

# CHEWING GUM TASK FORCE



**BIN  
YOUR  
GUM.**

**YEAR TWO  
ANNUAL REPORT**

# CHEWING GUM TASK FORCE

The Chewing Gum Task Force brings together some of the country's major chewing gum producers, including Mars Wrigley and Perfetti Van Melle. Haleon, producer of nicotine replacement therapy gum, is also a small contributor. Under the scheme, the producers have pledged up to £10 million over five years to tackle gum littering. The Task Force was established by Defra and is administered by Keep Britain Tidy.

🍬 Tackling chewing gum litter is a serious and challenging problem for councils across the UK. It is great to see gum producers playing their part by investing in a sustained programme to clean up historic gum staining and change behaviour to prevent littering in the future.

Allison Ogden-Newton OBE, Chief Executive of Keep Britain Tidy

In 2023, Year Two of the scheme, we awarded grants of up to £25,000 to individual councils across the UK for the purchase of cleaning equipment and/or street cleansing. In addition to the grants for cleansing, 25% of the fund was used to supply gum litter prevention packages to councils.

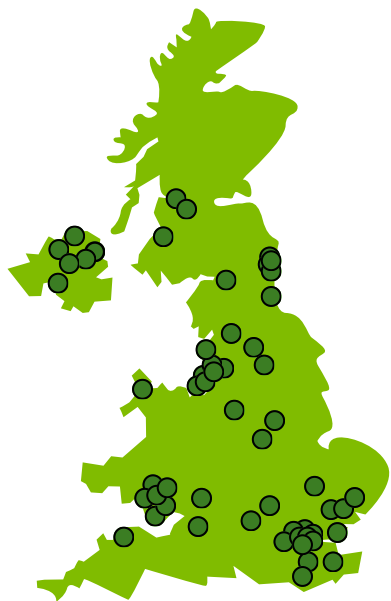
Designed and produced by social enterprise Behaviour Change, these packages are based on behavioural science and target hot-spots where people are most likely to need to dispose of gum, nudging them to use a bin.

We funded a full independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the cleansing and prevention signage with four councils (one from each nation), and two innovation pilots – one to trial a new prevention signage design and one to trial the application of pavement coating.

We also commenced research into gum littering behaviour in the night time economy, and began developing social media assets for councils to use in Year Three of the scheme.



# YEAR TWO AT A GLANCE



We awarded grants to 55  
UK councils worth a total of  
**£1.65 million**  
16 councils received grants  
for a second year

**71**  
gum litter prevention  
packages fulfilled

**10,453**  
items printed

**Up to 60 %**  
reduction in gum  
littering achieved  
after 2 months

**2**  
innovation pilots  
completed

We helped councils  
clean an estimated  
**440,000 m2** of  
pavements which is  
the same area as the  
entire Vatican City



# HOW THE FUNDS WERE USED

New equipment

Redeploying staff and/or equipment

Staffing costs

Contractors

Other

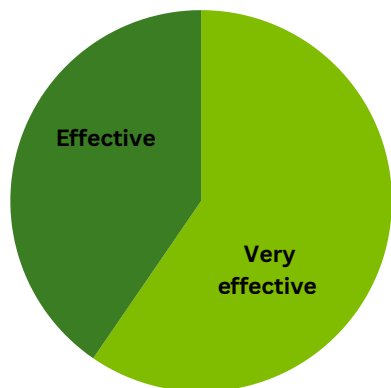


Ardfin and Newtownabbey Borough Council

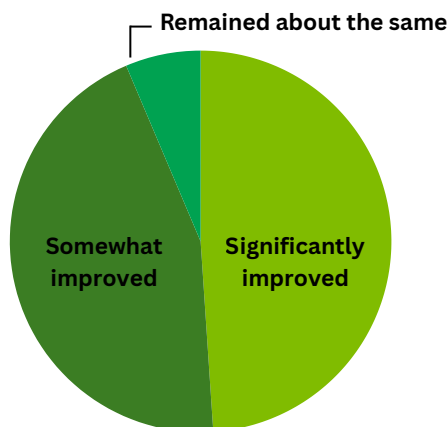
More than 70% of councils used their grant money to purchase new equipment, ensuring that they will continue to benefit after the project ends.

# GUM LITTERING REDUCED BY UP TO 60 %\*

100% of councils feel their  
grant enabled them to  
effectively tackle gum litter.



94% of councils reported an  
improvement in gum litter  
following their cleansing and  
signage installation.



*South Lanarkshire Council  
pre- and post-clean*

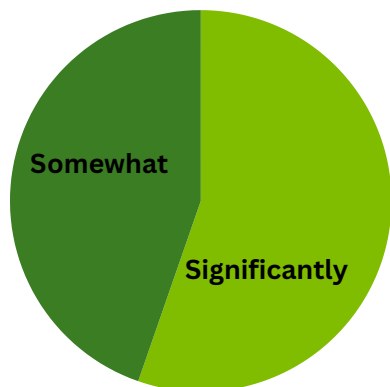
“ We have received  
feedback from businesses  
and members of the  
public commenting on  
how much cleaner the  
streets look. The areas  
that were cleansed first  
have not seen gum  
littering reoccur.

*North Devon Council*

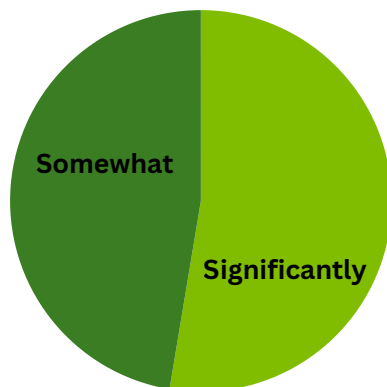
\*Based on results recorded in Cardiff after two months.



**100% of councils feel that their project has benefitted their local community.**



**100% feel that their project has increased awareness of the issue of gum littering.**



*Year 2 of the Chewing Gum Task Force grant has benefitted our communities as we would not have had the ability to do such an intensive cleanse of the areas without it. It continues to highlight the real issue and frequency of chewing gum litter and staining in the communities and visually emphasised the problem. It is positive that through this grant we have been able to tackle and cleanse four new high-profile areas within South Lanarkshire communities.*

**SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL**



**Rushcliffe Borough Council**



**Mid and East Antrim Borough Council**

# GUM LITTER PREVENTION



We processed over 70 orders from participating councils across the four nations, including over 6,000 stickers, 2,600 lamppost signs and over 1,200 posters.

The 'Kitten' (see p.8) was the most popular design, followed by the 'Using bin as a nudge' sign seen on the left. Over 4,600 of these designs have been put on the streets, across the four nations to reduce gum litter.

Manchester City Council © Nick Harrison

Four councils (Antrim and Newtownabbey, Cardiff, Doncaster and Glasgow) benefitted from a full independent evaluation of the effectiveness of street cleansing and prevention signage. Up to 60% reduction in gum littering was measured as a result of the interventions, through a combination of pre- and post-intervention gum counts and footfall analysis.

Cardiff Council utilised Chewing Gum Task Force funding to invest in a new mobile chewing gum machine, which has enabled the removal of chewing gum from sandstone paving in our historic areas - something that previously was not possible with high pressure jet washing. This investment, supported by a public messaging campaign has seen improvements in Cardiff City centre.

Matthew Wakelam, Assistant Director Street Scene, Cardiff Council

The evaluations reinforced a learning point from Year One that the interventions are most effective when focused on one area with a high density of signage.



# PREVENTION SIGNAGE



'Gnomes', Manchester City Council



'Heritage', Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

'Pointing out the bin', Rushcliffe Borough Council



'Eye catching' and 'Thanks', Oxford City Council



'Kitten', Mid and East Antrim Borough Council



South Lanarkshire Council pre- and post-cleansing, 'Using bin as a nudge'

# INNOVATION

We trialled new signage designs in Newport which built on the success and popularity of the 'Kitten' design. The 'Bunny', 'Duck' and 'Squirrel' signage was well received and contributed to a **51%** reduction in gum littering after two months. The designs will be on offer to councils in Year Three.

We measured the effect of a pavement coating which is designed to make it easier to clean at some monitoring sites in Leeds. Standard intervention sites saw a reduction of 16% in gum littering, this increased to a **31%** reduction in areas which had been coated, which indicates the coating was successful at helping prevent gum litter from sticking to the pavements.



'Squirrel', 'Bunny' and 'Duck', Newport City Council



# IN THE HEADLINES

In the second year of operation, the Chewing Gum Task Force has attracted **175** pieces of news coverage including **78** broadcast pieces. This coverage had a potential reach of **974.6 million** and an advertising value equivalent of just over **£9 million**.

## 'Ghostbusters-style' backpacks brought into Cambs to blast chewing gum from the streets

The machines have been funded through a £25k grant from environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy

By [Celia Findlay](#)  
12.11.19 10.46.2019

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■ New machines to clean gum from streets in East Cambridge (Image: Sam Cragg/Agence France Press)

A Cambridgehire resource has introduced 'Ghostbusters-style' backpacks to clean gum from streets.

[www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/local-news/ghostbusters-style-backpacks-brought-cambs-27486010](http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/local-news/ghostbusters-style-backpacks-brought-cambs-27486010)

Across social media, the Chewing Gum Task Force featured in **557** posts across X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook, with a reach of **1.41 million** on X alone.



Chewing gum litter is highly visible and is both difficult and expensive to clean up, so this new highly specialised Gladiator machine will help improve the removal of chewing gum and will also complement our existing street cleansing equipment, whilst improving efficiency and overall cleanliness standards. However, the best solution to this problem is for people to bin their gum.

*CLlr Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Transformation, the Environment and Customer Services and Deputy Leader, Braintree District Council*

# YEAR ONE UPDATE

In Year One of the scheme, by combining targeted street cleaning with the specially designed signage, participating councils achieved reductions in gum littering of up to 80% in the first two months.

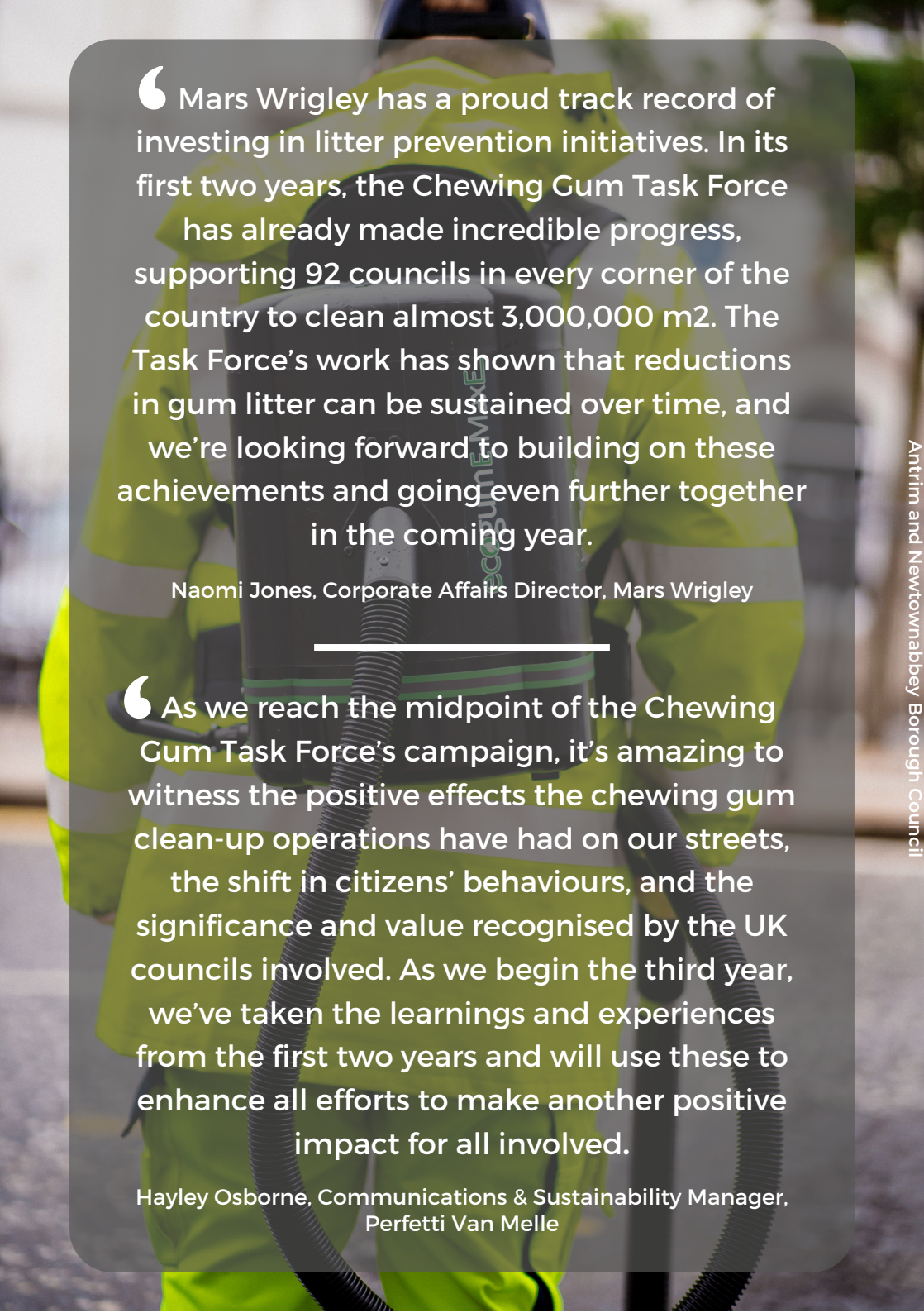
Since publication of the Year One report, we concluded follow up evaluation which showed that a reduced rate of gum littering was still being observed six months after clean-up and the installation of prevention materials.

By carrying out gum cleansing activities there has been improved environmental quality for the community. Targeted areas look more inviting, making members of the public more likely to spend their time there.

*BOLTON COUNCIL*

In addition, six months after completion of their Year One projects:

- **100%** of councils feel that the issue of gum littering has improved in the cleaned areas
- **100%** of councils agree that the grant has benefitted their community
- **100%** of councils feel that the grant has helped raise awareness of gum litter in their local areas
- **100%** of councils would recommend the Chewing Gum Task Force grant scheme to another council who is struggling with gum litter



‘ Mars Wrigley has a proud track record of investing in litter prevention initiatives. In its first two years, the Chewing Gum Task Force has already made incredible progress, supporting 92 councils in every corner of the country to clean almost 3,000,000 m<sup>2</sup>. The Task Force’s work has shown that reductions in gum litter can be sustained over time, and we’re looking forward to building on these achievements and going even further together in the coming year.

Naomi Jones, Corporate Affairs Director, Mars Wrigley

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‘ As we reach the midpoint of the Chewing Gum Task Force’s campaign, it’s amazing to witness the positive effects the chewing gum clean-up operations have had on our streets, the shift in citizens’ behaviours, and the significance and value recognised by the UK councils involved. As we begin the third year, we’ve taken the learnings and experiences from the first two years and will use these to enhance all efforts to make another positive impact for all involved.

Hayley Osborne, Communications & Sustainability Manager,  
Perfetti Van Melle



# CHEWING GUM TASK FORCE

**MARS WRIGLEY**

**PERFETTI**



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working,  
active landscape valued by everyone



**The Scottish  
Government**



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



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