

[Solent plastic pollution hub launched for Hampshire litter pickers](#)

The Environment Agency and independent coastal partnership, the Solent Forum, have launched an [information hub](#) for litter pickers.

The web-based resource features guidance for new and existing groups, including group links, information on borrowing equipment, litter recycling and disposal, and local initiatives. Litter pickers can also join a [Facebook](#) page featuring news and local events.

The 2-year initiative is part of a wider project funded by the cross-Channel [Interreg Preventing Plastic Pollution project](#), which is made up of 18 expert organisations aiming to reduce the impact of plastic pollution in river and marine environments across southern England.

Environment Agency project lead Lizzie Lewis said:

Each year an estimated 14 million pieces of plastic rubbish end up in and around our waterways, with around 500,000 pieces flowing out into our oceans, adversely affecting marine life and habitats.

We know there's lots of excellent work taking place across the Hampshire patch to improve river and coastal health. This new online resource will collate and publicise this activity.

By gathering and recording river catchment data, Interreg partners can create catchment-wide risk maps which identify plastic pollution hotspots. The results will help us to focus our prevention efforts, and hopefully encourage people to change their behaviours by following our waste hierarchy – avoid, reduce, reuse and recycle – to help our planet thrive.

The online resources are being hosted by the Solent Forum.

Kate Ansell, Solent Forum project lead, said:

We are delighted to be part of this project which helps to fulfil our ambitions to reduce litter and plastics for the benefit of all Solent coastal communities. The promotion and sharing of information and data Solent-wide will help to support local community groups and build links between them.

This work also supports our Cleaner Solent Shores and Seas Initiative which co-ordinates information on a wide range of water quality issues throughout the Solent and its catchments.

For more information about the project email solentforum@hants.gov.uk.

Environment Agency: As a regulator the Environment Agency prevents waste plastic entering the environment by cracking down on waste crime and poor waste management.

As an influencer its ambition is to promote better environmental practices that result in a reduction of plastic waste, helping to achieve the goals and commitments outlined in its 5 year plan to create better places for people, wildlife and the environment, and the government's 25 year Environment Plan.

Interreg Preventing Plastic Pollution (PPP): The partnership seeks to understand and reduce the impacts of plastic pollution in the river and marine environments. By looking at the catchment from source to sea, the project identifies and targets hotspots for plastic, embeds behaviour change in local communities and businesses, and implements effective solutions and alternatives.

PPP is a €14million funded EU INTERREG VA France (Channel) England Programme project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund which works mainly across Brest Harbour, Bay of Douarnenez, Bay of Veys, Poole Harbour, Medway, Test and Itchen, East Hampshire, Tamar, and Great Ouse catchments.

Partners are the Environment Agency, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Queen Mary University of London, LABOCEA Conseil, Expertise et Analyses, Syndicat mixte établissement public de gestion et d'aménagement de la baie de Douarnenez, Office Français De La Biodiversité, Parc naturel marin d'Iroise, Brest Métropole, Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Conseil départemental de la Manche, Institut français de recherche pour l'exploitation de la mer, The Rivers Trust, Syndicat de bassin de l'Elorn, ACTIMAR, Brest'aim, Westcountry Rivers Trust, South East Rivers Trust, and Plymouth City Council.

Solent Forum: The Solent Forum is an independent coastal partnership established in 1992 to develop a greater understanding among the many local and harbour authorities, user groups, marine businesses and agencies involved in planning and management of the Solent. It assists and advises them in carrying out their functions. The Environment Agency is a forum member.

[Solent Forum – Solent Plastics Pollution Hub](#) [Solent Plastics Pollution Hub | Facebook](#)