



Friends of Rising Sun Country Park

Risk Assessment for Volunteer-Led Community Litter pick sessions

Location	Rising Sun Country Park - Paths, woodlands and grassland areas
Dates	Monthly – last Monday each month (except December). Occasional weekend events for specific campaigns such as Great British Spring Clean or Love Parks week
Meeting Point	Outside Countryside Centre Café, Whitley Road at 10 am. An alternative meeting point would be Rising Sun Farm.
Organiser	Friends of Rising Sun Country Park
Review date	Annually at AGM or after any incident

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1. Event Overview

Event Overview	A community litter-picking session within the Rising Sun area, led by volunteers. Activities include collecting litter, transporting filled bags, and moving around varied terrain.	
Roles and Responsibilities	Event Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers safety briefing • Monitors volunteer safety throughout the session • Carries first aid kit and mobile phone • Coordinates with the park team for hazardous waste or incidents • Decides whether to pause or terminate the activity if conditions become unsafe 	Volunteer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow instructions and safety guidance • Use provided PPE and equipment correctly • Report hazards, injuries, or concerns immediately • Stop work if feeling unwell or unsafe
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Mandatory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloves • Litter pickers for all waste handling • Sturdy footwear • High-visibility vests when picking near roads or car parks 	Recommended <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long sleeves and trousers • High-visibility vests – Mandatory when picking near roads or car parks • Weather-appropriate clothing (sun protection, waterproofs, warm layers)
Children, Young People and vulnerable adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times • Must remain within sight and control of their responsible adult 	
Welfare & Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers should assess their own health and comfort before taking part and should only join activities if safe and able to do so. • Volunteers must inform the Event Lead of any relevant medical conditions that may affect their participation, so that appropriate adjustments can be made. • Adequate breaks encouraged; hydration advised in warm weather – although eating and drinking during the session are discouraged due to high risk of contamination from waste materials. 	
Incident Reporting	All incidents, near misses, and new hazards must be reported to the Event Lead. A post-event review will be completed to update the risk assessment if needed.	

2. Risk Assessment Table

Risk Scoring Method: Risk Score = Likelihood × Severity

Score	Likelihood	Severity
1	Rare	Minor injury
2	Unlikely	First aid injury
3	Possible	Injury requiring medical attention
4	Likely	Serious injury
5	Very likely	Major injury/fatality

Risk Level:

1–4 Low – Acceptable with controls
 5–9 Medium – Manage and monitor
 10–25 High – Additional controls required

Hazard	Potential Harm	Risk level (LxS)	Control Measures	Additional Actions	Residual risk level (LxS)
Lack of information/awareness	Unsafe behaviours leading to injury	High (4x3=12)	Safety briefing to cover hazards, boundaries and safe practices	Provide reminders during the session	Medium (2x3=6)
Slips, trips and falls (uneven ground, roots, mud vegetation and hidden obstacles in vegetation)	Sprains, fractures, cuts	High (4x3=12)	Site inspection where possible, sturdy footwear advised, caution in wet/overgrown areas, keep equipment clear of paths	Avoid steep banks and unstable ground	Medium (3x3=9)
Manual handling	Back strain, muscle injury	Medium (3x3=9)	Do not overfill bags; keep weights manageable; use wheelbarrow/trolley for heavy items; equipment available for transporting bags	Provide reminders during the session	Medium (2x3=6)
Vegetation & wildlife (brambles, nettles, insects)	Scratches, stings, bites	Medium (3x2=6)	Recommend long sleeves and trousers; avoid dense undergrowth; highlight risks in briefing	Reinforce message during session	Medium (3x2=6)
Sharp or hazardous items (glass, needles, dead animals, chemical containers, Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment or WEEE)	Cuts, punctures, infection	High (3x5=15)	Use litter pickers; gloves must be worn; never pick up items by hand; report needles, dead animals, dangerous or fly-tipped items; sharps container and WEEE container available	Reinforce message during session	Medium (2x4=8)

Dog faeces	Bacterial/parasite exposure	Medium (3x3=9)	Raise awareness; volunteers inspect area before working; do not handle unbagged faeces; bagged poo only picked with litter picker; treat bags as high-risk		Medium (2x3=6)
Water hazards (ponds, ditches, marshy ground)	Slips, immersion, drowning	High (2x5=10)	Keep clear of water edges; children closely supervised; avoid marshy or unstable areas	Reinforce message during briefing	Medium (1x5=5)
Weather conditions	Hypothermia, heat exhaustion, sunburn	Medium (3x3=9)	Wear weather-appropriate clothing; avoid woodland areas in high winds due to risk of falling branches/trees; cancel activity in extreme weather	Monitor weather on the day	Medium (2x3=6)
Moving vehicles (car parks, access roads)	Collision with vehicles/bikes	High (2x5=10)	Volunteers made aware of traffic areas; high-vis when appropriate; caution near roads	Event Lead reinforces road safety	Medium (1x5=5)
Public interaction	Conflict, distress	Medium (2x3=6)	Avoid confrontation; step away and report concerns; maintain distance from off-lead dogs	Event Lead reinforces calm disengagement	Medium (2x3=6)
Aggressive or reactive dogs	Bites, scratches, fear	Medium (2x4=8)	Do not engage with dogs; keep litter picker low and still; give dogs/owners space; avoid eye contact with stressed dogs	Volunteers should not intervene or give instructions	Low (1x4=4)
Presence of Horse riders on shared paths	Startled horse, volunteer injury	Medium (2x4=8)	Step aside and stop work, keep equipment and bag low and still until horse and rider pass, avoid sudden movements, be aware of narrow paths and blind corners, allow riders to choose passing point	Remind volunteers to keep equipment low and still when horse riders pass	Low (1x4=4)

Overall Risk Conclusion

- **Pre-control measures:** Several hazards present **High** inherent risk.
- **Post-control:** All hazards reduce to **Medium** or **Low** residual risk.
- **Conclusion:** Residual risks are **acceptable and manageable** for a volunteer-led litter-picking activity when control measures are followed and actively monitored.

3. Event Procedure

Purpose	Litter-picking sessions help keep the park clean, protect wildlife, and maintain a welcoming environment for visitors. Volunteers work together as one group and return to the Countryside Centre grounds with all collected rubbish at the end of each session.
Before Starting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign in with the Event Lead. • Collect equipment: litter pickers and bags. • Listen to the safety briefing and confirm the route the group will follow. • Wear suitable footwear and clothing for the weather and terrain
Working as a Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group stays together throughout the session for safety and communication. • The Event Lead sets the pace and identifies safe areas to work. • Volunteers spread out slightly along the path but remain within sight and voice of the group. • Anyone needing to stop or leave early tells the Event Lead before doing so.
Where to pick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paths, woodland edges, and grassland areas identified as safe by the Event Lead. • Avoid steep banks, water edges, dense undergrowth, and any restricted wildlife zones.
What to pick up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General litter such as bottles, cans, wrappers, packaging, bagged dog poo and small plastics. • Broken glass, or items with sharp edges are collected separately and placed in a rigid container. • Any Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment - WEEE (e.g., vapes, batteries, small electricals) are also placed in a separate container for safe disposal. • Filled bin bags are tied securely and kept with the equipment trolley until the group returns to the Centre grounds. Bags will be placed in a designated area for collection if this has been agreed with NTC and/or park team prior to the session.
What not to pick up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needles, syringes, chemicals, unbagged dog poo or suspicious items. • Large or heavy objects requiring specialist removal. • Dead animals or contaminated waste. These are reported to the Event Lead so they can be passed on to the park team
Safety essentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the litter picker- never hands-to lift items. • Be aware of surroundings e.g. uneven paths, cyclists, dogs, and other park users. • Be aware of personal limitations and don't overfill bin bags. • Children must be supervised by a responsible adult. • Dogs accompanying volunteers must be kept under control. • Wash or sanitise hands after the session.

Emergency procedures	Sharps injury	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Move to a safe area 2. Encourage bleeding 3. Wash with soap and water 4. Cover with sterile dressing 5. Seek urgent medical attention
	Dog bite	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Move to a safe area 2. Clean wound with water 3. Apply sterile dressing 4. Seek medical attention
	General Emergency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Event Lead contacts emergency services if required 2. Volunteers stop work and move to a safe location 3. Incident recorded and reported to park team
Returning to the centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group walks back together with all collected rubbish. • Bin bags, plus any sharp-edge items or WEEE items are placed in the designated waste area as advised by the Event Lead • Return equipment to the Event Lead and sign out. 	