

Clean Up Scotland – Litter Picking Guidance for groups

Clean Up Scotland has supported groups and individuals with community litter picks for almost ten years. We are aware that as a result of lockdown people across Scotland have had much more time to spend at home and in their local area, appreciating their local environment in a way that they may never have had the opportunity to before

As a result, a lot of our supporters still want to litter pick and we know others want to join them as part of a community wide effort to tackle lockdown litter. We want to make sure this is done as safely as possible whilst maximising effort and coordinating across councils and groups.

We ask that all our supporters follow the latest advice from Public Health Scotland (which can be found [here](#)) and **localised guidance from their local authority** as well as the guidance below:

1. Litter picking should be done in line with current limits on groups sizes meeting outdoors with appropriate social distancing measures in place.

As of 10/9/2020 these are:

- Outdoor meetings can have up **to 1 other household at a time**.
- You should meet in small numbers – **no more than 6 people in total** at a time.

Please remember that this is upper limit per day, for further information check [Scottish Government guidance here](#).

2. You should still stay at least **2 metres apart** from people from other households at all times.
3. Avoid litter picking in crowded or busy areas.
4. Wear protective gloves at all times during your litter pick.
5. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds before and after your litter pick.
6. Use a litter picker and your own carrier bags to collect the litter (do not use your hands).
7. Do not touch your face when litter picking.
8. Make sure you thoroughly sanitise your equipment before and after use using suitable cleaning products. Remember gloves, bags and litter pickers (handle and grabber) all need to be washed.
9. If you think you will collect a few bags we'd recommend speaking to your local authority to see if an uplift is possible. If it isn't possible, you will need to dispose of the litter you collect in your own household general waste bin. Remember to take this into consideration ahead of picking up litter to ensure your bags will fit.
10. Ensure you pass on all this information and guidance to your group at ahead of the litter pick. Remind individuals that if they feel unwell they shouldn't participate.

We know it can be difficult to ensure everyone maintains social distancing measures when in a familiar group. Why don't you try spacing yourselves out in your community and take a street each? This approach would cover more area and would be more visible to other members of the community.

You could also promote an on-going adopt a street approach to keeping your place beautiful. To do this you would need to have a Facebook group set up so that individuals can be allocated a street and the effort can be coordinated.

If you are looking for equipment (including gloves, litter pickers, hoops and high vis vests) contact our partners at [Helping Hand Environmental](#). Use the code **KSBGROUP** to get a discount on any orders.

This guidance will be reviewed and updated in line with the Scottish Government's advice including the [Covid-19 Framework for Decision-Making Route Map](#)

FAQs

Where do I get equipment from?

At present not all local authorities are able to provide support to community clean ups. They are still focused on trying to ensure primary services are maintained so can't provide this support at the same level as before. A list of contacts for local authorities can be [found here](#), but please be aware replies might be slow.

Individuals can purchase discounted equipment from Helping Hand Environment using the code **KSBGROUP** to get a discount.

I can't get equipment anywhere; can I just use gloves?

Even thick gloves cannot guarantee safety from sharps and needles. Using your hands can also lead to closer contact to littered items. We encourage everyone to use a litter picking stick to ensure they are safe.

Where do I put the rubbish I remove? Can I use public bins?

Under normal circumstances we ask individuals to arrange an uplift from their local authority. In the first instance, we'd recommend reaching out to your local authority to see if they can add an uplift to their routes. Find the relevant contacts here: <https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/media/1565416/local-authority-contact-list-2020.pdf>.

If you don't get a response or they are unable to help you we ask that you use your own household waste bins or (if you are confident it will get emptied) use a public bin. We do not want to add pressure to our already stretched local authorities.

We have communal litter picking equipment, how do you ensure it's cleaned?

If you are borrowing equipment from one of our new Community Hubs or the local authority you need to make sure it's sanitised and that you feel confident it's been cleaned. Both our Community Hubs and local authorities will have appropriate measures and facilities in place to ensure all equipment is sanitised before use. We recommend you also give the equipment a wash down when you have finished using before handing it back to help out. You should always be washing your hands before and after use.

Is it safe to use a reusable bag?

Reusable bags are difficult to keep clean and ensuring they are properly sanitised between uses will be hard. We recommend using a disposable bag instead.

I've litter picked my area throughout lockdown but people are still littering. What else can I do?

Over the last few months we have been developing a litter survey tool that individuals can use to track their local litter problems. This will help with understanding the unique behaviours that are leading to problems.

We are also working to support individuals and groups with designing bespoke localised campaign to try and change this behaviour for good. Keep up to date by checking the [Clean Up Scotland pages](#) or contact us at cleanup@keepscotlandbeautiful.org