

RICHBOROUGH ACTION GROUP

Our group believes that Richborough HWRC (and others) site should stay open and regrets how Kent figure in the Table below reinforce the view that more sites should be open rather than close any!

County	Population	No. Of Sites	Sites per head of population
East Sussex	517,040	12	1:43,087
Hampshire	1,296,800	24	1:54,033
West Sussex	780,000	11	1:70,909
Kent	1,427,400	19	1:75,126
Essex	1,600,000	21	1:76,190

1. Despite Protestations to the Contrary

Despite efforts by KCC villagers and residents in and around Sandwich can point to sites where fly-tipping even now takes place. Finance and resources make this a challenging area to police 100% at the best of times, closure of a site like Richborough will increase this risk, any increase would be a direct result of a decision for closure.

2. Flawed Consultation

Few people in the affected areas have been made aware of the proposals. The 85% figure of satisfaction, if the survey is to be believed, is very high and closing sites is a mistaken response to Council success.

3. Flawed Information Received or Absent

Leading questions in the survey (for example, Q's 15 & 17) produce distorted and inaccurate responses which do not aid a real 'consultative' process. No data has been included in papers regarding the impact of closure on neighbouring sites. One example of response is that "a large minority of respondents agreed to closure" in response to a leading question, a majority did not! No detail on alternative options is provided. The absence of criteria or data provided makes a reasoned judgement impossible and, along with the limited reach of the consultation, is why RAG believes it would be prudent and sensitive of the Council to explore alternatives to closure before reaching any decision. Closure can only worsen our service in comparison with three of our county neighbours noted in the table above?

4. The Corridor, Localism and an Economic Centre

We understand that 63% of material received by Richborough is reclaimable. We are not given comparative figures with other sites nor what makes any site more or less economic. We wonder why, inconsideration of the Strategic Plan regarding the Richborough Corridor, this closure was excluded. We note that Recycling Sites are

included in these proposals. We believe that retaining the current Site until the Corridor's proposals are implemented makes sense. If there are to be such centres in the future we cannot believe that KCC feel that these would be uneconomic then, so why now? Dover D.C. are charging for green waste thought Localism Act meant joined-up thinking, residents around our area do not see this!

5. Flawed Facts and Figures

No detail of where the 150 households not affected is provided. We argue that far more than 150 households will be affected especially when one takes account of increased queue times, impact on residents of neighbouring sites, journey times. If the guide time of 15/20mins travel to sites is being maintained no figures are provided to justify this figure. Flawed data, insufficient evidence, public concern in the light of a successful service mean KEEP RICHBOROUGH HWRC OPEN!

Jeffrey Loffman
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