

REPORT PC26.007

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Date: 15.01.26

Report on Fly-Tipping, Littering and Associated Health & Safety Concerns in Old Sarum

1. Introduction

This report addresses a long-standing issue of significant concern to residents of Old Sarum: the persistent and worsening problem of fly-tipping, littering, and associated anti-social behaviour. The Parish Council has debated this matter repeatedly over several years. At the full Council meeting on 17 July 2023, under item 23.099 *Anti-Social Behaviour in Old Sarum and Longhedge*, councillors requested that the police convene an all-stakeholder meeting to coordinate a response. No such follow-up has occurred to date.

The situation on the ground remains unchanged and, in some areas, has deteriorated further.

2. Current Situation Overview

2.1 Severity of Fly-Tipping and Littering

Recent visits to affected sites confirm that the problem is now dire (**Communication & Public Engagement Working Group, October 2025**). Observations include:

- Very large dumped items, including a full-size trampoline
- Numerous smaller items scattered across the area
- Widespread general litter, giving the impression of long-term neglect

Images documenting the current state of the site have been attached to this report.

2.2 Health & Safety Risks

One particular area visited is reportedly used by drug users. This raises serious concerns regarding:

- The presence of *sharps* (e.g., needles) hidden within undergrowth or litter
- Risks to volunteers, council staff, and especially young people or children
- The need for formal risk assessment before any clean-up activity

2.3 Additional Areas of Concern

While the Partridge Way area is the most severely affected, other locations also require attention:

- **Old Sarum Primary School:**
The fenced area behind Ramsbury Drive / Sherbourne Drive contains rubbish and derelict items. This contributes to a neglected appearance and reflects poorly on both the school and the wider community.
- **Pathway from the COOP toward Partridge Way:**
A trail of discarded packaging and litter is visible in the bushes. COOP staff have previously stated they are only responsible for areas legally within their boundary.
- **Sanctuary Housing:**
The available information suggests there is a long history of unresponsiveness to requests for action on environmental maintenance and littering.
- **Wiltshire Council Reporting App:**
The app intended for public reporting of fly-tipping and litter issues is widely regarded as ineffective, with reports not being processed or acted upon.

3. Summary of the Problem

- The issue has been discussed repeatedly over several years.
- No decisive or coordinated action has been taken.
- Multiple stakeholders share responsibility, yet no mechanism exists to ensure accountability.
- The situation now poses environmental, reputational, and health & safety risks.

4. Proposed Actions

To address the above issues in a structured and assertive manner, the following steps are recommended.

4.1 Convene an All-Stakeholder Meeting

The Parish Council should formally convene a meeting including:

- Parish Council representatives
- Wiltshire Police
- Sanctuary Housing
- Wiltshire Council (Environmental Services)
- COOP management
- Old Sarum Primary School
- Local community representatives

Purpose of the meeting:

- Establish a clear understanding of *who is responsible for what*
- Identify named counterparts for ongoing communication
- Agree on immediate emergency measures to address health and safety hazards
- Begin developing a coordinated long-term plan

4.2 Immediate Emergency Measures

Depending on stakeholder input, the Council should seek agreement on:

- Urgent removal of hazardous waste, including potential sharps
- Temporary signage warning of risks
- Increased patrols or monitoring in high-risk areas
- Rapid-response commitments from responsible organisations

4.3 Follow-Up Measures

If stakeholders fail to respond adequately, the Council may consider:

- Escalating concerns to Sanctuary Housing's supervisory or regulatory bodies
- Requesting Wiltshire Council to review the performance of its reporting systems
- Exploring enforcement options where responsibilities are not being met

4.4 Community Engagement Initiatives

To complement institutional action, the Council should:

- Organise community activities for different age groups as part of the **Great British Spring Clean (13–29 March 2029)**
- Provide risk-assessed opportunities for residents to participate in safe clean-up efforts
- Promote environmental stewardship through schools, youth groups, and local organisations

5. Recommendations

1. **Approve the organisation of an all-stakeholder meeting** as a matter of urgency.
2. **Mandate the Clerk** to issue formal invitations and coordinate logistics.
3. **Request Wiltshire Police** to participate and support risk assessment of high-risk areas.
4. **Require Sanctuary Housing and COOP** to clarify their maintenance responsibilities and commit to action.
5. **Engage Old Sarum Primary School** regarding the condition of land adjacent to its premises.
6. **Develop a clear action plan** following the stakeholder meeting, including timelines and accountability.
7. **Prepare community engagement activities** for the Great British Spring Clean 2029.
8. **Monitor progress** and report back to Council at regular intervals.

6. Conclusion

The environmental condition of several areas in Old Sarum has reached an unacceptable level. The problem is well-known, long-standing, and now poses clear health and safety risks. Previous discussions have not resulted in meaningful action. A coordinated, assertive, and accountable approach is now essential.

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Report in preparation of the full Council meeting on 19-01-2026

The recommendations above provide a structured path forward to ensure that responsibilities are clarified, hazards are addressed, and the community begins to see visible improvement.

Patrick Schneider

15-01-2026