

Beach Buddies



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BEACH Buddies was founded in October 2006 when two people were walking the beach with their dogs at Kirk Michael on the west coast of the Isle of Man in the British Isles. Until then, no one had any idea of the scale of the problem facing the Isle of Man. Within six weeks two people had collected hundreds of bags of rubbish (30,000 plastic bottles alone!) with some of the materials dating back as far as 30 years. It was then clear that the Isle of Man had a massive problem with rubbish on its beautiful beaches. A decision was made – ‘It’s not enough to just stand and stare.’ After operating on a very small scale for several years, Beach Buddies decided to use social media to try to attract more volunteers to get involved, chiefly through our Facebook page Beach Buddies Isle of Man. The first Beach Buddies’ team event happened early in 2013 at Fisher’s Hill, Castletown. To our pleasant surprise, 35 people turned up. We published the story in the newspapers and on radio. The following week we went north to Ballaugh Cronk and a completely new group of another 40 joined in. We had started something special. By the end of 2013, we had been joined by almost 1,500 volunteers. Companies, Scouts, Guides, schools, clubs, sports clubs all wanted to get involved. At the end of 2015, the number of different volunteers who had taken part in Beach Buddies’ events surpassed 6,000. Beach Buddies is a volunteer beach cleaning charity, based in the Isle of Man and was founded in 2006 by Bill Dale B.E.M. It is a registered Isle of Man charity (No. 1158) and relies entirely on donations to provide a much needed

service for the Isle of Man. It is a unique organisation, which has achieved a great deal, and the cleanest beaches in Europe. The Patron of Beach Buddies is His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Richard Gozney, KCMG CVO KStJ. Sponsors receive excellent PR and media coverage. Beach Buddies is mentioned almost every week in the local media, including newspapers, radio stations, BBC and numerous news websites. There are a variety of sponsorship packages. If you or your company can help in any way, no matter how small, please get in touch via beachbuddiesisleofman@gmail.com • We are currently putting together a website to provide detailed information about Beach Buddies and what is being achieved, with the latest news, the dates of volunteer cleaning sessions and sponsorship packages. Watch this space! Our volunteers have given the Isle of Man the cleanest beaches in Europe and now we want to spread our message around the world . . . Another 1,000 new volunteers were added during 2016 and by the end of August 2017 the total passed another landmark at 8,000. And that's without counting the army of "Unknown Volunteers" who fill our bins all around the Isle of Man. Manx beaches have been transformed and we now believe the Isle of Man has the cleanest beaches in Britain, probably Europe, and possibly the world, and many people have said some very kind words about us. In 2016, the achievements of Beach Buddies were recognised by UNESCO Biosphere as "an excellent example" of how to tackle the problem of marine litter on the world's beaches. And Beach Buddies has won numerous awards for its ground-breaking achievements, including an honour from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for "Services to the Marine Environment". Subsequently, Beach Buddies has been asked to speak about its achievements at Universities across the world. Invitations have come from Ohio, California, New York, Washington, Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia and across the United Kingdom. It appears that Beach Buddies has found a very simple, but effective, method of keeping beaches free from marine litter, and the rest of the world is watching. Our method is simple – get small teams of friends and like-minded people together, host events, try to find some small sponsorship to buy basic equipment, tell your local politicians and the local media what you are doing – and then just get started! That's what we did in the Isle of Man, and Beach Buddies is

now being recognised around the world for what it has achieved. This is how we, the people, can get together, do something simple, and change the world. It's not enough to just stand and stare... Beach Buddies has taken on one of the biggest challenges facing the world today – the pollution of the seas and beaches by millions of tonnes of plastic and marine litter. In the Isle of Man we have found a realistic, workable and sustainable way of including everyone in keeping our beaches clean. We believe we have the cleanest beaches in Europe and have the most efficient beach cleaning organization in the world. We have created a simple, low-cost and effective method of how to clean beaches, which is sustainable and can be used anywhere to change the world. It is ordinary people of all ages who have dramatically changed the Isle of Man, and this can easily happen anywhere else in the world. All it takes is a few people to get together, take on a challenge close to home and show others what can be achieved. It might seem a daunting prospect to begin with, but the results can be astonishing, and highly effective. Together, we can change the world. By doing nothing, we will never make any changes. It's not enough to just stand and stare. And the project can be considerably enhanced by support from sponsors to make this work. Beach Buddies calls on all companies, individuals and even families to think about sponsoring "Beach Buddy" bins to keep the world's beaches clean. It doesn't take huge amounts of money. Just a small amount will make a massive difference. And this idea can easily extend to include parks, forests, plantations, footpaths, roadsides and all public areas. You can help – everyone can help. It's not enough to just stand and stare.

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