

Opinion

COMMENT Worcester News

Real cost of food waste is long term

TIMES are hard. Wherever we turn, we are not far from hearing phrases like “times of austerity”, “recession” and stories of yet more cuts.

And we understand that tough decisions need to be made – be it switching street lights off in some areas overnight, or reducing the number of times a piece of grass is cut. However, the issue of food waste is more complicated.

The scheme was rejected by Worcester City Council because, as Tory group leader Simon Geraghty said, “we can’t afford it”. One solitary councillor voted in favour of the collection, Green Party member Neil Laurensen, who was also defeated when he asked councillors to consider the scheme when replacing the current rubbish collection vehicles.

At the time of writing, a poll on the Worcester News website showed just 29 per cent of respondents would use a food waste collection, while 25 per cent would not.

‘It costs too much’ was the favoured response of 28 per cent of voters. And the pro-food waste collection case is a difficult one to argue – the start-up costs of about £1 million sound extravagant, expensive, unaffordable.

But what of the long-term environmental cost of not spending that money? If you believe some, recycling food waste, using it to generate power, or simply composting it, could be an effective money-saving device in its own right, as the amount of tax the council pays when sending rubbish to landfill would inevitably fall.

By throwing out a food waste collection scheme so totally, do we risk saving short-term at a long-term cost?



More than three-quarters of the material used to make today's paper came from yesterday's. Recycled paper made up 78.9 per cent of the raw material for UK papers in 2011.



OUR SALES:
Mon-Sat 12,008 (Jan-June 2013)
Audit Bureau of Circulation
100% paid (includes 86 digital copies)

30,800 READERS PER DAY
COMPARED TO 32,375 IN MAY.
Source: Jicreg October 2013

Your article raised a

SIR – I thought I would let you know how pleased I was with the article that appeared in the health section on Monday about my baby boy who will be born in January with a cleft lip.

The reporter, Tarik Al Rasheed, did a brilliant job with it in terms of raising awareness of cleft lip/palate.

It was a huge shock at first when my husband and I found out from a routine scan and I was only vaguely aware of the condition, but it is much more common than we thought and completely fixable.

I've had a few parents of children with cleft lip/palate in Worcester contact me since the article ran who are interested in a support group for the condition, so it has had a very positive impact and is a great start to raising awareness of the condition locally.

With thanks again and very best wishes.

LISA VENTURA
Cleft Awareness UK/
Baby & Cleft
babyandcleft.co.uk
cleftawareness.co.uk
Email: lisa@cleftawareness.co.uk

Tories are now party of Westminster elite

SIR – The media have this week been full of David Cameron saying that British companies should give jobs

UP TO 9,000 more homes could be dumped across South Worcestershire – after a Government inspector said the current tally is not enough. Planning inspector Roger Clews has published his views on the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) – a major growth blueprint earmarking land for 23,200 properties.

He says the housing figure is too low – and although the report leaves it to all three district councils to agree a higher one, suggests a benchmark of 25,300 to 32,000. He also says the retail earmarked for the various towns across South Worcestershire is too much. The findings have also been lambasted by politicians, with West Worcestershire MP Harriett Baldwin calling it a “terrible day for local democracy” that “defies logic”. Unless all three councils can agree a new housing figure accepted by Mr Clews, the SWDP cannot be approved by the Government.

TOP FIVE STORIES ON THE WEBSITE

worcesternews.co.uk

1. Wheelchair-bound man 'threw a wobbly' in post office
2. Man found dead in Grimley shot himself, inquest finds
3. Trees in Worcester found with killer disease
4. Up to 9,000 more homes for South Worcestershire
5. UKIP 'in meltdown' as members quit to launch new party



SHOCK: Mum-to-be Lisa Ventura, who has had to come to terms with the fact that her child will be born with a cleft lip.

to British workers. Yet this month the Agricultural Workers Board, which agreed terms and conditions for agricultural workers in England, passed into oblivion thanks to a decision of the Conservative-led government.

The purpose of the board was to ensure that farmworkers (approximately 150,000) and farmers alike didn't have to worry about individual wage negotiations and had common standards throughout the Industry.

It ensured the British farm workers some protection from being undercut by workers coming from the EU.

This protection has now been removed and with the opening of our borders to immigrants from Romania and Bulgaria in January we can expect ever more foreigners to be employed in the farm industry.

The Conservative Party, which was once the party of the shires, is now the party of the Westminster urban elite.

Only UKIP can protect British workers.

MARK STARR
Leigh Sinton

Cameron's statement was shocking

SIR – On October 28, David Cameron said that the Government is likely to act to stop newspapers publishing

ON THE WEB

WHAT YOU'RE SAYING ON WORCESTERNEWS.CO.UK



BUILD: More homes are on the way to South Worcestershire.

Remember “up to” includes 0. Also, if you read the story, not the sensationalist headline, the bottom end of the inspectors' benchmark is 25,300, which is less than a 10 per cent increase on the original SWDP number of 23,200. Storm in a teacup whipped up by a paper desperate for a story. Watch the sheep all pile out to bleat about how bad it is.
Posted by Hwicce

Are there the jobs here for so many households?
Posted by skychip

The inspector notes that: “The CE forecasts show some 6,000 workers employed in the agricultural sector in South Worcestershire in 2001, rising slightly to about 6,600 in 2010. The number of agricultural workers then slumps to around 3,700 in 2020 before falling more gradually to some 1,800 in 2030. The fall of some 44 per cent between 2010 and 2020 largely accounts for the overall decline in employment

predicted by CE for that decade” He then goes on to say: “No explanation is given for this dramatic predicted decline in agricultural employment.” Just a guess but maybe it's due to all new houses which are being built upon the agricultural land! DOH!
Posted by macka2013

Excellent news. Now we need the jobs so people can afford to buy a house.
Posted by Officer Nordbu

Harriett – why don't you that to your mates Eric and Dave (does he let you call Dave?) It is after all just rules the inspector is following, rules which you presumably voted for (I check Hansard).
Posted by christm

Is this to house all the immigrants?
Posted by yamoto

Well said. My job is gone in January and there is not much about.
Posted by lovelyjubbly

WRITE: LETTERS, WORCESTER NEWS, HYLTON ROAD, WORCESTER WR2 5JX. EMAIL: LETTERS@WORCESTERNEWS.CO.UK

awareness of cleft lip



TOM EDWARDS
THE SOURCE



POLITICAL ASYLUM:
Edward Joseph disclosed classified details of several top-secret United States, Israeli, and British government mass surveillance programs to the press.

he has called damaging... from former US... intelligence operative... Edward Snowden unless they... demonstrate some social... responsibility".
... setting aside questions... about Mr Cameron's... understanding of social... responsibility, isn't it... saying that he has made... a statement in a country... tells itself it has press... freedoms?
... Edward Snowden exposed a... of surveillance... programme that targeted... millions of ordinary citizens... as well as heads of state –... would David Cameron... to punish newspapers... for highlighting this fact?
NEIL LAURENSEN
Worcester Green Party

How long do you have... before you are out of work for?
... When I was out of work... on benefits it was not the

fact I did not want a job, the fact was I was told at Jobseekers I could not go for this job, that job or any of the courses.
Every week for two-and-a-half years, every week the same old story.
The staff at Jobseekers were not a bit helpful.
They said I had not been out of work long enough to apply for the above and being at YMCA through unseen circumstances did not help.
I had always worked hard and very long hours in factories and farm work.
How long does anyone have to be out of work before you can apply for a job or get one?
I did not waste my time while at the YMCA – I worked on their allotment most of every week.
I attended courses and received approximately 20 certificates.
I got a job at £125 per week.
I removed myself from the

YMCA. Each week I had to pay rent, electric, gas, council tax, water rates, food, if I had anything left after paying out that amount.
But I did it by myself with no other help, so it can be done.

JOHN SHERIDAN
Worcester

MPs should decline £10,000 pay rise

SIR – Are MPs so out of touch that they could accept a £10,000 pay rise a year in the current climate?
Most workers don't have the luxury of an independent review body.
If we did, it would result in lots of pay increases.
Who do these people think they are?
Every day we hear the opposition disagree with the Government, and visa-versa, but they were in total agreement with each other over this pay rise.
If any MP had any feeling of the people that put them there they would decline a pay rise or have one more in line with the rest.

GB DIPPER
Leominster

It would be a mistake to start costly scheme

SIR – From the report by Tom Edwards (*Worcester News*, October 29) on Worcester

City Council's choice of whether to offer a food waste collection or not, it should be simple to decide.

Councillor Neil Laurenson's theory is well meaning but in this day of severe financial restraint it would be a mistake to start a scheme which is so costly to run. £973,000 to set up and another £544,000 every year in recurring costs is just not on with all the cuts elsewhere that have been made.

In view of the fact that Wychavon have decided to axe their scheme in January because of £500,000 annual costs, surely Worcester should learn by that?

PHIL PEGLER
Worcester

I'm siding with the unemployed fellow

SIR – Re: your 'Workshy Worcester' story and your comment piece – you ask: Who do you side with?
Well, I side with the poor fellow who had his details of his unemployment on facebook and in the papers, which I think is quite wrong.
And the job he was offered was hardly a job with wages.
They said they had 50 jobs that couldn't be filled.
So it's obvious there was something wrong. It was the Tories who class people out of work as scroungers and

it's not always the case.
Are the council workers from Worcester, Birmingham and Wolverhampton, who are going to be laid off, classed as scroungers? I don't think so.

It was Mr Cameron who said you are better off working.

Generally you are but there are employers who are not paying a decent wage, so there is no advantage taking a job like that.

JOHN SHEARON
Worcester

Congregation could sort it out themselves

SIR – What kind of problem can a Christian congregation not sort out for themselves?

Peacemakers are called in to calm parish in turmoil – October 18 – but as I have been informed, at great expense, to employ a company of bridge builders.

JEAN HARRIS
Worcester

● We reserve the right to edit all letters. Full names and addresses must accompany letters, including those sent by e-mail. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, anonymity will not be provided. A daytime phone number – home or work, but strictly not a mobile – is also necessary. Letters should be no more than 200 words long

Riaz bowled over by the cricket dig

IT'S been a hairy couple of weeks for Councillor Jabba Riaz, who crossed the rubicon in spectacular style by quitting Worcester's Tory group to join Labour.

And with a new political roadmap ahead comes a new haircut, with the rightie-turned-leftie spotted at a barbers in London Road last week getting a short back and sides.

It was there that he bumped into former Worcester MP Mike Foster, who by coincidence was also having his hair trimmed.

Foster told his new colleague that amid the raft of hurtful comments aimed at Coun Riaz by the keyboard warriors on our website, one saying he was a "useless bowler" would have caused him the most pain.

For those not in the know, our new Labour man is cricket mad, and made headlines in the *Worcester News* last year after breaking his finger playing for the Old Vigornians in the Worcestershire League. Owzat!

● TALKING of Mike Foster, life after New Labour isn't proving as glamorous as some people would have you believe.

Whereas some of his old party colleagues are making megabucks on after-dinner speeches (Blair), advising the World Economic Forum (Brown) or filling up their diaries with TV appearances (Blunkett), Worcester's man-of-the-hour isn't living the high life.

Foster is now chief executive of the Energy and Utilities Alliance, and sent out a press release to MPs this week urging them to publicise National Radiator Day, which is today.

It asks MPs to post images of themselves on Twitter bleeding a radiator, and includes rank tips on "flushing the sludge" to keep them working properly.

But it has raised a chuckle among our parliamentarians, who are now surely fearing their careers could well go the same bleedin' way once the electorate decides their time is up.

As one MP puts it: "How the mighty have fallen – but he's probably doing more good than many MPs."

Walker, Luff, Baldwin – beware.

● FARCICAL scenes within UKIP ranks this week, with West Midlands MEP Mike Nattras managing to convince three activists in Worcester to quit and join him in launching a new party.

Mr Nattras, a smooth-talking veteran with the Midas touch, has recruited the former UKIP treasurer, chairman and vice-chairman to launch 'An Independence Party'.

I see it's meeting at the Old Cock Inn, Droitwich, on Thursday.

EASTNOR CHURCH BY PHOTOGRAPHER NICK TOOGOOD Send your pictures to photo@worcesternews.co.uk

