



Love Solihull - January 2023



This month we look ahead to upcoming events in 2023, see the results of a winter coppicing project in Monkspath, and highlight those groups, schools and businesses who braved the cold weather to carry out a litter pick last month

Happy New Year from Love Solihull!



We wanted to start the year by saying a huge thank you to all the volunteers, community groups, schools, colleges, businesses, charities and contractors we worked with, or supported, during 2022.

We hope you all had a restful break and were able to enjoy quality time with loved ones. Our team also spent time reflecting on all the fantastic achievements last year, which would not have been possible without the support of the Solihull community.

Thank you for all your help to keep our borough clean, green and safe, and we look forward to the impact that we will make together this year!

Photo caption: A beautiful robin captured by our Park Ranger Luke at Brueton Park

The Great British Spring Clean is back!



The Great British Spring Clean takes place this year from Friday 17 March to Sunday 2 April 2023.

We are once again looking forward to supporting Keep Britain Tidy by encouraging schools, businesses and residents in Solihull to take action and help remove litter from our streets, parks and green spaces.

Don't forget to save the date in your diaries and start planning how you can get involved!

To pledge your support or request equipment, please email lovesolihull@solihull.gov.uk.

Volunteers support biodiversity in local woodland



Our contractor Veolia, and their partners idverde, recently teamed up with local volunteers to tackle overgrown woodland located off Shelly Lane in Monkspath.

The coppicing work formed part of a phased project to address issues such as fly-tipping and overgrown vegetation in the woodland.

Photo caption: Members of the working party in the woodland

Phase one got off to a fantastic start, with idverde providing a dedicated team to fell the dead and dangerous trees, leaving the area safe for volunteers to work in.

With loppers at the ready, volunteers supported by Council staff and contractors, set to work clearing holly from the pathways. The team worked tirelessly, pushing back the vegetation to where it had originally been, leaving the pathway clear and opening up lines of sight to enhance safety in the area and reduce fly-tipping.

Nothing went to waste on the day, with the majority of cuttings and branches used to create 'dead hedges' along the pathway. This feature will both preserve and encourage biodiversity in the area, offering a nice warm home for some of the local wildlife during winter.

The project is still very much in its early stages, but after a hard day's work, we saw some amazing results. A nearby resident even shared some photos dating back to the 1980s which

showed how the woodland looked back then and provided a great comparison for the work carried out.

Residents and locals were left in a state of nostalgia as they looked at the restored woodland and they are now hopeful that with the thinned canopy and the ground clear, bluebells which once flourished in the woodland, will begin to grow again.



Photo caption: A photo highlighting how the woodland looked around 35 years ago

Heart of England find a new love for litter picking



We had a fantastic time at Heart of England Secondary School and Sixth Form in Balsall Common at the end of last term, where we supported students from the school council to carry out a litter pick in their local area.

The pupils and teachers, joined by Rachel from the local litter picking group, headed towards the village centre and collected eight bags of litter from the Kenilworth Road.

Photo caption: Students on Kenilworth Road joined by Rachel from the local group

The newly formed school council talked enthusiastically with Love Solihull about future environmental initiatives which they could get involved with and discussed how to encourage other students at the school to get involved.

The council, made up of representatives from each year group, plans to talk to their peers about the issue of litter in an assembly in early 2023 and they have pledged to continue litter picking in the community going forward.

The school put together a fantastic [blog](#) which summarised the activity and they shared lots of pictures on their own [Instagram](#) feed.

Thank you for inviting Love Solihull to the school to share our passion for a litter-free borough.



Photo: Pupils outside Heart of England School at the end of their litter pick

Arden Academy eco-club tackles school litter



The eco-club from Arden Academy (Knowle) joined forces with Love Solihull for a litter pick around their school grounds during their last week of term.

Several students, supported by their eco-teacher, Ms Blenkinsop, donned their festive jumpers to collect around ten bags in under an hour - they were also joined by 'The Grinch' (who stole plenty of the litter!) and they had lots of fun whilst taking part.

The pupils outlined their plans to be litter-free, discussing ways to educate other students on responsible waste disposal, both at school and in the local community.

The eco-club also plans to review the provision of bins in the school grounds, making sure all bins are visible and sensibly located to encourage usage by all pupils.

Thank you for inviting Love Solihull to take part in the litter pick and sharing your ideas with us!



Photo caption: Arden Academy students (and The Grinch) litter picking

NSL offer 'visible' support to Clean & Green



Clean & Green were over the moon to receive a recent donation from NSL (part of Marston Holdings) which helped them purchase some warm, waterproof high-vis coats for their most active volunteers.

NSL, who manage the Council's parking enforcement contract, were more than happy to support the community group as part of their social value commitment and opted to support a community group

based in north Solihull.

Jennifer Bryan, NSL Client Account Manager, joined the group to present them with the new jackets, which carry the group's logo, and also provided a welcome donation towards their volunteer celebration event.

This is a perfect example of how businesses can provide valuable support to community groups across Solihull, enabling them to continue volunteering effectively.

We can't wait to see all the volunteers out and about in their new kit!

Photo caption: Volunteers from Clean & Green joined by Jennifer Bryan, NSL

Another year in the bag for Castle Bromwich Litter Pickers



Castle Bromwich Litter Pickers have had a very busy year during 2022, collecting approximately 2,500 bags of rubbish.

With around 21 active volunteers, they collect an average of 50 bags every week, in all weather! Since forming, they have removed more than 7,800 bags of litter from Castle Bromwich streets and green spaces.

Their contribution to the local community is hugely appreciated by all at Love Solihull, and we wanted to extend a big thank you to Ian Whittle (group leader) for organising the weekly bag collections and coordinating routes with volunteers.

If you are interested in joining this friendly group of volunteers, please visit their [Facebook](#) page.

Photo caption: Castle Bromwich Litter Pickers gathered for a social event last year.

Hockley Heath gathers for annual litter pick



Hockley Heath Parish Council hosted a community litter pick in December, with volunteers meeting at the village recreation ground, before heading off in different directions to collect litter from nearby streets and report any fly-tipping to the council.

Love Solihull supported the event by providing equipment and joining in with picking around the park. Each volunteer collected at least one bag of a litter, leaving 13 bags ready for collection by the council's waste contractor, Veolia.

The Parish Council has been very active in supporting litter picking over the last few years and usually arrange a group litter pick twice a year which ends with refreshments at the Wharf Tavern.

If you would like to get involved in the next group litter pick, email [hhpc2009@hotmail.com](mailto:hhec2009@hotmail.com) - don't forget to follow them on [Twitter](#) too!

Photo caption: Bags ready for collection at Hockley Heath Recreation Ground

Winter litter pick at Tudor Grange by BNP Paribas

Litter picking is a great way for colleagues to head out during the working day, even just for an hour, and make a real difference.

Last month, staff from Solihull based finance company, BNP Paribas, took part in a litter pick around Tudor Grange Park. The group collected three bags during the lunchtime outing and took time to appreciate this wonderful park located close to their offices.

Tanya, who organised the session, said:

"Thank you so much for your support to make today happen, we had great fun doing it, if a little chilly! The park looked beautiful frozen over."

If your business would like to take part in a litter pick this year, please contact lovesolihull@solihull.gov.uk to arrange.



Photo caption: The team from BNP Paribas at Tudor Grange Park

Still time to nominate for The Natural Environment Awards - deadline 16 January



The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) launched the region's first [Natural Environment Awards](#), sponsored by KPMG, to celebrate the successes of organisations on restoring and protecting nature.

Any community group within the West Midlands can apply to the community category with highly commended and winner awards both up for grabs.

Whether you are a faith group who host weekly gardening sessions with your community, or a charity which has restored the local canal by creating new habitats for birds, WMCA want to hear from you!

Awards will also be given to businesses, educational institutions and public sector organisations. Applications are currently open and close on **16 January 2023**, with the award ceremony taking place on Tuesday 21 March 2023. Awards will be presented by Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands.

You can download the application guidance [here](#) and apply online via their website.

If you have any questions, please email WMCA: WMGreenerTogether@wmca.uk.org

Take part in tree planting at Elmdon Park



wildlife ways

for people, for places, for nature

Bees and Trees - Elmdon Park tree planting

You are warmly invited to join us for tree planting at Elmdon Park,
10am - 12 noon, Saturday 14 January 2023.
Meet 10am in the car park by Elmdon Church.

Starting with a short walk, our contractor *idverde* will identify some of the trees they have already planted. This will be followed by guidance on how to plant the new trees (2-3 foot tall).

Spades and gloves will be provided, but in case of a shortage, please feel free to bring your own. Also, please be prepared for wet and cold weather! (If the weather is extreme we will cancel.)

After this event, over 4,000 similar sized trees will be planted at various plots across the south area of the park. 100 larger trees will be planted at a later date by another team.

Bees and Trees is a grant-funded project delivered through the Wildlife Ways Small Habitats Grants programme, part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. To find out more, please visit www.socialsolihull.org.uk/peopleplacenature or email landscape@solihull.gov.uk



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](#).

