



May 2021 Newsletter

It's been a while, but we are back with all your latest news from Love Solihull - in this month's issue we share updates from local litter picking groups, meet the newest member of the Love Solihull team and find out how Love Solihull is supporting the Great British Spring Clean 2021

Balsall Common Litter Pickers

The group has seen an increase in membership recently (25 members and counting) which is positive news for the area. The group holds an organised litter pick once a month, currently in small COVID safe groups, with designated routes provided by the group leader.

In April, the Balsall Common Litter Pickers collected a total of 20 bags in one day – well done!

Interested residents in Balsall Common are advised to register with the Love Solihull Community Litter Picking Initiative, stating they wish to join the group.

For more information about joining, email [Love Solihull](#)



Photo credit: Balsall Common Litter Pickers (group photo taken pre-COVID)

Castle Bromwich Litter Pickers

Well done to the Castle Bromwich Litter Pickers who reached a huge milestone recently, having collected a whopping 4,000 bags since forming just over 3 years ago! So far in 2021, they have already collected 1,000 bags, which is an amazing achievement in just 4 months!

The group consists of 25 volunteers from the local area and their dedication and hard work was recently highlighted by the BBC, who featured them on Midlands Today.

You can read the full article and watch the video footage [here](#) – maybe you will see some familiar faces!



Photo credit: Castle Bromwich Litter Pickers

Clean & Green in North Solihull

There has been some fantastic action by Clean & Green in the north of the borough recently to tackle the issue of dog fouling.

Using 'Your Dog, Your Job' stencils provided by the Council, various 'hot spot' locations have now been targeted by the group, including Kingshurst Park and Babbs Mill Local Nature Reserve & Park.



Photo credit: Clean & Green

Talking Rubbish in Solihull (TRiS) – The Big Bag Count

TRiS recently conducted a bag count for the month of March to highlight the impact of litter picking. The following infographic shows how volunteers play a pivotal role in helping to reduce littering, the Council continues to work with community groups and partners to tackle this issue and thanks everyone for their hard work and dedication.

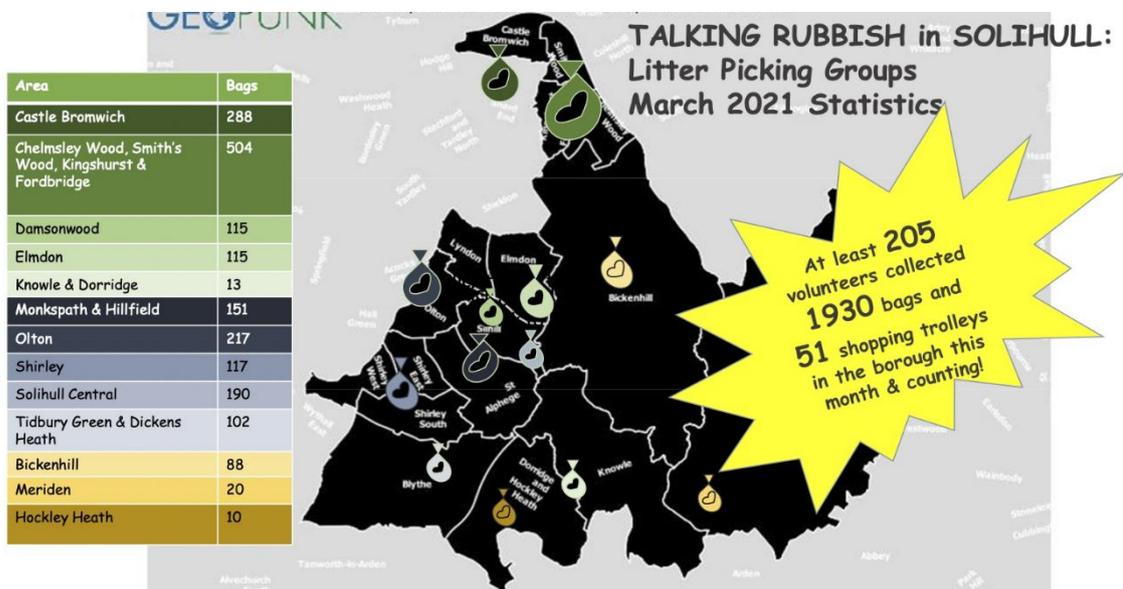


Image credit: Talking Rubbish in Solihull

Great British Spring Clean 2021



This year, Love Solihull is proud to be involved in Keep Britain Tidy's [Great British Spring Clean](#) by supporting individuals, community groups, businesses and schools who want to organise litter picks in their local area.

You can participate in the #MillionMileMission by pledging the total amount of time you spend litter picking between **28 May to 13 June 2021**.

The time pledged will be converted into miles (using a slow walking pace of three miles per hour) which adds to an ambitious nationwide target of 1 million miles.

If every resident in Solihull pledged just 1 hour, as a borough we could add over 262,000 miles to the national target - that's further than travelling to the moon!

Not only is litter picking good for the environment, it gets you outside and active. Last year, 79% of people who took part in the Great British Spring Clean reported an improved mood and 51% said it encouraged them to move more. So, this is the perfect way to enjoy the great outdoors and do something positive for the environment and your wellbeing.

Current guidance issued by Keep Britain Tidy recommends picking in groups of up to 6 people (or two households). We will continue to monitor the guidance in relation to easing of restrictions outlined in phase 3 of the government's road map, which currently states groups of 30 will be permitted to meet outdoors from 17th May.

Given the ever-changing situation in relation to COVID, we advise any community groups wishing to organise litter picks of more than 6 people, take this into account with any planned activities and ensure you have a contingency plan.

For any groups planning a collective pick, please email [Love Solihull](#) to confirm the intended date and whether you require any support.

As a reminder we can provide:

- Equipment such as litter pickers, hi-vis vests, waste bags and bag hoops
- Collection of waste bags after the event from a pre-agreed collection point

We would continue to encourage new individuals to register with the [Love Solihull Community Litter Picking Initiative](#) as soon as possible - we will aim for any equipment to be delivered within 2 weeks. Please note that there may be some delays subject to our supplier deliveries and an increase in volunteer requests recently, so please register as soon as possible.

Don't forget to

- Pledge your litter picking target on the [Keep Britain Tidy](#) website
- Share your pledge and any photos (where consent has been granted) on Twitter/Instagram - don't forget to tag @LoveSolihull and use the following hashtags #GBSpringClean #LitterHeroes #MillionMileMission
- Let us know how many bags you or your group collects and share any news stories by emailing: [Love Solihull](#)

This month we chat with the latest addition to the Love Solihull team, Alison Lee (Community Engagement Officer) to discover her aspirations for the future of Love Solihull...

What attracted you to join Love Solihull?

Love Solihull is a great initiative and plays a key part in engaging with the local community. I love how dedicated residents are in making Solihull a great place to live. I really wanted to be part of making a difference in the borough by supporting people to look after where they live, whilst they build social networks and stay active.

What did you do before joining Solihull Council?

I worked at the University of Birmingham for the last 10 years, with the last 4 years as a Participation Development Officer in the University's new sports centre. My role was to help students, staff, and the public make the most of opportunities available in relation to sport, exercise and wellbeing. I see my previous role as having prepared me for any challenges in the context of Solihull's parks and open spaces, so look forward to meeting new people.

What do you like most about working with communities?

I love seeing people make new connections with other like-minded individuals and helping them achieve their goals, whether as an individual or as a collective. I like assisting people to get self-directed projects off the ground and seeing the positive impact they make. I also get a lot out of working with young people, helping to shape their mindset about the environment and harnessing their innate ability to devise creative ways of looking at a problem or issue. There will be a lot of opportunities to learn from our young people, which will help shape the future of Solihull.



Photo: Alison Lee, Community Engagement Officer

What projects are in the pipeline for you?

I will be leading on this year's **Great British Spring Clean** campaign for individuals, schools, businesses, and community groups. It is the perfect way to make a big impact on the environment and educate people about disposing waste properly. The impact of litter is so detrimental to our wildlife and people's ability to enjoy our open spaces safely.

I am also making plans to engage with more young people in the borough, reaching out to schools, colleges and youth groups to increase awareness of key environmental issues. We are also planning to increase the volunteering opportunities for young people in the community in the future, especially in our parks and green spaces.

What is your top tip for helping people make the most of our parks and open spaces?

My top tip would be to remember to make time each day to just get outside and breathe in the fresh air, it's so easy to forget, but it makes a huge difference to my wellbeing. I usually go for a walk, cycle or litter pick. When I collect litter in my own area, I get a huge sense of satisfaction from filling a bag with the knowledge that other people will enjoy the area more as a result of my contribution.

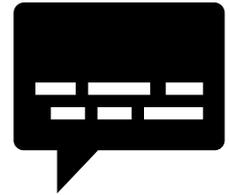
'Love Solihull Hubs' Update

Whilst libraries have now re-opened in Solihull, our Love Solihull Hubs are not yet back up and running. This to avoid adding any additional pressures to our library colleagues, this means that currently you will not be able to obtain equipment from any Love Solihull Hub. We are in discussions with Library Managers to see how we can work together to relaunch the Hubs service and hope to be able to provide an update on this soon.



Online Reporting – Fly Tipping

Just to remind you that the best way to report Fly Tipping on council owned land is by using the following [online form](#) to directly notify the Street Care team, who will aim to investigate within 5 working days.



Please call the Council's Contact Centre on **0121 704 8000** if:

- You have witnessed Fly Tipping taking place
- You find any hazardous waste such as needles on council, providing as much detail as possible on the location. For your own safety please do not try to remove any needles yourself, a cleansing operative trained in the safe removal and disposal of hazardous items will attend as soon as possible

Visit the council's website to also report [abandoned shopping trolleys](#) and [abandoned household waste bags](#).

As a reminder, Litter picking bags do not need to be reported if less than 3 are left next to a council litter bin.

Online Registration – Litter Picking

We have now launched a Love Solihull section on the revamped Solihull Council [website](#) for anyone interested in littering picking in their local community, including an online [Litter Picking Registration Form](#)

We will continue to accept paper forms, but we encourage the use of the web form wherever feasible to capture the details of new litter pickers (whether individuals or part of an existing group).

In addition, we have created two new forms for registered litter pickers to inform us when they need [additional Love Solihull bags](#), and tell us the location where [3 or more bags](#) of litter have been filled, which requires a special collection – don't forget to bookmark these pages in your web browser!

Love Solihull actively encourages residents and businesses to make a difference to the environment and support those who co-ordinate their own projects.

Email alerts will be sent out throughout the year giving information on environmental projects including what is happening in your area and how you can get involved.

More information can be found at www.lovesolihull.org

For more information about Council services, please see our [website](#).

