

Dear Councillor,

I hope you are keeping safe and well.

I thought it may be helpful to you to provide a short update across waste and other environmental services, regarding work developed in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Brian Stephens.

### Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

In my last update to you I outlined our plans to open all twelve of our main HWRCs from **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May**. I am pleased to confirm that this is the case, and that they will be able to accept the full range of materials. We will continue to operate the E-Permit system for those larger vehicles or vehicles with trailers and residents will be requested to show their permit details through their vehicles closed window. Residents will be able to apply on line for the electronic permits from tomorrow (15<sup>th</sup> May).

You may be interested in viewing our video developed by communications and marketing on <https://youtu.be/jbBQB3Qmyxw>, and provides advance notice to users of the service of what they might expect. For our monitoring purposes, please don't share this in advance of the social media messaging which will be released in the coming days. Our advance planning has also allowed us to develop some FAQ responses which I attach and can be adjusted if needed if new queries come in.

As you will be aware we have needed to generate robust traffic management plans for each of the sites. We would emphasise that in line with Government guidance, trips should be made only if considered essential, and even then to seek to spread out visits to lessen queuing. I am pleased also to confirm that for most sites the opening times remain as normal, we are additionally extending the opening of Hett Hills from weekend only to every day, but in order to safeguard access for refuse collection vehicles and other HGVs, we are having to change the Monday to Saturday opening hours of Annfield Plain, Coxhoe and Thornley to start in the afternoon, but continue to the early evening (8pm), which indeed may be more convenient for those that have recommenced work. Summary is as follows:

HWRC	Days open	Opening hours
<a href="#">Annfield Plain</a>	Every day	Monday - Saturday, 2.00pm - 8.00pm Sunday, 9.00am - 8.00pm
<a href="#">Coxhoe</a>	Every day	Monday - Saturday, 2.00pm - 8.00pm Sunday, 9.00am - 8.00pm
<a href="#">Heighington</a>	Every day	9.00am - 6.00pm
<a href="#">Hett Hills</a>	Every day	9.00am - 6.00pm
<a href="#">Horden</a>	Every day except Friday	10.00am - 4.00pm weekdays 9.00am - 6.00pm Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays
<a href="#">Middleton-in-Teesdale</a>	Every day	9.00am - 6.00pm

HWRC	Days open	Opening hours
<a href="#">Potterhouse Lane (Pity Me)</a>	Every day	9.00am - 6.00pm
<a href="#">Romanway</a>	Every day	9.00am - 6.00pm
<a href="#">Seaham</a>	Every day	9.00am - 6.00pm
<a href="#">Stainton Grove (Barnard Castle)</a> - HWRC only*	Every day	9.00am - 6.00pm
<a href="#">Thornley</a>	Every day	Monday - Saturday, 2.00pm - 8.00pm Sunday, 9.00am - 8.00pm
<a href="#">Tudhoe</a>	Every day	9.00am - 6.00pm

We are ensuring regular feedback and alerts if sites are busy through a network of Wardens and Civil Enforcement Officers present across all sites back to our communications team who will be provide updates on our social media channels and website as appropriate. In common with the experience elsewhere we do anticipate a return to more normal levels of demand relatively quickly. We will of course update on opening time for those sites with afternoon/evening when it is considered that there will not be an adverse impact on core services.

### **Bulky Goods Collections**

I can confirm that these are scheduled to start on 18<sup>th</sup> May. It may be of interest for you to know that in the last few days we have already taken 632 bookings for the service. As a reminder appointments for collection can be made through the Councils website (<http://www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste>) or contact 03000 260000

### **Garden Waste Collections**

I am pleased to confirm that the service has grown in popularity, with now at 61,447 sign ups across the County (not including Teesdale where Rotters collect). The vast majority of customers are aware of their new collection dates, and the tonnages of garden waste after the first rounds of collections have been record breaking for us. It is with some excitement that colleagues in the service share with me photos of large steamy mounds of garden muck at our new facility at joint stocks and assure me that its composting down very nicely indeed. Subject to passing environmental audit, later in the year we will be exploring the opportunities of returning this to residents and community groups.

### **Waste Statistics**

Demonstrating the massive additional effort our collection crews have had to put into maintaining the service compared with this time last year residual waste has increased in April by 15.02% and recycling by 25.6% . This is also a challenge to our waste treatment contractors and we are continuing to work closely with them to ensure we maintain a high standard service.

### **Morrison Busty Nursery**

Whilst the prime purpose of our nursery is to supply plants for public provision and display, including to Towns and Parishes, there has been local interest for a number of years, where elected Members

may purchase these plants for community use, or some stock is sold to residents, providing it is surplus to need. Whilst not a garden centre, we have nevertheless been mindful of the overall guidance regarding stay at home and have not been operational.

I am pleased to confirm however that since the ease on restrictions, we have reviewed our operations, and have reopened this facility at Morrison Busty Depot, and whilst mostly outdoors, have introduced a range of social distancing measures for both staff and visitors. The customer base is relatively small, however mindful of the traffic management at Annfield Plain for the HWRC site, we are limiting any public access to the mornings.

I hope you find this update helpful, and thank you for bearing with us during what has been a challenging time for services.

Oliver

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