



KINGS HEATH & BRANDWOOD LITTER PICKERS

Winter Newsletter – December 2023




Welcome!

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading it.

If you have ideas for future editions or would like to contribute, please email us at:

B14litterpickers@gmail.com

If you would like to join our group, please email us or visit our facebook page 



Group Dates:

January:

Sunday 7th, 14th, 28th January

Meet York Road, B14 7SA

10:00am-11:00am

Sunday 21st January

Meet Yarningdale Road, B14 6ND

10:00am-11:30am

February:

Sunday 4th, 11th, 25th February

Meet York Road, B14 7SA

10:00am-11:00am

Sunday 18th February

Meet Yarningdale Road, B14 6ND

10:00am-11:30am

March:

Sunday 3rd, 10th, 24th March

Meet York Road, B14 7SA

10:00am-11:00am

Sunday 17th March

Meet Yarningdale Road, B14 6ND

10:00am-11:30am

For other litter picking group dates see <https://ourscene.org/whatson/>

Kit notes:

Kit for loan to our litter pickers includes:

- ❖ Grabber
- ❖ Ring to hold blue rubbish bags open
- ❖ Blue rubbish bags
- ❖ Gloves
- ❖ High Viz vest
- ❖ There are brooms and brushes if needed.
- ❖ There are also smaller grabbers available for children to use

We will provide details of how to get hold of kit if you decide to join us.

Please return any unused kit to 'York Supplies' on Waterloo Road.



Chair's update

A very big welcome to our winter newsletter. We hope it will be of interest to not only you litter pickers out there, but all of you who are fed up with looking at our messy streets. We know we are making a difference because people tell us so when we are out and about, but the trouble is the littering never stops!

During the autumn months we have been quietly getting on with it while trying to avoid the rain. As usual we have been very busy picking up litter, removing graffiti and reporting fly tipping. A big thank you to all our busy volunteers.

Our Christmas party on 6th December at Loco Lounge was a great success – good food, a special song and a quiz. Many thanks to those who contributed.

This New Year we are planning an event in partnership with the Neighbourhood Forum in February. This will be open to everyone and focus on what happens to our rubbish after its collected by the City Council, how to report fly tipping and any other issues, what can be recycled and the effect of rubbish on our planet. I am particularly interested in what happens to our rubbish and we have included some information in this newsletter.

In our first newsletter we included an interview with Mabs from Cartridge and Print who is a big supporter and has joined our group. We are very keen to get other businesses involved in what we do. A number of businesses already clean outside their premises which is wonderful, but if every business picked up the rubbish in front of and near their café, restaurant or shop, our streets would be vastly improved. Just a few minutes a day would really help. We can supply litter picking equipment and bags. If any businesses in Kings Heath and Brandwood would like to be part of our endeavours. Just email b14litterpickers@gmail.com and I will get back to you.

In the past I have visited schools and talked to young people about litter and what they can do to help, and I have recently been to talk to Year 9 at Camp Hill Boys School. If any schools out there would like a visit, I would be very happy to talk for a short while about what we do.

We encourage you to re-use, recycle and use the bins and then perhaps all our volunteers can retire and go home for a nice, strong cup of tea.

Keep at it and thank you again for all you do. With best wishes for the festive period.

Andrea x

P.S. If you can no longer continue to litter pick for whatever reason then please contact me on 07711 614134 either by text or phone call.



Volunteer Hours

- ❖ 4,188 volunteer hours recorded – June 2021 to November 2023
- ❖ An average of nearly 140 hours a month

Strange items of “waste”



Please share photos of strange items of waste that you find. The stranger the better!

Litter picking certainly isn't dull!



Group member, Kim, brings a welcome splash of colour to proceedings!

BIN SIN

*Hey, hey, wanna have fun, meet at one
Get fast food scoff, then we're off.*

*Leave stuff on the ground
you know we've been around
trash the place, can't lose face*

*Hey, hey, meet in the park, nice and dark
Chips and beer, We Was 'Ere*

Leave stuff etc.

*Hey, hey outside a' the pub had some
grub*

*One last drag, drop the fag
Leave stuff etc.*

*Hey, hey, cruise'n the car, not too far
Chuck crap outside, don't mess my ride!*

Leave stuff etc.

*Hey, hey got a Ford truck, back full
o'muck*

*In the road, dump the load
Leave stuff etc.*

*Hey, hey, so I kill another dog and a bird
and a frog*

*So, the town's a shame, I won't take the
blame*

Leave stuff etc.

Ruth Davies



Graffiti Removal

In early 2022, one of our litter pickers decided to start painting over unsightly graffiti instead of picking up litter. Phil Osman (Oz) says “it’s surprising how creative and satisfying it is, and you get a real feeling of having made a difference – especially when you remember to take ‘before’ photos!”

Since setting out on his mission to remove tags and other graffiti from around the area, Oz has tackled projects large and small, high and low, matching colours as closely as possible and always securing permission from property owners before getting his brush out.

Earlier this year, a call was put out via the litter pickers’ WhatsApp group and the Business Improvement District (BIDs)’s @enjoykingsheath social media channels for volunteers to join Oz on his quest. A few people have come forward over the last few months meaning that more tags can be dealt with and the mission to keep Kings Heath welcoming and attractive can gather pace.

One of the more pleasing aspects of the job is recognising that, once cleaned up, many sites stay graffiti-free. Working alongside the BID has also meant that Oz and his anti-graffiti team have been able to invest in more materials and even a colour-meter to help match colours before painting over the tags.

And, the BID is working alongside several local artists to see more high-quality street art around the area, making it harder for low-level taggers to vandalise the streets.

Looking ahead to next year, Oz is planning a graffiti-blitz month, so if you’d like to get involved, drop him a line via B14litterpickers@gmail.com – and please do the same if you spot any tags that need removing.

Spot the Difference?





Grot Spot

In each edition of our newsletter we want to draw attention to 'grot spots' with the aim of encouraging landowners to clear them up.

One such 'grot spot' is Milford Place off Kings Heath High Street where there are ten homes.

Whilst we are pleased to hear that site is due to be cleared up soon, there are some outstanding issues relating to the siting of commercial bins that needs to be resolved.

We understand that the BID are working with BIRA (British Independent Retailers' Association) and First Mile to try and streamline the number of different bins across the BID area.

The Milford Place example shows that sometimes there are a number of issues that contribute to a 'grot spot' developing.

If you come across a 'grot spot', please do let us know and we can help raise awareness of the problem, including through this newsletter.





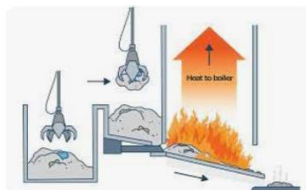
What Happens to our Bags?

Our newsletter “news hound” has been doing some research to find out what happens to the bags of litter we collect, with some fascinating findings:

Have you ever wondered what happens to our bags of rubbish when they are left by the litter bins.



The bags are taken by the City Council to the Tyseley Energy Recovery Plant and incinerated at 850 degrees Centigrade



Harmful gasses are extracted

Magnets and other gadgets recover metal

Electricity (25MW) is exported to the National Grid enough to power 25,000 homes (a Town around the size of Redditch)

Ash left after burning is used for aggregate for road building

Energy Recovery Facilities (ERF's) around the World



Tyseley is an older generation ERF

Newer ERF's can be quite eye catching



Newhaven, Sussex



Copenhagen – has a ski slope on top



Leeds



Vienna – designed by the Architect Hundertwasser is a tourist attraction



Cigarette Butts Are Rubbish!



Cigarette butts remain our nation's most prevalent litter item – making up 66% of all littered items.

Accordingly to Keep Britain Tidy's latest research, **a quarter of a million cigarette butts are dropped on UK high streets alone each hour.**

Cigarette butts are made of plastic and do not biodegrade. Over time, they break apart into microplastics and seep toxins such as arsenic, lead, formaldehyde and nicotine into the earth and our waterways.

So when a cigarette butt is dropped on the ground, it is no different to littering a water bottle or a crisp packet, for example.

Part of the problem is that smokers have a real blind spot when it comes to their butts. They are three times *less* likely to see butts as problem litter, compared to non-smokers.

If you smoke, please put your cigarette butt in the bin – making sure you extinguish it completely first. If you are not near a bin, then please keep it with you until you can bin it – for example in a container or portable ashtray.

Cigarette waste is considered to be the same as any other waste in terms of litter laws and you can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice for not disposing of it properly.

Every day millions more cigarette butts are littered, and every day we don't act millions more will join them - despite the best efforts of local authorities and other land managers to clear them up.

This problem cannot wait – we need to do this now.

Source: <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/smoking-related-litter>



Litter Quiz

	True? or	False?
1. Dropping litter is illegal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A fixed penalty notice for littering in Birmingham is £50	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Throwing litter from cars causes accidents and deaths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Anyone can pick up litter and put it in the bin if it's clean and dry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. It takes 20 years for a fizzy drinks can to biodegrade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. It takes 20 years for a drinking straw to biodegrade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Helium balloons drift up to space and stay there	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. It costs an estimated £800 million a year to pick up litter in the UK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The RSPCA get 5,000 calls a year about animals who have swallowed or been hurt by litter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Most of the rubbish found in the sea comes from boats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Turtles find plastic bags floating in the sea and eat them, confusing them for jelly fish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. There are an estimated 5 billion pieces of plastic in the ocean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources Birmingham City Council and Clean Up Britain

Quiz Answers:

1. True	2. False, its £150	3. True	4. True
5. False, its 450 years	6. False, its 200	7. False	8. True
9. True	10. False, most comes from the land	11. True	12. False, its estimated to be 5.2 trillion