

SUBMISSION FROM BALDOCK BEATS WASTE (09.01.19)

What do we want NHDC to do about waste?

A Consistent Waste Disposal Service

Waste Aware's Duncan Jones made clear in a recent talk in Baldock that what this area, this county and this country need is a consistent waste disposal service which informs the public fully and encourages the public to make the right choices and carry out effective waste disposal. This would facilitate a higher level of recycling at less cost to public and environment. At the moment different areas of Hertfordshire, let alone different parts of the country do things differently and this confuses everyone's efforts to recycle. I would ask NHDC to support all efforts to get this in place.

Publicity and Encouragement

We would like more publicity from NHDC about what they are doing about Waste and recycling (eg no single use plastic/ water bottles in their offices, projects to help particular groups) and to encourage businesses, schools and restaurants working to reduce waste and their efforts to go plastic free. We need more than the odd email or Facebook post which reaches only the few if they're looking. Perhaps a weekly page in the Comet and monthly billboards conspicuous in each town.

Rubbish Clearance from approach roads

The NHDC should take more responsibility for clearing rubbish from the approach roads into towns which might not be covered by normal cleaning agencies as town centres are. Could people on community service be asked to do this? It would be great if NHDC could organise litter-picking sessions for members of the public to join or just more freely lend out the simple apparatus required.

Stopping Food Waste at home

Food Waste is a difficult problem with several facets. Most food waste occurs at home (portion size, overbuying, bad storage, over emphasis on food labels, lack of family knowledge passed on) and since the teaching of food in schools has been run down nationally many people grow up with a haphazard sense of food use which leads to waste. The local councils could supply information in public places and run free courses in schools and other public places to help improve awareness e.g. offer to support PSHE lessons.

Supporting Shops and restaurants/ cafés

Shops and restaurants should be given more encouragement to give leftover food to the public through food banks, homeless charities and places like the Best Before Café in Letchworth. More towns could be served by this. NHDC could help by providing transport for this food and by creating a "register" of potential donors and receivers.

Supporting Voluntary Local Events

We have some very successful public events in local towns, for instance music festivals food festivals charity sporting events, which create a lot of publicity and increased footfall for the towns and their businesses. However, they can also create more public food waste and other rubbish, some of which is recyclable. Rather than penalising the organisers and their volunteers for the behaviour of their supporters how much better would it be if the council would provide extra rubbish bins and recycling bins and bins for food waste only? With a council presence at the events I'm sure most people would be only too happy to comply with the sensible rules which keep their town clean. The fact that they don't necessarily at the moment is surely because the facilities are not provided as a routine by their council with their money. The council need to be seen to be leading these things. For all the waste to be treated as rubbish whatever its type and thrown into landfill is appalling.

Baldock Beats Waste's group list of ideas

My group did send a list of their suggestions for NHDC to consider some time ago and I believe that NHDC are taking some of these up already like "split" waste bins (recyclable/rubbish) in ALL towns as already in Hitchin or multi designated bins (e.g. rubbish/paper/plastics/food) as in other countries like Germany. We need these provisions as soon as possible.

Chewing gum

Chewing gum is a real blight on our streets but provision for its collection is limited and not obvious. The main material from gum can be extracted and as it is a plastic it can be recycled into useful stuff. GUMDROP uses waste chewing gum to make bins for chewers to drop their gum into.

Here are a couple of other points from our list concerning waste:

Litterpicking stations round Baldock as well as Greenway. They could be no more obtrusive than fire fighting equipment points. Bins there for refuse/ recycling what is collected.