**Beachwatch Beach clean – Risk Assessment**

**IMPORTANT:** this risk assessment has been developed to include the most likely risks associated with the beach environment and the activity of beach cleaning with your group. Due to the changing nature of this environment and variations between risks at different locations, you must adapt this document to suit the location of your event and make note of any additional risks present on the day. There are blank lines available to add risks specific to your event. You must sign to indicate that you have done this and keep a copy of this document. NEVER place yourself or others in the position of risk.

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| **Beach name and event date:**  | **Risk Assessment checked on day of clean by:**  |
| **Risk Assessment completed by**:  | **Date Risk Assessment checked:**  |
| **High tide:** use for quick search -https://www.visitmyharbour.com/ | **Low tide:** |
| Date of Risk Assessment:  | I confirm the Risk Assessment is accurate and has been updated as required. Signed:  |

***Essential for event and RA:*** *First aid kit, container for glass, \*****sharps box,*** *hand sanitiser, strong gloves, (face mask if you would like to wear one)*

***Who has the First Aid Kit/Is a First aider:***

***Phone reception: Excellent / Good / Poor*** (delete as appropriate) Check phone reception on arrival. Check with other adults and if no one has reception, identify the quickest route to a phone – may be a phone box nearby or go into a shop/cafe/kiosk and set up in advance just in case. This is an important stage of the risk assessment as the ability to contact emergency services is required to mitigate many of the identified risks.

***Where is the nearest hospital:*** *search England –* [*https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Accident-and-emergency-services/LocationSearch/428*](https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Accident-and-emergency-services/LocationSearch/428)

***Where is the nearest hospital:*** *search Scotland -* <https://www.nhsinform.scot/scotlands-service-directory/aes-and-minor-injuries-units>

***Where is the nearest hospital:*** *search Wales -*  <https://aeinfo.nhs.wales/>

***Where is the nearest hospital:*** *search Northern Ireland -* <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/maps/>

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| **Incident or near miss reporting**: All injuries, incidents or near miss incidents to be reported to the event organiser immediately. Record the information on the MCS (Marine Conservation Society) beach clean summary form.**Near misses**, or close calls, are events that did not harm anyone, but could have.As soon as possible, MCS staff to notify the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Advisor of any incidents that required First Aid or medical treatment at hospital. |

***Where is the nearest defibrillator:*** Search - http://www.heartsafe.org.uk/aed-locations

***Coastguard & Emergency Services:*** - Call 999

***Contact for dead/injured alive animals: - If*** you find a live marine mammal that is injured call BDMLR on 01825 765546. If you find any other live but injured animal call RSPCA on 0300 1234999.

## In Scotland, please call Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals - 03000 999 999

**Section 1 – Identify who might be at risk (please circle)**

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| Participants (Volunteers / MCS staff) | Teachers/Group leaders | Young People | Parents/Helpers | Members of the public |
| Others |  |  |  |  |

**Section 2 – Identify who is responsible for applying this risk assessment (please circle)**

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| Beach clean organiser | Teachers/Group leaders | MCS Staff | Other (please state) |

**Section 3 – Identify Hazards**

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| **1** | Lack of understanding of the event site or knowing what to do if something occurs. |  | **8** | Extreme weather conditions  |  | **15** | Aggressive dogs |  |
| **2** | Covid/ respiratory infections |  | **9** | Fly tipped waste  |  | **16** | Safeguarding – special provisions for welcoming children, vulnerable adults, and young people |  |
| **3** | Roads and slipways |  | **10** | Unexploded ordnance |  | **17** | First aid required |  |
| **4** | Tides/currents |  | **11** | Animals (dead/alive); Including jelly fish |  | **18** | Avian bird flu |  |
| **5** | Hazardous waste (dog faeces, sewage, sharps, (syringes), containers) |  | **12** | Member of the public becoming involved with the event |  | **19** |  |  |
| **6** | Slips, trips & falls, including features of the environment (cliffs, dunes, soft sand, mud) |  | **13** | VIPs in attendance or contentious issues/event expected |  | **20** |  |  |
| **7** | Lifting and carrying heavy items |  | **14** | Media present at event  |  | **21** |  |  |

**Section 4 – Risk Controls**

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| **Hazard No.** | **Description of Hazard** | **Measures to manage the risk that the hazard could have.****Ensure that you are satisfied that the measures effectively control the risk to the minimum possible level.****Where risks cannot be reduced sufficiently, consider that the event cannot run** | **Who is responsible for implementing the controls, and when?** |
| 1 | Lack of understanding of the event site or knowing what to do if something occurs. | Prior to the litter-pick taking place, beach clean organiser provides a briefing and safety talk, covering:* Risks and general information about correct use of the equipment
* The requirement to clean hands frequently with soap, or sanitiser
* Any risk / issues of the chosen area for cleaning (like cliffs, dunes etc)
* Risks from hazardous waste and the need to avoid touching with hands/gloves
* Who to contact if an accident occurs
* Where and when to meet if the group becomes separated
* Any issues that have become more hazardous (for example, due to the weather on the day, other events on the beach, increased traffic, specific wastes).
 | Beach clean organiser in advance of the event and in the briefing on the day.Beach clean organiser can call the event to a close if behaviour is putting others at risk, or for any other hazards and risks that appear. |
| 2 | Covid / Respiratory infections | As we learn to live safely with coronavirus (COVID-19), there are actions we can all take to help reduce the risk of catching COVID-19 and other respiratory infections and passing it on to others. These actions will also help to reduce the spread of other respiratory infections such as flu.**What to do if you have symptoms of a respiratory infection:****Do not attend if:*** **If You’ve Tested Positive for COVID-19,** be aware that you can be infectious to others for anything up to 10 days after initial infection
* **If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection**, such as COVID-19, and you have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities
* If you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or are waiting for the results from a PCR test.
* Participants must be advised to bring along their own gloves, always wear them, and use litter pickers if they are available.
* Follow good hygiene practices for handwashing, sneezing, coughing and although face mask wearing is no longer required, we respect some people may continue to wear them.
* Any litter picking equipment given out to Participants must be cleaned before and after use with a household disinfectant.
 | Beach clean organiserPart of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event. |
| 3 | Roads and slipways | * Prior to event, organiser to advise participants of any requirement for crossing roads
* Children to always remain under supervision and in sight of a responsible adult, preferably by a parent or guardian.
* Do not to work on roads or roadside verges
* No litter picking near railway lines or bridges.
* All participants to avoid slipways and to note if vehicles are permitted on the beach.
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event. |
| 4 | Tides/currents | * Stay away from water’s edge, not enter the water and be vigilant of surging waves.
* Be vigilant of large sea swell conditions and possible rogue waves surging up the beach.
* Be aware of tidal times and not to go to areas of the beach that could be cut-off.
* Special consideration of risks from the water for young people in the group – to be always supervised.
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event.Beach clean organiser monitors during the clean and cancels event if sea state is large and surging waves threaten Participant safety. |
| 5 | Hazardous waste:Dog faecesSewage related itemsSuspicious containersSyringes, Needles/medical waste | * **Overall message is ‘if in doubt, don’t touch****’.** Beaches can contain a variety of unpleasant and hazardous materials that can pose a risk to human health. Children should be always supervised and instructed to ask for help with hazardous waste.
* **Always wear sturdy gardening type gloves,** **or use a litter picker in preference to hands, and never pick handfuls of litter as broken glass, metal, syringes, and other sharp items may be hidden inside.**
* Beach clean organiser to check with the council/landowner about their approach to collecting used PPE when they are arranging for waste collection.
* Glass and sharp items must not to be put loose in a collecting bag.
	+ Collect glass in a separate container or bucket, and at the end of the clean, put into an appropriate recycling bin if one is available.
	+ Wrap the item securely, or in a sealable container which can be put in the waste bag at the end of the clean for safe removal
* Collect **bagged dog faeces** with litter pickers if possible or only with gloves on. Unbagged dog faeces should be left - clean footwear if waste is stepped in.
* **Sewage related items** to be collected using litter pickers if possible – or only with gloves on.
* **Never approach suspicious looking containers** with or without hazard warning sign and any suspicious drums, materials, barrels to be left untouched and Environment Agency Pollution Hotline to be contacted (Tel 0800 7312453) Scottish Environment Protection Agency (Tel 0800 80 70 60), Natural Resources Wales (Tel 0300 065 3000), Northern Ireland Environment Agency (Tel 0845 302 0008)
* **Do not to touch oil/tar/chemicals** found but to report to event leader; if considered appropriate the relevant agency will be informed. (Agencies = Environment Agency (England); Natural Resources Wales; Scottish Environment Protection Agency; Northern Ireland Environment Agency).
* **Syringes**
	+ Syringes and needles must be left where they are and never put in collection bags.
	+ The beach organiser should be alerted immediately and advise all participants to keep away from the area.
	+ The beach owner should be notified to collect and dispose of the syringe.
	+ For councils owned beaches you can use the following link https://www.gov.uk/report-syringes and leave information on the location of the syringe.
* First aid and treatment
	+ Any piercing injury by a syringe should be immediately treated at medical practice or A&E
	+ All participants should be advised to seek medical advice if they become ill in the weeks following the event and to ensure they inform medical staff that they took part in a beach clean.
* Participants to pay particular attention to hand washing/using sanitiser to reduce the risk of infection. Wear gloves and keep them sanitised throughout the day. Cover all existing wounds on hands with dressings and consider wearing a thin pair of extra gloves under the work gloves.
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event Beach clean organiser to ensure a suitable container is provided for collecting sharp itemsBeach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event Beach clean organiser to contact Environment Agency Pollution Hotline to be contacted (Tel 0800 7312453) Scottish Environment Protection Agency (Tel 0800 80 70 60), Natural Resources Wales (Tel 0300 065 3000), Northern Ireland Environment Agency (Tel 0845 302 0008) with any suspicious or hazardous containers are found. |
| 6 | Slips, trips, and falls, including features of the environment (for example, cliffs, rocks, dunes, soft sand, mud, groynes, pebble shelves, sand banks) | * Beach clean organiser to choose a location with minimal hazard to the participants and of any areas that are to be avoided
* Wear supportive, slip resistant footwear and no open toed shoes.
* Take care when negotiating steps, overgrown areas, rocky areas, wet/muddy areas, or sand dunes.
* Take extra care when carrying heavy bags over uneven, slippery ground
* If in doubt, don’t carry on if an area looks slippery or dangerous
* Stay away from visible landslips cliffs and never access caves or overhangs, with a minimum of 5m distance from cliff faces
* Sand dunes to be avoided to prevent the deterioration of the habitat
 | Beach clean organiser to include particular features and cautions applicable to the cleaning site in the briefing and the conditions on the day.Monitor activity during the event.Event organiser to cancel event if weather is sufficiently extreme. |
| 7 | Lifting and carrying heavy items | * Do not to over-fill bags or try to carry heavy items.
* Be aware of their own limitations by the event organiser during the briefing and not lift heavy items found during the clean up
* Heavy or partially buried items should be left, and the beach owner informed to arrange collection.
* Participants with pre-existing injuries are not to lift bags or heavy items
* No more than one bag at a time to be carried
* Young people are always supervised by a parent or guardian.
* If too heavy to handle, leave the object in place and report it to the organiser to arrange removal by the council.
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event.Beach clean organiser monitors during the clean.Beach clean organiser to inform the council/beach owner for removal of waste |
| 8 | Extreme weather conditions:Heat:Sunstroke, sunburnDehydration, heat exhaustionCold/wind/rain:HypothermiaLightningFire risk  | * **Beach clean organiser to:**
	+ Be aware of the predicted weather conditions in the lead up to the event and assess if the event can go ahead. Reschedule event to time when conditions are improved.
	+ Shorten the event duration due to the conditions or to end the event if the weather changes, or the location becomes unsafe.
* **Hot weather:**
	+ Take regular breaks and seek shade if necessary.
	+ Have access to water and advised to drink plenty.
	+ Apply sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) as directed on the tube / pump bottle. Reapplying every 2 hours is recommended.
	+ Encourage the removal of personal protective equipment (gloves, shoes & tabard) when resting to help encourage heat loss (don't forget to put them back on when you resume)
	+ Wear clothes and sunglasses that provide sun protection, such as:
		- A wide brimmed hat that shades the neck and ears
		- A long-sleeved top
		- Trousers or long skirt in close-weave fabric that do not allow sunlight through
		- Sunglasses with wrap around or wide arms with the CE Mark and British Standard mark 12312-1:2013 E
* Be aware of [heat exhaustion and heat stroke](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heat-exhaustion-heatstroke/) and how to look after them. If in doubt seek medical attention
* **Fires**- consider risks of fire during dry summer period and no open fires or BBQ’s if risk of combustion with vegetation or other combustible material.
* **Cold / wet weather**: Wear appropriate clothing. Be aware of [hypothermia](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hypothermia/) and how to look after them. If in doubt seek medical attention
* **Unstable, steep ground:** avoid areas where debris could come loose, i.e., trees, poorly maintained structures in high winds
* **Lightning:** cease using litter pickers and stop the event. Be aware of objects that can conduct or attract lightning, for example, litter pickers, gazebo poles, anything. If you have a metal object that is not necessary for your safety, put it aside.
	+ **30/30 rule:** if the flash to bang is 30 seconds in length or less you should seek shelter. Staying inside this shelter is advised until 30 minutes past the last clap of thunder. This ensures that any distant strikes at the beginning of the storm (lightning can travel up to 10 miles), or trailing storm clouds at the back of the storm do not take anyone by surprise.
* **Seeking shelter from lightning**
	+ Ideally, seek shelter inside a large building or a motor vehicle keeping away from, and getting out of wide, open spaces and exposed hilltops.
	+ If you are exposed to the elements with nowhere to shelter, make yourself as small a target as possible by crouching down with your feet together, hands on knees and your head tucked in. This technique keeps as much of you off the ground as possible.
	+ Do not shelter beneath tall or isolated trees, it has been estimated that one in four people struck by lightning are sheltering under trees.
	+ If you are on / near water, move away as quickly as possible as water will transmit strikes from further away.
 | Beach clean organiser to assess the conditions on the day and monitor during the event. |
| 9 | Fly tipped waste | * If there is an accumulation of waste which would obviously have been fly-tipped deliberately on site, then this should be left alone and the relevant local authority with responsibility for fly- tipping clearance informed.
* It is possible that asbestos could be found amongst smaller accumulations of litter that may not appear to be fly tipping. A simple asbestos ID chart can be found on the HSE (Hand Safety Executive) website here: http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/gallery.htm
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event. |
| 10 | Unexploded ordnance | * Do not to touch and/or approach suspected unexploded ordnance, but to immediately inform the event leader.
* **Beach clean organiser to:**
	+ stop all activity and participants moved a safe distance away from the unexploded ordnance.
	+ immediately notify Emergency Services/999 and establish a safe cordon around the device.
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event  |
| 11 | Animals (dead/alive); Including jelly fish | * Dead animals are to be reported to relevant agency for removal.
* Jellyfish do not need to be reported but should not be touched. You can send us information of your sighting here https://www.mcsuk.org/sightings/
* Do not to touch but immediately inform beach clean organiser
* Remain safe distance from animal.
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event  |
| 12 | Member of the public becoming involved with the event  | * Beach clean organiser to monitor the event closely and ensure that they are known as the point of contact/discussion with any members of the public.
* Event to be set up as a private event, so interested members of the public can be directed to the Beachwatch website to find suitable cleans to get involved with.
* If a confrontation occurs move the group away and if it persists, contact the police.
* We do not recommend that you approach members of the public to challenge inappropriate behaviour such as dog fouling or littering. If you do, please be polite and respectful.
* Do not trespass onto private property whilst litter picking.
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event  |
| 13 | Events with VIPs, Ministers, contentious issues – possibly attracting opposition or other campaign groups and publicity. | * Depending on the event, a member of the MCS Staff Team may be in attendance and will be responsible for managing the VIP/Minister with a separate colleague(s) handling press and monitoring for disruption. The MCS representatives will take responsibility for halting the event in line with the contingency plans and any extra safety considerations based on the nature of the event.
* No person is to be left alone or become separated from the group without an appropriate plan to ensure their safety.
* Whether MCS Staff Team are attending or not, if there is a VIP visitor to an event, they will brief the Beach Clean Organiser in advance to outline the purpose and messages and advise on any confidentiality issues and press/social media embargoes. They will also support on any contingency plans to update this risk assessment.
 | MCS Lead Representative inform the Beach Clean Organiser prior to the event and include any instructions for the briefing at the start of the event. |
| 14 | Media present at event  | * All Participants to be made aware in the event briefing that media will be present.
* All Participants asked to sign a consent form for photography and film taken during the beach clean if they are happy to be involved and for organiser to support them if needed.
* Organiser to send consent form to MCS Comms team for records along with any photography or film taken by the organiser or media lead.
 | Beach clean Organiser before (if possible) and during the event  |
| 15 | Aggressive dogs | * Participants advised of the threat of aggressive dogs and to not approach any unknown dog.
* Dog Walkers in vicinity to be advised by group leader of the litter pick and to keep dogs under control
* Children to always remain under adult supervision and within sight of adults
* Adopt recommended posture if confronted by a dog – do not look in eyes, look down, do not run, pull limbs into body. Retreat slowly
* Visit A&E if bitten or attacked
* Report attack to the Police and refer to the government guidance on controlling dogs in pubic if you feel this is necessary: <https://www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/report-a-dog>
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event. |
| 16 | Safeguarding – special provisions for welcoming children and young people at an eventLost child | Beaches are great environments for young people to enjoy, however, there are many distractions, and hazards that will always need supervising.* Young people remain the duty of care of their parent or guardian.
* Always keep young people in sight – no wandering off to explore.
* Keep all young people away from the water.
* If you are a school or children's group leading a clean, be sure to work in small groups directly supervised by an adult helper. The size of group will depend on your group and location.
* On report of a missing child, the Beach clean Organiser must identify when they were last seen and where, if possible. If child is still not located after contacting other members of the group, a widespread search of the area should be conducted in small groups.
* If they are still not located, the police should be contacted on 999
 | Beach clean Organiser informs as part of the H&S briefing at the start of the event. |
| 17 | First aid required  | * Beach clean organiser is recommended to:
	+ Have a first aid kit available and to let participants know how to access it.
	+ Be first aid trained or have first aid trained participant
	+ Have mobile phone in case of emergency and call 999 if help is needed.
	+ Before each litter pick takes place, keeps a copy of details of local walk-in centres and accident & emergency departments
	+ Replace used first aid items after event,
	+ To notify MSC staff of incidents involving first aid or visits to A&A or medical centres
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event  |

Put any temporary or additional risks that are relevant to the location and group of people attending

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| **Hazard No.** | **Description of Hazard** | **Measures to manage the risk that the hazard could have.****Ensure that you are satisfied that the measures effectively control the risk to the minimum possible.****Where risks cannot be reduced sufficiently, consider that the event cannot run.** | **Who is responsible, and when?** |
| 18 | Avian Bird Flu | **Current status – At risk*** Do not touch any sick or dead birds.
* Do not work in areas where birds congregate; nesting, feeding, roosting sites etc., where exposure to contaminated materials is more likely.
* Staff & Participants should continue to follow good hygiene procedures, such as regular and thorough handwashing.
* If you find an injured or sick animal call; England & Wales, the RSPCA- 0300 1234999 Scotland, the SPCA - 03000 999 999 Northern Ireland, the USPCA - 028 3025 1000.
* If you find dead birds or +5 of any other species in one place, please report them to Defra on 03459 335577 or in NI to DAERA on 0300 200 7840.
* **For the latest information** [**https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu#latest-situation**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu#latest-situation)
 | Beach clean organiser informs as part of the health and safety briefing at the start of the event. |
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