

Dear Resident,

Odours in Lowton and Culcheth areas

We are writing to you to provide you with an update regarding residents' concerns of odour in the Lowton and Culcheth areas.

We have received many reports from the local community regarding odour from nearby sites, and would like to reassure you we understand the impact that strong, sustained and unpleasant odour can have on people's lives. Due to the impact odour is having within the local area we are treating this as a high priority.

We would also like to thank you for your reports to our incident hotline. These calls are important to us and do help our work. While many of the reports received have highlighted Diggle Green Farm to be the cause there are also other sites in the area that have the potential to cause odour.

Due to the time of year a lot of land spreading activities are being undertaken. These have the potential to produce odour. Unfortunately this, along with the effect of air currents and often changing wind direction, can make it very difficult to establish the origin of specific odour incidents. Calls to our incident hotline as soon as you are being impacted by strong odours will help us with our investigations.

We would like to assure you that when we find strong, persistent and offensive odours, from sites we regulate which are in breach of the odour conditions within their permit, we will take the appropriate action.

Odour from Diggle Green Farm

We have received a number of reports of Diggle Green Farm producing an offensive odour and as a result have been in the area on a number of occasions to verify if the farm is the cause. Our experience is that the farm is not always the source of odour. However, during a recent visit an odour was detected within the Lowton area that we believed to be from activities being carried out at the site. With this in mind the operator is now working with us to ensure that odour is significantly reduced. We have required them to review all activities with the potential to cause odour and to ensure any necessary improvements are implemented. This odour management plan will be regulated alongside their environmental permit.

Food Waste

Several residents have raised the concern that untreated food waste is being accepted at the site. I want to assure residents that during our inspections we have found no evidence that this is the case.

Untreated food waste is not allowed under their environmental permit.

The site can accept 'mixed' green and food waste that has been treated before reaching the site. This treatment process produces a compost which will not attract pests and can be stored outside. We are working with the site to establish if this waste type has the potential to cause odour.

Working Together

We have spoken to many residents and are also working closely with both Wigan and Warrington Council. Some residents have also offered to keep an odour diary which will involve keeping an informal record of when odours occur, where they have been detected and at what level they are perceived to be at. This, along with the regular odour monitoring we undertake, will help build an accurate picture of when the odours are being created and will help us with our investigations.

Diggle Green Farm have also been asked to produce an improvement plan for the site. This will ensure that positive steps are taken to further reduce the risks of odour. This will be closely monitored by our Officers.

We are also in talks with other companies, such as United Utilities, to ensure that other activities that are carried out in the area are done in a way to minimise odour.

Reporting Incidents

To help us monitor odour in the area, it would be helpful if residents report odour incidents immediately to our 24 hour incident hotline. The hotline number is 0800 80 70 60.

If you call the incident hotline to report an odour we may call you back to get more details from you. The information we get is important as it will enable us to better target our investigations.

Unfortunately, due to the number of reports we receive, it would not be practical to call every individual back personally. We will however continue to provide feedback to residents by the use of these updates.

I hope this update has been useful for you and keeps you up to date with the work we are doing to reduce odour as much as possible within the Lowton and Culcheth areas.

Regards,

Caroline Berry

South Central EPR Waste Team Leader