

BREAKING THE CYCLE:
TACKLING FLY-TIPPING
AND WASTE CRIME
A ROADMAP FOR REFORM



Introduction

I've spent most of my life loving the British countryside. I've walked through it, filmed in it, bought houses in it and raised my children in it. I know the feeling of turning a corner in a lane and seeing a meadow, a hedgerow or a river in the distance and thinking, this country really is extraordinarily beautiful. That is something worth protecting.

So I can also tell you what it feels like to turn that same corner and find a dumped sofa. A fridge. Black bags ripped open across a verge. Piles of asbestos in a gateway. Most people who live in rural communities have seen it and the overwhelming feeling is fury. Not just because it's ugly, but because of the contempt behind it. Contempt for the land, for the people who work on it and for everyone else who cares about it.

We need to stop pretending this is some minor nuisance. It's a crime. The farmer who finds a gateway blocked by builders' waste isn't just dealing with an eyesore, he's dealing with a huge bill for something that was done to him, not by him. That is plainly unfair.

Yes, rural communities often bear the brunt of the very worst incidents, lorry loads of waste dumped in gateways, fields and lanes, but anyone who lives in a town or city knows this problem is everywhere. Alleyways piled with mattresses, rubbish dumped beside flats, industrial waste abandoned on ordinary streets, fly-tipping drags places down wherever it happens. This is not just a countryside issue. It affects all of us.

What this report shows is that the system meant to tackle fly-tipping is failing miserably. The laws exist. Plenty of people care deeply about the issue. But enforcement is patchy, responsibility is blurred and organised criminals know exactly how to take advantage of that.

The countryside is not somewhere to dump rubbish because nobody is watching. The people who live and work there should not be expected to absorb the cost of other people's criminal behaviour. Rural communities deserve better than that.

This report sets out what needs to change. Now somebody needs to listen.

Kirstie Allsopp



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fly-tipping and wider waste crime have reached crisis levels across the United Kingdom, imposing severe and escalating costs on the environment, rural communities, businesses and the public purse. Official statistics indicate that local authorities in England dealt with over 1.26 million incidents in 2024–25, a figure that has risen consistently in recent years. Yet even this stark headline understates the true scale of the problem.

1.26 million incidents is only part of the picture

The headline figure of 1.26 million incidents represents a continuing upward trend, but it is not a full account of the scale of waste crime. It excludes incidents that took place on private land, cases handled by the Environment Agency involving large-scale illegal dumping, and the substantial proportion of offences that are never reported at all. According to industry estimates, these may account for the majority of waste crime.

Waste crime is not a uniform offence. It ranges from small-scale dumping by individuals and rogue traders to highly organised criminal enterprises operating at industrial scale. At the same time, the burden falls disproportionately on landowners, farmers and rural communities, who often must bear the full clean-up costs despite being the victims.

An enforcement lottery

When fly-tipping is recorded, what happens next? Only 31% of incidents are investigated, with over half of those investigations resulting in no further action. Across England in 2024–25, there were just 13 custodial sentences for fly-tipping offences.

The legal framework is not the problem. Unlimited fines can be levied. Vehicles can be seized and costs recovered. The Statute Book provides for prison sentences of up to five years. The problem is that these powers are rarely used, inconsistently applied and split across local authorities, the Environment Agency and the police, with no single body clearly accountable for outcomes.

The result is, in practice, an enforcement lottery where whether action is taken depends largely on where the offence occurs. This is, in effect, an enforcement system in name only.

Organised crime, operating in plain sight

Fly-tipping is no longer simply a matter of illegally dumped mattresses and bin bags. Organised criminal networks are running waste operations on an industrial scale, exploiting weaknesses in regulation, enforcement and data-sharing to generate substantial illicit profits.

At least 11 illegal waste “super-sites” are operating across England, including one in Cheshire containing an estimated 280,000 tonnes of waste, linked to increased flooding on surrounding farmland and nearby residential areas. These are not isolated cases but sophisticated criminal enterprises.

The former chief executive of the Environment Agency has previously described waste crime as “the new narcotics”: low-risk, high-reward, and increasingly the preserve of organised criminal networks.

Victims bearing the cost of crime committed against them

When waste is dumped on private land, it is the landowner who must pay to clear it. In some cases, they may also face landfill tax liabilities despite being the victim, not the perpetrator. Meanwhile, offenders frequently face little or no meaningful sanction.

Survey evidence underlines the scale of this injustice. Findings from the 2025 Countryside Alliance Rural Crime Survey show that fly-tipping is the most prevalent rural crime, accounting for 44% of all reported rural offences. Nine in ten members of the Country Land and Business Association (CLA) report being targeted within the past year, with over three-quarters suffering a significant financial impact. The National Farmers’ Union (NFU) reports that 85% of farmers believe the problem has worsened over the last five years.

These are not abstract statistics. They represent repeated, real-world costs borne by the same individuals and businesses, with limited prospect of redress.

A fragmented system that is not working

This report, jointly produced by the Countryside Alliance and the National Rural Crime Network (NRCN), finds that the current system is fragmented, inconsistent and insufficiently resourced. Responsibilities are split across multiple agencies. There are gaps in official data, intelligence-sharing is weak and enforcement varies widely between areas.

While recent government initiatives – including the Waste Crime Action Plan – and an ongoing inquiry by the House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee demonstrate growing political recognition of the issue, this report concludes that more fundamental reform is required. There is a need for clearer national leadership, stronger enforcement mechanisms, improved data and intelligence-sharing, and a more robust regulatory framework that closes off opportunities for abuse.

What this report calls for

This report sets out 18 recommendations for reform. The central proposals are:

- ◆ A comprehensive national dataset capturing the true scale of waste crime.
- ◆ A single clearly understood reporting route for all incidents.
- ◆ Stronger regulation of waste carriers and brokers; improved intelligence-sharing and enforcement coordination between agencies.
- ◆ Sustained action against organised criminal networks.
- ◆ An end to the injustice of victims being left to bear the costs of crime committed against them.

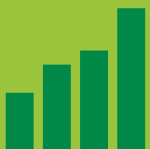
Conclusion

Fly-tipping is no longer a marginal environmental issue; it is a systemic criminal enterprise exploiting gaps in governance, regulation and enforcement. Without decisive action, the problem will continue to grow in scale and sophistication. Inaction would also perpetuate fundamental injustices: landowners forced to pay for the costs of crime committed against them, rural areas bearing a disproportionate impact and criminals exploiting weak enforcement.

This report provides a practical and deliverable roadmap for reform, a plan that matches the seriousness of the crime with the strength of the response required.



Key findings



The true scale of waste crime is significantly higher than official statistics suggest due to exclusions and underreporting



Only around 31% of incidents are investigated, with more than half of those investigations resulting in no further action



In England, there were just 13 custodial sentences imposed in 2024-25



At least 11 large-scale illegal waste "super-sites" are operating across England



Waste crime is increasingly driven by organised criminal networks operating at industrial scale

Summary of recommendations

Data and transparency

1. Comprehensive national dataset: Record and report data concerning all fly-tipping and waste crime incidents including those on private land, Environment Agency cases and full clean-up costs.
2. Standardised reporting: Reduce local authority discretion and improve data accuracy and accountability.

Reporting and public interface

3. Single national reporting point: Create a clearly understood universal system (ideally via 101) for reporting waste crime.
4. Emergency response: Ensure police respond to fly-tipping incidents in progress reported via 999.

Prevention and offender accountability

5. Minimum standards for waste site provision: Ensure accessible, affordable disposal facilities nationwide.
6. Strict liability vehicle offences: Hold registered keepers and drivers automatically accountable for fly-tipping offences.
7. Company law reform: Prevent abuse of limited liability by rogue waste operators.

Clean-up costs

8. Local authority duty: Transfer responsibility for clearing fly-tipped waste and pursuing offenders for costs from landowners to local authorities.

Regulation of the waste sector

9. Stronger waste carrier regulation: Move to a robust environmental permitting regime and scrutinise its effectiveness.
10. Mandatory registration display: Require visible licence numbers on vehicles, advertisements and documentation.
11. Director disqualification: Ban offenders from future involvement in waste businesses.
12. Improve the public register: Make it easier for households and businesses to verify legitimate operators.
13. Duty of care awareness campaign: Educate the public and businesses on checking waste carriers.

Strengthening enforcement

14. Strengthen local authority enforcement: Introduce incentives, guidance or duties to ensure action – especially in relation to private land.
15. Enable data sharing: Remove real or perceived barriers to intelligence-sharing between agencies.
16. Role for National Police Service: Consider transferring serious waste crime cases to a single responsible body, potentially the announced National Police Service.
17. Embedded liaison officers: Strengthen coordination between policing and environmental regulators.

Legislative framework

18. Waste Crime (Prevention) Act: Deliver key reforms through a single, coherent piece of primary legislation.



2. CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Foreword | 1 |
| Executive summary | 2 |
| Summary of recommendations | 4 |
| Contents | 5 |
| The scale of the problem | 6 |
| Legislation, governance and policy | 10 |
| Legislation | 10 |
| Governance | 11 |
| Policy | 12 |
| Offender profiles | 15 |
| Small-scale fly-tippers | 15 |
| Organised criminal gangs | 15 |
| Customers of illegal waste carriers | 16 |
| Colluding landowners | 16 |
| Marginally legitimate waste processors | 17 |
| Impact on victims | 18 |
| The environment | 18 |
| Communities | 18 |
| Landowners | 18 |
| The public purse | 19 |
| The broader economy | 19 |
| Policy and enforcement failures | 20 |

3. THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM

Before we can begin to tackle any problem of national significance, we must first understand its nature and scale. In the case of waste crime, that understanding is hampered by the national data being neither comprehensive nor reliable. An assessment of the data landscape will support calls for a complete overhaul with all relevant information reported annually, including data for all types of incident, clean-up and enforcement costs, and penalties paid by offenders. It will also show a need for higher expectations of accuracy in data reporting.

The most comprehensive indicator of the scale of fly-tipping is Defra's Fly-tipping statistics for England¹, published annually around January or February, with some reservations that will be discussed. This year's release, published on 25 February 2026, covered the period from April 2024 to March 2025.

Defra Fly-tipping statistics for England 2024-25: Key points



Because the report is presented in a standard format, the data can be compared over time, going back to 2018-19, as indicated in Table 1.²³

Table 1: Local authority recorded fly-tipping incidents and enforcement actions, 2018-19 to 2024-24

| | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 |
|--|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total incidents | 957,157 | 979,728 | 1,138,347 | 1,091,019 | 1,084,044 | 1,152,632 | 1,257,863 |
| Large incidents | 36,008 | 30,882 | 38,260 | 37,055 | 41,952 | 46,508 | 51,792 |
| Total Local authority enforcement actions | 500,329 | 473,051 | 455,467 | 507,432 | 530,205 | 529,708 | 571,861 |
| FPNs issued | 76,963 | 75,445 | 57,658 | 91,034 | 66,661 | 63,303 | 68,760 |
| Court fines issued | 1,659 | 1,657 | 621 | 1,798 | 1,491 | 1,378 | 1,250 |
| Custodial sentences | 26 | 41 | 5 | 20 | 21 | 28 | 13 |
| Community service orders | 40 | 44 | 15 | 30 | 34 | 22 | 37 |

¹Defra, Fly-tipping statistics for England, 2024 to 2025, 25.02.26

²An accompanying release gave data on fly-tipping incidents and actions taken going back to 2007-08. The report states that methodological changes in 2019-20 mean that earlier years' figures are not directly comparable, however the changes were applied retrospectively to data for 2018-19.

³Defra, Flytipping incidents and actions taken (national level data) 2007-08 to 2024-25, 25.02.26

THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM

While Table I gives the relevant historical data that the government has published, it does not record data on the combined value of court fines in each year. These are only reported in the annual statistical releases, which must be consulted individually while they remain archived. This makes it more difficult than it should be to determine the longer-term trend. The historical data also does not include information about the combined clearance and enforcement costs for all incidents – not just those of ‘tipper lorry load size’ or larger. The last year for which this information is available is 2016-17, given as £57,966,874. This indicates that later releases, presenting only clearance costs of larger incidents, are masking the true cost to local authorities of clearing all incidents of fly-tipping.

Waste crime is officially estimated to cost the economy more than £900 million per year in England alone.⁴

The enforcement picture is further complicated by the way “local authority enforcement actions” are recorded. The figures count every action taken, meaning a single case may generate multiple enforcement actions. In 2024-25, local authorities recorded 571,861 enforcement actions, of which 386,328 were the opening of an investigation. As opening an investigation is likely to be a prerequisite for further action, this suggests that only 30.71% of the 1,257,863 incidents for which local authorities were responsible were investigated – fewer than one-third. The figures also suggest that at least 200,795 investigations did not result in any further enforcement action. If so, 51.97% of opened investigations led to no additional action, meaning that more than half produced no observable enforcement outcome.

A still more glaring omission in the published data is any information relating to fly-tipping incidents that were not managed by local authorities. As the 2024-25 report states:

“Incidents involving the Environment Agency or those cleared by private landowners are not included in this notice. In 2024-25 the Environment Agency dealt with 98 incidents of large-scale, illegal dumping.”

This is especially significant given that the incidents managed by the Environment Agency are the most severe the country faces. A BBC investigation in January 2026 found that these included:

“...at least 11 so-called “super sites” containing tens of thousands of tonnes of rubbish.”⁷

The largest of these ‘super-sites’ identified by the BBC is in Northwich, Cheshire containing 280,000 tonnes of fly-tipped waste, reported elsewhere to be of soil and other building debris, and linked to increased flooding incidence at nearby farmland and residential areas.⁸

Furthermore:

“Local authorities gather their data from a number of different sources, and data can often be collected and reported by separate teams. There is a level of discretion in applying the reporting guidance. This can lead to some differences in how local authorities record incidents and enforcement actions...”

⁴National Audit Office, *Investigation into government’s actions to combat waste crime in England*, 27.04.22

⁵Other actions undertaken in this most recent year were a total of 62,194 warning letters, 29,483 duty of care inspections, 21,233 statutory notices, 68,760 fixed penalty notices, 903 uses of stop-and-search powers, 1,377 prosecutions, 1,444 formal cautions, 0 injunctions and 139 vehicles seized.

⁶Again the true number will be higher because some incidents will have led to multiple further enforcement actions.

⁷BBC News, *Hundreds of illegal waste tips operating in England – including 11 ‘super sites’*, 23.01.26

⁸The Mirror, *Inside England’s biggest illegal waste dump with 280,000 tonnes of rubbish abandoned*, 23.01.26

THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM

In 2024, reporting errors on the part of several local authorities were so severe as to warrant a re-release of the data.²

“Defra is aware that the definitions used to describe fly-tips and enforcement actions in the guidance are interpreted broadly by local authorities, and that changes in staffing, data collection methods, and cyber-crime have led to reporting errors in the past.”

It is unfortunate, therefore, that the best available indicator of the scale of fly-tipping in England cannot be relied upon as giving a comprehensive, or indeed necessarily accurate, depiction of the true scale of the crime.

In addition to Defra’s statistical release, in July 2025 the Environment Agency published the results of its latest annual national waste crime survey of figures in the waste industry and potential victims of waste crime. The survey concluded:

“Waste industry respondents estimated that an average 20% of all waste may be illegally managed. The financial consequences of waste crime continue to be high; criminals are thought to be motivated to misdescribe waste to avoid regulations and evade landfill tax meanwhile landowners and the waste industry suffer the impacts through harm to their businesses and the financial costs of clean up. However, the survey also reveals, that despite a small increase on previous years, only 27% of all waste crimes are reported. Few respondents felt that the Environment Agency is effectively resourced to deter waste crime.”¹⁰

38.2 million tonnes of waste is illegally managed each year, according to waste industry estimates: enough to fill Wembley Stadium 35 times over. ¹¹

Unofficial data sources can help fill in the picture. The latest Countryside Alliance Rural Crime Survey, published in March 2025 and covering the previous year, found that 44% of respondents who had experienced rural crime reported fly-tipping. They also felt the crime to be their second-top priority (behind only agricultural machinery theft) for police to focus resources on tackling.¹²

Separately, a CLA snapshot survey, announced in February 2025, found that 90% of respondents had fallen victim to fly-tipping over the past year, almost 40% had experienced at least six separate incidents and over 75% reported that it had a significant financial impact on their business.¹³

The picture is further reinforced by an NFU survey from June 2024 which found 54% of respondents had experienced small-scale and 30% large-scale fly-tipping on a farm, with 85% of respondents reporting that the problem had worsened over the past five years.¹⁴

²This year’s report includes revisions of data from 2022-23 and 2023-24 for nine local authorities, following receipt of new or amended data affecting the total number of incidents and of enforcement actions, and type breakdowns for each.

¹⁰Environment Agency, National waste crime survey 2025: summary, 23.07.25

¹¹Environment Agency, National waste crime survey 2025, 23.07.25

¹²Countryside Alliance, Rural Crime Survey 2024, 31.03.25

¹³CLA, Where is the government’s crime strategy, the CLA asks, as fly-tipping incidents exceed one million, 26.02.25

¹⁴NFU, Channel 4 highlights shocking impact of waste crime following NFU survey, 24.06.24

THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM

Recommendation 1

Establish a fully comprehensive annual dataset for fly-tipping. Specifically, include:

- For incidents managed by local authorities, all clean-up and enforcement costs, not limited to those related to incidents of 'tipper lorry load' size or larger.
- Data pertaining to incidents managed by the Environment Agency.
- Data sourced from police concerning incidents that took place on private land, where reported.

Recommendation 2

Review the degree of discretion afforded to local authorities in reporting fly-tipping data with a view to achieving national-level standardisation. Explore means of holding local authorities accountable for the quality and accuracy of the data they report.



4. LEGISLATION, GOVERNANCE AND POLICY

The regulatory system for waste and associated crime is a complex one that has evolved over a number of years, founded in a law from 1990 that has been amended several times in subsequent years. One result has been an accumulation of different agencies with responsibility for managing parts of the problem, a source of considerable public confusion as to where a given incident should be reported and who must oversee the response. Fly-tipping has received higher levels of political attention in recent years, but debates persist on how effectively this has been translated into action.

Legislation

The principal law governing fly-tipping is the **Environmental Protection Act 1990**, as amended. Section 33 criminalises fly-tipping, defined as depositing waste “in or on any land unless an environmental permit authorising the deposit is in force and the deposit is in accordance with the licence”, with the offence now punishable by unlimited fines, vehicle seizure and up to 5 years’ imprisonment.

Section 34 establishes the duty of care by which businesses and, as amended by the **Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005**, households may only transfer waste to an authorised operator. Other sections, amended by the 2005 Act and by regulations, establish fixed penalty notices, compensation orders for investigation, enforcement and clean-up costs, and vehicle forfeitures.¹⁵

Lawful waste disposal facilities in England and Wales are regulated under the **The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016**, which also enable waste authorities to prosecute operators and land occupiers who allow illegal dumping, with penalties including fines and imprisonment.¹⁶

Powers to tackle illegal activity at waste sites were enhanced by **The Waste Enforcement (England and Wales) Regulations 2018**, which gave local authorities the power to require unlawfully deposited waste to be removed and the Environment Agency and Natural Resources powers to restrict access and waste importation to sites.¹⁷

Fixed penalty levels were last revised in **The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023**, which raised the upper limit of fixed penalty notices for littering, graffiti and fly-posting offences from £150 to £500; for household waste duty of care offences from £400 to £600; and for fly-tipping offences from £400 to £1,000.¹⁸ Unlimited fines are available if a conviction is secured in court.

The use of fixed penalty receipts was ring-fenced for local authority clean-up and enforcement activity from 1 April 2024 under **The Waste Enforcement (Fixed Penalty Receipts) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2024**.¹⁹

Most recently, the **Crime and Policing Act 2026** was amended during its parliamentary stages to add a provision that courts may order between 3 and 9 penalty points to the licences of drivers of vehicles caught fly-tipping. These debates also featured an initial defeat for the government on an amendment that would have required local waste authorities to collect fly-tipped waste and seek to recover costs from offenders, effectively transferring the burden of clearing illegal waste from landowners to local authorities.²¹ Despite co-ordinated campaigning by the NRCN, the Countryside Alliance and other partners, the government declined to accept defeat and the amendment was subsequently reversed.²² The Act also provided for statutory guidance to be issued to local authorities on the exercise of their powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 relating to waste crime enforcement and the household duty of care.

¹⁵Environmental Protection Act 1990

¹⁶The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016

¹⁷The Waste Enforcement (England and Wales) Regulations 2018

¹⁸The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023

¹⁹The Waste Enforcement (Fixed Penalty Receipts) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2024

²⁰Defra, Fly-tippers risk losing their driving licence under tougher court powers, 30.04.26

²¹Countryside Alliance, Government defeated on waste crime, 26.02.26

²²Countryside Alliance, Government allows fly-tipping injustice to continue, 15.04.26

Governance

This part of the report profiles the various bodies that have roles in enforcing waste crime legislation and are otherwise involved in the enforcement landscape.

Local authorities

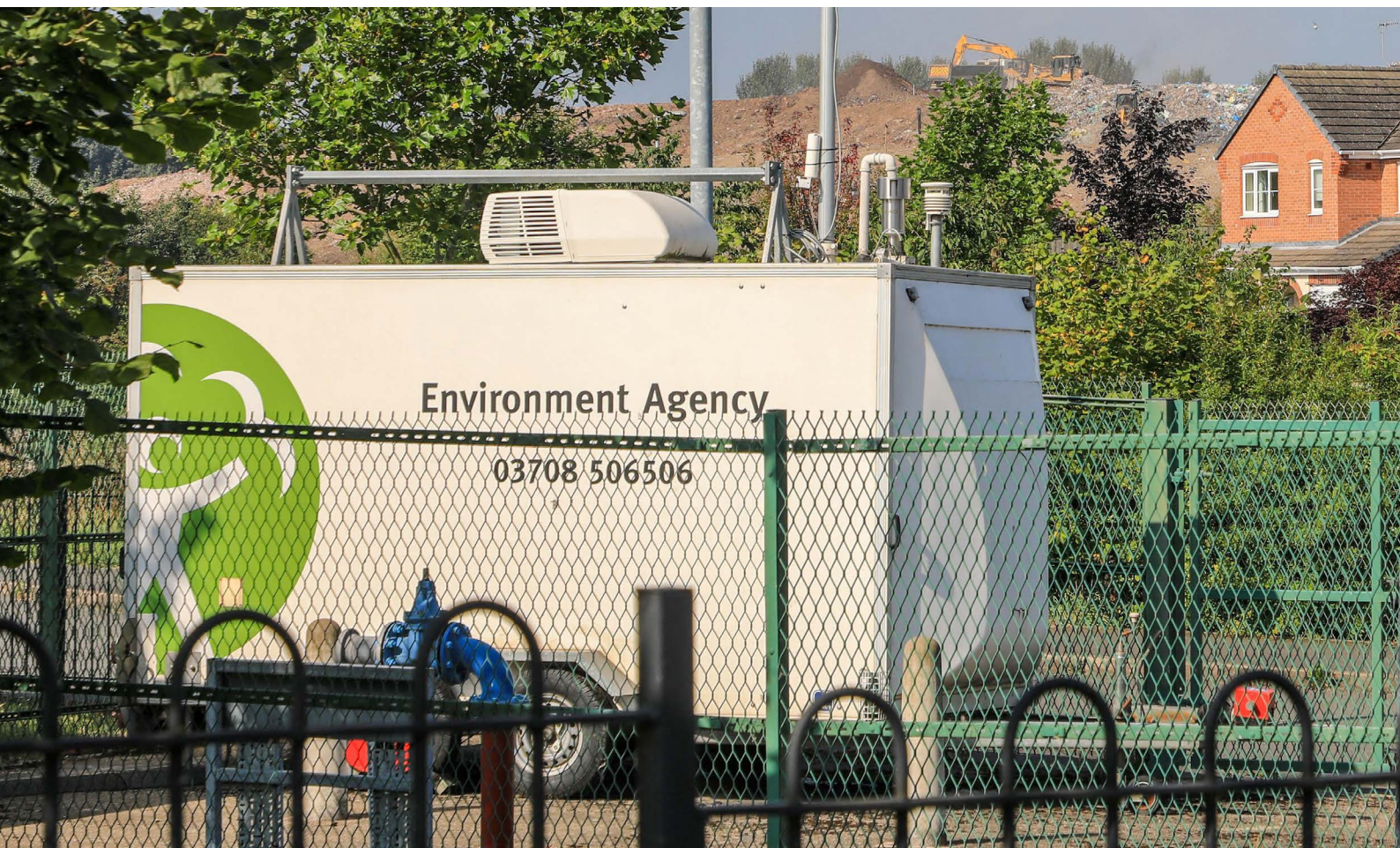
In their capacity as principal litter authorities, as defined in the Environmental Protection Act 1990²³, local authorities are the lead investigatory and enforcement body for fly-tipping offences and have a statutory duty to clear litter on public land. They are responsible for prosecuting or issuing a fixed-penalty notice, and have powers to stop, search and seize involved vehicles. Despite this, while local authorities are empowered to enforce, they are not required to do so. Many do not investigate incidents of dumping on private land, despite some of it being subject to open access requirements. Furthermore, in areas of England with a two-tier council system, district councils are usually the principal litter authority for the purposes of clear-up and enforcement whereas county councils are responsible for providing community waste and recycling facilities, which (as set out in section 5) can influence rates of fly-tipping if the provision is too costly or restrictive. Their priorities may conflict.

The Environment Agency

This national body is responsible for investigating large-scale, hazardous or organised waste crime in England, typically incidents involving over 20 tonnes of waste measuring around 20 cubic metres, 5 cubic meters of asbestos, 75 litres of hazardous liquid, or incidents linked to organised crime. Given that these factors (particularly the involvement of organised crime) may not be obvious, local authorities must liaise with the Environment Agency where its involvement may be needed.²⁴

The police

Police forces do not have responsibility for fly-tipping but may be called upon to assume a supporting role. They may receive public complaints which they should refer to the local authority; they may seek intelligence on fly-tipping and work with local authorities through Community Safety Partnerships; they may be sought as an investigative resource by the Environment Agency; and, as with all criminal activity, they are responsible for responding to incidents witnessed in progress.²⁵ They also retain a general power to prosecute criminal offences although in practice, waste crime prosecutions are delegated to local authorities or the Environment Agency as appropriate.



²³Environmental Protection Act 1990

²⁴Environment Agency, A council view of the fly tipping curse, 31.05.23

The National Fly-tipping Prevention Group

An advisory rather than an accountable body involving a broad range of groups including “representatives from central and local government, enforcement authorities, the waste industry, the police and fire service, private landowners and the devolved administrations.”²⁶ It maintains a series of prevention guides for householders, businesses, landowners and local authorities that seek to foster best practices and encourage effective enforcement.

The Joint Unit for Waste Crime

Launched in 2024, this is a UK-wide partnership between the Environment Agency, His Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC), the National Crime Agency, the police and others including partners in the waste industry. It shares intelligence, powers and resources to disrupt waste criminals. Its four priorities are to Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue; on preparation, for instance, it trains Environment Agency personnel, and on protection and pursuit it serves stop notices on illegal waste sites.²⁷ The government said recently that it had increased the Unit’s funding to allow it to double in size.²⁸

The National Police Service

A forthcoming new police body announced in a White Paper on 30 January 2026 and confirmed for imminent legislation in the King’s Speech, this body is expected to take over responsibility for counter-terrorism, roads policing, the National Police Air Service, financial crimes and professional development and training in England and Wales. It will also assume responsibility for serious and organised crime operations, suggesting a future role in the policing of organised waste crime.²⁹

Policy

The government issued its Waste Crime Action Plan on 20 March 2026.³⁰ The plan features a range of measures grouped around the themes of Prevent, Enforce and Remediate.

Some of these involve promoting the use of existing powers, such as the Environment Agency’s authority to restrict site access and suspend or revoke permits. Some involve progressing work already under way, including reforms to the carriers, brokers and dealers regime, implementing digital waste tracking (which became available in April 2026 and will be mandatory from October 2026), upgraded surveillance drones for the Environment Agency, and removing or reforming waste permit exemptions that Defra maintains have been abused.

Other measures appear to be entirely new. Most notable is a pledge that the Environment Agency will “step in on an exceptional basis to clear sites where that waste presents an untenable risk to the public and the environment,” as it announced it would in relation to the Kidlington-Cherwell site in December 2025 (see case study in section 5). This included setting out criteria for determining sites to which the policy would apply, under the themes of operational factors, environmental risk and community impact. Consequently, Defra pledged a funding increase for the Environment Agency of £45 million over the three financial years from 2026-27, in addition to a previously announced increase of £5.3 million for 2025-26. These measures also included involving HMRC in checking waste businesses’ tax records and implementing Labour’s 2024 manifesto pledge to force waste criminals to clean streets or parks for up to 20 hours.

²⁶Newcastle City Council, Fly-tipping

²⁶National Fly-tipping Prevention Group

²⁷Environment Agency, Joint Unit for Waste Crime (JUWC): end of year report 2024 to 2025, 29.07.25

²⁸House of Commons Hansard, River Cherwell: Clearing Illegal Waste, 06.01.26

²⁹Home Office, From local to national: a new model for policing, 26.02.26

³⁰Defra, Waste Crime Action Plan, 20.03.26

Presented as “forc[ing] fly-tippers and vandals to clean up their mess,” this last suggestion succeeded in attracting headlines, but given that the proposed mechanism involves issuing conditional cautions allowing offenders to avoid prosecution by complying with a community service condition, in some cases it may represent a less severe penalty than might otherwise have been imposed.

It could only apply to low-level offenders because it would not be a satisfactory alternative to prosecutions of organised criminal gang members responsible for serious incidents. Community service is already a sentencing option in waste crime cases although its uptake in England has been low, at only 22 in 2022-23 and 37 in 2024-25.

Concurrently with the government announcement, the Environment Agency published its own set of ten pledges:

1. Faster intelligence handling and a more consistent response.
2. Earlier intervention on larger sites.
3. A new unit to improve national understanding of waste crime.
4. Greater transparency to engage communities.
5. Naming operators involved in illegal activity.
6. Involvement in waste crime will put permits at risk.
7. Expanding partnership working nationally and locally.
8. Identifying sites at risk of waste dumping.
9. Acting on persistent poor operator performance.
10. Closing loopholes and tightening controls.³¹

Several days before the launch of the Action Plan the government announced it was considering granting the Environment Agency police powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, allowing for earlier and more effective investigation.³² The previous month, it had also announced new guidance to local authorities on making use of powers to identify, seize and dispose of vehicles used in fly-tipping offences.³³

Regardless of the merits of the government’s and its bodies’ proposals, the extent of this recent policy activity demonstrates the political salience of the issue.

Helping sustain that impetus outside government is an inquiry on Waste Crime by the House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee, still ongoing at the time of writing.³⁴ In October 2025 it wrote to the government with some interim policy recommendations, calling for a comprehensive, independent “root and branch” review of the entire system from prevention and reporting through to enforcement and prosecution. The review, it argued, should examine co-ordination between key bodies and learn lessons from major illegal dumping cases, concluding by May 2027.

Beyond this proposed review it urged the government to introduce clear interim targets and metrics, streamline public reporting through a single national portal, and strengthen collaboration between agencies, particularly at local level, to improve intelligence sharing and enforcement. The report highlighted the need for increased resources and flexibility for the Environment Agency, including sustained funding and the introduction of a waste crime levy, alongside a review of Treasury rules that limit enforcement activity. It also advocated assessing landfill tax reform for unintended consequences, progressing regulatory reforms by April 2026, and delivering a robust digital waste tracking system.³⁵

The Secretary of State, Emma Reynolds MP, wrote in response that the government preferred to prioritise existing reforms rather than conduct a new review, and to enhance public reporting through existing channels instead of creating a single new system. She highlighted increased funding for the Environment Agency and ongoing efforts to strengthen enforcement and partnership working, including through the Joint Unit for Waste Crime. She said her Department was exploring technological solutions and developing new metrics to improve reporting. She reiterated existing commitments to regulatory reform and digital waste tracking.³⁶

The Chair of the Committee, Baroness Sheehan, responded to the Secretary of State through the *Daily Telegraph* that her refusal to conduct a full review or explore a single route for reporting waste offences was “complacent” and risked giving “succour to the organised criminal gangs who are profiteering from waste crime and inflicting misery on impacted communities across the country whilst damaging precious environments.”³⁷

Furthermore, in a debate on the Kidlington-Cherwell incident on 30 March 2026, the Waste Minister, Mary Creagh MP, effectively conceded that reporting and governance are a muddle. She said:

“One of the things that I am very interested in exploring is what the playbook is. The Hon. Member for Bicester and Woodstock asked who such things should be reported to, and the problem is that if that is not clear, people do nothing. The most important thing when any crime is being carried out, wherever it is happening – whether that is on the Tube or wherever we see things happening – is for us as citizens to do something. That might be reporting it to the council, the local police or the Environment Agency, whose hotline is 0800 807060...

“The playbook is important. Once something has been reported, what does the local authority, the police or the EA do? What is the definition of “major site”? ...What is the playbook, what are the definitions and where do national agencies step in?”³⁸

If even the Minister responsible for waste policy sees a lack of clarity, it is hardly surprising that members of the public, farmers and landowners are unsure where to turn.

Recommendation 3

Introduce a single national reporting point for all incidents waste crime, with those receiving reports trained to collect relevant details and hand the case over to the appropriate authority. While a range of options exists, the police non-emergency number, 101, is already widely recognised and trusted and would seem the most obvious solution.

Recommendation 4

Where waste crime is witnessed in progress, calls to 999 would be most appropriate and should be responded to by police regardless of whether the authority ultimately leading the investigation will be a local authority or the Environment Agency. Call handlers should be trained to gather similar basic information to those handling non-emergency cases, with appropriate routes for passing it on understood.



³²Defra, Police-style powers handed to environment officers as part of plans to bring down waste criminals, 15.03.26

³³Defra, Councils urged to crush more fly-tippers' vehicles, 25.02.26

³⁴Environment and Climate Change Committee, Waste Crime ³⁵Environment and Climate Change Committee, Policy Letter to SoS for Defra on waste crime, 28.10.25

³⁵Environment and Climate Change Committee, Policy Letter to SoS for Defra on waste crime, 28.10.25

³⁶Environment and Climate Change Committee, Letter from SoS for Defra on waste crime, 09.12.25

³⁷The Telegraph, Labour accused of complacency over illegal waste dump, 10.12.25

³⁸House of Commons Hansard, River Cherwell: Clearing Illegal Waste, 06.01.26

5. OFFENDER PROFILES

Just as the scale of waste crime varies widely between incidents, so do the characteristics of offenders and the patterns of their conduct. This variety demonstrates exactly why the policy response to fly-tipping must be multi-faceted, with measures taken to prevent and penalise all kinds of offence. Those at the smaller scale may not offend at all if offered a viable, legitimate alternative. Organised gangs may be disrupted by targeting all those associated with vehicles used in offences. Established waste disposal firms may be deterred from engaging in intermittent illegality if their directors were prevented from using limited liability protections as a shield against legal sanction.

Small-scale fly-tippers

These range from individuals dumping personal household waste (most often seen in urban areas) to rogue 'man and van' operators and tradespeople dumping waste generated through home or business renovations. The likeliest deterrents to the use of legitimate waste disposal facilities are their cost and availability, which fall under the responsibility of local authorities. These factors also affect small-scale business offenders, who may additionally be seeking to avoid landfill taxes, other fees and the requirement for a waste carrier licence.

Organised criminal gangs

These fall at the opposite end of the spectrum and are the parties responsible for the largest and worst fly-tipping incidents. They include a variety of offenders operating in a range of capacities, from the controllers of the enterprises to the drivers of the tipper lorries that dump waste. Waste offences can also be linked to other crimes, such as the theft of vehicles used in illegal dumping.

CASE STUDY: Ash Wood, Bletchington, Oxfordshire

This registered Local Wildlife Site³⁹ was reported on 11 January 2026 to have been the scene of a recent illegal dump that included "flooring, Eurohome-branded fixtures, wallpaper, and a number of vintage wall tiles with floral designs." Cherwell District Council reported that the dump was of transit van size, and that the nature of the waste strongly suggested it to have originated from "a rogue contractor working on a property renovation".⁴⁰

The waste industry estimates that 35% of waste crime is committed by organised criminal groups.⁴¹



³⁹Oxfordshire County Council, Designated sites and BAP species and habitat in Oxfordshire by District
⁴⁰Cherwell District Council, Appeal for information over woodland fly-tip, 15.01.26
⁴¹Environment Agency, National waste crime survey 2025, 23.07.25

Customers of illegal waste carriers

Both householders and businesses are under a legal duty of care to ensure that they transfer waste only to those authorised to receive it. Practically, this would involve looking up the contractor on Defra's 'Register of Waste Carriers, Brokers and Dealers' database⁴⁵ to ascertain that it has a relevant, valid and current registration. The intention behind these regulations (covered in more detail in sections 4 and 7) is to ensure that waste will be disposed of responsibly, but this is not the only possible outcome of following them. When waste is fly-tipped by anyone other than the household or business that generated it, there are two possibilities. Either there was a breach of the duty of care and the waste was transferred to an unregistered operator, or the waste was transferred to a registered operator who disposed of it illegally anyway.

Colluding landowners:

Not all landowners on whose land waste is illegally dumped are innocent victims. In a minority of cases, land is acquired for ostensibly legitimate purposes, only to be used as an illegal dumping site with the full knowledge of the new landowner. This may be an individual or a rogue company operating integrally to an organised criminal gang.

A recent NRCN report found fly-tipping and waste crime are increasingly carried out by organised crime groups. It links waste crime to wider offending including money laundering, drug trafficking, and acquisitive crime, and argues that weak enforcement and lower penalties make rural areas attractive for illegal dumping.⁴⁴



CASE STUDY: Kidlington, Oxfordshire

This highly publicised case involved a 150-metre-long dump abutting the River Cherwell and the A34 near Kidlington. The Environment Agency stated that it first attended the site on 2 July 2025; it then issued a cease-and-desist order against the landowner and sought a court order to close the field. According to the constituency MP, Calum Miller, speaking in a subsequent parliamentary debate on 6 January 2026, initial reports to the Environment Agency had been made by local anglers, farmers and residents – not by the landowner – and dumping still continued throughout the summer. He said the Environment Agency had spent most of the time between 2 July and 15 October trying to establish who the landowner was, and that this work subsequently led to the first arrest in the case.⁴³

⁴²BBC News, River close to engulfing waste mountain, MP warns, 17.11.25

⁴³House of Commons Hansard, River Cherwell: Clearing Illegal Waste, 06.01.26

⁴⁴NRCN, Rural Crime: Serious, Organised and International, 02.24

⁴⁵Defra, Register of Waste Carriers, Brokers and Dealers

Marginally Legitimate waste processors

This category includes waste management companies whose business includes some legitimate and some illegitimate practices, the most famous fictional example (heavily inspired by true events in parts of the USA) being the Sopranos. It may account for some of the cases of waste being transferred to a registered operator but nevertheless fly-tipped; it also accounts for ostensibly legitimate, registered dumps whose operators flout site conditions relating to environmental impacts or the types of waste that may be deposited.

Sir James Bevan, the former chief executive of the UK's Environment Agency (EA), has described waste crime as "the new narcotics". First making the comparison in 2016, he argued that waste crime had become a high-reward, low-risk activity for organised crime groups, as the illegal drug trade was in the 1980s.

CASE STUDY: Walley's Quarry, Silverdale, Staffordshire

This landfill site was closed by the Environment Agency (EA) in November 2024 following years of complaints from local residents about hydrogen sulphide odours, which some said had affected their health. The operator, Walleys Quarry Ltd., went into liquidation in February 2025, three months after the closure notice. It owed more than £3 million including legal fees, unpaid business rates and a £132,097 settlement owed to Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council following an abatement notice.⁴⁶ Walleys Quarry Ltd. had operated as a subsidiary of Red Industries Holdings Ltd., a multi-site waste management company that continues to operate across the country.⁴⁷ Companies House data indicate that at the time of its liquidation Walleys Quarry Ltd. had two named directors,⁴⁸ each of whom remains listed as an active director of Red Industries Ltd.⁴⁹



Recommendation 5

Introduce a national policy framework for local authority waste disposal sites, establishing minimum standards of accessibility and pricing aimed at raising those of the worse-performing councils. Require annual reporting of identified accessibility metrics and impose funding penalties for compliance failures.

Recommendation 6

In addition to new measures under the Crime and Policing Act 2026 to add penalty points to fly tippers' driving licences as discussed in part 4, introduce strict liability offences of being the registered owner of any vehicle proven to be associated with a fly-tipping incident or for being the driver of a vehicle apprehended in the act. This will prevent such owners and drivers from benefitting from excuses that they had no knowledge of the offence, they were ignorant about the legality of their activities or they were simply following instructions.

Recommendation 7

Review companies law to determine whether limited liability protections are being abused by rogue operators to form subsidiaries of otherwise legitimate companies that act unlawfully, are penalised and then enter liquidation without any attachment of penalties to the parent company or its directors. Consider reforming companies law so that debts arising from penalties levied against firms for waste violations cannot be limited by law and/or are attached automatically to any parent company.

⁴⁶BBC News, 'Closed landfill owner 'still owes council £132k', 13.03.25

⁴⁷Red Industries

⁴⁸Companies House, 'WALLEYS QUARRY LTD, People

⁴⁹Companies House, 'RED INDUSTRIES HOLDINGS LTD, People

6. IMPACT ON VICTIMS

In 2022, a research team headed by Ray Purdy was commissioned by the then-government to conduct a landmark review of the causes and consequences of fly-tipping, *Flytipping: Drivers, Deterrents and Impacts*. Their report comprehensively catalogues the multi-faceted harms caused by fly-tipping and is recommended as extensive supplementary reading. Leaning on, without entirely rehearsing, the detailed evidence the paper collates, the victims – both concrete and abstract – of waste crime offences can be categorised and the harms they suffer exposed. The impact on landowners supports a recent political attempt to shift the burden of recovering from waste offences from private citizens and businesses to local authorities that are better equipped to deal with them.

The environment

Fly-tipping causes a range of environmental harms, particularly through the illegal disposal of hazardous materials such as chemicals, oils and asbestos, which can pollute land and threaten human health. It also poses serious risks to water environments, either through direct dumping into waterways or nearby contamination, potentially affecting drinking water supplies and increasing flood risk by obstructing channels. Wildlife and livestock are vulnerable to injury, poisoning or death from ingesting or encountering waste. Additionally, the dumping of green waste can introduce non-native species, disrupting ecosystems and biodiversity. Finally, fly-tipping diverts waste from legitimate disposal systems, undermining recycling efforts and the circular economy, with materials often lost to landfill, illegal burning or export.

Communities

Fly-tipping harms communities by reducing quality of life and contributing to perceptions of neglect and decline. As a form of anti-social behaviour, it causes frustration among residents and degrades local environments through unpleasant sights, smells and the attraction of vermin. It can also create safety hazards, for example when dumped items obstruct roads or public spaces. Commonly reported concerns include pollution, reduced recycling rates and public funds being diverted from other services to clean up waste. Fly-tipping may also deter people from moving into affected areas and lower property values. In some cases, access to community spaces is restricted due to hazardous waste, further limiting public enjoyment of local environments.

Landowners

Fly-tipping imposes substantial and often underreported financial burdens on the overwhelming majority of landowners who have no involvement in the offence, particularly since they must bear the full cost of clearing and legally disposing of waste left on their property. Incidents can be frequent and expensive, with individual clear-ups often costing hundreds or thousands of pounds, particularly where hazardous materials or waste dumped in difficult locations require specialist removal. These costs are compounded by lost staff time, administrative effort in reporting incidents and the diversion of resources away from core business or charitable activities. Landowners may also face landfill tax despite being victims of the crime, adding to the perception of unfairness; the government itself admitted in response to a recent parliamentary question that it has made no assessment of the impact of landfill tax on fly-tipping, nor compared the revenue it generates with costs associated with illegally dumped waste.⁵¹ In response, many invest in preventative measures such as fencing, gates and surveillance, which bring further ongoing costs and operational challenges without always deterring repeat offences.

⁵⁰Purdy et al., *Fly-tipping: Drivers, Deterrents and Impacts*, 03.22
⁵¹UK Parliament, *Fly-tipping and Landfill Tax (UIN 126940)*, Answered 16.04.26

The public purse

As outlined above, Defra's annual fly-tipping statistics indicate only local authority clearing costs of incidents of 'tipper lorry load' size or larger, so the quoted cost of £19.3 million in 2024-25 represents but a fraction of the overall cost to the public purse. Fly-tipping creates significant direct costs by reducing tax revenues and increasing government spending. Those who illegally dump waste avoid landfill tax. Estimates suggest tens of millions of pounds are lost annually in England alone: potentially far more when unreported incidents and private land are considered. At the same time, local authorities face substantial costs for clearing waste, investigating incidents and enforcing regulations, with overall public sector costs reaching tens of millions each year. Clean-up operations, particularly for large or hazardous sites, can be extremely expensive, sometimes reaching hundreds of thousands or even millions per site. Additional spending on enforcement staff, legal action and preventative measures further strains public budgets, diverting resources away from essential services.

The broader economy

Fly-tipping imposes significant and growing costs on the wider economy, driven by illegal landfill tax evasion and undermining the economic viability of proper waste disposal channels. Purdy et al. quote a report from the Environmental Services Association, published in 2021, which estimated the total economic cost of fly-tipping in 2018-19 at £391.9 million. The private sector bore by far the highest burden at £330.9 million, primarily in clean-up costs, alongside impacts on public services and broader society. However, the true scale is likely much higher due to widespread underreporting, particularly on private land. This obscures the full economic impact and may encourage further non-compliant disposal by victims, such as burning or burying waste, compounding both financial losses and environmental damage.

Recommendation 8

Implement measures passed by the House of Lords during debates on the Crime and Policing Act 2026 (as discussed in section 4) to transfer responsibility for clearing private land of illegally fly-tipped waste and pursuing offenders for cost recovery from landowners to local authorities, except in cases where the landowner is found to have colluded in the offence.



7. POLICY AND ENFORCEMENT FAILURES

The 2022 report led by Ray Purdy features a remarkably comprehensive assessment of the enforcement landscape, demonstrating systemic weaknesses of poor coordination, weak regulation, limited oversight and ineffective use of existing powers. Their work supports the conclusion that enforcement tools exist on paper but are not being applied robustly or coherently, resulting in ineffective deterrence and persistent illegality. In combination with this report's earlier findings, their work underpins our final recommendations.

Fragmented and weak strategic oversight

There is no coherent national enforcement strategy, leading to inconsistent approaches across local authorities. Enforcement responsibilities are dispersed across multiple agencies as discussed in section 4, with no single body clearly accountable. Both local authorities and the Environment Agency have powers but not duties to enforce, weakening the overall enforcement impetus. Stakeholders highlight a lack of coordination, national leadership and prioritisation. Some call for a national strategy or central "tsar" to align enforcement efforts.

Local authority enforcement capacity and variation

Enforcement activity varies significantly between local authorities, contributing to a postcode lottery in the intensity and effectiveness of enforcement. Many invest resources in local strategies, but most report limited or no impact on reducing fly-tipping, suggesting their approaches to enforcement are not consistently effective. Informal knowledge-sharing between authorities is common, but dissemination of the best enforcement techniques is not systematic.

Major weaknesses in the waste carrier regulatory system

The carrier, broker, and dealer system, central to enforcement, is widely seen as ineffective. There is evidence of a very large unregistered sector (estimated at over 200,000 operators in England), which undermines enforcement since many offenders are operating outside the visibility of regulators. Entry controls have been minimal; registration involves low fees and limited vetting, allowing easy access to dubious operators. There has been little monitoring of compliance and, despite thousands of enforcement actions annually, virtually no registrations have been revoked.

Lack of data sharing and institutional co-ordination

Weak information flows between local authorities and the Environment Agency hinder enforcement. Enforcement outcomes including prosecutions are rarely fed back into regulatory systems, meaning offenders can continue to operate. Split responsibilities create "blind spots", particularly around organised waste crime networks.

Lack of data sharing and institutional co-ordination

Weak information flows between local authorities and the Environment Agency hinder enforcement. Enforcement outcomes including prosecutions are rarely fed back into regulatory systems, meaning offenders can continue to operate. Split responsibilities create "blind spots", particularly around organised waste crime networks.

Enforcement challenges in practice

The system struggles to address organised and networked offenders, especially in the "man and van" sector. Online advertising platforms facilitate illegal operators, with minimal checks on registration status. Enforcement remains largely reactive, focusing on incidents after they occur rather than prevention or disruption.

Weaknesses in supporting mechanisms (Duty of Care & Register)

The duty of care regime relies heavily on public compliance, but awareness is low. The online register is unreliable and hard to use, limiting its value as an enforcement tool or a resource for customers. Poor data quality and inconsistent naming make it difficult to verify legitimate operators, undermining both compliance and enforcement.⁵²



POLICY AND ENFORCEMENT FAILURES

Information from the National Rural Crime Unit adds further weight to the suggestion that ineffective data sharing is a major barrier to enforcement, driven largely by uncertainty and inconsistency around Information Sharing Agreements. Police, local authorities, prosecutors and the Environment Agency often hesitate to exchange intelligence because existing agreements are unclear, outdated or not in place, and without stronger national direction this is unlikely to improve. Although template agreements have been created, they are not consistently adopted or embedded, and there is no coordinated system to ensure agreements are current, comprehensive and trusted. This undermines partnership working, which is essential to tackling fly-tipping and wider rural crime. At the same time, valuable tools such as national police databases, vehicle tracking systems and forensic techniques could significantly strengthen enforcement by making it easier to identify suspects and vehicles, but their use is dependent on effective data-sharing frameworks.

To test the government's thinking on this issue, the Countryside Alliance recently prompted a written question to be tabled in the House of Lords, asking "what assessment they have made of any barriers to information sharing in relation to instances of fly-tipping between (1) local authorities, (2) the police, and (3) the Environment Agency, that may arise from current data protection legislation." The Minister, Baroness Hayman of Ullock, replied that the government was not aware of any such barriers.⁵³ However, the government's subsequent Waste Crime Action Plan identified new data sharing agreements struck between the Environment Agency, HM Land Registry and HMRC as achievements worthy of mention.

Recommendation 9

Pursue previously-announced reforms to the regulation of waste carriers, brokers and dealers, announced as moving from a light-touch registration system into the environmental permitting regime,⁵⁴ to ensure that registered waste carriers can genuinely be trusted not to dispose of waste illegally. Rigorously scrutinise the outcomes of the new legislation.

Recommendation 11

Ensure that registered waste carriers that do go on to commit serious violations are de-registered and that the directors of such companies are, as individuals and in addition to criminal penalties, barred from being persons of significant control over any other registered waste carrier for a period measured in multiples of years.

Recommendation 10

Follow through with a pledge to require the display of waste carrier registration numbers on advertisements and in vehicles, which was made by the Minister during the Kidlington-Cherwell debate but did not appear in the Waste Crime Action Plan. In addition, require the number to be printed on paper or electronic contracts and invoices.

Recommendation 12

Review the public Register of Waste Carriers, Brokers and Dealers for useability by busy, non-expert householders and businesspeople to determine whether improvements to the user interface and/or user experience could make the process of checking a registration could made easier and more frictionless.

⁵³UK Parliament, Fly-tipping: Information Sharing (UIN HL14688), Answered 05.03.25
⁵⁴Defra, Waste Crime Action Plan, 20.03.26

Recommendation 13

Once outcomes from Recommendation 12 have been implemented, institute a public 'relaunch' campaign to raise awareness of the household and business duties of care and how to comply with them by checking the Register before making a contract involving waste handling. Engage participation by online advertising platforms, such as Checktrade, that are commonly used when seeking a contractor.

Recommendation 14

Consider what further steps may be necessary to promote investigatory and enforcement action by local authorities, particularly in relation to incidents of dumping on private land. Options could include published league tables, funding incentives, enhanced national guidance and imposing a legal duty to investigate incidents within their geographical responsibility. Incorporate these measures in statutory guidance issued to local authorities as provided for by the Crime and Policing Act 2026.

Recommendation 15

Review data protection legislation to determine whether there are legal barriers to the sharing of any data, including personal data, between public bodies for the purpose of enforcing waste crime. If such barriers exist, reform legislation to remove them. If it is determined that there is already a lawful basis for data sharing (presumably law enforcement processing under Part 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018⁵⁵), instruct local authority and other public officials that they must cease raising spurious objections to the legitimate sharing of data for enforcement purposes.

Recommendation 16

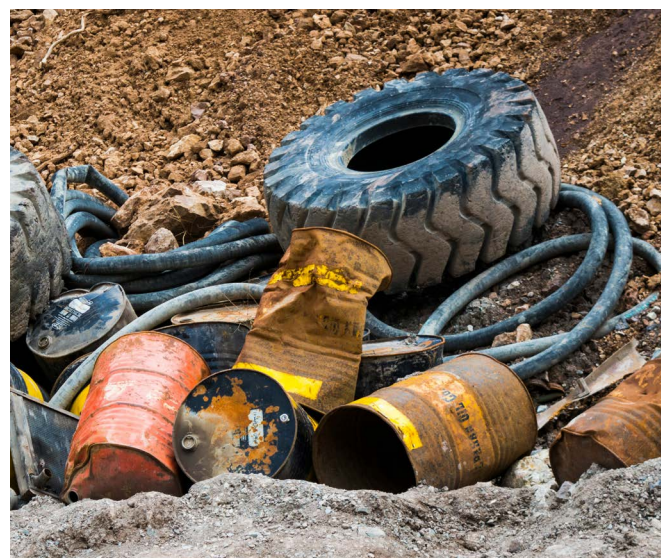
Consider the merits of transferring responsibility for the investigation and prosecution of waste crime incidents above a given severity threshold to the National Police Service.

Recommendation 17

Require the mutual embedding of liaison officers between the National Police Service and the Environment Agency. In the event Recommendation 16 is adopted the Environment Agency would presumably maintain responsibility for monitoring environmental impacts of illegal waste sites and overseeing clean-up activity; if it is not adopted this will still be necessary to co-ordinate the investigation of organised criminal gangs.

Recommendation 18

Accomplish those of the foregoing recommendations that require primary legislation through a combined Waste Crime (Prevention) Act.



Future Countryside

Future Countryside has established itself as the leading forum for fresh thinking on rural policy. It brings together a unique coalition united by a simple idea - that the countryside is not a problem to be managed, but a powerful national asset to be championed. Future Countryside is powered by the Countryside Alliance.

E: info@futurecountryside.org

W: futurecountryside.org



The National Rural Crime Network champions a better understanding of crime in rural areas, and new, effective ways to help to keep rural communities safe – and make them feel safer too. Founded in 2014, the National Rural Crime Network (NRCN) is a membership organisation. Our members include Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Police and Crime Commissioners, from across the political spectrum, as well as rural campaigners, academic experts and commercial partners.

W: nationalruralcrimenetwork.net

E: info@nationalruralcrimenetwork.net



E: info@countryside-alliance.org

W: www.countryside-alliance.org

China Works
Black Prince Road
London SE1 7SJ

