# Newbury residents push back against plans for three-weekly bin collections



Plans to switch to three-weekly bin collections in Newbury, West Berkshire, have elicited significant backlash from residents, raising questions about the council's engagement process and the broader implications for community waste management. The Liberal Democrat-led council, which currently operates a fortnightly collection schedule, aims to implement this change as part of a draft waste strategy projected to save £150,000 annually. However, many locals argue that the consultation process preceding this decision was fundamentally flawed, lacking adequate awareness measures that might have better informed them about the proposed switch.

Niki Marshall, a leading campaigner against the change, highlighted concerns about increased waste accumulation and potential pest problems. Speaking about the community's sentiments, she noted that families with young children, the elderly, and those with specific medical needs are particularly anxious about the implications of less frequent waste collections. This sentiment isn't isolated; a consultation process reportedly yielded over 5,000 responses, predominantly opposing the change.

The council’s assertion that the three-week collection schedule will not only enhance waste management but also improve recycling rates is met with skepticism. Councillor Stuart Gourley acknowledged that approximately 43% of the waste in black bins is recyclable, indicating a need for improved recycling initiatives. Furthermore, he stated the importance of listening to public feedback, emphasising that waste services are among the most visible services provided to residents.

The overarching strategy includes ambitious goals such as increasing recycling rates to 60% by 2030 and reducing carbon emissions, which aligns with broader objectives in sustainable waste management. However, many residents seem unconvinced that reducing the frequency of collections will facilitate those goals. As part of the proposed strategy, the council intends to leverage public insights gathered throughout the consultation process, scheduled to conclude by November 2024. Insights from these discussions will be incorporated into a report due for release in December.

As local councils across the UK grapple with sustainability and waste management, the effectiveness of less frequent collections remains a contentious issue. Past experiences in other regions suggest that such measures may indeed spur higher recycling rates due to the need for residents to be more deliberate in waste segregation. Yet, critics remain cautious, warning that a decrease in service frequency could lead to a notable deterioration in community hygiene and sanitation.

The council’s draft waste strategy is still under review and will be presented for executive consideration in the spring of 2025. Until then, campaigners continue to mobilise residents in an effort to hold the council accountable, advocating for a thorough reassessment of the proposed changes to ensure that the health and wellbeing of the community remain paramount.

In this ongoing debate, the solution may not lie solely in the frequency of waste collections but in fostering a collective commitment to responsible waste management practices and robust community engagement. As Newbury navigates these challenges, the direction taken may well set a precedent for other councils facing similar dilemmas in the future.

### Reference Map

1. Lead article
2. Related summary (2)
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Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2054831/outrage-lib-dem-council-three-week-bin-collections> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/plans-for-3-weekly-black-bin-collections-get-scrutiny-at-wes-9407758/> - West Berkshire Council is considering reducing black bin collections from fortnightly to every three weeks, aiming to save £150,000 annually and boost recycling rates. A public consultation received over 5,000 responses, with most opposing the change. The council's draft waste strategy, which includes this proposal, is under review and will be considered by the executive in spring 2025. The final strategy will be published on the council's website. ([newburytoday.co.uk](https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/plans-for-3-weekly-black-bin-collections-get-scrutiny-at-wes-9407758/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/draft-waste-management-strategy> - West Berkshire Council's draft Waste Management Strategy 2025-2032 proposes increasing recycling rates to 60% by 2030 and reducing black bin waste collections from fortnightly to every three weeks. The strategy aims to improve waste management performance, promote recycling initiatives, and reduce carbon emissions. A public consultation on the draft strategy closed on 6 November 2024, with feedback to inform the final strategy. ([westberks.gov.uk](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/draft-waste-management-strategy?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/fewer-bin-collections-make-us-better-at-recycling-say-west-b-9326049/> - Consultants hired by West Berkshire Council suggest that reducing black bin collections to every three or four weeks could improve recycling rates. The proposal is part of the council's efforts to develop a new waste strategy aimed at increasing recycling and reducing carbon emissions. The council is seeking public feedback on this proposal. ([newburytoday.co.uk](https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/fewer-bin-collections-make-us-better-at-recycling-say-west-b-9326049/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/poll-should-west-berks-change-bin-collections-from-fortnigh-9391142/> - A public consultation on West Berkshire Council's proposal to change bin collections from fortnightly to every three weeks closed on 6 November 2024. Feedback from the consultation will form a final report to be published in December. The council aims to increase recycling rates and reduce waste generation through this change. ([newburytoday.co.uk](https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/poll-should-west-berks-change-bin-collections-from-fortnigh-9391142/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/have-your-say-on-plans-to-switch-west-berkshire-s-bin-collec-9387227/> - West Berkshire Council is consulting on plans to switch waste collections from fortnightly to every three weeks. The consultation aims to boost recycling rates and help the council work towards being carbon negative by 2040. Information sessions are planned to gather public opinion on the proposed change. ([newburytoday.co.uk](https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/have-your-say-on-plans-to-switch-west-berkshire-s-bin-collec-9387227/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c0e1yvw48jpo> - West Berkshire Council is seeking residents' views on changing general rubbish collections to every three weeks. The move aims to increase recycling and composting rates. A six-week consultation on the proposal runs until 6 November 2024. The council has found that a significant portion of black bin waste is recyclable or compostable. ([bbc.co.uk](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c0e1yvw48jpo?utm_source=openai))