

Cllr Dr Robert Clegg
Cabinet Member for Environmental Services,
Climate Action and Nature Recovery
Vale of White Horse District Council
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**County Hall
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**Cllr Laura Gordon
Cabinet Member for
Environment and Economy**

By email

17 July 2026

Dear Councillor Clegg

Thank you for your letter of 26 June 2026 regarding the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) booking system and for setting out the concerns raised by Members of Vale of White Horse District Council.

Firstly, I agree that the Vale has an excellent record on fly-tipping enforcement. The work undertaken by your officers has made an important contribution to tackling environmental crime across the district and in ensuring that areas are not blighted by fly-tipping. The county council is equally concerned about the impact of fly-tipping. As the waste disposal authority, the county council bears the cost of disposing of fly-tipped waste collected by district councils, and we therefore share your interest in ensuring that any changes to HWRC operations do not lead to increased fly-tipping.

We are closely monitoring the impacts of the new booking system and associated site access arrangements. At present, the data available to us does not identify any increase in fly-tipping that can be linked to the introduction of the booking system, nor any new trends emerging suggesting there is any particular change occurring in local fly-tipping more generally against historical norms. We recognise the importance of continuing to monitor this position and are grateful that Vale, and the other Oxfordshire councils, have shared their fly-tipping data with us. This information will be valuable in helping us assess wider system impacts, and we greatly value the close working relationship between our respective officer teams.

With regard to your request for site usage data, please see table below for traffic telemetry data for Drayton HWRC, and I have also included data covering the other sites as well where data is available. You note that Stanford Quarry was absent from previous releases, and it continues to be. Unfortunately, the vehicle counting equipment at Stanford HWRC is not operating accurately and therefore the data currently available is not sufficiently reliable to publish. These issues with the telemetry equipment are being addressed, and whilst this will not allow us to see backdated traffic information, moving forwards we shall be collecting data that would be useful for future. However we believe a safe assumption is that the number of customers has reduced by a similar amount to that across the other sites, as it is remarkably consistent.

Drayton HWRC Traffic Telemetry	Jan (19th -)	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total
24-25 Telemetry	4692	11144	18647	20101	15996	70580
25-26 Telemetry	2780	6872	9524	11297	11540	42013
Difference	-1912	-4272	-9123	-8804	-4456	28567
Percentage change	-40.8%	38.3%	48.9%	43.8%	27.9%	40.5%

Telemetry (all HWRCs)	Jan (19th -)	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total
24-25 Telemetry	20914	49587	76595	79046	73687	299829
25-26 Telemetry	13525	32128	44259	49891	50480	190283
Difference	-7389	17459	32336	29155	23207	109546
Percentage change	-35.3%	35.2%	42.2%	36.9%	31.5%	-36.5%

In response to the specific questions raised by your Full Council:

How is the County Council mitigating any risk of digital exclusion with the new booking system?

The booking system can be accessed online, but we recognised before introducing it that some residents may have limited access to digital services. To address this, residents who are unable to use the online system can make bookings via the Council's Customer Contact Centre by telephone. This approach mirrors existing arrangements used for other HWRC services and ensures that residents are not excluded from accessing the sites because of a lack of digital access. The same option was available for those making DIY waste bookings under the previous system.

How is the County Council ensuring that there is no indirect discrimination arising from the new rules?

Prior to implementation, the booking system was subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment. The assessment did not identify any direct or indirect discrimination arising from the proposals. The Council will continue to monitor the operation of the system and consider any issues raised by residents as part of the ongoing review process.

What more can the County Council do to ensure that residents can access HWRCs regardless of infirmity or disability?

The introduction of the booking system and improved traffic management arrangements have reduced queuing and improved the flow of vehicles through sites. This has enabled site staff to spend more time assisting residents, including where support is required.

Assistance has always been available to customers who require help using the facilities, although the new changes mean site teams are now even better able to provide support to residents who may have difficulty managing their waste independently.

You also asked about the review of the booking system. I can confirm that Oxfordshire County Council will undertake a formal review of the HWRC access arrangements and booking system, with the findings to be published in December 2026. This timetable will allow sufficient operational data to be collected and assessed, including consideration of accessibility, customer experience, operational performance, recycling outcomes and wider impacts such as fly-tipping. We agree that an evidence-based approach is essential to understanding the full effects of the changes and informing any future decisions.

Thank you again for writing and for the constructive approach taken by Vale of White Horse District Council. We look forward to continuing to work closely together through the Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership and through our ongoing officer engagement as the review progresses.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura Gordon', with a stylized, flowing script.

Cllr Laura Gordon
Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy