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Cigarette butts – a blight on Scotland’s streets

Author | 14 Aug 17

Download our guide to cigarette litter

Tackling cigarette litter isn't a straightforward task – but it is possible. Our guide will help you understand the problem, learn from others, and find resources to help you communicate with businesses and individuals about the negative effects of not binning our butts.



Related Websites

Visit [www.url.co.uk](#)

Related Downloads

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Cigarette litter campaign support

You can use these short articles and tweets to highlight problems, motivate businesses and other organisations to provide better facilities, and encourage smokers to think twice about littering. We've also included some ideas to support your litter prevention efforts.

Article 1

Smokers’ etiquette – separating fact from fiction

Even if you want to dispose of your cigarette responsibly, urban myths doing the rounds make it hard to know right from wrong. We separate fact from fiction.

Claim 1:

Cigarette butts are biodegradable

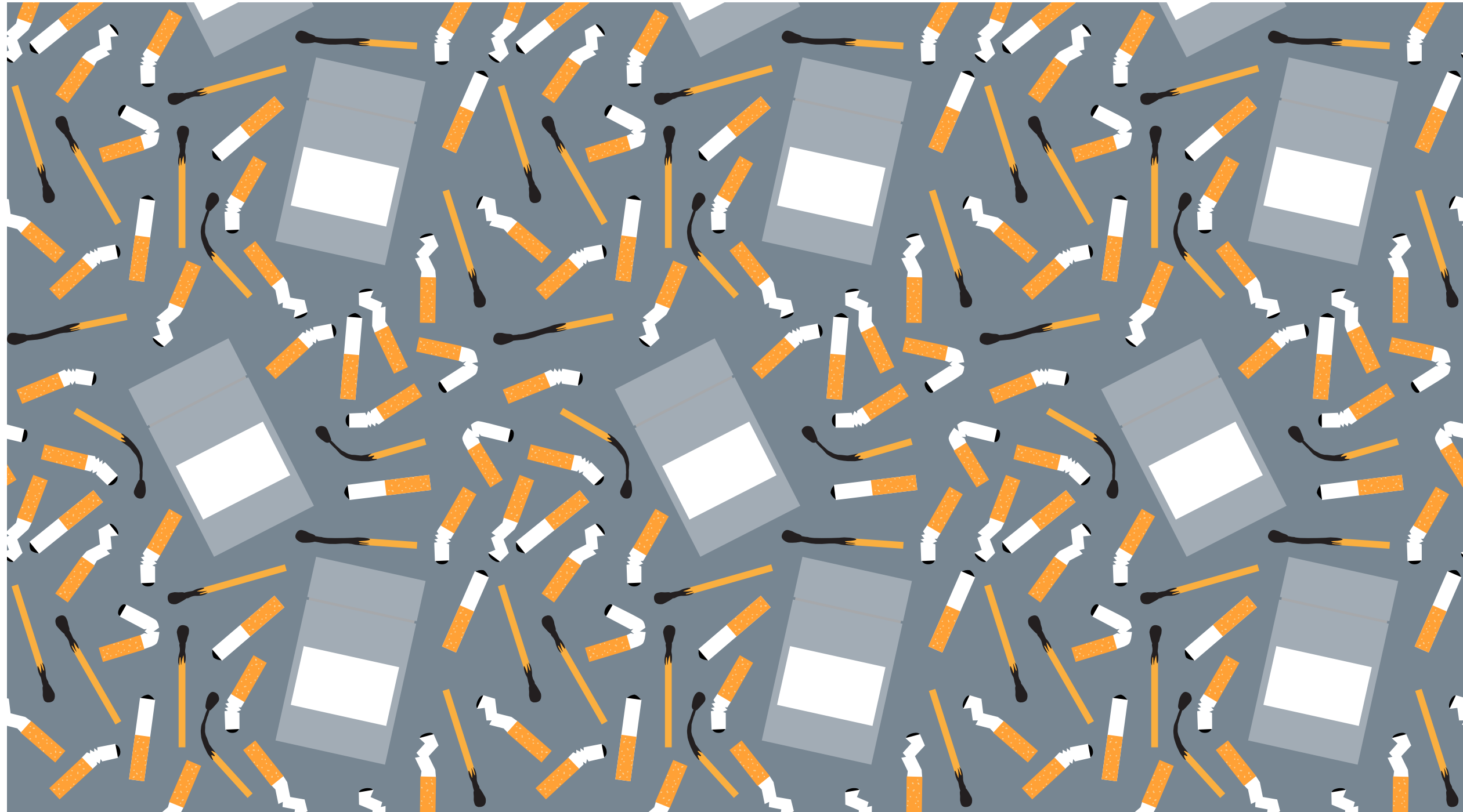
Fiction
They actually take up to 12 years to break down. That means if you drop a butt when you’re 18, it could still be there when you’re 30.



Claim 2:

We spend a packet cleaning up cigarette ends

Fact
It's not just the cigarette ends, it's the empty packets, cellophane wrappers and foil too. In fact, cigarette related waste accounts for nearly 40% of the littered items on our streets . Put them in the bin and we could save on clean-up costs, and use the savings to improve Scotland's essential services.



Claim 3:

Cigarette butts don't count as litter

Fiction
If you drop smoking-related items – including cigarette butts – on the street, they become 'waste in the wrong place'. And that makes them litter. Get caught in the act and you could earn yourself an £80 fine.



Claim 4:

Putting cigarette stubs in a litter bin is a fire hazard

Fiction
There's lots of confusion around whether binning butts is safe. Rest assured, as long as you check your cigarette is fully out, it's fine to put it in a rubbish bin.



Get the message out there

No ifs, no butts.

Zero Waste Scotland

@ZeroWasteScot

Butts don't need a fancy bin. Once you've checked your #cigarette is fully out, a regular rubbish bin will do.

11:09 PM - 5 May 2017

222 148

£80 fine

Zero Waste Scotland

@ZeroWasteScot

Smokers, know your stuff. Cigarette butts are litter – drop one and you risk an £80 fine #BinYourButts

11:09 PM - 5 May 2017

222 148

Up to 12 years

Zero Waste Scotland

@ZeroWasteScot

Think cigarette butts are biodegradable? Wrong - they take up to 12 years to break down #BinYourButts

11:09 PM - 5 May 2017

222 148

Article 2

Cigarette waste: what you need to know

As local authorities crack down on cigarette litter, make sure you know the score, so you never end up on the wrong side of the law.

Bin your butts

The law says that cigarette butts left anywhere else but in a bin are litter.



Don't tread the fine line

Cigarette ends are subject to the same laws as other litter – which means dropping just one could earn you an £80 fine.



When is a bin not a bin?

When it's a plant pot, gravel-filled tub or any other container. You may not be dropping your cigarette end on the floor, but this still counts as littering – and street clean-up teams still need to come along and clean up after you.



Drains aren't OK

Though drains are great for waste water, throwing cigarettes in is a whole different story. Smoking debris spreads toxins into our rivers and seas – so under no circumstances should you put butts down the drain.




Stay prepared on the go

Carry a portable ashtray with you and you'll never find yourself in a situation where you risk a fine. They're inexpensive (some companies even give them out for free) and handle cigarette ends cleanly and conveniently until you find a bin.






Get the message out there



Get the message out there


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Infographic

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They might be small, but cigarette butts are almost everywhere. They're one of the most common types of litter in Scotland.





Recommended reading



Case study / Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture



Case Study / Blairgowrie Golf Club thriving on compost



Communication Materials / Tackling litter with targeted messaging

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