

# Tidy up planning guide

## Choose an area to carry out your litter pick and visit it before the event to complete a risk assessment:

- Get permission to be on any land well in advance.
- Do not hold litter picks near dangerous places such as high speed roads (with a speed limit over 40 MPH), steep banks, fast flowing or deep water, derelict buildings, edges with steep drops.
- Make a sketch map of the area and decide where you want any bags you collect to be picked up from.
- Spread the word through leaflets, posters in local shops or libraries, and through word of mouth if you need helpers.
- Let the media know what is happening by sending a press release.
- Make it a fun day by holding a competition for children (the example the child who collects the most bags or most unusual piece of litter).
- Make sure you have a safe meeting place to give a briefing, and to start from and return to – especially if the weather deteriorates or toilets are needed.
- Ensure anti-bacterial wipes (or soap and water) and first aid kits are available with a qualified First Aider.
- Use your briefing to warn the group about all potential dangers and make sure they use the safety checklist.
- Make sure there is adequate supervision for the event. Appoint a leader or leaders to ensure that the group or groups stay together.
- Children must be supervised at all times, no more than eight children per adult is advisable.
- Do not allow children to wander freely, alone, and out of sight.
- Work within children's capacity – usually no more than 1 hour at a time and no more than three hours in total.
- Always 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 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.
- Please ensure suitable refreshments such as bottled water are available during you tidy up especially in warm weather.

## If working near water:

- Check with 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.

## Insurance:

Obtaining public liability insurance is 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 (Local Council's and schools may have this insurance in place but should check that litter picking is covered under the policy).

If you are having difficulty obtaining public liability insurance contact: the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BCTV) on 01302 388883 as they can provide groups with insurance.

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

# Safety check-list

**Groups must have at least one co-ordinator aged 21 or over who must be present at all times during any work.**

## **The co-ordinator is responsible for:**

- Ensuring this safety check-list is followed.
- Knowing exactly who is taking part and checking numbers. This can be done by keeping a register of all participants.
- Briefing the group on emergency procedures.
- Distributing and collecting equipment.

## **The co-ordinator should:**

- Ensure the co-ordinator and all appointed adults have a working mobile phone and all participants have the correct contact numbers.
- Appoint an adult to act exclusively as a safety lookout during clean ups.
- Do not allow unaccompanied young children to take part or attend clean-ups.
- Maintain a working group of 6-10 people and ensure the child/youth/adult ratio is appropriate for safe supervision.
- Members of youth groups must have parental permission.
- Members of the group working near highways must wear safety tabards.
- Do not work on the road, central reservations, roundabouts or islands. Stay on the pavement/verge away from live traffic at least 1.5 metres from the kerb.
- When working near roads, always face oncoming traffic, and work on one side of the highway at a time.
- If you travel to your adopted site by car do not cause an obstruction or nuisance by parking carelessly.
- Do not work 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 work near deep mud, steep/slippery banks, or deep/polluted/fast flowing water.
- Do not touch or remove hazardous items such as unidentified canisters or drums, poisons, broken glass.
- Do not touch syringes. Phone the Sharps hotline 0800 7319835 for removal.
- Do not pick up litter with bare hands; gloves and litter pickers are available.
- Do not try to move heavy items.
- Ensure that rubbish to be collected by the Council is stored safely, and does not cause obstruction.
- Avoid contact with noxious weeds and areas where herbicides have been applied.
- Do not participate in clean ups under influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Ensure group has access to First Aid materials.
- Volunteers should wear appropriate, warm, light coloured clothing and shoes/boots.
- Do not disturb wildlife, damage plants or trees, or clean up 'natural litter' e.g. logs, stones or weeds.
- Do not work on any pavements or roads which have a speed limit that is over 40 miles per hour (mph).
- Remember to cross only at designated crossing points.

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

Bolton Council cannot be held responsible for acts or omissions of the group whilst they are undertaking their work.

**Remember to print off this Safety checklist and keep with you during the Big Bolton Tidy Up.**