



The Great Skerne Scour

Sunday 23rd October



There will be litter picks taking place along the River Skerne

To clean your section of the River and get involved please contact:



jacqui@teesriverstrust.org

Big Skerne Scour

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Don't let rubbish along your local riverbank ruin the view, join the rapidly growing band of litter vigilantes for the Big Skerne Scour on their big clean-up day next month. That's the message from campaigners who are out to make Sunday, October 23 the busiest-ever day of action along the whole length of the river.

"The Skerne is a beautiful river compared to how it was even just 30 years ago," says Tees River Trust manager Ben Lamb, who works from the clocktower in South Park, Darlington.

"However, the river and its banks are blighted by litter. From bottles to bags and trolleys to fags, the variety of items discarded along, chucked, blown and washed into it is obscenely eclectic.

"Bizarrely, in 2012, a dentist chair was hauled out of the river under Victoria Embankment bridge!"

So Ben and fellow enthusiasts -- including the new Bright Water Project aimed at restoring and celebrating the heritage of the River Skerne's wider catchment area -- have got together to plan a big day of clean-up action along the whole 25-mile length of the Skerne.

A growing number of Friends groups, Street Champions and individuals are taking the problem into their own hands and organising litter picks, supported and encouraged by initiatives such as Litter Free Durham and Darlington Street Champions, says Ben. But, for the first time, 'Skerne Scourers' will all combine for a united effort throughout the length of the river, from Trimdon to Croft. And they need help to clean up as much bankside as they collectively can, whether it be ditch, beck or riverside.

Bags, gloves and litter sticks will be provided and there will be organised collection points for litter. The Scourers volunteers will have their own Facebook page, with updates about the campaign, news of future initiatives and the chance for participants to upload and share photos of the big day.

There will also be an opportunity to look for other problems, such as waste pipes and smelly drains while volunteers are out litter-picking. A simple survey form will be provided, with space for suggestions about improvements.

Anyone who wants to take part in the big clean-up on October 23 can contact Friends of the River Skerne via our facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Riverskerne/>