

Dog Fouling Awareness Campaign 2026

Briefing Note for Town and Parish Councils

Working Together to Keep Our Communities Clean

As autumn approaches and daylight hours reduce, we traditionally see an increase in concerns relating to dog fouling in parks, open spaces, footpaths and residential areas. While the vast majority of dog owners act responsibly, dog fouling remains one of the most common environmental complaints received by local authorities and communities.

Shropshire Council is asking Town and Parish Councils to work with us to identify local hotspot areas where dog fouling is causing concern, enabling us to target resources where they will have the greatest impact.

Responsible Dog Ownership

Dog owners have a legal responsibility to clean up after their dogs. Bagged dog waste can be:

- Deposited in any public litter bin;
- Placed in designated dog waste bins; or
- Taken home and disposed of in a household refuse bin.

Bagged dog waste should not be left beside bins, hung from trees, fences or hedgerows, or discarded in the countryside. While the waste may be bagged, leaving it behind still constitutes littering and creates an unpleasant environment for residents and visitors.

Dog Warden Patrols

Shropshire Council's Dog Warden Service carries out patrols across the county to:

- Monitor areas where dog fouling has been reported;
- Engage with dog owners and provide advice;
- Gather intelligence regarding offenders; and
- Undertake enforcement action where appropriate.

To ensure patrols are focused where they are most needed, we rely on local intelligence and reports from communities.

We Need Your Help

Town and Parish Councils are uniquely placed to understand local issues and identify problem locations.

We are asking councils to:

- Identify areas where dog fouling is a persistent problem;
- Provide details of locations, times and days when issues are most prevalent;
- Report any emerging hotspots or repeat problem areas; and
- Share local concerns raised by residents.

This information will directly influence where our Dog Warden Service carries out patrols and targeted enforcement activity.

Town and Parish Councils can email us with details of locations where they would like targeted patrols or campaign activity to be considered. Requests will be prioritised using a data-led approach, taking account of the number and pattern of reports received through FixMyStreet, together with the local intelligence provided. Residents should therefore continue to report dog fouling through FixMyStreet, as this information helps us understand where issues are occurring, what matters most to local communities and where our available resources can have the greatest impact.

"We're Watching You" Campaign

To support local action, Shropshire Council can provide **"We're Watching You"** signs for Town and Parish Councils to install as part of the nationally recognised Keep Britain Tidy campaign.

The campaign uses behavioural science and evidence-based messaging to encourage responsible dog ownership and deter offending behaviour.



Getting the Best Results

Experience has shown that the signs are most effective when used as part of a targeted, short-term intervention rather than as permanent signage.

We recommend:

Week 1

- Identify a specific hotspot location.
- Gather information from residents, councillors and local observations.

Weeks 2-4

- Install "We're Watching You" signs at the hotspot.
- Arrange targeted Dog Warden patrols where appropriate.
- Promote the campaign through local newsletters, websites and social media.

Week 5

- Remove the signs and review the impact.
- If successful, relocate the signs to another priority location.

This rotational approach helps maintain the effectiveness of the campaign and ensures resources are focused on current problem areas.

Report Local Hotspots

By sharing information about dog fouling issues in your area, you can help us target patrols, education and enforcement activity where they are needed most.

Working together, we can encourage responsible dog ownership, reduce environmental crime and help keep Shropshire's communities clean, safe and welcoming for everyone.

To report local hotspots or request campaign signage, please contact the Shropshire Together with details of the location and any relevant information regarding the nature of the problem.

Key Message for Residents

Bag it. Bin it. Take it home. Any public litter bin can be used for bagged dog waste. Leaving bagged waste beside bins, on footpaths or hanging in trees is still littering and is unacceptable.

Together, we can help keep Shropshire clean.

