



HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2018

AT A GLANCE

189
businesses
signed up

11
schools
engaged

3
SeaBins
installed

11
beach
cleans

INTRODUCTION

It's been a busy and incredibly successful first 6 months for the Final Straw Solent campaign. We have carried out numerous beach cleans, school assemblies and activities, been instrumental in the launch of 3 new SeaBins in the Solent, met with local councils and signed up 189 businesses that have pledged to drop single-use plastic straws at a minimum and cut back on their consumption of single-use plastic wherever possible. So far we have had public support from Havant, Portsmouth and Gosport councils and Chichester and Southampton Business Improvement District (BID) and we look forward to continuing these relationships throughout the winter months and into 2019.

Over the coming months, we will be organising more beach cleans. We already have 25 local school assemblies booked in for this academic year, and have pledged to reach 75% of local schools over the coming year to engage and inform pupils about the plastic pollution crisis and what we can do to combat it. We will engage and sign up new businesses to the campaign, and we will nurture our close relationships with local councils to ensure support for the project comes from a local government level.

We would like to thank Portsmouth Water and Postcode Publications for their support and sponsorship of our reusable steel water bottles - all proceeds from the sale of these bottles is being plunged back into the campaign to enrich our outreach programme. The Portsmouth News have also been incredibly supportive, adopting the campaign and helping us to spread this important environmental message throughout local communities.

And last but no means least, we would like to thank everyone who has come to a beach clean, picked up litter in their local area or changed their buying habits to avoid plastic. Your engagement and care is what will ultimately help turn the tide on plastic pollution.



BUSINESSES

So far this year, 189 local businesses along the Solent have signed up to the campaign. These businesses have pledged to reduce their single-use plastic consumption and we have shouted about all of them on our social media pages. Why? Because they deserve it and we hope that it may inspire other businesses to follow suit.

Businesses range from bars, pubs, restaurants and cafes to beauty salons, hairdressers, schools, dentists and theatres. Look around and identify the single-use plastic items present in your business that could be cut - there is always something, from bottles to cups at water fountains to cutlery or cotton-bud sticks. This campaign is open to everyone.

If you want to join the campaign or recognise a business that should already be on our list, get in touch!



SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Over the last six months, we have visited 11 local schools to provide either whole-school, or class-specific assemblies, presentations and activities. Following this, some schools also carried out planned plastic workshops or beach cleans with us to supplement their learning. Each child in the school receives an 'Ocean Defender' certificate from us, where they pledge their own personal support to the campaign, the local environment and our oceans. We have found that this establishes ownership of the campaign for the children, giving a sense of empowerment and creates an amazing feeling of community engagement.



We have also given talks to several local community groups, such as the Soroptimists and Mumpreneurs, and attended local business networking events to raise awareness of the campaign and the issues around single-use plastic pollution in our area.

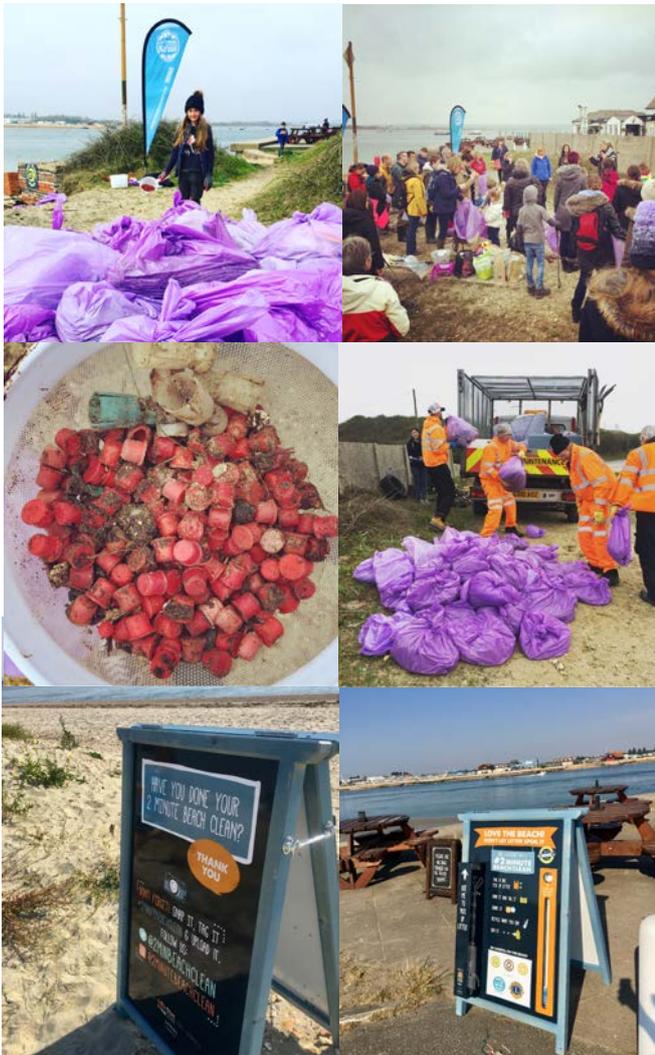
This coming year, we have 25 school assemblies already booked in for all 25 schools in the Gosport borough. With permission granted from Hampshire County Council, we hope this will inspire other local councils to work closely with us so we can reach more schools in Havant, Portsmouth, Fareham, Chichester and Southampton. The autumn term is looking busy, but exciting!

SEABINS

Currently there are, to our knowledge, 7 Seabins in the UK. One each in Ireland, Scotland and Bristol. And then finally, 4 in the Solent - and 3 have been installed in association with the Final Straw Solent. We would like to thank Helistrat and Premier Marinas for facilitating the installation of two Seabins in Port Solent and Gosport Marinas, also Chichester Harbour Federation and Emsworth Marina for the purchase of the Seabin in Emsworth. This Seabin has already been visited by 3 school groups, so it is not only removing plastic and waste from the ocean, but also helping to raise awareness of plastic in our local seas and tying in with our schools outreach programme. Thank you to all involved in these projects.



BEACH CLEANS



Our beach clean programme has been incredibly well supported, with over 500 attendees in total at the 11 beach cleans we have organised so far this year. The passion and dedication of the volunteers who come along, no matter the great British weather, always astonishes us. We have cleared over 350 bin bags of plastic waste and litter from our local shores. This pollution includes thousands of plastic nurdles, cotton bud sticks, bottles, bags, tyres, packaging, wrappers, tarpaulins, fishing net and even a kitchen sink! The thing that always shocks new volunteers is that a beach can look superficially clean - until you really look closely. One of the key areas we are targeting is the Ferryboat end of Hayling Island, where the levels of microplastics is incredibly high.

We have also arranged the provision of 8 #2minutebeachclean boards in the local area, which provide passers-by with a litter picker and bag and encourages people to clean up the local area. These have been very well received and we are hoping to install more.