

Report to: Cabinet Meeting – 21 January 2025

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Simon Forde, Climate & the Environment

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<b>Report Summary</b>	
<b>Type of Report</b>	Open Report, Non-key Decision
<b>Report Title</b>	Motion for the Ocean - Action Plan Update
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To update on the Council’s Motion for the Ocean commitments, activities to date and future plans.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>It is recommended that Cabinet approve the following requests to enable future initiatives to be carried out:</p> <p>a) approve the transfer of £10,000 from the Cleaner, Safer, Greener reserve to Environmental Services to allow the organisation of day-to-day activities around the commitment to grow ocean literacy; and</p> <p>b) approve an additional £45,000 for the year 2025/26 budget to finance a touring theatre company to visit all 45 primary schools across the district to deliver a whole-school performance as part of the commitment to ensure all primary school-aged children have a first-hand experience of the ocean, in line with the Motion for the Ocean commitment.</p>
<b>Alternative Options Considered</b>	Alternative options are set out in detail in paragraph 6 of the report and summarised at paragraph 7.
<b>Reasons for Recommendations</b>	To grow ocean literacy and champion ocean recovery, funding must be made available deliver the aspirations within the Motion for the Ocean and to engage young people in the health of the waterways that surround them.

## **1. Background**

1.1. At the meeting of Full Council meeting on 17 October 2023, Councillors from all parties unanimously voted to support a Motion for the Ocean put forward by Cllr. Emma Oldham and seconded by Cllr. Keith Melton and declared an urgent need for ocean recovery. In doing so, the Council became the first Midlands authority to formally vow to act to protect our waterways and ocean in the fight against climate change and

pollution. Since then, on 1 January 2024, Cllr. Paul Peacock, Leader of the Council and Cllr. Emma Oldham, the then Portfolio Holder for Climate & the Environment, wrote to Central Government declaring urgent need for ocean recovery and calling on the Government to take action (**Appendix A**).

- 1.2. As a result of the declaration, a Motion for the Ocean Officer Group was created; the first Newark & Sherwood Flood Partnership Meeting was held on 23 February 2024 and Cllr. Emma Oldham formed part of the panel discussion titled Meeting the EIP's Clean Water Goal at the Environmental Improvement Plan Conference on 8 July 2024.
- 1.3. The Motion for the Ocean has been created to enable local authorities to play their part in realising a clean, healthy and productive ocean and all the direct economic, health and wellbeing benefits it will bring. The #Motion4theOcean is a blueprint for local action, developed by leading ocean experts Emily Cunningham, Dr. Pamela Buchan, and Nicola Bridge together with Councillors and Council Officers from across England.
- 1.4. So far, twenty-nine councils have passed a locally adapted Motion for the Ocean since Plymouth Council passed it in 2021 (**Appendix B**). The majority of these are coastal councils; however, the responsibility for ocean action lies equally with inland councils.
- 1.5. Following the #Motion4TheOcean blueprint for inland councils, Newark & Sherwood District pledged to champion ocean recovery as outlined below:
  - A. Collaborate with responsible authorities and others with an interest in the River Trent to bring an action plan and to review the timetable to Cabinet within 12 months. Longer-term, we commit to making this report publicly available on the Newark and Sherwood District Council website and to subsequent bi-annual progress reporting at the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee.
    - I. Embed protection and recovery of the River Trent and its tributaries in decision making by the Council (particularly in planning, regeneration, waste, skills, and economic policy), in line with our actions to mitigate the Climate and Ecological Emergencies and to consider nature-based solutions in our journey towards a carbon neutral and climate resilient future.
    - II. Work with Severn Trent, the Environment Agency, developers, and other agencies to explore ways to improve the water quality of our rivers and coastal waters in our district benefitting nature and residents alike.
    - III. Update the Council's Climate Change Plan to recognise how land and rivers connect to, impact the ocean, and strive to support ocean recovery through a source-to-sea approach. Ensure any future relevant plans, set out in our new Development Plan 2024 to 2029, also adopts this approach.
  - B. Grow ocean literacy (where a person understands the ocean's impact on them and their impact upon the ocean) and marine citizenship in Newark & Sherwood, including:
    - I. Collaborating with the responsible authorities with the aim of ensuring that all primary school-aged children in Newark and Sherwood have a first-hand experience of the ocean or River Trent, striving to engage home-schooled children.

- II. Promoting sustainable and equitable experience and awareness of the ocean or River Trent through physical and digital experiences for all residents; and
  - III. Through these actions, embed understanding of the 'source to sea' approach and how all people, wherever they live, impact and are impacted by ocean health.
- C. Use our website and other communication channels to provide updates on the recovery of our rivers, and signpost to opportunities and guidance that enable residents to become more ocean literate and to get involved with river and marine citizenship activities and to stop pollution at its source.
  - D. Ensure that the Council's Biodiversity Portfolio Holder, or Cabinet in any future absence of a designated Portfolio Holder, champions ocean recovery in line with the pledges laid out in this motion.
  - E. Recognise that wherever we live we share responsibility for sustainable marine management and that the Leader will write to the Government calling on them to put the ocean into recovery by 2030, following expert guidance as outlined in.

## 2. Project Objectives

These objectives are taken from the Project Initiation Document created by the Motion for the Ocean Officer Group

### 2.1. **Grow Ocean Literacy for Primary School-Aged Children**

#### **A. Current work in primary schools:**

While there is no specific focus on ocean health within the current curriculum framework, there are objectives from the National Curriculum which provide opportunities to teach pupils about the impact pollution has on our waterways.

- I. **Key Stage 2 Geography Objective:** *describe and understand key aspects of: physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle.*
- II. **Key Stage 2 Science (Year 4) Objective:** *recognise that environments can change and that this can sometimes pose dangers to living things.*
- III. **Key Stage 2 Science (Year 5) Objective:** *within the statutory and non-statutory guidance for the topic of 'properties and changes of materials' there are opportunities to explore plastic as a material and the impact it has on our environment.*

All schools make provision for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education which provides a cross-curricular link to cover teaching around ocean health and recovery. The PSHE Association provides schools with a framework to follow which helps pupils understand more about 'Living in the Wider World'.

- I. **Key Stage 1 Objectives:** *how people and other living things have different needs; about the responsibilities of caring for them; about things they can do to help look after their environment.*

II. **Key Stage 2 Objectives:** *the importance of having compassion towards others; shared responsibilities we all have for caring for other people and living things; how to show care and concern for others; ways of carrying out shared responsibilities for protecting the environment in school and at home; how everyday choices can affect the environment (e.g. reducing, reusing, recycling; food choices).*

**B. Enhance knowledge relating to ‘ocean literacy’ by ensuring that all primary school-aged children in Newark and Sherwood have a first-hand experience of the ocean or River Trent:**

See ‘future proposals’ for challenges and opportunities in achieving this.

## 2.2. **Collaborate with Responsible Authorities and Others with an Interest in the River Trent**

**A. Determine the health of the River Trent and where responsibilities lie:**

The Environment Agency hold responsibility for the overall health of the river. In 2023 the River Trent and its tributaries within the district of Newark and Sherwood saw over 14,568 hours of sewage being discharged, as part of 1,521 spills that occurred throughout the year. The River Trent is split into two parts: The Lower Trent and Erewash, and the Staffordshire Trent Valley. The district falls under The Lower Trent and Erewash catchment which saw 58,696 hours of sewage discharged from 8,555 counted spills across 2023. The river flows downstream towards The Lower Trent and Erewash catchment from the Staffordshire Trent Valley where 17,588 hours of sewage discharge was recorded from 3,532 known spills (*Appendix C*).

**B. Embed protection and recovery of the River Trent and its tributaries in decision making by the council:**

This is linked to Goal 13 ‘Life below Water’ Sustainable Development Goal.

**C. Develop an action plan for recovery of the River Trent:**

In 2019, the Environment Agency commissioned Atkins to develop the Trent Gateway Masterplan with the vision to create a thriving river corridor for fish, wildlife, and people along the River Trent. The aim is to deliver a healthier watercourse that also reduces flood risk, creates habitats, and complements the ambition to support sustainable growth. The masterplan consists of short-, medium- and long-term projects ranging from 1 – 20+ years. We are working with relevant groups along the Trent to develop this project further.

**D. Work with Severn Trent, the Environment Agency, developers, and other agencies to explore ways to improve the water quality of our rivers and coastal waters:**

The Trent Gateway Masterplan had a Project Steering Group in the development of the vision, comprising of representatives from numerous agencies (*Appendix D*).

**E. Update Climate Emergency Strategy and corresponding action plan to feature the Motion for the Ocean Strategy:**

An updated version for the Climate Emergency Strategy is due in Spring 2025.

### **3. Ocean Literacy Achievements**

#### **3.1. Open Doors' Artist in Residence Paper Boat Crafts**

During half term, Tuesday 13 – Friday 16 February 2024, people of all ages were invited to create their own paper boats, colouring them in and sending them down the collaborative paper version of the River Trent (*Appendix E Figure 1*). Open Doors' Artist in Residence at the National Civil War Centre, Vanessa Stone, led the creative craft putting her own spin on the activity, which was heavily influenced by Motion for the Ocean, raising awareness of the river's importance to residents.

#### **3.2. Graffiti Hotspot Transformation**

In April 2024, Year 4 pupils from Barnby Road Academy helped transform a graffiti hotspot with bright and colourful works of art. Barnby Road bridge and Clay Lane bridge underpass were freshened up after the school's original artwork from 2021 was vandalised (*Appendix E Figure 2*). Working with graffiti specialists Imageskool, their artwork depicted scenes of the ocean and a green forest. The murals serve as a reminder to passersby to take care of the planet as it takes care of us. This project was supported by Newark & Sherwood District Council and by the Safer Streets fund.

#### **3.3. The Plastic Ocean Show**

A. On Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024, Newark was captivated by a huge 18-metre-long, inflatable whale when it took centre stage in Newark Market Place (*Appendix E Figure 3*). The event, run by the Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Team in partnership with Newark Town Centre Partnership and provided by Circo Rum Ba Ba Ba theatre company, invited young people to step inside the creature to experience a beautiful, funny, and thought-provoking, interactive show, highlighting the impact plastic has on our environment and oceans. Each of the performances – held inside the whale – sold out in record time.

B. Due to its popularity, the whale washed up on the marketplace for a second time on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2024 as part of Newark on Sea. Situated alongside the urban beach, the sell-out show wowed audiences with its informative and interactive performances, proving it was a big hit and creating an important discussion point around plastic pollution. This event was run by the same teams and partnerships as the first and was partly sponsored by Newark Town Council.

#### **3.4. Motion for the Ocean Activity Session**

A. As part of Big Green Week and Water Safety Week in June 2024, Environmental Services provided a fun and interactive 20-minute session for over 850 primary school pupils across a 2-week period (*Appendix E Figure 4*). Pupils were introduced to the term 'Motion for the Ocean' and invited to take part in 3 activities linked to plastics, including what happens to plastic when littered, recycled, and disposed of in general waste. There were several misconceptions for both adults and pupils around items such as disposable cups, crisp packets, and food trays.

As part of the session, we awarded two winners of Holy Trinity Catholic Academy for their entries to the Motion for the Ocean Comic Strip Competition which we ran as a follow-up to the sessions (*Appendix E Figure 5*). The winning pupils were awarded turtle tracking bracelets where some proceeds go towards turtle conservation due to loss of habitat.

- B. The same session was also due to run as part of the Balderton Water Safety Event on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2024, but it was cancelled due to wet weather. Instead, a presentation with resources was sent to the Year 5 pupils at John Hunt Academy, who were due to attend so that they did not miss out on learning more about how plastic pollution affects our oceans.

Again, Environmental Services ran the Motion for the Ocean comic strip competition for the children to demonstrate their understanding of what they had learned in a fun and artistic way (*Appendix E Figure 10*). A winner was selected by the team at Brunel Drive Depot and the winner won a turtle tracking bracelet which was presented to them in a prize-giving assembly that Environmental Services attended.

### 3.5. **Surf's Up**

The District Council's Community Development team provided 28 local primary schools with wooden surfboards to decorate, with 2024's theme being Motion for the Ocean (*Appendix E Figure 6*). Working with Art Smart to draw on the designs, pupils were asked to decorate the boards with Motion for the Ocean themes that inspire them. The entries were fantastic, and the pupils enjoyed working on a project that was being displayed at events they could attend. Some of the completed boards were exhibited alongside an informative 'mini beach' at Nottinghamshire County Show in May 2024 and were displayed at Newark's Buttermarket in August as part of Newark on Sea.

### 3.6. **Ollerton Motion for the Ocean Recycling Project**

The District Council commissioned artist, Michelle Reader, to work with pupils from Forest View Academy, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, and Park Gate Academy to create their own sea-inspired sculptures (*Appendix E Figure 7*). The ocean-themed sculptures were exhibited in their own art show titled 'Ocean in Ollerton Recycling Art Show'. The exhibition was open to the public from Friday 23 August to Wednesday 18 September 2024. It is hoped that the project will have inspired children to get creative at home, thinking about items they throw away and how they can reuse and repurpose them.

### 3.7. **Motion for the Ocean Trails**

#### **A. Aqua Trail**

To highlight plastic pollution in our waterways, Environmental Services and the Communications Team provided a free trail around Newark town centre for families during Newark on Sea in August 2024 (*Appendix E Figure 8*). Aqua, the plastic water bottle, guided trail goes to informative posters containing facts about ocean pollution. To record trail findings in a paperless format, a QR code was provided. 'Hidden' letters in each poster were collected, spelling out 'microplastics'. To further promote the messages around reduce, reuse, and recycle, shops displaying the posters were chosen for their sustainability.

Although the uptake for the trail competition was lower than expected, the posters were displayed during Newark on Sea providing further education around ocean health. In hindsight, this trail may have been more successful if it had not been active during Newark on Sea as there was already a wealth of activities for families to take part in.

## B. Balderton Lake Trail

As part of the Balderton Water Safety Event on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2024, Environmental Services and Community Development created a bespoke trail for pupils from John Hunt Academy to be delivered around Balderton Lake (*Appendix E Figure 9*). Working in small groups, the trail posed questions about the lake, water pollution, local wildlife, and the negative impact we inflict on our lakes, often unknowingly. The event was cancelled due to wet weather, but the trail was delivered in the playground of John Hunt Academy and there are plans to provide it to Balderton schools in summer term.

### 3.8. Refill.org Community Refill Scheme

In 2019/2020 Newark and Sherwood District Council encouraged – through their communication channels - organisations within the district to either sign up to the free Refill app or display in their windows that they were a part of the global network.

Anyone can download the free Refill app and visit one of the 300,000 Refill stations offering refills for water, coffee, food containers and plastic-free shopping. To date, the app has helped avoid 100 million pieces of plastic being used. These are just a handful of the organisations who have signed up in the district: Costa, Premier Inn, Morrisons, Newark Library, Greggs, Holland and Barrett, Nineteen20 Café at The Palace Theatre to name a few.

### 3.9. Costs of Delivering the Ocean Literacy Achievements

The table below shows the costs to complete the projects already delivered. NSDC officer time has not been included but is considerable in the delivery of these.

COMPLETED PROJECTS		
PROJECT TITLE	DATE COMPLETED	COST TO COMPLETE (inc. VAT, ex officer time)
Open Door's Artist in Residence Crafts	February 24	£300
Graffiti Hotspot	April 24	£1740
The Plastic Ocean Show	April 24	£2980
The Plastic Ocean Show	August 24	£2920
Motion for the Ocean Activity Session	June 24	£27.88
Surf's Up	August 24	£1672.50
Ollerton Motion for the Ocean Recycling Project	August 24	£1,250
Motion for the Ocean Trails	August and September 24	£13.94
	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>£10,904.32</b>

## 4. Ongoing Projects with Responsible Authorities

### 4.1. Three Rivers Project

The District Council is working with ecologists, hydrologists, and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to improve the water at Vicar Water Country Park. The works include: deculverting parts of Vicar Water, dredging, and wetland creation at Vicar Dale and beyond.

The construction phase of the project will address the issues of:

- I. Low flows due to leakage from the riverbed
- II. The need for enhancement of channel form and location
- III. Structures that compromise channel integrity and reduce fish passage
- IV. Water quality improvement.

The aims of this project are to:

- I. Address the low flow issues and to prevent water losses as far as is feasible
- II. To increase the ecological resilience of the watercourses, through a wide range of measures.

Work on the final phase of this project began on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Completion is expected to be in early 2025.

#### 4.2. **Water Audits and Water Saving Solutions**

Severn Trent are working with local authorities and other organisations to improve water efficiency across all sites.

As part of our audit, they'll monitor our current water usage and provide personalised water saving advice, tailored to our buildings. They'll fit water saving devices, replace any old fixtures and fittings, and identify opportunities to fix leaks – and they'll do it for free. Currently the scheme is closed, but they will be looking to reopen it.

### 5. **Ongoing and Future Projects around Ocean Literacy**

#### 5.1. **Motion for the Ocean Lighthouse Project**

This project is expected to take part at 12 schools across the west of the District. Each child will make a red or white textile artwork about the environment which is then attached to structures forming a 'scaled' lighthouse. The plan is to then display them at Vicar Water at different times.

#### 5.2. **Storm Drain Art**

Many countries now recognise the link between all water and the ocean. As a visual reminder of this, artworks have been created across the world around storm drains to draw attention to this fact, and to try to create change in people's behaviours (*Appendix F Figure 1*). Plans are currently being formulated to deliver something similar in our district through an interschool competition for the artwork to be created around the drains and delivered by an artist. We will be working with Open Doors to source a suitable artist. Something worth considering would be planned drain routes (approximately 1 mile) in selected areas for families to follow and interact with. Several organisations redo their drain artwork every 3 years.

#### 5.3. **Plastic's Got Talent: School vs School**

Schools' project to run alongside the airing times on television of a well-known, family-friendly competition in February 2025. Schools will be invited to reuse single use plastics from both school and home, turning them into musical instruments (*Appendix F Figure 2*). Although we can promote the alternatives to plastic packaging available, there will be some that are harder to change for a variety of reasons. Encouraging children to reuse these in interesting ways promotes a 'reduce, reuse, recycle' lifestyle and unlocks creativity. Children can decorate their instruments and create music collectively. Entries



will be submitted in accordance with school safeguarding, so they can either present a video or audio recording of their classes and musical instruments, sending them in alongside photographs of their instruments. Prizes to be awarded to classes based on different criteria (TBC). We are also in discussions with the Heritage, Culture and Visitors team to display the audio recordings as an installation at the National Civil War Centre as part of a light and sound event.

A small teachers' pack will be provided to encourage discussions around single-use plastics whilst making their instruments.

#### **5.4. Plastic Pollution Theatre Production**

As part of growing ocean literacy in primary schools through a first-hand experience, a travelling theatre company, Hopscotch Theatre Company, has been sourced. They have a high-end production around ocean pollution and can deliver performances to all primary schools in the district from October 2025 (*Appendix F Figure 3*).

It is an eco-fable written by bard of Glastonbury and Roald Dahl Foundation storyteller in residence, Sarah Mooney, taking the form of a slapstick ancient Greek comedy. Greek mythology is studied in primary schools so this could provide teachers with an opportunity to put an ocean pollution twist on any myths they write with their own classes.

The story was written using Sarah's diaries and experiences during an expedition sailing across the Atlantic Ocean with a team of ten female scientists studying plastic pollution and ocean toxicity.

The narrative focuses on ways to communicate with and educate young people about the impact ocean toxicity is having on our planet. How they can begin with small steps to understand the problem, in a sensitive way for their age group, and what changes they can make in their own day to day lives to foster positive sustainability in the future. It also promotes positive representation in areas such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and maths). STEM education aims to skill students by presenting a cohesive learning platform that is largely based on connecting classroom activities and experiences to real-life opportunities.

The company are based in Scotland and have toured across their own primary schools. The company received investment from People's Postcode Lottery, People's Postcode Trust, Walter Scott and The Leche Trust to bring the concept to life, creating a magical experience for the children watching. A lot of the costumes have been made using upcycled plastic. This will also feed into some of the forthcoming projects the council have planned and present classes with an opportunity to create their own upcycled costumes for plays and World Book Day the following year.

It has been agreed with the company that they would produce a video production of the performance to leave a legacy for our schools to use time and time again. A high-quality teachers' pack is also included with the performances.

#### **5.5. Litter Wise Water Signage Artwork**

Schools will be offered the opportunity to design a sign to be placed along waterways with high foot traffic. The signs will highlight that litter can end up in our rivers, leading to the ocean, and suggest what people should do with their litter (*Appendix F Figure 4*).

Signs will be printed on Dibond and fixed to existing posts where possible. Situating them near and away from bins will provide an opportunity to remind the public to keep hold of rubbish until they come across a bin.

## 5.6. Educational Resources

- A. The Environmental Services team is creating their own presentations and interactive resources to be sent to all primary and secondary schools to help deliver positive behaviour changes around reduce, reuse, recycle and water pollution (*Appendix F Figure 5*). The recycling resources have just been tested in both a primary and secondary school. Feedback was incredibly positive. Students loved the recycling games and gave the presentation 10/10. These are now being finalised with our communications team and will be made available to schools. The resources around water pollution are currently being created and will also be trialled in schools before they are released for use.
- B. Hopscotch Theatre Company have agreed to us using their interactive teacher resources for a small cost (*Appendix F Figure 6*). NSDC would be able to provide primary schools with some fun and informative classroom resources to use as part of their learning and to enhance the resources the Environmental Services team are providing.

## 5.7. Pond Dipping Sessions

The Park Rangers already deliver pond dipping sessions in Sconce and Devon Park and in Vicar Water Country Park. Providing this as an alternative to transporting children to the seaside has been discussed.

## 6. Challenges Ahead

### 6.1. Providing a First-hand Experience of the Ocean or River Trent

One of the initial project objectives was to “Enhance knowledge relating to ‘ocean literacy’ by ensuring that all primary school-aged children in Newark and Sherwood have a first-hand experience of the ocean or River Trent “. The two factors that we have continually come up against are the logistics and costs in being able to bring a project to fruition.

#### A. Trip to the Seaside

The initial thoughts lay around transporting children to the coast, after a few enquiries to a variety of different coach companies, costs were estimated at £289,500. This was the cost purely for the coaches to transport the 10,327 children of the district, not including any other additional costs for staffing and activities. This was obviously cost prohibitive.

#### B. Delivering the Plastic Ocean Show in Schools

Due to the success of the Plastic Ocean Show earlier in the year, it was considered that we may be able to move the whale around the district so all children could have the opportunity to engage with the whale and the plastics story inside. Initial estimates show that this would need the whale to be in the district for a full 45 days. Hire cost, of the whale only, is approximately £84,490.00 for all primary school children of the district to pass through. Having spoken with the team that

regularly engages the schools across the district the following were identified as further challenges to this activity, these include but are not limited to:

- I. Limited schools/community properties in the right locations that can host the whale safely and securely. Only four or five were identified.
- II. Additional revenue burden as many of these facilities are revenue generating during the day and evenings, so would potentially need packing away every night with additional costs being passed onto NSDC.
- III. The process for children getting to visit will need to be transparent and equitable, a challenge given the mix of schools.
- IV. The cost of transporting children to centralised locations, vehicles, extra staff for safeguarding. Unless parents are DBS checked they cannot be used even if available.
- V. Extra site staff for managing flow of external children to site.
- VI. Very few venues that have easy access without going through school buildings, and/or have suitable parking.
- VII. Availability in school calendars to logistically get all children to the site on the same day.
- VIII. Orchard Special School has 147 children who cannot travel due to the number of staff required for adult to pupil ratio, and due to health and safety concerns when offsite.
- IX. The biggest issue was the willingness of getting schools to travel, the history of getting schools to move about is poor.

### **C. Pond Dipping Sessions**

Providing this activity to all primary school-aged children presents us with the same logistic and financial implications as those above. Transport would need to be provided, which would not be dissimilar to those estimated to transport children to the coast. Also, we have limited staff trained to deliver a quality session on this scale. NSDC will be able to provide additional pond dipping sessions to the ones currently provided at locations with the correct facilities. These are currently delivered by the Park Rangers at Sconce and Devon Park and Vicar Water Country Park.

### **6.2. Storm Drain Art**

This has become a popular activity with organisations across the globe in recent years as a colourful and interactive way to highlight where our ocean begins. Despite this, it still has several implications in getting it installed:

- I. A review of suitable, pedestrianised locations will be needed to avoid congestion and traffic accidents by working with the Highways Agency, relevant councils, and Severn Trent to obtain permission to potentially alter the appearance of their drains with paints and sealant for anything from 6 months to 3 years, depending on how well they last.
- II. As an alternative to paint, chalk could be used but would not last as long.
- III. The drain areas being painted would need to be sand blasted to clear the working area of dirt.
- IV. It is recommended that a high-quality exterior paint be used such as Aura Exterior Flat due to its resistant properties. Also, a matte finish epoxy resin with shark grip

additive for non-slip finish will be needed as a sealant. The resin can still be slippery when raining or covered in snow.

- V. The works would need to be installed during pleasant weather conditions and over several days to allow the sealant to cure.
- VI. To ensure the murals longevity, they will need cleaning with a soft bristle brush to remove dirt. Consideration needs to be given over who will carry this out.

### 6.3. Litter Wise Water Signage Artwork

Running the competition for the artwork within schools is straightforward. Installing the signs at various points along rivers, streams and around lakes will present challenges. Erecting signage on land not owned by NSDC will require landowner permission, which comes with a degree of liability. This is something we are looking into. An alternative would be to sticker the tops of NSDC bins with vinyl stickers. This would work well but not in areas of high flooding. A solution would be to use a mix of both where appropriate.

### 6.4. Engagement of home-schooled primary-aged Children

As with all these projects, thought needs to be given to the group of children who are educated at home for a variety of reasons. Competitions and projects delivered to school can be delivered to these children through communication channels with the Newark home education community. For events such as the theatre production, an appropriate venue would need to be found to deliver this.

### 6.5. Estimated Costs for Ongoing and Future Projects Around Ocean Literacy

The table below shows the estimated costs of projects planned at present. NSDC officer time has not been included but will be considerable to deliver these projects.

ONGOING AND FUTURE PROJECTS		
PROJECT TITLE	ESTIMATED DATE TO BE DELIVERED	ESTIMATED COST TO COMPLETE (inc. VAT)
Motion for the Ocean Lighthouse Project	Spring/ Summer 25	TBC
Storm Drain Art	Spring/ Summer 25	TBC
Plastic's Got Talent: School vs School	Between February and May 25	£1000
Hopscotch Theatre Company Production, Video and Resources	October 2025	£45,000
Litter Wise Water Signage Artwork	Summer/ Autumn 25	£1500
Educational Resources (if not purchased with theatre production)	Ongoing	£700

## 7. Recommendations

- 7.1. It is recommended that council approve the transfer of £10,000 from the Cleaner, Safer, Greener funding stream to the Environmental Services to allow the delivery of day-to-day activities and small-scale projects around the commitment to grow ocean literacy. As can be seen from the completed project costs, £10,000 will cover materials, prizes, educational resources, and individual events for the following year.

- 7.2. Approve £45,000 for 2025/26 to finance a touring theatre company to visit all forty-five primary schools across the district to deliver a whole-school performance as part of the commitment to ensure all primary school-aged children have a first-hand experience of the ocean. This production is as an alternative to transporting all primary-aged children to the seaside (see challenges faced in 5.1.1.) and in taking the Plastic Ocean Show to each primary school (see challenges faced in 5.1.2.). Although this is not a first-hand experience of the ocean directly, it has a strong connection to it. The ‘first-hand’ element is deliverable through a live theatre performance, which some children may not have experienced before and is more impactful than watching a pre-recorded performance. From the options investigated, this is logistically possible and more affordable. The video legacy will provide schools with a high-quality resource to work into their curriculum when they are delivering environmental education in the future.

## **8. Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability, and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment below where appropriate.

### **Financial Implications FIN24-25/8759**

- 8.1 As part of the budget setting for 2024.25, a community plan objective included the following:

*Declare a ‘Motion for the Ocean’ to champion good stewardship by the relevant authorities of the River Trent and its tributaries. To encourage addressing pollution and litter at source, contributing significantly to the preservation and restoration of the ocean.*

- 8.2 A new Environmental Development Officer post was created costing £53,630 and is in the Councils MTFP, as a full-time established post. This post covers the Motion for the Ocean Agenda, as well as the Green Agenda with colleagues across the Environmental Services Team. This role also delivers environmental education and develops, implements, and manages new initiatives within the Environmental Community Plan Objectives.
- 8.3 This report seeks a one off £10,000 which can be funded by the Councils Cleaner, Safer, Greener reserve to allow the organisation of day-to-day activities around the commitment to grow ocean literacy; and any surplus at year end can be returned to the reserve and rolled in to the next financial year if needed.
- 8.4 This report also seeks another one off £45,000 which will be an additional requirement to the 2025.26 budget to finance a touring theatre company to visit all 45 primary schools across the district to deliver a whole-school performance as part of the commitment to ensure all primary school-aged children have a first-hand experience of the ocean, in line with the Motion for the Ocean commitment. If approved, this can be used in the following year should it be required.

## **Legal Implications**

8.5 Cabinet is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

17 October 2023 Full Council Motion <https://democracy.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=9732>

Background

*Letter to the Secretary of State from Newark and Sherwood District Council*

Dear Secretary of State,

**Newark and Sherwood District Council declares urgent need for ocean recovery and calls on government to take action**

During our October 2023 Full Council meeting, Councillors from all parties unanimously voted to support a Motion for the Ocean and declared an urgent need for ocean recovery (attached for information). In making this declaration, we recognised that our ocean is in crisis and that local government has an essential role to play in recovering the health of our ocean. We are the first Midlands Council to pass a Motion for the Ocean, in recognition of our residents' concerns about the state of our local rivers and ocean. We may not have direct coastal responsibilities, but we understand the significance and impact that our local actions and policies have on the ocean. We have committed to doing everything we can locally, but we cannot do it alone.

Our ocean recovery declaration also committed for us to write to central government asking you to do everything within your power to put the ocean in net recovery by 2030.

Developed by leading ocean experts: Emily Cunningham, Dr Pamela Buchan of the University of Exeter, Nicola Bridge of the Ocean Conservation Trust, and with input from specialists at the University of Plymouth, the model Motion for the Ocean suggests central government do this by:

- a) Ensuring Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities have the resources they need to effectively research and monitor our growing number of marine protected areas, and to set and enforce appropriate fishing levels that support local economies and deliver environmental sustainability.
- b) Working with coastal communities to co-develop marine policy to ensure it delivers equitable and sustainable outcomes in local placemaking.
- c) Appointing a dedicated Minister for Coastal Communities.
- d) Embedding ocean and civic literacy into the national curriculum.
- e) Stopping plastic pollution at source by strengthening the regulations around single-use plastics and set standards for microfibre-catching filters to ensure that all new domestic and commercial washing machines are fitted with a filter that captures a high percentage of microfibres produced in the wash cycle.
- f) Improve the water quality of our rivers, coastal waters and ocean to benefit nature and the health and wellbeing of all UK residents, including by stopping the regular pollution of our rivers and seas; and
- g) by listening to marine and social scientific advice to update the Marine Policy Statement and produce a national Ocean Recovery Strategy which will:
  - i. Enable the recovery of marine ecosystems rather than managing degraded or altered habitats in their reduced state.
  - ii. Consider levelling up, marine conservation, energy, industrial growth, flood and coastal erosion risk management, climate adaptation and fisheries policy holistically rather than as competing interests.

- iii. Develop a smarter approach to managing the health of the entire ocean that moves beyond Marine Protected Areas and enables links to be made across sectors towards sustainability.
- iv. Establish improved processes for understanding the benefits of ocean recovery, leaving no doubt the links between this and human lives, livelihoods, and wellbeing.

We recognise that this government strives to be a world leader in marine conservation, but more needs to be done to move from ocean decline to recovery – for the good of our economies, our communities, and the natural environment on which they all depend.

We look forward to your response and your action to put our ocean in net recovery by 2030.

Yours sincerely,

**Cllr Paul Peacock**  
**Leader of the Council**

**Cllr Emma Oldham**  
**Portfolio Holder for Biodiversity & Environmental Services**



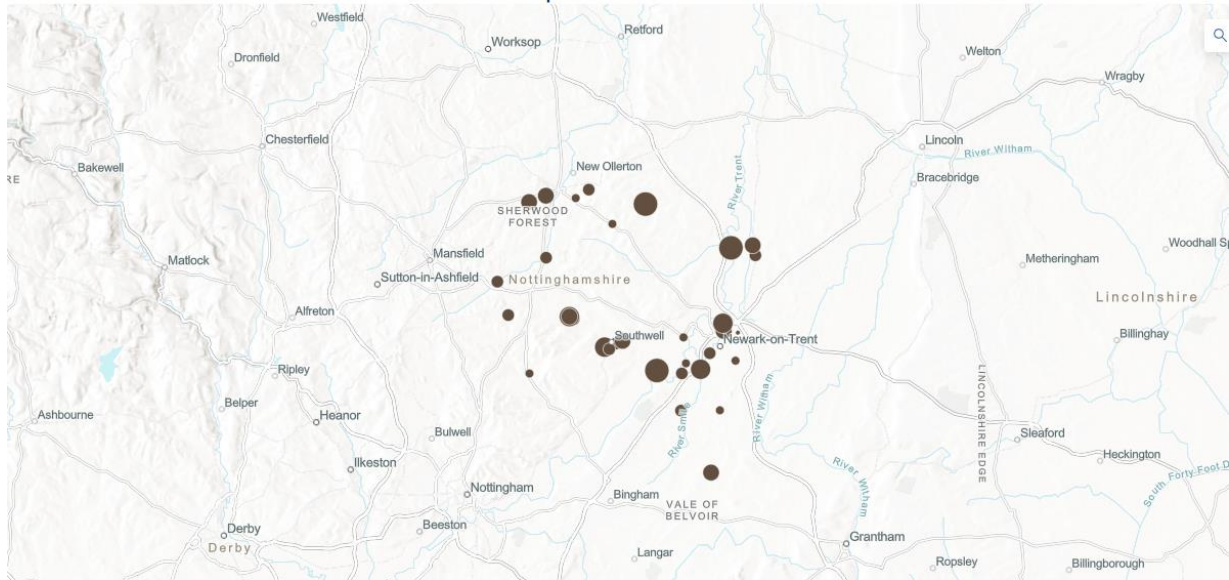
Background*List of councils who have declared their Motion for the Ocean*

The following councils have declared an urgent need for Ocean recovery using a locally adapted Motion for the Ocean:	
Plymouth City Council 22 November 2021 – Motion	Falmouth Town Council 10 January 2022 – Motion
South Tyneside Council 13 January 2022 – Motion	North Norfolk District Council 9 February 2022 – Motion
North Devon Council 23 February 2022 – Motion	Monmouthshire County Council 3 March 2022 – Motion
Seaton with Slingley Parish Council 16 March 2022 – Motion	Seaham Town Council 22 March 2022 – Motion
Torrige District Council 11 April 2022 – Motion	Portsmouth City Council 17 May 2022 – Motion
Devon County Council 27 May 2022 – Motion	Blandford Forum Town Council 25 July 2022 – Motion
Teignbridge District Council 26 July 2022 – Motion	Blackpool Council 20 November 2022 – Motion
Isle of Wight Council 19 July 2023	Canterbury City Council 20 July 2023
North Somerset Council 19 September 2023 – Motion	Havant Borough Council 20 September 2023 – Motion
Norwich City Council 26 September 2023	Newark and Sherwood District Council 17 October 2023 – Motion
Lewes District Council 20 November 2023 – Motion	Cornwall County Council 28 November 2023 - Motion
Nottingham City Council 15 January 2024 - Motion	Colwick Parish Council 16 January 2024
Worthing Borough Council 6 February 2024	Swanage Town Council 28 February 2024
Stafford Borough Council February 2024	Walmer Town Council March 2024
Brandon and Byshottles Parish Council 15 March 2024	

Project Objectives

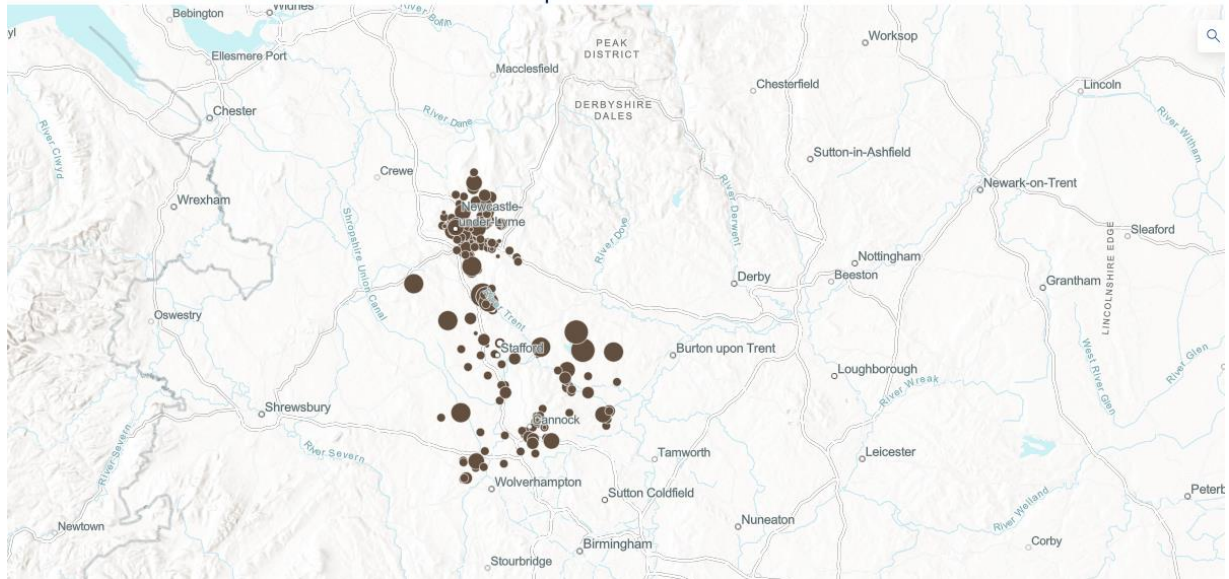
*The Rivers Trust Sewage Information for Newark and Sherwood (2023)*

Monitoring was carried out on **41** out of 42 storm overflows  
 A total of **1,521** spills were counted  
 For a total duration of **14,568** hours



*The Rivers Trust Sewage Information for Staffordshire Trent Valley (2023)*

Monitoring was carried out on **226** out of 228 storm overflows  
 A total of **3,532** spills were counted  
 For a total duration of **17,588** hours





Project Objectives

*List of agencies involved in the creation of the Trent Gateway Masterplan to improve the health of the River Trent*

Agencies involved in the creation of the Trent Gateway Masterplan
Canal & River Trust
Derbyshire Wildlife Trust
Derbyshire County Council
Nottingham City Council
Nottinghamshire County Council
Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
RSPB
Severn Trent Water
Trent Rivers Trust
Lower Trent & Erewash Catchment Partnership
Gedling Borough Council
Newark & Sherwood District Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council
Forestry Commission
Natural England
Beeston Canalside Heritage Centre
River Trent Joint Anglers Association

Ocean Literacy Achievements

Photographs of Completed Projects



*Figure 1 - Open Doors' Artist in Residence Paper Boat Crafts*



*Figure 2 - Graffiti Hotspot Transformation*



*Figure 3 - The Plastic Ocean Show*



*Figure 4 - Motion for the Ocean Activity Session (Safety Event June 24)*

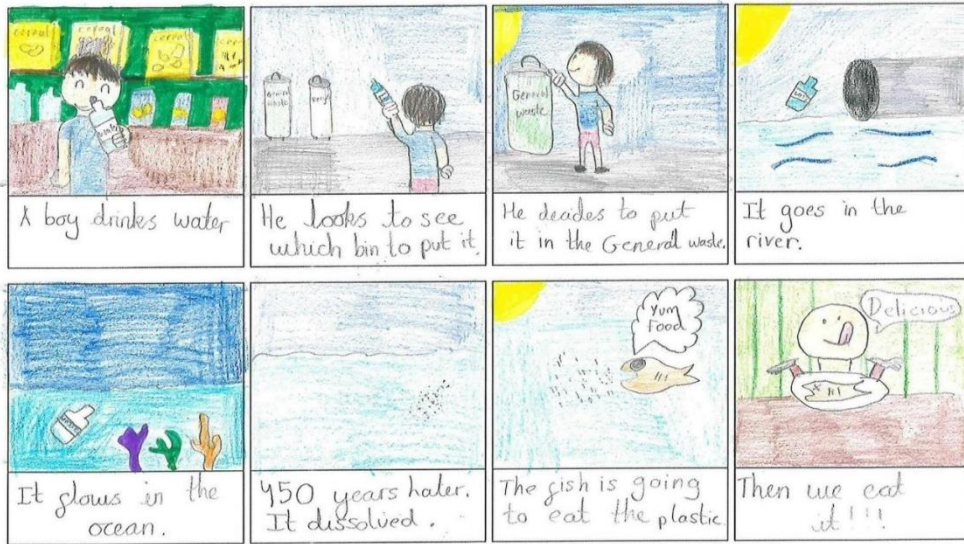
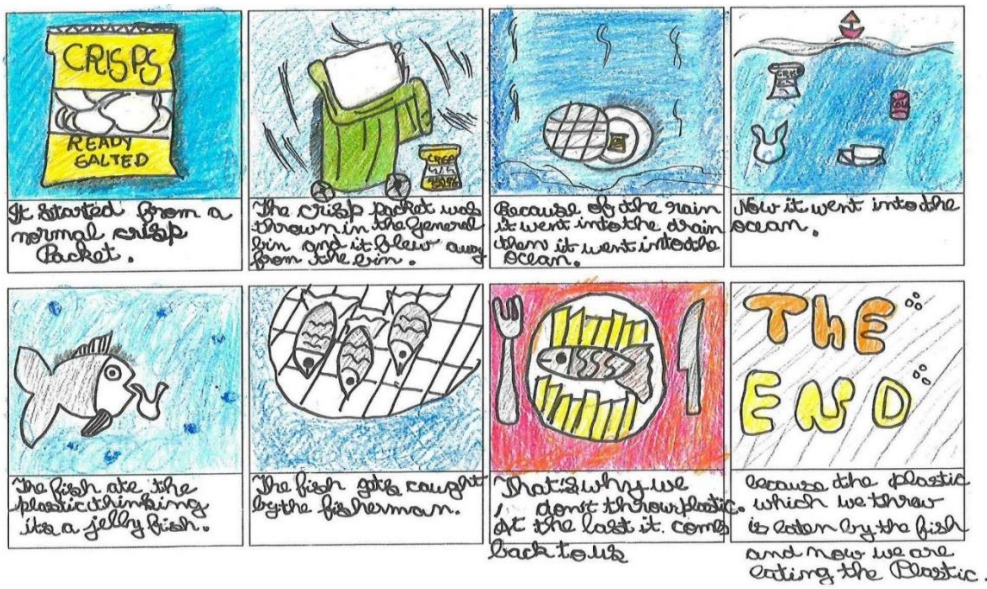


Figure 5 – Motion for the Ocean Comic Strip Winners (Safety Event in June 24)



Figure 6 - Surf's Up



Figure 7 - Ollerton Motion for the Ocean Recycling Project



Figure 8 - Aqua Trail



Figure 9 - Balderton Lake Trail

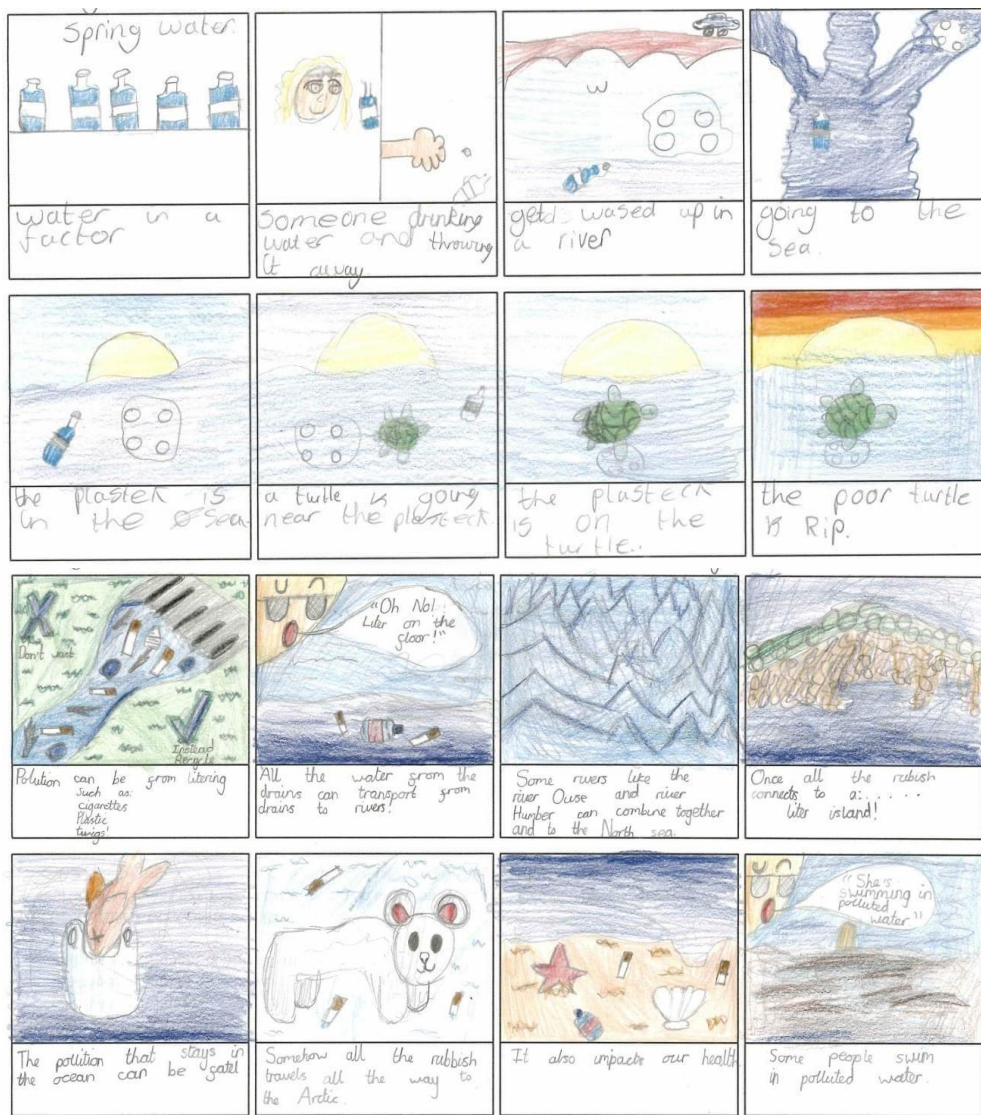


Figure 10 – Motion for the Ocean Sample of Comic Strip Entries (Safety Event September 24)



Ongoing and Future Projects Around Ocean Literacy

Photographs of Suggested Projects



Figure 1 - Storm Drain Art



Figure 2 – Plastic's Got Talent: School vs School Instrument Ideas

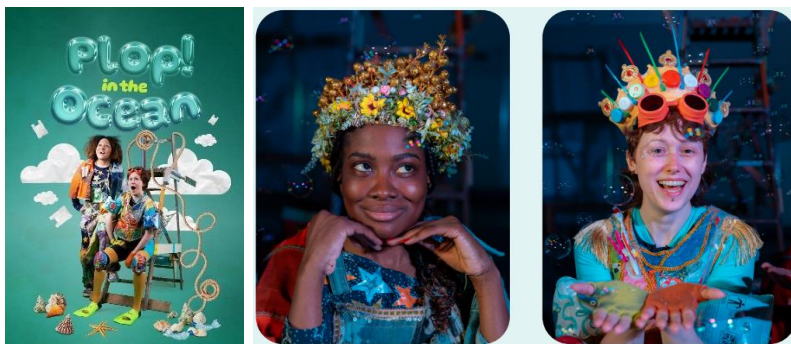


Figure 3 – Hopscotch Theatre Company Production of 'Plop! In the Ocean'



Figure 4 - Litter Wise Water Signage Artwork



Figure 5 – Educational Resources by Environmental Services

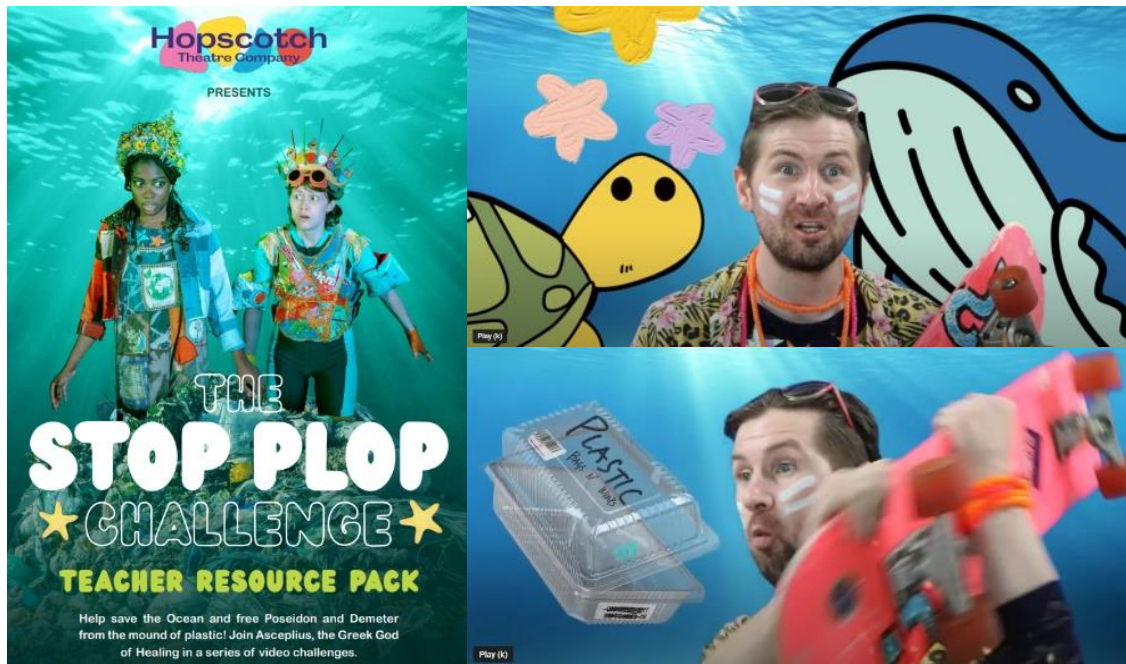


Figure 6 – Educational Resources by Hopscotch Theatre Company