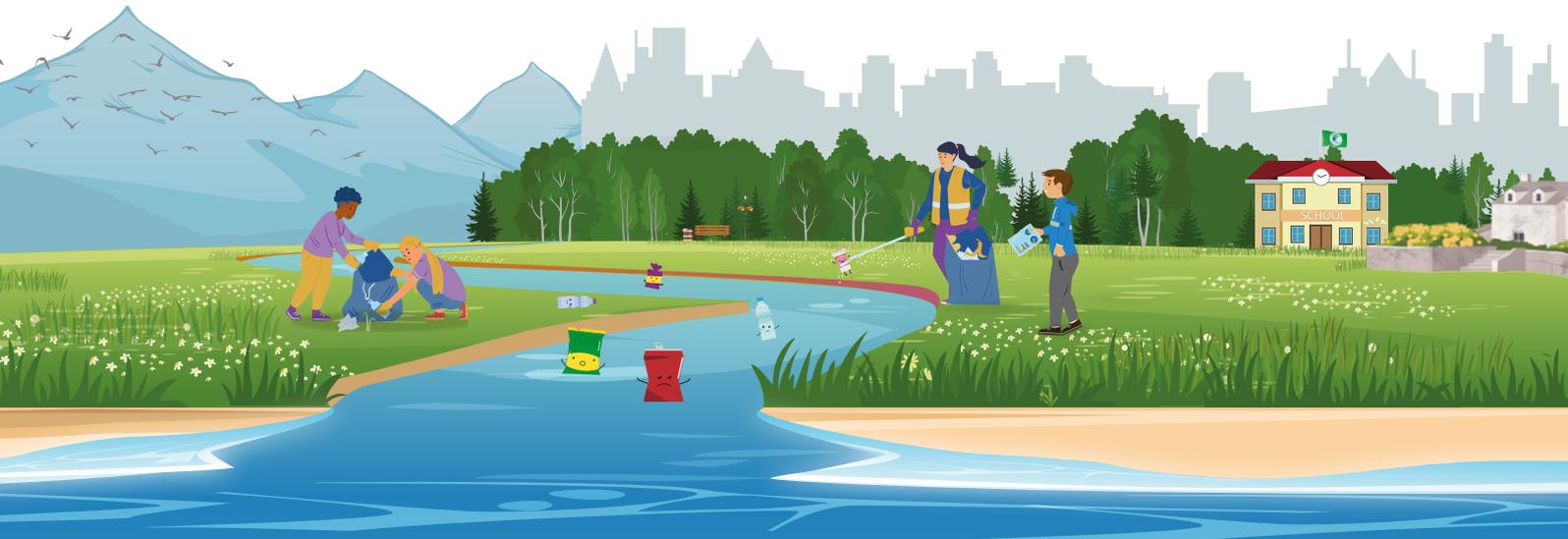




Keep Scotland
Beautiful

Your charity inspiring action for Scotland's environment



Upstream[®]

Battle

Surveying Guide

Thanks for taking part in our Upstream Battle[®] campaign

This guide explains how to carry out a survey, including picking your site, filling in the survey on the day, doing a litter pick and submitting your results.



What is Upstream Battle and why should I get involved?

Upstream Battle is our ambitious campaign to raise awareness of and stop marine litter at source. Whilst we know that 80% of marine litter starts life on land, we do not know in detail how much, where or what is getting into our waterways.



That is where you come in!

We're asking people to carry out litter surveys along the banks of our waterways so we can get a better picture of the problem.

We'll be using the information you collect to put together a comprehensive picture of the litter that's potentially entering the sea via rivers in Scotland. We'll use this information to better understand the sources of litter and help us target activities and campaigns to inform future policy.



Once you have completed your survey, you can undertake a Clean Up of the area to help ensure the litter you have surveyed does not enter the waterway.

Lets get started!



Checklist for survey success

Before you start

[Create an account](#) to access our online portal- this is where you will find our online survey form- it is very easy, just sign up here. [There is also a printable version.](#)

Where?

Have a think about where you are going to do your survey and Clean Up. Make sure you are allowed to access the site, particularly if it is private land.

When?



ANYTIME!

Organising an Upstream Battle event for a group? [Register your event](#) with us online. You can choose to make this public, if so, we will add them to our [Clean Up Scotland map](#). See our [Clean Up guidance](#) for organised litter picks!

On the day

Have a plan of attack, you can just survey the litter, or you can clean up the litter too. We would encourage you to litter pick if you can- this way you can stop the litter from entering the marine environment and making its way into our seas!

Your survey should not take more than one hour to complete, the time it takes really varies depending on how littered the area is and if you are just surveying or conducting a cleanup too.



Top tip: Feel free to print this survey guide or download on your phone to help remind you on the day how to do the survey.

After your survey/cleanup

[Submit your results.](#) If you counted litter on the paper survey -please transfer your data to our online version.

Picking your survey location

Focus on a local or nearby river, burn or canal that will be convenient for you to survey and conduct a Clean Up.

Find a section of water that has a path or open area such as a park next to it, that is safe to access. You can do this by simply walking around the area you have chosen, or you might want to do some prior research with a map, such as Open Street Maps www.openstreetmap.org or Google Maps www.google.com/maps.



Should I focus on an area I know is particularly a problem?

You don't have to search for a real "grotspot" – all the information you collect will be included in our reporting whether it paints a good or bad picture of the local area. However, if you know of an area where litter accumulates, tackling it as part of Upstream Battle will be a satisfying challenge and will hopefully drive change!

Your safety is the most important thing when carrying-out the survey, so you should never feel unsafe.

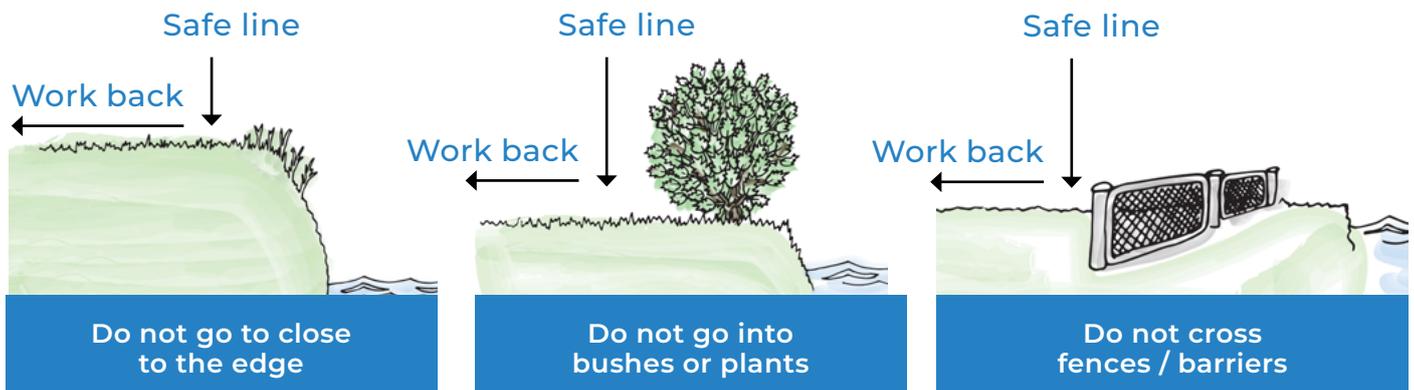
If in doubt, choose a different survey location.

Avoid	Never
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Boggy or uneven ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Climb over fences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Steep banking, gorges and drops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Lean over or towards the water when picking litter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Banks with overgrown bushes, brambles and plants – particularly if these look like giant hogweed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Leave people, particularly children, under your care unsupervised

Choosing the transect

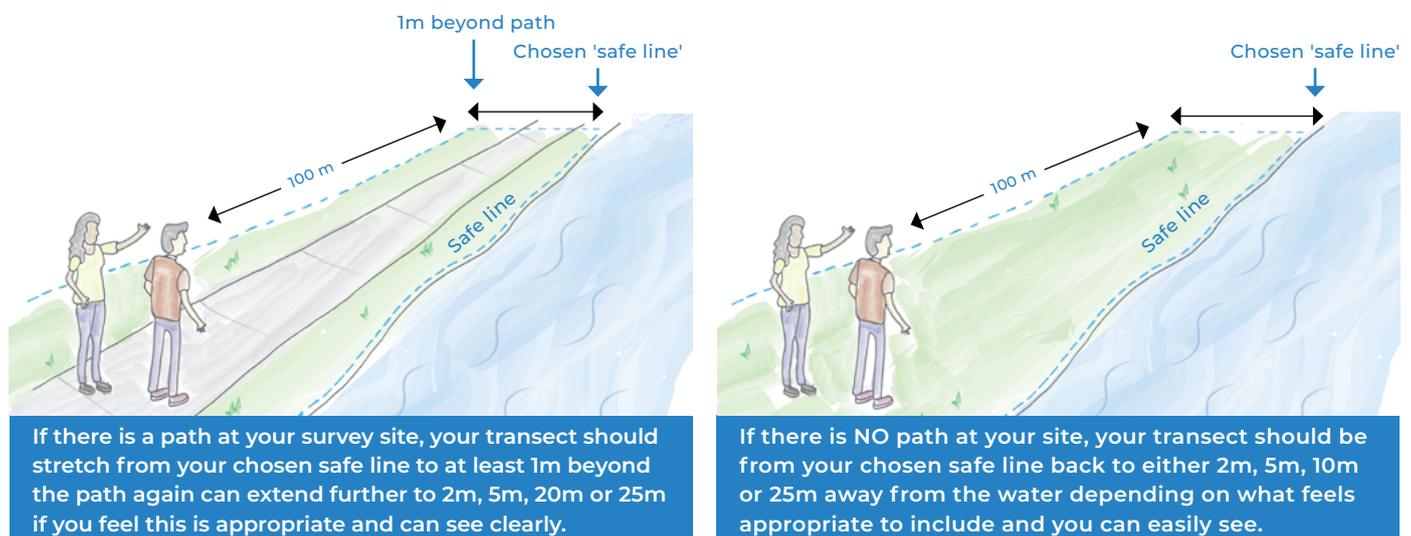
The section you pick for the survey is called the “transect”.

Choose a ‘safe line’ to mark the closest you will get to the water at your site. In some cases, this might be the water itself, but it is more likely it will start at a fence, at the crest of steep banking or up to vegetation growing alongside the river or stream. You should consider how fast, deep and wide the river or burn is, and choose your safe line accordingly.



Transect dimensions

Choose your dimensions - the transect ideally would be 100m long and will stretch along the water's edge. We can accept other lengths if the amount of litter is problematic (as per hint/tip below). The width of the transect will be different for each site but we would recommend:



If the nature of your site and chosen safe line means that any part of your transect is more than 100m away from the water, you should choose a different site to survey.



How to measure out 100 meters?

Go to the area you want to use as a survey site and pick a start point (top tip – you could use a tree or a object to start in line with so you remember where your transect starts) walk away using large steps, each step will be roughly 1 meter – 100 steps = 100m transect length! Too much litter?

If your chosen site is in a tidal deposition area, you may find that there are too many items to count across the entire transect. If this is the case, just reduce the length of the transect. Remember to record the length and width of your reduced transect area on your survey sheet.

Carrying out your survey

You should complete one survey sheet for each 100m transect. If you are doing the survey online log into the portal and select 'add a survey'.

Part 1: Details about the survey you are undertaking. There is space at the top for you to record important information like the location and information about the day. Here you can also select to affiliate your survey with a group or event if that applies to your survey activity.



Why we need your location?

This will help us to plot the data that you collect geographically to help look at distribution and movement of litter through the river system.



It is important to record where you did your survey. Top tip - this is easier to do when you come to log your results online using our online map to pinpoint where you did it

If you are using the paper survey it might be helpful for you to make note of exactly where you surveyed. [Find out how to get your exact coordinates here and mark your location on Google maps.](#)

Conduct a count of litter on the ground

Part 2: Now you have your location, transect chosen and your survey sheet ready you can get stuck in to collecting the data!

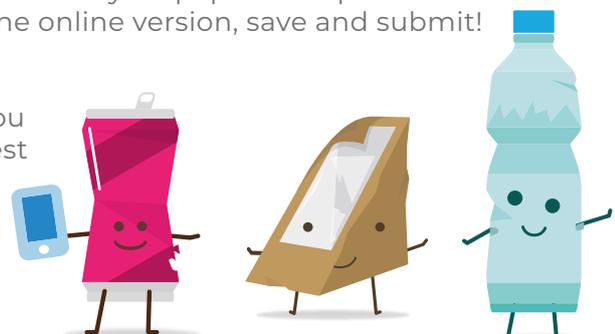
Walk your entire transect area, identifying each piece of litter that you find and record it on your survey sheet which is split into material categories. Be thorough and tally each individual piece of litter within your chosen transect.

Make sure you fill in the exact number as we will not be able to use data like "lots" or "100s". There is an "other" section for each material type to record items which aren't listed on the sheet. Please try to be as specific as possible.

Submit your results

Once you've counted all items within your 100m transect, if you have done the survey online then just press save, this will submit your survey. If you have done the survey on paper then please when you get home, [log in online](#) and transfer your written data to the online version, save and submit! You have contributed to the national data set! Thank you.

Repeat! Do more surveys if you want to give us more data. If you would like to identify any trends of litter, then we would suggest that you do the survey again in the same place. Once a season is ideal – but you could choose to do it as often



Clean Up

You can just do the survey, and this is very helpful for us to know what litter is in your area, BUT if you would like to conduct a clean up of your chosen area then this will help stop it from ending up in the sea!

Too much litter in this area? Do not feel restricted to only litter pick your survey transect. If you have time or enough volunteers do another 100 m section and survey or just extend the Clean Up boundaries to a larger area. It is possible that you will see a large accumulation of litter on the riverbank. If this litter is beyond your safe line leave it where it is.

[Please read our guidance on litter picking](#) which has further information about planning and conducting your clean up activity and organising events.

There are different approaches to how to combine collecting data with litter picking- it really depends on what works best for you! Here are some different ways we find work well:



It is easier generally to pair - one person picking and identifying, the other marking them on the survey sheet!



Doing it on your own? Taking a survey and picking at the same time can be hard (we only have so many hands) so some people find it easier picking up all the litter within your chosen transect (area) then counting at the end- just empty your bag onto the ground away from the river and path. Remember to rebag and bin it after though!



Alternatively walk one way surveying your 100m transect then turn around and litter pick on your way back.



You may find it easiest to litter pick your transect as you count and record items. This can help avoid double counting, particularly in sites with a large number of litter items.



Thank you

Thanks again for taking part in Upstream Battle. You have contributed to a better understanding of marine litter and its pathway to the ocean. We will use the information you have collected to develop plans to help prevent it in the future.



Do not forget to submit your survey results online:
<https://members.keepscotlandbeautiful.org/>



Social media

Spread the word about your activities. When posting about Upstream Battle, make sure you tag us on social media with your before and after photos [@KSBScotland](#), and use the hashtags [#UpstreamBattle](#) and [#Source2Sea](#).



If you do want to chat to anyone about how we can support your events or if you are a community group who wants to get involved with Upstream Battle and need our help - email: upstreambattle@keepscotlandbeautiful.org



We support the ambitions of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Keep Scotland Beautiful is your charity for Scotland's environment. We work with you to help combat climate change, reduce litter and waste, and protect and enhance the places we care for.



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