

# Beachwatch River Clean Risk Assessment

**IMPORTANT:** this risk assessment has been developed to include the most likely risks associated with the river environment and the activity of river 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.

River name:	Person responsible for calling emergency services (999 for Coastguard, Ambulance, Fire/Rescue, Police):
Risk Assessment completed by:	Time of River Clean:
Date of Risk Assessment:	I confirm the Risk Assessment is accurate and has been updated as required: [tick box]

**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)

**Where is the nearest hospital:** search here - <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Accident-and-emergency-services/LocationSearch/428>

**Where is the nearest defibrillator:** Search here - <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.

**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.

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

MCS Volunteers	Teachers/Group leaders	Young People	Parents/Helpers	Members of the public
Other (please state)				

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

MCS Volunteer organiser	Teachers/Group leaders	Other (please state)	
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## Section 3 – Identify Hazards

1	Lack of understanding of the event site, or knowing what to do if something occurs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Sharp or heavy litter	<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Safeguarding – special provisions for welcoming children and young people	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Transmission of coronavirus (Covid-19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Hazardous waste (dog faeces, sewage, needles, Weil's Disease, containers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	16	Aggressive dogs	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Lifting and carrying heavy items	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Fly tipped waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	17	Lone Working	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Tides/currents	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Unexploded ordnance	<input type="checkbox"/>	18		<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Slips, Trips & Falls, including features of the environment (for example, steep banks rocks, mud, locks, tunnels, narrow paths)	<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Animals (dead/alive);	<input type="checkbox"/>	19		<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Roads and slipways	<input type="checkbox"/>	13	First aid required	<input type="checkbox"/>	20		<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Weather conditions (Heat and Cold)	<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Member of the public becoming involved with the event	<input type="checkbox"/>	21		<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Section 4 – Risk Controls

Hazard No.	Description of Hazard	Measures to manage the risk that the hazard could have.		Who is responsible for implementing the controls, and when?
		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	
1	Lack of understanding of the event site, or knowing what to do if something occurs.	Prior to the litter-pick taking place, River Clean Organiser provides a briefing and safety talk, covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>risks and general information about correct use of the equipment</li> <li>the requirement to clean hands frequently with soap, or sanitiser</li> <li>particular features of the chosen area for cleaning (like banks, narrow paths etc)</li> <li>risks from hazardous waste and the need to avoid touching with hands/gloves</li> <li>who to contact if an accident occurs</li> <li>where and when to meet if the group becomes separated</li> </ul>		River Clean Organiser in advance of the event and in the briefing on the day.  Organiser can call the event to a close if behaviour is putting others at risk, or for any other hazards and risks that appear

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any issues that have become more hazardous (for example, due to the weather on the day, other events on the river, increased traffic, overcrowding/ability to maintain social distancing etc).</li> </ul>	
2	Transmission of coronavirus (Covid-19)	<p>All volunteers are advised not to attend any event if they have coronavirus symptoms. Pre-event communications with volunteers must include a clear message that they must not attend if they or any member of their household have symptoms of the coronavirus. They should also not attend if they, or any member of their household is shielding or classed as clinically/extremely vulnerable.</p> <p><b>When volunteers start arriving at the event, they must be advised to maintain social distancing in line with government advice with anyone outside of their household.</b></p> <p>Group advised to pay special attention to children and young adults who may find social distancing difficult to maintain.</p> <p>Volunteers must be advised to bring along their own gloves, wear them at all times, and use litter pickers if they are available.</p> <p>Any litter picking equipment given out to volunteers must be cleaned before and after use with a household disinfectant.</p> <p>During the health and safety briefing, volunteers must be reminded not to touch their face during the clean and to regularly sanitise their gloves and hands.</p> <p>All volunteers should wash their hands or use an appropriate hand sanitiser for 20 seconds at the end of the litter pick.</p>	<p>River Clean Organiser</p> <p>Part of the H&amp;S briefing at the start of the event.</p>
3	Lifting and carrying heavy items	<p>Volunteers instructed not to over-fill bags or try to carry heavy items.</p> <p>Volunteers advised to be aware of their own limitations by the event organiser during the briefing and not lift heavy items found during the clean up</p> <p>Volunteers with pre-existing injuries are not to lift bags or heavy items</p> <p>No more than one bag at a time to be carried</p> <p>Young people are always supervised by a parent or guardian.</p> <p>Only organisers/volunteers trained in safe manual handling procedures should offer guidance for safe lifting practices and reducing/removing common hazards and risks (reducing load weight, postural advice when lifting, handling asymmetrical loads, grip, other environmental factors, carry distance, obstacles en-route).</p> <p>Volunteers advised on safe manual handling practices.</p>	<p>River Clean Organiser informs as part of the H&amp;S briefing at the start of the event.</p> <p>River Clean Organiser monitors during the clean.</p> <p>River Clean Organiser to inform the Council/Beach Owner for removal of waste</p>

		If too heavy to handle, leave the object in place and report it to the organiser to arrange removal by the council.	
4	Tides/currents	<p>If on a foreshore then the tide times will be checked, and timing of event planned to ensure the sea will not be too close to participants.</p> <p>Volunteers advised to stay away from water's edge, not to enter the water</p> <p>Volunteers advised of tidal times and not to go to areas of the foreshore that could be cut-off.</p> <p>Special consideration of risks from the water for young people in the group – to be supervised at all times.</p>	<p>River Clean Organiser informs as part of the H&amp;S briefing at the start of the event.</p> <p>River Clean Organiser monitors and cancels event if water conditions threaten volunteer safety.</p>
5	<p>Slips, Trips &amp; Falls, including features of the environment (for example, steep banks rocks, mud.</p> <p>Locks</p> <p>Tunnels</p> <p>Narrow paths</p>	<p>Event organiser to choose a location with minimal hazard to the participants. Volunteers advised of any hazardous areas and informed that these are to be avoided.</p> <p>Volunteers advised to wear supportive, slip resistant footwear and no open toed shoes.</p> <p>Volunteers advised to take care when negotiating steps, on overgrown areas, rocky areas or wet/muddy ground.</p> <p>Volunteers instructed to take extra care when carrying heavy bags and not carry them for long distances.</p> <p>If in doubt, don't carry on if an area looks or becomes slippery or dangerous.</p> <p>Volunteers advised to stay away from steep banks and any visible landslips.</p> <p>Ensure children and young adults are supervised, particularly at locks where there is a risk of falling in.</p> <p>Note if buoyancy aids/life rings are available in the area of your route - choose locations that have them where possible.</p> <p>If someone falls in Call 999. Shout that help is on its way. Encourage them to float on their back. If being carried with water flow try to stay ahead of them. Use a life ring or a long branch if possible and safe to do so, and doesn't put you at risk of falling in.</p>	<p>Event organiser to include particular features and cautions applicable to the cleaning site in the briefing and the conditions on the day.</p> <p>Monitor activity during the event.</p> <p>Event organiser to cancel event if weather is sufficiently extreme.</p>
6	Roads	Prior to event, organiser to advise participants of any requirement to cross roads	River Clean Organiser informs as part of the

		<p>Children to remain under supervision and in sight of a responsible adult at all times, preferably by a parent or guardian.</p> <p>All volunteers advised not to work on roads or roadside verges</p> <p>No litter picking near railway lines or bridges.</p>	H&S briefing at the start of the event.
7	<p>Weather conditions:</p> <p><b>Heat:</b></p> <p>Sunstroke, sunburn</p> <p>Dehydration, heat exhaustion</p> <p><b>Cold/Wind/Rain:</b></p> <p>Hypothermia</p>	<p>River 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.</p> <p>Volunteers advised to dress appropriately for weather conditions. Gloves to be worn on all occasions.</p> <p>Advise volunteers to take regular breaks and seek shade if necessary.</p> <p>Volunteers advised to wear sun hats and sun cream, re-apply as needed.</p> <p>Volunteers to have access to water and advised to drink plenty.</p> <p>Volunteers instructed to avoid areas where debris could come loose, i.e. trees, poorly maintained structures in high winds</p> <p>If lightning occurs, workers and volunteers are instructed to cease using litter pickers and stop the event</p> <p>Event Organiser to shorten the event duration due to the conditions or to end the event if the weather changes, or the location becomes unsafe.</p>	<p>River Clean Organiser to assess the conditions on the day, and monitor during the event.</p> <p>Event organiser to cancel event if weather is sufficiently extreme</p>
8	Sharp or heavy litter	<p>Overall message is 'if in doubt, don't touch'.</p> <p>Volunteers advised to wear sturdy gardening type gloves at all times, to use a litter picker in preference to hands, and never pick handfuls of litter as broken glass and sharp items may be hidden inside.</p> <p>Glass and sharp items 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. Participants instructed to wrapped up securely, or in a sealable container which can be put in the waste bag at the end of the clean for safe removal.</p> <p>Bags not to be overfilled and made difficult to carry,</p> <p>Heavy or partially buried items should be left and the land owner informed to arrange collection.</p>	<p>River Clean Organiser informs as part of the H&amp;S briefing at the start of the event</p> <p>River Clean Organiser to ensure a suitable container is provided for collecting sharp items.</p>
9	<p>Hazardous waste:</p> <p>Dog faeces</p> <p>Sewage related items</p>	<p>Rivers can contain a variety of unpleasant and hazardous materials that can pose a risk to human health. Children should be supervised at all times and instructed to ask for help with hazardous waste.</p> <p>River Clean Organiser emphasises the requirement to wear gloves and avoid contact with hazardous materials.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>River Clean Organiser informs as part of the H&amp;S briefing at the start of the event</p> <p>River Clean Organiser to contact Environment Agency Pollution Hotline</p>

	<p>Suspicious containers</p> <p>Needles/medical waste</p> <p>Weil's Disease</p>	<p>Sewage related items to be collected using litter pickers if possible – or only with gloves on.</p> <p>Volunteers instructed to never to 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)</p> <p>Volunteers finding syringes should not touch them, but immediately notify the event organiser. All work must then cease in this particular area until the syringe is recovered.</p> <p>Any accidental piercing by syringe should be immediately treated at a medical practice or A&amp;E</p> <p>Sharps are never to be put in collecting bags. Volunteers advised to alert organiser if sharps are found and if able, they will arrange proper disposal using sharps kit/by the council. <a href="https://www.gov.uk/report-syringes">https://www.gov.uk/report-syringes</a></p> <p>The risk of Weil's disease will be outlined in the H&amp;S briefing at the start of the event. Volunteers must keep hands/gloves clean, use clean water to rinse if available, wash hands or use sanitiser. Ensure that all volunteers have cuts and grazes covered and all must be wearing gloves.</p> <p>Participants requested 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).</p> <p>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 or Nitrile gloves under work gloves.</p> <p>All volunteers 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 river clean.</p> <p>Event Organiser to check with the Council/land owner about their particular approach to collecting used PPE pick when they are arranging for waste collection.</p>	<p>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.</p>
10	Fly tipped waste	<p>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.</p> <p>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 website here: <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/gallery.htm">http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/gallery.htm</a></p>	<p>River Clean Organiser informs as part of the H&amp;S briefing at the start of the event.</p>
11	Unexploded ordnance	<p>Health and safety briefing at the start of the event will highlight the hazard of unexploded ordnances. Participants advised not to touch and/or approach suspected unexploded ordnance, but to immediately inform the event leader.</p>	<p>River Clean Organiser informs as part of the H&amp;S briefing at the start of the event</p>

		<p>Event leader to stop all activity and participants moved a safe distance away from the unexploded ordnance.</p> <p>Event leader to immediately notify Emergency Services/999 and establish a safe cordon around the device.</p>	
12	Animals (dead/alive)	<p>Included in Health and safety briefing at start of event - dead animals are to be reported to relevant agency for removal.</p> <p>Participants instructed not to touch but immediately inform event leader (see Weil's Disease above).</p> <p>Remain safe distance from animal.</p>	River clean Organiser informs as part of the H&S briefing at the start of the event
13	First aid required	<p>River Clean Organisers advised to have a first aid kit available and to let participants know how to access it.</p> <p>It is recommended that all clean-up hosts are First Aid trained</p> <p>Event organiser to have mobile phone in case of emergency and call 999 if help is needed.</p> <p>Before each litter pick takes place, organiser updates and keeps a copy of details of local walk in centres and accident &amp; emergency departments</p> <p>Organiser to replace used first aid items immediately after event, check kit before every event and undertake formal inventory on a quarterly basis</p>	River clean Organiser informs as part of the H&S briefing at the start of the event
14	Member of the public becoming involved with the event	<p>River 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.</p> <p>Conflict can occur with recreational or competition anglers, moored boats, groups of people socialising/picnicking.</p> <p>Interested members of the public can be directed to the Beachwatch website to find suitable cleans to get involved with.</p> <p>If a confrontation occurs move the group away and if it persists, contact the police.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Do not trespass onto private property whilst litter picking.</p>	River clean Organiser informs as part of the H&S briefing at the start of the event
15	<p>Safeguarding – special provisions for welcoming children and young people at an event</p> <p>Lost child</p>	<p>Rivers are great environments for young people to enjoy, however, there are many distractions, and hazards that will need supervising at all times.</p> <p>Young people remain the duty of care of their parent or guardian at all times.</p> <p>Keep all young people in sight at all times – no wandering off to explore.</p> <p>Keep all young people away from the water.</p>	River clean Organiser informs as part of the H&S briefing at the start of the event.

		<p>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 particular group and location.</p> <p>On report of a missing child, the River 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 river bank should be conducted.</p> <p>If they are still not located, the police should be contacted on 999</p>	
16	Aggressive dogs	<p>Volunteers advised of the threat of aggressive dogs and to not approach any unknown dog.</p> <p>Dog Walkers in vicinity to be advised by group leader of the litter pick and to keep dogs under control</p> <p>Children to remain under adult supervision and within sight of adults at all times</p> <p>Adopt recommended posture if confronted by a dog – do not look in eyes, look down, do not run, pull limbs into body. Retreat slowly</p> <p>Visit A&amp;E if bitten or attacked</p> <p>Report attack to the Police and refer to the government guidance on controlling dogs in public if you feel this is necessary: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/report-a-dog">https://www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/report-a-dog</a></p>	River clean Organiser informs as part of the H&S briefing at the start of the event.
17	Lone Working	<p>Let someone know where you are going to be and what time they should be back. Have a little check in, during the day if it's going to be a few hours. Consider location sharing on your phone.</p>	River Clean Organiser

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

Hazard No.	Description of Hazard	<b>Measures to manage the risk that the hazard could have.</b> <b>Ensure that you are satisfied that the measures effectively control the risk to the minimum possible.</b> <b>Where risks cannot be reduced sufficiently, consider that the event cannot run.</b>	Who is responsible, and when?
18			



19			
20			
21			