

News from County Councillor Dr Marie Strong  
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Dear All

With regret I may not be back in time on this occasion – so just in case I hope the following information is of interest. And of course let me know if I can be of assistance.

Kind regards

Marie.

**Subject: Wells Recycling Centres and other centres:** I know many people from outlying villages use Wells Recycling Centre some of whom have picked up concerns to which I have obtained a detailed response copied below from our Head of Waste. Additionally I have listened to concerns regarding ‘Fly Tipping’. Just to clarify that the recent charge relates to building/D.I.Y rubbish and there remain main items which can be taken to the recycling centres with no charge (see emboldened below).

(I would add that I have continued to work with this officer in respect of a possible ‘Reuse Shop’ at Wells – this is where useful products left at the Recycling Centre are checked for safety etc and can then be offered for sale. You may have come across these shops at some of the larger centres and they have proved very welcome by users.)

‘My thanks for passing on concerns to me. I can confirm that the throughput at Wells Recycling Centre has dropped in the last two months, down by an average of around 18 tonnes a month compared to the same period last year, so the information about there being a drop off is correct. This is a pattern we have seen recently across the network of sites we provide and was expected as a part of the effect of the policy change, although it is clear that in April the weather also had an effect. We know this because the tonnage of garden waste was down this April by around 6.5 tonnes compared to April last year at the Wells site and that is a pattern we have seen across the network and has been seen in Suffolk too.

‘To address the concern the County Council understands how much these services are valued and appreciated by householders, and to underline that point the County Council has stated that these recent changes were in clear preference to closing sites or reducing hours further at any sites. It is also worth pointing out that in these recent changes we have ensured that Wells can now accept larger volumes of construction and demolition waste – so where previously local residents would have had to visit Hempton to pay for disposal of larger volumes they are now able to use the site at Wells which will hopefully provide a more convenient and competitive alternative option for residents in the Wells area. **I hope you can relay that development on to others who may not be aware of this improvement, as well as extending the reassurance that the site still accepts all household items for free – things such as fridges, sofas, electrical items, furniture, recyclables and garden waste etc – more information is on this link if that is useful: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling-and-planning/rubbish-and-recycling/types-of-waste-we-accept>**

‘In terms of bin changes on site I’ve now looked in to the detail of this issue on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of June and whilst it is a situation we try to avoid on these occasions it was a case of need. This was because the bins provided earlier were full, meaning that they needed to be replaced to allow the service to continue in the way we aim to provide it, and the only way to do this safely for customers is to clear the site for a short period. That said I have raised this as an operational issue and the transport arrangements will be planned to try and avoid the most popular site times where at all possible, for example avoiding the times just after a site is open or close to closing time. I can’t promise that will always be the case, for instance sometimes regulations that control driver hours may sometimes need an action has to be taken at a particular time and can’t be delayed, but at least you know it is a situation we will actively seek to avoid.’