# Traders’ year-long concerns confirmed as cannabis farm found in charred Norwich pub



The discovery of a cannabis farm within a charred building in Norwich has raised significant concerns among local traders who have long suspected the presence of illegal drug activity in the area. Following a fire at the former Cat and Fiddle pub on Magdalen Street, police uncovered 40 cannabis plants along with hydroponics equipment. The blaze, reported around 2.45 pm on June 5, drew firefighters who managed to extinguish the flames and allow investigators access to the site. Remarkably, no injuries were reported, though the ongoing police investigation has yet to result in any arrests.

Local business owners expressed relief, albeit mixed with frustration, as they noted a distinct smell of cannabis had been prevalent in the neighbourhood prior to the fire. Kelvin Mitchell, who runs a nearby second-hand store, shared his observations with reporters, stating, “We could smell it but didn’t know where it was coming from.” Another nearby shopkeeper echoed this sentiment, claiming the cannabis odour had been familiar for "maybe a year." These claims reflect a growing awareness of drug-related issues in the area, a sentiment shared by many of those operating businesses on the street.

Moreover, the fire and subsequent police activities have significantly disrupted business in the area. One anonymous trader remarked on the intensity of the blaze, describing it as "fierce" and lamenting the impact such incidents have on foot traffic: “When the buses don’t come down here, there’s no people.” The trader voiced that issues like the recent closure of Anglia Square and disturbances like the fire are merely "another nail in the coffin" for local commerce.

The problems presented by illegal cannabis operations are not new to Norwich. In 2021, Norwich police discovered around 200 cannabis plants in a former pub in Wisbech, indicating that such establishments are increasingly being repurposed for drug production. Moreover, the area has seen various significant drug busts over the years, highlighting a troubling trend in both illegal cultivation and the associated dangers. For instance, in September 2021, police uncovered a cannabis factory worth £150,000 in the city, prompted by neighbour reports of a constant cannabis smell.

Last year, an alarming instance involved the arrest of two men after officers seized over 250 plants in a separate operation. That event drew attention to the confrontational stance taken by law enforcement, with authorities affirming their commitment to combat drug-related activities.

The ongoing successes of law enforcement in curtailing cannabis cultivation are often preceded by community reports of suspicious activity or distinctive smells. These discoveries underscore a broader narrative about drug culture in urban spaces and its implications for local economies and public safety. Police continue to encourage public vigilance, urging anyone with information about such activities to come forward, and emphasising that, despite the challenges, they remain committed to addressing these issues.

As the investigation into this recent fire and its connection to drug cultivation continues, the implications for local commerce and public safety in Norwich remain a concern for both residents and law enforcement alike.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25222494.traders-smelt-cannabis-year-city-fire/?ref=rss), [[4]](https://www.fenlandcitizen.co.uk/news/former-pub-was-being-used-as-cannabis-factory-9201402/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25222494.traders-smelt-cannabis-year-city-fire/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-23364017), [[5]](https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/23933359.neighbours-strong-smell-norwich-cannabis-factory/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/crime/21114956.two-arrested-police-find-250-cannabis-plants-norwich-home/), [[6]](https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/23757746.170-cannabis-plants-found-bluebell-road-norwich/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25222494.traders-smelt-cannabis-year-city-fire/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-23364017> - In 2013, a British Gas worker discovered a cannabis farm worth £60,000 in Norwich after noticing 'orange lights' through the windows. The house contained about 400 plants, heated by lamps powered by bypassed electricity. No arrests were made, and the plants were seized by Norfolk police. The gas company emphasized its strong track record in detecting energy theft and working with authorities.
3. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/crime/21114956.two-arrested-police-find-250-cannabis-plants-norwich-home/> - In May 2022, Norwich police arrested two men, aged 33 and 39, after discovering a cannabis factory with over 250 plants in Kingsley Road. The officers seized 258 plants, drug paraphernalia, and a significant amount of cash. The men were released on bail while investigations continued. PC Ngaire Harrington emphasized that illegal drug activity would not be tolerated in the community.
4. <https://www.fenlandcitizen.co.uk/news/former-pub-was-being-used-as-cannabis-factory-9201402/> - In May 2021, police found approximately 200 cannabis plants worth over £100,000 in the former Five Bells pub in Wisbech, Norfolk. The discovery was made after a call from the UK Power Network. No arrests were made, and investigations were ongoing. The police urged the public to report any information about drug dealing or production.
5. <https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/23933359.neighbours-strong-smell-norwich-cannabis-factory/> - In September 2021, a £150,000 cannabis factory was discovered in Cranworth Gardens, Norwich. Neighbours reported a strong smell of cannabis, leading police to uncover the facility with over 100 plants in various growth stages. Andi Kodra, 22, was found asleep at the address during the raid and was jailed for 30 weeks after admitting to cannabis production.
6. <https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/23757746.170-cannabis-plants-found-bluebell-road-norwich/> - In August 2023, Norwich police discovered around 170 cannabis plants, estimated to be worth £170,000, along with hydroponics equipment in a property on Bluebell Road. No arrests were made, and inquiries were ongoing. The police urged the public to report any information about drug-related activities.
7. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-66852615> - In July 2023, a stray dog led police to a garden in Framingham Earl, near Norwich, where they found 30 cannabis plants. A man in his 50s was arrested on suspicion of producing a controlled class B drug and possession with intent to supply. The police emphasized the dangers of such cannabis grows to the community, including the risk of fire and associated criminal activities.