

## **Community Litter Picking**

### **Health & Safety Guidance**

You will be responsible for making sure you and your group are aware of safety issues. Havering Council will not be responsible for any injuries or damages resulting from this activity.

It would be a good idea to have a short safety briefing before you start.

#### **Protective Clothing and Equipment**

Anyone taking part in a litter pick should use the following items at all times:

- Gloves to minimise contact with any noxious or dangerous materials.
- Reflective hi-visibility waistcoats to clearly highlight the litter-picker to traffic and pedestrians.
- Wear stout shoes and weather appropriate clothing.

Litter picks, gloves and litter sacks can be borrowed from our depot in Hornchurch. Arrangements for the collection of items from the depot need to be made in advance by emailing [Environmental.Maintenance@haverling.gov.uk](mailto:Environmental.Maintenance@haverling.gov.uk).

Litter picks will need to be returned within 48 hours of the event taking place so that they can be sanitised and re-used at another event. Please return your litter picks to our Hornchurch depot on Havering Road on the driveway entrance to Harrow Lodge Park/Sports Centre between the hours of 7am-3pm.

Unfortunately, due to the current pandemic we are unable to offer hi-visibility waistcoats as these cannot be reused by another person in case of spreading the virus. Gloves that are provided do not need to be returned at the end of the event.

#### **Potential Hazards**

##### **Noxious and Dangerous Materials**

The following materials may be encountered during litter picks and you should treat them with caution:

- Broken glass. Remove using a litter picker or a brush and shovel, avoiding contact by hand, and dispose of in a sturdy container.
- Drug related litter and hypodermic needles. These should not be moved under any circumstances. You should note the location and report it to the Council on 01708 432563 . The Council will arrange specialist removal.

- Suspect materials and fly tipping. You should not remove items that are possibly dangerous, such as unknown liquids in containers, building materials, asbestos or fly tipping. Note the location and report the matter Havering Council, who will arrange for specialist removal. If you are in any doubt about an item, leave it and report it.

## **General Site Safety and Inspection.**

You have a duty towards yourself, the Council and the public to work safely, so be mindful of the following:

- Litter picking by the side of roads must be carried out with extreme caution, due to the risk of being hit by vehicles. Only litter pick where there are wide verges or pavements, and face oncoming traffic when you are doing this. It is essential that you are visible to road users, and therefore you must only carry out this activity if you have and are able to wear a hi-visibility waistcoat, and only do this in clear daylight.
- Do not attempt to remove litter from roads.
- Avoid reaching into hedges or undergrowth in such a way as to expose your face, eyes and skin to scratches from thorns or branches. If you cannot reach an item with your litter picker, then leave it.
- Avoid working close to rivers or on steep slopes, where there is an increased risk of falls and slips. When you are working close to ditches, avoid reaching into the ditch to remove litter unless it can be safely reached with a litter picker.
- Be aware of wildlife. Avoid disturbing animals and birds that may be nesting in the spring, and avoid wasp and bee nests in the summer. Be considerate. Do not disturb animals or damage plants. Don't remove "natural" rubbish like logs, stones and weeds – they can be "home" to animals. Don't try and release entangled animals; call the RSPCA if you come across any. Do not attempt to remove dead or live animals.
- Do not enter an area, or attempt to litter pick an area, where works are restricted, or where workmen are already in place, or where the public do not have a right of entry.

## **Lifting and Handling Materials**

Be aware of the risk of injury caused by carrying bags of collected litter and by attempting to lift and carry heavy materials. To avoid injury to yourself, you must apply the principles of manual handling, as follows:

- Use litter pickers to prevent constant bending and stretching.
- Make sure that an item is safe to handle with no sharp edges or noxious contents.
- Decide if an item can be safely removed by either one or two people.
- Rubbish should not be compressed using hands or feet as this can accidentally puncture the skin.
- Avoid contact with the body when carrying plastic bin bags.
- Ensure any cuts or abrasions are clean and covered with a waterproof plaster.
- Do not overfill bin bags and avoid lifting heavy objects or sacks alone.
- Only try to remove an item if this can be done without straining.
- Bend your legs and keep your back straight when lifting an item.

**Other hazards to consider are:**

- Trips and falls if working on uneven ground or where the ground level drops.
- The time of day that you carry out the activity e.g. the middle of the day in the summer may be too hot with a risk of sun burn. Daylight is better than dusk.
- Dog foul and other unclean articles or materials.

**If there are children involved**

- Arrange adequate supervision for children - at least one adult per 6 children.
- Ensure that parents know what clothing and footwear the children need to wear.
- Ensure that you are aware of any relevant medical conditions affecting any of the children.
- Try to limit the amount of time litter picking to 1-2 hours.
- Plan breaks.

**On the day**

- Make sure that all volunteers know what is expected of them and the guidelines to follow in relation to Covid 19. Please see the updated Risk Assessment available for litter picking during the pandemic.
- Ensure that all participants meet at the assembly point.
- Take a list of names and addresses and contact numbers in case of accident or for track and trace purposes at the start of the event and ensure that all participants are recorded as having finished at the end of the event
- Be aware of your environment and do not put yourself at risk whilst picking litter.
- Clean hands thoroughly and for 20 seconds after handling equipment and before eating food or drinking.
- Do not confront people that are littering.

A risk assessment should be carried out at the location prior to the start of the activity. Risk assessment templates can be downloaded at [www.haverling.gov.uk/springclean](http://www.haverling.gov.uk/springclean).