

Northumberland County Council – Environmental Enforcement SLA

Summary

In total **76** reports have been received for Accumulations of waste on private property this calendar year in Ashington.

Enforcement Action

After the initial request to remove the items, action has had to be taken as follows:

Community Protection Warnings

60 have been issued resulting in **35** properties being cleared. (Compared to 34 CPW issued in the rest of the County).

At the end of the period for action enforcement was moved to a notice.

Community Protection Notices

25 have been issued resulting in a further **14** properties being cleared. (Compared to 7 CPN issued in the rest of the County)

2 are currently awaiting updates.

At the end of the time period action was moved to case files.

Prosecutions

8 x Prosecutions

This means **65** properties were cleared at the tenants/owner's expense following our intervention.

Following prosecution, the Court may order the person to remove the waste by issuing a remedial order, if ignored this can lead to a further fine which has happened on 2 occasions. This however does not get the waste removed and if it remains then we must start the process again but only if fresh waste is added.

We are currently trialling default clearances where prior to court we will send a default works notice with an amount for clearance and claim the amount back at court. This can only be done under certain circumstances and conditions as the cost should not be made from the public purse.

Environmental Enforcement Officer SLA with Ashington TC

The EEO (0.5fte) is employed because of the SLA, with 3 days credited to Ashington and 2 days credited to Newbiggin.

In respect of fly-tipping, Ashington and Blyth account for 87% of incidents in the County in 2022, resulting in this being a priority. However, as you are aware the highest proportion of fly-tipping in Ashington is household waste, ranging from fridges and sofas to bagged food and general rubbish. The areas which are problematic are older housing areas with back lanes which have high walls on each side, and which provide many opportunities for the dumping of waste without detection. These are also the more deprived areas of the County

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where residents struggle to provide their own transport to dispose of their larger waste items lawfully and this compound matters.

NCC have recently engaged with residents and have provided information via a ‘Love Where You Live’ campaign to give advice regarding the lawful disposal of household waste. Continuing this message during the week.

Enforcement in the area continues. There are signs of a downtrend in reports and incidents taking effect (see figures below).

April/November 2021/22 1,370 reports

April/November 2022/23 1,069 reports a reduction of about 22%

Without the current SLA there will be only 1 FTE Officer covering Ashington and Newbiggin, therefore patrols for dog fouling and litter offences will be greatly affected as will the response to abandoned vehicles, flyposting, open to access properties and the other reports described as miscellaneous which often come their way.

The SLA can be subject to discussion and amendment depending on the requirements of ATC.

John Robertson

Principal Officer

Environmental Enforcement

Public Health Protection Unit

Housing & Public Protection Service

Northumberland County Council