

Date: 29 September 2021
Direct email: gjung@eastdevon.gov.uk



Rebecca Pow MP
House of Commons
Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Rebecca,

Consultation on Consistency in Household and Business Recycling in England.

Thank you for your response to my previous letter. I understand that there have been over 900 responses to the Consistency consultation which clearly illustrates how important these changes are and that by working together we have a good chance of getting it right.

Managing waste as close to the top end of the hierarchy is critical to reducing our overall carbon footprint. There is genuine concern that introducing a free garden waste service will detract from home composting and pull waste into the system. In addition there will need to be additional large vehicles on the road as well as drivers which will only exacerbate the current national LGV driver shortage situation. There is no evidence from our residual waste audit in Devon that garden waste is being placed in the residual waste bin as a result of charged garden waste services. Introduction of free garden waste collections will cost at least an additional £3.5m per annum in Devon alone and this may rise to over £7m with the increase in properties subscribing to a free service. Given the current economic situation and the drain on the public purse due to the impact of managing the pandemic and subsequent recovery, it seems that this a proposal that we as a nation simply cannot afford. It is hard to understand why Government are still considering this given that there is little benefit to be gained – improving the garden waste element of recycling rates should not be achieved at any cost.

The 'polluter pays' principle is in relation to managing waste that is produced. Whilst I would agree that gardens bring a lot of environmental benefits they do still generate waste which does need to be managed. It seems inequitable that all residents should cover the cost of a free garden waste service when those particularly on lower incomes are less likely to benefit from the advantages of being able to enjoy a garden.

Blackdown House, Border Road, Heathpark Industrial Estate, Honiton, EX14 1EJ
DX 48808 HONITON
Email: csc@eastdevon.gov.uk
eastdevon.gov.uk@eastdevon

Download the free East Devon App to access council services at eastdevon.gov.uk/app

East Devon – an outstanding place Chief Executive: Mark R Williams

Frequency of residual waste collections should be determined at a local level. Councillors are well placed to manage the services that are offered balancing the cost of service provision against the needs of their residents. Whilst sharing best practice nationally is to be welcomed this should be used to inform local decision making. East Devon have successfully introduced an enhanced recycling service alongside reducing residual waste collection to every 3 weeks. The results speak for themselves – 60.5% recycling rate with 89% resident satisfaction rate. Other District councils in Devon are now considering introducing 3 weekly residual waste collections as it encourages residents to make full use of their recycling containers including the weekly food waste collections.

I would hope that you will give due consideration to the points that I have raised – ultimately we all are working towards the same goal of managing waste as close to the top of the hierarchy as possible, reducing our carbon footprint and meeting the needs of our residents. However I hope that you would agree that it has to be affordable and sustainable.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Jung', is centered on the page. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor Geoff Jung
Chair Devon Authorities Strategic Waste Committee

Cc: Mel Stride MP, Neil Parish MP, Simon Jupp MP