

ENJOY AND PROTECT

Community Guide





ABOUT ENJOY AND PROTECT

The Clean Coasts programme works with communities to help protect and care for Ireland's waterways, coastline, seas, ocean and marine life, by organising hundreds of beach clean-ups each year, mobilising thousands of volunteers, and removing large quantities of marine litter from our coastline.

The Irish coast offers breath-taking views, beautiful beaches, epic cliffs, and more, and its unique beauty and character has been attracting visitors from all over the world - did you know that some of the coastal areas in Ireland have been named top tourists' attractions in Europe, ranking higher than other famous landmarks including Buckingham Palace, the Eiffel Tower and the Leaning Tower of Pisa?

The Irish coast also presents its visitors with numerous opportunities to have fun. With the nice weather on the way, we expect that more people will be visiting the beautiful coastal areas around the country, whether it is for sea swimming, water sports, or simply to enjoy the stunning landscape.

With our 'Enjoy and Protect' campaign, we are asking people to enjoy and celebrate our stunning coastline, beautiful beaches, epic cliffs and all outdoors areas, but also to protect these natural treasures. Get out and make the most of Ireland's wonderful coast, but also do your part to preserve our marine environment and keep it safe and beautiful for future generations to enjoy too.

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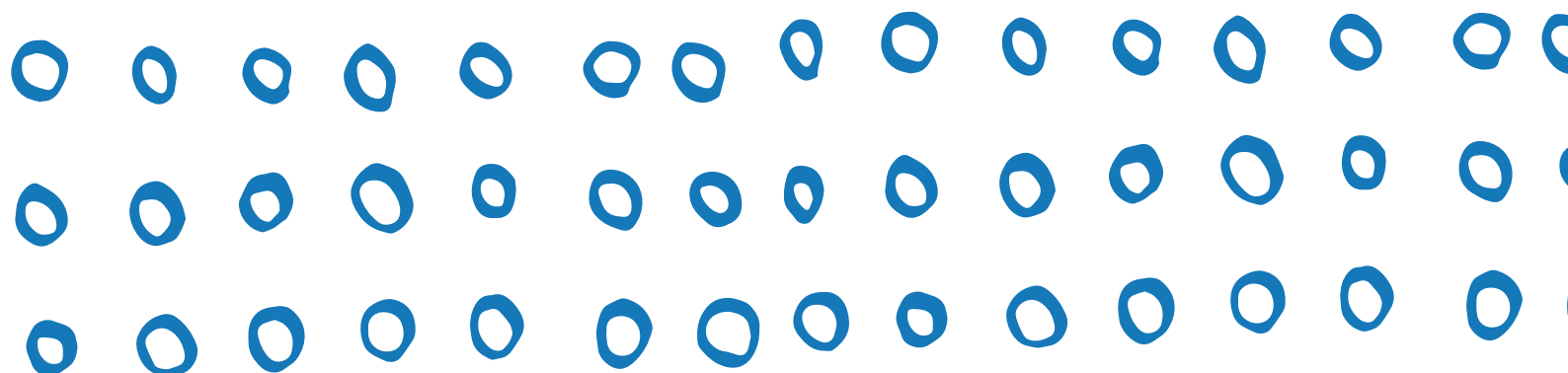
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SECTION 1

MARINE LITTER

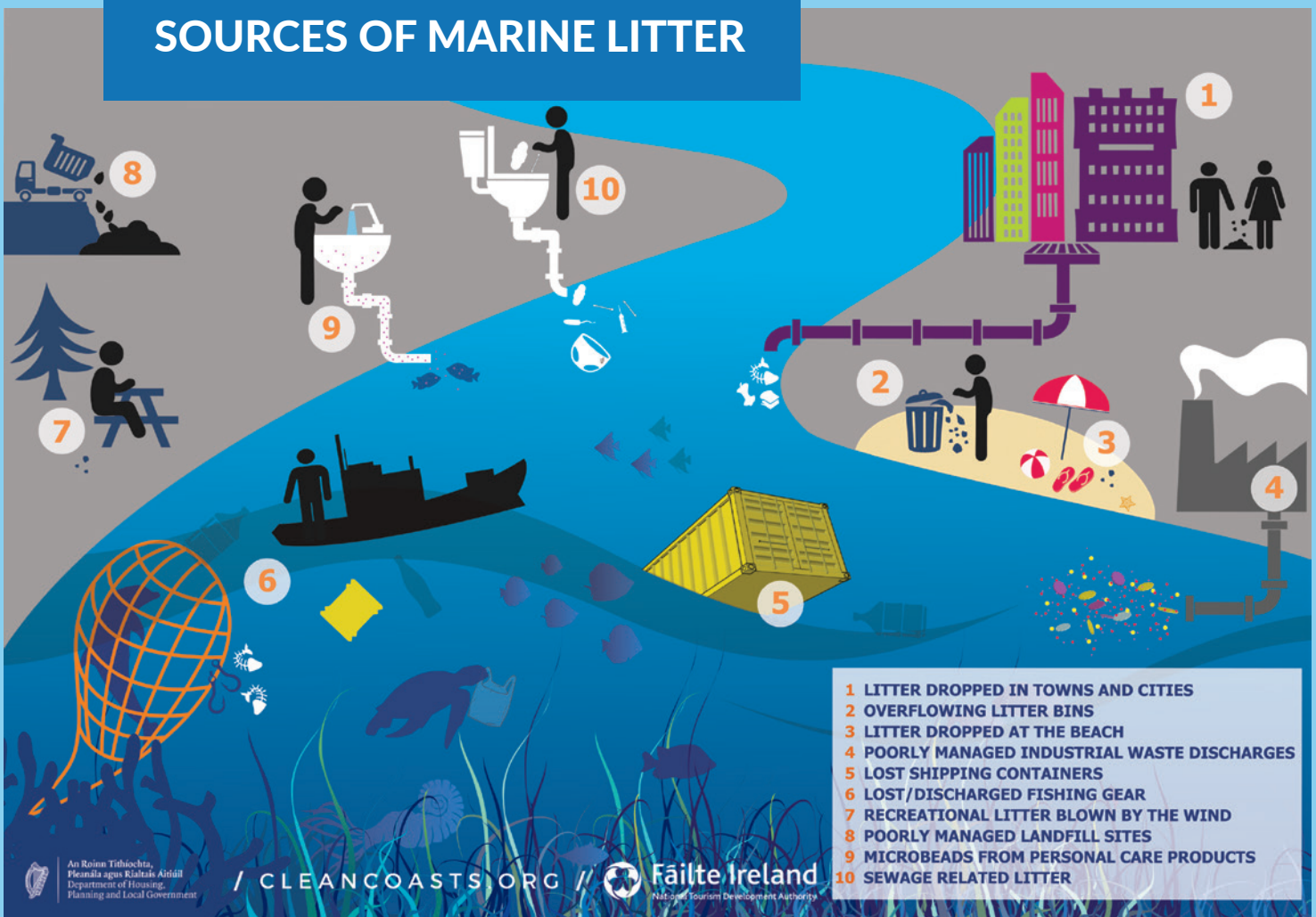
- WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Approximately 10 million tonnes of litter ends up in the world's oceans and seas each year. The term "marine litter" or "marine debris" covers a range of materials which have been deliberately discarded, or accidentally lost on shore or at sea. It includes materials that are carried out to sea from land, rivers, drainage and sewerage systems, or the wind (European Commission, 2013).

Plastics make up 80% of all marine litter from surface waters to deep-sea sediments (IUCN, 2018).

What we find on our beaches is not the full extent of the marine litter problem. It is estimated that 70% of marine litter is on the seabed, 15% is floating in the water column and 15% is found on our shores (OSPAR, 1995).

SOURCES OF MARINE LITTER



SECTION 2

CLEAN COASTS & BEACH CLEANS

Clean Coasts Group Action

One of the key initial activities for groups is a beach clean-up event. Below you can find information to help you organise a beach clean. Some of the info could also be applied to other Clean Coasts group events, such as workshops and marram grass planting event.

2.1 HOW TO ORGANISE A BEACH CLEAN

1. Choose an area you think would benefit from a clean-up.
2. Pick a date/dates when you would like your event to take place.
3. Have a read of our Covid-19 health and safety guidelines and undertake a risk assessment of the site.
4. Please keep numbers for your clean-up in line with Covid 19 government guidelines.
5. Notify your Local Authority of the time/date of the clean-up, if possible, a week in advance. This time will allow efficient management of the collected rubbish and recyclables.
6. Publicise the success of your clean-up on social media, take a picture remembering to maintain social distance. Tag us on Facebook/Twitter/Instagram at @CleanCoasts, we'd love to share your images.





2.2 HEALTH & SAFETY

- Please carry out a safety briefing before all clean-ups, especially for new volunteers.
- Ensure that all volunteers are aware of location of the First Aid kit.
- Ensure at least one person has a mobile with signal before starting the clean-up.
- Please wash hands before and after the clean-up.
- Gloves should be worn throughout clean up.
- Wear High Visibility clothing.
- Persons under 18 years should be supervised at a ratio of at least one adult to every five children.
- Report sharp objects, such as broken glass and syringes to Safety officer - any such items should be removed by adults only and placed in a sharps box, not rubbish bags.
- If something is heavy please ask for help.
- Please adhere to any weather warning that are in place at the location of the clean-up.



GOT QUESTIONS?

If you are unsure about any of the Health & Safety or Covid-19 guidelines, or simply have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us on:
cleancoasts@eeu.antisce.org



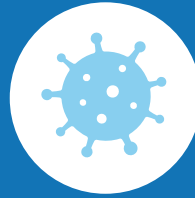
2.2 HEALTH & SAFETY

Water Clean-ups:

- Never enter the water when working in a canal or river clean-ups. Never work on your own, use the “Buddy” system.
- Anyone using kayak or canoe must be trained and experienced.
- Do not try to access areas that are difficult.

Coastal Clean-ups:

- When working on the coast, never conduct clean-ups with your back to the water.
- Watch the tide. In some areas, the tide may come in and cut you from the shore.
- Do not enter the water to collect rubbish as there could be dangerous currents.
- Ensure that non-swimmers and children keep away from the water's edge.
- Avoid climbing boulders or rocks as they may be slippery and loose under foot.
- Avoid working alongside steep or overhanging cliffs as they may be unstable due to erosion.



COVID GUIDELINES

- If you have any symptoms of Covid-19 prior to the event, please do not attend the clean-up and ensure to get tested.
- Please inform all volunteers of the health and safety guidelines before the clean-up.
- Ensure only small groups attend the clean-up, noting current government guidelines.
- Please ensure a two metre social distance is maintained throughout the clean-up.
- Keep a list of attendees for contact tracing and download the Covid-19 Tracker App.
- Please clean hands before and after the clean-up.
- Please use your own equipment and do not share gloves or litter picker during the clean-up.
- Make sure gloves/litter pickers are cleaned before and after each clean-up.
- If you or many of your group members are vulnerable to contracting Covid-19, don't hesitate to ask to people to wear masks on the clean-up.
- Always keep up to date with Covid-19 guidelines and travel restrictions for your area.

2.3 BUILDING CAPACITY / ATTRACTING NEW VOLUNTEERS

- Try and host events at regular times if possible, e.g. First Saturday of each month.
- Publicise events on existing beach infrastructure (notice boards/ signage)
- Setup a Facebook or Instagram page – create online community & post updates.
- Try to make easy access points for people to join. Encourage them to get involved regardless of the amount of time they can join.
- Try and make your events as informal and relaxed as possible and thank volunteers for attending.



SECTION 3

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR AREA

3.1 CASE STUDIES

Innovative community Initiatives for littering

Clean Coasts Ballynamona

Clean Coasts Ballynamona was founded in 2015 and it is one of the biggest and most active Clean Coasts Groups in the country, which can count on the work of approximately 275 people. They clean so many beaches around East Cork – indeed they are cleaning 40km of coastline which equals 1.5% of the Irish coastline!



Clean Coasts Ballynamona

Clean Coasts Ballynamona acts as the main network support for many of the East Cork Clean Coasts Groups as well as arranging multiple clean ups throughout the year. They are constantly engaging volunteers, schools, local politicians and businesses in their efforts to keep the coastline of East Cork clean and to raise awareness of marine pollution at both a local and national level.

This group has reached out and received great support from local businesses in East Cork who support their clean ups. In 2019, Clean Coasts Ballynamona received donations towards a quad and trailer for the group to help with cleaning so many kilometres of coastline. In 2021, thanks to funding, the group has deployed “The Gator”, a vehicle with a towing capacity of more than 400kgs and can carry almost 300kgs of cargo, which will help the group remove heavy marine litter items, such as tyres, and will also allow volunteers to carry the very heavy bags that volunteers collect back to the carpark for safe disposal.

A mention also has to be given to their use of imagery, video and social media. They are constantly looking at ways to engage people in their mission.

For more info visit:
www.ballynamona.org



GLAN Tralee

over thirty pledges in the GLAN Tralee programme in seven categories: retail, catering, education, office, hotel and pubs, personal services, and clubs and societies.

To date, the reaction experienced by volunteers has been very positive with many businesses contacting the GLAN Tralee Facebook Page directly asking for a sign-up visit or for more information. At this time 96 businesses and organisations have signed up to date – which has surpassed the sign up targets set by the GLAN Tralee team (signees include Kerry County Council, IT Tralee, Siamsa Tire, AIB Tralee, Croi restaurant, and Bridge Place Dental).

More information available at
<https://tralee.ie/glan-2/>

Glan Tralee

Glan Tralee was formed in March 2018 with the aim of helping businesses and organisations to transition towards sustainable practices. Organisations in Tralee including businesses, clubs, schools and public bodies were asked by GLAN Tralee volunteers to make 'green and clean' pledges/ commitments. These include participating in regular clean-ups, taking responsibility for the upkeep of an area in town, moving away from single use plastic, implementing waste reduction practices and considering more sustainable energy sources. There are



Tramore Eco Group

Tramore Eco Group

Tramore Eco Group is dedicated to raising awareness within the community of the amazing biodiversity in and around the town, including in the sea, and the importance of preserving it. It recognizes the importance of educating children in this regard, hence the liaison with schools.

Future plans include, continuing to record the species that inhabit the environment, widening the scope to include plant life, freshwater habitats and invertebrates.

Also, to continue to engage and educate the community about the environment that surrounds us and its value, whilst highlighting the importance of working together to preserve, nurture and improve it.

Public Plastic Bottle Recycling Bins

In 2018, Tramore Eco Group initiated the installation of these wired plastic bottle recycling bins, two of which have been added to the Promenade in Tramore.

These bins were collected and separately sorted by Waterford Council. The aim for this initiative is to encourage the public to separate recyclable plastic from general waste.

The collected waste is then transported to a local recycling facility where it is sorted and recycled as opposed to ending up on landfill sites.

This is one of numerous initiatives run by this very active group.

For more information
www.tramoreecogroup.ie

Maharees Conservation Association

Enhancing, protecting & preserving the unique coastline of the maharees.

The Maharees Conservation Association was formed to address the adverse impact of Coastal Erosion by raising awareness and putting in place practical measures and a comprehensive management plan to ensure the future of the coastline for all to enjoy. Rock armour placed along one section of Brandon Bay in the 1980s has proven very successful in protecting and regenerating part of a highly degraded dune system.

Their latest campaign focuses on traditional placenames.

LOGAINMNEACHA AN MHACHAIRE -
THE TRADITIONAL PLACENAMES OF
MAHAREES

They raise awareness and ask the public to follow the following simple actions

How can you help?

- Keep off the sand dunes
- No wild camping - camp only in official areas.
- Do not litter
- Get involved in our beach clean ups
- Help with Marram grass planting and Chestnut Fencing

For further details check out
www.mahareesconservation.com



Photos: Maharees Conservation Association

'Place names are not only signposts in space, they are also signposts in time.'

DR. BREANDÁN Ó CIOBÁIN.

Making the most out of your area

THE IRISH COASTLINE IS OUR MOST INCREDIBLE RESOURCE, GO MAKE USE OF IT.



Community

The single best way to connect with your area is to connect with the local community. The breadth and depth of knowledge, interests and experience in our small coastal communities is remarkable. Please see our [beach community section](#) for info on who to connect with and how to do so.



Get to know the coastline

A great aspect of the Irish coastline is that, from the high tide line down, it belongs to all of us.

Maps are a great way to develop a good understanding of your area. Portals like Google Maps or Geohive allow you explore your home place. You can use the layer function to look at historical maps and examine change over time. Looking at the ebb and flow of sand dunes over the years is particularly fascinating.

Remember, the coastline is yours, get out there and explore it!



Biodiversity

Get familiar with the wildlife in your area. A pile of seaweed thrown over a rock is just that...until you learn about the myriad of lifeforms that live on, in or under it. We highly recommend the book "Ireland's Seashore, A Field Guide" by Lucy Taylor and Emma Nickelsen

Once you get to grips with the basics you too can become a citizen scientist. This means recording and sending off observations from the seashore. We have a section on our website which will give you more information on getting involved. The more data we have about what's happening to the geography and ecology of our shorelines the better we will be able to protect them into the future.



Food

Explore local food. There are fishermen and foragers in most local areas. It's incredible what can be eaten from the seashore with the right knowledge. Invite them along to share their knowledge with your group.

Local seafood is available for sale from local slips and piers for a keen price.



Activities

Engage with what your area has to offer. Around the Irish coastline there are all kinds of fun ability and age-appropriate activities you could get involved in. This could be rock climbing, lifesaving, kayaking, fishing or hillwalking. Look them up and get involved.



Be the change you want to see in your community.

Do you feel your area is missing something? Seating? Signage? Identify it and seek funding opportunities to allow you develop your area for the greater good.



3.2 SETTING UP REGIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Local Issues

Groups often coalesce around a particular litter, pollution or local habitat loss.

There are many good examples of regional campaigns from towns and villages around the coast ([See case studies](#)).

If you think a regional campaign would be a good fit for your group/area, the first thing to do is get a working group together. Groups are most effective when they are embedded in the community they operate. Connect with ALL key stakeholders (see beach community section) and explain what your campaign hopes to achieve.

Research the issue. Is the pollution coming from an identifiable source, like campers? A local takeaway? Flytippers? Or is it diffuse pollution coming in on the tide or down the river?

Collectively develop an action plan. For example, if the issue is waste from

business, decide if an approach should be made, who should do it, what the message is? Whatever the issue you are trying to tackle, approach each situation in the spirit of cooperation.

A key part of the action plan should be a communication campaign. Be positive, don't always focus on the negatives, be cooperative and supportive. Avoid direct criticism of individuals or businesses.

The campaign should be built around a love and pride of place rather than a dislike of a problem. Use social media but use it wisely. See social media section.

Find out what supports are out there for groups like yours. Typically to receive financial support, groups need their own bank account.

Look up some existing groups like the ones mentioned above and get in touch. They are further on their journey and probably have some very useful tips.





3.3 GET TO KNOW YOUR BEACH COMMUNITY

The skills, knowledge and opportunities available within your local community can be quite remarkable. Groups can benefit from potential volunteers and support by connecting with local sports clubs and community groups, businesses, govt agencies, volunteer centres and NGOS.

Your first port of call is your local Clean Coasts Development Officer. They can help organise events and projects, supply clean up kit, give advice on potential funding and building relationships with Local Authorities or other bodies and help promote the work groups do via social media

Once you have chatted with your development officer you can approach other local groups. You will be surprised by their willingness to help! Here are some to consider

- The beach lifeguards.
- Water safety clubs
- Retirement groups

- Local sports clubs
- Tidy Towns and Biodiversity groups
- Foragers and fishermen
- Whale and dolphin groups
- Birdwatching groups
- Wildlife ranger (NPWS)
- Public Participation Networks
- Age Action Groups

There are also a while range of organisations working in your community who have an official function which may be useful to your group.

Here is a list of groups that you may wish to get in contact with

- Lawpro
- NPWS
- Environment section of local authority
- Community Warden

Local Business

There are many examples of longstanding partnerships between Clean Coasts groups and local businesses. Local businesses are often looking for ways they can contribute to good causes in their area. They can support your group with knowledge, equipment or even direct financial assistance. Many café offer a cup of tea to groups after monthly clean ups. Why not contact them and see if there is an opportunity for a partnership.

- Credit Union and banks
- Local and multinational Businesses
- Cafes or restaurants
- Builders provider and Garden centres



3.4 MEDIA AND PROMOTION

Getting your message out there

- Traditional media -local and national television, radio and newspapers.
- Word of mouth
- Signage
- Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Ticktok)

Traditional Media

Journalists are always looking for good stories. Ones about community, lucky finds and local curiosities will all attract attention. If you think your group has something of interest, decide what the most appropriate destination is and get in touch. The closer to the source you can get the better.



Ideally having a journalist's email or phone number would get the best response. Sending items to generic emails or head office will not be as successful. Regional correspondents for national are usually open to hearing stories from their region.

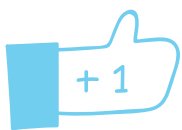
Need some help contacting the press? Get in touch with our Communications Officer or your Local Clean Coasts Development Officers and we can send out the press release on your behalf.



Social media

Social media can be seen as a minefield by groups but used appropriately it can be a great way of sharing experiences, learning and connecting with people who can assist you in your mission.

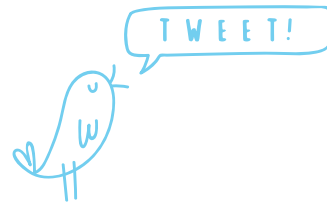
Different social media platforms are good for different objectives.



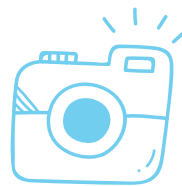
Facebook is great for connecting with the people who live nearby and the demographic that usually participates in beach cleans. It will probably be your most important tool. Creating events is a key function.

EXTRA TIP

If you are creating an event, don't forget to add Clean Coasts as a co-host of your event, so the event will automatically appear on our Facebook page too!



Twitter can be a great platform for connecting in with influential stakeholders in your region for example journalists and media organisations, fundraising and grant initiatives, government departments, NGOs. Using hashtags can really help you spread your message.



Instagram, whilst great for the creative types, it isn't very good at getting your message beyond your follower group, which can be slow and laborious to build up. However, Instagram is good for connecting to a slightly younger cohort and it is also perfect to visually show the impact of your beach clean.

Like in real life, your groups approach online should be positive, educational and inclusive. This doesn't mean you shy away from the facts or the reality but too much negativity turns people off wishing to be involved.

FIND US & TAG US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

Facebook: @CleanCoasts

Twitter: @CleanCoasts

Instagram: @cleancoasts

YouTube: Clean Coasts Ireland

Linkedin: Clean Coasts

#CleanCoasts #2minutebeachclean

SECTION 4

What is the #2minutebeachclean

Making a difference in 2 minutes!
Do a #2minutebeachclean

Some volunteers from your group or community might not feel comfortable joining beach cleans or their schedule might not allow them to join you on a particular beach clean. That's perfectly fine!

Please highlight #2minutebeachclean to them. It is a great way for individuals, families, sports and friend groups to have a positive impact on our coastline, without joining a beach clean.





How to take part in the #2minutebeachclean?

- Follow Clean Coasts – @CleanCoasts on Instagram/ Twitter/Facebook
- Do a #2minutebeachclean
- Take a snap of the marine litter you collect
- Post your snap on Instagram/ Twitter using the hashtag #2minutebeachclean and tagging @CleanCoasts so we can reshare them
- Dispose of the waste you collected properly, recycle it/bin it!
- Be safe when you do your #2minutebeachclean

Why should you do a #2minutebeachclean

- It will have an immediate positive impact on our environment
- You will be an example and inspire other people to take action too
- You will contribute to creating a more sustainable community
- It's an easy way to be active and exercise
- A cleaner environment means better health
- Spending time by the sea and outdoors is good for the body and for the mind
- You will help protect the ocean and marine life
- You will also help protect all life on land



