



**LIVE
HERE
LOVE
HERE**

HEALTH AND SAFETY HANDBOOK

Whether you're participating in our Adopt A Spot project or simply planning a one-off litter picking activity, safety is essential.

This guide provides valuable advice and practical tips to ensure you carry out your event safely and effectively.



+44 28 9073 6920



enquiries@liveherelovehere.org

Who we are

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 have the power to create meaningful change by taking practical action to make Northern Ireland a cleaner, greener, and healthier place to call home.

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Responsibilities

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



Please read these safety guidelines carefully and get in touch if anything is unclear. When volunteering as part of a group, it is best practice to appoint a Group Leader to oversee organisation and take responsibility for health and safety during the event.

We also recommend that every event, whether individual or group, has a first aid kit readily available in case of accidents or emergencies.

For group activities, it is advisable to have at least one member trained in first aid. In addition to a first aid kit, ensure you have all necessary equipment for the event, including appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

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

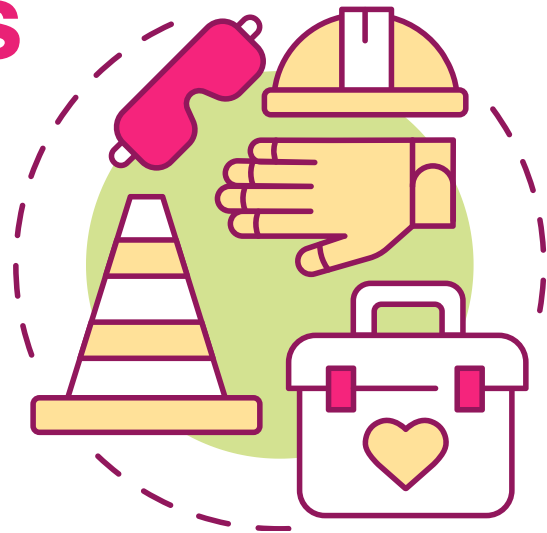
Health & Safety Basics

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.

Step-by-Step Guide to Risk Assessment

1. Identify the Hazards

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

Hazard:

A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, or wet floors

2. Decide Who Might Be Harmed & How

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

Risk:

The likelihood that someone could be harmed by a hazard, together with an indication of how severe the harm could be (e.g. a broken bone)

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.

Use this [Template Risk Assessment](#) and adapt it to suit your site or event. It includes some common hazards and suggested measures to help minimise them.

Working with Children

Parents and 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 supervision ratio of one adult for every four young participants (18 years or younger). When completing the risk assessment, please consider the age, abilities, and specific needs of the children involved.

Children should be made aware of potentially hazardous items they may encounter and advised not to touch or pick them up. They should also be reminded never to lift heavy or bulky objects to avoid injury.



Any activity near water or roadways requires children to be closely supervised at all times. Children should remain within sight and reach 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.

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 needed. The What 3 Words app is a handy tool to share your exact location.

Working Near Water

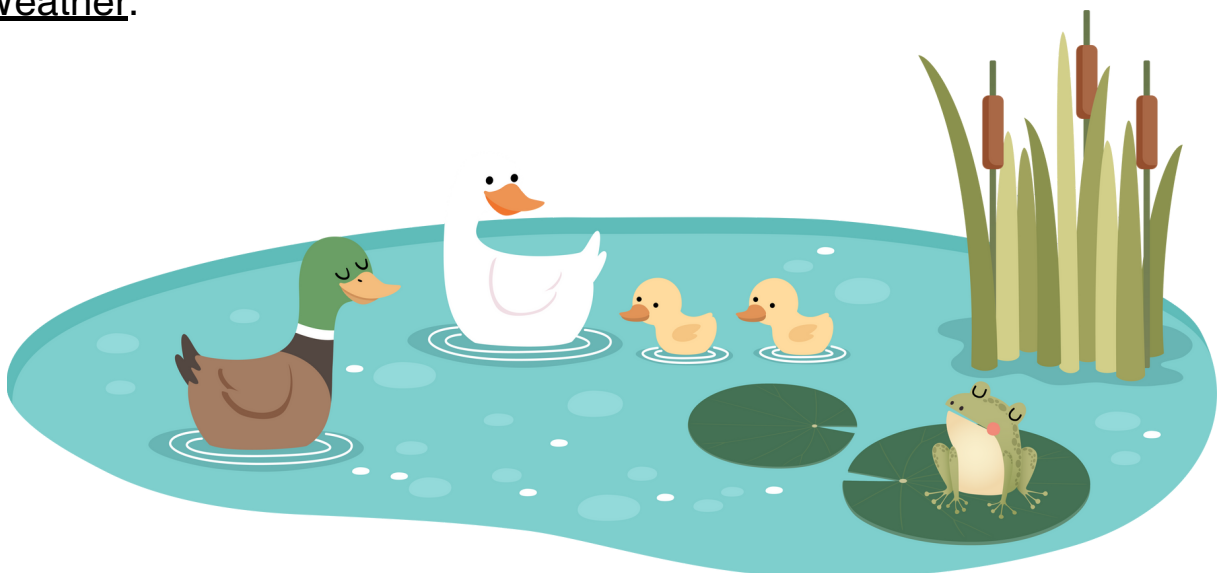
Precautions must always be taken when carrying out any activity close to rivers, lakes, ponds, or coastal areas. Work should be planned and conducted at a safe distance from the water's edge, if possible.

All participants should wear appropriate footwear with good grip to prevent slips and falls, particularly on wet or uneven ground. Before starting, take time to identify and familiarise yourself with any rescue or safety equipment available on-site, such as life rings or throw lines.

If working in a coastal location, check tide times in advance and plan activities carefully to avoid areas that could become cut off by an incoming tide. Weather and sea conditions can change quickly, so exercise extra caution and consider postponing if conditions are unsafe.

You can check local tide times on [Willy Weather](#).

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. Find out more about blue-green algal blooms [here](#).



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. Find out more about Leptospirosis [here](#).

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

Ticks are small parasites commonly found in grassy or wooded areas. They can transmit Lyme disease to humans, so it's important to take precautions when working outdoors.

If you're in an area where ticks may be present, wear protective clothing, such as long trousers and sleeves, to reduce the risk of bites. After your event, check your skin carefully for ticks, and remove any you find as soon as possible.

Important Note: Do not try to pull a tick off with your fingers. Find official guidance on how to safely remove ticks [here](#).

If you experience any of the following symptoms after being bitten, contact your GP immediately:

- Pain and swelling in the joints
- Neurological issues (e.g. numbness or facial weakness)
- Heart problems
- Meningitis-like symptoms

Early treatment of Lyme disease is essential for effective recovery.

Hazardous Waste

Do not touch hazardous materials, including chemicals, weapons, ammunition, needles, or any other 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 prevent handling.

For litter such as unidentified drums, syringes, chemical containers, poisons, or insecticides, do not attempt to move them. Instead, record the location and notify your local council.

If collecting syringes, always use a sharps container, long tweezers, and heavy-duty



gloves. However, it is oftensafest to contact your local council for removal.

Asbestos is a hazardous material commonly found in fly-tipping incidents. If you suspect asbestos or come across fly-tipped waste, do not attempt to remove it yourself. Contact your local council for safe removal.

Never touch an object if you are unsure whether it is safe!

Location & Time

All activities should take place during daylight hours and finish before dark to maintain clear visibility.

Check the weather forecast in advance to confirm conditions are safe, and ensure participants are equipped with suitable clothing and footwear, such as waterproof jackets and sturdy shoes.

Avoid holding activities in poor visibility or adverse weather conditions, including heavy rain, fog, or high winds. Choose a safe location and steer clear of steep slopes, boggy ground, or other hazardous areas.

Before beginning, inspect the site for potential trip hazards such as uneven ground or fallen branches. If working as a group, communicate any



identified hazards during the pre-activity safety briefing.

Make sure you have the landowner's permission before your event. Choose a site that's easy to access and safe for everyone taking part.

Your risk assessment should include precautions for adverse weather, including the option to reschedule the event to ensure participant safety.

Contact Us



enquiries@liveherelovehere.org



+44 28 9073 6920



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful
Titanic Suites, 55-59 Adelaide Street,
Belfast, BT2 8FE

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 specific risks and hazards at each location may vary, and it is the event organiser's responsibility to identify these risks and implement appropriate safety precautions.

In the event of an accident, the organiser must record the incident and notify Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful as soon as possible.

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