



TAKE A STAND

fact sheet chewing gum

The Problem

Have you ever sat on a piece of chewing gum, or trodden in it? If the answer is yes, you'll know that it is very sticky and really difficult to remove from clothes and shoes. As chewing gum has been in someone else's mouth, it's also not that pleasant to have to try and clean it up.

Like clothes and shoes, chewing gum that has been dropped or spat onto the street is a problem. When chewing gum is removed from a surface such as a pavement or road it leaves a dark stain which is almost as unsightly as the chewing gum itself. If you have noticed dark marks on the pavements especially in the Town Centre locations, which individually are about the size of a 50 pence piece, they could be the stains left by gum which has been removed.

Chewing gum is made from natural or synthetic latex which means that it does not degrade or break down quickly and can withstand all weather conditions. Chewing gum is really tough stuff!

The Message

As with most cases of littering, the best way of tackling chewing gum litter is to prevent it from happening in the first place. This means that people need to be encouraged not to spit,

drop or stick their chewing gum but to dispose of it properly and hygienically. Gum on the streets and other forms of litter can make the environment look dirty and neglected. By working together to clean it up, Torbay can be a cleaner place to live and work, and a nicer place to visit.

In some areas around the country, chewing gum targets are used. Chewing gum targets are specially designed and are a cross between a sign and a poster. People can stick their chewing gum onto the target and after a while or when the target is too full, it is removed and replaced. Chewing gum targets can encourage people to get rid of their gum responsibly and prevent gum from being dropped on the floor or stuck where it shouldn't!

Break the Rules - Pay the Price

Spitting out or dropping gum 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. By raising awareness about the consequences of littering, and encouraging people to stop and think about their actions The Bay Team hope to clean up Torbay.

Tips

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

- Get a stubbi pouch! Stubbi pouches are small enough to fit in your pocket and come with paper which you can wrap your gum in. You can then place the gum and paper in the stubbi, and empty it into a bin later on. You can buy a stubbi pouch at www.stubbi.co.uk for under £2, which is £73 less than the price of a Fixed Penalty Notice for littering.
- If you know someone who drops chewing gum on the floor, encourage them to think about the consequences...
- **the cost of clearing it up** – clearing up chewing gum is difficult and expensive. All local people and businesses pay council tax and some of this money has to be used to clear up chewing gum and other litter. If this sort of cleaning didn't have to take

place or was reduced, there would be more money available to spend on other services for local people.

- **the impact on other people** – some people may not think that dropping chewing gum or sticking it somewhere is a big problem, but chewing gum litter does have an impact on other people. For example, imagine buying a brand new pair of trainers and a day later realising that you've trodden in chewing gum. When you finally get the gum off you see that it's left a stain and then you find out that you've trodden the gum into your bedroom carpet. How would you feel?

Join the Bay Team

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

- ✉ community.protection@torbay.gov.uk
- ✉ Community Protection, Torbay Council, 1st Floor Roebuck House, Abbey Road, Torquay TQ2 5EJ
- ☎ 01803 208091

www.torbay.gov.uk/takeastand

