We use cookies to ensure that we deliver the best user experience of our website. If you would like to, you can change your cookie settings at any time. Continue

Price of living with landfill

Posted on Monday 7th January 2013

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 Birmingham have found that houses situated within three kilometres of an active site, or within one kilometre of an historic site, suffer a significant price drop. It is the first time researchers have investigated the impact of “historic” landfill sites.

Professor 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,” Professor Maddison says. “Much more effort needs to be put into reducing waste at source, re-using and recycling.”

© University of Birmingham 2014