

Litter Picking Guidance for Volunteers

Thank you for your support in helping to keep Stockport clear of litter. We value the support that community volunteering provides to our routine services.

Litter picking can be a hazardous activity in some locations, so in order to make your event as safe as possible we ask that the following health and safety advice be taken into consideration. Please make sure all volunteers are aware of the risks before the event takes place.

Prior to any event it is important that the lead volunteer assesses any potential risks and hazards which may need to be avoided on the day. An example Risk Assessment is attached.

The main considerations are:

- Do not enter any restricted areas such as road works or where the public do not have a right of entry, this includes private land without the landowner's permission.
- Litter picking near roads should be restricted to wide verges or pavements, suitable for pedestrians.
- Litter picking should be carried out facing oncoming traffic within 40 mph speed limits.
- If volunteers are litter picking on both sides of a road they should work on one side at a time to avoid excess crossing.
- Volunteers should not attempt to clear litter from the carriageway (road).
- It is essential that volunteers are visible to road users, for that reason, hi-visibility waistcoats must be worn and litter picks should only take place in clear daylight.
- Avoid reaching into hedges or undergrowth in such a way as to expose the face, eyes and skin to scratches from thorns or branches.
- Avoid working next to rivers or steep slopes as there is an increased risk of slips and falls.
- Be mindful of wildlife. In the spring time avoid disturbing animals and birds that may be nesting and in the Summer time be wary of wasp and bee nests. Volunteers should avoid areas contaminated by rats: Leptospirosis (Weil's disease) is a very rare infection carried in rats' urine and can be fatal. To minimise risk of an accident if an item of litter cannot be safely reached with a litter picker, leave it.
- If there is any doubt about the safety of a site or material, then it should be avoided.

Equipment to be used at all times:

- Gloves - to remove the risk of exposure to hazardous materials.
- Reflective hi-visibility vests/jackets - to make sure volunteers are highly visible to both traffic and pedestrians.
- Litter pickers - to reduce risk of injury sustained from repetitive bending and remove risk of any direct contact with litter/Hazardous materials.
- Appropriate footwear - Strong boots/shoes which have adequate grip and support to prevent slips/falls. This is especially important in winter months when ice may pose a threat.
- Mobile phones (where possible) - in case of emergency.
- Suitable outdoor/weather appropriate clothing

Items to be avoided:

If you come across any of the following items leave them where they are, record the location and inform the Council.

- Broken glass - avoid direct hand contact; remove using a litter picker and dispose of in a solid container NOT a plastic bag or record the location and report to the Council.
- Drug related litter/hypodermics - needles should under no circumstances be picked / touched. Record the location and report to the Council.
- Suspect materials - batteries, asbestos, miscellaneous chemicals or fly-tipping. Record the location and report to the Council.
- Large bulky items that appear to be fly tipped. Record the location and report to the Council.
- Dog fouling – record the location and report to the Council.

Contact the Council via <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/report-it> or by calling 0161 217 6111

Collection and Disposal:

The Council will supply bags and litter pickers (on loan) and arrange for the litter collected to be disposed of after the event.

Please contact the Council in advance to arrange this either via District.standards@stockport.gov.uk or call 0161 218 1492 between 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday.

We will also need to arrange for the litter pickers to be returned - they will be available for volunteer litter picking events at any time in the future.

Insurance:

Volunteer litter pickers are not working for, or on behalf of, the Council so it is strongly recommended that you arrange your own public liability insurance. 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 a member of the public or their property.

Disclaimer:

Volunteers should not participate in litter picks unless they understand and accept that **participation is entirely at their own risk**. Volunteers are not working for, or on behalf of the Council, therefore the Council will not be held responsible for any loss, damage injuries or inconvenience caused as a result of the actions and omissions of volunteers or this guidance.

Please note that these guidelines are issued by Stockport Council for guidance only, and are not intended to create any legal relationship between the council and any group or individual participating in a litter pick.

Further resources:

Further advice is available from www.greatbritishspringclean.org.uk if required.

If you have any further queries please contact the Council either via district.standards@stockport.gov.uk or call 0161 218 1492 between 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday or for an out of hours emergency where an immediate response from the Council is necessary 0161 474 5555

Please complete and return this page to: district.standards@stockport.gov.uk bringing a signed copy with you when you pick up the litter pickers and bags

Litter Picking Guidance for Volunteers

I confirm that I have read and fully understand the guidance notes relating to carrying out voluntary litter picks in the community.

I understand that this work is undertaken at the risk of those involved and that the volunteers are not working on behalf of the Council.

Print Name.....

Signed.....

Date.....

Contact number

Email.....

Group represented (if applicable)

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Please can you confirm the location that you will be litter picking

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How many bags do you think you will require?

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How many litter pickers do you think you will require?

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Have you identified a collection point for the filled bags, and if so, where is this as we will need to check its suitability?

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Do you need assistance in identifying a collection point for the filled bags, if so, please let us know.

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