

Blue Planet II changed everything. The most watched programme in 2017 woke the UK up to the damage plastic litter is doing to the natural world. Since then ‘single-use’ has been named word of the year, young people around the world are taking a stand on climate change and Parliament has declared a Climate Emergency together with many local authorities. The media has opened our eyes to the thousands of tonnes of waste exported from the UK to developing countries every year and, at a local level, the funding crisis affecting our much-loved parks and green spaces has been featured in media campaigns.

As the nation’s best-loved environmental charity, with thousands of passionate supporters and volunteers across the country, Keep Britain Tidy addresses the concerns of local people and communities. In our ‘Word on the Street’ survey, people tell us that what they value most about the area where they live is that it is clean and litter-free.

With our 19,700 Eco-Schools, our professional network of local authorities, our partnerships with business, our Blue Flag beaches and Green Flag Award parks and our links with thousands of community groups and dedicated volunteers across the country, we play a crucial role in protecting and improving the environment on people’s doorsteps,

translating local action into national and global impact.

But, even with the support of the great British public, we need leadership from government. We believe the public wants the UK to be a leader in environmental protection, which requires bold action, building on and going further than the initiatives to date and delivering a country where everyone can be proud to say they ‘Love where they Live’.

“I’ve always hated litter and I can’t stand the sight of our glorious countryside strewn with trash. We are at an ecological crisis point and it has never been more important to try to stop unmanaged plastic waste from harming our wildlife and being washed into rivers and waterways and, ultimately, reaching the ocean.”

Chris Packham
Keep Britain Tidy Ambassador



A manifesto for a cleaner and greener country

Provide a framework for robust environmental protection

We must ensure that national legislation and organisations are able to both protect and improve our precious environment and resources now and for generations to come.

We ask the next government to ensure that a future Environment Act provides at least an equivalent level of environmental protection to that which currently exists in the EU and provides opportunities to go beyond these measures. Supported by an Office of Environmental Protection that is independent, accountable to parliament and with sufficient enforcement powers, equivalent to those of the European Commission.

Eliminate litter

Litter remains a big problem for our country. It costs local authorities £700 million a year to clean up and kills or injures thousands of animals every year. The public's desire to live and work in a cleaner and greener country was evidenced as more than half a million people joined Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean in 2019.

We ask the next government to ensure that Extended Producer Responsibility applies to cigarette manufacturers, in addition to fast food, snack and confectionery packaging, and instigate an all-in Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers before the proposed 2023 implementation date.

End waste

Blue Planet II was the most watched programme in 2017 and woke the UK up to the damage plastic pollution is doing to the natural world, while Hugh Fearnley-

Whittingstall shone a light on the problem of unnecessary consumption and the vast quantities of waste shipped abroad. Yet we continue to create ever more waste, while our recycling rates have stalled.

We ask the next government to shift the cost of dealing with waste from local authorities to manufacturers, develop a clear action plan to eradicate fly-tipping and implement new targets aimed at improving resource efficiency, while setting an ambitious national recycling target of at least 70% by 2030.

Improve public space

The UK was the birthplace of the formal public park, a legacy that has been replicated around the world. We now have an opportunity to put parks and open spaces at the heart of a preventative health care strategy, recognising them as essential national infrastructure.

We ask the next government to protect parks for future generations with a statutory duty to manage them to the Green Flag Award standard, making specific funding available to local authorities to achieve this.

Educate future generations

Greta Thunberg's stand on climate change has demonstrated how the actions of one young person can translate into a worldwide movement. All schools in England have the potential to become more sustainable and harness the talents of millions of young people, enabling them to become the green business leaders, policy-makers and sustainable consumers of the future.

We ask the next government to champion a mission to support all schools across England in achieving Green Flag Eco-School status.