Great British Beach Clean for Schools

Ages 7-11

About The Project

Every year we run the Great British Beach Clean, with thousands of people getting involved by heading to the beach to clear litter and make note of what they find. If you can't make it to the coast, no problem! That's where the Source to Sea: Litter Quest comes in. All of the data you collect on the beach, on your street or in a local park helps us campaign for change.

We've used data collected in previous years to make the case for the 5p carrier bag charges across the UK, and are campaigning for a Deposit Return Scheme for all types of drinks containers.

Why Get Involved

Taking part is simple, all you need to do is download the survey form, grab some gloves or litter pickers and head outside! The survey gives students a great opportunity to see first-hand the impact of litter in the environment.

It's a great way to help your school or group reach its sustainability goals and takes advantage of outdoor spaces for learning. By improving their local environment, young people will develop a sense of social responsibility and awareness of how to take personal action.

Curriculum Links

This project links to learning in: Geography, Science, Social Science, English, I.T., PSHCE and Maths. It's a great opportunity to run an innovative cross-curriculum project across the week, building on knowledge and skills at each stage. This lesson plan will run through an activity suggestion for each day of the week.

Week Overview

Each day will focus on a different theme with knowledge built-up throughout the week. On day one students will explore the problems caused by marine litter. On day two students will follow litter on a journey from land to sea. On day three it's time to go outside and collect litter survey data, followed by a day of data analysis on day four. On the final day students will explore how they can take action to reduce litter in the environment.

Sustainability goals:

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Day 1 – What's the problem?

Learning Objectives

- To understand how litter in the ocean can harm wildlife
- To learn about how different materials degrade at different timescales

Resources Provided

- Litter fact file
- Litter image reel
- Litter timeline

Resources Required

Items in timeline game: paper, cardboard, balloon, crisp packet, plastic carrier bag, drinks can, disposable nappy, plastic drinks bottle.

Activities

Activity 1

Encourage pupils to develop and share their own opinions around the topic of marine litter in the natural environment.

Activity 2

Use our *image reel*, with notes from our *teachers fact file* to explore how litter affects marine animals

Activity 3

In an open space, lay out the *litter timeline* cards in order, with the litter items in a pile in front. As an example, discuss the properties of paper and encourage children to think about what they know about paper. Match paper to its degradation time. Emphasise that these are scientists' best predictions, as materials like plastic haven't been around long enough to truly know their degradation times. Invite one child at a time to choose an item and guess how long it is estimated to take to break down. Remind each student to use the paper as a guide. Once each item has been matched to a length of time, turn over the time cards to reveal the answers.

Discuss the timeline. Was anyone surprised by the answers? Which items could be recycled or reused? Could any of the items be avoided and how? How could these items harm wildlife?

Extension

Develop and enhance reading skills by reading a story with an environmental moral. A great book to read as a class is Tuamor the Turtle by Jo Earlham.

Day 2 – From source to sea

Learning Objectives

- To develop map reading skills through studying how your location connects to the ocean

Resources Provided

- Litter fact file
- Your school and the ocean worksheet
- Plastic Ocean

Resources Required

- Computers
- Google earth or other digital map

Activities

Activity 1

Use maps to understand the area local to you, looking into how local factors could contribute to the amount of litter you might find on your survey for example local businesses and facilities that might sell single use items.

Activity 2

Explain that 80% of the litter that we find on beaches comes from inland. Discuss possible routes for litter from your local area to reach the ocean. Common sources are highlighted in our litter fact file.

Activity 3

Find out how your local area is connected to the ocean. First use Google Earth to find your school. From your school, locate the nearest river and explore where this meets the sea. At each stage, fill in the Your school and the ocean worksheet. There are different worksheets depending on whether students are completing the activity in pairs (recommended for older students) or as a class activity (younger students).

Extension

To investigate how plastic can travel once in the ocean, challenge students to find out about the North Pacific Garbage Patch. Start by reading through the information on the Plastic Ocean poster and identify key words. Students should then work in pairs to use Google SafeSearch to research the topic further. Students could perform a short (2 minute) Newsround-style report on the issue to inform others, or create a news article for your school's website.

Day 3 – Litter in the environment

Learning Objectives

- To learn a basic survey technique to collect data and to evaluate the method
- To experience fieldwork and participate in a community activity

Resources provided

- GBBC beach clean survey form
- Beach clean advice
- Source to Sea survey form
- Source to Sea safety advice
- Source to Sea poster
- Source to Sea fact file

Resources required

- Gloves
- Litter pickers or metal tongs
- Bin bags
- Clipboards

Activities

It's time to head out on a litter pick and survey your local area. Either use our beach clean information if you're by the coast or our source to sea information if you're inland.

Beach Clean

Use our GBBC beach clean form to record litter and download our beach clean advice for guidance on how to run a beach clean and health & safety information. If you have any questions about leading a beach clean, please contact beachwatch@mcsuk.org

Source to Sea

Head out to your local river, street, park or even your school grounds. Collect litter and record it. We have developed a simple tick form for infants. Older students should use our standard source to sea survey form and record the number of litter items collected. This data can then be added to our national data set. Download our source to sea advice document for health and safety guidance and risk assessments..

Option B

If you're unable to take your school out into the local area, you could use the surveys to discuss what litter items students have seen in the local area, or items which young people have in their homes that could end up as litter. Discussion could then centre around which items are 'new' types of litter (e.g. Covid related items), how items end up as litter and which items could be recycled or cut out completely. Older groups could debate whether single-use items should be allowed.

Please check and follow the government, and local, rules in your area.

Day 3 – Cont.

Before Your Litter Survey

- Choose the location for your litter pick and survey to suit the age and ability of your group. Work away from roads and with direct adult supervision.
- Equipment list:
  - Sturdy shoes.
  - Gloves - ideally gardening style gloves. For the youngest groups this may be tricky and it may be necessary for the children to spot the litter and an adult wearing gloves to pick it up.
  - Or use litter pickers or metal tongs, which make good improvised pickers. Cover up any cuts. Sanitise equipment after use.
  - Bin bags.
  - Hand sanitiser.
  - Waterproofs or sunscreen – whichever is needed.
  - Check and update your risk assessment on the day, run through the safety guidelines and set clear expectations for behaviour. Have a rule regarding alerting an adult if anything sharp, dangerous or nasty is found.
- Use either the Source to Sea or the beach clean form to record litter items depending on your location. Run through the survey forms before you start to ensure everyone understands how to record the data.

- **Activity 1** - If your using our beach clean forms ensure everyone understands the different categories and explain how this data is used by the Marine Conservation Society. If using our source to sea forms, students should read the source to sea poster to understand why we are asking them to record these items, follow this up with a group discussion, more information provided in the source to sea fact file.

During Your Litter Survey

- **Activity 2** – Head out on your litter pick and record the items you collect.

- Do not touch your face when litter picking, and use your hand sanitiser often.
- Put any sharp items in a separate bucket or container and not in your bin bag whilst litter picking.
- Make sure you take photos and share them with us using #LitterQuest or #GreatBritishBeachClean or email education@mcsuk.org including your group name.

After Your Litter Survey

- Wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds, as soon as possible.
- Clean your litter picking kit thoroughly with household disinfectant.
- Snap a photo of your Source to Sea survey card and post it on social media using the hashtag #litterquest

- **Activity 3** - Upload source to sea data to our national database via the *website*. Email beach clean data to *education@mcsuk.org* Explain to the group that the data they collected will be analysed and used to inform our clean seas campaign work.

Day 4 – Delve into data

Learning Objectives

- To analyse and manipulate data
- To present data using IT

Resources provided

- 2020 GBBC beach clean results
- 2020 Source to sea results
- 2019 GBBC national data set

Resources required

- Computers (optional)

Activities

Activity 1

Using the litter pick data you collected you could practice simple manipulation of numbers on a real life data set. Simple manipulation could include: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, fractions and percentages.

Activity 2

Present your data using graphs, tables and charts. These could then be used as part of day five to share your work and raise awareness of the impacts of littering within your wider community.

Activity 3

Compare your data to last years' data using either our beach clean data or source to sea data.

Extension

For older students we've created a dataset showing the top 10 litter items found on beaches in 2019 for each UK Country. You could use this to explore data and compare findings across the UK. You could then produce charts and graphs to show variation across the UK.

Day 5 – Taking action

Learning Objectives

- To work in small groups to solve problems and share ideas
- To generate a community focused campaign to raise awareness and promote environmentally responsible behaviour

Resources provided

- Waste Funnel
- 7 R's
- Litter Fact File

Resources required

- Poster paper or computers

Activities

Activity 1

Encourage young people to identify ways we can stop litter reaching the beach. Use the Waste Funnel to discuss making good choices. There is more information provided in the fact file to help explain the order of importance in the pyramid. Students should cut out and match up the 7 R's definitions and terms. It's important to emphasise that waste can become litter unintentionally and reducing the amount of waste we produce is key.

Activity 2

Split the class into small groups and challenge students to generate ideas for a local campaign to raise awareness of litter in the local environment. Students should use knowledge gained throughout the week to shape their campaign, such as why litter in the environment is bad and how litter can travel to the sea. Students should use their litter pick results to determine how they shape their campaign. Thinking back to Activity 1 on day 2, students should think about possible different sources of litter in the local area. Encourage students to generate innovative ideas for not only raising awareness but also reducing litter in their local community. Each group should present their campaign ideas to the rest of the class, and have a class vote on one campaign idea to take forward or decide on a way to best combine everyone's ideas.

Activity 3

As a class decide how you will work on the campaign idea and how your whole school could help to implement your campaign in the local community.

Extension

Explore and develop creative writing skills using the knowledge learnt around the topic of marine litter to create a short story or poem.

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Reflect

After the week's activities take time to reflect on what students have learnt by asking the following questions:

- Why is it important that we all reduce the amount of plastic being produced?
- How does collecting data help make a positive change?
- Thinking about the waste hierarchy, what is the most impactful change you could personally make?
- Are there any changes you are going to make to your life to reduce your impact on the environment?

Follow Up

For more activity ideas and lesson plans have a look at our marine litter series. Challenge your students to reduce their single use plastic consumption through our Plastic Challenge resources.

Check out our Artivism lesson which studies various artists who are using their work to raise awareness and be inspired to create your own artivsim piece.

Keep In Touch

If you have any questions about the activity suggestions or resources provided please don't hesitate to contact the education team.

We would also love to see photos of your school out and about collecting litter. You can share these with us on social media or through our email address.

Please also share examples of your work and celebrate the amazing work of your students using #LitterQuest or #GreatBritsihBeachClean

Contact details
Education email: education@mcsuk.org
Twitter:@mcsuk
Facebook: @mcsuk

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Marine Litter Fact File

From source to sea

It is estimated that 11 million tonnes of plastic ends up in the sea worldwide each year (1), and that 80% of litter found in the sea is from inland sources. (2)

Sources on land can include intentional and accidental littering, items flushed down toilets, sinks and drains, windblown litter from bins and landfills, and litter carried by rainwater into drains, rivers and eventually the sea. Litter is also a problem at sea, with sources like fishing, sailing, speed boats, commercial ships and container spills causing litter pollution.

Litter timeline

Litter in the ocean takes longer to degrade than litter on land, but will eventually start to break up due to wave action, currents, saltwater and sunlight. Degradation time varies greatly from 1–450 years depending on the properties of the litter.

Microplastics are a serious environmental issue. They are plastics that have broken up into pieces less than 5mm, as well as pieces that enter the environment this size like microfibres or plastic nurdles, which are the small plastic pellets used in the production of plastic products.

1. Pew 2020
2. Europa 2016

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Marine Litter Fact File

Marine life and litter

Litter items can cause harm to all sorts of marine life, from tiny plankton to whales.

Animals can become entangled in litter, causing injury, reduced mobility and even death. Ingestion of litter, particularly plastic, is very problematic for marine life who are unable to digest it. Large amounts of plastic ingestion can lead to starvation, as there is no room left for food. One study found 100% of turtles to have plastic in their stomach. (3) In some areas, the extreme amount of plastic on the sea floor can suffocate the animals and plants living there.

Invasive species
Ocean currents can move plastics around the world. Small animals and plants can hitch a ride on the surface of plastic and travel with the currents, introducing non-native species to new areas. The introduction of non-native species could cause harm to the ecosystem.

Plastic chemicals
Several chemicals used in the production of plastic materials are carcinogenic. Toxic contaminants can also accumulate on the surface of plastic materials that have broken up and been underwater for a long time. When marine animals ingest plastic accidentally, these toxic contaminants enter their digestive systems and could build up in the food web over time.

Gannet carrying fishing rope.
© JHS Archer-Thomson

Microplastic pieces amongst seaweed. © Natasha Ewins

3. Duncan et al 2018

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Marine Litter Fact File

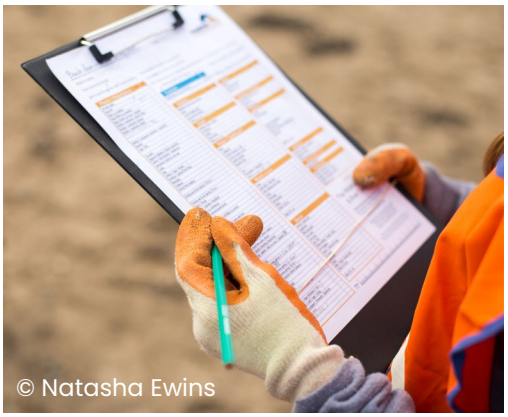
Litter surveys

Litter surveys are not only important for clearing rubbish, but also for gathering data on the types of litter polluting our environment. Beachwatch is our national beach clean and survey initiative, and has been running for over 25 years. Our brilliant volunteers head out to beaches across the UK to clean and survey our coastline, collecting and recording the rubbish they find in a 100m stretch of beach. This litter data helps inform our campaigns and lobby government, and has led to influential changes like the UK-wide carrier bag charge, microbead bans and changes to wet wipe packaging.

We also use the data to determine the sources of litter. For example, if a significant amount of sewage-related debris (SRD) is found in an area, we work with local sewage treatment companies to try to improve treatment plants, and with communities to raise awareness of what should and shouldn't be flushed down the toilet.

Reducing litter

We all need to do our bit to reduce litter in the environment. By rethinking how we shop and what we use in our daily lives, we can all make a difference. Refusing unnecessary plastic and other materials, reducing the amount of products we consume, and repairing rather than replacing are all important actions we can take. Through education, we can help raise awareness, encourage positive consumer behaviour, and campaign for change from businesses and the government.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Recycling

Even if we reduce the number of items we use, we will still need to throw some away. This is where efficient recycling is key. Download a guide from your local council to help students understand what can be recycled at home and at school. Many items can be recycled, but if your local council has limited recycling options check out Terracycle's website for local drop off points.

Plastics can only be recycled at best 2-3 times before they lose their strength, so we still need to move away from plastics to materials that can be recycled time and time again. We need to change how products are recycled, and how we incentivise best practice to ensure materials and resources are valued. This can include redesigning products or calling for economic incentives like Deposit Return Schemes (DRS), where a small deposit is paid when people buy a single-use drinks container and is refunded when they return it to a store or dedicated recycling point.

Circular Economy

We currently have an economy which is linear, which means we make, use and dispose of products using up finite resources. It's estimated that only 9% of all plastic ever made has been recycled, (4) so we know that recycling alone isn't the solution. Instead we need to move towards a circular economy, where products are designed to be used time and again, repairable, or re-designed into new products. The whole life cycle of the product has been considered so very little ends up in landfill.

Litter collected at a beach clean.
© Natasha Ewins

Single-use plastic straws.
© Natasha Ewins

4. Geyer et al 2017

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Name: _____

_____

Your school and the ocean

Our school's name is:

The coordinates for our school are:

Find your school on google earth by typing in your school name in the search function. Find the coordinates in the bottom right hand corner.

The village or town our school is in is called:

Our nearest river is called:

Zoom out to find the nearest river to your school

Did you know?

The place where a river enters a lake, larger river, or the ocean is called its mouth. We are going to follow your river on its journey to the sea.

In the search bar on google earth type in the name of your nearest river. Click more info to find out where the mouth of the river is.

The mouth of the river is:

You're getting closer to the sea! The river mouth may lead you to the sea or it might flow into another river. If it leads you to another river you will need to search again for the mouth of the second river until you reach the sea.

Did you know?

When the mouth of the river meets the sea, this is called an estuary.

What is the name of the estuary?

What is the name of the nearest town to the estuary?

Use the measurement tool on google earth

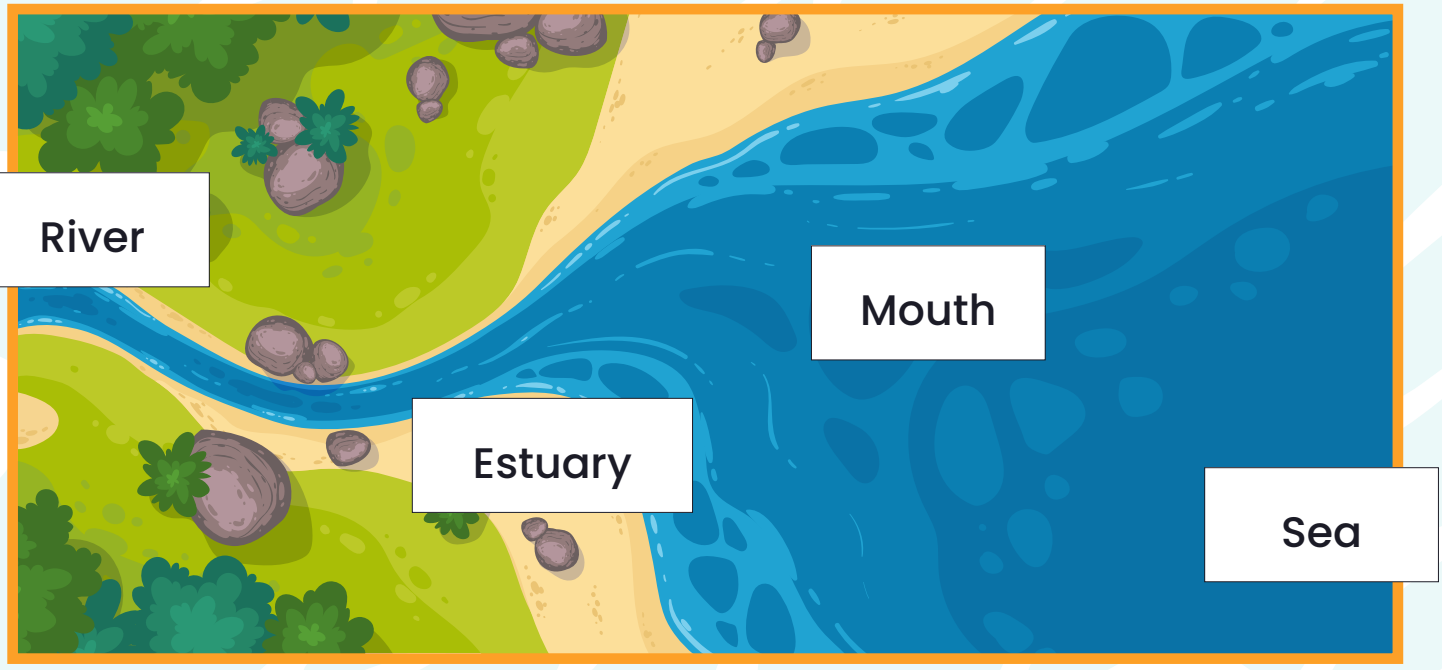
How far is your school to the mouth of the estuary:

Zoom out to find the name of the sea closest to your school. The sea is the are of the ocean closet to and surrounding land.

What is the name of the sea in this area?

Zoom out even more to find the name of the ocean closet to you.

What is the section of ocean nearest to you called:



On the map mark roughly where your school is and where your nearest river meets the sea.

Plastic Ocean

Our ocean has no boundaries, and when it comes to rubbish in the sea, that means it's everyone's problem.

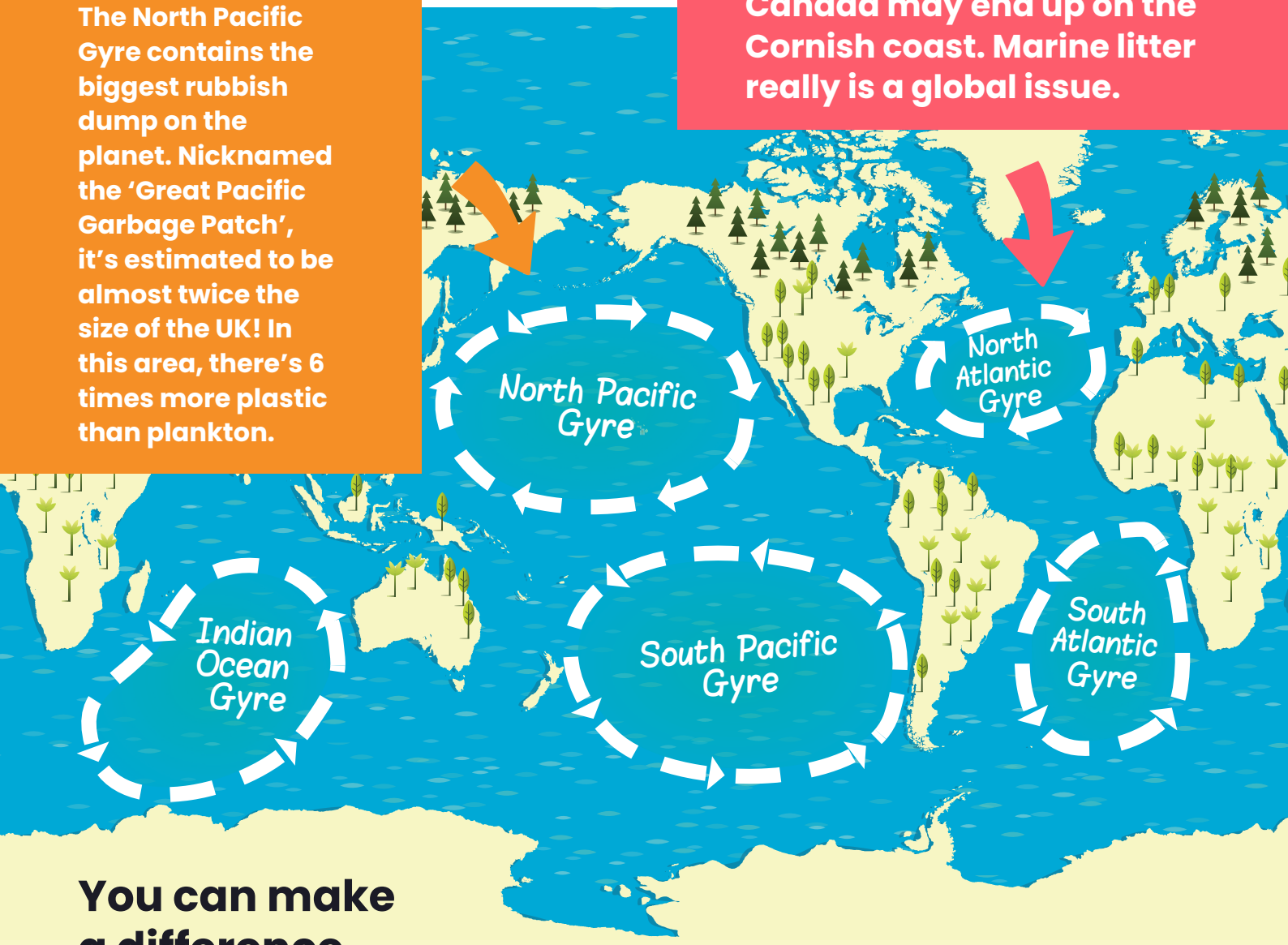
All caught up

Gyres are large rotating currents in our ocean where water spirals around. It's where much of the litter that is floating in the sea collects. The five main gyres across the globe collect man-made debris, especially plastic objects.

Floating rubbish dumps

The North Pacific Gyre contains the biggest rubbish dump on the planet. Nicknamed the 'Great Pacific Garbage Patch', it's estimated to be almost twice the size of the UK! In this area, there's 6 times more plastic than plankton.

A plastic bottle dropped in Canada may end up on the Cornish coast. Marine litter really is a global issue.



You can make a difference

Never drop litter, reduce the amount of plastic you use and recycle more.

Beach clean volunteer survey sheet

Cool Seas Clean Up

Beach name: ..... Date: ../../..

■ To make your data count, **please enter actual numbers collected** - 'lots', 'many', 'bag fulls' or '100s' can't be used.

What it's made of, and category no. →
Keep a running tally as you collect your litter →

0 Example	tally	total
Litter item	𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 ||	27

← Add up your tally and enter your final total here

1 Plastic / Polystyrene	tally	total
4/6 pack rings		
Bags: shopping		
Bags: other		
Bottles / containers: drinks		
Bottles / containers: other		
Caps / lids		
Cigarette lighters / tobacco pouches		
Containers: Food (inc. fast food)		
Containers / tubes (inc. pill packets)		
Cups		
Cutlery / trays / straws		
Fishing line (angling)		
Fishing net & net pieces		
Floats / Buoys		
Foam / sponge / insulation		
Light / glow sticks (tubes with fluid)		
Packets: Crisp / sweet / lolly (inc sticks) / sandwich		
Pens & pen lids		
Plastic / polystyrene pieces		
Shoes / sandals		
Shotgun cartridges		
Strapping bands		
String / cord / rope		
Syringes & needles (⚠ don't touch)		
Toys / party poppers / fireworks / dummies		
Other *(please specify)*		

2 Rubber	tally	total
Balloons (inc string, valves, ribbons)		
Boots		
Tyres		
Other *(please specify)*		

3 Cloth	tally	total
Clothing / shoes (inc leather) / towels		
Furnishings		
Other *(please specify)*		

4 Paper/Cardboard	tally	total
Bags		
Cartons (juice, milk etc.)		
Cigarette packets		
Cigarette stubs		
Cups		
Newspapers / magazines		
Other *(please specify)*		

5 Wood (machined)	tally	total
Corks		
Lolly sticks / chip forks		
Pallets		
Other *(please specify)*		

6 Metal	tally	total
Aerosol / spray cans		
Appliances		
BBQs (disposable)		
Cans (drink)		
Cans (food)		
Caps / lids		
Fishing weights / hooks / lures		
Foil wrappers		
Wire / mesh / barbed wire		
Other *(please specify)*		

7 Glass	tally	total
Bottles		
Other *(please specify)*		

8 Pottery/Ceramics	tally	total
Construction material (e.g. tiles)		
Other *(please specify)*		

9 Sanitary	tally	total
Cotton bud sticks		
Wet wipes		
Other *(please specify)*		

10 Faeces (⚠ don't touch)	tally	total
Bagged dog faeces		

Total number of rubbish bags collected: .....

Total weight of rubbish bags collected: .....

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80% of the litter we find in our ocean comes from inland, help us stop ocean pollution in its tracks! Spot the litter, tick what you found, then pick it up.

Total participants:

Weight of litter: kg

Number of bags:

Weirdest item found?

Where did you clean? (please circle)

Town | Countryside | Park | Street | River

Playground | Grounds of the office | Other

☐ School group?
☐ Youth group?
Age range:

First half of your postcode:

The litter you record on your local clean-up will help us identify and create a snapshot of the litter that is still plaguing our environment, including new single-use items such as PPE.

Glass bottles

Tally:

Metal drink can

Tally:

Plastic drink bottles

Tally:

Loose plastic bottle caps/lids

Tally:

Plastic drink cups

Tally:

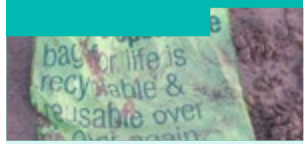
Polystyrene cups

Tally:

Paper cups

Tally:

Plastic bag for life



Tally:

Single-use plastic bag

Tally:

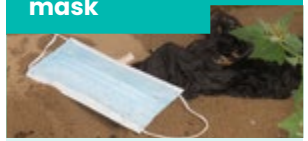
Polystyrene fast food container

Tally:

Single-use plastic gloves

Tally:

Single-use face mask



Tally:

Balloons

Tally:

Wet wipes

Tally:

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Age range:

First half of your postcode:

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Glass bottles

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Metal drink can

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Plastic drink bottles

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Loose plastic caps/lids

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Plastic drink cups

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

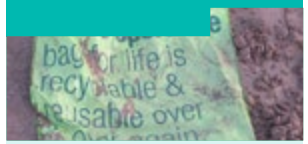
Polystyrene cups

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Paper cups

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Plastic bag for life



Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Single-use plastic bag

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

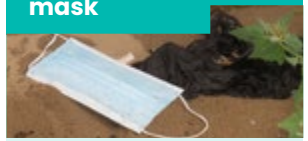
Polystyrene fast food container

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Single-use plastic gloves

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Single-use face mask



Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Balloons

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Wet wipes

Did you find it? yes ☐ no ☐

Source to Sea: Litter Quest

Coming Soon

Source to Sea Fact File

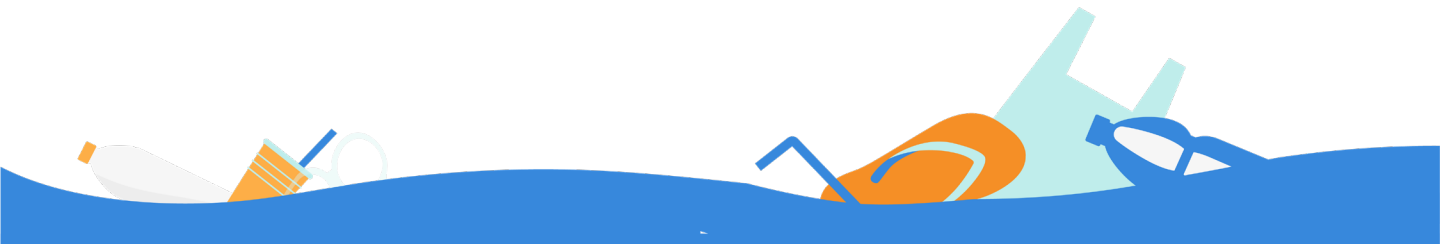
Take part in Source to Sea: Litter Quest as part of the Great British Beach Clean. This September, there's something for everyone, everywhere. No matter where you live across the UK, you can help keep our seas clean.

Why your help matters

We know that litter from towns, parks and even the remotest country lanes often make their way down to our ocean. **Every item dropped in the street has the potential to pollute our seas** by travelling down rivers and streams, being washed down drains or by being blown onto our beaches.

As part of our litter cleans we collect data to track rubbish back to its source - our survey results are then used to find solutions to ocean pollution, and to campaign for measures to bring positive change.

We've used data collected in previous years to make the case for the 5p carrier bag charges across the UK, and are campaigning for Deposit Return Schemes for all types of drinks containers.



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Source to Sea Fact File

The Litter Quest items

This year we've chose **14 items** for you to record and report back to us – these items have been chose carefully, and by taking part in our inland cleans, you can help us, keep our seas safe and healthy – for us all to enjoy.

What we're looking for – Food & drink containers:

1. **Polystyrene fast food container** – these break up easily into small pieces. Did you know polystyrene is a type of plastic?

2. **Glass bottles** – these can easily get broken and become pieces which can hurt us and wildlife

3. **Metal drink can** – Scotland will introduce a deposit return scheme in 2022 on glass, metal and plastic (PET) bottles – but we want all the UK governments to take urgent action and bring in their own schemes

4. **Plastic drink bottles** – 9 billion drink containers are wasted each year by not being recycled

5. **Loose plastic cases/lids** – In the UK there is currently no legislation for lids to be tethered to bottles. We believe this small change could help reduce litter from lids. How many can you spot?

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

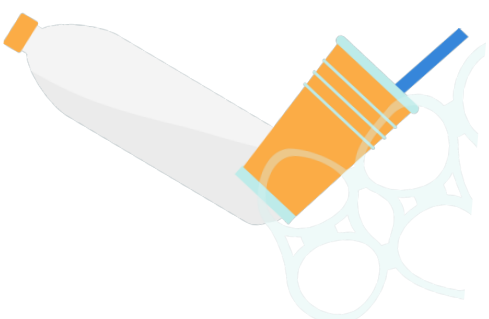
Source to Sea Fact File

6. **Plastic drink cups –** what happens to plastic cups from places like takeaways? Help us hunt down the offenders so we can see where they end up

7. **Polystyrene cups** – are made from a type of plastic and break down really easily into smaller pieces. We think these tiny pieces of plastic might be spreading far and wide – how many can you spot?

8. **Paper cups** - did you know that lots of paper cups have plastic lining them on the inside. Does that make them paper, or plastic – what do you think?

During last year's Great British Beach Clean we found an average of 30 drinks-related litter items for every 100m of beach, and all these items were also found on 99% of inland cleans.



We want to see **Deposit Return Schemes** introduced across the UK, where consumers pay a small deposit on these items when they buy them, and receive their money back when they return them. Scotland will introduce a Deposit Return Scheme in July 2022, but England, Wales and Northern Ireland have yet to create the legislation.

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Source to Sea Fact File

What we're looking for – Plastic bags:

9. **Single-use plastic bags** – we know that when shops started charging people for bags for their shopping, around half the number of bags were found on our beaches. But can you see any in the park or on a street near you?

10. **Plastic bags for life** – these bags are made from thicker plastic and are meant to be used many, many times. But we think some may have been used just once, and could find their way into the sea.

Since charges were introduced across the UK, we've seen an over 50% drop in single-use plastic carrier bags on our beaches. (1) We want to know if this drop can also be seen inland. Although there's been a charge on single-use plastic carrier bags for at least 5 years (Wales introduced it in 2011, Northern Ireland 2013, Scotland in 2014, England in 2015), 'bags for life' have been encouraged as a reusable alternative. But we suspect that these may still be used as a single-use item, and so still harming our environment.

What we're looking for – Wet wipes:

11. **Wet wipes** – often found on beaches from being flushed down the toilet, but they're also used around towns and cities.

Last year we found 18 wet wipes per 100m of beach during GBBC. By tracking them back through the sewage system and their journey from our streets and parks, we can put a stop to pollution.

1. Comparing 2015 litter data with 2020

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Source to Sea Fact File

What we're looking for – PPE:

12. **Single-use face masks** - We didn't see many people wearing these in everyday life before the pandemic, but now it's commonplace. Have people been disposing of them in the right way? Let us know what you see!

13. **Single-use plastic gloves** - Like the face masks, we rarely saw these being used outside of medical settings and specialist jobs until last year, when lots of people started wearing them. Can you spot them amongst the litter around you?

PPE has been really important during the pandemic, but unfortunately it hasn't always been disposed of properly. PPE was found on almost 70% of inland cleans over Great British Beach Clean in 2020. We want to see how common it is one year on.

What we're looking for – Balloons:

14. **Balloons –** have you ever thought about what happens to your balloon once you have let it go? Help us track down the facts to find out

Over the past 5 years, we've found on average 3 balloons per 100m during GBBC! Balloons marketed as 'biodegradable' can last up to 4 years in the marine environment. Animals get tangled in balloon ribbons, restricting their movement and ability to eat. To reduce this threat, we want to get outdoor balloon and sky lantern releases stopped.

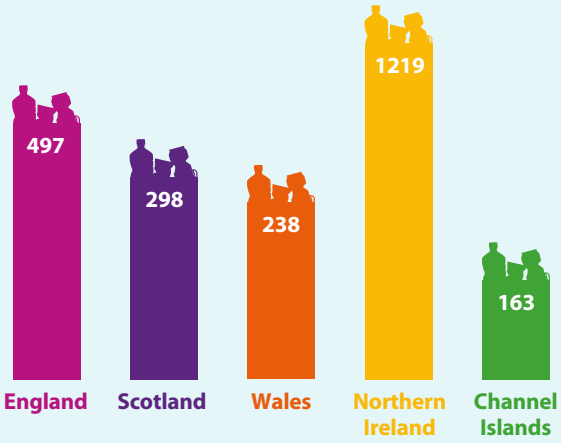
MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Great British BEACH CLEAN

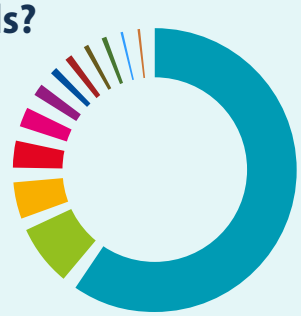
2020 Report

How much litter did we find?

Average number of items by 100m



What were the materials?



73.7% Plastic/polystyrene

8.6% Sanitary items

5.1% Paper/cardboard

3.9% Glass

2.8% Metal

1.6% Cloth

1% Wood

0.9% Rubber

0.8% Pollutant items

0.7% Pottery/ceramic

0.4% Dog faeces

0.3% Medical items

How many volunteers took part?

How many beaches were cleaned?

Where did it come from?

51.9% Non-sourced
Hard to know where it's from – mainly because it's too tiny to identify

27.7% Public
Litter that the public has not disposed of correctly – usually left on beaches, blown in off the street, or carried by waterways

8.9% Fishing
All the things from lobster pots to fishing nets, that help anglers and commercial fishermen catch seafood

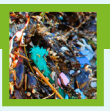
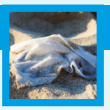
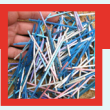
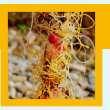
8.6% SRD
Sanitary products and other household items that are flushed down the loo but should go in the bin

2% Shipping
Objects lost, or thrown overboard from small craft or massive ships

0.6% Fly-tipped
Illegally dumped items like TVs, mattresses and tyres

0.3% Medical
Pill packets to syringes.

What did we find?

1.  **Plastic/polystyrene** (0-50cm) — **167.2** /100m ▲
2.  **Caps/lids** — **19.7** /100m ▼
3.  **Wet wipes** — **17.7** /100m ▼
4.  **Cigarette stubs** — **16.2** /100m ▼
5.  **String** — **15.8** /100m ▼
6.  **Glass** — **15.4** /100m ▼
7.  **Cotton bud sticks** — **14.7** /100m ▼
8.  **Fishing net** — **10.1** /100m ▼
9.  **Fishing line** — **7.9** /100m ▼
10.  **Plastic/polystyrene** (other) — **7.1** /100m ▼

marine conservation society

Source to Sea: Litter Quest Results 2020

Great British BEACH CLEAN
Source to Sea Litter Quest

239 bags of litter were removed from streets, parks and playground

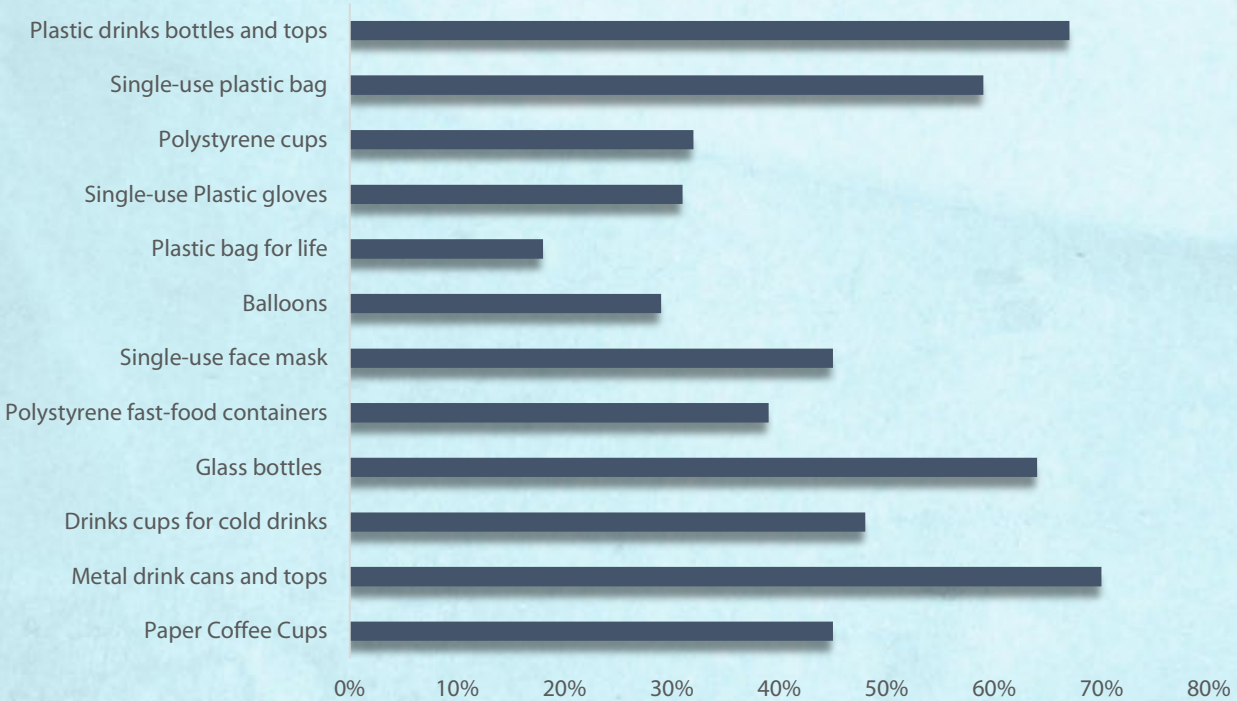
359 volunteers took part

of inland cleans found PPE equipment

Plastic PPE poses a threat to wildlife

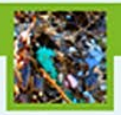
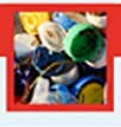
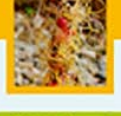
of inland cleans found drinks containers

Percent of surveys litter item found in



What did we find?

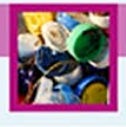
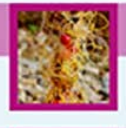
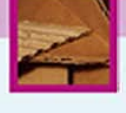
Average number of items per 100m

1.  **Plastic/polystyrene** (0-50cm) — **143** /100m ▼
2.  **Cigarette stubs** — **42.6** /100m ▲
3.  **Glass** — **33.4** /100m ▼
4.  **String** — **32.6** /100m ▲
5.  **Packets** (crisp, sweet, lolly, sandwich) — **30.9** /100m ▼
6.  **Fishing net** (small) — **21.3** /100m ▲
7.  **Caps/lids** — **20.4** /100m ▼
8.  **Wet wipes** — **19.2** /100m ▲
9.  **Fishing line** — **18.8** /100m ▲
10.  **Other Plastic/polystyrene** — **16** /100m ▲

Great British BEACH CLEAN 2019 Report

What did we find in England?

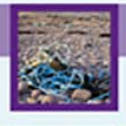
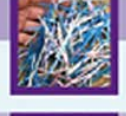
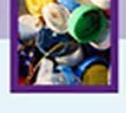
Average number of items per 100m

1.  **Plastic/polystyrene** (0-50cm) — **178.7** /100m ▼
2.  **Cigarette stubs** — **62.6** /100m ▲
3.  **Packets** (crisp, sweet, lolly, sandwich) — **38.1** /100m ▼
4.  **Glass** — **35.1** /100m ▼
5.  **String** — **30.4** /100m ▲
6.  **Fishing net** (small) — **25.7** /100m ▲
7.  **Caps/lids** — **24.3** /100m ▼
8.  **Fishing Line** — **23.8** /100m ▲
9.  **Wet wipes** — **11.3** /100m ▲
10.  **Cardboard** — **10.7** /100m ▲

Great British BEACH CLEAN 2019 Report

What did we find in Scotland?

Average number of items per 100m

1.  **Plastic/polystyrene** (0-50cm) — **99.8** /100m ▼
2.  **String** — **39.5** /100m ▼
3.  **Glass** — **38.5** /100m ▼
4.  **Wet Wipes** — **36.7** /100m ▼
5.  **Other Plastic/polystyrene** — **32.9** /100m ▲
6.  **Packets** (crisp, sweet, lolly, sandwich) — **23.3** /100m ▼
7.  **Rope** — **16.1** /100m ▲
8.  **Cigarette stubs** — **15.5** /100m ▲
9.  **Cotton bud sticks** — **15** /100m ▼
10.  **Caps/lids** — **14.6** /100m ▼

Great British BEACH CLEAN 2019 Report

What did we find in Wales?

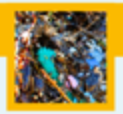
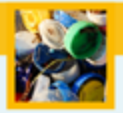
Average number of items per 100m

1.  **Plastic/polystyrene** (0-50cm) — **162.4** /100m ▲
2.  **Fishing net** (small) — **40.9** /100m ▲
3.  **Cigarette stubs** — **32.6** /100m ▼
4.  **Fishing line** — **27.3** /100m ▲
5.  **Packets** (crisp, sweet, lolly, sandwich) — **20.9** /100m ▼
6.  **String** — **19.3** /100m ▲
7.  **Metal** (50cm+) — **15.5** /100m ▲
8.  **Caps/lids** — **14.8** /100m ▼
9.  **Metal wire/mesh/barbed wire** — **14** /100m ▲
10.  **Glass** — **10** /100m ▼

Great British BEACH CLEAN 2019 Report

What did we find in Northern Ireland?

Average number of items per 100m

1.  **Plastic/polystyrene** (0-50cm) — **69.6** /100m ▼
2.  **Caps/lids** — **52.3** /100m ▲
3.  **String** — **48.9** /100m ▲
4.  **Fishing line** — **26.8** /100m ▼
5.  **Packets** (crisp, sweet, lolly, sandwich) — **20.6** /100m ▼
6.  **Plastic Drinks Bottles** — **20.1** /100m ▲
7.  **Shotgun Cartridges** — **17.6** /100m ▲
8.  **Cloth** — **15.9** /100m ▼
9.  **Glass** — **13.8** /100m ▼
10.  **Rubber** — **12.8** /100m ▲

Great Northern Irish BEACH CLEAN 2019 Report

What did we find in the Channel Islands?

Average number of items per 100m

1.  **Plastic/polystyrene** (0-50cm) — **29.9** /100m ▼
2.  **Cigarette stubs** — **11.9** /100m ▼
3.  **String** — **9.7** /100m ▼
4.  **Packets** (crisp, sweet, lolly, sandwich) — **4.3** /100m ▼
5.  **Wood** (0-50cm) — **3.2** /100m ▲
6.  **Wood** (Lolly stick/chip forks) — **3.1** /100m ▼
7.  **Caps/lids** — **2.7** /100m ▼
8.  **Cloth** — **2.7** /100m ▼
9.  **Rubber** — **2.3** /100m ▼
10.  **Fishing net** (small) — **2.1** /100m ▼

Great Channel Islands BEACH CLEAN 2019 Report

Waste Funnel

Reducing our waste means less landfill/ incineration and less litter

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Cut boxes along dotted lines

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Rethink	Always question the choices you make. Could you do things differently in your life so that you use less resources and create less waste?
Refuse	Identify single-use items that you can refuse, like straws and water bottles. Keep looking for new items to refuse.
Reduce	Cut down on the things you buy and the energy you use. By using less, we can cut down the amount of waste sent to landfill and stop it from becoming litter.
Repair	When something breaks see if it can be repaired and used again instead of buying a new one. This stops the old item becoming waste and means energy and resources don't need to be used to make a new one. Win, win.
Reuse	Can the product be used again for another purpose? By reusing what you already have or finding a new use for it, like using a tin can as a pencil pot, you stop the item becoming waste. It also means you don't have to buy something new.
Recycle	By recycling products whenever possible something new can be made from the materials and you stop them going to landfill.
Rot	If you can't repair, reuse or recycle the item, use a bin. Depending on where you live, this may then be sent to landfill or incinerated. Plastic, remember, will never rot away.

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Paper

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Months/ years

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Cardboard

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

2 – 5 years

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Balloon

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

4 years

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Crisp packet

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

75 years

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Plastic carrier bag

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

250 years

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Drinks Can

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

450 years

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Disposable Nappy

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

450 years

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Plastic Drink Bottle

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

800 years

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Glass

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Forever?