

## Living close to a rubbish tip reduces house prices by 2.6%, research shows

Posted on Friday 28th December 2012

Living close to an active landfill site reduces house prices by 2.6% and the cost to home owners can still be counted two decades after the facility has shut, new research shows.

Experts at the University of Birmingham have found that houses situated within 3 kilometres of an active site, or within 1 kilometre of a historic site, suffer a significant price drop. It is the first time researchers have investigated the impact of "historic" landfill sites.

Prof David Maddison, who co-authored the report into the disamenity impact of landfill sites, said: "The house price differential is a measure of the negative impact landfills have on the local community. That is, nuisances such as noise, smell, wind-blown litter, the additional traffic as well as flies and vermin.

"What is interesting, however, is that the impact of landfill sites on house prices appears to endure over periods in excess of 20 years after closure."

The report also suggests that proximity to a landfill site can also generate "stigma damages" not attributable to any physical nuisance.

"Each of these impacts operates over a different geographical scale and may persist even after landfill sites are closed," the report states.

Although the amount of waste sent to landfill is declining, it remains one of the most widespread methods of waste disposal in UK.

"The cost of disposing of waste through landfill needs to be prices at levels that fully internalise the social costs," Prof Maddison says. "Much more effort needs to be put into reducing waste at source, re-using and recycling."

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### Note to editors

The report looked at the location of properties and landfills within 4km of Birmingham, UK.

Read the full report: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/business/economics/landfill-externalities-revision-2.pdf>  
(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/business/economics/landfill-externalities-revision-2.pdf>)

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