

Huge effort by volunteers to clean Dorset beaches

Now in its 27th year, the Great Dorset Beach Clean has been hailed a success once again. The clean, which targeted 26 of Dorset's beaches, involved over 700 volunteers and 20 different organisations who offered just a couple of hours to make a difference to our coasts, retrieving almost 800 bags of litter from beaches from Friars Cliff to Lyme Regis.

For the first time, the clean-up was co-ordinated by the Litter Free Coast and Sea Project, part of the Dorset Coast Forum. Natalie Poulter, project co-ordinator said 'We'd like to give a huge vote of thanks to all the organisations who agreed to host a clean this weekend and, most importantly, to the hundreds of volunteers who gave up their time to help clean up Dorset's beaches in time for the summer season'. She went on to explain 'beach cleans are an important way for us to understand what rubbish is being found on which beaches. In turn, this helps us to work out who we can work with to help stop more getting out there in the future- after all, if we don't reduce the amount going into the sea, these clean ups will go on forever!' She added 'There are 5.25 trillion pieces of plastic floating and sinking their way around this planet's oceans, and washing up on beaches. I'm thrilled that Dorset's residents are passionate about protecting their part of the coast, and are willing to give up their time to make a dent in that figure'.

Litter collected will be processed by the Dorset Waste Partnership, who will be recycling the waste wherever possible to prevent it going to landfill. Plastic bottles from some cleans have also been donated to an exciting new project which will turn them into board shorts, creating something useable from something we think of as rubbish. Ali Murrell from Riz boardshorts said 'It seems bonkers to me that we use something for less than five minutes and throw it away, when it can be turned into something useful, valuable, long-lasting and something which can be cherished. We think we can do better, and feel that Riz boardshorts are a step in the right direction.'

Notes to editors

Litter Free Coast and Sea is an ongoing campaign to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of marine and beach litter, and improve and maintain bathing water quality along the Dorset and East Devon coast by preventing litter from getting to our coast in the first place. It is supported and promoted by over 500 local organisations and individuals up and down the coast. All supporters want a litter free coast and sea, act in ways that will help achieve this and encourage other people to do so.

For more information:

- **Litter Free Coast and Sea Week:** please contact Litter Free Coast and Sea: litterfreecoastsea@dorsetcc.gov.uk (01305)221752
- **Riz boardshorts:** please contact Ali Murrell at ali@rizboardshorts.com or go to his website: www.rizboardshorts.com or call 07813 150855