



## Newquay Cleaner Seas 2019-2020 Project Report

### Project scope

Following the success of the 2018-2019 project based on the Porth Catchment, the EA contacted Newquay Marine Group (NMG) to repeat the work, this time concentrating on the Towan Beach Catchment.

The objectives were the same: *Raise public and business awareness of poor drainage and waste disposal practices that causes blockages, leaks and overflows that result in polluted drainage water reaching bathing beaches (e.g. Fats Oils Grease, 3Ps, Only Rain Down the Drain, Yellow Fish Campaign).*

While no tasks were specified, the group understood that similar outputs were required. These included:

- Painting yellow fish
- Business visits
- Community events
- School engagements
- Promotion and publicity

### The Plan

- Liz and Laura to manage the project using the same team that worked at Porth.
- Draw up a planning timeline.
- Create specific resources for this area.
- Engage the Harbour, Blue Reef Aquarium and the owner of Towan Beach.
- Raise awareness and spread the word at all events NMG
- Start with painting yellow fish, create a 'buzz' on social media and local press.
- Deliver workshops for schools in the area.
- Engage with businesses in the area by 'cold calling'.
- Offer misconnection surveys where possible if the budget allowed.

### The Achievements

#### Planning

- Our team group Facebook page was activated after we announced the new project at NMG meeting.
- Timeline and paperwork created and collated.
- New materials ordered and printed for the Towan Catchment area.
- More paint ordered ready for yellow fish.
- Meeting with the Harbour master which was extremely positive.
- Attendance of the Harbour Stakeholder meeting. Liz and Laura attended and spoke at the meeting about NCS.



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- Meeting with the Assistant Manager of Blue Reef Aquarium which agreed to display an information board in their foyer and to distribute information leaflets to school children.
- Positive email communication with the private owner of Towan Beach.
- Emails sent to Trenance School and Newquay Pre School and 1<sup>st</sup> Newquay Scout Group. Two workshops arranged in March with the Beavers.
- Two days set with our team to cold call a prepared list of businesses. Businesses packs and ID badges prepared.

### Activities

- A leaflet was designed by a NMG member ready for dissemination to school groups at the Aquarium.
- Content for an A1 information board was designed and collated and delivered to the Aquarium for them to set up.
- A misconnection survey was offered and set up with Richard Barker for the Blue Reef Aquarium. This would take all day and all of our survey budget but deemed worth it.
- 3 Radio interviews about the project with two further interviews in the diary with Heart FM and Pirate FM.
- Half a page article in the Newquay Voice
- Two individuals working towards their Duke of Edinburgh award made cardboard stencils and decorations for our events stall.
- Kar and Dave, a company in St Mawgan donated 2 laser cut stencils for painting.
- The team painted approximately 150 yellow fish around town. Fore street from The Red Lion to Central, up to The Victoria Hotel and all of beach road.
- We had a lot of yellow fish interest on social media. The first post in December 2019 led to a lot of discussion and other groups getting in touch to discuss the project. Stats: 17,816 reached and 3,626 engagements. 158 likes and 75 shares, our second main post which discussed the new paint had 1300 reached, 259 engagement and 80 likes.

### Events

- NMG attended 5 events promoting the project and explaining it to the public. These were:
  - The Seal Group and Research Trust talk,
  - Artifishal film showing at Newquay Cinema,
  - Manta Ray talk at Cornwall College
  - The Your Shore Conference in Wadebridge
  - St Pirans day Celebrations at the Griffin

## **The Issues**

Despite a positive start, several external reasons have led to the project being incomplete at the end of March.

- We started painting yellow fish in earnest in December 2019. This received a huge amount of publicity and worked well in tandem with newspaper articles and radio interviews. However, the social media post led to a revelation that the paint was deemed toxic to aquatic life. We made the decision to postpone any further painting until we had discussed next steps with our partners and sourced environmentally friendly paint. Lakeland Paints were extremely



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helpful and make eco-friendly paints which we purchased and had more painting days in the diary. Until

- The consistently wet and wild weather got a lot worse in February in March with the arrival of Storm Ciara and then Storm Dennis. No painting could be done in these conditions. Plus
- In February, due to bad weather and storm Dennis, Blue Reef Aquarium suffered structural damage. A huge hole opened up on the promenade resulting in no access to the facility. Obviously and quite rightly the staff had different priorities to concern themselves with. We have yet to get the display board up or distribute leaflets to children there, or to deliver a misconnection survey. We have yet to paint yellow fish on the promenade also.
- Despite a very positive response by schools for the Porth project we had limited responses to emails sent to schools this time. We are not sure why this was as we also had excellent feedback from the schools engaged last year. The Beaver/Scout group were very enthusiastic and we had arranged two workshops with them. These, however, have been cancelled/postponed due to Covid-19.
- The cold calling days arranged for March have been cancelled due to the Coronavirus as has all ongoing activities as per the Government guidelines.

## The Future

NMG are frustrated that we haven't got further with this project as hoped and that we can't complete the objectives the EA entrusted upon us. Once the Covid-19 lockdown has been lifted and things get back to normal, the team will be working hard to finish this project as one of the NMG priorities for this year.



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