



2020 has been a difficult year for all of us in Wales, and as a partnership our work has been impacted at a variety of different levels, such as 'on the ground' beach cleaning, planned field work and research and engagement with the public.

As we emerged from the initial Government restrictions last year, volunteer beach cleans could once again commence, indeed the First Minister attended a socially distanced beach clean with Marine Conservation Society (MCS).

Ways of working were changed and the use of virtual and social media awareness raising has benefitted and replaced our partners usual engagement mechanisms such as; Surfers Against Sewage (SAS) [#ReturnToOffender](#), Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP) [#TakeItHome](#), Welsh Government [#LoveWelshBeaches](#), MCS [#StopTheThread](#), Keep Wales Tidy (KWT) [#NoLitterAfterLockdown](#) campaigns.

However, some projects have progressed in 2020 including Welsh Government '[end of life fishing gear](#)' and 'marine litter education packs' for Welsh secondary schools and '[Eco-Schools at Home Challenges](#)' being delivered by KWT.

Other projects include [#PostPandemicPollution](#) from SAS encouraging beach visitors in Brighton to photograph and raise awareness of the lack of disposal points for rubbish. SEP have made progress with their 'Litter Free Coast' project engaging with partners on both sides of the Severn. Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum (PCF) continue to deliver the 'Building Resilience in Catchment' project which focuses on water quality measures in the Cleddau Estuary. The National Federation of Women's Institutes-Wales' 'End Plastic Soup' campaign, was adapted to run from home using a variety of different tasks.

The partnership continues to work closely and engage with wider litter policies, such as waste and single use plastics. A workshop was held in 2020 relating to the 'Single-use Plastics' consultation of which some partners responded with their views.

Key discussion points have focused on emerging issues relating to the covid-19, including an increase of PPE found on our beaches and guidance on how to safely undertake a beach clean.

Unfortunately, many of the annual beach cleaning events which provide valuable data on the state of the marine environment were cancelled, including; SEP 'Severn Estuary Big Beach Clean' and KWT's 'Spring Beach Clean'. However, the MCS 'Great British Beach Clean' did continue later in 2020 in a significantly scaled back event.

A number of partners are working to identify solutions, jointly and individually on a number of key litter items such as; MCS 'ASH Wales' focusing on cigarette butts and wetwipes using the '[Stop the flush](#)' standard and Dwr Cymru's 'Stop the Block'.

For 2021, there is a positivity that some work can continue amongst the partners, building on the adaptations made in 2020.