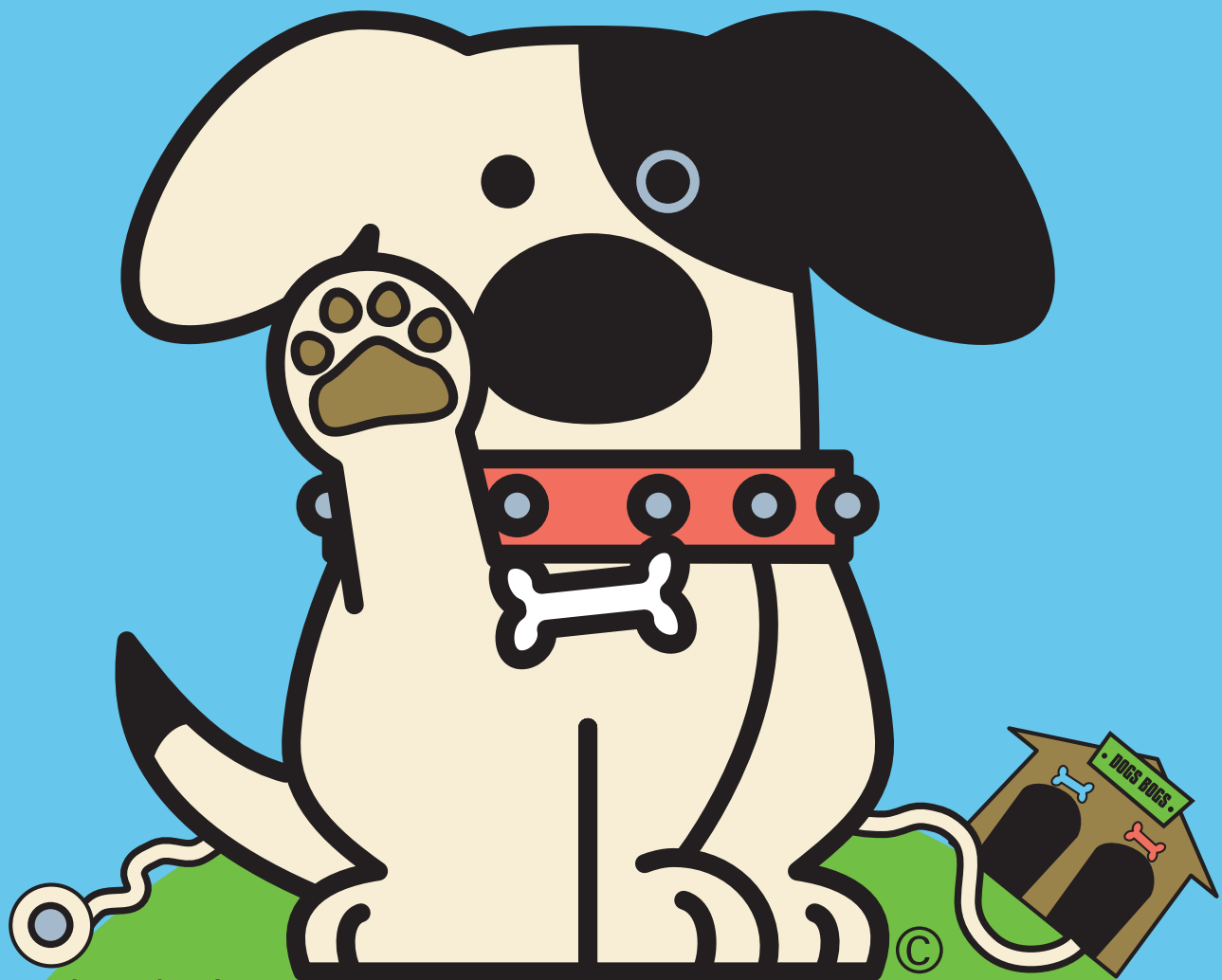


# Green Dog Walkers<sup>®</sup>

## GUIDE



### Introduction

The Green Dog Walkers (GDW) Scheme was trademarked and licensed by Falkirk Council in 2009. Scottish Borders Council purchased a licence in February 2016.

The secret to a successful GDW event is the volunteer groups and dog owners who are the ones “on the ground” running the pledge stalls and gathering pledgers.

### Partnerships between Scottish Borders Council and Volunteer Groups

The best scenario is for a community volunteer group to work hand-in-hand with the Council. The group provides the “on the ground” work to sign up pledgers and the Council supplies pledge forms and the GDW accessories to sell at the event. It’s the community volunteers who do the groundwork of signing up pledgers, running stalls at dog events and local fairs, engaging children in the scheme and undertaking poo surveys.

## Visibility

The scheme works best the more visible the pledgers are in their area, by wearing an accessory residents will know you are a responsible dog owner and other dog owners are more likely to pick up after their dog or ask for a 'poo bag' if they don't have one.

## A Two Stage Process

The scheme's philosophy is that the first stage is to start shifting public attitudes so that it becomes socially unacceptable to leave dog poo on the footway, play park, sports pitch, public footpath etc.; the second stage will hopefully be a reduction in dog fouling.

Stage one is quicker it requires individuals or community groups to sign a "pledge" and wear a fluorescent GDW Accessory. Stage two will take longer and require further evaluation of the surrounding area to establish if there has been a reduction of dog poo.

## Falkirk Council

- 2009 survey – 51% stated when other dog walkers saw their GDW armband they were less likely to leave dog poo
- Marked increase in the use of the street bins by dog owners
- Council had to increase the frequency of bin emptying

# Tips on how to run a Green Dog Walkers Campaign

## 1. The Number One Rule is "Keep It Friendly"

Remember the pledge, to never be confrontational when wearing a GDW Accessory. The best way to approach someone is to begin your message with "we are talking to dog owners who pick up after their dogs, so they can help get the message out to those who don't." Assume the person you are talking to is a responsible dog owner and the dialogue will go well.

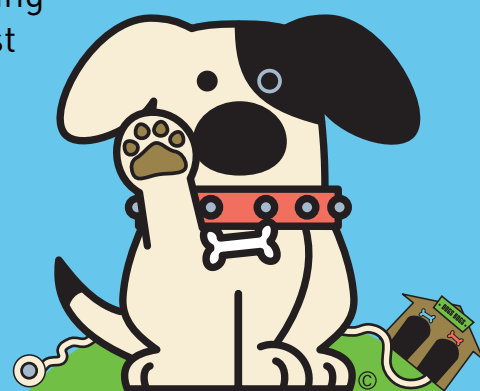
If you speak to them in a reprimanding tone, they may become angry or aggressive.

## 2. Wish Them a Good Day!

Most dog owners are curious, interested and eager to sign up. However, if you do find that the person you are talking to or approaching has an attitude, is confrontational, or begins offering reasons why they won't or can't pick up after their dog, it is best not to engage or let it escalate – they will always have another excuse. Stay friendly, wish them a good day – and move on!

## 3. Your True Ambassadors

Don't let the good dog walkers get away; these are exactly the people you want to take the pledge. They are your ambassadors, to help change attitudes by the nonverbal sign of the GDW Accessory. Don't worry about trying to convince dog foulers to become responsible, hopefully in time they will. Start with the ones willing to wear the accessory to help with a bit of peer pressure.



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#### 4. Distributing Pledge Forms

Arrange to leave a few in public places in your local area (i.e. local shops, pub and vets surgery).

#### 5. Vets are Great Resources

Vets may be happy to include a brochure in any “puppy packs” they give out to clients the first time they bring in a new puppy for its vaccinations. Or willing to advertise your GDW event, or be willing to take a stall. If you have a community newsletter in which you will be publishing GDW information, they may be willing to provide an article.

#### 6. Network Face to Face

The best way to distribute information and pledges forms is face-to-face. It offers a change to speak to people in your community, to find out where the dog fouling trouble spots are. This information can be reported to the Council to enable them to target resources more effectively.

#### 7. Business Cards

Have business cards made up with the Green Dog Walkers Logo and your group’s contact details.

#### 8. Set Up a Green Dog Walkers Stall

School Fairs, Civic Events, dog shows provides a great opportunity to talk to people when they are relaxed and often have their dog with them.

#### 9. Media

You can “launch” your Green Dog Walker scheme by inviting the local press they may publish an article announcing your community group has signed up to the scheme.

#### 10. Green Dog Walkers Columns

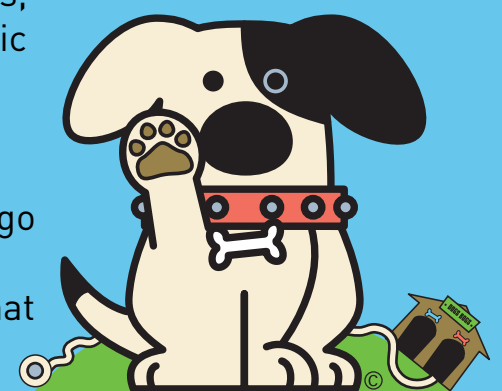
Include a Green Dog Walkers column or page in your group’s newsletter, Facebook page or website. Remember; keep it friendly and non-confrontational!

#### 11. Involve the Children

Children about to get their first puppy are easily convinced to “start out right” by signing the pledge in advance. Involve youth groups (Brownies, Guides, Scouts etc), they are future dog owners and will be enthusiastic and creative.

#### 12. Keep it Friendly

Make sure that any communication that goes out under the logo is always in the friendly, non-confrontational manner of the scheme. For example, it should not be used to post notices that are entirely about enforcement or a reprimand from a neighbourhood group to any individual about their dog fouling habits.



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## **Monitoring /Evaluation**

Part of your responsibility as a community group signing up to the Green Dog Walker scheme is to undertake surveys and evaluations.

**First Survey** – Choose an area or group of areas you will monitor over the next year, where you know a lot of dog-walking goes on - near parks, sports pitches, routes to schools etc. As you first launch your Green Dog Walker project – either before or around the same time as you begin to sign up pledges – do a “poo count” and record the results.

**Second Survey** – Six months later, walk along the same area(s) and do another count, compare the results with the first survey. Are the areas better; stayed the same or gotten worse?

**Final Survey** – Six months later, do it again. Now you have data from before your campaign began, during it and at the end of the first year.

Don't be discouraged if the dog poo data indicates less success than you had hoped. Several factors can be involved, such as weather, are people walking certain areas more or less due to available daylight hours etc. It will take at least a year to see how results look “on the ground”.

## **Questionnaires**

Another part of survey analysis is to send/email questionnaires to your pledgers. We recommend you do this six months after the project starts and 12 months after the project started. This will give an indication if residents in your areas think that the problem of dog fouling in the area has improved, stayed the same or worse since the community signed up to the Green Dog Walkers scheme.

**GDW annual survey reports or questionnaires can be emailed to**  
**-[PlaceBusServices@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:PlaceBusServices@scotborders.gov.uk)**

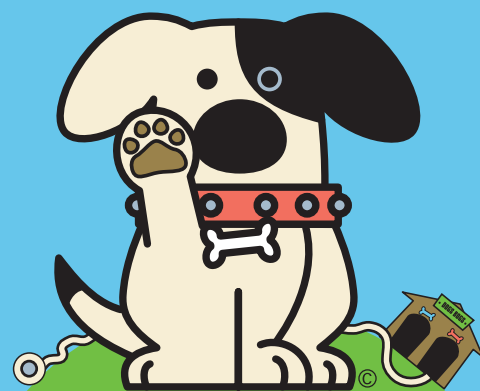
## **For further information or to order a GDW Accessories you can -**

**Email:** [PlaceBusServices@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:PlaceBusServices@scotborders.gov.uk)

**Tel:** 0300 100 1800, PLACE Department, Business Services

**Order online:**

[http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/1330/street\\_care\\_and\\_cleaning/862/dog\\_fouling/2](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/1330/street_care_and_cleaning/862/dog_fouling/2)



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