

# Waste crime taskforce conducts raid on site in Great Harwood, Lancashire

Today the Joint Unit for Waste Crime (JUWC) has conducted a successful raid on an illegal waste site in Lancashire as it continues to combat serious and organised waste crime across the UK.

JUWC Enforcement Officers and Lancashire Police raided the site, which is operated by two skip hire firms, in Great Harwood near Blackburn. It is alleged that illegal waste activities are being carried out on the site, including the handling and storage of scrap metal, the landfilling of mixed waste, and illegal burning.

During the raid, enforcement officers gathered evidence of a large-scale waste operation. An estimated 50,000 tonnes of waste has been landfilled at the site and a number of skips containing mixed household and business waste were observed.

A spokesperson for the JUWC said:

We are dedicated to clamping down on serious and organised waste crime. By working collaboratively with a wide range of enforcement agencies, our vital work disrupts criminality and ensures those responsible are held to account.

Our previous order to cease waste operations on this site was ignored, and we have therefore taken the necessary enforcement action.

We will continue to take action against the operators of this site until the activity has ceased or is being carried out in compliance with the law.

Everybody has a legal duty to ensure the waste they produce is taken away by registered waste carriers and that waste is only taken to authorised sites for treatment or disposal. Residents in Lancashire should therefore make sure any local skip hire firm they use has the necessary permits.

The government estimates that waste crime costs the economy in England alone around £600 million a year. The JUWC was being established in January 2020 to disrupt and bring down the criminals and gangs who carry out illegal waste operations.

The Unit is comprised of the UK's four environmental regulators, the National Crime Agency, HMRC and the police. To tackle the growing trend in criminal waste networks, the JUWC conducts site inspections, makes arrests and, where necessary, take enforcement action including prosecution.

Members of the public can check if a waste business is genuine by contacting the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506, 03702 422 529 (minicom), via email at [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk) (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or online at [www.gov.uk/ea](http://www.gov.uk/ea).