

Plastic Free Scilly

By Nikki Banfield,
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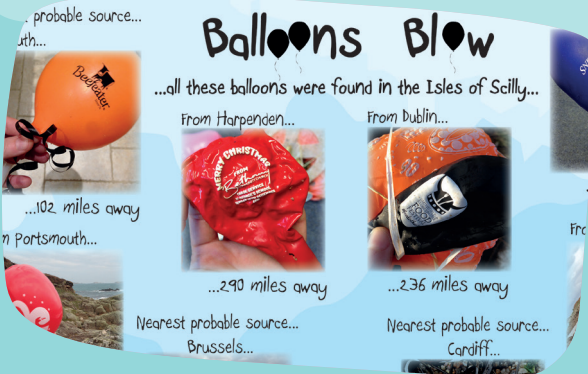
@PlasticFreeIoS



Those of you that receive and read Scilly Now & Then on a regular basis may recall the piece we wrote for Issue 84 entitled "Microbeads, Balloons & a Message in a Bottle", detailing the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust's work as part of the Cornish Plastic Pollution Coalition (CPPC) and the work being carried out with regards balloons.

We regularly "rescue" balloons from our beaches, or found drifting around at sea; in fact in one week during July 2018 between 20-30 balloons were "rescued" and removed from locations across and around the Islands by various individuals; none of the balloons originated from Scilly.

Many are promotional branded balloons which can be tracked and traced and where possible we contact those concerned and politely ask them to reconsider their use of balloons in promoting their business/organisation.



Quite often it can take some time for messages to filter through to the right person but during the first week of September just that happened and we had a lovely surprise.

On 3rd December 2016 we picked up a red balloon on a Scilly beach stating "Merry Christmas from Bethany Community Church". On doing a little digging we discovered that this balloon had travelled to Scilly from Harpenden 290 miles away. Attempts were made to notify them but sadly with little success.

Pictures of this balloon, along with many others, are regularly used in our social media posts and it was picked up by Charlotte Cumming, one of our online followers. Charlotte tweeted us that "after recognising a balloon in your earlier tweet as originating from my home town I forwarded it on and had this reply today:"

@Superloris My name is **@neiljchitty** and I lead Bethany Community Church, Harpenden. Thanks for your tweet on 23rd Aug regarding our wayward balloon! It was a great wake up call and you'll be pleased to know that our ballooning days are now over! Blessings to you + Scilly Isles

Neil went on to say in a further Tweet, "We handed out balloons to children at our Christmas Carnival thinking it was a great idea. However, we had no idea that this could and did negatively impact the wider environment. Thanks for making it known to us. You're making a difference!"

All of these little changes that we are encouraging individuals and organisations to make add up and collectively they do make a difference. We are really proud that we, as a small charity in the Isles of Scilly, are eliciting changes no matter how big or small, not just locally but on the other side of the country too!



@ScillyAONB
@ScillyWildlife

Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust registered charity number 1097807
www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk

