

# Wet wipe litter blighting Britain's beaches: survey

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The number of wet wipes found washed up on British beaches has soared 50%

British people have been urged to stop flushing wet wipes down the toilet after a 50 percent surge in the number found in a beach survey.

The total of wet wipes collected in the Marine Conservation Society's annual Great British Beach Clean was up by half in 2014, with the survey revealing a 6.4 percent rise in overall beach litter.

More than 300 beaches around the UK were cleaned and surveyed by 5,349 volunteers last September, with 2,457 pieces of litter collected for every kilometre of coastline cleaned—up from an average of 2,309 in 2013.

The most commonly collected type of rubbish was bits of plastic, with 11 percent of overall litter related to commercial and recreational fishing.

An average of 35 wet wipes were found for every kilometre of [beach](#) cleaned in 2014, up from 23 the previous year, the society said.

MCS beachwatch officer Charlotte Coombes said the UK's sewers are not built to cope with wet wipes, which are also a scourge elsewhere in the world.

"When flushed they don't disintegrate like [toilet paper](#), and they typically contain plastic so once they reach the sea, they last for a very long time.

"They can cause blockages in our sewers and then everything else that has been flushed down the loo can either back up into people's homes, or overflow into rivers and seas."



The Great British Beach Clean showed overall beach litter was up by 6.4 percent in 2014

The charity is calling for a national marine litter action plan.

Measures could include a national deposit scheme to pay people for returning drinks bottles and cans and better recycling or disposal facilities for fishermen, the MCS said.

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