

# The Clean Cornwall Newsletter



clean  
cornwall

Issue 6

Welcome back for issue number six of the Clean Cornwall Newsletter! We hope you've all had a fantastic summer.

As always, we'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone who has registered a litter pick with us this summer. It can sometimes feel like a chore to remind yourself of the plastic crisis whilst trying to enjoy the summer sun, so we are forever grateful for those that have been protecting our planet rain or shine. Keep reading for litter news from around the UK, Clean Cornwall updates and other environmental stories.

## Zero Waste Week

Zero waste week takes place in the first full week of September each year, running from the 4th until the 8th this year. The grassroots environmental campaign encourages individuals and organisations to reduce their landfill and celebrate each step taken to reduce waste and protect our environment. Here at CRCC, we've invited our staff to take part by setting a specific goal to reduce their personal waste, and then collecting their landfill throughout the week to identify where we can further reduce our use of disposables. We will be sharing our efforts at the end of week to see where can improve our impacts, and which goals we can set for the future to further reduce our waste. Head to <https://www.zerowasteweek.co.uk/> if you would like to learn more about this campaign, its impacts and how you can reduce our own landfill waste.

## Two Weeks of Picking with Plasticblitz

Organised by environmental charity Thames21, Plasticblitz sees community groups, environmental charities, rotary clubs and Environment Agency staff taking part in a mass litter pick and citizen science event on England's waterways. This year, hundreds of volunteers came together to clear our waterways:

- **58km of river cleared**
- **585 volunteers**
- **699 bags of rubbish collected**

The results won't be surprising to any seasoned litter picker, with 71% of the recorded waste being plastic and cigarette ends being the most numerous plastic items, followed by drinks lids and food wrappers.

This was the first year that the campaign targeted rivers all across the UK, as it previously only covered the River Thames. Next year, let's get stuck in to keep Cornwall's waterways as plastic free as possible.



# Change Maker Spotlight

By Will Paris

# Biffa



## *Who are we?*

Biffa is a national waste service made up of private and municipal contracts, in Cornwall we are the contractor chosen by Cornwall Council for the collection of the household rubbish and recycling service. We work in partnership with Cornwall Council and strive to ensure that we deliver a great collection service as well as keeping Cornwall beautiful with our street cleansing and beach cleaning. We have been working with Clean Cornwall since the beginning of its conception. Aiding by collecting the volunteer's black bags, allowing volunteers to borrow all the equipment they will need for a beach clean or litter pick as well partnering in many campaigns like Hold Tight!

## *What makes us sustainable?*

We constantly aim to be more sustainable, from increasing our education- going into schools to talk about reducing, re-using, and recycling. We speak to community groups about our waste and recycling in Cornwall, and support litter picking groups by donating equipment and working to waste industry standards to ensure we are being as sustainable as possible.

Biffa also runs nation wide schemes that focus on

health and wellbeing- not only for staff but also looking at a wider environmental issues. We are a key supporter of the charity Waste Aid, running frequent fundraisers and providing support and opportunities for their projects in Cameroon, Kenya and The Gambia. The charity focuses on waste management in countries that don't have the infrastructure to deal with the waste that is generated. Waste Aid work alongside these countries to deal with their waste needs through education and the setting up of processes to deal with the rubbish. This in turn creates jobs, increases the health and safety and lowers diseases and other issues that come with not having a sustainable process to deal with waste. We also focus on protecting and improving our environment within the UK. We are currently running project called Biffa bees, where packets of wildflower seeds are given out to our depots across the UK as well as given to community groups to help improve local biodiversity. Previously we have been able to donate hundreds of packets of seeds to groups across the Cornish Plastic Pollution Coalition as well as local businesses within Cornwall.

Our current focus is looking at the new service changes. Cornwall Council will soon be rolling out a new weekly food waste collection service from households across the whole of Cornwall. As Cornwall Council's collection contractor we are responsible for collecting this waste. This is very exciting as it makes up around 35% of the waste that is placed into a black bin bag for collection. This will have a big impact on the sustainability of the County ensuring that the food waste collected will be recycled into farm fertiliser to grow more food, and into energy to power communities. These changes will cut Cornwall's annual carbon emissions by nearly 18,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, saving the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> the average car would kick out driving round the world 2,547 times.

## *How can you help?*

We are constantly encouraging people to reduce, re-use and recycle- this will be even more important with the new changes as we look to pick up recycling and general waste fortnightly on a rotating weekly basis. By recycling-

as much as we can as individuals, we can decrease our general black bag waste and ensure our recycling rates will be higher than previously. We all have a part to play with managing our waste as individuals and can be helpful to see the wider picture. We can be especially proud with Cornwall Council's waste management in Cornwall with our recycling staying within the UK and our general waste going to the Energy Recovery Centre.

At Biffa, we strive to be sustainable, live our values of Team work, fairness and respect and deliver a great service to households in Cornwall. We aim to change how people think about waste. If you have any community events or any thing you would like us to be a part off or would like some packets of wildflower seeds! please contact myself- Will Paris- at e&eteam@biffa.co.uk



## Releasing the Hounds to Tackle Dog Mess

The Clean Cornwall team has been cooking up an anti-dog mess solution over the past few weeks, aiming to introduce a new concept that sparks conversation and positivity around the issue. We are proud to introduce you to our first dog mess sculpture "Uno". Uno is made almost entirely from materials found on litter picks across Cornwall, and will serve as a friendly reminder discarded dog poo is not going unnoticed in our otherwise stunning county. We will be installing Uno very soon, and he might be appearing near you, so keep an eye out!



# Truckers Cleaning Up Britain

## The Hidden Campaign Keeping our Roadways Clean

When traversing Britain's roadways, it's hard to miss the hundreds of litter hotspots scattered across thousands of miles of dual carriageways and motorways. However, many of us may not have noticed the near pristine sections of roadside that have been created thanks to volunteers from the Truckers Cleaning Up Britain Campaign.

Truckers Against Britain was founded by Martin Burrows, an RAF veteran with a passion for clean roadsides. Martin noticed the shocking amount of litter sprinkled across laybys and formed the group to begin the tackle the high-speed, hard-to-reach litter hotspots. The group now boasts more than 2000 members, with regular posts to their Facebook Group revealing more than 12 bags collected from one layby in some locations.

The campaign has received national recognition, with its founder receiving a Point of Light Award and personal letter from former Prime Minister Boris Johnson thanking him for his efforts. (Points of Light, 2023).



Photo: Martin Burrows, Founder

Litter on the roadside isn't just an eyesore, it has serious detrimental effects on local wildlife and ecosystems. A report published in Keep Britain Tidy's Journal of litter and environmental quality investigated the effect of litter on small mammal populations in Norfolk. This study examined 2,174 discarded bottles and cans and found that 5.3% contained small mammal remains, 230 dead animals in total— including 118 common shrews, 59 bank voles, and also pygmy shrews, and wood mice (Keep Britain Tidy, 2018)

Many may not realise the true scale and cost of roadside litter not just to the environment, but to the taxpayer. Highways England collects approximately 200,000 sacks of litter from the strategic roadwork every year, with removal costing an estimated £50 per sack. (National Highways). This is a saddening waste of taxpayer money that could be better spent elsewhere if people become more diligent about binning their litter and cleaning up where others have failed to.

Thank you to every trucker that has given their time to support this campaign, your efforts are not going unnoticed and we (and every shrew in Britain) are extremely grateful for your hard work.

If you would like to learn more about the Truckers Cleaning Up Britain campaign, head to [https://www.facebook.com/groups/393605774773227/?locale=en\\_G](https://www.facebook.com/groups/393605774773227/?locale=en_G).



Photo: Scott Gibbins, Trucker and Regular Volunteer

# Swimming in Plastic

## Confronting the UK's plastic crisis with performance



On the 22nd July, Surfers Against Sewage and their passionate volunteers created an eye-opening spectacle in Penzance's Jubilee Pool to mark the launch of their latest brand audit, protesting the shocking scale of plastic pollution in the UK. The event, aptly named "Swimming in Plastic", gathered spectators at the Jubilee Pool as it was filled with 75,000 plastic bottles headed for disposal and a team of pink clad synchronised swimmers. The protest innovatively showcased the never-ending waste stream produced by just 12 companies who have been identified as responsible for more than 70% of branded pollution collected in the UK over a 12-month period.

The Surfers Against Sewage "Dirty Dozen" companies were identified using data collected during a citizen science initiative that relied on volunteers collecting, recording and reporting the pollution they have uncovered during their Million Mile Clean litter pick throughout the year. This data is now being used to identify and call out the UK's biggest plastic polluting brands which were unsurprisingly revealed to be: Coca Cola, McDonald's, PepsiCo, Mondelez International, ABInBev, Tesco, Haribo, Nestle, Mars, Heineken, Carlsbeg and Red Bull.

So what needs to happen? One of the key demands pushed during the protest was the widescale introduction of packaging deposit return schemes in the UK. These schemes are nothing new, and have been functioning successfully in countries all over the world for several years. Germany, for example, is home to the successful Pfand system which allows consumers to return containers such as glass bottles and PET plastic contains to reclaim a small deposit ranging from €0.08 to €0.25 (DW, 2021). Since the Pfand scheme was launched in 2003, 97% of plastic and glass bottles are now recycled in Germany (K&M Communities, 2019). It is safe to say that the UK's need for new environmental initiatives is long overdue and undoubtedly urgent, and we can only hope and demand that our government further prioritises our health and ecosystems before it is too late.



Photos: Million Mile Clean Volunteers' Gallery

# Impact Report Clean Cornwall - 2022

We have used the Social Value Engine developed by Rose Regeneration to identify a monetary value, to represent the social impact of Clean Cornwall. This is an internationally accredited tool for measuring social impact. Here are the results calculated for 2022.

**For every £1.00 invested in Clean Cornwall, £7.57 of social and economic value is returned.**

## IMPACT VALUES

Volunteer participation in a Clean Cornwall litter pick

£591,308.38

Improved wellbeing through outdoor activities

£43,674.52

Increased cleanliness of physical environment

£3,536.00

Collaboration across partnerships in Cornwall

£11,934.00

- Increased volunteering and community participation
- Improved wellbeing through arts
- Improved cleanliness of streets, green spaces and waterways
- Life satisfaction increase from visiting heritage (including marine or maritime environments)

**Clean Cornwall supported an average of 256 volunteers per month.**

**1858 bags of litter collected.**

**8.62% increase in volunteer registrations from previous year**



# The Blue Litter Project

## Clean Cornwall's Newly Secured Grant Funding to Tackle Marine Litter in Remote Areas of Cornwall

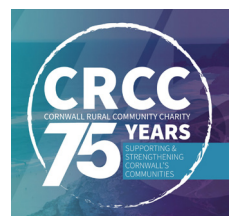
Clean Cornwall has recently secured £50,000 in funding to kickstart an ambitious project titled the Blue Litter Project. The funding will enable us to provide the equipment and guidance required to work with volunteers and organisations in the marine leisure industry to remove litter as it is encountered in our oceans, bays and coves. We are massively grateful to be given this opportunity and to increase our environmentally conscious network in Cornwall. A second thank you is due to the Fishing Amateur team from Cornwall Rural Community Charity for your hard work securing this funding!



Most litter pickers in Cornwall will have encountered a moment when a piece of litter was just tantalisingly out of reach, and this feeling becomes even more common around Cornwall's jutting cliffs and isolated coves. Regardless, this litter still needs collecting, and this project will allow hundreds of volunteers to take action and start removing it.

The planning for this project is now underway, and we will be contacting groups in the near future to collaborate with us to keep Cornwall's blue spaces clean and habitable. Our initial aim is to learn more about marine litter in Cornwall and how it can be most easily collected and processed. We will be getting in touch with members of the marine industry at every level, from hobbyist paddleboarders to pleasure boat charters, so if you have any questions about this upcoming project, or would like to get involved as an individual or organisation, please get in touch at [info@cleancornwall.org](mailto:info@cleancornwall.org). Keep an eye on our website for updates as the project progresses.

We'd also like to say thank you to South West Water for granting us £2000 to continue to facilitate litter picking across Cornwall. Every penny makes a difference to the amount of litter our volunteers can collect each year, so we will continue to work to secure funding to keep our services running as efficiently as possible.





## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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### Arrange a Litter Pick

You can organise your own litter pick completely free using the form on our website to loan equipment, arrange litter collection, recruit volunteers and more:

<https://www.cleancornwall.org/litter-picks>

Got a question? Get in touch:

**Email:** [clean.cornwall@cornwallrcc.org.uk](mailto:clean.cornwall@cornwallrcc.org.uk)

**Website:** <https://www.cleancornwall.org/contact>

### Join The Change Maker Network

Learn more about how your business can join our growing network to evidence your business' environmental responsibility and gain access to exclusive discounts, promotion and sustainability events run by the Clean Cornwall Team. Head to our website to get involved and learn more:

<https://www.cleancornwall.org/change-makers>





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