

1 August 2025

Whinney Hill Landfill Site

Community Update

Incident Reports Received

Month	Total number of reports	Types of report and numbers breakdown
December	104	Gulls (84) / Odour (20)
January	101	Gulls (35) / Odour (66)
February	180	Gulls (62) / Odour (102) / Noise (14) / Litter (2)
March	310	Gulls (204) / Odour (93) / Noise (13)
April	55	Gulls (35) / Odour (13) / Noise (7)
May	108	Gulls (69) / Odour (25) / Noise (14)
June	97	Gulls (72) / Odour (12) / Noise (13)
July	77	Gulls (42) / Odour (34) / Flies (1)

Current Situation

We are still receiving reports to our incident hotline, the majority relating to the gull population and the impacts they continue to have on local residents and businesses. Those living closest to the tipping area are also noticing occasional periods of odour from the site.

Over recent months, SUEZ has been actively working with Natural England to address the ongoing impact of the gull population at the site. In April, following careful assessment, Natural England recommended the implementation of a 'shoot to scare' strategy aimed at altering gull behaviour. This was a preliminary step prior to considering lethal control measures. Due to the nature of using live ammunition, and an increase in noise, we did receive complaints from local residents.

Whilst the scaring of the gulls did initially change some behaviour, they remain a problem at the site and are still present in large numbers. SUEZ continue to work with Natural England to look at the next steps for bird control, which includes a lethal bird control licence. Gull deterrence methods, including the possible implementation of lethal measures, forms part of the broader pest control strategy and are considered an 'appropriate measure' under the environmental permit.

Given that SUEZ are trying new techniques and taking advice from other government bodies and experts to resolve the issues, the company are currently meeting the requirements set out in its environmental permit, and in accordance with the Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016). We understand this is a difficult message to relay, but following due process and trialling new techniques can take time before improvements are seen.

Customer Service line **03708 506 506**

Floodline **03459 88 11 88**

Incident hotline **0800 80 70 60**

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Our Regulation

In early June we received reports expressing concern about the level and quality of cover material used to cover the tipping area at the end of the working day. Cover material plays an important role in odour control and helps prevent gulls from accessing food waste. Whilst officers did not observe that issue directly at the site, we have required SUEZ to improve their performance and provide assurance that those measures are consistently delivered.

SUEZ have committed to photographing the covering of the tipping area at the end of each day to ensure that they can provide evidence that they are meeting the requirements of their environmental permit.

We continue to carry out regular inspections of the site and hold meetings with members of the SUEZ management team, to ensure that they are considering all methods available to control both odour and reduce the impact from gulls on the community.

Updating the community

The community can stay up to date with information about Whinney Hill by accessing our dedicated webpage: [Information on Whinney Hill Landfill Site, Accrington, Lancashire - Environment Agency - Citizen Space \(environment-agency.gov.uk\)](https://environment-agency.gov.uk/citizen-space/whinney-hill-landfill-site).

Over the coming weeks we will be adding further compliance assessment reports to the information webpage.

On Thursday 31 July we attended the community liaison meeting to provide an update to attendees on complaint themes and recent compliance information for the landfill. At the meeting, a number of suggestions were made by attendees on how we can engage better with residents and business, which we will look to implement over the coming weeks.

Reporting the issue

Reporting helps us to build up a picture of the extent and impact of the pest and odour issue within the community. We encourage people to report to us on our 24-hour incident hotline: **0800 807060**.

Or via email: incident_communication_service@environment-agency.gov.uk

We would advise members of the community to contact NHS 111 or their GP if they have concerns about their health and need advice.