

HWRCs reopening - town and parish councils briefing

Dear colleagues,

I write to provide you with an update on our Household Waste Recovery Centres.

I am delighted to inform you that following lengthy negotiations with Suez, the operator of our Household Waste Recovery Centres (HWRC), all 12 sites will be reopened on a restricted basis from **Monday 4 May 2020**.

I have copied the press release that will be issued to the media at 1pm today, but wanted to make sure you were fully briefed on our plans, as far as possible.

As you'll appreciate, this is a significant change to our normal HWRC operations, and our teams have worked tirelessly to ensure that we are able to run these both safely and efficiently. Despite the challenging circumstances, we're proud to be one of the first local authorities to have secured this outcome following negotiations with our provider Suez.

As outlined in DEFRA guidance, journeys to waste sites are **only** allowed under the lockdown restrictions **if** the waste materials cannot be stored at home without causing risk of injury or harm to health.

To make sure that each facility can operate in line with Public Health England guidelines, and to protect the health and safety of our staff and our residents, restrictions will be put in place.

Strict social distancing measures will be in place across all HWRC sites, which means that the number of visitors will be limited. Residents should be aware that this may result in queuing traffic due to these restrictions.

We anticipate that there may be significant demand in the first few days following the reopening. Should very long queues form, residents may be asked to leave and come back at a later date.

These restrictions are absolutely necessary, and I ask for your support within your respective areas, to ensure we are consistent in our messaging to support the safe operation of these facilities.

Should very long queues form, residents may be asked to leave and come back at a later date.

Further information will be made available to residents over the coming days, and run up to reopening these facilities.

I hope this helps, and thank you for your support in advance.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen', with a small dot below the end of the signature.

Glen

PRESS RELEASE

Northumberland tips to reopen with restrictions in place

Northumberland County Council have announced today that it will reopen their Household Waste Recovery Centres (HWRC) from **Monday 4 May** following an agreement with SUEZ recycling and recovery UK, the company that operates the sites. The tips will initially offer a restricted service in line with Government guidance on reopening HWRCs.

In common with most other local authorities, the sites were closed in response to the Government lockdown and movement restrictions introduced in March. However, Government guidance issued last week advised councils they could reopen HWRCs, if social distancing could be maintained.

Following this, agreement to reopen all 12 of recycling centres has been secured through detailed discussions with SUEZ about how the sites can be run in line with Public Health England guidelines, to minimise the risk of spreading Covid-19 to protect the health and safety of the public and site staff.

Councillor Glen Sanderson Cabinet member for Environment and Local Services, praised staff who have led on these discussions, and said: "Our teams have done a fantastic job in continuing to operate full waste collection services throughout this difficult time, as well as keeping our County clean and green despite the circumstances by cutting grass, clearing litter, and undertaking essential road repairs.

"But we know how much the household recovery centres have been missed, and we have pulled out all the stops to get them open."

Detailed inspections at HWRC sites across Northumberland will continue this week, to make sure that each facility can operate in line with Public Health England guidelines, with social distancing strictly observed by staff and visitors at all times. This will mean limiting the number of people who can visit at any one time. Ideally only one person per vehicle should travel to the site, as only one person will be permitted outside their vehicle once on-site, and people must remain in their vehicle whilst queuing. There will also be new controls on the number and type of vehicles allowed on site.

With this in mind, opening times will vary across sites, and there will be restrictions and traffic management controls in place at each HWRC to protect staff and residents, and social distancing measures must be observed at all times by both staff and visitors. Northumberland residents will be required to provide proof of residence, and should only attend the sites for essential visits.

As outlined in DEFRA guidance, under the lockdown restrictions a visit to your local HWRC would only be considered essential if the waste materials cannot be stored at home without causing risk of injury or harm to health. The sites will only be able to

accept bagged general household waste, garden waste, wood and bulky items of household waste such as old furniture.

Leader of the Council Cllr Peter Jackson said: "We would ask residents to bear with us as we fine tune the process during the first few days of operation - we want the sites to work as efficiently as they can, whilst at the same time prioritising the health and safety of both our staff and our residents."

"I am very pleased that we are moving forward now, and I am very grateful to our residents who have shown great patience and resilience throughout these recent unprecedented times."

Strict social distancing measures will be in place across all HWRC sites, which means that the number of visitors will be limited. The need to restrict the number of people at each HWRC at any one time to maintain social distancing is likely, and we anticipate that there may be significant demand in the first few days following the reopening. Should very long queues form, residents may be asked to leave and come back at a later date.

Residents are advised to visit the council's dedicated web pages for further information on their local Household Waste Recovery Centre, including site information, opening times and site rules and restrictions - visit www.northumberland.gov.uk/tip - regular updates will be provided on the council's social media channels, and any issues including waiting times, will be provided through the council's Alerts system.

Site information and opening times

HWRC Site	Opening Hours
Alnwick Bebside Berwick Hexham Morpeth North Seaton Prudhoe	Monday – Sunday: 8am to 6pm
Allendale Haltwhistle Kirkley West Thorn North Sunderland Wooler	Friday – Monday: 8am to 6pm (Closed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday)

Covid-19: Restricted Site Rules

- Ideally only one person per vehicle should travel to the site, as only one person will be permitted outside their vehicle once on-site, and people must remain in their vehicle whilst queuing.

- Social distancing measures must be adhered to at all times by both staff and visitors.
- Any additional passengers must remain inside the vehicle.
- All site users must adhere to the 2 metre social distancing rules in place.
- Sites can only accept bagged general household waste, garden waste, wood and bulky items of household waste such as old furniture.
- Do not attend the site if you are self-isolating due to having / or having had possible Covid-19 symptoms.
- No assistance will be given to offload materials by site staff so only bring what you can safely carry.
- Only cars, small vans and small trailers (below 5 feet or 1.5 metres long) are allowed on site.
- No transit-type vans, large vehicle trailers or commercial vehicles of any type will be allowed on site.
- A new traffic management system will be in place and due to safety concerns, queueing outside of the sites will be restricted. If there are queues you may be asked to leave and come back at a later time.
- If any households have had Covid-19 symptoms, then the waste should be left for 72 hours before being brought to site. Waste should be doubled bagged.
- If residents have sanitary or incontinence pad waste this should be bagged and placed in their household general waste bin and the excess household waste brought to site.
- No access to pedestrians on any site.
- You will be required to prove you live in Northumberland - please bring proof of your postal address and postcode to get access to HWRC sites - for example a utility bill, or driver's licence. You will need to display this in the windscreen of your vehicle.
- We anticipate that there may be significant demand in the first few days of operation, and residents may be asked to leave and come back at a later date.