

# Guidance for volunteer litter pickers



 Rugby recycles

**Thank you** for volunteering to litter pick in Rugby Borough whether you are part of a group or taking part as an individual.

The role you are playing in keep our towns and villages tidy and litter-free is hugely appreciated, not only by the borough council, but by your neighbours and our communities.

It's really important you keep yourself safe while litter picking and this guidance has been designed to help you do just that.

There are also some tips and advice that will ensure we are all working together to reduce litter in our borough and enable the borough council to support you as much as we can.

## Our support

To get you started the following equipment is available to borrow from Work Services (on the corner of Newbold Rd and Hunters Lane)

- Hi visibility vest
- Litter picker
- Bags.

If you'd like to register as a volunteer litter picker, please visit our web page at [www.rugby.gov.uk/litterpicking](http://www.rugby.gov.uk/litterpicking)

## Other things you are likely to need

- Gloves
- Suitable shoes and clothing
- Water
- Suncream and hats in warm weather.



## Registering your litter pick and disposing of litter

We want to support your litter pick and work with you to ensure the litter collected can be disposed of properly. Wherever possible we encourage you to take the rubbish you collect home with you and put it in your black bin. If you are able to safely separate out recyclable materials and put these into your recycling containers – even better!

**Register your pick online – it'll only take a few minutes.**

If you or your group are planning a bigger litter pick, registering your pick with us before you start will allow us to arrange a safe and appropriate location for a timely collection. The easiest way to do this is to use the 'Report It' section on the Rugby Borough Council app - get it at [www.rugby.gov.uk/app](http://www.rugby.gov.uk/app)

## Hygiene

To avoid illness we strongly recommend you:

- Wear heavy-duty, protective gloves at all times
- Cover any cuts (however minor) with surgical tape or a waterproof plaster
- Keep hands away from mouth and eyes while litter-picking
- Wash hands and forearms before eating, drinking, smoking or going to the toilet.

## 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, a local authority; therefore, we will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused because of the actions and omissions of volunteers or this guidance.

We recommend completing a risk assessment before taking part in this activity.

## Health and safety

We recommend that you avoid:

- Potentially hazardous objects, including chemicals, pressurised canisters, sharp objects and clinical waste. Please see the appendix for more details on these items.
- Collecting large objects of any kind – stick to items of litter. If you encounter a fly-tip, please report it to the council
- Hazardous areas such as deep or fast-flowing water, steep, slippery or unstable banks, sharp rocks, derelict buildings, busy roads and electric fences (which are identified by yellow warning signs)
- Working alone – try to stay in sight and earshot of others or let someone know where you've gone and when to expect you back. If you encounter dangerous or hazardous items, please contact [WSUSupport@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:WSUSupport@rugby.gov.uk)

We recommend completing a risk assessment before undertaking this activity.

## Litter picking on roads

Litter picking along any road can be dangerous, especially those that are busy or have high speed limits. We strongly recommend you avoid picking any road where:

- Traffic is heavy
- The speed limit in the area you intend to pick is more than 30 mph
- Road conditions are such that visibility is restricted by obstructions in the road such as overhanging trees and the contours of the road
- There are blind bends
- Weather dictates it would be difficult for drivers and litter pickers to see each other, i.e. sunlight low in the sky, rain or fog, dusk or dawn
- Where the verge has its own hazards, for example is especially narrow, rough underfoot or steep banked
- Where there is no street lighting
- Where you are unable to face oncoming traffic to pick litter
- There are distractions such as children or pets that prevent you from concentrating on the safety aspects of litter picking
- You have not told someone of your exact whereabouts and expected return time
- You do not have correct Personal Protective Equipment in place including hi vis and suitable footwear
- You are wearing sound restricting hats, earmuffs or headphones.

Please see a list of high risk roads we strongly discourage you from litter picking in the appendix.

## Heavy lifting

Lifting heavy items could be hazardous and should be avoided. If you encounter a fly-tip you can report this on the borough council website.

## Use of land

Avoid litter picking on private land as you need permission from the landowner first. Litter on private land is the responsibility of the landowner to dispose of.

Wherever possible stick to public land for your litter picks.

## Children

Children should be accompanied by a responsible adult when taking part in a litter pick

Before you start, make sure children understand which items are potentially dangerous and should not be picked up.

## Appendix

Some of the litter you find may be hazardous or restricted. Items you should be aware of include:

**Broken glass.** Do not bag with other litter. If possible, place in a separate container or clear bag. Large pieces of glass should be reported as fly-tipping and not moved.

**Asbestos.** Asbestos can be difficult to identify as it comes in many forms, including fibres, textiles, cement, tiles and boards. If you suspect asbestos, do not attempt to move it and report it as fly-tipping.

**Paint or chemicals.** Do not attempt to move containers that may be leaking. Report as fly-tipping and take note of any labels you can see.

**Pressurised canisters including laughing gas (nitrous oxide).** Do not attempt to move canisters which may be flammable, report as fly-tipping and take note of any labels you can see. Laughing gas canisters should not be bagged with other litter but can be placed next to your bags for collection

**Needles and drug paraphernalia.** Do not attempt to move needles and drug paraphernalia, report as fly-tipping

High risk roads in the borough we strongly discourage you from litter picking include, but are not limited to:

**A45 from A46 junction to Willoughby.** Traffic management required due to road conditions, vehicle numbers and speeds

**A46 from M69 junction to A45 junction.** Traffic management required due to road conditions, vehicle numbers and speeds

**Western Relief Road from Newbold Rd to Potsdam Bridge.** Traffic management required due to road conditions, vehicle numbers and speeds

**A5 from Rugby truck stop to Moors Barn.** Traffic management required due to road conditions, vehicle numbers and speeds