

# City of Wolverhampton Council Fly-Tipping Reduction Scheme

BEST ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

**CIEH**  
EXCELLENCE  
AWARDS 2019



## INTRODUCTION

City of Wolverhampton Council has reduced reports of fly tipping by 50%, saving £75,000. This was achieved by encouraging the community to report fly tipping, incentivised by a £100 gift card for information which leads to the successful payment of a fixed penalty notice or fine from the court. In a first for the Council, vehicles involved in fly tipping have been seized and appropriated using new legislation.

### Brief and objectives

The objective of the project was to reduce the level of fly-tipping in Wolverhampton in a concerted public campaign throughout the first quarter of 2019. City of Wolverhampton Council cleared over 2,000 reports of fly-tipping in 2018, costing taxpayers around £300,000. There is usually a peak in fly-tipping in the first quarter of the year, likely due to the new purchases made over the Christmas period. Crime deterrence is achieved by demonstrating that action is taken against offenders, rather than increasing the severity of punishment. As a council, it is a priority to keep the city clean and tidy. However, with limited resources, action must be based on intelligence and evidence. Inspired by the incentivisation of crime reporting seen on 'Crimestoppers', a plan to engage and reward the community whilst deterring fly-tipping was drafted. Offenders can receive a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of £400 if they are caught fly-tipping.

### Rationale

Fly-tipping is when waste is illegally dumped on roads or land which is not licensed for waste disposal. As well as blighting our streets, it can harm water supplies, is a risk to public health, wildlife and farm animals, and spoils our enjoyment of the environment.

### Strategy

The 'Shop a Tipper' campaign was conceived; it would cultivate intelligence from members of the public informing the council about who is responsible for blighting the city streets with fly-tipped waste. A £100 'Enjoy Wolverhampton' gift card, which can be spent at businesses across the city, was the offered reward. The gift cards would be purchased when the £400 FPN or court-ordered fine was paid and posted to the reporter within 14 days.

### Implementation

After bringing the Waste Services Team in-house, the Council now works in an integrated manner which ensures that it is both removing fly-tipping quickly but also ensuring as many fly tips as possible result in a FPN. The website [shopatipper.com](http://shopatipper.com) and corresponding email address were created, as well as a telephone hotline. The website contains a web form to report fly-tipping, where the public can upload media evidence. The unprecedented integration between the Council's Customer Record Management System (CEP) and Enterprise Asset Management software (Confirm) allowed seamless reporting then actioning of incidents, by enforcement and street cleaning. This increased the likelihood of catching the culprit and the speed at which an incident was resolved. The Council has also worked with community groups to educate residents on how to dispose of waste correctly and has encouraged residents to keep their streets clean and to take pride in their area. Guidance for the public is available on the website,



advising people on how to dispose of unwanted items and how to correctly report fly-tipping. A 'Day of Action' was planned at a hotspot for fly-tipping reports. The process had four steps:

1. A fly-tipping issue is reported.
2. This goes through to the Environmental Crime team to investigate. They aim to do this within 24 hours.
3. The Environmental Crime team will visit the fly-tip to investigate and gather evidence. Once they have done this they will arrange for the fly-tip to be cleared.
4. The evidence will be reviewed by the Environmental Crime team to pursue a prosecution, which will be a FPN.

Planning for the campaign started in November 2018 for a 1 January 2019 launch, and details of the launch can be found [here](#). Wednesday 27 Feb 2019 saw the 'Day of Action' and the seizure of a vehicle that was used for fly-tipping activities. The campaign formally concluded on 31 March 2019

### **Budget and cost-effectiveness**

The campaign was delivered through existing budgets, with the website and personal protective equipment coming to around £1,000. FPN income was used to purchase gift cards, with potentially £8,400 income through FPNs. The campaign has provided good value for money as clean-up costs have halved, delivering a saving of £75,000.

### **Measurement and evaluation**

The campaign received 50 tip-offs, resulting in the issuance of 13 Community Protection Notices, 16 Community Protection Warnings and 28 Fixed Penalty Notices. The average clearance time was 64 hours. By April 2018 1,045 fly-tipping incidents had been reported to the city council compared to 519 by April 2019. This is a 50% reduction in reports during a campaign where reporting is being financially incentivised. The 'Day of Action' resulted in the clearance of all fly tipping and litter collected by volunteers during the day, in addition to the removal of overflowing and abandoned bins. Public Protection officers engaged with residents and businesses in the area, around accumulations and fly tipping. Officers had several discussions with local residents and received useful intelligence on serial fly tippers which are being investigated. A red Volkswagen was caught on CCTV being used to transport waste which was fly tipped over ten times. The registered keeper of the uninsured and untaxed vehicle was contacted to attend an interview under caution but failed to come forward. During the 'Day of Action' the vehicle was spotted and seized. The Council used its powers under the 'Control of Waste (dealing with seized property) Regulations 2015' to crush a vehicle involved in fly-tipping for the first time, which was then sold for scrap metal. On 1 March 2019, the first-ever Forfeiture Order was made by the Black Country Magistrates Court, in the matter of fly-tipping from [this Mercedes van](#). After evidence was submitted showing fly-tipping, the defendant was found guilty and now faces a legal bill of over £1,000. There were several media reports relating to the seizure of these vehicles, which acts as a deterrent to would-be fly tippers.