

PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL: 24 SEPTEMBER 2021

AGENDA ITEM 13: POLYSTYRENE SURFBOARDS

At the request of Council, the Beach Guardian, Emily was contacted, and meeting arranged with Councillor Higman and the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk advised of letter received from Cornwall Council (appendix 1) who are now also interesting in the banning of them. She had contacted CC to advise of Council's recent discussions and any further information they may have, but nothing has come back as yet.

Emily advised that this was a matter she too considered an issue with her fully appreciating the concerns raised. She commented on various schemes she was aware of or had considered taking forward, some put on hold due to COVID, these included:-

- Aware that Newquay had collection bins where any beach toys could be left and recycled for other beach goers use or picked up for disposal. However, this wasn't ideal as often people put other rubbish including dog waste in them.
- She had been looking at working with holiday rentals to encourage them to have available high quality reusable beach items, such as boards, windbreakers etc.
- Mentioned the Ocean Recovery Project, which takes beach waste and upcycle into other things, such as chairs etc. This more so in Devon.
- Possible rent and repair systems to try to encourage more use rather than disposal.

It was felt that as Padstow had its Padstow Plastic Free status this could be a good project to work together on to try to encourage and educate people and businesses to not sell or buy cheap boards but better to direct to high value or wooden boards. It was acknowledged that Padstow Town Council doesn't have any powers in getting people to stop selling. There was further thought on this and linking back to nostalgia and trying to look at personal stories which could be shared as part of a campaign, to start the process of educating businesses and users. All agreed that social media was a great platform for this. Would Council like to work with the Beach Guardian in this matter?



Date: 31 August 2021

Dear Town and Parish Council Colleagues

Campaign to ban the sale of environmentally-damaging body boards

Cornwall Council is joining other coastal areas in supporting a new campaign by Channel 4's 'Joe Lycett's Got Your Back' to ban the sale of polystyrene body boards and replace them with more sustainable alternatives.

The BAFTA nominated TV series is broadcasting a programme in September highlighting how the cheap and flimsy bodyboards are discarded in coastal towns across the UK each year littering beaches and polluting the sea.

The programme will look at sustainable alternatives and call for retailers to stock more durable body boards that can be rented out, thus ensuring that the items are not abandoned and treated as disposable.

As the Cornwall Council Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, I am well aware of the problem and support Joe Lycett's campaign.

We have joined a list of other councils and organisations committed to asking local businesses to support the movement to 'get on board' with the Council and remove the sale of polystyrene bodyboards from Cornwall altogether.

I am asking for your support in encouraging Cornwall's retailers to consider stocking more durable, climate-friendly body boards that can be rented out as a more sustainable option for the environment and businesses.

We have all seen the images of the mountain of polystyrene boards that get left behind by beachgoers. And there are several great initiatives in Cornwall that are already dealing with the problem:

- Cornwall Council is supporting Waterhaul, a social enterprise based in Cornwall which has a mission to transform the ocean's most damaging plastic from waste to resource. Waterhaul is [developing an education and outreach program](#) through our Crowdfunder [#BackTheFuture Cornwall Climate Action scheme](#).
- [BeachCare](#) and [Rivercare](#) recycle and repurpose left behind boards. The Friends of Fistral Dunes 'Newquay Bodyboard Recycling scheme' focusses on [collecting and recycling body boards](#): <https://fb.watch/6qDZiNPUuy/>, and the Keep Britain Tidy #waveofwest project hires wooden bellyboards: <https://www.inyourarea.co.uk/news/wooden-bellyboard-hire-scheme-will-protect-our-beloved-beaches/>

Personally, I am particularly keen to see the return to the old plywood body boards used by my Mum and Grandmother!

Keep Britain Tidy have reported that 16,000 polystyrene bodyboards end up discarded on UK beaches every year. These brightly coloured boards usually cost less than £10 and are known to break easily - invariably getting discarded on our beaches at the end of the day. They have a large carbon footprint and because polystyrene is fragile and crumbles easily, the small white polystyrene balls can be mistaken as food by fish and other marine life.

If you would like to support the campaign, please look at how your organisation can work with local retailers to find a different and better way for everyone to enjoy Cornwall's waves.

Yours sincerely



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