

# Tackling smoking litter in Blaenau Gwent - Caru Cymru behaviour change trial

Short summary report



cadwch keep  
gymru'n wales  
daclus tîdy

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## The project

This project aimed to test a combination of bininfrastructure and messaging to encourage smokers to dispose of their cigarette ends responsibly. This was done by removing the psychological, structural and social barriers to responsible cigarette disposal, while increasing the accessibility and visibility of bininfrastructure (introduced at different times), in combination different messaging across three high streets in Blaenau Gwent which were designed to appeal to the values and motivation of smokers. This local authority was chosen due to its high rate of smokers and high prevalence of smoking litter.<sup>1, 2</sup> Unfortunately, this project was delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions and engagement were also subsequently affected.

<b>Bininfrastructure (used in every town)</b>	<b>Bilingual messages on posters (all posters carried the strapline <b>Stub them. Bin them</b>)</b>
Voting bins (2 for each high street)	Abertillery - Cigarette butts are small but they're still litter
Micro bins (up to 20 for each high street)	Ebbw Vale - Ashtrays for butts, drains for water
Pocket ashtrays	Tredegar - Be proud of where you live

## Key deliverables

- A public survey helped inform the project.
- A suite of bespoke bright orange bilingual artwork was designed incorporating messaging for the project materials.
- Bininfrastructure was chosen based on key behavioural principles:
  - 6 voting bins were installed into which a total of 141g of cigarette ends were deposited.
  - 50 micro bins were installed.
  - 1,400 pocket ashtrays were distributed to businesses to be passed on to smokers free of charge.
- Dedicated hashtags #TidyButts and #BonionTaclus generated more than 11,000 impressions from Keep Wales Tidy social media channels.
- Monitoring and partner feedback allowed us to evaluate the project's success.

## Key outcomes

- Businesses are concerned about smoking litter and are willing to be part of the solution.
- Feedback from smokers has provided useful information on their behaviours and beliefs.
- Smokers engaged with some bininfrastructure (both voting and micro bins), with some bins seeing increased use over time.
- Some businesses reported that the pocket ashtrays had been very popular.

<sup>1</sup> South Wales Argus. (2018). *One in five people in Blaenau Gwent are smokers*. Available: <https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/16368957.one-five-people-blaenau-gwent-smokers/>. Last accessed 21-10-21.

<sup>2</sup> Keep Wales Tidy. (2019). Street Cleanliness Survey Data. (Unpublished).

- More than three quarters of businesses thought that the project had raised awareness of smoking litter, while half thought that it had made a direct impact on the cleanliness of the high street.

## Key recommendations

- Some project elements were too complex and time consuming so there is room to simplify the project design, the role of businesses and monitoring requirements.
- Thorough weekly cleansing (targeting cigarette ends) is essential to allow the impact of the project to be properly evaluated.
- The installation of bins should concentrate on areas where people congregate (while keeping in mind the possibility of vandalism). Micro bins should not be placed too high. Stronger and sturdier smoking litter bins could also be trialed.
- Increased engagement with the public and businesses would further benefit the project (this was limited due to the pandemic).
- Behaviour change doesn't happen overnight, so a future project could involve less but longer-term monitoring to see whether the desired behaviour changes over time.
- There is scope for further research to identify:
  - The effectiveness of the questions on the voting bins - and how often they need to be changed to retain their novelty value.
  - Feedback from smokers on each intervention and the messaging.



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