

admin

From: Victoria
Sent: 30 November 2020 18:38
To: admin
Subject: FW: Plastic Free North Devon Polystyrene Bodyboard Campaign

Mrs Victoria Woodhouse BA (Hons)

Executive Officer
Fremington Parish Council
The Beechfield Centre
Beechfield Road
Fremington
EX31 3DD

01271 321063

From: Plastic Free North Devon <
Sent: 28 October 2020 15:54
To: Victoria <v.uk>
Subject: Plastic Free North Devon Polystyrene Bodyboard Campaign

Dear Fremington Parish Clerk

I am writing to ask Fremington Parish Council to support our campaign to remove, from retail sale, cheap polystyrene bodyboards in North Devon by passing a motion of support. We would also like to request your help in gaining support from our district councillors by inviting them to do the same.

Annually, hundreds of thousands of low-cost body boards are discarded on beaches across the world. Keep Britain Tidy estimates that 16,000 cheap polystyrene bodyboards end up discarded on UK beaches every year. Hundreds of these "sub £10" brightly coloured boards, known to break easily often after only one or two uses and are invariably discarded on North Devon beaches.

These 16,000 single use boards create a large amount of waste in the UK and create a huge carbon footprint. These boards, made from a block of standard polystyrene wrapped in brightly printed nylon cloth, are sourced from China, transported thousands of miles only to snap within minutes of use. Standard polystyrene is fragile and crumbles easily posing danger to sea and shore life alike as animals mistake these small white nuggets for food - 'polystyrene popcorn'. In the ocean, algae and small organisms grow on crumbled polystyrene or 'polystyrene popcorn' adding weight causing the nuggets to sink and present themselves as food to fish. The human health threat from polystyrene comes from one of its building blocks styrene. In 2018, the World Health Organisation reclassified styrene from a "possible carcinogen" to a "probable carcinogen" – a probable cause of cancer.

We, Plastic Free North Devon, are campaigning to encourage local retailers not to offer block polystyrene bodyboards but to offer bodyboards with higher grade expanded polystyrene core board (EPS). This material is far more resilient when used and is repairable should a board become broken. With Covid impacting the supply of cheap polystyrene bodyboards, local retailers reported stronger summer sales of the EPS core boards but many are considering reverting to the cheaper polystyrene boards for sale next summer. As with plastic straws, these cheap boards are often usable for a short time period defining them as single use, poor value for money and a threat to our natural environment.

This year we launched a pilot project to tackle this issue giving beach goers the opportunity to rent wooden Bellyboards at Saunton Beach. This project was successful at raising awareness but is unable to tackle the root cause of the problem and doesn't even touch the surface of the damage that these polystyrene bodyboards cause. We need to turn off the tap. You can read more about this in our [blog](#).

It is nearly two years since North Devon Council unanimously voted through a motion supporting the Surfers Against Sewage Plastic Free Coastlines campaign along with many parishes in the area. Can we count on your support to vote through a motion to support removing from sale cheap polystyrene bodyboards? We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards

CEO Plastic Free North Devon

Plastic Free North Devon



info@plasticfreenorthdevon.org

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

www.plasticfreenorthdevon.org

Registered Charity 1182464