



**LIVE
HERE
LOVE
HERE**

HEALTH AND SAFETY HANDBOOK

Whether you're participating in our Adopt A Spot project, Healthy Oceans Healthy Minds initiative, or simply planning a one-off litter pick, safety is essential. This guide provides valuable advice and practical tips to ensure you carry out your activities safely and effectively.



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Live Here Love Here is a positive people powered campaign focused on improving our local environment and taking pride in our communities.

We aim to Enable, Empower, and Engage people across Northern Ireland. Volunteers hold the power to create meaningful change by taking practical action to make Northern Ireland a greener, cleaner, and healthier place to call home.

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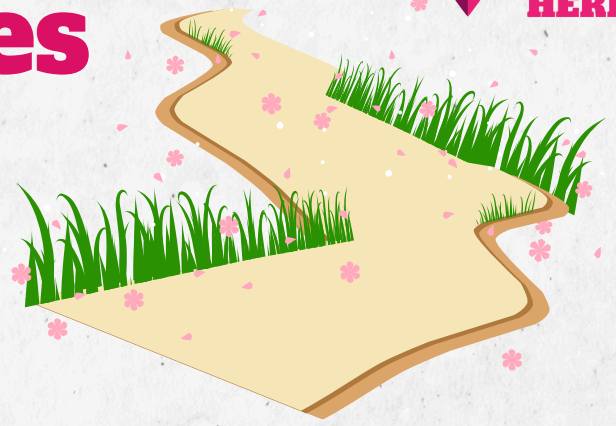
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Responsibilities



Whether participating as an individual or part of a group, everyone has a responsibility to ensure their own safety and the safety of others. Volunteers should be aware that they may be working in potentially hazardous environments and must follow the recommendations outlined in this guide.

Please read these safety guidelines carefully and reach out if anything is unclear. If volunteering as part of a group, it is best practice to appoint a group leader to oversee organisation and take charge of health and safety during the event.

We recommend that every event, whether individual or group, includes a readily available first aid kit in case of accidents. For group activities, it's advisable to have at least one member trained in first aid. Alongside a first aid kit, it's important to ensure you have the necessary equipment for the event, including appropriate PPE.

Please note that Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful cannot accept legal responsibility for any personal injury or damage incurred as a result of participation in our programmes and campaigns.



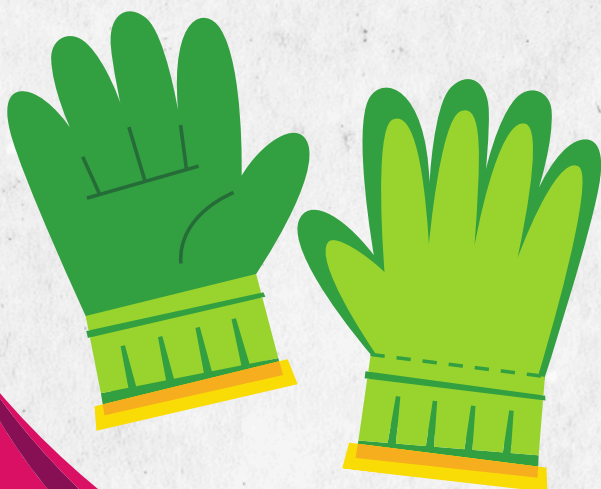
If you're signed up to Adopt A Spot, you can also join our kit waiting list to receive equipment as soon as funding becomes available.

The Basics

Every event comes with its own set of risks, whether it's walking on a slippery path or working near a road. That's why it's essential to carry out a risk assessment before the event begins.

A risk assessment identifies potential hazards that could harm participants and outlines measures to reduce the likelihood of accidents or injuries. It should always be completed ahead of the event.

For group activities, the responsibility lies with the group leader to conduct the assessment and share it with participants before the event takes place.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) plays an important role in keeping you safe during activities. Your risk assessment will help determine if any specific PPE is needed. Additionally, practising good general hygiene is always recommended.

For group events, it's essential to deliver a safety talk at the beginning. This should cover potential hazards, precautions outlined in the risk assessment, and any other key information, such as the meeting point or identifying first aiders.

While it's not mandatory to have insurance in place to participate in our clean-up campaigns, it's considered good practice for your group to have insurance coverage.

To make your event preparation easier, you can use our Safety Talk Checklist as a guide!

Risk Assessments

Follow these five guidelines to complete a successful risk assessment:

1. Identify the Hazards

Examine the area and activities involved to spot potential hazards that could cause injury.

2. Decide Who Might Be Harmed & How

Consider who could be at risk, such as volunteers with pre-existing health conditions or pregnant individuals.

3. Evaluate the Risks & Decide on Precautions

Assess how likely the identified hazards are to cause harm and take actions to minimize risks, like using PPE or restricting access to hazardous areas.

4. Record Your Findings & Implement Them

Document the assessment and share it with all involved volunteers to ensure they are informed of the precautions.

5. Review Your Assessment & Update When Necessary

Monitor for new risks, like weather changes, and update your risk assessment with any additional precautions needed.



Risk:

Risk is the chance that somebody could be harmed by a hazard with an indication of how serious the harm could be e.g. breaking a bone.

Hazard:

A hazard is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, wet floors, etc.

You can use our **template risk assessment** and adapt it for your site/event. We have included some of the more common hazards and how to minimise them.

Working with Children

Parents or supervisors are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of any children participating in events. Adequate adult supervision is essential when groups include individuals under 18 years of age.

As a guideline, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful recommends a ratio of one adult for every four young participants (18 years or younger). When completing the risk assessment, be sure to account for the age, abilities, and needs of the children involved.



Children should be informed about potentially dangerous items they may encounter and advised not to touch or pick them up. Additionally, children should never attempt to lift heavy or bulky items to avoid injury.



Any activity near water or roadways requires close supervision of children at all times. They should remain within sight of a responsible adult to ensure their safety.

Working Near Roads

Avoid working near roads during peak traffic times or public holidays, as traffic is generally heavier.

Ensure clean-up activities are not carried out in low light or fog conditions to maintain visibility.

A safe crossing point should be clearly marked in the risk assessment and highlighted during the safety briefing.

Always exercise caution when crossing roads, and use pedestrian crossings and signals where available. Work should be conducted on one side of the road at a time to minimise risk.

Working in the direction of oncoming traffic provides more time to react if a vehicle veers off the road or loses control.

Any work near roads should be carried out facing oncoming traffic, and all participants should wear high-visibility clothing at all times.



Lone Working

If you're working alone, always ensure someone knows your location and the time you plan to finish.

Make sure you carry a fully charged mobile phone to call for help if necessary. The [What 3 Words](#) app can be a handy tool to share your exact location if needed.

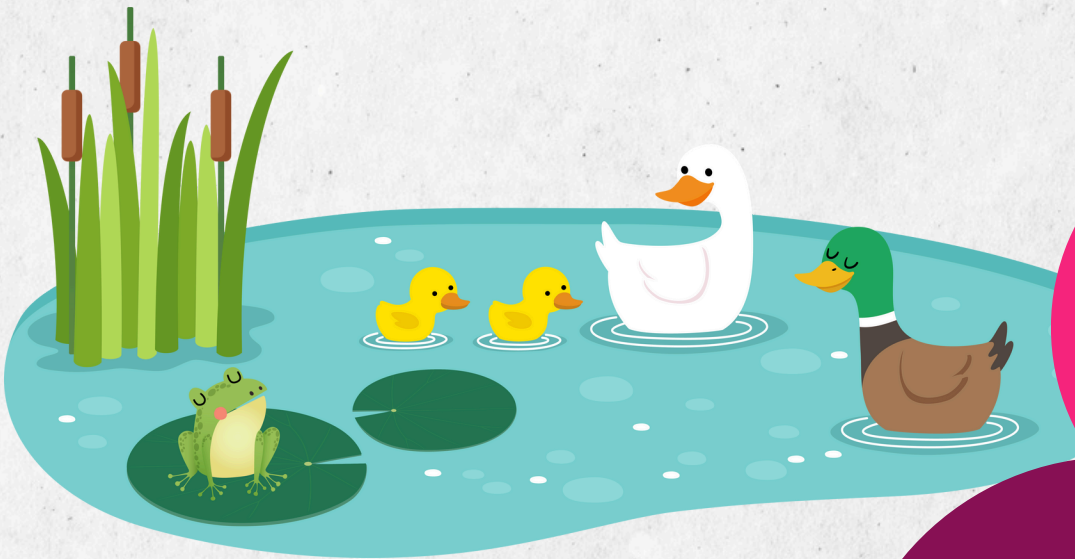
Working Near Water



Precautions must always be taken when working near bodies of water. Work should be conducted away from the water's edge, and participants should never enter the water.

When working near water, participants should wear shoes with good grip and familiarize themselves with any available rescue equipment in the area.

If working in a coastal area, tide times should be checked in advance, and extra caution should be exercised to avoid areas that may become cut off by an advancing tide.



Check local tide times on [WillyWeather here.](#)

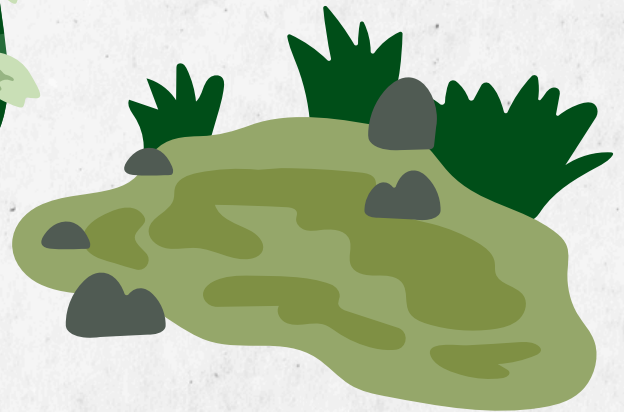


In the case of an emergency, call 999 and ask for **COASTGUARD.**

Natural Hazards

Nature contains various hazards, such as toxic plants or dangerous animals. It's important to ensure that all participating volunteers are made aware of these potential risks before the event takes place. This helps to keep everyone safe and prepared for any unexpected situations.

Giant hogweed is an invasive plant that can cause severe skin damage. It is harmful to both humans and animals and should never be touched. If you come across giant hogweed, avoid contact and notify your local council for proper handling. While common hogweed is smaller, it can still cause serious skin conditions and should also be avoided.



Blue-green algae is toxic to both humans and animals. Under no circumstances should you touch water containing blue-green algae. Be aware that the algae can remain on the banks of infected water bodies when water levels change.

If you're working near water bodies where blue-green algae may be present, extra caution is essential. For more information on blue-green algal blooms, visit [Blue-Green Algae | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#).



Weils Disease

(Leptospirosis) is an infection that can be contracted through contact with the urine of infected animals, typically rats. It is spread when infected water or soil enters the mouth, eyes, or any cuts on the skin.

The infection can become serious if left untreated, and it is important to seek medical attention if you suspect you have contracted it. Symptoms of Leptospirosis include a high fever, red eyes, aching muscles, and feeling nauseous or unwell.

If you think you have been exposed, it is important to visit a GP for diagnosis and treatment.

For more information on Leptospirosis, please visit [Leptospirosis \(Weil's disease\) | nidirect](#).

Avoid touching dead or sick animals. Report dead birds to DAERA. Find useful contacts [here](#).



Ticks are small parasites found in grassy areas, and they can transmit Lyme disease to humans. If you're working in an area where ticks may be present, it's important to wear protective clothing, such as long trousers, to reduce the risk of tick bites. After the event, check your skin carefully for ticks, and if any are found, remove them promptly.

Important Note:

Do not attempt to remove a tick by pulling it off yourself. For guidance on how to safely remove ticks and information on Lyme disease, please visit: [Lyme disease | nidirect](#).

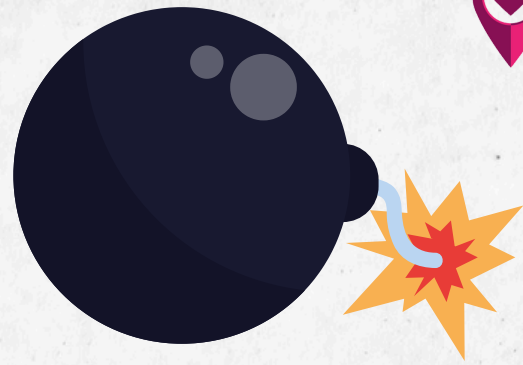


If you develop any of the following symptoms after being bitten by a tick, it's important to visit your GP as soon as possible:

- Pain and swelling in joints
- Neurological issues
- Heart problems
- Meningitis-like symptoms

Early treatment of Lyme disease is crucial for effective recovery.

Hazardous Waste



Do not touch hazardous materials like chemicals, weapons, ammunition, needles, or any dangerous objects.

If you find a suspicious object, move away immediately, evacuate the area, and **call 999 to alert the police**. Ensure no one else approaches the object.

Group Leaders must inform participants about potentially dangerous items to avoid handling.

If litter such as unidentified drums, syringes, chemical containers, poisons, or insecticides is spotted, do not attempt to move it. Record its location and notify your local council.

If collecting syringes, always use a sharps container, long tweezers, and heavy-duty gloves. However, it may be safest to contact your local council to handle their removal.

Asbestos is a hazardous material often found in fly-tipping cases. If you suspect asbestos or encounter fly-tipping, contact your local council for removal. Do not attempt to clear it yourself.



If unsure whether an object is safe, do not touch it!

Find your local council contacts [here](#)

Location and Time



All activities should occur during daylight and conclude before darkness to ensure clear visibility.

Always check the weather before events to confirm it's safe to proceed and that participants are prepared with appropriate supplies, such as waterproof coats and sturdy footwear.

Avoid holding activities in conditions that reduce visibility, such as heavy rain or fog.



Choose a safe location, avoiding steep banks or boggy areas.

Before starting, check for trip hazards like fallen branches or uneven ground. If working in a group, share these hazards during the pre-work safety talk.

Important Note: Your risk assessment should outline precautions for adverse weather, including the possibility of rescheduling the event for safer conditions.

Ensure you have permission from the landowner before your event takes place. Make sure your site is accessible and try to make sure it's as safe as possible.

This resource is intended for guidance purposes only and applies to all Live Here Love Here activities, including litter picking and Adopt A Spot. The risks and hazards at each location may vary, and it is the event organiser's responsibility to identify them and implement the necessary precautions.

If an accident occurs during the event, the organiser should document the incident and inform Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful as soon as possible.

Please note that Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful is not legally responsible for any personal injury or damage incurred as a result of participation in any of our programmes and campaigns.

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