 & P15
6	Ways in which to reduce the environmental harm and impact of Monofilament Fishing line to be raised with the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers and other statutory bodies	ACE Marine Scotland	P12
7	Scottish Government to clarify responsibilities for the disposal of ghost fishing gear, tyres and other potentially hazardous substances removed from Scottish beaches.	Scottish Government	P13
	Where is Scotland going to send the above waste when all the landfill sites are closed? Are we really going to start sending it to England?		P13
	How can it be made easier for community groups to dispose of what they pick up?		P14
	Is the Local Authority responsible for the disposal of marine waste even if they do not own the foreshore?		P15
8	Grant Awarding bodies to consider funding ongoing core costs to communities that can demonstrate they are achieving important outcomes	Needs promoting by Marine Scotland	P15
9	A system for registering marked fishing gear numbers should be open and accessible to enable owners to be traced and potentially pick up their own marine waste.	Marine Scotland	P16
10	Scottish Government to consider financial sanctions to off-set the impact of static gear conflict and reinvest some of this money in local coastal communities involved in the constant clean up exercise. Also to contribute to the disposal of this waste.	Scottish Government	P16

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Great Angus Beach Clean and Summer Clean could not take place without the hard work and commitment of so many individuals, groups, schools, organisations and businesses across the area. Angus is a beautiful place to live and visit and so many people are passionate about reducing litter and preventing it from escaping into the sea. For those who live near the coast and watch the relentless tide of plastic washing in and out there is an increasing sense of urgency to do something about it and play a part in creating healthier Scottish seas and beaches.

### **Special thanks to the following**

#### **Those who hosted Litter Stations**

Sue Taylor, Mobay

Ian Wren (Arbroath Poo Fighters) and Wendy Russell in Arbroath  
Crawford Paris and Ladyloan Primary School

Lynne Fotheringham, East Haven

David Rorie Carnoustie Community Council

ACE in Monifieth

James Anderson, Friockheim Park

#### **Drivers of the ATV**

John Keen, Nicola Keen, Jack Reid, Andy Edward, Alasdair Murray, Anne Bancroft, Ian Bancroft, Jimmy Brown, Wendy Murray

#### **Individuals and Organisations**

Crawford Paris, East Grampian Coastal Partnership (Turning the Plastic Tide)

Angus Council, Waste Management Services

Heather McLaughlin, Keep Scotland Beautiful

Kelly Ann Dempsey, Marine Life Angus

Cllr Julie Bell, Marine Species and Litter Champion

MSP Graeme Dey and MSP Mairi Gougeon

Roos Leap, Montrose

**This report was produced by Angus Clean Environments (ACE)  
14th June 2021**

e-mail: [angusisace@gmail.com](mailto:angusisace@gmail.com)

[www.aceangus.co.uk](http://www.aceangus.co.uk)

Facebook: AngusCleanEnvironments



## APPENDIX 1

WHO/AREA	Bags and Weight	No People	OTHER
<b>Montrose</b> <b>40kgs</b>	15 bags	18	Roos Leap supported Mobay and Rotary by providing refreshments to help fuel the beach clean!
<b>Ferryden</b> <b>2kgs</b>	1.5kgs	2	Generally small items of marine plastics. Sweet papers.
<b>Lunan Bay</b> <b>6kg</b>	6kg	2	Mixed ghost fishing gear (part of a creel, blue fish container, netting, plastic box, wood)
<b>Victoria Park Arbroath</b>  <b>27.5kg</b>	2kg 0.5kg 1kg 24kg	16	1 fish box, 1 plastic supermarket food container. 1 piece metal. Parts of bouys, 1 plastic tree support, 11 bags of mixed marine waste including plastic bottles, clothing, rags, food packaging, drinks containers, sweet wrappers, crisp packets.
<b>Ladyloan Primary School Inchcape Park Arbroath</b>  <b>18.3kgs</b>	2.5kg 2.8kg 3.4kg 1.6kg  8kg	46 +1	1 Cigarette Lighter, 1 dolly, 1 toy tractor, 1 pair of trousers, 2 socks, 1 pair trousers. 1 knitted glove, 12 Cloths and rags, 4 coffee cups, 19 parts of a coffee cup or lid, 1 old tobacco tin, 1 orange peel, 6 empty dog bags, 3 full dog bags, 7 drinks cans, 70 pieces of small plastic anglers fishing line, 1 large MacDonalds tray, 1 food can, 1 medication container, 1 glass bottle, 5 polystyrene food containers, 100 small plastic pieces, 1 metal spanner, 60 large plastic pieces, 125 sweet wrappers, 1 pen, 1 pencil, tube of glue, tube ion mechanics grease, 2 covid masks, 1 piece of blue plastic strapping, 38 prices of paper or card, 2 large blue wipes, 9 crisp packets. Bundle of lightweight fishing net. 1.5 metres of small rope. 0.5 metres of large rope. 1 pair Fishermen's gloves, 12 plastic bottle tops. 1 Metal Creel wrapped in complex plastics. No concrete
<b>Queens Drive Arbroath - beach and rocks</b>  <b>9.7kg</b>	3.1kg 3.8kg 2.8kg	2	19 plastic bottles, 4 glass bottles, 1 ceramic plate, 2 plastic picnic plates, 1 plastic measuring jug, a paint roller, 1 oil canister, 12 drinks cans, 1 coat hanger, 45 cigarette butts, chemical waste from a motorhome, part of a creel, food packaging, polystyrene and cardboard, coffee cups, cigarette lighter, clothing, rags, shoe.
<b>Elliot Beach Arbroath</b>  <b>80.5kgs</b>	<u>10</u> <u>bags</u> 26.7kg  11kgs 12kgs 10kgs 4kgs 3.6kg 1.2 kgs 12kgs	7  + 2 in ATV	10. Bags containing plastic bottles, 1 metal BBQ, plastic plates, plastic pieces of all sizes, drinks cans, food containers, fishing rope, parts of creels, metal pieces, sweet wrappers, crisp packets. 8 Balloons. One of the balloons had written on it, "Happy Birthday Mum - hope you think I am doing you proud"  5 large tins of food waste 2.2kgs each. 1 Tyre, 1 carpet, 2 fish boxes 1 heavy creel weight in liquid sugar container 1 bouy marker 1 wooden Pallet

WHO/AREA	Bags and Weight	No People	OTHER
<b>East Haven</b> <b>27.46</b>	2.35kgs 3.12kgs 7.86kgs 3.23kgs 3kgs 3.8kgs 2.2kgs 1.9kgs	17	17 cloths/rags, 1 metre carpet, 2 coffee cups, 1 cigarette lighter, 1 swimming trunks, 1 T-shirt, 1 pair trouser, 1 sock, 1 glove, 15 cigarette butts, 1 cigarette packet, 5 empty dog bags, 11 filled dog bags, 4 drinks cans, 4 disposable gloves, 30m anglers plastic fishing line, 2 fish hooks, 2 plastic bottles, 500+ plastic pieces <50cm, 40 plastic pieces >50cm, 4 polystyrene food containers, 11 plastic cable ties, 1 rubber strap, 4.5m synthetic hemp rope 10mm, sweet papers, 6 crisp packets, part of a creel, fishing net, 2 foam pieces, 9 similar type white cloths, 34 cotton buds, 2 tampon applicators, 2 wet wipes, 1 mask. 4 cabbages, orange peel +
<b>Carnoustie</b> <b>62kgs</b>	62kgs	73	Full range of marine type litter including plastic bottles, sweet wrappers, balloons, cotton buds, sanitary items, fishing related items, food containers etc.
<b>Monifieth</b> <b>16kgs</b>	1.6kg 1.8kg 2.4kg 1.1kg 1.8kg 2.2kg 3.4kg 1.7kg	13	1 pair of shorts, 57 cotton buds, 6 tampon applicators, 10 other sanitary items, 5 broken glass, 8 paper, 3 masks. 1 pen, 1 pencil, 4 disposable gloves, 32 sweet wrappers, 2 straws, 12 foam pieces, 3 metres 8mm rope, 2 metres 8mm synthetic hemp rope, large fishing net, 30 plastic angling line, 2 hooks, 1 ball, 2 toys, 35 plastic pieces>50cm, 2 children's toys, 2swimwear, 12 rags, 8 drinks cans, part of plastic bouy. 75 Plastic pieces <50cm, 6 Wood pieces, 12 foam pieces. 1 scarf. 1 holdall bag. 1 bag for life.
<b>ATV and Volunteer Drivers</b>	50kgs 6kgs 20kg 5kg 2.8kg 142kgs 43kgs 28kgs 25kgs 16kgs 34.5kgs 14kgs 6kgs 3kgs 108kgs  148kgs 80kgs 94kgs 9.2kgs 1.4kgs 2 kgs 10kgs 32.2	7	1 large truck tyre 2 traffic cones 1 car tyre/wheel 6m Plank covered in material 1 burned out model boat 9 Concrete and plastic (fishing weights) 18 pieces of large metal 25 pieces small metal 1 Large carpet 4 Smaller sections of carpet 8.8m large heavy 6 wire steel cable 7 Fish boxes 5 Bouys - tubes and flags 7 parts of boys 6 extra long metal creels with concrete, rubber, mixed plastics and five large wooden pallets 17 medium sized creels (some with concrete) 16 broken/parts of creels 220m Synthetic Hemp rope 28mm diameter 110m Synthetic Hemp rope 10mm diameter 100m Polypropylene rope 6mm diameter 85m Polypropylene rope 8mm diameter Polypropylene Fishing Net 14 metal drums containing rancid food waste. (Full= 3.6kgs. Half full or Near empty = 1kg).

WHO/AREA	Bags and Weight	No People	OTHER
ATV continued	8kg 1kg 3kgs 9kgs 9.2kgs  5.5kgs		1 plastic Olleco collection bin 3 empty oil containers. 1 metal. 2 plastic 15m pole with metal hooks 3 Traffic cones 4 additional bags of rubbish containing plastics of all types, sanitary, food containers, plastic fishing line, small pieces of rope etc  1 Car head rest 1 piece of plumbers plastic piping 2 Dog bowls 8 pieces of metal wire 3 Large pieces of Foam 2 small pieces foam 1 Dustbin lid
915.8			
Additional beach clean at Elliot on 12th June 2021	1.4kg 3.3 kg 2.2kg 1.8kg 2.3kg 2.2kg 4.1kg 4.7kg 6.2kg 3.4kg 1.5kg 8kg 3kg Careful estimate  16kgs  48kgs <b>108kgs</b>	7 +2	Eleven black bin bags with mixed marine waste. Since the beach clean last Sunday people have obviously been down to the beach to picnic and party. Lots of drinks bottles, drug paraphernalia and food containers. In addition hundreds of pieces of small fishing rope and small plastics.  1 intact creel and weights 1 tyre 1 huge entangled mass of ghost fishing gear. This was returned to base. The rope was measured for both diameter and length. There was approximately 32 metres of 28mm synthetic hemp, 14 metres of 10mm synthetic hemp, 8 metres of plastic fibre rope and 1 large piece of fishing net, small nets and cords which was estimated to weigh 16kgs. The concrete which was extractable was weighed along with 8 parts of creels including metal bars, plastic tubes, rubber strips, small plastic rope and wooden creel base slats (48kg)
Friockheim and surrounding areas	90 bags	30	50 Bags General Waste. A further 40 bags of dry mixed recycling have been given to Biffa for recycling. 6 Plastic container sizes 2L to 25L 1 Full Wheel- tyre & alloy 2 wheel trims 1 rusted old shovel 1 large box full of damp rotten wood 1 Road sign 3 Traffic Cones 2 Odd bits of heavy metal. Razor blades. Needles A selection of damp cardboard
<b>TOTAL VOLUME Collected</b>	1313kgs	<b>Min 245</b>	<b>1313 kgs + further 17 bags from Carnoustie and 90 bags from Friockheim</b>