

Risk Assessment for Volunteer Litter Picking

This form should be completed by the lead volunteer before the start of any litter pick. Litter picks are generally very safe and it is unlikely that you will encounter any serious hazards or incidents – you will see that the points below are just common sense and are worth considering to ensure your event runs as smoothly and safely as possible.

As the organiser of the litter pick you should ensure that all volunteers know the risks and understand the control measures before clearing any litter. It is sensible to address all volunteers and introduce yourself as the lead volunteer/organiser, so they know who to go to with questions/to report an incident. You should also check that all volunteers know what equipment they must use and what area they may clean up. Also advise that a copy of the risk assessment is available on request.

Name	Date	Phone	Location of Litter Pick
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Before starting your litter pick ensure all volunteers:

- Have the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – e.g. Thick gloves, hi-vis vest, sensible footwear, weather appropriate clothing etc.
- Have the correct equipment – e.g. Litter grabbers, plastic bags, dog waste bags, brush, shovel etc. and know how to use the equipment.
- Consider all the risks and hazards in the work area, e.g. hazardous waste, broken glass, dog waste, vomit, needles, condoms and roads/cycle ways, thorny bushes, low branches, uneven ground etc.
- Know the work area and how to report incidents or hazardous or unidentified waste, where to get first aid, meet on completion, deposit bags of waste and mark bags containing sharp material e.g. broken glass.

Use the table below to score the risks in the **Risk Matrix**.

The matrix below is designed to help you in identifying a risk level for a given task or activity. Using your experience, the available evidence and existing precautions/ control measures in place you will have already determined the consequence of harm, and the likelihood of the harm being realised. The level of risk for the respective task or activity can now be determined using the following matrix.

Consequence	Catastrophic	5	5	10	15	20	25	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>20-25</td> <td>Stop – Stop activity and make immediate action</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15-16</td> <td>Urgent Action – take immediate action and stop activity: main existing controls rigorously</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8-12</td> <td>Action - Look to improve in specified timescales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3-6</td> <td>Monitor – look to improve at next review or if there is a significant change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-2</td> <td>No Action - No further controls but ensure controls are maintained and reviewed</td> </tr> </table>	20-25	Stop – Stop activity and make immediate action	15-16	Urgent Action – take immediate action and stop activity: main existing controls rigorously	8-12	Action - Look to improve in specified timescales	3-6	Monitor – look to improve at next review or if there is a significant change	1-2	No Action - No further controls but ensure controls are maintained and reviewed
	20-25	Stop – Stop activity and make immediate action																
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Major	4	4	8	12	16	20												
Moderate	3	3	6	9	12	15												
Minor	2	2	4	6	8	10												
Insignificant	1	1	2	3	4	5												
		1	2	3	4	5												
		Very unlikely	Unlikely	Fairly likely	Likely	Very likely												
		Likelihood																

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by whom? (Full Name)	Action by when?	Done (Must be YES and include date)
Lack of information and awareness	Volunteers not knowing safety procedures or who first aiders are	<p>Prior to the litter-pick taking place, all volunteers should be given a Briefing and Safety Talk, covering the any risks and general information about correct use of the equipment, any particular issues to be aware of regarding the site, muster points etc.</p> <p>Event Organiser to take a roll-call prior to litter-pick taking place.</p>	None	Event organiser	On the day	
Safeguarding children	Children and vulnerable adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children up to the age of 18 and any vulnerable adults to be accompanied by responsible adult (parent, carer or teacher) in approved ratios. • No child to be out of sight of a responsible adult. • All staff on site to maintain vigilance where members of the public not participating in the event are using the same public space. • All event volunteers to wear event tabards to allow easy identification. • In the event of an incident, immediately inform the local Police and any other relevant agencies. 	<p>Check for unaccompanied children and confirm supervision ratios are satisfactory. We use the NSPCC ratios as a guide:</p> <p>0 - 2 years - 1 adult to 3 children.</p> <p>2 - 3 years - 1 adult to 4 children.</p> <p>4 - 8 years - 1 adult to 6 children.</p> <p>9 - 12 years - 1 adult to 8 children.</p> <p>13 - 18 years - 1 adult to 10 children.</p>	Event organiser	On the day	

Aggression/abuse from members of the public	Risk of conflict with member of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organiser to brief volunteers on how to avoid confrontation – approach members of the public in a non-aggressive way if wishing to challenge their behaviour e.g. littering or dog fouling and do not approach people alone. Do not trespass onto private property whilst litter picking. 	Report any incidents to Council.	Event organiser	On the day	
Extreme Weather	Volunteers risk sunstroke, sunburn, dehydration and heat exhaustion due to hot weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First aider on site with access to First Aid kit. Volunteers advised to dress appropriately for weather conditions. Gloves to be worn on all occasions. Advise volunteers to take regular breaks and seek shade if necessary. Volunteers advised to wear sun hats and sun cream, re-apply as needed. Volunteers to have access to water and advised to drink plenty. 	<p>If under 18's are present parent or guardian must supervise closely.</p> <p>Organiser to shorten event duration due to conditions.</p> <p>Organiser to cancel event if weather is extreme.</p>	Event organiser	On the day	
	Volunteers risk discomfort from cold weather , wind and rain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First aider on site with access to First Aid kit Volunteers instructed to wear warm and waterproof clothing, thick socks and sturdy boots Volunteers instructed to avoid areas where debris could come loose, i.e. trees, poorly maintained structures in high winds If lightning occurs, workers and volunteers are instructed to cease using litter pickers and stop the event. Volunteers instructed to warm up and stretch prior to event during cold weather and to pay particular attention not to 	<p>If under 18's are present parent or guardian must supervise closely.</p> <p>Organiser to shorten event duration due to conditions.</p> <p>Organiser to cancel event if weather is extreme.</p>	Event organiser	On the day	

		overexert themselves in order to prevent muskoskeletal injuries.				
Vehicles on roads and in car parks	Volunteers risk injury through contact with moving vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children to remain under supervision and in sight of a responsible adult at all times, preferably by a parent or guardian. • Children not to pick litter from the road but to remain on pavements and paths. • Prior to event, the organiser to advise volunteers on areas where vehicles maybe present. • Briefing to include warning on roads, speed limits and any known hazards Briefing to include warning to always focus when crossing streets and be aware of surroundings at all times • Be aware of any vehicle, potentially trying to park, maintain vigilance, give warning to others of approaching vehicles • Volunteers advised that they must not work on roads or on roadside verges. • Absolutely no litter-picks to take place near railway lines or on bridges. • Tabards or hi-vis to be worn at all times. 	Check for any unusual hazards on the day itself	Event organiser	On the day	

Electric fences	Electrocution, shock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always assume electric fences are live. • Warn volunteers not to touch electric fences. 	<p>Seek medical attention where appropriate.</p> <p>Report any incidents to Council.</p>	Event organiser	On the day	
Collection of litter – manual handling	Workers and volunteers risk injuries or back pain from handling heavy loads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers instructed not to over-fill bags or try to carry heavy items. • Volunteers advised to be aware of their own limitations by the event organiser during the briefing and not lift heavy items found during the clean up. • Volunteers with pre-existing injuries are not to lift bags or heavy items. • No more than one bag at a time to be carried. • Under 18's are always supervised by a parent or guardian. • Only organisers / volunteers trained in safe manual handling procedures offer guidance for safe lifting practices and reducing/removing common hazards and risks (reducing load weight, postural advice when lifting, handling asymmetrical loads, grip, other environmental factors, carry distance, obstacles en-route). • Volunteers advised on safe manual handling practices. • If too heavy to handle, leave the object in place and report it to the organiser to arrange removal by the council. 	Organiser to ensure this is covered in the safety briefing delivered ahead of the clean up starting.	Event organiser	On the day	
Collection of litter – toxic materials /	Volunteers risk coming into contact with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers instructed never to approach suspicious looking containers with or without hazard warning badges. 	Organiser to conduct Site survey at beginning of clean	Event organiser	On the day	

hazardous chemicals	toxic or hazardous material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any suspicious drums, materials or containers with contents not identifiable to be left untouched and Environment Agency Pollution Hotline to be contacted (Tel 0800 7312453) 	up and contact the Environment Agency Pollution Hotline (Tel 0800 7312453) if suspicious or possibly hazardous barrels, containers or materials are found.			
Collection of litter – fly-tipped asbestos	Illness from contact with asbestos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is an accumulation of waste which would obviously have been fly-tipped deliberately on site, then this should be left alone. Report fly-tipping via the Love Newham App for clearance. It is possible that asbestos could be found amongst smaller accumulations of litter that may not appear to be fly tipping. Read our asbestos handbook here. 	<p>Undertake an on-site review of the area, identify any hazards and brief volunteers before event begins.</p> <p>Do not litter-pick fly-tipped rubbish.</p> <p>Report any asbestos related incidents to Council.</p>	Event organiser	On the day	
Collection of litter – sharps, syringes and medical waste	Volunteers risk injury from sharp items, infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site survey prior to event to check for any evidence of syringes. Volunteers finding syringes should not touch them, but immediately notify the event organiser. All work must then cease in this particular area Any accidental piercing by syringe should be immediately treated at medical practice or A&E All volunteers to use litter pickers and gloves. Volunteers instructed never to put sharp objects in bags. 	<p>Organiser to ensure this is covered in the safety briefing delivered ahead of the clean up starting.</p> <p>Organisers to check that litter picking tools are in good, clean condition.</p> <p>Remain vigilant at all time during the clean up and end the clean</p>	Event organiser	On the day	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken glass to be collected in glass bucket and disposed of safely at end of the event. • Volunteers advised not to handle sharps, i.e. needles, syringes, unless trained to do so. • Volunteers advised to alert organiser if sharps are found and if able, they will arrange proper disposal using sharps kit / by the council. 	<p>up immediately if syringes are found.</p> <p>Seek medical attention where appropriate.</p> <p>Report any incidents to Council.</p>			
Discovery of ordnance	Unexploded bombs, shells and flares, severe cuts bruising, severe burns, broken bones, eye damage, shock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you or any volunteer suspect an object to be a type of ordnance, stop what you are doing and report this immediately to the event organiser who then must instruct everyone to return to the designated meeting point, whereby a roll-call will be taken, the event cancelled and the emergency services must be contacted (call 999). 	Report any incidents to Council.	Event organiser	On the day	
Accidents and emergencies	Workers risk injury during event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aider on site with access to First Aid kit • Event organiser to have mobile phone in case of emergency. • In the event of an emergency, event organiser to call 999 and then inform Council. • Before each litter pick takes place, organiser updates and keeps a copy of details of local walk in centres and accident & emergency departments – for minor injuries. • Organiser to replace used first aid items immediately after event, check kit before 	<p>Organiser to follow guidance for reporting of near misses, accidents or injury.</p> <p>Organiser to report any incidents to Council.</p>	Event organiser	On the day	

		every event and undertake formal inventory on a quarterly basis				
Slips, Trips and falls	Volunteers risk slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers advised to wear supportive, slip resistant footwear and no flip flops. • Take care when negotiating steps • Volunteers advised to take extra care on overgrown areas, rocky areas, wet/muddy areas or sand dunes. • Volunteers instructed to take extra care when carrying heavy bags. • Volunteers advised of any hazardous areas and informed that these are to be avoided. • If in doubt, don't carry on if an area looks slippery or dangerous 	<p>Event organiser to remind volunteers to take care when pavements are slippery from rain, leaves, ice, snow etc.</p> <p>Event organiser to check clothing and footwear.</p> <p>Event organiser to cancel event if weather is sufficiently extreme.</p>	Event organiser	On the day	
Rock falls	Volunteers risk injury from falling rocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers advised to stay away from cliffs and never access caves or overhangs. • Volunteers advised to stay away from visible landslips. 	Organiser to ensure this is covered in the safety briefing delivered ahead of the clean up starting.	Event organiser	On the day	
Trees, shrubs	Trips, cuts & eye pokes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aider on site with access to First Aid kit <p>Be aware of low hanging branches and exposed tree and shrub roots.</p>	Obtain medical attention in the event of injury.		On the day	
Proximity to water, contact with water	Volunteers risk injury or drowning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers advised to stay away from water's edge, not enter the water & be vigilant of surging waves. • Volunteers advised of large sea swell conditions and possible rogue waves surging up the beach. 	Organiser to ensure this is covered in the safety briefing delivered ahead of the clean up starting.	Event organiser	On the day	

		Volunteers advised of tidal times and not to go to areas of the beach that could be cut-off.	Organiser to cancel event if sea state is large and surging waves threaten volunteer safety. Advise of risks of Weil's disease /Leptospirosis in safety talk.			
	Potential for bacterial infection - Leptospirosis (Weil's disease)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aider on site with access to First Aid kit. • Have clean water available to wash hands. • All volunteers to wash hands after activities or use antiseptic wipes. • All volunteers to wear waterproof gloves. • All wounds to be disinfected and dressed promptly. • All volunteers to wear sturdy footwear. 	Advise volunteers to wear Nitrile gloves or plasters to cover any existing cuts on hands.	Event organiser	On the day	
Irritant and dangerous plants	Workers and volunteers risk injury from irritant and dangerous plants, e.g. Giant Hogweed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aider on site with access to First Aid kit. • Volunteers advised not to touch any potentially irritant and dangerous plants. • If unsure or concerned about presence of irritant and dangerous plants in the area, organiser to advise relevant authority, i.e. Council. 	Organiser to ensure this is covered in the safety briefing delivered ahead of the clean up starting. Organiser to report any incidents to Council.	Event organiser	On the day	
Dog fouling / faeces	Toxocara canis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not touch dog faeces. • Do not use litter-pickers. • Always wear gloves and use a plastic spade when removing dog faeces. • If a volunteer steps in dog faeces, clean shoes if possible. • If found warn others in the vicinity • If touched, thoroughly wash your hands. 	Organiser to ensure this is covered in the safety briefing delivered ahead of the clean up starting. Organiser to report any incidents to Council.	Event organiser	On the day	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor. • Seek medical attention where appropriate. 				
Animals – Domestic, wild & farm	Lyme Disease carried by animal ticks & bites/scratches, stings from animals/ shock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aider on site with access to First Aid kit. • Avoid contact with animals. Avoid contact with animal faeces. • See separate Guidance on Lyme Disease. • Avoid moving through bracken or vegetation while wearing shorts or short sleeved shirts. • Beware of adders, do not pick up or touch any snakes. • Do not handle jellyfish even if they appear to be dead they can still sting. 	<p>Seek medical attention as soon as possible after being bitten, stung or scratched.</p> <p>Wash hands immediately after contact with faeces.</p> <p>Avoid touching eyes or mouth.</p> <p>Organiser to report any incidents to Council.</p>	Event organiser	On the day	
Aggressive dogs	Workers and volunteers risk injury from dog attack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers advised of the threat of aggressive dogs and to not approach any unknown dog. • Avoid areas if any evidence of aggressive dogs. • Volunteers to maintain vigilance for dogs off leads. • Dog Walkers in vicinity to be advised by group leader of the litter pick and to keep dogs under control. • Children to remain under adult supervision and within sight of adults at all times . • Adopt recommended posture if confronted by a dog – do not look in eyes, look down, do not run, pull limbs into body, retreat slowly. 	<p>Check site for evidence of dogs.</p> <p>Organiser to report any incidents to Council.</p>	Event organiser	On the day	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit A&E if bitten or attacked. • Report attack to the Police and refer to the government guidance on controlling dogs in public if you feel this is necessary: https://www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/report-a-dog 				
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On Completion of the Litter Pick Ensure:

- Everyone washes their hands thoroughly as soon as possible after the litter pick and before taking any food or drink.
- Any wounds are redressed after cleaning and disinfecting if there has been any contact with water. Volunteers carry out a personal inspection for cuts etc.
- All volunteers have reported back and all equipment is collected back in.
- All rubbish for collection has been left in the arranged pick up site.
- Any bags containing sharp material, e.g. broken glass, are clearly identified.