

A GUIDE TO ORGANISING YOUR

# Great Plastic Pick Up



#GreatPlasticPickUp



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# Preparation

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First of all, you need to decide which area in your local community you would like to clean up. Have you noticed somewhere that needs a little attention? Well, this is your chance to make a difference and bring friends, family or your local community together.

It's usually fine to undertake a litter pick on public land, but if in doubt make sure you have the landowner's permission beforehand.

## Got it all mapped out?

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Why not make a sketch map of the area to be tackled. Depending on how many people attend, you might want to identify a 'lost and found' and a 'first aid' point.

And if it rains, your volunteers would thank you if you marked an area suitable for them to shelter.

You can also mark the location of any toilets and any other useful amenities.



# Who wants to get involved?

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We are calling on individuals, volunteers groups, local councils, businesses and schools to do their bit for The Great Plastic Pick Up from May 11-13, 2018.



# Equipment and further help

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You will need a supply of rubbish sacks. Special Great Plastic Pick Up sacks are being provided. The first 3,000 people registering on the website can receive them by post, with others available from participating local authorities. You may, of course, choose to use your own – that's fine!

It's important that your volunteers can be seen easily by other pedestrians and road users. High-visibility tabards are useful for this (and for giving a sense of group identity), particularly where volunteers may be litter picking on pavements by roads.

Materials such as litter pickers, tabards and gloves are available to buy from suppliers such as Helping Hand. Visit [www.HHEnvironmental.co.uk](http://www.HHEnvironmental.co.uk).

Others are available online or, alternatively, your local council recycling officer may be able to loan you equipment.

Your local council may also be able to help or advise on obtaining protective wear or equipment.

# Litter picking and recycling



As part of our 'three bags full' message, we are providing different colour bags, a blue one for plastic bottles, a red one for aluminium cans and a white one for general litter.

recycled. Plastic bottles are collected by nearly every local authority and recycling facilities exist to process them and turn them into new plastic!

## Dealing with the litter after your pick

The Great Plastic Pick Up is therefore encouraging volunteers to pick up and bag plastic bottles and aluminium or steel cans separately.

A number of local authorities will allow you to take the litter and recycling you have collected to your local council run Household Waste Recycling Centre, while others prefer you leave your bags for collection. We will be regularly updating the campaign website with details of how your local authority will support your pick-up event by providing a means to dispose of and recycle your litter.

Sorting your litter in this way will allow the plastic bottles and metal cans you collect to be recycled. The general litter can then be disposed of by your council.

We are asking you to collect plastic bottles, rather than all types of plastic you find, because not every type of plastic can be easily

# Health and safety

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## Having chosen a place for your pick up, visit the site and carry out a full assessment of the risks.

It is important you consider all of the possible risks to you and your volunteers.

### When assessing the risks, look for the following hazards:

- Unidentified cans or canisters, oil drums, poisons, insecticides, clinical waste, other hazardous substances, broken glass, condoms, syringes, etc.
- Deep or fast-flowing water, currents or tides, steep, slippery or unstable banks, sharp rocks, mud holes, derelict buildings, busy roads, electric fences (which are identified by yellow warning signs) etc.

### To avoid illness from poor hygiene, all those taking part in the pick up must:

- Wear heavy-duty protective gloves at all times
- Cover any cuts, however minor, with surgical tape or waterproof plaster
- Avoid rubbing the mouth and eyes while working
- Wash hands and forearms before eating, drinking, smoking or going to the toilet

### Heavy lifting

- Lifting heavy items could be hazardous and volunteers should be discouraged from lifting large or heavy items
- Once large or heavy items have been identified, you should consider whether it is practical for volunteers to remove the given objects or whether it would be best removed by the local council
- If you decide the item can be lifted by volunteers then this should be done at the end of the pick up through a separate and co-ordinated effort
- It is good practice to tie rope to large objects or use a grappling hook if a large object needs to be lifted

### Dangerous items

Make sure everyone is aware of potentially dangerous items which they should not pick up.

If dangerous or polluting items are present, contact the Environment Agency on 0800 807 060.

If syringes are spotted at any stage during your clean-up, do not attempt to move them yourself. Make a note of their location and inform your local council.

If you see someone fly-tipping or come across hazardous waste report it to the Environment Agency on their 24-hour hotline 0800 807 060 or alternatively contact the police.



## General awareness

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- Make sure all volunteers are briefed about the area to be cleaned and any hazards
- Ensure that volunteers are wearing any safety equipment e.g. high-visibility tabards
- Ensure that any no-go areas are clearly outlined

## Public Liability Insurance

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It is not compulsory to have insurance in place for your group before participating in the Great Plastic Pick Up event.

However, it is good practice to have insurance cover for your group. This protects the group and group leader should a volunteer make a claim for an injury sustained whilst volunteering.

Setting up a policy for an individual group will require payment of a fee to an insurance company and this may be beyond the reach of some groups. In this instance alternatives include checking whether your local Parish, Town or District Council can provide insurance. If you are volunteering as part of a faith group or as a member of a charitable organisation, then their existing public liability insurance may provide cover for your activity.

# Working with children

It is also important to ensure that children are accompanied by a responsible adult when taking part in a clean-up. In the case of young children we advise no more than four children to one adult.

Before your clean-up, make sure children understand which items are potentially dangerous and should not be picked up. Warn them not to pick up any items they are the least bit unsure

about and always use a litter picker and not their hands. It is important children are provided with gloves and wear suitable clothing and footwear. With children, do no more than a one-hour stint. If only adults are involved, attempt only what is within everyone's capabilities and allow for rest breaks. Two to three hours of litter picking is usually enough unless you're extremely dedicated.

## Finally

Don't forget to take before and after pictures, so you can see your progress and the results of your hard work.

And don't forget to upload your photos to the website, using your personal login details, to be in with a chance of winning fantastic prizes for your community or school.

[www.greatplasticpickup.org](http://www.greatplasticpickup.org)





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