



PureStreets™

Believe and Do Good

COMMUNITY CLEANUP GUIDE

A handbook for mosques and Islamic organisations

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Why Organise a Community Litter Pick?

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger ﷺ said:

وَتُمِيطُ الْأَذَى عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ صَدَقَةٌ

“Removing harmful objects from the pathway is an act of charity”
(Bukhari & Muslim)

Caring for our local environment is a simple yet powerful way to put our faith into action.

With the right intentions, a community litter pick becomes more than just cleaning the streets, it becomes an **act of worship, service, and collective responsibility**.

By coming together, mosques and Muslim communities can make a positive impact while building stronger relationships, promoting wellbeing, and creating cleaner, safer, and more connected neighbourhoods.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES



Put Islamic values of **stewardship, care for the earth, and cleanliness** into action

Build **positive relationships** with our neighbours and the wider community

Promote **physical and mental wellbeing** through active volunteering

Strengthen unity within the community and build meaningful connections through shared service

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The Three Essentials

If you are organising a litter pick for the first time, it's not always easy to know where to begin. The good news is that most of the planning becomes much simpler once you've sorted out these three essential elements.

Get these in place early, and you'll have a solid foundation for a safe, well organised and successful event. Here is the first one:

1

Research Bag Requirements & Waste Collection Arrangements



The purpose of this first essential is to research the following two questions:

- 1) **What type of bags** does the council prefer people to use for litter picks in your area?
- 2) **Where should volunteers leave full bags** that have been filled at the end of an event?

This information is important as practices may vary between different councils. For example, some councils require you to email them with location of bags that have been filled, whereas for other councils, you only have to leave them next to a public bin for collection.

Here are a few useful methods for finding this information:

- **Online search and council website:** Do a quick online search to look for websites that may have the relevant information. For example, if you were looking for information for litterpicking in the council of Redbridge, you could search up *"Redbridge litterpicking"*
- **Existing litter-picking groups:** You may find existing litter-picking groups operating in the area or local Facebook groups that can provide the required information
- **Contacting councillors:** Emailing the council or speaking to local councillors can help with receiving the required information
- **PureStreets Database (limited):** PureStreets are also collecting information for different councils that can be viewed [here](#).

Please note, the PureStreets database is a work in progress, if you find out new information for your council not in this document, we would love to get in touch for any details that can help others who would like to litter-pick in the same area

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2

Health, Safety & Safeguarding Planning



Now you know what bags to use and where to leave them, it's time to think about Health, Safety & Safeguarding for our events:

Choosing a Safe and Suitable Location

Where you litter-pick must be **safe** and **accessible**. Quiet streets, parks and open green spaces are a great place to start and build confidence. Plan ahead when and where you will pick and consider your route.

Never litter-pick:

- On private land without permission
- Next to roads with a speed limit over 30mph
- On roads with little or no pavement
- Near the edge of waterways, ponds or lakes
- Within 10 metres of weirs, sluices or locks
- On beaches where you are unfamiliar with tide times or tide cut-offs
- In potentially dangerous locations (e.g. steep slopes or slippery banks)

Items to Avoid Picking



Oil drums and chemicals



Sharp objects, e.g. glass



Heavy or bulky items



Biohazardous material



Dead animals and animal waste



Flytipping

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Health, Safety & Safeguarding Planning (Continued)



Additional Guidelines:

- Check weather prior to the event and encourage volunteers to wear appropriate clothing/protection
- Conduct a simple risk assessment
- Provide a safety briefing at the start of a session
- If litter picking near water, do not enter
- Always wear gloves and use a litter-picker
- Do not touch your face or any open wounds with gloves after litter picking
- Post-litter picking, hands must be washed
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are in place by following the relevant safeguarding policy of your organisation, obtaining parental consent for minors where required, maintaining suitable adult supervision ratios, and ensuring all volunteers know how to report any safeguarding concerns

3

Equipment for the litter-picking session



The Bare Minimum:

- ✓ **Handheld litter picker/grabber**
- ✓ **Rubbish bags**
- ✓ **Gloves** (essential for hygiene and protection, as contact with unknown liquids and contaminated waste will most likely occur even when using litter pickers)

Even better if you have:

- ✓ **Litter-picking hoops** make it much easier to keep bags open while collecting waste.
- ✓ **High-visibility vests** are particularly useful near roads, car parks, or in low-light conditions.
- ✓ **Hand sanitiser** for cleaning hands after removing gloves.
- ✓ A **first aid kit** is useful for minor cuts, scrapes, or blisters.
- ✓ **Water and snacks** are great for longer sessions.

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Miscellaneous

What should I do if I see a vape?



If you choose to collect vapes, place them in a **separate, clearly labelled bag**. Leave the bag for collection by the local authority and inform them that it contains vapes, which are classified as hazardous Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE).

Promotion

Before the event

- Use communication channels to promote the event. For example, WhatsApp, Facebook (especially community groups), Instagram, word of mouth, announcements, posters etc

During the event

- Take some photos and videos. Before and after shots can be very useful

After the event

- Post videos and photos on communication channels. A narrative voiceover describing the pick is very useful to include. Consider adding collaborators to amplify your posts (e.g. PureStreets, Muslim Council of Britain, and local community accounts)

Useful Apps



Google Maps

Map locations

<https://www.google.com/>



what3words

Use three words to navigate a specific location

<https://what3words.com>



Litterati

<https://www.litterati.org/>

References

Keep Britain Tidy (2026) Litter Picking Essentials. Available at: <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/Litter-Picking%20Essentials.pdf> (Accessed: 16 June 2026).



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