

Household Waste Recycling Centre Changes 2025/26 ~ Q&As

This briefing sets out some questions and concerns raised by residents in relation to changes to the way the county's Household Waste and Recycling Centres (also known as recycling Centres, HRCs and HWRCs) will operate from April 2025, including a new booking system for slots for bringing your recycling and waste to the centres, and charging for DIY waste above a certain volume.

The county council's website has a dedicated page setting out how the recycling centres will operate, with links to separate pages for the different aspects of the changes.

The direct link to the recycling centres page is here: [Powys Household Waste Recycling Centres](#)

From there you can move on to the DIY charging page. At the bottom of that page, you will also find a link to a DIY Charges FAQs page. The direct link to the DIY charges FAQs is here: [DIY Waste Charges FAQs](#)

The pathway to reach these and the other recycling and waste pages is: PCC homepage > Services > Bins, Rubbish and Recycling > Recycling Centres.

Here are the questions and concerns raised with me by residents, and information I have been provided by the team, both in direct response to these specific questions and concerns and also in previous discussions about the changes (questions and concerns in bold, information from officers in blue):

1. Questions

What do officers think the impact will be on people on low incomes who carry out their own home repairs because they can't afford to employ tradespeople?

If residents carry out small jobs, there will either be no cost for them to take the material to the HRC or it is likely to be minimal compared to the cost of purchasing the materials for the job. The cost of taking materials to the HRC will be a very small part of the overall cost of the project they are undertaking. The first bag of wood (or equivalent), up to 25 litres in capacity, will be free of charge. The charge will come into play if more than this was being recycled, for example if the resident was refitting the whole kitchen or had taken down a complete fence.

Have officers focused on tackling tradespeople who avoid charges without fully considering how many people on low incomes throughout the county carry out their own home repairs?

Household Waste Recycling Centre Changes 2025/26 ~ Q&As

We issue enforcement notices for traders to prove where the material they generate is being taken. We also have the Commercial Vehicle and Trailer permit scheme which allows residents with these vehicles to take household waste to the sites but is a check on illegal use by traders. As per previous answer, if residents carry out small jobs, there will either be no cost for them to take the material to the HRC or it is likely to be minimal compared to the cost of purchasing the materials for the job.

How does the county council justify the risk of extra recyclable materials entering tips because people can't or won't pay the charges at the recycling centres?

There is no reason to expect that the chargeable materials should end up in tips. If residents are carrying out large DIY jobs, hiring a skip would be more appropriate. Skip operators do tend to salvage as much as they can to reduce their own costs. The same applies where tradespeople leave building and construction type material after they have carried out a job for a householder. They should be taking this material away as part of the job. It is not fair for all Council Taxpayers to pick up this cost.

Can officers please provide the evidence base that informs both the change to the booking system and the change to DIY waste charging.

As part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2024/25 (agreed in February last year), a saving was put forward of £400k. This was based on the reduction in the cost of processing and disposing of waste, as a result of a decrease in throughput at the sites and an increase in material diverted for recycling due to better management on site. These measures will reduce the amount of illegal use and also divert material to skip companies. Residual waste also decreases as visitors to the sites can be better supported and hence the facilities for recycling are better utilised. We have used data from other authorities who have introduced these measures successfully and extrapolated it to the tonnages that come through our sites.

2. Concerns: Potential negative consequences:

Unpredictable rural journey times make a 10 min booked slot at the HWRC difficult to manage and may lead to the queuing which the booking system is supposed to avoid.

This has been taken account of when setting the timeslots for bookings. Our calculations have also used experience of other local authorities using a booking system. The system will be flexible to allow for residents who arrive reasonably early or late. The length of the booking slot can be easily reviewed and altered if required.

Householders might put their DIY waste in the 3-weekly kerbside waste collection, overloading the system in terms of labour and vehicle capacity.

We accept the possibility that some DIY waste material may end up in the wheeled bin. The three-weekly collection period should mitigate against this, reducing the usefulness of the wheeled bins as receptacles for DIY waste in bigger volumes than would be accepted free of charge at the recycling centre.

Increased fly tipping and increased associated costs.

Fly tipping is a criminal offence and not something that residents tend to resort to. Fly tipping statistics vary widely over time and there is no evidence that introducing booking and charging schemes encourages residents to break the law. WRAP, a global environmental waste reduction NGO working in Wales with local authorities and Welsh Government to support the journey towards a circular economy, carried out a study which showed no correlation between fly tipping and charging for DIY waste at Household Recycling Centres. The study can be viewed at the following link:

[The relationship between fly-tipping rates and HWRC charging | WRAP](#)

Increased problems with incorrect items in the kerbside collections and costs and time to rectify errors.

There is no evidence to suggest that charging for DIY waste or implementing a booking system would have a negative impact on material collected at the kerbside. However, collection staff are trained to identify inappropriate items left in kerbside collection boxes as they work. Items which should not be collected at the kerb are extracted and left at the kerbside, with a card for the resident to explain the reason for this.

For residents in towns who can't accommodate the green waste bins and rely on being able to take their garden waste to the recycling centre as and when they need to, having to book is going to create problems.

The great majority of residents with gardens will have space for a garden waste bin. However, it will be possible to book slots at short notice for residents who regularly use the HRCs for garden waste.

Household Waste Recycling Centre Changes 2025/26 ~ Q&As

The introduction of charging for DIY waste appears to be focused fully on increasing revenue, without taking into account consequential increased costs.

The reason for introducing the booking system and DIY charging is to offset some of the cost of providing the HRC service; not to increase revenue. The changes represent cost avoidance and cost reduction, not increased revenue. Alternative means by which to reduce costs were also explored. These included a reduction in the centres' opening hours and days, and potentially even closing one of them altogether.

The changes we are proceeding with represent the best, evidence-based option, and also have additional benefits. For residents these include less queuing, better access to sites and to facilities on sites, increased assistance from site staff if required, and improved health and safety on site. For staff benefits include this increased health and safety, and being able to better manage the material and increase the council's recycling rates. (Welsh Government has set statutory recycling targets for local authorities of 70% of all recyclable material produced by households, and local authorities are subject to punitive fines for failing to meet the targets.)

Increased fly tipping will be at great expense to the Council and also perhaps to local landowners such as farmers.

As stated previously, there is no evidence to suggest that these measures will increase fly tipping. Fly tipping already occurs without these measures being in place. Perpetrators currently are not motivated to commit crime by having to pay charges or book slots at recycling centres. Most residents are law-abiding people and booking systems and low-level charging is unlikely to change them from people who don't break the law to people who do. We do take action wherever possible against the perpetrators of the crime of fly tipping, and will continue to do so.

Councillor Sian Cox

CLlr.sian.cox@powys.gov.uk ~ 0780 505 3786 ~ facebook.com/SianCoxLlangorsBwlch

23rd February 2025