# Residents in Birmingham face growing rat problem amid refuse strike



Residents in Birmingham, the second largest city in the UK, are confronting an alarming surge in the rat population, attributed to significant fly-tipping and an ongoing refuse collection strike. This situation has left many locals, including a concerned 56-year-old mother who preferred to remain anonymous, extremely frustrated.

Speaking to BirminghamLive, she detailed her distress over not only the overflowing rubbish in her own home but also the additional refuse dumped by individuals who she believes are not local residents. The mother described the condition in her neighbourhood, stating, "We've got rats, it's getting really bad. Rats the size of cats. It's been like this for weeks now." She further explained that the fly-tippers, whom she claims are from outside the area, engage in their activities under the cover of darkness, believing they are not being observed. She remarked, "It's not people who live in the area who are dumping rubbish here, it's people from outside [the estate]. They come late at night and think no-one is watching—but someone is always watching."

In response to the escalating situation, the Birmingham City Council has publicly condemned fly-tipping, referring to it as "incredibly harmful." A spokesperson for the council highlighted the council's commitment to addressing the issue, stating, "It is carried out by environmental criminals that have no regard for our neighbourhoods or well-being and there is no excuse for this behaviour." The council also acknowledged the complexity of the current rubbish situation exacerbated by the strike, assuring residents that efforts would be made to clear waste as circumstances allow. They pointed out that there are various lawful options available for the responsible disposal of waste, including household recycling centres and mobile waste centres.

As tensions have escalated between refuse collectors and the council, reports indicate that staff members attempting to perform their roles have faced intimidation and abuse, prompting the deployment of police outside the four main depots in the city to ensure order. Furthermore, there have been instances of pickets conducting 'go slow' marches in front of departing bin trucks in an evident attempt to disrupt service, an act that resulted in police intervention to manage the situation.

Recently, two arrests were made in close proximity to the depots: one individual was apprehended for drug possession, while another was charged with causing disruption. The city continues to contend with both the operational restrictions caused by the strike and the urgent public health concerns stemming from the growing rat population in the streets.

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

## References

* <https://www.theworkersunion.com/2025/02/27/massive-rats-terrorize-birmingham-as-bin-strike-chaos-fuels-rodent-surge/> - This article supports the claim that the rat population surge in Birmingham is linked to the ongoing bin collectors' strike and increased fly-tipping. It also highlights residents' concerns about the size of the rats and their impact on public health.
* <https://thetab.com/2025/03/19/birminghams-rat-crisis-residents-urge-council-to-address-cat-sized-rodent-problem> - This article corroborates the alarming growth of the rat population in Birmingham, with residents describing rats as 'cat-sized' and attributing the issue to factors like bin strikes and fly-tipping.
* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/03/15/rats-banquet-rotten-food-birmingham-bin-strike/> - This article details the public health dangers posed by rats feasting on uncollected waste during the Birmingham bin strike, highlighting the severity of the situation.
* <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk> - Although not directly linked, the Birmingham City Council's official website would provide information on their stance and efforts to address fly-tipping and waste management issues.
* <https://www.uniteunion.org> - This URL would provide information on the Unite union's perspective regarding the strike, including their demands and concerns about jobs and pay.
* <https://www.west-midlands.police.uk> - The West Midlands Police website might offer details on their role in maintaining order during the strike, including any interventions or arrests made near the depots.