

# Fly issues briefing - September 2023

## Introduction

We are sorry to hear that residents are experiencing problems with flies in the local area. Please be assured that we are investigating this issue and working closely with Warwick District Council (WDC) over our findings.

We hope our update will answer some of your questions. Thank you for taking the time to read this update.

## Background

The Environment Agency were first made aware of the issue of flies in the Whitnash area of Leamington Spa on 19 July 2023. This was reported to us by WDC who advised they had received a number of fly complaints in the area. WDC had visited one of our permitted sites, Plasgran Limited (Berry Circular Polymers), and considered that it could be the potential cause.

Plasgran Limited (PL) is a newly permitted site that produce plastic flakes and pellets which are used for the production of new products and food packaging. The Environment Agency issued PL with an Environmental Permit on 17 April 2023 and the permit contains a condition requiring the operator to take measures to prevent or minimise pests on the site if they are likely to give rise to an annoyance off site.

We have received reports from members of the public regarding flies and odour in the area. PL have been notified of all reports and the impact this is having on residents.

## What action have we taken?

After receiving the initial report from WDC on 19 July 2023, we attended PL on 24 July 2023. During this inspection we did identify flies inside the building in the bale storage area, but did not identify any odour, litter or flies outside the building in the waste storage area. As there were a noticeable number of flies in the building, we requested that the operator provide an updated Pest Management Plan (PMP) to the Environment Agency for assessment. We also asked for records of the training provided to staff in relation to pest management.

On 11 August 2023 we advised PL to carry out fly monitoring in the form of indoor resting counts or indoor adhesive paper fly traps to help us ascertain patterns of fly counts and to see if these correspond with incident reports. Adhesive paper fly traps have been implemented by the operator.

We have conducted further site visits on 16 August and 1 September at PL. The results of these inspections have been recorded on a Compliance Assessment Report (CAR). The permit holder has 28 days from receipt of our CAR in which they can challenge any findings within the report. We are therefore unable to provide the report to the public until this period has expired.

## Next steps

We are currently reviewing PL's Odour Management Plan and Pest Management Plan to assess their effectiveness at minimising the risk of pests and odour generated by its activities. PL are still required to comply with its last approved management plans whilst these are being reviewed.

We will continue to inspect PL, as well as any other permitted sites in the area that we consider may be a potential source of flies. We will continue to notify PL of all fly reports received and provide guidance to the operator on best practices and appropriate measures that need to be implemented to reduce flies on site.

We appreciate this is not something that will be resolved quickly and understand that this has already been an issue prior to us being informed. We are grateful for residents who have taken the time to report this and provide additional information to us.

## Roles and responsibilities

The Environment Agency has provisions under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016) to investigate permitted facilities. The Local Authority (LA) can investigate under the Statutory Nuisance Provisions under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The LA will investigate insects (flies) which emanate from relevant industrial trade or business premises and are prejudicial to health or a nuisance – but only ones not permitted by the Environment Agency. Any potential other sources/sites will need to be investigated by the LA to rule them out, which in this case is WDC.

We will continue to work with WDC to ensure that we use the most appropriate powers available to deal with this issue. We are in communication with WDC over this ongoing fly issue in your area and are keeping each other up to date on our progress with this investigation.

## Incident reporting

Please continue to report any fly issues to our 24-hour incident hotline on **0800 80 70 60** so we can continue to map areas impacted. Your reports help build a picture of the issue, inform our investigation and allow us to feedback to permitted facilities the effect any action is having.

Please do not try to contact our officers directly - we cannot guarantee that your report will be logged and dealt with in a timely manner unless it is made through the incident hotline.

## Future updates

As we are still currently investigating this issue, we will next update you when we have new information to share. If the operator does not challenge the Compliance Assessment Reports produced, we will share these upon request when they are available to the public.