November Update note from Claire Nicholls re differences in how fly tipping is reported across councils in Hertfordshire.

Each district or borough are responsible for reporting the number of fly tipping incidents to DEFRA, including the overall number, classification and land type the fly tip occurred on. Each authority uploads their numbers to DEFRA on a monthly basis. I know concerns were raised at a recent Herts Fly Tipping Group meeting that not all authorities across Herts report in the same way. For example, Stevenage report fly tips that the caretaking team find at flat blocks, whereas some authorities do not. Therefore, it can appear that our fly tipping numbers look disproportionate compared to some other authorities. However, we believe we are reporting fly tipping in the most accurate way, reflecting everything we are clearing. Unfortunately, we have no control over how other authorities collect and report their figures.

I understand there was also a request to clarify the classifications of fly tipping incidents, with particular emphasis on footpath and highways data. We receive information from HCC on a monthly basis regarding fly tips they clear from highways and this is the data we report. This is provided to all Herts councils. These incidents generally include where a fly tip is blocking a highway or is on a major A road. Given Stevenage Council is a geographically small borough in comparison to neighbouring authorities, with few major roads running through it, we have always received a low number of highways incident reports.

In relation to footpaths, borough council's clear fly tips off highway footpaths because statutory street cleansing duties in England rest with the district and borough council, even when the county council owns or maintains the highway. HCC are responsible for structural maintenance and urgent road hazards. Therefore, SBC clears routine fly tips from pavements and footpaths, whilst Hertfordshire Highways step in primarily when dumped waste blocks a live carriageway or poses an immediate traffic danger.

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Environment & Leisure