

# Key findings report

## Household Waste and Recycling Centre Savings Survey 2016



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### **Background to the service and purpose of consultation:**

Powys County Council sought the views of residents around proposals which would impact on the future of the county's household waste and recycling centres. The five proposals set out would allow the council to make savings ranging from £140k to £784K from the Waste and Recycling budget. The proposals were put forward as part of a number being considered to ensure the council met its overall budget savings target of £22m over the next three years. The proposals were:

<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Reduce opening day's at all five sites to three days per week to include Saturday and Sunday and one weekday. This would save £140k (£28k per site)</b>
<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Close one site (either one in Montgomeryshire or one in Brecknockshire) for savings of £350k.</b>
<b>Option 3</b>	<b>Close one site (as above) and reduce opening days at the remaining four sites to save £462k.</b>
<b>Option 4</b>	<b>Close two sites leaving one in each shire to save the required £700k.</b>
<b>Option 5</b>	<b>Close two sites and reduce opening times at the remaining three sites to save £784k.</b>

### **Background to the consultation/engagement exercise:**

A comprehensive survey was prepared seeking views not only on the proposals, but also asking questions to gain insights into how and what residents currently take to the Household Waste and Recycling Centres, what times they visit, what times would best suit them and how far they had to travel to get to their nearest site.

The survey was accessible online via the council's 'Have Your Say' consultation page and hard copies were also made available in all the county libraries in English and Welsh.

The consultation exercise was publicised using a mix of channels including issuing press releases and use of social media and it was supported by a number of local town, community and county councillors who opted to print and distribute paper copies to interested residents.

### **Report format:**

The purpose of this report is to set out the findings from the consultation including both the response received via the survey alongside any additional views received including petitions and social media commentary. It firstly gives an overview of who and what responses were received and then provides the reader with the key

findings followed by a fuller question by question analysis and use of charts to help clearly show the results.

**Response rate:**

In terms of the survey, 882 responses were received and analysed. This included all the paper surveys that were received up until and including Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December. Note: Powys decided to allow an extra three weeks past the closing date to ensure all the surveys dropped off at libraries or collected on behalf of communities were input into the database and included in the analysis.

**Additional views and comments received:**

Alongside views received via the survey over 70 letters/emails and web comments were made and two petitions received. Representations from AMs Kirsty Williams and Russell George and other local councillors and some organisations like the Brecon Beacons National Park were also considered.

In total, allowing for the fact that some residents who completed a survey may have also signed the petition and written a letter into the council, it's estimated that around 5500 residents have responded to the consultation in one way or another.

This feedback has provided Powys County Council and the service with a very robust and representative view from its residents around the future of the five household waste and recycling centres.

Further details with regard to the petitions and the views expressed via letters, emails, social media and representations are provided on page 25.

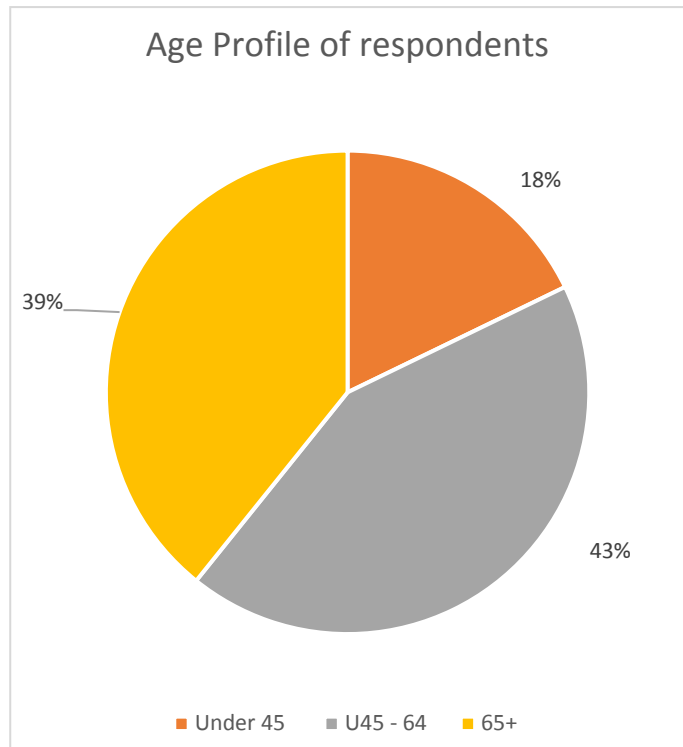
The following pages provide a focus on the survey responses and analysis.

**Key profile data:**

In total 882 residents responded to the survey. Of these 882, only seven stated that they were a trader with a commercial recycling permit and five choose not to give their status. 870 were thus householders.

A number of respondents choose not to answer all the profile questions but in terms of the age profile 43% of the 724 who did were aged between 45 and 64 years of age and 39% were aged 65+.

Only 18% of respondents were under the age of 45.



Age	Number	%
Under 45	129	18%
45 – 64 years	311	43%
65+ years	284	39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>100%</b>

In terms of the gender split 51% of those who answered the question (686 respondents did so) 51% were male and 49% female.

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	347	51%
Female	339	49%
<b>Total</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Key Findings:**

### **THE PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD**

- Over half (56.5%) of the 785 respondents who ranked the proposals in order of preference are keen to see all five sites remain open as their first choice even if this does mean the required savings target is not met.
- Just under a quarter (22%) of the 785 ranked Option 4 as their first choice, 15% ranked Option 5 as their first choice followed by 4.5% voting for Option 3 and only 2% choosing Option 2 as their first choice.
- When analysing this data further it is clear that residents from Newtown, Welshpool and Ystradgynlais were keener to see all five sites remain open than those residents who use the Brecon or Llandegley sites. This is likely to be because residents in the latter areas didn't feel their site was at risk and thus a number of them had chosen Option 4 instead as their first choice to make the necessary savings.
- When asked to give reasons for their first choice, residents who had chosen Option 1 felt that there would be an increase in fly tipping if a site closed, that more people would end up burning their waste, that the travel times would be significantly increased for residents and this was unfair and actually harmful to the environment and that the proposal to close some sites was counter intuitive and contradicting all the marketing and recycling messages we give out.
- 343 respondents choose not to rank anything other than their first choice.

### **USAGE AND DISTANCE TRAVELLED FEEDBACK**

- 75% of residents said that they travelled between 0 – 10 miles currently to get to the site they used.
- 25% of respondents stated they took items to their household waste and recycling site once a month whilst a similar number (24%) said they actually visited once a fortnight. 20% said they took items for recycling/disposal once a week. A further fifth of respondents (20%) didn't visit so frequently – they stated it was more likely to be once every couple of months that they would do so.
- However, 8% said they used their site more than once a week.
- The most popular times to visit were weekday mornings and Saturday mornings.
- When asked when people would prefer the sites to be open there was limited appetite for early morning or late evening opening hours during the summer months and a clear indication that people would rather the current opening hours were protected.

- Electrical waste, hard plastics, garden waste, cardboard and hazardous waste were the most likely items that people disposed of at the sites. There were numerous comments made from residents around the difficulties they would face regarding the disposal of garden waste if a site were to close near them.
- Gas bottles and tyres were the least deposited items.
- 84% of respondents stated that they used the weekly kerbside recycling service for glass, 88% used the blue box for their paper and cardboard and 89% used the red box for plastics.
- Slightly fewer - 77% - stated that they used their green food caddy and put this out for collection.

## Question by question analysis.

**Q1. Firstly we'd like to ask on what basis you are responding to this survey. Are you...?**

Answer	Number	Percentage
A householder	870	99%
A trader with a commercial recycling permit	7	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Five respondents who answered subsequent questions choose not to give any details to Q1.*

99% of those who completed the survey were householders with only 1% being traders.

The views expressed by the seven traders were overall no different to those expressed by householders so the feedback includes both sets of respondents. Traders who pay for a permit provide a source of income for Powys County Council so they were invited to comment on the proposals.

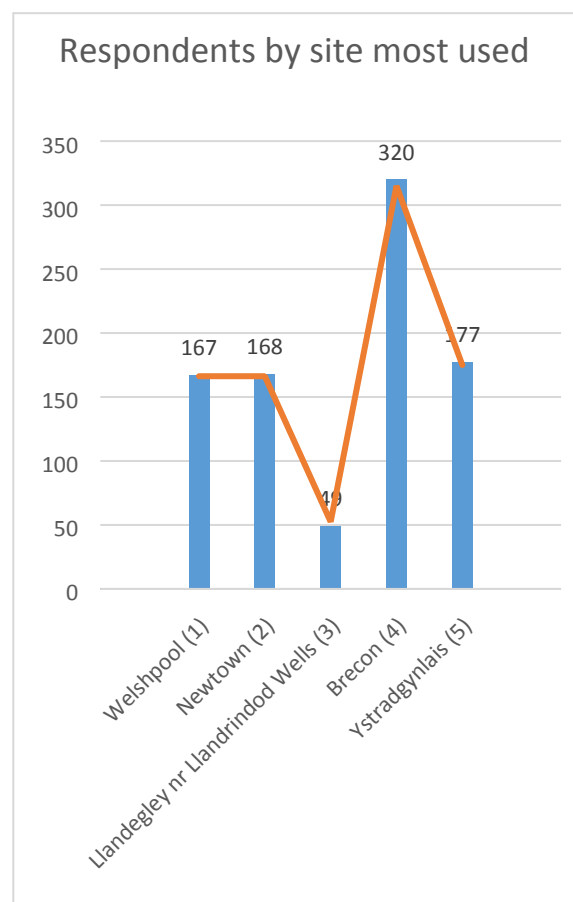
**Q2. Which of the five Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRC) do you tend to use the most? One person didn't answer this question.**

The analysis showed that 36% of the 821 respondents stated that they used the Brecon site compared to only 6% who used the Llandegley one.

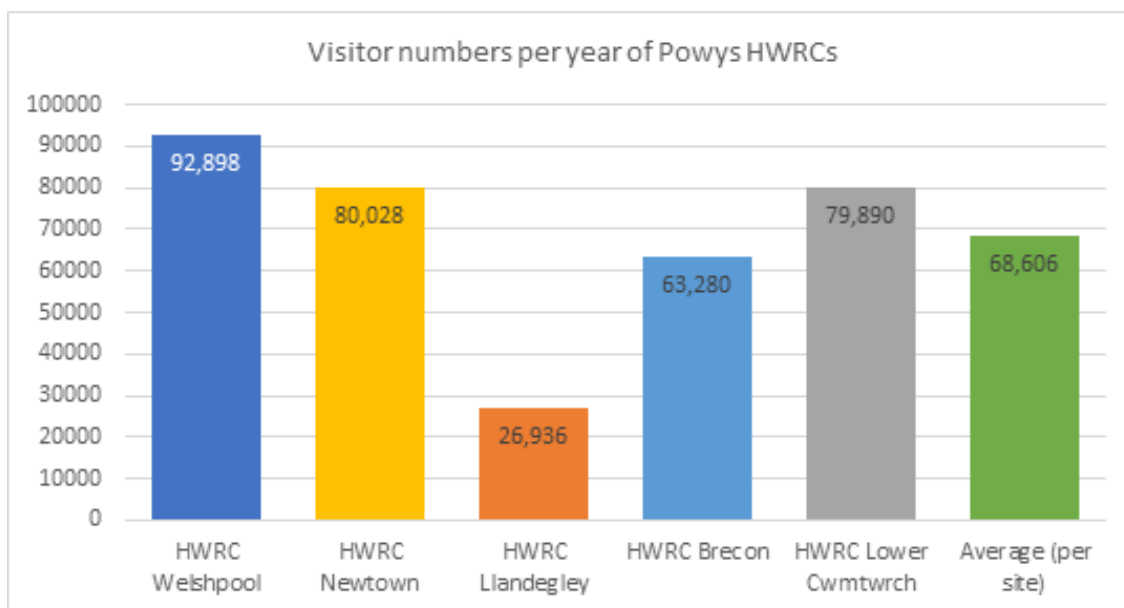
However overall there appeared to be a decent spread of views and responses from all the affected sites with 20% of respondents saying they used Ystradgynlais and 19% respectively saying they used either Welshpool or Newtown.

The proposals set out were least likely to affect site users in mid Powys so it's likely that a number of residents using the Llandegley site didn't bother to respond to the survey on that basis.

Interestingly when comparing the chart (right) with some figures around usage gathered by Powys County Council (next page) it is clear that the Welshpool site has the highest visitor numbers per year with Brecon being the fourth most visited site. However residents in Brecon felt strongly that their site should remain and voiced their concerns by completing the survey. They did this as opposed to raising a petition which was the preferred option chosen by residents in Ystradgynlais, Welshpool and Newtown. This may help to explain the difference in the two charts.

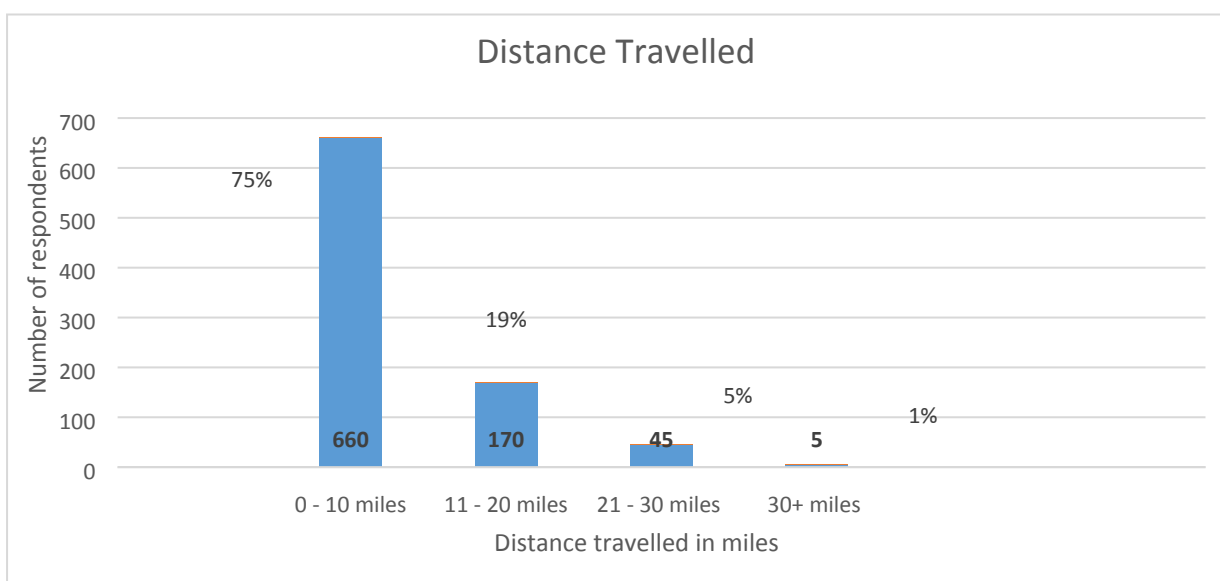






**Q2a. How far do you travel to get to this site?**

In terms of distance to travel to a site, three quarters (75%) of the 820 respondents who answered stated that they travelled between 0 – 10 miles to get to their preferred or local site. Only five people or 1% currently had to travel over 30 miles to get to a household waste and recycling centre. *Two people didn't answer this question.*

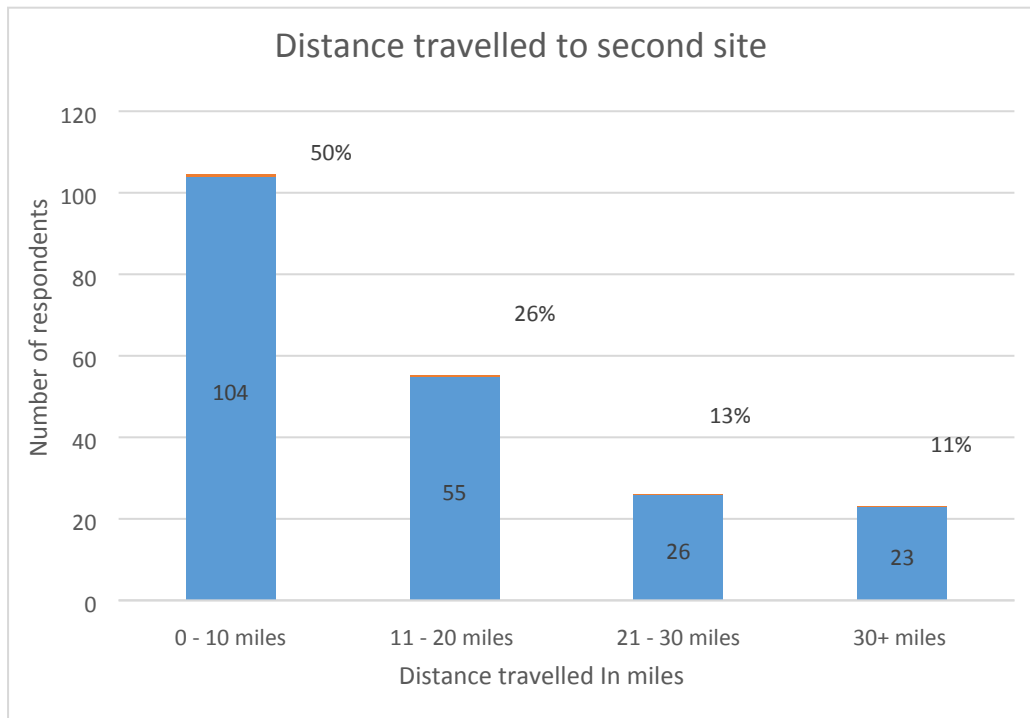


**Q2b. If you use another site please select from the list. 740 respondents didn't use another site so ignored this question.**

Answer	Number	Percentage
Welshpool	46	32%
Newtown	38	27%
Llandegley nr Llandrindod Wells	8	6%
Brecon	29	20%
Ystradgynlais	21	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100%</b>

The figures suggest that quite a few residents do and have used another site other than their preferred centre. Out of the 142 who answered this follow up question a third used Welshpool as an alternative whilst 27% used Newtown. It's likely that these residents use one or the other or both as needed. When asked how far they needed to travel to get to this second site 50% were still travelling between 0 – 9 miles whilst 26% stated they would need to travel up to 20 miles to deposit their waste/recyclables.

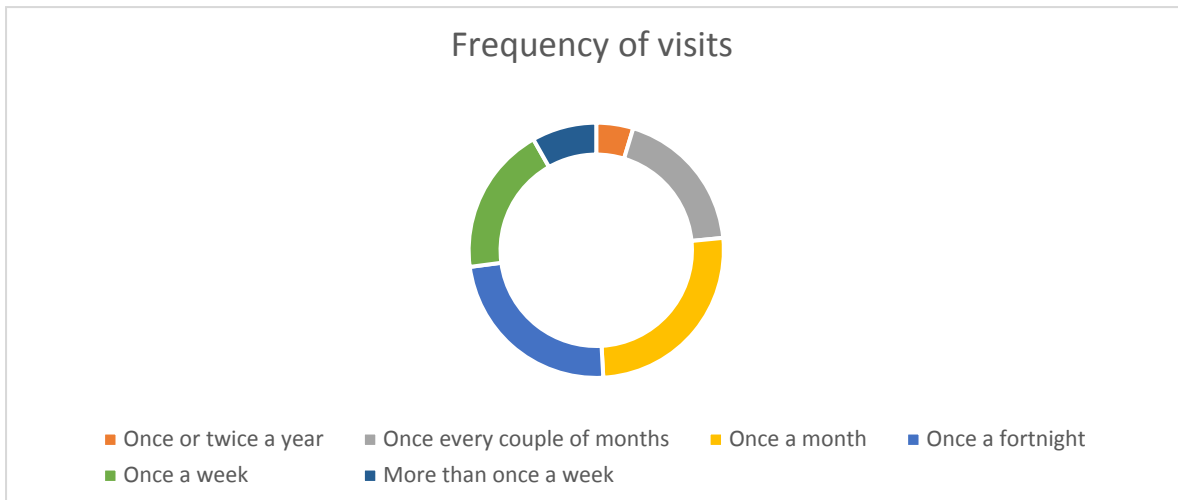
**Q2c. How far do you travel to get to this site?**



**Q3. How often do you tend to visit a HWRC?**

853 respondents choose to give an answer to this question.

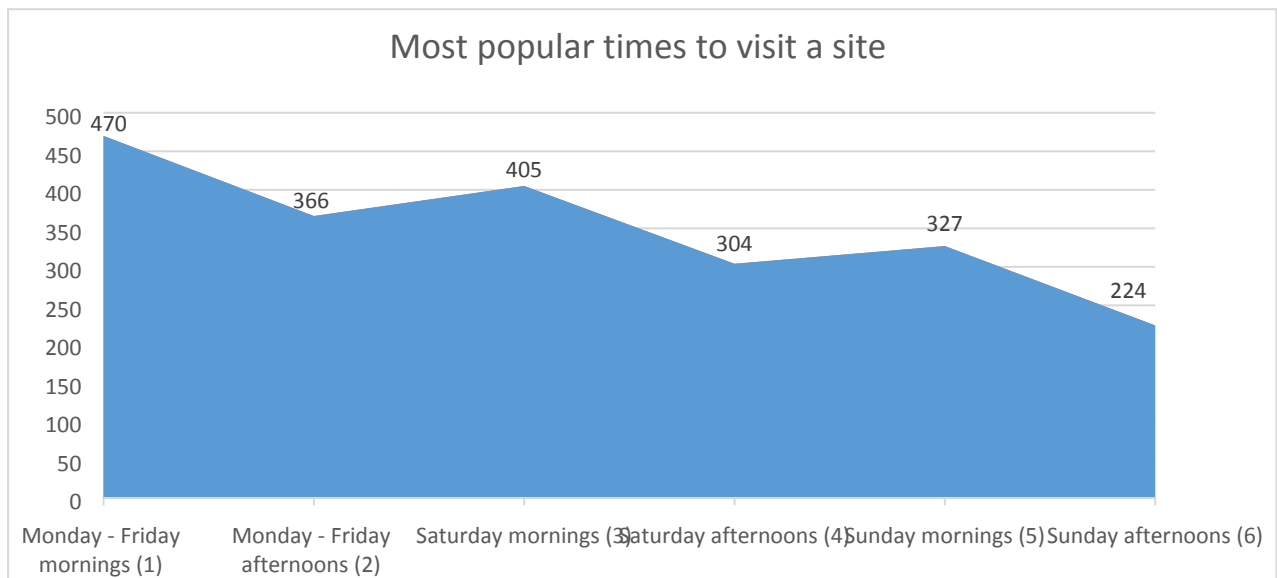
Frequency of visits	Number	Percentage
Once or twice a year	40	3%
Once every couple of months	160	20%
Once a month	219	25%
Once a fortnight	203	24%
Once a week	161	20%
More than once a week	70	8%
	<b>853</b>	<b>100%</b>



The chart above shows that only 3% of respondents stated that they used their site once or twice a year. A quarter are using the sites once a month, a further 24% of respondents are visiting once a fortnight and 20% once a week.

However 8% of respondents (70 residents) stated that they were using the sites more than once a week. When looking at these 70, two were traders one person didn't state their status but the rest were householders. 17 out of the 70 were retired but 36 were working either full, part-time or were self-employed. One person was permanently sick/disabled. The remainder choose not to give their working status. The postcodes given by these respondents were primarily from Ystradgynlais, Newtown or Brecon.

**Q3a. What days and times do you tend to visit the centre you use the most?**



The chart above shows that the most popular times/days for people to visit tends to be mornings. In this chart you can see that weekday mornings and Saturday mornings appear to be the most popular. This could be useful data if the proposal to reduce opening hours across all sites is considered the best way forward. The data will help the service to plan out opening times accordingly. The chart above does reflect the service's experience when site monitoring has been undertaken. Interestingly some of the traders who responded had opted for weekday afternoons, Saturday and Sunday mornings.

### Q3b. What days and times would best suit you?

As above residents/respondents were keen to sustain opening times to mornings both on weekday and at weekends. Weekday afternoons and then Sunday mornings were the next preferred opening times. The chart below gives the responses.

Opening Times	No of responses
Monday - Friday early morning - between 7am - 9am	93
<b>Monday - Friday mornings - between 9am - 12noon</b>	<b>435</b>
Monday - Friday afternoons - between 12noon - 5pm	403
Monday - Friday early evenings - between 5pm - 7pm (summer months only)	136
Saturday early morning - between 7am - 9am	104
<b>Saturday mornings - between 9am - 12noon</b>	<b>451</b>
Saturday afternoons - between 12noon - 5pm	382
Saturday early evening - between 5pm - 7pm (summer months only)	162
Sunday mornings - between 9am - 12noon	355
Sunday afternoon - between 12noon - 5pm	312
Sunday early evening - between 5pm - 7pm (summer months only)	141

The proposal to open either early morning or early evening during the summer months didn't appeal to most respondents with only a few expressing an interest in this option.

### Q4. What materials do you take to the site?

24 items were listed for respondents to select from. The table on the next page highlights all of these items in order of which were most frequently deposited at the sites.

The top five items were:

- Electrical goods
- Hard plastics
- Garden waste
- Cardboard
- Paint

Over half of the respondents (427) had stated that they took additional waste that wouldn't fit in their wheeled bin or purple sack to a site. The reasons why people were taking their residual household waste to a site wasn't sought at this point but the result could suggest the following:

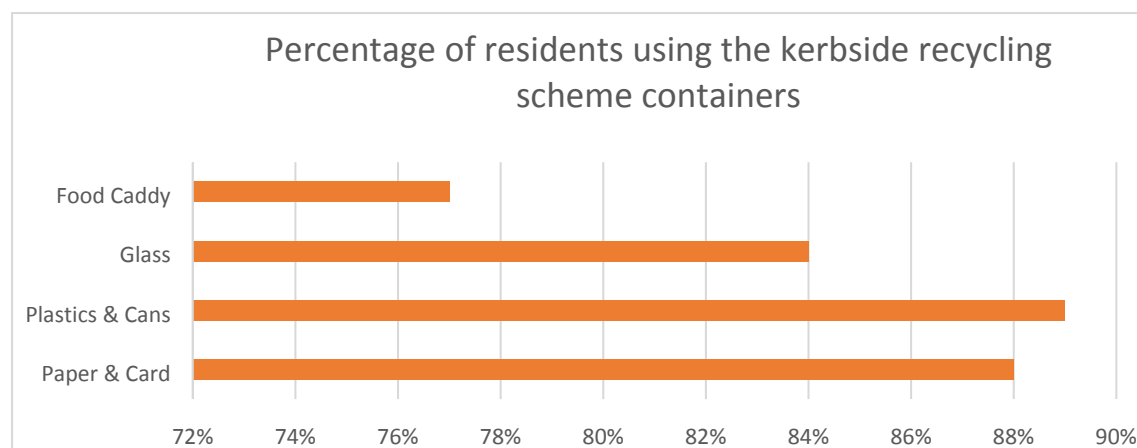
- Residents may not be aware that they can have additional boxes for recycling more of the kerbside collected material, i.e. cans and plastics, paper and card, glass, and food.
- Residents may not be recycling as much of their waste as they could. A standard size wheeled bin provides enough capacity for three weeks' worth of residual household waste for an average family. Households on purple sacks receive 52 sacks each year which is the equivalent of the standard wheeled bin if they put out three sacks per collection.
- Larger households may not have applied for a bigger wheeled bin and thus are using a HWRC site instead to dispose of extra waste.

Tyres and gas bottles were the least deposited items.

<b>Materials deposited in order</b>	<b>No of responses</b>
Electrical items e.g. lightbulbs, TVs, cookers, small domestic appliances e.g. curling tongs. (6)	<b>726</b>
Hard plastics like children's toys, garden furniture and washing up bowls etc. (10)	<b>622</b>
Garden waste (7)	<b>550</b>
Cardboard (4)	<b>538</b>
Other hazardous waste like paint, engine oil, weed killer etc. (11)	<b>537</b>
Scrap metals (19)	<b>517</b>
Old furniture (12)	<b>457</b>
Additional waste that won't fit in my wheeled bin or purple sack (1)	<b>427</b>
Batteries (2)	<b>423</b>
Old fridges/freezers (13)	<b>397</b>
Wood (24)	<b>414</b>
Carpets (5)	<b>386</b>
Textiles (22)	<b>337</b>
Old mattresses (14)	<b>317</b>
Soil / rubble (20)	<b>305</b>
Other glass products e.g. sheet glass (15)	<b>303</b>
Plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays. (17)	<b>279</b>
Tetrapak (21)	<b>251</b>
Glass bottles (9)	<b>191</b>
Paper (16)	<b>190</b>
Plasterboard (18)	<b>166</b>
Cans (3)	<b>157</b>
Tyres (23)	<b>81</b>
Gas Bottles (8)	<b>53</b>

75 respondents stated that they took something else to dispose of alongside the other materials listed in the chart above. Some of the items that people listed when asked included broken glass, bubble wrap, polystyrene, large cardboard cartons, damaged furniture, small metal objects, used cooking oil, ink cartridges, books, solid fuel ash, soft plastic, old clothing, duvets and magazines.

**Q4a. Which of the following do you use in relation to the weekly kerbside recycling service?**



The chart on the page above shows that the vast majority of those who completed the survey are using the boxes provided by Powys County Council to recycle their household waste. There seemed to be slightly less residents using the food caddy compared to the other boxes. 77% of respondents said they used the food caddy compared to 89% who used the red container to dispose of plastic materials like drinks bottles, yoghurt pots and food type containers.

**Q4b. If you don't use any of the boxes provided or perhaps only use one could you tell us a bit more about why that is?**

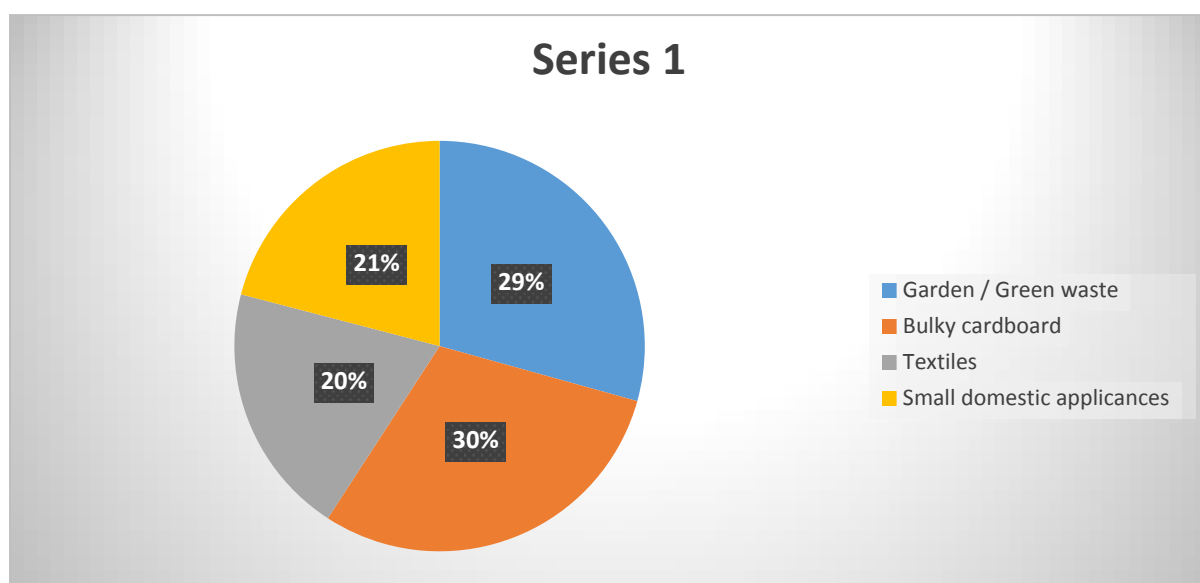
153 respondents choose to respond to this question.

A sample of the comments given is below but the key reasons for non-usage of the food caddy were either that households composted their food waste, fed it to their pets or didn't produce any to make it worthwhile using the food caddy.

However some other residents stated that they didn't receive the recycling service due to their location and chose instead to take their rubbish/recyclables to their local bring bank or HWRC instead.

836	None- Living on a470 - the wind tends to blow it into the road which can be hazardous.
844	Any kitchen waste I generate is simply placed in my compost bin. All households with gardens should be expected to do likewise.
853	Food waste goes to my compost heap. Glass jars, paper, cardboard, plastic and cans I take to the village recycling site.
856	Too heavy to carry down to collection point.
858	We do not have any food waste.
874	None - all my waste goes to Brecon. We live in an isolated area and can't use the collection service.

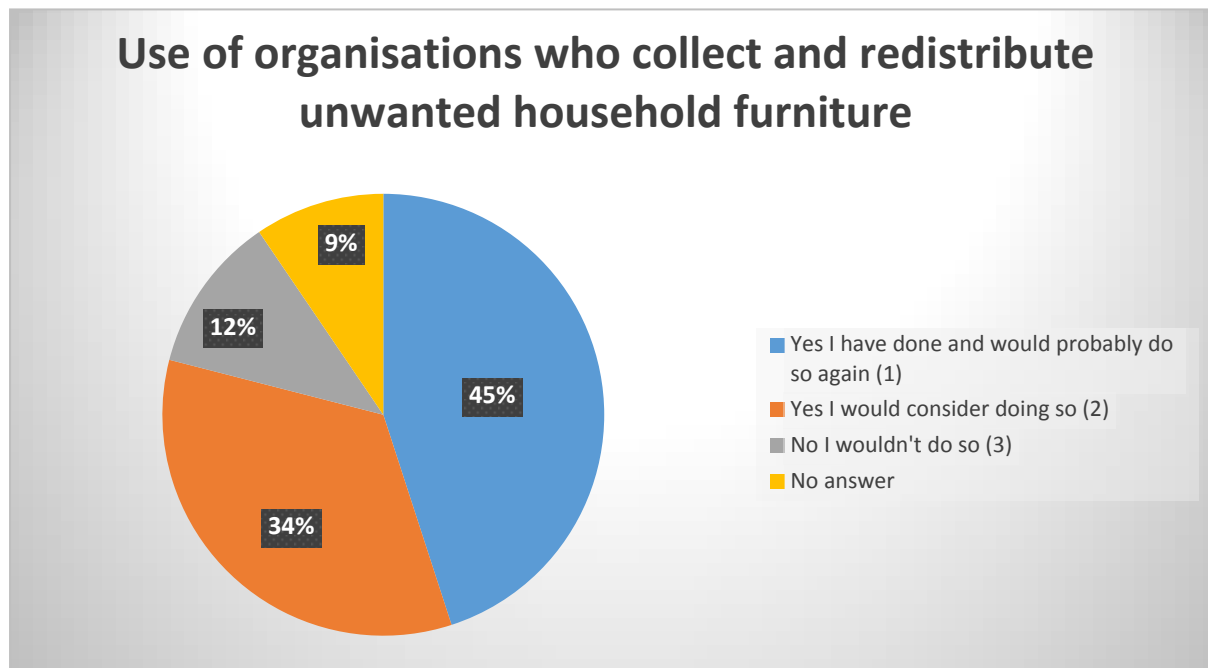
**Q4c. Do you use your local community bring site for any of the following items not collected at the kerbside?**



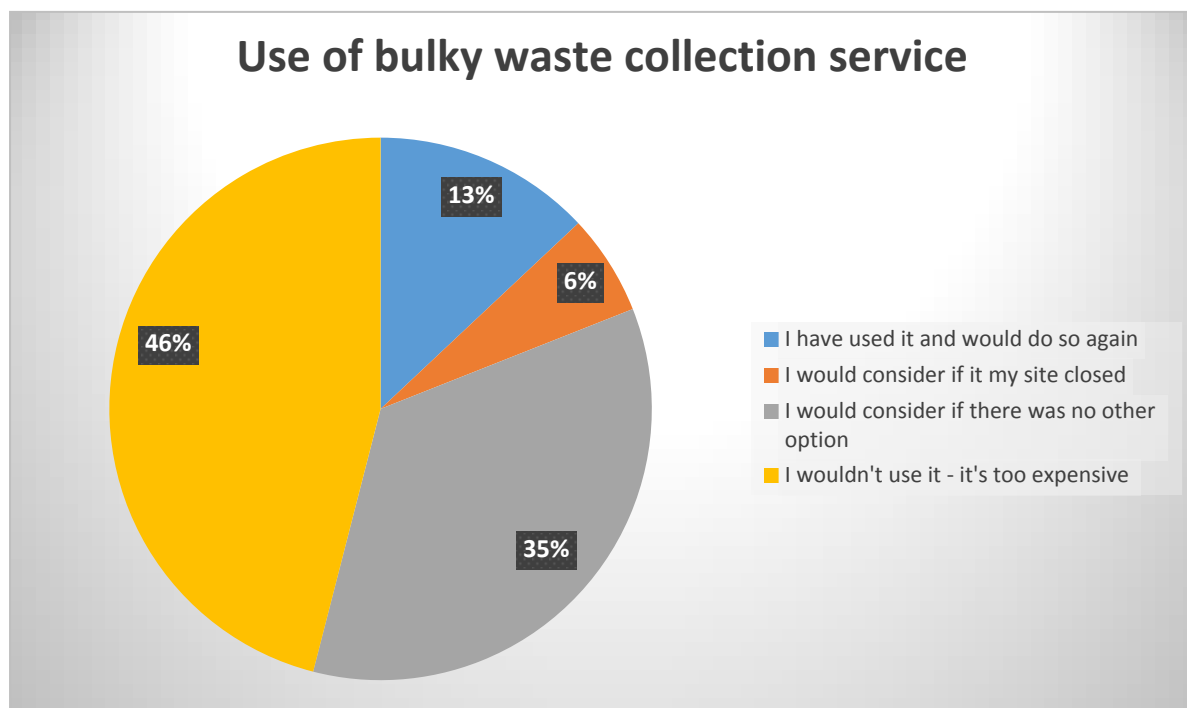
Just under a third of respondents used their local bring site for getting rid of bulky cardboard and green/garden waste. Around 20% took both old clothing/textiles and small domestic appliances where there was a bank of this type available. Not all sites have the latter.

**Q4d. Have you ever considered or would you consider contacting one of the organisations that collect household items like furniture, beds and other household products for free and pass them onto those in need?**

*Around half of the respondents answered this question. The results are shown in the chart below.*



**Q4e. Have you ever used or would you consider using the bulky waste collection service?**



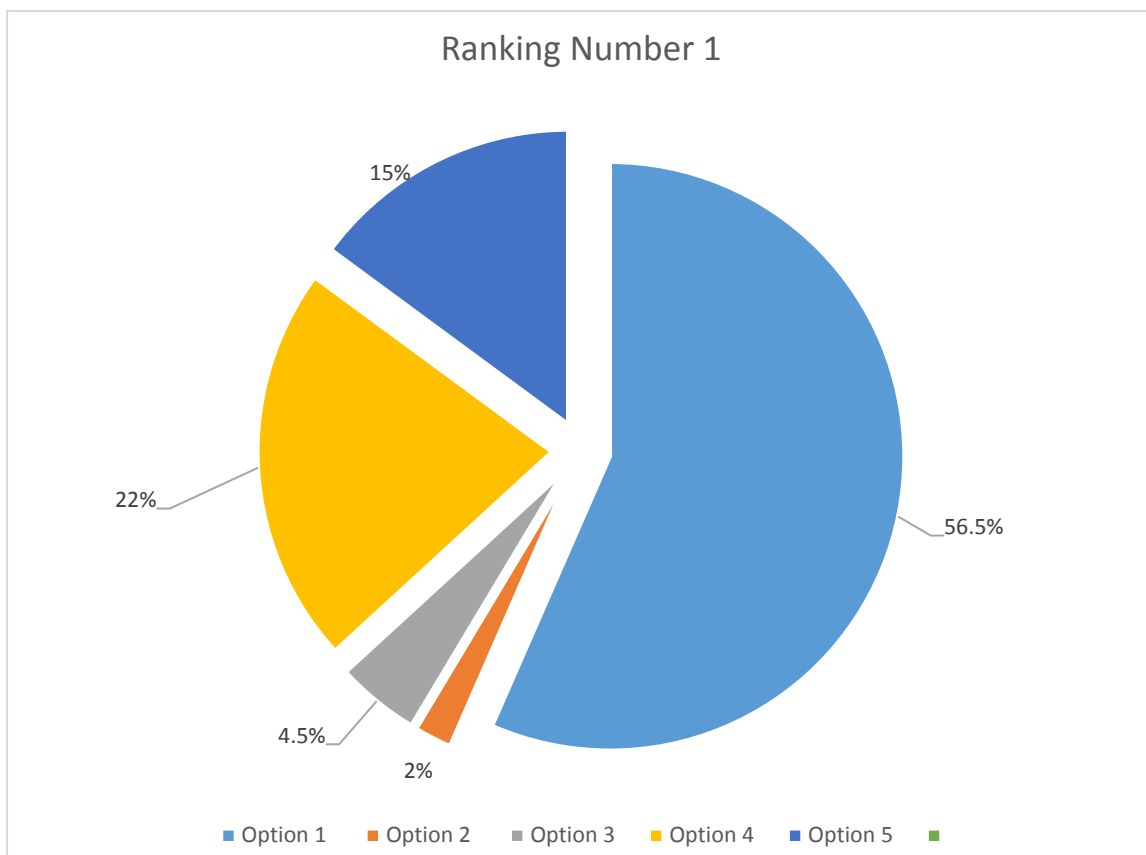
As above it is clear that a number of residents wouldn't use the service because they feel it is too expensive. 46% of the 788 who responded felt this way however 35% would consider using it if there were no other option available to them.

**Q5. There are five options put forward. Two will make the required £700k saving and three won't. If you prefer one of the options that only makes a partial saving then the shortfall will most likely have to be found elsewhere within the service's budget. Please read each of the following, consider in what order you would prioritise them and then rank as per the instructions.**

<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Reduce opening day's at all five sites to three days per week to include Saturday and Sunday and one weekday. This would save £140k (£28k per site)</b>
<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Close one site (either one in Montgomeryshire or one in Brecknockshire) for savings of £350k.</b>
<b>Option 3</b>	<b>Close one site (as above) and reduce opening days at the remaining four sites to save £462k.</b>
<b>Option 4</b>	<b>Close two sites leaving one in each shire to save the required £700k.</b>
<b>Option 5</b>	<b>Close two sites and reduce opening times at the remaining three sites to save £784k.</b>

785 residents answered the question which asked them to put the proposals into their preferred order.

### Ranking Number 1



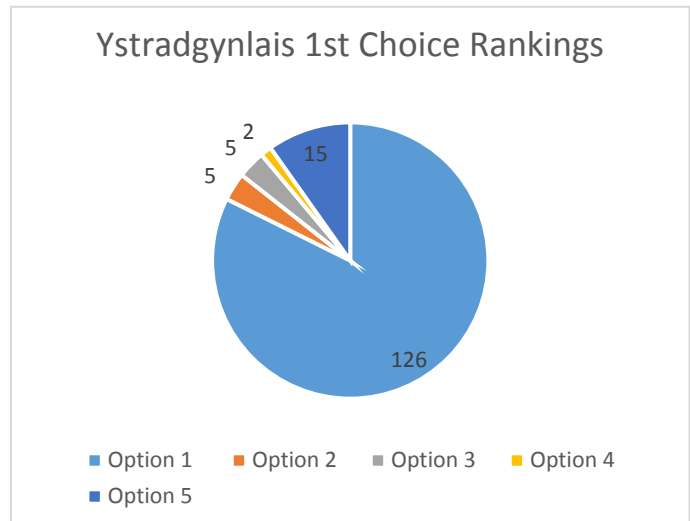
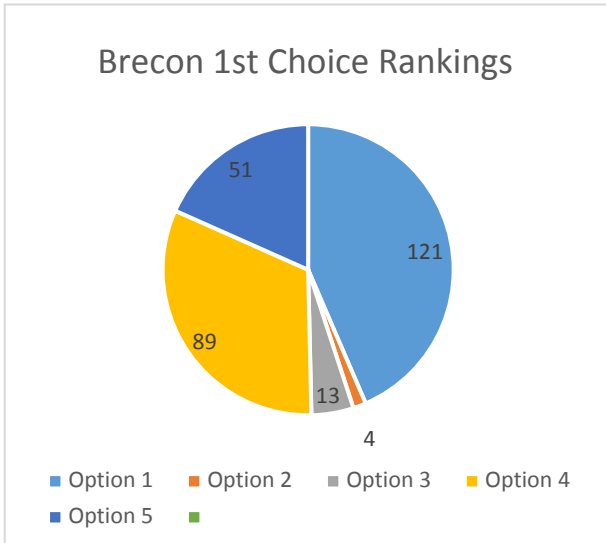


56.5% of respondents are keen to see all five sites remain open even if this does mean the required savings target is not met.

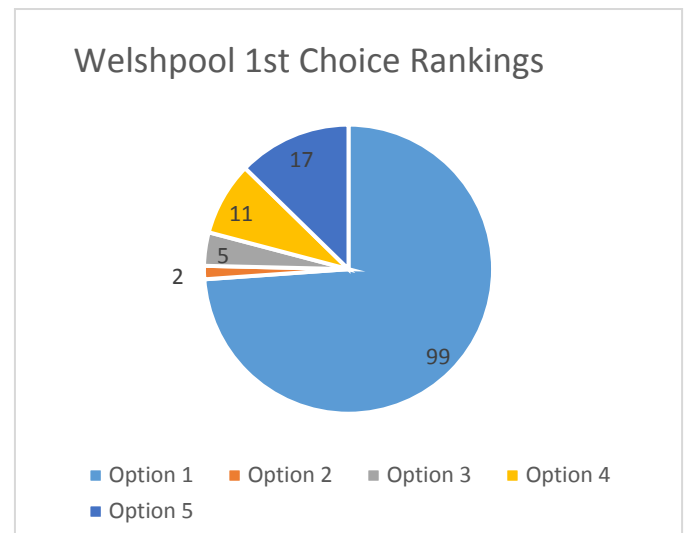
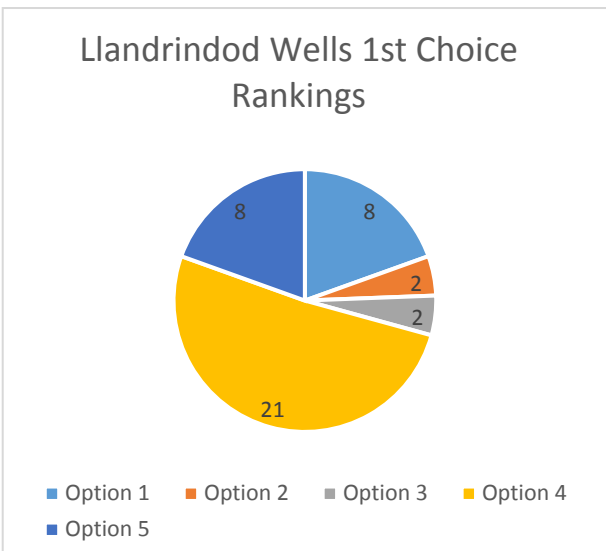
<b>Ranking Number 1 Results</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Option 1 - Reduce opening day's at all five sites to three days per week to include Saturday and Sunday and one weekday. (1)	<b>444</b>	<b>56.5%</b>
Option 2 - Close one site (either one in Montgomeryshire or one in Brecknockshire) for savings of £350k. (2)	<b>16</b>	<b>2%</b>
Option 3 - Close one site (as above) and reduce opening days at the remaining four sites to save £462k. (3)	<b>36</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
Option 4 - Close two sites leaving one in each shire. Brecon, Llandegley and Welshpool to save the required £700k. (4)	<b>172</b>	<b>22%</b>
Option 5 - Close two sites and reduce opening times at the remaining three to save £784k. (5)	<b>117</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>100%</b>

97 respondents chose not to answer this question.

The charts below show the first preference



choices by users stating the site they most use.



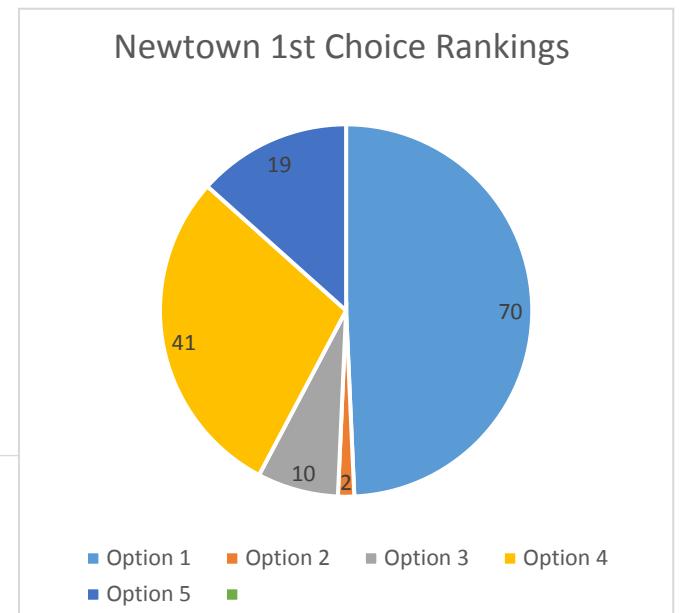
**Analysis:**

29 out of the 46 respondents who use the site in Llandrindod choose either option 4 or 5 as their first preference.

This is likely to be because they know the proposals don't have any impact on their ability to dispose of their bulky waste as none of the proposals threaten closure of the site in Radnorshire. Only 8 respondents choose Option 1 as their first preference.

One resident said:

*"I would actually like to see the sites retained as they encourage recycling and the money saved elsewhere - a move to*



*four weekly collections for wheelie bins for example or less salt on the roads when we don't need it. However, one site in each shire would seem fair - I collect items and visit sites infrequently. I would tend to use the site in the mid which would not be affected by the proposals so perhaps it is not fair for me to comment on the north and south options."*

Similarly when looking at the response from residents using the Brecon site it's clear that the 89 who chose Option 4 as their first option are likely to be of the opinion that Brecon would remain open. However the majority of Brecon residents (121) did feel Option 1 was their preferred choice.

In comparison when looking at the views from Ystradgynlais 126 out of the 153 residents who responded chose Option 1 as their first preference knowing that they would be impacted by the potential closure if one site in the Brecknockshire area were to close. Only two residents chose Option 4 as their first preference. One resident wrote:

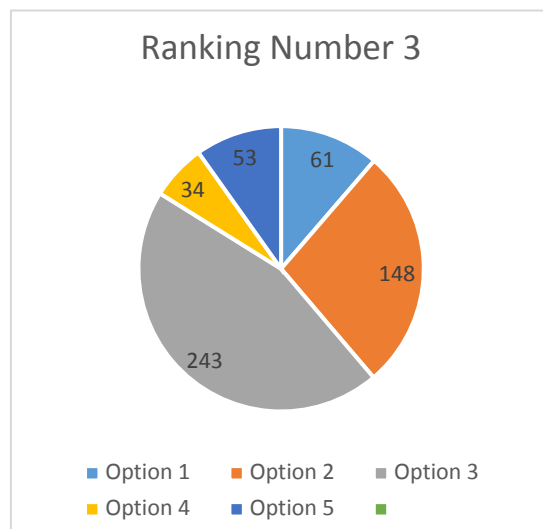
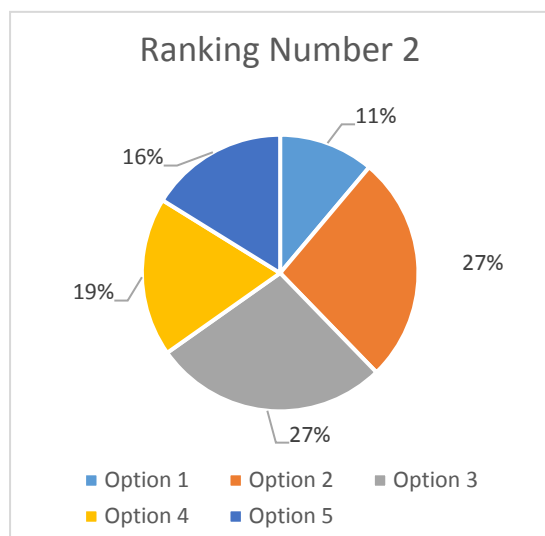
*"I know this option (Option1) has the smallest saving, but this is the only option where the Ystradgynlais site would remain open. If a choice had to be made between Ystradgynlais and Brecon remaining open, I can guarantee that Brecon would be it."*

Similarly Welshpool residents felt keeping all sites open but reducing their opening hours was a better option than anything else. 99 of the 134 respondents chose Option 1. Only 11 chose Option 4.

Interestingly when looking at Option 5 it appears that respondents in Ystradgynlais and Welshpool would rather see two sites closed and all sites reduce opening hours than see just two sites close and the other remain open on the current times. This appears to suggest an element of sharing the pain and a view that if cuts are needed to be implemented that Option 5 would allow for some element of shared reduction in service as opposed to Option 4 where residents living in some areas would have much better access than others.

### Ranking Number 2 and 3

The charts below show the overall second and third rankings for the proposals. For Ranking Number 2 Option 2 and Option 3 come out equal top with 27% choosing these as their second choice out of the five proposals. 243 residents (45%) selected Option 3 as their preferred third choice.



Residents continued to rank the proposals in the same order so that Option 4 is the fourth preferred choice and Option 5 is the fifth overall.

A number of residents however chose not to rank the options at all and instead wrote that none of the options were their preferred choice. These residents wanted the status quo to remain.

"Close no sites. Site closure will lead to more fly tipping and roadside litter."

"All are unacceptable. The council needs to look elsewhere to save money."

"We do not agree with Options 2-5."

"Options 2 to 5 are completely unacceptable. Option 1 is highly undesirable."

**Q5a. Please can you explain why you have ranked the proposals in the order you have.**

Option One. The key reasons for ranking this number one were primarily around the following factors:

- **Fly tipping.** The majority of comments given were that closing these sites would lead to a big increase in fly tipping and that the cost to deal with this would in time outweigh the savings that are made by closing two sites. People felt this was short-sighted.

**Quotes from respondents**

*"Option 1 would be my preferred choice but it won't make required savings. It's essential there are sufficient HRCs within Powys, otherwise fly tipping, burning of waste, etc. will almost certainly increase. Many residents would like the HRCs as a choice in safely disposing/recycling of their larger household waste."*

*"Closure of any sites will result in fly tipping, Option 1 is the best of a bad bunch."*

*"I think closing sites will actually cost more than it saves because of the amount of rubbish that will go to landfill if there is nowhere to recycle it (e.g. I take two black bags of tetra packs to Welshpool Centre every month) and also because of the increase in fly-tipping that will inevitably result."*

- **Travel times.** As a large rural county there was a view expressed by numerous residents that Powys needed the five sites to remain open because of the travel times to get to them. Some residents stated that they would otherwise be faced with a 50 mile round trip to take their bulky items to a site. In particular respondents from Ystradgynlais were concerned that the closure of their site would create a fly tipping culture.

**Quotes from respondents**

*"I would not travel to Welshpool or other sites due to cost and no free time to travel to other sites, any reductions in opening times will tend to cause long tail backs on to the main road and put people off recycling, it's hard to get in and out sometimes already at Newtown's site due to demand."*

*"This is the only fair and equitable solution for all residents in Powys. No one should have to travel from one area to another to recycle when this is to be encouraged. Closing any site will increase the carbon footprint: no buses travel to the sites (it is not practical to take rubbish on buses). People will end up fly tipping and the countryside will be unsightly - bad for tourism and health. Powys has no rodent officer - rats and mice will increase and so will diseases. Taking a vital service out of use is ridiculous."*

*"Because I don't believe the site in Welshpool should be closed as I am not prepared to travel a 32 mile journey to take waste to Newtown."*

*"I'm sure no one wants to lose their local recycling centre, I certainly don't want to travel half an hour to Brecon. Our centre is literally brand new, it seems false economy to close it."*

*"Option 1 is the only acceptable choice! I would not consider driving 30 miles or more with a car filled with rubbish!"*

- **Mixed messages.** Residents feel that the closure of two sites would send out the wrong message and contradict our PR around recycling all you can. Residents already feel frustrated by changes to the recyclables that they can put out for collection e.g. plastic film and bags. The kerbside collection scheme provides for basic materials but the HWRCs offer a wider mix of options to ensure waste is reused or recycled rather than going to landfill. Closing sites would discourage people from recycling and lead to higher levels of fly tipping.

*"It is very difficult to make a choice as there are other monetary factors that need to be taken into account. If Powys does not meet the Welsh Govt. recycling target what would be the level of the fine? Has the additional cost of dealing with fly tipping been taken into consideration? If authorities in West E Wales are able to have recycling levels of over 60% then Powys should be putting more effort into raising its level. Reducing access to recycling centres will not help with this."*

*"I don't agree with any of the options. My first choice assumes Newtown will remain open. You can't leave the largest town in pots without a centre. It is always busy, if you only open three days a week the queues will be horrendous and Newtown will be more grid locked than usual. Reducing citizen access to recycling facilities just goes against the compulsion PCC is putting on everyone to recycle more, you can't expect greater recycling activity if site access is restricted. The order I have put for the remaining options is irrelevant as they are all dreadful and unworkable."*

- **Equality.** Residents felt that it was important that an equitable service was on offer across the county. The proposal to have a site in each shire was not considered sufficient.

*"I think the Council needs to look to the future rather than ill-conceived short term cuts. All of these sites are well used and the consequences of closing sites and reducing hours will have a negative impact on local communities and will result in increased fly tipping which will probably negate any possible savings."*

*"It is better to have all the sites open with reduced opening hours - we have already lost a site in Machynlleth that is causing problems for people in that area."*

*"Whilst I don't use the sites further away, it does seem unfair to pick on one area for the chop just because it doesn't affect me. It would become a postcode lottery as to whether you can afford to dispose of unwanted. It seems the policy of the council is relentlessly pursuing a contract out, commissioning attitude whereby it will end up providing no services at all unless the poor council tax payer is willing to cough up ever more for decreasing service. Option 1 will at least give everyone a chance to use their site at some point, with the option to extend hours again when this ghastly assault on our services starts to ease up."*

- **No other option.** A handful of residents stated that they didn't have any other choice as they didn't have a waste collection service at all – i.e. they live in a remote location and take their waste to the HWRC site as and when they need to. Some residents don't have space for the recycling boxes so choose to go to their nearest HWRC. Some residents said they would either have to start to burn their waste or were worried about neighbours doing so and polluting the air quality as a result of closures.

**Q6. If you have chosen proposals that don't realise the full £700k as your top three choices where do you think the shortfall should come from?**

573 respondents answered this question.

There were a diverse number of options and ideas put forward and all comments/ideas are now with the service for consideration. The most common comments/views given were as follows:

- a reduction in the number of councillors and senior managers in the council,
- an increase in council tax,
- lobbying the Welsh Government for more money,
- better use of and an efficiency drive to reduce waste,
- a reduction in the use of consultants

Appendix A provides some more examples of comments received.

24	Why aren't items taken to the tip made available for the public to buy? There should be a section there where items that are too good to throw can be bought. There are sites in Neath doing this and are doing quite well.
502	I would like to see an option where sites are opened one day a week. It does not mean having all the sites opening on the same day of the week as some may find it difficult to go on that day. The day can change each week etc.
56	As mentioned above, a small fee per load that is fixed for say 5 years would be acceptable to most people. Charging local contractors a fee, albeit a slightly larger one could also be a lucrative proposal
80	Charge people from out of county to use the services. Open up an opportunity for people to purchase items that others discard. Encourage employment by engaging people to take on the role of sorting and selling the materials to be sold, recycle garden waste.

**Q7. In your own words, please could you say what impact there might be for you and your family if the site you use the most were to close in April 2017?**

740 residents responded to this question.

A sample of comments is listed in Appendix B but the most frequent views expressed by residents around the impact and what they would then do were as follows:

- There would be an increase in people burning their rubbish instead. (This could cause neighbour disputes and an increase in air pollution)
- The bring sites would be overflowing as people would use these first if they were still open – often they are already overflowing and plans to close some won't help this.
- People would stop trying to sort their waste out and put everything in their wheeled bin and send to landfill.
- People would have to travel significantly longer journey times to get to a site that was open.

A number of other comments were made about the closure of sites being contradictory to the ethos of Powys wanting residents to recycle more and residents themselves not wanting to see items that could be reused ending up in landfill. There were concerns about the cost and convenience and environmental benefits of trying to dispose of items in a more sustainable way. One example of a comment given by a residents is given here.

37	We would be forced to recycle less. As Green supporters, this is something that would trouble me greatly, and I would try to avoid it, however the carbon waste in driving to Welshpool would not balance the economic benefits of recycling at that plant. We waste little, so we would find it hard to reduce our waste any more. We buy from the sites also in an attempt to recycle rather than buy new, but we would probably have to buy a lot more items from new, meaning there would be large economic and ecological impacts.
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Some residents expressed how closing a site may have a detrimental impact on their quality of life and that of their community.

A couple of examples are listed here.

25	It would have a negative impact on my environment. I take waste to my local centre as my incontinent disabled son also creates a lot of waste and waiting three weeks for my bins to be emptied is too long, so I go to the centre. I also have a large garden which produces a lot of waste.
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52	My black bin will have far more in it so I'll have to use local litter bins. I don't know where I'll take any of the items that I currently take to the Ystradgynlais site. What do I do - pile it up in my garden? Previously we had a private site in Ystradgynlais (JLA) but access to that went when you opened our new site. At last there is NO RUBBISH THROWN INTO THE RIVER & culverts.....how long will that last if the tip closes??? And WHO is going to clear that + the fly-tipping up? THIS WOULD BE A TOTALLY IRRESPONSIBLE ACTION.
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**Q8. If you feel the site you use should stay open please share with us your reasons/logic i.e. why the site you use and not another one?**

726 residents gave an answer to this question. A variety of reasons were given but the key ones were as follows:

- The travel times would be unreasonable to get to another site
- The cost to get to another site would make it uneconomical
- The geography of Powys would mean that fly tipping would increase if any of the sites closed
- The sites are well used, clean and familiar so why close them

Appendix C provides a sample of some of the comments received.

**Q9. Finally, alternative options could be considered to reduce the costs or raise income. Which of the following would you support?**

The table below shows how popular the alternative options were and how many respondents chose to support them. Around half of those who completed the survey supported some whilst just over half didn't comment.

<b>Options</b>	<b>Number of responses for this option</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
To charge for certain materials like plasterboard, soil and rubble.	<b>409</b>	<b>46%</b>
To charge a small entry fee to use the site e.g. (£1 or £2 per visit)	<b>369</b>	<b>42%</b>
To restrict use of the site by commercial type vehicles	<b>355</b>	<b>40%</b>



## **Additional Feedback Received**

The two petitions were as follows:

- **1 from Ystradgynlais residents with 2307 signatures.**

The petition was worded as follows:

*“We the undersigned are in support of our local Household Waste Recycling Centre on Bethel Road, Lower Cwmtwrch. We value this service and are signing below to bring to your attention that we DO NOT want to lose this very valuable local service.”*

- **1 from Welshpool and Newtown residents with over 3000 signatures.**

The petition was worded as follows:

*“We the undersigned call on Powys County Council to drop plans to close any more recycling centres and to guarantee that the Potters recycling centres in Welshpool and Newtown remain open.”*

With regard to the Welshpool site, a meeting was arranged by Welshpool Town Council on 22 November 2016 and attended by the Cabinet Member and senior officers from the council to hear the views of the council and residents. A letter was also received from the clerk.

Responses were also received from the following town and community councils:

- Forden with Leighton and Trelystan
- Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn
- Manafon
- New Radnor
- Old Radnor
- Presteigne and Norton

Letters from the Chief Executive from the Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP) the Campaign for the Rural Protection of Wales and the Welsh Liberal Democrats were also received and responses from County Councillors Huw Williams, Gemma Bowker, Dawn Bailey and Sandra Davies. One letter came in from a tourist who visited the county on a regular basis asking us to reconsider.

The majority of the content received from all of these was concerned with:

- a potential increase in fly tipping if a centre/s were to close and the costs incurred to clean this up across the county,
- issues around travel times and distance to get to the sites remaining open if there were only three across the county,
- a contradiction to the council’s continuing request for residents to “recycle all they can” How can we then propose to close a centre which takes bulky waste items which would otherwise go into landfill via the wheeled bin? This was a question posed over and over again by respondents.
- requests for the council to reconsider and find the money from elsewhere

There was some recognition from residents, organisations and town councils around the financial situation facing Powys County Council but a desire to see more collaboration with other neighbouring authorities around potential partnership working prior to taking a decision around closures. Consideration of alternative funding streams and use of investment via the Rural Development Plan to create industries associated with recycling and upcycling was a suggestion put forward by the BBNP.

Other ideas and suggestions put forward to make savings were around councillor numbers and senior manager posts being deleted.

There were also a number of comments posted on Facebook and various Facebook pages set up. E.g. Campaign to save Potters which were monitored.

### **Overall Conclusion:**

Overall residents across the county felt all five sites should remain open even if savings had to be found from elsewhere. Concerns were expressed around an increase in fly tipping, travel costs and the distances to get to a site in a rural county if closures were pursued. There was support for considering charging for the disposal of some items like rubble and plasterboard, a small gate fee and restricting the use of commercial vehicles.

The views given will now be considered by the service and the Cabinet.

## A note about market research and consultations

When conducting market research companies use a margin of error and confidence level to ensure that their results are robust and representative of the population they are seeking views from. (i.e. the population of interest).

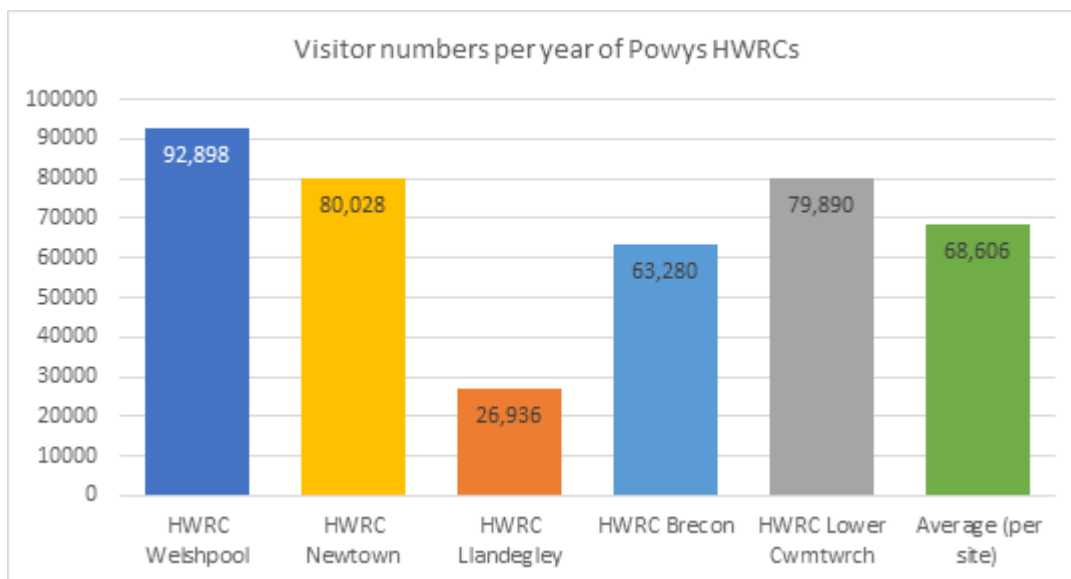
A consultation however isn't market research as people choose to respond and are not contacted using a sampling methodology. People self-select so sometimes when conducting a consultation you only hear the views of the people who are either strongly in favour or strongly object to a proposal. The silent majority may not have given a view. However when we analyse any consultation results we do consider how robust they are in terms of the population of interest using a market research calculator.

For the purposes of this consultation exercise Powys was keen to hear from all Powys residents and in particular those who use the sites currently or may have a need to use them in the future.

We know from the Census that the population of Powys is 133,000. This means that with 882 respondents less than 1% of the whole of the population have expressed a view.

We also know from data collected that the sites are visited on average by 68,600 residents. Taking the figure of 68,606 for the average per site the response rate is 1.3%.

However, in market research terms a sample of 383 users of the sites would be sufficient to give a robust overview on the proposals and views of all users and with over 880 responses to the survey and further signatures on petitions we know we have a very robust response and can use the feedback with confidence.



When conducting consultation exercise Powys County Council works to the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales.

<http://www.participationcymru.org.uk/national-principles>

# Appendices

## Appendix A - Sample of comments in response to Q6.

“If you've chosen proposals that don't realise the full £700k as your top three choices where do you think the shortfall should come from?”

## Appendix B - Sample of comments given in response to Q7

“In your own words please could you say what impact there might be for you and your family if the site you use the most were to close next April?”

## Appendix C - Sample of comments given in response to Q8.

“If you feel the site you use should stay open please share with us your reasons /logic i.e. Why the site you use and not another one?”

	<b>Appendix A - A sample of the comment given in response to Q6 – where the shortfall could be made if opted for an option that doesn't make the required savings target.</b>
490	As outlined in above question, to seek partnered financial agreement with other statutory agents such as Neath Port Talbot.
491	council members expenses, consultant fees etc.
492	Reducing Councillors' expenses, reducing salaries of CEO and other "senior" posts.
495	You haven't told me all the options that you are looking at but I could suggest top managers salaries are way too high, wider sourcing of contractors to get better value.
496	Council tax should be increased, and the welsh government lobbied to increase their funding for Powys.
497	Rationalise council services to essentials and remove unnecessary middle/senior management in Council, additional rise in council tax to ensure these services are kept.
498	Stop extortionate spending on things like laybys for pylon lorries which don't use them or can't because the kerb is too high, e.g. Arddleen.
501	Making recycling site self-financing. Not on your list.

503	This question should be answered by Powys staff and councillors.
505	Reduce further the opening hours at existing site and charge more for business users incremental on volume. I know of gardeners who take vast amounts for a very nominal fee. Encourage the facility for taking unwanted items for sale and slightly increase.
507	I don't have an overview of the budget.
508	Education, we do not need a new junior school in Welshpool when we currently have 3 schools, the number of pupils has decreased and do not need a 'super school'.
509	Reduce overheads within PCC not services: amount of councillors; encourage work from home, travel/other expenses, need to travel unnecessarily to meetings, etc.,
510	Collect recycling less often, hardly worth bothering with green caddy for food waste
511	increase council tax
512	Adopting a new school dinner payment method. What was wrong with it before?
514	Apply to Welsh government for more funding or increase community charge.
516	Loose some of the pen pushers in the council offices.
517	social housing
519	Stop giving out free dog poo bags - people have dogs therefore should provide own bags

	<b>Appendix B - A sample of comments given by residents in response to Q7 - the impact a closure may have on a person/their family/community</b>
873	We'd probably have to let nature take the garden over or annoy the neighbours will frequent bonfires.
874	Big problems - tell us where we would dispose of our waste?
875	Impossible with 16 cats I produce 1 black sack daily of used cat litter. Council will not give me a larger bin and I will have to pay around £21 pa for a private collection.
876	I would cease recycling outside of roadside collection and send to landfill.
879	We make regular use of the site and would not travel the considerable extra distance to access another site in the proposal (at our expense)
881	I would have to revert to dispose of my garden waste (very large garden) in the river something I definitely do not want to do.
882	Devastated
883	What can we do with garden waste?
884	The waste has to go somewhere. Don't believe having the population driving 35 miles is a good option.

885	As a pensioner ' downsizing' and clearance of a family hoarder's belongings I just do not know how I will cope.
886	Personally no impact other than my general waste bin would be filled every time it goes out instead of being 1/2 full.
887	I would have to travel down to Swansea adding on about 1 1/2 - 2 hours to the usual journey adding to the already congested roads resulting in more pollution and increased health costs etc.
888	Additional waste would build up at my home.
889	My waste would pile up.
890	56 mile round trip. More fly tipping will result which will turn out to be an extra expense.
891	Problems re- black bins and general rubbish. Garden waste? Don't know but in the past locals dumped this into the river.
892	Increased waste at home due to lack of facilities. Impact on health and wellbeing due to unhygienic waste/stress and anxiety of not being able to dispose of waste in the proper manner to sustain a healthy environment for future generations.
893	Please I'd like to understand what you think I should do - really? Moving it from Ystradgynlais what would you like me to do travel all the way to the other locations.
894	Where else is there in this vicinity to recycle waste.
895	I don't see how I would manage as my house would not fit the boxes in - other than in my sitting room.
896	Disastrous. At present my family and I recycle everything that we possibly can. What would we do with our used electrics, batteries, large plastic, garden waste etc.
897	There would be an increase in fly tipping which would be detrimental to our local environment and items put in general rubbish that could be recycled (e.g. tetra packs) increasing landfill.
898	I am already spending time walking my dog picking up litter that is a really big problem in Ystradgynlais. Can you imagine what it will be like if the recycle plant is closed.
899	I would have to travel to Brecon - a 50 mile round trip - I am 65! And on a pension.
900	We use Brecon recycling quite a lot - my husband is disabled and he would find it difficult to drive out of Brecon to recycle. We have a large garden and use the centre for garden waste. Fly tipping would bring the town down in its presentation to visitors and the community.
901	All our rubbish would have to go to landfill

<b>Appendix C – A sample of views given in response to Q8 reasons/logic for one site to stay open as opposed to another.</b>
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885	The site I use is a short distance away - I could not afford to travel to another site.
886	All the sites should stay open to ensure people recycle all that they can. Driving 30 miles to recycle something negates the effect of recycling.
887	There has already been fly tipping near where I live because someone was asked to sort their rubbish. If it is made harder such incidences will increase.
888	It is close and easy to take items that fit in a small car. A site further away is ok if you have a large vehicle but a small vehicle requires more visits.
889	Where else would we be able to go to recycle our unwanted items.
890	You say HTR budget will have to find savings. There are other departments. Highways is already not as it was - it used to be top in Wales for maintenance of the roads but has slipped badly in recent years. Ystradgynlais was opened as it was too expensive to use Ty Canol which is a private tip. Brecon is also private so how much cost is involved there?
891	Proximity is the main reason otherwise it will nigh on impossible. Do you really think people from Ystradgynlais will travel up to Brecon to deposit waste?
892	Proximity to house. Powys is a large county - too far to travel to another site. Waste of money investing in the site initially - should be used since money has been invested.
894	It's kept clean and tidy, courteous staff. It's the only one round here. It will help keep Powys clean - otherwise people will start fly tipping as Brecon is too far to go.
895	Brecon is the main town and people travel in for shopping etc. therefore it is the logical one to keep. Ystradgynlais is not a main shopping/visiting area for Brecon people.
896	I am not qualified to speak of other sites as the one in Brecon is the only one I use which is why I choose Option 1 so at least everyone has an equal opportunity to recycle.
897	Brecon site was brought from a private operator who appeared to be operating viably - they had successful shop area that was very popular and reduced landfill.
898	No one in Ystradgynlais will travel to Brecon to dispose of waste what so ever. This area is neglected by Llandrindod as it is. Try spending a little more money down here and we might have a bit more respect for our environment. Our centre is busy all the time if closed an environmental disaster will happen with fly tipping.
899	We need to look after our environment (the earth) as above the distances are too far between sites - all sites should remain open and reduced hours I think would be an alternative to closure - I believe fly tipping would occur and clean up more expensive.
900	If Brecon is more central it makes sense to keep it open. Convenient. No fly tipping.

901	Brecon site is right on my doorstep - it serves our needs perfectly - glass, paper, card, plastics and cans and personal needs, rubble, household and garden. The other sites are too far away making a visit costly and time consuming. I already pay a licence and don't think you should restrict use for commercial vehicles.
902	I am a regular visitor to the site in Ystradgynlais. It's only been open around 18 months - how much did it cost to open? Money spent now you talk of closing it. Money wasted and more money will be spent on clearing fly tipping.
903	We live close to the Ystradgynlais site. We would not travel as far as Brecon to recycle - even if we were prepared to give the time to do this it is hardly "green" to use fuel to travel to a recycling site. I would not be able to carry my gardening bags up the steps at Brecon as I struggle to life weights.
904	If the Brecon site should close I fear many people will be tempted to dump things incorrectly try to use Abergavenny and fly tip. Think very carefully about how far it is reasonable to expect people to travel to get rid of rubbish. Don't forget those who cannot drive.