



## Highbury Park Litter Picking Trail



Highbury Park, on the border of Kings Heath and Moseley, is one of the largest but least known of Birmingham's parks. Home to all kinds of habitats, it includes pools, springs, streams, marshy areas and over 1000 trees. You may be able to spot kingfishers, herons, woodpeckers, and water snails amongst many other species.

Over lockdown in Spring 2020, 1280 tonnes of rubbish and litter was removed from Birmingham parks. That's the equivalent of 200 elephants! This was an increase of 220% from the same time in 2019 when 400 tonnes (equivalent to 60 elephants) were collected. Like other green spaces across the city, litter is a problem in Highbury Park.

Explore the park, pick up any litter you find, discover why single-use plastic isn't that fantastic and how **YOU** can reduce the amount of plastic you use.

### Litter pick safely



Before you start, there are a few rules to litter pick safely with children:

- Children should be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- Make sure children understand which items are potentially dangerous and should not be picked up (contact Birmingham City Council to collect dangerous items.)
- Only litter pick with suitable gloves, clothing and footwear. You can arrange to borrow a litter picker from Highbury Orchard Community (contact details on the last page.)
- Don't let children pick for more than one hour at a time.
- Please dispose of the rubbish you collect in one of the park's litter bins. If the bin is full please tie your bag up and leave it next to the bin or take it home. The recyclable materials will be separated out.
- Find more preparation and safety tips on the Keep Britain Tidy website [www.keepbritaintidy.org](http://www.keepbritaintidy.org)

Take pictures of the items you collect and share them with us via [refill@ecobirmingham.com](mailto:refill@ecobirmingham.com) or on social media using #RubbishExcuse #GreenerBum



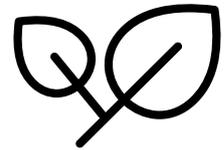
ecobirmingham & highburyparkfriends



ecobirmingham & highburypark



# Highbury Park Litter Picking Trail



This trail will take you on a circular route:

- Start from the High Street entrance to the park.
- Follow the path through the park towards the car park. On the left you may see a glimpse of Highbury Allotments. Running parallel is the train line.
- Just before you reach the car park, on your left you will see a line of ancient hedgerow with oak, ash, hawthorn, privet and field maple. Dog's Mercury, a plant usually associated with ancient woodland can also be found growing here. Tawny owls have been seen hiding in the ivy. You may also spot robins, blackbirds, blue and great tits and willow warblers.



## Highbury Park Litter Picking Trail



- When you reach the car park, leave the path and walk North, ensuring the bank of woodland is to your right. You are walking through the Hay Meadow. For the last few years, mowers have been banned from this area to allow grasses and flowers to bloom before being cut at the end of Summer. There are 10 species of grass to be found here and 3 types of buttercup.
- Re-join the path to cross over the Shuttuck Stream. You may even see Water Shrimp (*Gammarus pulex*) which are native to the UK.
- Follow the path to the right past the long pond. To your left is an old oak, the oldest tree in the park. It may have been a seedling in the early 1700s when Queen Anne or King George I were on the throne!
- The path will turn to the right. Keep following. On your left, you will come to the Community Orchard. Here, Highbury Orchard Community run woodland and growing projects to help people connect with nature. What can you see growing in the garden at this time of year?
- Re-joining the path, you may come across some of the many fairy dwellings in the trees. How many can you find?
- You will come to a crossroads with the children's play area to your left. Taking the path to the left will take you back to the start of the walk, or to your right, the car park.

If every Brummie refilled a water bottle once a week instead of buying a new single-use plastic one, the city would reduce its waste plastic bottle consumption by 22.3 million a year!

Want to make a difference? Sign up to the free Refill app and find out where you can refill your water bottle locally for free.

[www.refill.org.uk](http://www.refill.org.uk)



Animals have been injured by or caught in litter nearly 900 times in the West Midlands over the past five years.

The RSPCA received 895 calls relating to litter between 2015 and 2019.

A 50 year old crisp packet was recently found on a beach in Cornwall. If left there, it would eventually start to decompose into tiny pieces of plastic, contaminating nature and wildlife.

If you love your crisps, you can now find Terracycle collection points in your local area to recycle them.

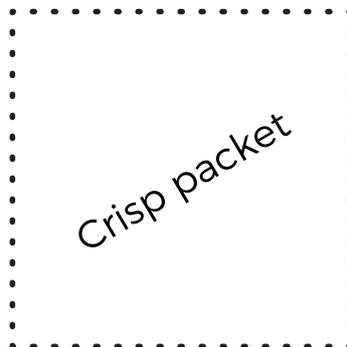
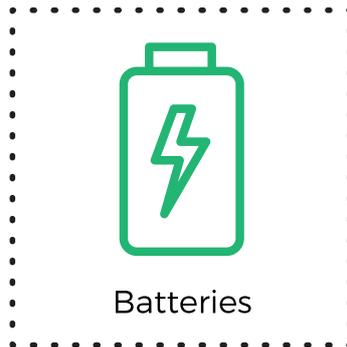
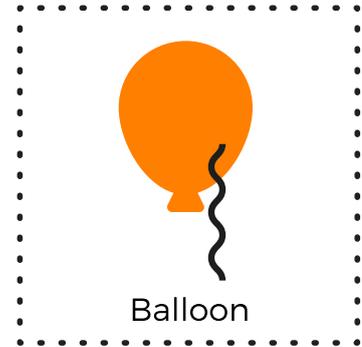
[www.terracycle.com](http://www.terracycle.com)



# Litter Pick Bingo!



See how many of the items below you can find and dispose of safely with your family and friends.



Take pictures of the items you collect and share them with us via [refill@ecobirmingham.com](mailto:refill@ecobirmingham.com) or on social media using #RubbishExcuse #GreenerBum



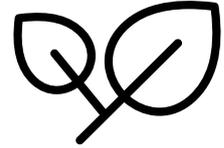
ecobirmingham & highburyparkfriends



ecobirmingham & highburypark



## The Problem with Plastic

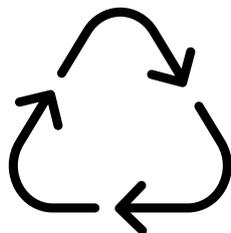


Found a lot of litter made from plastics? These could include crisp packets, sweet wrappers, takeaway packaging, disposable coffee cups as well as drinks bottles.

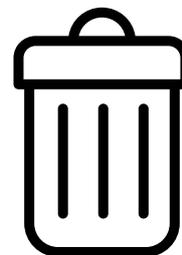
Plastic has many benefits, it is lightweight and virtually indestructible, as well as being cheap to produce and transport. That's why countless industries have seen plastic as a miracle material.

However...

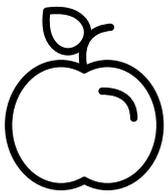
- It is made from oil and is very polluting to land, sea and air to make.
- Unlike aluminium, the way the plastic is made on a chemical level (plastic polymers) means they are unlikely to and difficult to be recycled.
- Currently  $\frac{2}{3}$  of UK plastic recycling is exported abroad for processing. This can mean it ends up in countries with less strict environmental regulations, leading to burning or unregulated landfilling, therefore polluting their land.
- Small bits of litter can fall down storm drains, then end up in rivers and finally the sea. Once in the marine environment, plastic breaks down into miniscule microplastics and can leach chemicals. Microplastics also attract pollutants (POPs) in the sea. All of which are then ingested by marine life.
- Plastic is being found in fish that humans consume - so there is proof it is coming back into the food chain. Yuck!



Less than 10% of plastic waste ever produced has been recycled.



Globally, we now produce over 300 million tonnes of plastic every year – half of which is single use.



## What can YOU do?



Now, we know you're wise enough not to litter. However, you can make a massive difference to your local environment and the planet by reducing the amount of plastic you use. This would otherwise be sent to landfill (100s of years to degrade, poisoning of land), incinerated for energy (air pollution) or recycled locally or overseas (BUT only if it has been sorted correctly and not contaminated by other waste).

The best thing you can do is say no to plastic in the first place. Below are some simple swaps you can make today:

- **Support local shops** that sell loose veg. This may be a greengrocer or corner shop.
- **Reusable bags** – The old flimsy plastic bags can now set you back 15p at the checkout. Keep a spare bag with you to avoid further expenditure while you're on the go.
- **Drinks bottle** – Carry a reusable bottle with you to fill up with water while you're out and about. We've been working with national scheme Refill to increase the number of places in the city you can fill up your bottle for free – there are now over 250 in Birmingham alone. Check out the free Refill app and look out for Refill stickers in windows to find water refill stations nearby.  
[www.refill.org.uk](http://www.refill.org.uk)
- **Coffee cup** – Love a caffeine fix? The vast majority of disposable coffee cups are not recyclable. Why not invest in a thermal cup? Many cafes now offer discounts if you bring your own, so you can quickly pay back the initial outlay.
- **Beeswax wraps** – Cling film cannot be reused or recycled. Beeswax wraps use the temperature of your hands to wrap around containers other food items you wish to store for later. Simply rinse them after use and they're ready to be used again.
- **Toothbrush** – Dentists recommend you change your toothbrush every 3 months. That's a lot of plastic thrown away over a lifetime. Why not use a bamboo toothbrush instead? Bamboo is one of the fastest growing plants and is fully biodegradable.

We aren't saying switch all of these at once, but pick one and stick with it. Once you've mastered one swap, try another one until you've become a sustainability champion!



## Visiting the Park



Highbury Park has several points of access, mainly along the Western side. For cyclists and pedestrians, the main access points include gated entrances at the North-East and North-West corners, plus access along the Western edge (Moor Green Lane/Shutlock Lane). Vehicular access to the park is near the junction of Shutlock Lane and Dad's Lane.

To find out more about Highbury Park and download more trails, including their Discovery and Highbury Historic Landscape trails visit

[www.highburyparkfriends.org.uk](http://www.highburyparkfriends.org.uk)

Find out more about Highbury Orchard Community by visiting

[www.peopleandland.org.uk](http://www.peopleandland.org.uk)



## Refill & ecobirmingham



**Refill** connects you to places to eat, drink and shop with less waste. There are over 250 Refill stations across Birmingham and 30,000 Refill Stations across the UK. These include railway stations, high street chains such as Costa and Pret and lots of independents too! Local Refill Stations to Highbury Park include Loco Lounge and The Early Bird Bakery, both on Kings Heath High Street [www.refill.org.uk](http://www.refill.org.uk)

**ecobirmingham** is here to create a sustainable city. Birmingham faces unprecedented challenges and opportunities over the coming years. Through our projects, we give the people of the city the tools to take positive environmental action and help others do the same.

Donations from people like you are essential to ensure we can continue our important work across the city. Find out how you can help us tackle the big environmental issues in Birmingham via: [www.ecobirmingham.com](http://www.ecobirmingham.com)

Please let us know what you thought about this trail by filling in our very short survey here: [bit.ly/EBrumSurvey](http://bit.ly/EBrumSurvey)

