



Litter Picking Guide

For info visit:

www.eastcambs.gov.uk/east-cambs-street-scene/love-your-street

Contact: Customer Services, ContactUs@eastcambs.gov.uk



East Cambridgeshire
District Council



Purpose

Litter picking is a great way to improve the environment and raise awareness of littering in your area. It reinforces positive behaviours that show care for the local environment and pride in the places where we live, inspiring change within communities. The absence of litter can further discourage people from dropping it, resulting in safer places, and the whole community being proud of an area that is litter free.

Through the Love Your Street campaign, East Cambridgeshire District Council is asking for your help to spread positive messages to help reduce littering.

This short guide has been designed to help anyone thinking of carrying out a litter pick.

Please also take the time to watch this video, created by Keep Britain Tidy, to prepare yourself or your group for a litter pick: <https://youtu.be/cjxyE2LJxz8>.

If you are the organiser of a community litter pick you have a duty of care to ensure that the health and safety of all taking part is properly considered; all volunteers should know the hazards and understand the control measures to mitigate any risks, before clearing 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 or to report an incident. You should also check that all volunteers know what equipment they must use and what area they will clean up.

A copy of the risk assessment form (on page 8 of this guide) should be provided to all volunteers prior to the event, briefing them of any hazard that may pose a risk to them or the public during the litter pick. Volunteers may be requested to complete a sign-in sheet (on page 13 of this guide) which is checked to ensure everyone has returned after the litter pick. Adequate safeguarding measures must be in place if volunteers are children or vulnerable adults.

Before starting a litter pick

The organiser/you should ensure all volunteers:

- have the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) such as thick gloves, litter picking sticks, high visibility vests, sensible footwear and appropriate clothing for the weather
- know how to safely use the litter picking sticks and only use them to collect litter (to reduce the risk of manual handling injuries caused by direct contact with litter and repetitive bending)
- know the litter pick area (its proximity to roads or cycle ways) and how to report incidents or receive first aid
- consider all the risks and hazards in the collection area, such as hazardous waste (e.g. chemicals, asbestos, paint, engine oil) or harmful waste (broken glass, nails, needles, condoms, dog waste.)
- know where to deposit the litter bags collected and how to mark bags containing sharp material such as broken glass
- avoid reaching into hedges or undergrowth to avoid exposing the face, eyes or skin to scratches from thorns or branches.
- know where to meet on completion of the litter pick
- do not attempt to pick up any items that cannot easily be identified or is clearly hazardous. Hazardous waste should be immediately reported using the appropriate online form at [Clean Streets | East Cambridgeshire District Council \(eastcambs.gov.uk\)](https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/clean-streets).
- do not attempt to remove dead animals, but report them using the online form at [Dead Animals | East Cambridgeshire District Council \(eastcambs.gov.uk\)](https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/dead-animals).
- do not compress any litter in bags as this can cause skin injuries
- are mindful of wildlife and of potential diseases that can be transmitted through it (Leptospirosis and Lyme disease, for instance, through contact with rats' urine or tick bites, respectively)

Don't forget to:

- find out who the landowner is of the area you wish to litter pick, and ensure you have permission to carry out the activity, if the area is private. East Cambs Street Scene Ltd will only be able to collect bags from public land.
- ensure there is a first aider on site with access to a first aid kit
- have a mobile phone to use in case of emergency and have identified local minor injuries walk-in centres or the nearest A&E
- exchange phone numbers or offer your phone contact, which ensures everyone is contactable or can communicate with you if need arises.
- brief volunteers on your role and your duty of care towards them
- advise volunteers not to overfill bags, carry heavy items or handle suspicious items
- be aware of the forecasted weather and how it may affect participants so that you can take precautions (hats, suncream) or can cancel the event in case of extreme weather
- arrange a litter pick only if visibility is good and in daylight hours

East Cambs Street Scene Ltd can support you by lending litter picking equipment (including litter picking sticks, high visibility vests, thick gloves, hoops for bags and bags for the collection of litter) at no cost. Please fill in the booking form at https://eastcambs-self.achieveservice.com//service/Litter_pick_equipment_booking_request or contact the ECDC' s Customer Services at ContactUs@eastcambs.gov.uk to book the equipment.

There is a limited stock that can only be lent short term to groups, so please ensure the timely return of equipment to allow other people to borrow it.

You will be required to provide, together with your contact details, information such as the date of your litter pick, location of bags for collection, and date of the pick-up and drop-off of any equipment you may need to/from:

Waste Team, East Cambridgeshire District Council, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely CB7 4EE. Your contact details will only be used to contact you in relation to your request. The council's privacy notice can be found at:

www.eastcambs.gov.uk/notices/privacy-notice.

Whether or not you need to borrow equipment for your litter pick, you should always agree a collection point of the litter pick bags with the Waste Team prior to your event, so that all waste can be promptly collected and does not attract fly tipping. You will need to mark the litter bags collected with stickers provided by the council, to ensure the bags are not mistaken for fly tipping.

Risk assessment

Health and safety is very important when undertaking a litter pick; a risk assessment form must be completed by the organiser through visual inspection of the area where the litter pick will take place, before arranging the event. This will help to identify hazards and control measures, and how to mitigate risks in the event of an accident. The Risk Assessment Form on page 8 of this guide has been provided for reference and is not intended as an exhaustive list of hazards.

East Cambridgeshire District Council will not be liable for any accidents occurred before, during or after the litter pick. The organiser/you should tailor the assessment as necessary to identify other hazards and risks associated with the litter pick. Where the control measures allow a reduction in risks to an acceptable level for the activity to go ahead, ensure all participants are briefed on the risks identified and explain the control measures which need to be complied with. We advise volunteers groups and organisations to consider arranging insurance to cover their own legal liabilities.

You should give particular consideration to the location of your litter pick , whether it is easily accessible or close to cars or cycle routes, water streams or the wildlife. Volunteers should always wear high visibility vests and gloves and not touch any harmful or unidentified item, and wash hands and forearms if they have been accidentally in contact with litter.

Good hygiene such as washing hands after the litter pick and, if eating, during the litter pick is recommended, as well as avoiding touching the face (particularly mouth, eyes or ears) while wearing gloves.

To reduce risks, advise not to pick sharp or harmful waste such as needles and syringes, but to contact the council for their safe removal, taking note of the exact location where they have been found. You can use what3words for instance (www.what3words.com) or take details and pictures of the location.

Advertise the litter pick

Once a date for a litter pick has been arranged, you can further share it with friends or on Facebook, to encourage more people to join you. You can tag @EastCambs with hashtag #LoveYourStreet to support the Love Your Street campaign. Please ensure that volunteers can work in small teams if more people show up to the event and you have not enough litter pick sticks for your number of volunteers.

On completion of the litter pick

The organiser/you should ensure:

- volunteers carry out a personal inspection for cuts and minor injuries
- any wounds are redressed after cleaning and disinfecting
- that the area covered is inspected to see if there is any hazardous material still present. If so, records of the location should be taken to report it to the council
- all volunteers have reported back and all equipment is collected back in
- a pick-up site and day have been arranged in advance with the council and the bags have been left at the arranged pick up site for collection
- litter pick bags have been marked with the stickers provided by the council, to ensure they are not mistaken as fly tipping

- any bags containing sharp material such as broken glass have been marked using for instance a spray can
- any bags have been securely tied to ensure they do not cause spillages, which may be hazardous to the public

Useful contacts

To book litter picking equipment:	https://eastcambs-self.achieveservice.com//service/Litter_pick_equipment_booking_request
For litter pick queries, including bags collection:	East Cambridgeshire District Council, Customer Services 01353 6655555, ContactUs@eastcambs.gov.uk
For major accidents and emergencies:	Princess of Wales Hospital, Lynn Road, Ely, CB6 1DN 999
For minor injuries:	Ely Minor Injuries Unit, Princess of Wales Hospital, Lynn Road, Ely, CB6 1DN 01353 656675
Community groups that organise litter picking:	For a list of community groups that organise litter picks please visit: www.eastcambs.gov.uk/east-cambs-street-scene/become-loveyourstreethero

Litter pick Risk Assessment Form

Organiser's Name	Phone	Date	Location of Litter Pick
------------------	-------	------	-------------------------

Use the table below to score the risks in the **Risk Assessment Table**.

Likelihood (a)		Severity (b)		Magnitude = a x b
Certain	5	Fatality	6	2 x 3 = 6
Probable	4	Serious Disablement	5	le LOW RISK
Even Chance	3	Sprain, Major Cuts/Bruises	4	High Risk = 21 to 30
Possible	2	Minor Cut/Strain	3	Medium Risk = 11 to 20
Unlikely	1	Minor Bruises/Grazes	2	Low Risk = 2 to 10

Risk Assessment Table

HAZARD	RISK	CONTROLS	MEASURES TO REDUCE EFFECT IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT	Score	Risk
Broken glass, sharp/rusty edges	Cuts and infections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strong gloves to be worn at all times use litter grabbers to pick up sharp litter all participants should have up-to-date tetanus protection 	Seek medical attention where appropriate. Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor.		
Needles	Cuts and infections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leave alone and report to event organiser to dispose of in sharps container using litter grabber, or report to council for removal 	Seek medical attention where appropriate.		

Heavy/awkward to handle rubbish	Pulled muscles and strains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extreme care to be taken, use good lifting practices and share the load with an appropriate number of people If too heavy to handle leave the object in place and report it to the organiser to arrange removal by the council 	<p>Stop immediately if suffering any pain or discomfort.</p> <p>Seek medical attention if the ill effects persist.</p>		
Batteries, asbestos and miscellaneous chemicals	Potentially dangerous depending on condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not approach or remove any potentially hazardous waste report to the council for disposal 	<p>Seek medical attention if exposed to pesticides, insecticides or other chemicals – record any label details.</p>		
Ground conditions	Sprains, muscle damage and broken bones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid dangerous areas and choose the safest possible route over difficult ground instruct volunteers to wear suitable footwear 	<p>Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor.</p> <p>Seek medical attention for any serious cuts, bruises or strains.</p>		
Highways vehicles, bicycles, plant and machinery	Collision with moving traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid proximity to traffic if possible stay off the highway be alert to the potential presence of agricultural machinery wear high visibility clothing if necessary do not work on the roadside if the speed limit is 40mph or over be aware of the vehicles around you during the litter pick. keep a look out. children should not work by a road-side 	<p>Seek medical attention in the event of injury.</p>		
People, lone working	Physical or verbal assault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be aware of aggressive and difficult people withdraw rather than face conflict 	<p>Seek medical attention following any assault / injury.</p>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not work out of sight of others in the group organiser/section leader to have mobile phone keep together and stay off private property 			
Animals – Domestic, wild and farm	Lymes Disease carried by animal ticks and bites/scratches from animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wear appropriate clothing beware of loose dogs avoid contact with animals. Avoid contact with animal faeces 	Seek medical attention as soon as possible after being bitten or scratched. Wash hands immediately after contact with faeces. Avoid touching eyes or mouth.		
Waterside diseases	Weil's Disease from rats' urine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not touch dead animals cover any cuts or sores with a waterproof plaster before carrying out a litter pick avoid getting hands wet in rivers, ponds or canals 	Seek medical attention where appropriate. Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor.		
Dog faeces	Toxocara canis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not touch dog faeces always wear gloves and use a shovel when removing dog faeces 	Thoroughly wash your hands. Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor. Seek medical attention where appropriate.		

Weather eg Thunderstorms	Various health issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cease work in inappropriate conditions • avoid working in extreme conditions • dress for conditions & carry additional clothing • in the event of extreme weather conditions, the litter pick should be postponed or abandoned 	Seek medical attention where appropriate.		
Electric fences	Electrocution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • always assume electric fences are live • warn volunteers not to touch electric fences 	Seek medical attention where appropriate.		
Steep slopes and unstable structures	Falls leading to sprains, muscle damage and broken bones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instruct volunteers to stay away from these areas • avoid picking on or close to the edge of steep slopes or below unstable structures • take weather conditions and possible weather changes into account • seek medical treatment in the event of injury 	Seek medical attention where appropriate.		
Rivers and waterways	Hypothermia, drowning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid riverbanks, especially if they appear unstable. Always work in pairs if close to water • take account of river levels • shower and change into warm dry clothing if immersed • never allow children to work in these areas • adults should be cautious and non-swimmers must not litter pick near water 	Seek medical attention where appropriate.		
Hedges, fences, walls, ditches		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take care when climbing stiles particularly in wet weather 	Seek medical attention where appropriate.		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid climbing walls, ditches and fences • stay within the nominated location 			
Tools, equipment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • team to be shown how to use equipment if appropriate • allow sufficient working area for the correct and safe use of the tool • use appropriate protection • first aid training. • have first aid kit available • volunteers must use the equipment provided and as instructed 	Obtain medical attention in the event of injury.		
Trees, shrubs	Trips, cuts and eye pokes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be alert to the risks and keep a look out for hazards. • be aware of low hanging branches and exposed tree and shrub roots 	Obtain medical attention in the event of injury.		
Irritants, dangerous plants	Poisoning, skin irritations or allergic reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wear the gloves provided • beware of dangerous plants and possible adverse reactions. • wash thoroughly on completion of such operations. 	Seek medical attention for unusual or suspicious symptoms after contact with vegetation.		

Disclaimer

Volunteers should not participate in litter picks unless they understand and accept participation entirely at their own risk. Volunteers are not working for, or on behalf of East Cambs Street Scene Ltd or East Cambridgeshire District Council, therefore the council will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of the actions and omissions of volunteers or this guide. Obtaining public liability insurance is recommended. This provides 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. Household insurances may cover you for public liabilities, and we would advise to check your policy to ensure you are covered. If not, you will need to take out a separate public liability insurance.

Attendance list

Volunteers should write their name in the table below to confirm they have read the Risk Assessment Form and will follow the instructions given in this guide or safety briefing, to ensure the event runs as smoothly as possible. If they would like someone to be contacted in case of emergency, they can include telephone contacts below. Personal contacts, including phone numbers, will only be used if need arises, and will be securely destroyed after the event.

Litter pick location:

Date:

	Name	Phone number	Time in	Time out	Emergency number	Please tick to confirm you have read the Risk Assessment Form
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						