

SAVE EVERLEIGH

Background Information in support of the Poster asking people to please complete the survey which is part of Wiltshire Council's consultation "The proposed closure of Everleigh Household Recycling Centre"

This can be accessed by going to <http://wiltshire.objective.co.uk/portal> and there are paper copies in the Libraries. Replies need to be in by 3rd September.

If you wish to speak to your Councillor or write more in the form of a letter or email as well as filling in the survey, the following research and comment is offered, which may be of interest as it presents Everleigh from certain other perspectives which you may wish to take into account.

1. Population in the area is increasing with the army re-basing. Visitor numbers to Everleigh may also increase as a result of the ID system that was introduced in both Wiltshire and Hampshire. East Wiltshire residents can no longer take their waste to sites in Hampshire as they may have done previously.
2. The Council's duty to provide HRCs extends to council tax payers living in a rural area. Which HRC would be the next "least used" when savings are needed?
3. Considering tonnage and visitor numbers alone does not give a fair comparison of urban and rural sites. Visitors to Everleigh take more weight per visit than visitors to other HRCs, 67% more than visitors to the site with the lowest weight recorded per visitor. People take car loads when they visit Everleigh. In a chart comparing tonnage, costs, and population served per head with other HRCs, Everleigh has the second lowest total operating costs per site in cash terms and in fourth position, is not the most expensive site in terms of cost per head of population served.
4. The travel distance to the alternative sites of Marlborough, Devizes or Amesbury offered by the Council is likely to be up to twice as far for many local residents if Everleigh were to close. The carbon footprint would be increased. Also traffic congestion can result in it taking much longer than thirty minutes to reach the alternative sites.
5. Sending waste to landfill or incinerating household waste is more expensive than recycling, while fly-tipping on Council owned property cost in excess of £2.5M in 2017, with over 3,000 incidents. The fly tipping costs borne by farmers, private landowners and the MoD may well be much higher.
6. The Government and Wiltshire Council encourage reduce, repair, reuse and recycling to preserve resources and reduce carbon emissions. Indeed closing Everleigh appears to conflict with the aims for the Council's draft 10 year Waste Strategy.

7. If the site is restored to being fully operational it would be for the benefit of all, but especially those who would encounter significant hardship for health, financial or other reasons if required to travel to an alternative site.

8. The Council has a surplus of £35M in a capital account that it has already built up for when there is no more money coming from central government. The cost of repairs and new equipment for Everleigh is in the region of £150,000 which is a small capital investment in relation to the very significant value of the site's facilities to the local community.

Moreover,

- a) There are principles for consultation laid down in case law by the Supreme Court and Pewsey Area Community Partnership is taking legal advice on this and other issues surrounding the consultation. At the same time it is important for as many people as possible to complete the survey asking for the site to be kept open. A strong public voice will be taken into account by the Council.

- b) The Council appears to have been negligent in not inspecting or maintaining the infrastructure of the site since 1996. The Director of Waste has admitted publicly that inspection and maintenance did not take place and has apologised for this. There is no mention that the currently partially defective drainage system was not installed correctly to the original design in 1996 and was never checked. This matter did not come to light until 2017 and so a significant part of the recovery cost now is due to an earlier Council cost saving in respect of work that should have been carried out in the past, but never was. Repair costs are not an excuse for closure now.

- c) The option costs in respect of alleged savings are very simplistically stated, without any indication of the factors taken into account by the Council. This makes it difficult to arrive at any informed opinion as to their validity. With regard to the closure costs of Everleigh, no information has been provided with regard to the extra cost that will be incurred at the alternative sites offered, in order to cope with the extra workload that the closure of Everleigh will involve in terms of longer opening hours, increased staff costs and the cost of managing waste material that is currently brought to Everleigh.

Prepared by
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