

YOUR GUIDE TO

PLOG ON

Turn your *JOG* into a

PLOG to run litter

out of Birmingham



Plog On Canals is a campaign to clean up Birmingham's canal network by promoting 'plogging' within the city.

PLOGGING IS SIMPLE. It is just picking up litter while you jog; benefiting the environment and ourselves!

Follow this guide to find out...

- ◇ **Why** we want you to plog?
- ◇ How to **get started**?
- ◇ What are the **benefits**?
- ◇ How to stay **safe**?
- ◇ **Fun** plogging ideas



A BIT ABOUT US

Plog on Canals is born out of the *UpRising Birmingham Environmental Leadership Programme 2017/18*. We are a group of 5 young people who are passionate about the protection of Birmingham's green spaces. We realise how important green spaces are for our mental and physical health and want help make a positive change to the environment and empower local communities to do the same.

OUR ETHOS

- ◇ **Improve** green spaces within the city to protect wildlife
- ◇ **Promote** the use of natural spaces
- ◇ Allow communities to take **ownership** of their local environment
- ◇ Encourage people to **connect** with nature to promote mental and physical well being

OUR MISSION

- ◇ To **reduce** the impact of **litter** along the south Birmingham Canal network
- ◇ To **inspire** a community of runners to choose to **plog** as part of their training

PLOGGING? YOU JUST MADE THAT UP!

I know it sounds like a funny word we made up.

But it **PLOGGING** is an activity that found popularity across Scandinavia and is formed from 'Plocka Upp' up which means to 'pick up'.

You only have to do a quick search online to see plogging is helping *communities worldwide* tackle their litter problems.



PLOGGING IS VERY SIMPLE.

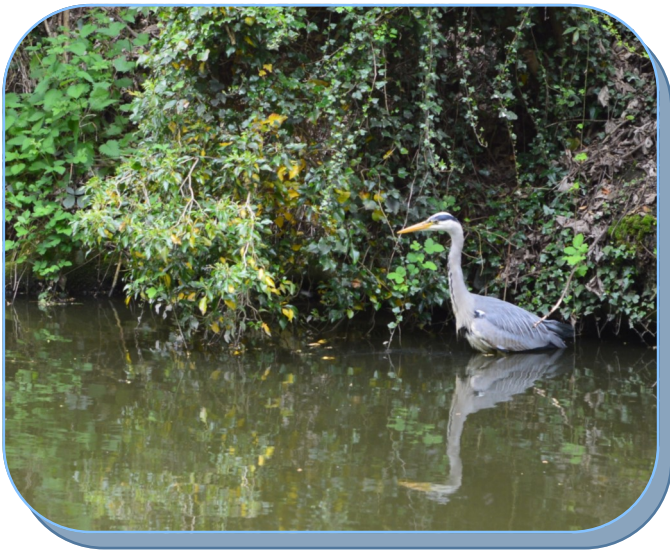
All you need are **comfy running clothes/ trainers**, a pair of **gloves**, a **carrier bag** for litter and the ***desire to do something good*** for your environment!

WHY DID WE CHOOSE CANALS?

The canals carve **natural pathways** through the city, forming a key piece of Birmingham's history and development.



Canals provide access to **nature** for urban communities. They are home to **lots of wildlife**; including herons, kingfishers and otters.



They are **frequently used** for cycling, walking and running, but there is still a **problem** with **litter**.



It is **easier and cheaper** to pick up litter from the **towpaths** than it is once it has blown into the canal

WHY CARE ABOUT LITTER?

Research shows that litter affects people's feelings of wellbeing and safety. Littered streets feel abandoned, consequently their inhabitants do too.

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Animals often try and eat litter mistaking it for food.

This can *deplete their nutrients, block their stomachs* and intestines, which can cause *death*.

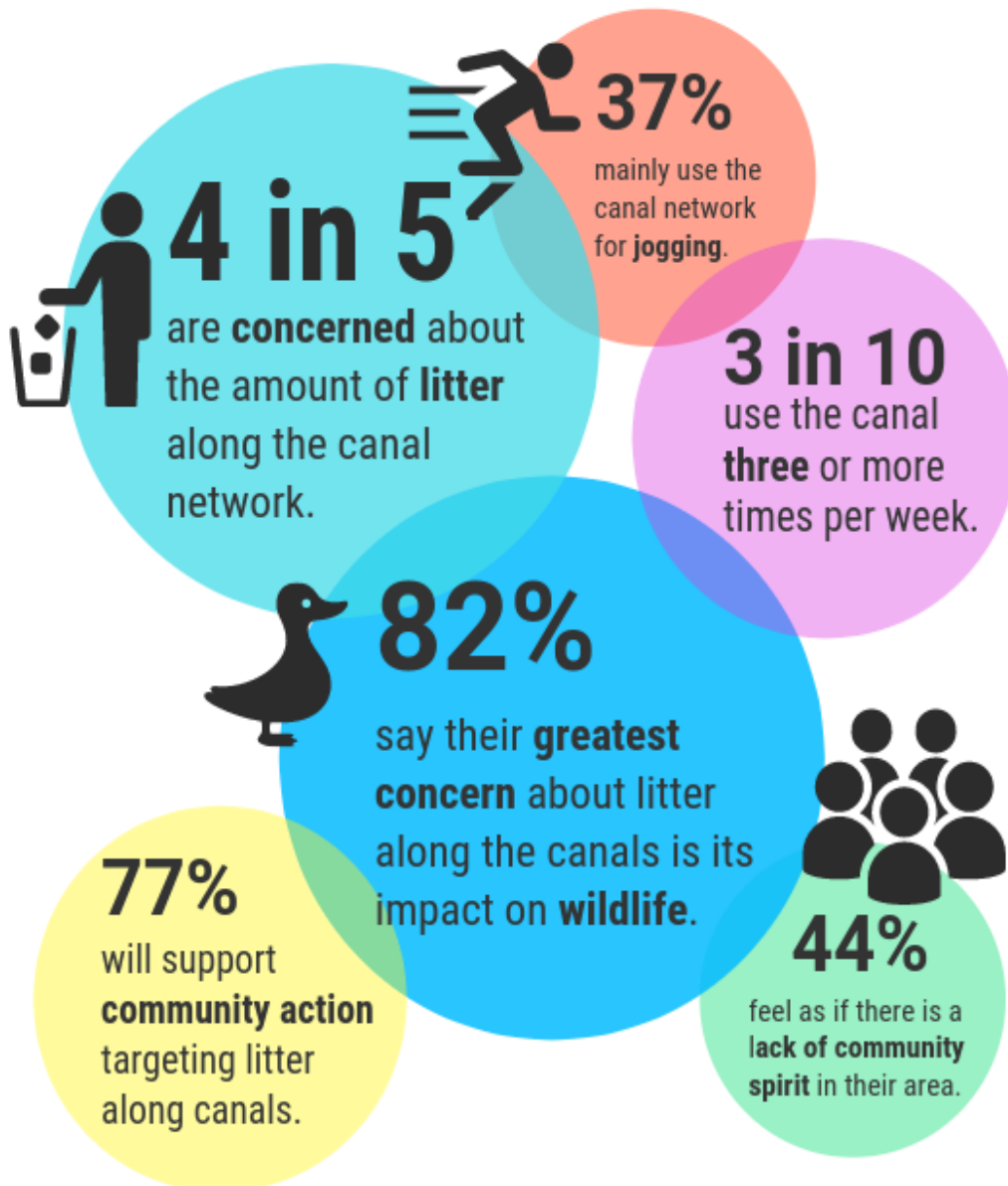
It is common for animals to get **caught in litter**, especially plastic bags and the plastic rings found around drinks cans.

Narrow canal towpaths mean that what might seem like **one piece of rubbish** on the floor that **'someone else will pick up'** will probably be **blown or knocked into the water** soon after you pass it.

So if you see it. Pick it up!

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Our survey explored the relationship between Birmingham residents and the canals. You told us that you were concerned about litter and many of you use the canals for jogging.



Information source: "Using Birmingham's Canals" survey, compiled by Plog on Canals

This led to the formation of **Plog On Canals**

Plogging combines **community action**, **care for the environment** and **fitness**.

On a personal level, *plogging* is satisfying - instead of passing litter and feeling saddened by its existence, you're **creating change** and **improving areas** for wildlife and fellow community members.

HOW TO PLOG?

It's really simple...

1. Wear comfy running clothes, trainers and gloves (I like to wear gardening gloves)

2. Take a carrier bag or rucksack you can put litter in.

3. Run and pick up any litter you come across. It doesn't have to be every single scrap. Start with what you feel comfortable with and build-up from there.

4. Once you've finished your run, divide your haul into recyclables and non-recyclables and dispose of accordingly.

Remember...every bit of litter you pick up from the towpath, even if it is one bottle, is one saved from ending up floating on the canal.

Follow us online to hear experiences of our first 'plogging' attempts!

5 REASONS TO PLOG

1. REDUCE LITTER

Litter causes lots of problems, it makes the canals look **uninviting**, **damages** the **environment** and **hurts wildlife**. The *more* you plog the *fewer problems* litter will cause.

2. PROTECTING WILDLIFE

Charities like the RSPCA are frequently contacted about animals being injured or caught up in litter. Plogging will keep harmful **rubbish away** from Birmingham's **wildlife**!

3. THE FEEL GOOD FACTOR

Feel **proud** after a normal run...imagine how great that feeling would be if your run was benefiting local **environment**, **wildlife** and your **community**!

4. COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Actively engaging in cleaning up your canal will help **empower** local people to take **ownership** of their local environment. You CAN make a difference!

5. RECONNECTING

Plogging encourages us to use the canals in a more **mindful** way. Rather than focussing on getting from a to b, you become **more aware** of the environment around you.



STAYING SAFE

1

PROTECTIVE GLOVES

We like to wear gardening gloves. They keep your hands clean and provide some protection from anything sharp or those pesky stinging nettles.

2

AVOID SHARP/HAZARDOUS OBJECTS

Don't pick up discarded needles/ any evidence of drug use. These can reported to the local council who will collect them with a sharps box.

Avoid animal waste/ broken glass or anything else potentially harmful.

3

STAY AWAY FROM CANAL EDGE

It might be tempting to reach for a bottle floating on the canal but we don't want you going for an unplanned swim. *Use your judgement, no heroics necessary!*

4

REPORT FLY TIPPING

Sadly the canal can be a place where you may come across fly tipping. This should be left and reported to your local council.

5

GIVE THE GEESE SPACE

As any seasoned canal runner knows...geese can have a mean streak. At this time of year they are protective of their young so leave a good distance when passing them.

6

PICK UP WITH CAUTION

Don't assume every packet/ container you pick up is empty. Be careful and check before you grab it to avoid any nasty surprises inside, even in something as innocent as a crisp packet.

7

NETTLES/ BRAMBLE

Plants along the towpath can sometimes be overgrown. If reaching in for rubbish use a grabber and be careful of your arms/ eyes on any branches/ nettles.

8

BE AWARE

Remember other towpath users/ runners may be around you. Don't stop suddenly or change direction when you may get in someone else's way.

At the end of this guide there is more information/ links to websites for reporting fly tipping and drug use evidence.

HAVE SOME FUN

It seems to be that the natural world is the greatest source of excitement.

- David Attenborough -

TRY THESE PLOGGING ACTIVITIES. ADAPT THEM FOR YOUR PERSONAL WORKOUT .

ONE PIECE PLOG

On your run aim to **pick up one piece of litter** and bring it home to recycle or put it in the next bin you find.

5 MINUTE PLOG

Leave **5 minutes** at the end of your run where you **pick up any litter you find**. Better yet, plan your run to end up near a local litter hotspot and get picking.

LITTER SNAP

Throughout your run see how many items you can **find double** of.

2 plastic spoons? SNAP!

SINGLE USE SQUATS

For every bit of **single use plastic** you come across challenge yourself to **5 squats**.

This will make you hate straws, bottles and coffee lids as much as our environment does!

LITTER SPRINTS

Fancy a bit of interval training?

Every 5-10 minutes why not try **picking up your pace** until you reach your **next bit of litter**.

RUBBISH BINGO

Set a **list of items to find** and see how many runs it takes to complete . Start a **competition** with your friends/ running club to help fuel your competitive edge.

CLUB PLOG

Are you a running club?

We know members will have their own running targets and training plans, so why not schedule a monthly or quarterly plog to **bring your runners together** to achieve a common goal of **tidying up your local community**.



**Follow us on Twitter/ Instagram/ Facebook
@plogonbrum**

#Pledgeyourplog on our website and get in touch to share your plogging success with us so we can celebrate the fantastic difference you make.

*We hope you will help us
'run litter out of Birmingham'*

Feel free to contact us at plogonbrum@gmail.com or via social media

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE

- Protective clothing and equipment
- Gloves to minimise contact with litter
- Reflective hi-visibility clothing to highlight the litter picker to oncoming traffic and other tow-path users
- Litter grabbers if you would like to reach litter that is deep into the undergrowth

NOXIOUS AND DANGEROUS MATERIAL

- Avoid broken glass
- Do not pick up any drug-related litter and hypodermic needles. Report it to Birmingham City Council following this link and they will arrange disposal.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20140/environmental_concerns_and_requests/107/report_hypodermic_needles_in_public_places/1.

- Do not remove items that are possibly dangerous, such as unknown liquids in containers, building materials, asbestos or fly tipping. Report any such findings to Birmingham City Council following this link and they will arrange disposal.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20140/environmental_concerns_and_requests/89/report_fly-tipping/1.

GENERAL SAFETY

- Be aware of wildlife. Avoid disturbing animals and birds that lay be nesting in the spring, especially geese, and avoid wasp and bee nests in the summer.
- Do not enter an area, or attempt to litter pick an areas, where works are restricted, or where workmen are already in place, or where the public do not have a right of entry.
- Avoid running too close to the canal, where there is an increased risk of falling into the canal.
- Avoid reaching into undergrowth or hedges in such a way that puts your eyes, face and skin at risk of scratches from thorns or branches. If you cannot reach it easily, leave it.

LIFTING AND HANDLING MATERIAL

- Use litter grabbers if you do not feel comfortable bending and lifting.
- Make sure an item is safe to handle and free from sharp edges or noxious contents.
- Only remove an item if it can be done without straining.
- Bend your legs and keep your back straight when lifting an item.

If you want to organise a large litter pick event there is lots of advice available online and local councils are often able to loan equipment and assist with litter collection.

For anymore information/ concerns feel free to contact us plongonbrum@gmail.com

"This project is born out of the UpRising Birmingham Environmental Leadership Programme 2017/18. UpRising is a UK-wide youth leadership development charity, addressing the problem of unrepresentative power in the UK. The nine-month Environmental Leadership Programme develops the knowledge, skills, networks and confidence of talented and under-represented young adults aged 19-25, levelling the playing field and raising aspirations to provide them with the opportunity to develop as leaders and go on to attain key decision-making positions in their future careers. For more information visit www.uprising.org.uk."

NATURE. WELLBEING. POSITIVE.

RUNNING. FEELGOOD. **INSPIRED.**

POWER. HOME FOR NATURE. *WILDLIFE.*

TAKE CONTROL. **YOUR GREEN CITY.**

DO YOUR BIT. CLEAN. COMMUNITY.

CHAMPIONS. *JOIN THE MOVEMENT.*

LITTER HERO. **BRIGHTER FUTURE.**

MORE THAN A RUN. *Inspire.* PlogOn.

BEAT PLASTIC POLLUTION. *CANAL LIFE.*

URBANWILDLIFE. **BE THE CHANGE.**