

Community litter picking

Guidance and advice for small organised groups

Birmingham City Council is committed to the safety of its staff, residents and all those volunteers who support our communities by cleaning up, making our environment a nicer place to be. Volunteer litter picking occurs in all different forms, from the individual whilst out for a walk, to organised groups looking to make an impact in their local community. Your health and safety is important to us and this is why we have compiled this checklist to help you continue to enjoy your volunteering and to help keep Birmingham litter free. We thank you all.

Are you a small group looking to organise a community litter pick?

Please download our free leaflet about organising a community litter pick:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/10715/litter_pick_leaflet

Are you looking to organise a litter pick in your local park or open space?

There are many parks 'Friends of' groups across the city. To see if your local park has a 'Friends of' group please visit <https://bosf.org.uk/> Birmingham Open Spaces Forum is able to give advice on setting up a new 'Friends of' group where one doesn't exist.

Are you organising a litter pick for more than six people?

Currently, due to Covid-19, litter picks of more than 6 people (including yourself) are restricted. If you are looking to organise a large litter pick, please contact the relevant Birmingham City Council department which manages the land first to discuss and gain permission. If you want to hold a litter picking event in a park, visit

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20089/parks/165/holding_events_in_parks_and_open_spaces to register your interest in holding a litter pick activity in a park.

Alternatively think about organising a number of mini litter picks, of only 6 people.

As an activity organiser you have a few responsibilities

If you are organising a community litter pick you have a few responsibilities you need to fulfil, these include:

- Making sure you have adequate insurance for the task and the group taking part. For more advice visit: <https://litteraction.org.uk/infocentre/insurance>
- That you carry out a risk assessment to keep you and your participants safe. For more advice visit: <https://bosf.org.uk/>
- That you make your participants aware of the findings of the risk assessment before the litter pick begins. Volunteers have a duty towards themselves, fellow volunteers and the public to work safely. If there is any doubt about the safety of a site or material, then it should be avoided.
- During Covid-19 if you are organising an activity you will need to keep a contact list of participants and to check that none of your participants have Covid-19 symptoms. Always follow government guidance on Covid-19; please refer to the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> Refer to government guidance around socialising outside at; <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-guidance-on-access-to-green-spaces#history>.

	<p>Check list reminder of what you need to do as an organiser</p>
Holding a litter pick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There are only 6 participants, or if it is a bigger event, I have contacted the right Birmingham City Council department who own the land for permission to organise the event. ✓ There is adequate insurance in place for the activity. ✓ A risk assessment has been carried out. ✓ I have litter pickers and hi-vis vests for use by my participants. ✓ I have asked participants to bring their own gloves and hand sanitiser. ✓ I have considered what time I am organising my litter pick to avoid busy times. ✓ I have arranged with the council where to leave the bags for collection
Can I take part?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Please follow current guidance on volunteering during Covid-19. ✓ Are you or are any of your volunteers in a high risk category? If you have a volunteer who is in an at-risk category, please consider carefully if the volunteer should be taking part. ✓ Do you have any Covid-19 symptoms? Please follow the current government advice on self-isolation. ✓ Please follow the current government guidance on social distancing this includes the current advice on mixing between households.
Before litter picking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Record the name and contact details of your participants. ✓ Always inform the participants of any hazards identified in the risk assessment before starting, including where not to go, where to find the organisers etc. ✓ Carry a mobile phone in case of emergencies. Please visit www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/covid-19-advice-for-first-aiders. For First Aid advice during Covid-19 ✓ Make sure your participants have a litter picker and a hi-vis vest. ✓ Make sure participants have their own protective gloves or you have spares they can use and keep. ✓ Check that participants have hand sanitiser. ✓ Make sure participants are wearing strong boots or shoes. ✓ Remind participants of the current Covid-19 social distancing measures, 2 metres. ✓ Remind participants to not touch their face, and to wash their hands when they get home. ✓ Remind participants not to pick up discarded gloves, masks and tissues with their hands, only use litter pickers. ✓ Remind participants not to pick up sharps (syringes) these should be reported to Birmingham City Council; please call us on 0121 454 7810 or use our online forms https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20140/report_an_environmental_concern

	Check list reminder of what you need to do as an organiser
During litter picking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Re-enforce safety messages concerning Covid-19 and in connection with the risk assessment. ✓ Be aware of your surroundings and of where your participants are. ✓ Inform the council of any problems or issues that you may have noticed; please call us on 0121 454 7810 or use our online forms https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20140/report_an_environmental_concern ✓ Place any rubbish in a strong waste bag or double bag your rubbish. ✓ If you are finding lots of discarded masks and gloves then please double bag any rubbish bags collected. ✓ Make sure bags are not over filled.
After litter picking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make sure any bags collected are placed at the agreed location for collection. ✓ Please make sure that any bags left behind do not obstruct footpaths and are not left in a position which will cause a hazard to the public. ✓ Remind participants to wash their hands when they get home. ✓ Clean down any returned equipment with an anti-bacterial spray or wipe. ✓ Inform the council of any problems or issues that you may have noticed; please call us on 0121 454 7810 or use our online forms https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20140/report_an_environmental_concern
Do not	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Handle any needles or sharp objects, leave alone and report. ✗ Pick up any discarded face masks or gloves with your hands, use litter pickers and place immediately in a bag. ✗ Litter pick on the highway. ✗ Work in or near any watercourses. ✗ Lift anything that is too heavy. ✗ Work when it is dark or unsafe. ✗ Approach any unknown people. ✗ Work when you are tired. ✗ Litter pick where permission has not been given. ✗ Hold an event without getting permission first.