

Litter Picking in Bolton A Planning and Health & Safety Guide

This sheet has been designed to help your group have a successful and safe litter pick

Not all of the below points will apply to every pick, some depend on the length and scale of the pick.

Before you go:

Get permission to be on any land well in advance.

Have a safe place to meet, give a briefing, and finish at, especially if the weather deteriorates or toilets are needed.

Spread the word through social media, leaflets, posters in local shops or libraries, and through word of mouth if you need helpers.

Do not cause an obstruction or nuisance by parking carelessly, if you travel to your chosen site by car.

Do not plan to litter pick an area that is near dangerous places such as high speed roads (with a speed limit over 40mph), steep banks, fast flowing or deep water, derelict buildings, edges with steep drops.

Group picks should have a co-ordinator. The coordinator is responsible for:

Holding a briefing before the pick starts to warn the group about all potential dangers and make sure they use the information in this safety checklist.

Ensuring the co-ordinator and all appointed adults have a working mobile phone and all participants have the correct contact numbers.

Ensuring this safety check-list is followed as closely as possible.

Knowing exactly who is taking part and checking numbers. This can be done by keeping a register of all participants.

Making sure the group is briefed on emergency procedures.

Distributing and collecting equipment.

Whilst picking:

Avoid working on roads, central reservations, roundabouts or islands. Stay on the pavement/verge away from live traffic. We suggest keeping 1.5m from the kerb

Wear hi viz safety vests when possible. If working near main roads it's absolutely necessary

When working near roads, try to face oncoming traffic, and work on one side of the highway at a time.

Be considerate towards wildlife - keep gates closed, avoid disturbing animals and birds. Do not remove natural habitats such as logs and stones.

Beware of any dangerous items such as: asbestos, canisters, poisons, insecticides, clinical waste, broken glass, sharp metal, condoms and syringes. Ensure syringes are reported to the Council's Sharps Hotline **0800 731 9835**.

Beware of electric fences marked with yellow warning signs.

Avoid working in darkness or bad weather conditions (e.g. when it is icy, or visibility is reduced).

Avoid peak traffic periods, and stay clear of any construction or engineering works.

Do not distract passing traffic or cause nuisance to members of the public.

Do not touch or remove hazardous items such as unidentified canisters or drums, poisons, broken glass.

Do not pick up litter with bare hands; where possible use gloves and/or litter pickers.

Avoid contact with noxious weeds and areas where herbicides have been applied. More info can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identification-of-injurious-weeds>

Do not participate in clean ups under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

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If working near water:

Check with the Environment Agency or Water Company to make sure there are no hazards; stay away from deep/fast flowing and polluted water.

Ensure non-swimmers are kept well away from the edge.

Make sure there is a lifesaver present.

If working with children:

Bolton Council takes the safeguarding of children very seriously. We ask that coordinators visit the below link to find useful information about how to keep child volunteers safe:

<http://boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/working-with-children-and-young-people/>

Children must be supervised at all times, no more than eight children per adult is advisable.

Do not allow children to wander freely, alone, or out of sight. Where possible, we recommend ensuring children wear hi viz or brightly coloured clothing

Work within children's capacity – usually no more than 1 hour at a time and no more than three hours in total.

Do not allow unaccompanied young children to take part or attend clean-ups.

Members of youth groups must have parental permission.

After the Pick:

Make sure that any bags that you fill, that are to be collected by the Council, are stored safely, and do not cause an obstruction. Leaving collected bags of litter next to a Council litter bin, at a bus stop or against the wall next to a street sign are usually the best locations.

After a litter pick, to help the Council remove the bags you have filled as soon as possible, please email loveboltonhatelitter@bolton.gov.uk, or ring 01204 334067, with the number and location of the bags

Insurance

Obtaining public liability insurance is very strongly recommended. This will provide cover for your legal liability arising from accidental damage or injury that may occur during the event; including damage or injury to any member of the public or their property (Unfortunately Bolton Council is unable to offer this to for litter picking activity).

An individual organising a clean-up may be covered by their household insurance but you will need to check the policy.

Working with Bolton Council and its partners

These safety precautions are for your guidance only, as circumstances differ. It will be the responsibility of the co-ordinator and all volunteers to ensure that all possible safety measures are taken by the group.

Bolton Council requires that all volunteers who wish to work along with the Council and/or any of its partners respect other volunteers, coordinators, members of the public, the relevant partner organisations, and Bolton Council.

Volunteers should not do, say, or write, anything that might be considered offensive, inappropriate, or critical of individuals, groups, organisations, or Bolton Council in relation to their volunteering activity. This includes comments made on social media sites.

Bolton Council cannot be held responsible for acts or omissions of the group whilst they are undertaking their work. Serious breach of the above the guideline may result in the withdrawal of Council support