

Time to Clean Up Our Act and the Planet This Month

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Plastic waste is seeping from every pore on land and in our oceans as the world continues to be laden with litter.

While humans are perceived to be the most intelligent species on the planet, we are also hell-bent on destroying our habitats, defying all logic. As a consumer society, it may still come as a shock to learn that 99 percent of items we purchase are thrown away within six months and a staggering 2.12 billion tons of waste is dumped every year.

There are three awareness days this month to ink into your calendar (use a refillable pen though, or you are simply adding to the waste problem!) and help make the change that is urgently required.

The Great British Beach Clean

This year between Friday 17th and Sunday 26th September, people across the UK will be out in force donning their litter pickers to collect rubbish from hundreds of beaches.

The citizen science event will collect marine litter data to help push conservation work forward and the information gathered will also feed into the International Coastal Clean-up (ICC), the world's largest effort to rid the ocean and waterways of plastics and marine debris.

Everyone who signs up will be asked to conduct a litter survey by recording all items of rubbish collected over a distance of 100m. All data will then be used to campaign for change.

Some changes have already been implemented to help protect our beaches, from the ban on microplastics in personal care products to the plastic bag levy (there has been a 55 percent drop in plastic bags found on UK beaches since the 5p charge was introduced), yet there is still more work to be done.

Last year, the Great British Beach Clean found 425 items of litter per 100m of beach. The pandemic hasn't helped combat the plastic pollution crisis either; 30 percent of beach cleans last year revealed discarded face masks and PPE.

The Great British Beach Clean includes the Great Channel Islands Beach Clean and Great Northern Irish Beach Clean.

To get involved simply turn up at your local beach with a litter picker and a bag for rubbish. To join a group, go to **The Great British Beach Clean events | What you can do | Marine Conservation Society (mcsuk.org)** to find out about events planned for your beach.

Clean Up the World Weekend

This is one of the largest community-based environmental campaigns in the world, attracting around 35 million volunteers spanning 133 countries.

The campaign, which runs from September 17-19, encourages everyone from businesses, schools, community groups and local governments, to get involved in addressing local environmental issues.

Whether you want to conserve water or plant trees to help make a difference, the not-for-profit event aims to empower global communities to make changes to clean up and protect the environment through a range of activities.

Clean Up the World operates in Africa, Europe, East Asia, Asia Pacific, Latin America & the Caribbean and signing up to the event will gain you access to tools and resources.

The event also aims to connect groups to create a support network and inspire others to take action.

For more details go to **www.cleanuptheworld.org**

World Clean Up Day

This is the biggest waste collection day in human history, which aims to involve 180 countries and 50 million volunteers.

Not even a pandemic could prevent people from around the globe pulling together last year to embark on a multitude of projects to rid the beaches of marine litter and collect waste from streets, forests and rivers.

Collaborating to help on World Clean Up Day(September 18th)can see meaningful relationships blossom as people join forces to do good for society and the planet.

As our Acre team are based in the UK, the US and the Netherlands, we have listed some of the events below.

- Clink Hostels will host a clean up in London, kicking off at Clink78 in Kings Cross. The youth hostel team will explore the local area to collect as much rubbish as possible and once finished you are welcome to join everyone back at Clink78 for a celebratory drink.
- Big Clean Up South London invites like-minded people to improve the environment. The diverse group has local associations coming together in Park Hill Park next to East Croydon Station and pickers and gloves will be provided.
- In New York, there will be an event focusing on the Suffolk Cooperative Library System (SCLS) offices, cleaning up litter from the parking lot and N Sunrise Highway Service Road.
- A Virtual Clean up Challenge with health food shop The Patch in Clearwater, Florida, will kick off with an Instagram challenge of collecting items from a 'trash shopping list'. Items to collect include 50 cigarette butts,25 cans/bottles/cups and there is also an honorable mention for the strangest trash item you uncover.
- In the NetherlandsClinkNOORD invites you to work together to clean up the streets of Amsterdam. Celebrate your efforts afterwards back at ClinkNOORD for a drink to celebrate!
- The Cohesion Clean Up Challenge Amsterdam welcomes volunteers to help look after the local environment. Cohesion provides affordable housing to young communities and wants to raise awareness of sustainability and looking after surroundings.

For further information on the events go to www.worldcleanupday.org

Are you planning to take part in an event to help clean up the world this month? It would be great to hear from you and we would especially welcome the success stories afterwards.

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