

Date: 25.8.05

Prestonpans Beach Needs You!

Prestonpans beach will be receiving a thorough clean on **17th/18th September** as party of the Marine Conservation Society's (MCS) national ***Beachwatch 2005*** beach clean and survey event. MCS needs volunteers to get together with family, friends or colleagues to help make *Beachwatch 2005*, supported by the Crown Estate, the biggest beach clean yet!

Since it began in 1993, *Beachwatch* has become the most extensive monitoring programme in Europe for coastal and marine litter and thousands of volunteers have joined the nationwide war on litter each year. During last year's MCS *Beachwatch 2004* weekend, over 3,000 volunteers took part, cleaning and surveying 269 beaches, and collecting over a quarter of a million items of litter, a clear signal that clean beaches are a matter of high concern to the UK public. The survey recorded an average of 1,897 items per kilometre surveyed on UK beaches, the equivalent of one piece of litter ever 52 centimetres.

Beach litter is more than just an eyesore; it's a problem on a major scale, costing local authorities in the UK an estimated £14.5 million annually, but there is something practical, and simple everyone can do to help.

Beachwatch, the flagship event of the Marine Conservation Society's *Adopt-a-Beach* project, is also part of the International Coastal Cleanup so all data collected is used at an international level. Taking part in *Beachwatch 2005* is an easy, simple and fun way of making a practical difference to your local coast! **As an extra incentive, Prestonpans volunteers will receive a free Gothenburger courtesy of the Prestoungrange Gothenburg!**

The next Prestonpans beach clean and survey is due to take place on Saturday 17th September at 4.00 p.m. and Sunday 18th September at 4.30 p.m. The part of beach to be surveyed is the section opposite the Prestoungrange Gothenburg stretching 100m westward past the murals - although volunteers are of course welcome to clean other parts of the beach!

Volunteers are requested to register first by contacting the organiser, Jan Barker. Tel: 01875 819696 or email jan@barker-family.info. Further information, parental consent forms, and sponsorship sheets are available at www.barker-family.info/beach

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Editors Notes:

The Marine Conservation Society (MCS) is the UK charity dedicated to the protection of the marine environment and its wildlife. Since its formation in 1983, MCS has become a recognised authority on marine conservation and is regularly consulted by Government for its views on a range of marine issues. MCS provides information and guidance on many aspects of marine conservation and produces the annual *Good Beach Guide* (www.goodbeachguide.co.uk) and *Good Fish Guide*, as well as promoting public participation in volunteer projects and surveys such as *Beachwatch*, *Adopt-a-Beach* and *Basking Shark Watch*. MCS has successfully lobbied for a recent Government commitment to draft a comprehensive Marine Bill to provide better protection for marine species and habitats and establish a governing system for the sustainable management of the marine environment. See www.mcsuk.org for more information.

Beachwatch is an annual UK-wide beach litter survey and clean-up, organised by MCS since 1993. *Beachwatch* is the flagship event of the *Adopt-a-Beach* project, which encourages local volunteers to survey marine litter every quarter. Volunteers remove all the litter from a measured area of their local beach, recording every item that they find. The data gathered from *Beachwatch* is published by MCS and used to raise awareness of the impacts of litter and promote measures to reduce litter at source.

Beachwatch and *Adopt-a-Beach* are sponsored by the **Crown Estate**. As a substantial owner of marine land, sponsorship of these projects is part of the Crown Estate's commitment to the good stewardship of land in its care.

Beachwatch 2004 – N.B. these are the statistics from the **September 2004 Beachwatch survey**.

Summary of Beachwatch 2004 results

Number of beaches surveyed	269	% Beach visitors	38.6	Note: Percentages are recorded to 1 decimal place. * if data from one beach where over 10,000 cotton bud sticks were recorded is removed, the percentage for SRD is 5.6%
Total length surveyed (km)	145.2	% Fishing	14.1	
Number of bags collected	2,469	% Sewage related debris*	9.3	
Weight (kg)	11,671	% Shipping	2.2	
Total number of items	275,54	% Fly tipped	0.8	
Mean items/km	1,897.4	% Medical	0.1	
		% Non sourced	34.8	

Copies of the Beachwatch 2004 Report, and Summary Report are available from the Marine Conservation Society, or can be downloaded from the Adopt-a-Beach website at www.adoptabeach.org.uk

The International Coastal Cleanup, involving over 80 countries, is co-ordinated by the Ocean Conservancy in the USA. This provides a 'snapshot' of the amounts and sources of litter washing up or being dumped on beaches around the world.

Beachwatch Contacts:

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Gill Bell (MCS Adopt-a-Beach Outreach Officer) 01989 561586

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