

BEACHWATCH AND CORONAVIRUS SAFETY GUIDELINES Q&A



Why have beach cleans resumed and how are volunteers being kept safe?

Now that guidelines across the UK allow for more time to be spent outside, we would like to support volunteers to run small, local and private beach cleans. We have updated all of our resources and guidelines to ensure that people can stay safe while they do so. Please do read these, and the latest government advice before you start.

What does local mean?

We don't want to encourage people to travel too far or to put a strain on local infrastructure, so we are encouraging people to always follow the government, and local council rules, where they are.

What do I do if I cannot get hold of the landowner to process my event application/arrange litter collection?

Each landowner has different processes for beach cleaning. Many will currently have reduced staff and resources, or they may have suspended all events on their land completely for the time being.

Please check the landowner's website to see if there is any further information about processing events such as beach cleans. If events are suspended please do not organise a beach clean and litter survey. If you send an email and receive an out of office due to furloughing, then it is likely that you are not able to proceed with your beach clean and litter survey currently.

What if there are too many people on the beach for me to be able to social distance from them, while doing my beach clean and litter survey?

Our volunteer's safety is the most important thing. If you arrive at the beach and there a lot of beach goers in your 100m survey area, which means you don't feel you can social distance, then please do not carry out the beach clean and litter survey. If the number of beach goers increase while you are running your clean, to a point where you feel you cannot social distance, then please stop the beach clean survey and move off the beach.

What if I have a beach clean planned and my Government re-introduces tighter lock-down measures?

If tighter restrictions are reintroduced, you should cancel your beach cleans. You can cancel your private event on our Beachwatch website. We will keep monitoring all governments guidelines and we will be in touch if beach cleans need to be cancelled for safety reasons.



What if I want to take part in a beach clean, can I still sign up to an event?

For the foreseeable future none of the beach cleans run by local Beachwatch volunteers will be advertised on our Beachwatch website. We feel it's important that we don't encourage gatherings of people or have people travelling far to the coast and so we are asking people to run small, local private events only.

If you do live by the coast and would like to take part, you can organise your own event. We have:

[Step by step guide](#)

[A more detailed organiser guide](#)

[Our Coronavirus health and safety guidelines](#)

Our friendly Beachwatch team are always happy to help you get started. You can email them at Beachwatch@mcsuk.org or ring them on **01989 567807**



When do you think beach cleans can start being advertised on your website again, for volunteers to sign up to?

We are unable to say at the moment. We will continue to monitor all governments guidelines and will only add events to the website when we feel it is safe to do so. Before adding any event we will also contact all our local volunteer organisers and it will up to them if they feel happy to advertise their event on our website for people to sign up to attend.



Do I still have to do a full 100m litter survey if I am running it on my own or with a few of us?

We are aware that in some cases, it is not possible to collect and record all the litter found within a 100m section of beach if you are on your own or in a small group. If this is the case for you then we can accept a survey length less than 100m, but no less than 10m. Please do whatever distance you feel you can do which allows you to accurately record everything you find and let us know what length you did on your survey summary when you submit the data.



Is it safe to be picking up litter right now?

Picking up any litter always comes with a risk. Our guidelines have always said that all volunteers **must wear sturdy gloves and use litter pickers** when they can when cleaning. It is now more important than ever to protect yourself when running a beach clean and to be conscious of what you do with your hands when you are wearing gloves.

You must remember not to touch your face when you have gloves on. If you need to then you must take your gloves off and wash your hands for 20 seconds beforehand.

Please don't touch anything that looks like it might be dangerous or full of something nasty (containers, drums, unexploded shells).

If you are unsure about picking up of any litter items that you find on the beach, then do not pick it up. Your safety is the most important thing.

Once the beach clean is over, make sure you wash your hands for at least 20 seconds, and it is also good practice to wash your beach cleaning kit after every beach clean.



Should I pick up PPE and how do I dispose of PPE?

Please follow local authority guidance on what to do with PPE on the beach.



If I find PPE on the beach, where do I record this on the survey form?

Please list any PPE found on beaches under 'Medical Other' and specify what you found and how many. Examples of these are, surgical masks, cloth face coverings, latex gloves, face visors and hand gel bottles.