



fact sheet

yeah but, no butt

The Problem

A cigarette butt may be small, but if it's thrown away or dropped, it's classed as littering. The term 'smoking related litter' is used to describe cigarette packets, matches, silver paper, and cigarette butts or filters.

Many people don't see dropping a cigarette as littering because cigarette butts are small. Some people also think that cigarette butts break down and biodegrade over a short time (which is false!). Some smokers think it is safer to put a cigarette out on the floor (for example if a cigarette end was not put out completely and placed in a litter bin, it may cause a fire).

The Facts

- As well as being ugly, cigarette butts that have been thrown away contain tobacco and a number of toxic chemicals including hydrogen cyanide and arsenic which can harm wildlife.
- Some people think that cigarette filters are made from cotton and that they degrade quickly. This is not true. Cigarette butts are made of cellulose acetate, which takes a number of years to biodegrade.
- It takes one second to drop a cigarette butt. Assuming it takes the same time to pick it up again, it would take one person, working eight hours a day, nearly 20 years to collect the estimated 200 million

cigarette butts that are thrown away each day in the UK (source - ENCAMS).

The Message

Smoking is a personal choice. Dropping cigarette butts is littering. Over the coming months, the Bay Team will be out and about in Torbay, encouraging smokers to use designated cigarette bins and personal ashtrays to bin their butts. The Bay Team will also be reminding people that tobacco is designed to stay lit, and cigarettes can very easily start an accidental fire.

The Bay Team will also be working with local businesses including pubs and clubs, to look at creative ways in which littering from cigarettes could be reduced.

Break the Rules – Pay the Price

Dropping cigarette litter is classed as littering. Those that are caught littering may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice for £75. Fixed Penalty Notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution. This means that if someone receives a Notice and chooses not to pay it, they could face a higher fine or be prosecuted which will result in a criminal conviction.





Take a Stand

Most littering is preventable and some people may not even be aware that they are committing littering offences.

Different people may have different views of what littering actually means, for example some people might think that spitting chewing gum out on the floor or dropping a drinks can is unacceptable, but that dropping small items like a cigarette butt is okay. If lots of people take that view, those little pieces of litter can soon add up to a big problem.

By raising awareness about the consequences of littering and encouraging people to stop and think about their actions, The Bay Team hope to make Torbay a cleaner and safer place for local people and for visitors. Take a Stand encourages everyone in the community to work together to clean up Torbay.

Tips

The Bay Team's top tips for being litter savvy are:

If you know someone that smokes, encourage them to:

- Get a portable ashtray. Portable ashtrays are available from high street shops and the internet. Portable ashtrays also come in

a range of colours and designs, like leopard print and camouflage!

- Use an ashtray if they are outside a café, restaurant or pub that allows smoking (if there isn't one available most staff will try to provide one or there may be a wall mounted ashtray probably near the entrance).
- Use wall mounted cigarette bins if they are in town (these are sometimes located outside shopping centres).
- Always ensure that cigarette butts are stubbed out properly to avoid any risk of fire (including in the home).
- If no cigarette bins are nearby, cigarette butts should be stubbed out fully to avoid any risk of fire and placed in a public litter bin.

Join the Bay Team

If you have an idea or a creative suggestion as to how people could be encouraged not to litter and to respect their environment, contact the Community Protection Team at:

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