

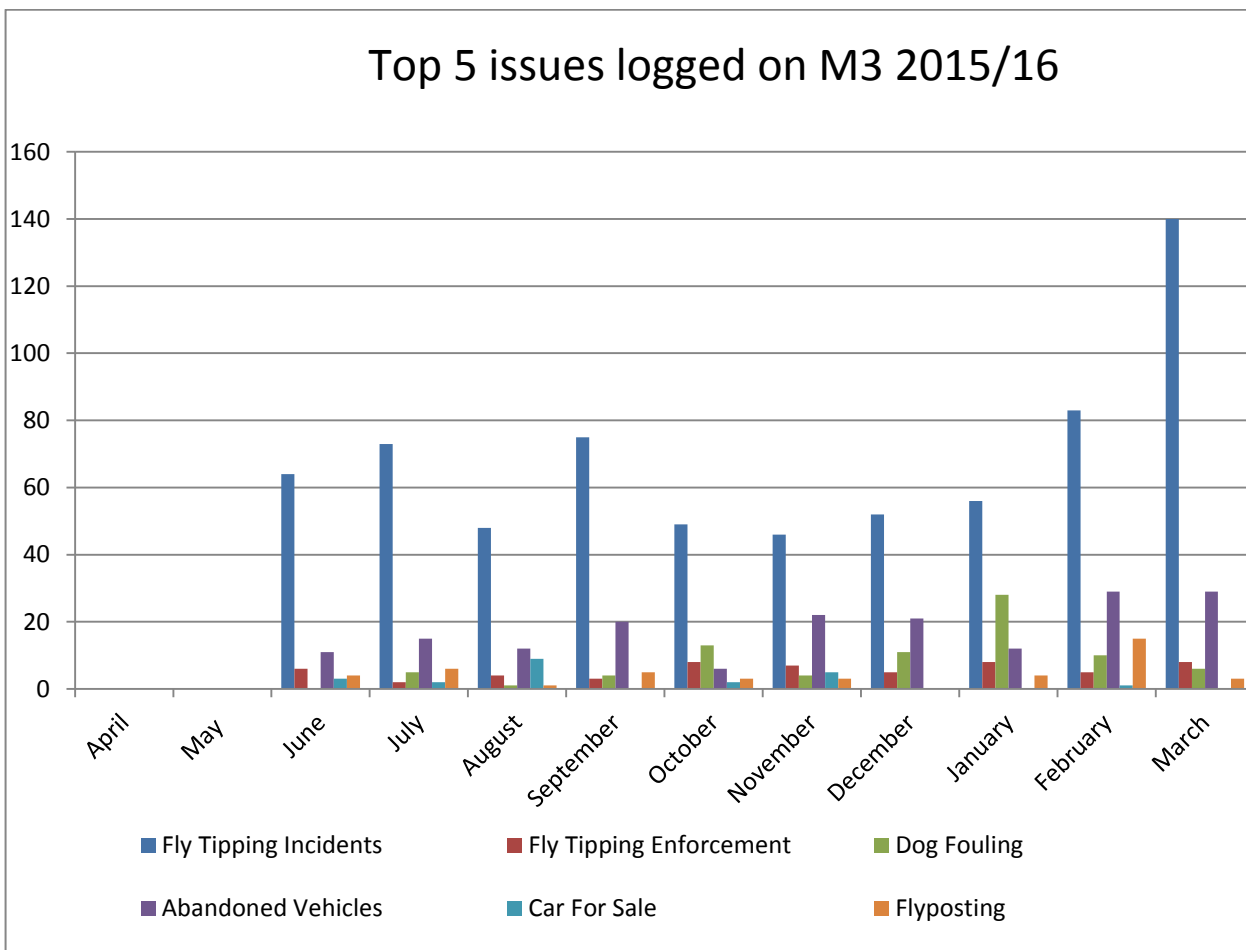
# Environmental Enforcement Summary 2015/16

## Overview

2015/16 saw Environmental Enforcement reduced to 1 dedicated Investigation Officer for Bromsgrove, who transferred from the Community Safety team to Environmental Services from June 2015. Bromsgrove also transferred across to the Redditch database system from June, which means that records of work for April and May are unfortunately not available for inclusion in this summary.

We already have a strong working relationship with the local police, and in late 2015/16 we built closer working relationships with the enforcement teams from our neighbouring Worcestershire authorities, and are looking to develop this relationship over the coming years to share experience and methods of working to increase our efficiency in tackling issues that affect us all such as commercial fly tipping and fly posting, and perpetrators that likely operate across our borders.

During the year, the main issues<sup>1</sup> logged were:



<sup>1</sup> Fly Tipping figures are split to show the total number of fly tips removed, and the numbers where potential evidence was identified for follow up by the Investigation Officer.

# Commentary

## **Fly Tipping**

The majority of fly tips occurring in Bromsgrove District are on a small commercial scale rather than residential. Mainly focused along rural lanes on the northern boundary with Birmingham, these consist of small van and truck loads of material being deposited in gateways, laybys and even in the middle of the road which then requires WCC to close the road for safety.

The majority of fly tips have no usable evidence within the waste, and so follow on action is limited unless something traceable is found, or a witness comes forward with information. Where evidence is found, the Investigation Officer will follow this up and determine the most appropriate course of action; which could include an interview under caution, warning letter, fixed penalty for breach of their Duty of Care, or court proceedings if the evidence is sufficiently strong.

The number and size of fly tips increased markedly towards the end of the year, and given that a lot of the material dumped is untraceable, and signage about the penalties has not been sufficient as a deterrent, we have explored options for the use of surveillance cameras to help gather information in our regular hotspots to support legal proceedings to penalise those responsible, and would look to push a strong communication campaign to highlight the issue and the penalties to discourage fly tipping in our area as part of any such action.

## **Dog Fouling**

Across the district as a whole, we have a relatively low volume of complaints regarding dog fouling, and those areas identified as having an issue either by public complaints or staff observations, have been targeted with educational messages in line with the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign, and 11 staff have now been trained in issuing Fixed Penalty Notices so that if they see anyone failing to clean up after their dog, they can take action as appropriate. Our Investigation Officer also carried out patrols and spoke to dog walkers in areas where multiple complaints had been received. January saw a rise in dog fouling complaints across the district, but not localised to any one area.

## **Abandoned Vehicles**

Abandoned Vehicles saw a sharp rise in reports during 2015/16, but the majority of these relate to vehicles on private land that were reported to us by BDHT. We have a duty under the Refuse Disposal and Amenity Act 1978 to remove abandoned vehicles on private land, and a contract with Worcestershire County Council to cover the costs of removing abandoned vehicles based on a fixed sum and a small contribution to the collection cost for each car collected. For 2015/16 this covered the cost of disposal and left us with a small amount as contribution to our staffing costs in dealing with Abandoned Vehicles, but if the increased rate of reporting continues, this may become an additional expense for the Council towards the end of 2016/17.

We are theoretically able to recover costs from those responsible for abandoning the vehicles under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, but as our removal costs are relatively low (£75), we have not implemented this to date as the process would require additional staff time to follow up. This can be reviewed if we experience a

continued rise in the number of abandoned vehicles, but even with DVLA information it is not always possible to identify the registered owner.

We have been receiving a large volume of requests for action from BDHT and the majority of these have subsequently been found to belong to a nearby BDHT resident. During 2016/17 we will be looking to work with BDHT to determine if they really are abandoned before passing them on to Bromsgrove District Council to deal with. Other authorities have introduced charges through their fees and charges structure for the removal of vehicles from private land specifically to encourage private landowners to take more responsibility for this issue so that only the genuine abandoned vehicles are dealt with by the Council.

### **Cars for Sale**

We are involved with the sale of cars where more than one is for sale by the same individual on the public highway, and is intended to prevent informal forecourts. The figures behind this statistic show that this was multiple vehicles for sale in a small number of locations, rather than a larger problem across the District. The majority of these instances were resolved using either a notice on the vehicles or a conversation with the registered keeper. Where a single car is for sale, there is no offence that we would take action for.

### **Fly Posting**

We have had relatively few issues with fly posting across the district in 2015/16, and carried out a project in February to deal with a number of signs that had been identified by our staff across the district and spoke to the businesses concerned, which gives us a high reading on the records for February that is not linked to public complaints.

### **Litter**

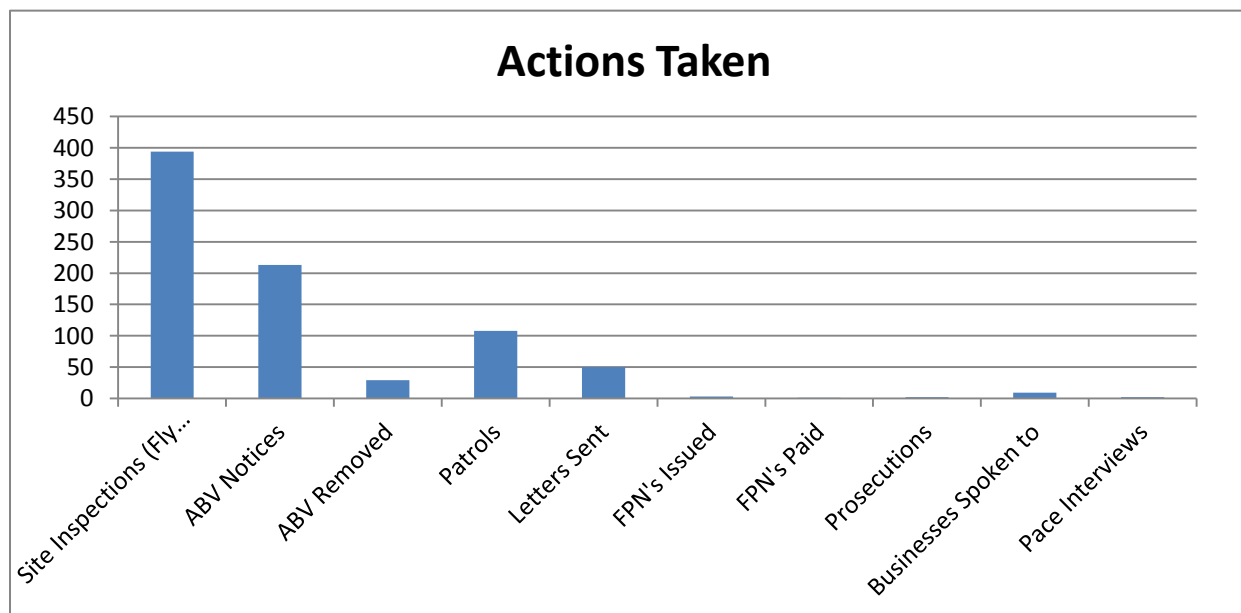
Litter issues are only passed to the Investigation Officer where there is evidence to show who has caused it, or that a recognisable group are repeatedly causing the problem. Often this will be linked to a local business, and so have a shared responsibility on the part of the business – eg Fast Food outlets.

This type of involvement will normally arise from observations by the Place Team as they work using local knowledge. It is very rare for the public to report individuals and so direct enforcement action in regards to litter is very low and will normally consist of a conversation to remind businesses of their responsibilities.

Most litter issues across the district are caused by food and drink related litter, and is focused either in town and village centres, or well used commuting routes. The Place Teams vary how they work throughout the year to focus their efforts where needed in order to maintain high standards of cleanliness.

Logged for Investigation/Action	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total for Year
<b>Fly Tipping Incidents</b>	0	0	64	73	48	75	49	46	52	56	83	140	686
Fly Tipping Enforcement	0	0	6	2	4	3	8	7	5	8	5	8	56
Dog Fouling	0	0	0	5	1	4	13	4	11	28	10	6	82
Abandoned Vehicles	0	0	11	15	12	20	6	22	21	12	29	29	177
Flyposting	0	0	4	6	1	5	3	3	0	4	15	3	44
Car For Sale	0	0	3	2	9	0	2	5	0	0	1	0	22
Abandoned Trolleys	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Bins left out by Residents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Bin being used by others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Damage to Fence or Gate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Sign Req / Promo Work	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Grass - Damage to Verge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Info Litter Enforcement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2	6
Litter Complaint													321
Other Enquiry - A. Vehicle	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Place Team Issues	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Existing Customer Enquiry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Weeds - Japanese Knotweed	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
													724

<b>Follow up Actions</b>	
Site Inspections (Fly Tips/Dog Fouling/ABV)	394
ABV Notices	213
ABV Removed	29
Patrols	108
Letters Sent	50
FPN's Issued	3
FPN's Paid	1
Prosecutions	2
Businesses Spoken to	9
Pace Interviews	2



<b>Value of FPN's &amp; Prosecutions</b>	
<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Value</b>
June 2015	£785 (Prosecution Waste Carriers License)
September 2015	£730 (Prosecution Waste Carriers License)
March 2016	£300 (FPN - Duty of Care)