



OUR MERSEY PARADISE?

There is little disputing that the River Mersey is cleaner now than it has been for many a long year. The old jokes about serving bread and red cabbage with the river water to save time making Scouse have long gone. Thankfully.

However, it has been reported that the waters are still not what they might be. Sadly it seems the Mersey is more polluted with microplastics than any other river in the UK.

After a new study, Greenpeace said it was worse than the "Great Pacific garbage patch". During the study, the River Mersey had the highest concentration of microplastics. A total of 1,271 pieces of plastic ranging from fragments of straws and bottle tops to tiny microbeads - less than 1mm across in size - were caught.

Prof Jamie Woodward, from the School of Geography at the University of Manchester, said Greenpeace's analysis supports its research which showed microplastics in the river bed sediments in the Mersey catchment was "higher than in any other environment".

"This study is a wake-up call for the government," said Fiona Nicholls, from Greenpeace. "We need to see bold new plastic

reduction targets... and aim to at least halve single use plastic production by 2025."

The EA said: "We know there is more to do, which is why we are funding ground-breaking research into how microplastics enter waterways and working with the water industry to find new methods to detect, measure and remove microplastics from wastewater."

It is time to act, and we cannot allow our wonderful river to suffer. So let's all do our bit, pick up when you are at the beach, stop using single use plastics and support clean up campaigns. One such campaign is the #BinForGreenSeas project. Which aims to combat the lack of awareness of improperly disposed litter. The effect that has on our oceans, its marine life and in turn, the food chain. Greenseas want their bin to act as a catalyst for more sustainable behaviour, and the first one was installed in Blackpool recently.

We are in talks with the founder to see whether it may be possible to have similar bins installed on Merseyside. You can learn more about the campaign here www.greenseas.org