# Norfolk’s ‘Wild West’ sees surge in fly tipping and illegal waste burning



In Norfolk, a region encompassing Walton Highway, the Walpoles, and Terrington St Clement, has emerged as a notable hotspot for waste crimes such as fly tipping and illegal waste burning. These alarming trends have been highlighted in a recent heat map released by the Environment Agency, revealing that the region receives an average of 16 reports per week. This is part of a larger issue in East Anglia, where over the past two years, a staggering 1,678 incidents have been reported, with an estimated 34,000 tonnes of waste being unlawfully managed annually. Despite these figures, the Environment Agency has not provided specific numbers for Norfolk alone, leaving local authorities and residents keen for more detailed insights.

Julian Kirk, a Reform county councillor representing the affected area, has described Walton Highway as Norfolk's "Wild West" due to the high levels of waste crime. Although Norfolk Police have stated that these concerns are not reflected in their crime statistics, the Environment Agency's findings suggest that the councillor’s concerns might hold some merit. Areas such as the A148 have been identified as frequent dumping grounds, where West Norfolk Council recently discovered significant amounts of rubbish discarded in laybys.

The geography of the area plays a critical role in the escalation of these incidents. The sparse population and the open fen landscape create numerous secluded spots for potential offenders to dump waste without the fear of being caught. Additionally, the proximity of Walton Highway to larger towns like King's Lynn and Wisbech, along with key transport links on the A47 and A17, further enhances its appeal to "waste cowboys."

The impact of fly tipping extends beyond aesthetics; it has significant economic implications, costing the UK around £1 billion annually. A report reveals that just 25% of such incidents are officially recorded, highlighting a pervasive issue of underreporting across the region. Councils, such as Fenland District Council, have made efforts to recover illegally dumped waste, with recent figures indicating that 15 tonnes were cleaned up from roads leading to the A47.

However, responses to rising fly tipping incidents vary across local authorities. Norwich, for instance, has reported a disturbing increase in illegal waste dumping, with 5,297 cases in the 2022-23 period, up from 4,805 the previous year. The city’s ‘Love Norwich’ campaign is ongoing, aiming to tackle this growing concern, and received an additional £100,000 to boost its operations. New measures include the installation of high-quality CCTV cameras at known fly-tipping hotspots, leading to investigations and subsequent penalties imposed on offenders.

Moreover, the government is taking a multifaceted approach to combat these environmental crimes. The recent introduction of the "Plan for Change" aims to bear down on waste offenders with increased penalties, including the authority for councils to seize and crush vehicles used in illegal dumping. Circular economy minister Mary Creagh stated that the government is committed to eradicating organised crime that profits from waste dumping, reflecting a heightened focus on environmental protections.

As local councils and government bodies battle against the rise of waste crimes, it remains vital for communities to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities. Citizens are encouraged to utilise resources such as the Environment Agency’s hotline to contribute to the fight against this environmental challenge.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25200229.norfolks-wild-west-revealed-waste-crime-hotspot/?ref=rss)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25200229.norfolks-wild-west-revealed-waste-crime-hotspot/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/23288953.norfolk-scale-fly-tipping-county-revealed/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25200229.norfolks-wild-west-revealed-waste-crime-hotspot/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://www.suffolklive.com/news/suffolk-news/lowestoft-fly-tipping-crisis-facing-8683958), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-68009718)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/crime/22641714.tyre-fly-tipping-reported-across-north-norfolk/), [[4]](https://www.norwich.gov.uk/news/article/741/norwich_city_council_deploys_247_cctv_cameras_at_fly-tipping_hot_spots)
* Paragraph 5 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-68009718), [[3]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/23288953.norfolk-scale-fly-tipping-county-revealed/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25200229.norfolks-wild-west-revealed-waste-crime-hotspot/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://www.suffolklive.com/news/suffolk-news/lowestoft-fly-tipping-crisis-facing-8683958)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25200229.norfolks-wild-west-revealed-waste-crime-hotspot/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-68009718> - Despite a city council campaign to combat fly-tipping, Norwich experienced an increase in illegal waste dumping, with 5,297 incidents reported in 2022-23, up from 4,805 the previous year. The council's 'Love Norwich' campaign, launched in 2022, received an additional £100,000 in February to address environmental crime. Residents noted that the types of litter dumped often included items not accepted by refuse collectors, such as tins of paint and furniture, commonly found in secluded areas like alleyways and under hedges.
3. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/23288953.norfolk-scale-fly-tipping-county-revealed/> - In 2021/22, Norfolk reported over 10,000 fly-tipping incidents, with Norwich accounting for the highest number at 4,805 cases. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) data revealed a slight national decrease in fly-tipping, but Norfolk's figures remained concerning. The Country Land and Business Association (CLA) highlighted that these statistics likely underestimate the problem, as many incidents occur on private land and are not reported. The CLA emphasized the need for more effective enforcement and public education to tackle this issue.
4. <https://www.norwich.gov.uk/news/article/741/norwich_city_council_deploys_247_cctv_cameras_at_fly-tipping_hot_spots> - Norwich City Council has installed high-quality CCTV cameras at six fly-tipping hotspots: Normandie Tower, Springbank, Douro Place, Marlpit Lane, Bowers Avenue, and Heathgate. This initiative aims to deter illegal dumping and provide evidence to identify offenders. The council has issued 11 penalty notices, conducted nearly 100 investigations, and sent over 50 warning letters since 2023. The 'Love Norwich' campaign, dedicated to improving the city, continues to address environmental anti-social behaviour and enhance community facilities.
5. <https://www.suffolklive.com/news/suffolk-news/lowestoft-fly-tipping-crisis-facing-8683958> - Lowestoft, a town in Suffolk, is facing a significant fly-tipping crisis, with 1,047 incidents reported between January 1 and August 3, 2023, averaging nearly five per day. The top ten most fly-tipped streets in East Suffolk during this period were all in Lowestoft, including busy town centre roads like Denmark Road and Rotterdam Road. The total cost to East Suffolk Council for cleaning up this waste amounted to £48,563. The council is urging residents to report fly-tipping and is exploring measures to address the issue.
6. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/crime/22641714.tyre-fly-tipping-reported-across-north-norfolk/> - North Norfolk has seen a rise in tyre fly-tipping incidents, with tyres and other waste dumped in public and private areas. Notable cases include tyres left at Dick Buck's Burrow near Cromer and along Scottow Road between Scottow and Buxton. In the 2021-2022 financial year, there were 51 tyre fly-tipping incidents on public land in North Norfolk, up from 25 the previous year. The council urges residents and businesses to responsibly dispose of waste and report any fly-tipping incidents to prevent further environmental damage.
7. <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/news/appeal-to-catch-broadland-fly-tipper> - Broadland District Council is seeking information to identify a fly-tipper who dumped waste at Repton Avenue, north of Norwich, on January 24, 2024. A white Ford Transit Connect van was seen discarding items, including an air conditioning unit, with its registration plates removed. The council emphasizes that fly-tipping is a criminal offence, urging residents to report any information or CCTV footage to assist in the investigation and prevent future incidents.