



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Stop the Drop campaign

How to organise a community litter pick

Litter is a growing problem. Last year alone, an estimated 25 million tonnes were dropped in Britain, and the problem affects countryside and urban areas alike. This amount of litter is an eyesore that despoils the environment. It is also a hazard to pets and wild animals – one that killed or injured over 69,000 animals in Britain last year. These notes will give you an overview of how you can combat this problem by organising a community clean-up day.

Getting your hands dirty in three easy stages

1. Plan the event

(CPRE Northants can help, where asterisked)

- decide on where you want to carry out your litter pick. Contact landowners to make sure you have legal access to this area. Landowners can be the town, district or county council, farmers, or local estate owners;
- carry out a full risk assessment of the area. Have a look at the guide produced by ENCAMS (see **Useful information** below) for a comprehensive list of hazards to look out for, and use the CPRE risk assessment template*;
- make a site map. Make a note of your route, and if possible identify locations for first aid, toilets, public phones, useful amenities, break areas and so on;
- decide when you will do the pick, if at all possible between **Friday April 9 and Sunday April 18, 2010**;
- decide how you will present the clean-up to your volunteers. It can be a straight forward litter pick, or you can have a theme or set a challenge;
- now, rally your volunteers! Try to get support from other groups and individuals to make this a community event. You can use the CPRE* poster to reach a wide range of volunteers;
- prepare for the event - you will need a range of equipment;
- brief the volunteers prior to the event. Make sure they know where and when to meet, what clothes to wear and which equipment to bring if applicable;
- request equipment and arrange for waste disposal with your borough or district council – check our website www.CPRENorthants.org for contact names. Make sure you get specialist help for heavy objects;
- contact us for CPRE high visibility vests*;

- consider public liability insurance in case of accidental damage or injury during the event (if organised by a Parish Council or CPRE Northants insurance may in place – please check);
- and let CPRE Northants* get publicity for your event. But whether you want glory or anonymity, please let us know when, where the pick is to be held, and who is involved.

2. The day of the community pick-up

- inform and instruct the volunteers. Identify team leaders and make sure the volunteers know about health and safety risks, who is responsible for first aid, how to use equipment, the route, timings and so on. Provide the volunteers with the CPRE high visibility vests;
- be considerate. You are urged not to disturb animals or damage plants. Don't remove 'natural' rubbish like logs, stones and weeds as these can be home to animals. Don't try to release entangled animals;
- call the RSPCA if you come across any. Don't interfere with people not involved in the litter pick;
- and avoid danger. Make sure all volunteers, particularly children, are aware of what not to pick up, such as drug-related litter. Note its location and tell the council. For other precautions, please refer to the guide produced by ENCAMS (under **Useful information** below).

3. After the event

- report the result: note the amount of rubbish collected and let us at CPRE Northants know, and
- try to recycle as much of the rubbish as possible.

Useful information

There are many guides on how to arrange community litter picks. ENCAMS (an environmental charity that runs the Keep Britain Tidy campaign) has produced a comprehensive guide. Visit www.encams.org.uk/publications and scroll down to the bottom of the page – the guide is called *Litter – Organising a Cleanup*. CPRE's *Stop the Drop* litter campaign pages are at www.cpre.org.uk.

You can also link from these pages to CPRE and CleanupUK's litter action website www.litteraction.org.uk, which will help you to find your nearest litter picking group, or establish your own group.

Contact details

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