

# Hopesay Parish Council

Honey Hills, Hopesay, Nr Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 8HA. Phone: 01588 660684.  
Email: [clerk@hopesayparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@hopesayparishcouncil.org.uk) . Website: [www.hopesayparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.hopesayparishcouncil.org.uk)

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Cllr Lezley Picton, Leader, Shropshire Council  
Shropshire Council  
Shirehall  
Abbey Foregate  
Shrewsbury  
Shropshire SY2 6ND

Dear Cllr Picton

Local communities across South Shropshire have been shocked to learn of the potential closure of the Craven Arms Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in an effort to reduce costs. In Hopesay Parish, parishioners have expressed dismay, incredulity, anger and despair over the serious consequences of such a closure. The matter was discussed at a full Council meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Councillors unanimously expressed grave concerns and voted to strongly object to the threatened closure. Council wishes to lodge the following points in objection:

Closure of the facility burdens 40,000+ South Shropshire residents with at least a 2-hour, 40+ mile round trip to the nearest remaining facility (Shrewsbury or Bridgnorth) - Along with the significant financial cost to residents, this will increase traffic on already busy roads with a consequent detrimental impact to the environment.

Given the time, nuisance, and costs involved, fly tipping will inevitably increase. This, in the heart of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape, will prove a contentious and costly problem to manage - It will also reflect very poorly on Shropshire as a whole.

The Craven Arms facility serves the largest community area in Shropshire, including the whole of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape (SHNL). Indeed, if the Craven Arms HWRC were to close, South Shropshire and the SHNL would become one of the least well served recycling areas in the whole of England (Source: <https://www.opendatamanchester.org.uk/recycling-uk/>).

Due to the rural nature of the area, residents do not benefit from many of the services available in more urban areas. Public transport is almost non-existent, most local roads are poorly maintained, and people already have to travel many miles to access basic services such as health, education and recreation. To close one of the few highly valued, well used and efficiently run services in the area would be a dismaying indication of how little Shropshire Council appears to value its rural electors and the rural population. It would feel to many like a 'kick in the teeth' from Shropshire Council.

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In a recent consultation response related to HWRC DIY waste charging, the government stated 'The government believes that taxpayers deserve a comprehensive waste and recycling service'. Furthermore, the response went on to state, 'It is important that HWRCs are accessible to residents in their area to help make sure waste is disposed of in a responsible way'. The proposed closure of Craven Arms HWRC is clearly contrary to these principles.

It is unjustifiable that Shropshire Council is proposing a spend of £28 million on new swimming fitness and leisure facilities at Shrewsbury Sports Village while on other hand proposing to close rural essential resources.

Considering the national and international drive to reduce waste, recycle, and aim for zero carbon emissions in response to the climate and environmental crisis, closing the Craven Arms HWRC – indeed any of Shropshire's 5 centres – appears short-sighted, retrogressive, and damaging.

Hopesay Parish Council therefore objects to the threatened closure and strongly urges Shropshire Council to retain Craven Arms HWRC, a vital asset to the community and the Shropshire Hills National Landscape.

Yours sincerely

*Meg Gwilliam*

Mrs Meg Gwilliam  
**Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer for Hopesay Parish Council**  
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cc (electronic copy):  
Unitary Councillors H Luff and D Evans,  
Philip Dunne MP  
Steve Barclay MP  
Robbie Moore MP