

## **Petition – Folly Island proposed refuse plans**

We, the undersigned, are opposed to the proposed changes to Folly Island's refuse collection and the introduction of wheelie bins. We call on East Herts District Council to:

- Reject the proposed changes to Folly Island's refuse collection and keep the current arrangement
- Fully consult with local residents on any future proposals

Folly Island is a historic conservation area that is often referred to as one of Hertford's most 'photographed areas'. It's a residential community which prides itself upon its appearance, with a conscious effort from residents to keep the streets and houses smart and well-presented.

Recently, the Council has proposed changes to Folly Island's bin collection, opting for residents to have wheelie bins (up to 4) with a three week collection. This decision appears to have been made and a contract was signed without any meaningful consultation with the residents.

It is crucial to understand that wheelie bins are an eyesore in areas known for their heritage, with the English Heritage Trust supporting campaigns to prevent the wheelie bin epidemic. Additionally, studies surrounding wheelie bins often cite that such changes lead to an increase in complaints related to visual pollution.

Additional negatives which will arise from such a change include:

- **Reduced Access:** Being a historic town, Folly Island has limited accessibility as is with the current parking arrangements and narrowed pathways. Adding wheelie bins to pathways will only restrict movement through the island further.
- **Pollution:** Wheelie Bins will encourage fly tipping in the area, especially as the majority of gardens on Folly Island are not large enough to house the required bins. This means those stored on streets or left in the alleyways will only lead to an increase in fly tipping and pollution to our streets and waterways.
- **Rats and Pests:** In addition to this the change to a monthly collection means that the sitting waste will only attract Rats and Pests. Living beside the river, these are combated currently with the system which collects waste weekly and prevents build up.
- **Bridge:** The only access to Folly Island is a bridge on and off the Island. In the past a full size lorry was trialled before and quickly switched to a smaller one to best service the area. The new plans take no consideration for the bridge weight limit and also puts it at risk. The bridge has been struck multiple

times before and had to be closed for access. In fact, the new contractor is the one which opted for a smaller truck years ago as a full-size one was 'not possible'. What has changed? Nothing. This is very obviously a cost-motivated decision that has won them back the contract they lost.

- Traffic and Safety: There is also an increased risk of bin lorries causing traffic and safety issues due to the narrow road and on street parking. In other similar areas across the UK, accidents involving bin lorries have risen by an average of 23% following such changes (source: UK Department for Transport's comprehensive road safety report).

Residents of Hertford, it's time we voice our concerns about these proposed changes as it won't just affect Folly Island; they will affect all of us.

This ePetition was started on 4 September 2024 and is still open on the change.org website. As of 7 October 2024, 873 people had signed the petition.

<https://www.change.org/p/help-keep-folly-island-picture-perfect-reject-proposed-refuse-collection-changes>