



Private / Confidential
Via Email

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Date: 25 September 2026

Dear Parish Clerk

Subject: Proposed closure of Docking Recycling Centre

Norfolk County Council, like many councils, continues to face significant financial pressures and is required to set a balanced budget. As part of this process, all services must be reviewed to identify potential savings. Unfortunately, this includes a proposal to close Docking Recycling Centre.

Papers being published today, ahead of the Cabinet meeting on 5 October, include a proposal for the site to close from April 2027. While this is not a position the Council wishes to be in, we must consider how services can be delivered as efficiently as possible with the resources available. Docking remains the least used of Norfolk's 19 recycling centres, receiving around 500 tonnes of material each year. In considering the future of the site, the council has reviewed its usage alongside the wider provision of recycling services across the county.

No decision has been made at this stage. The proposal will be considered by Cabinet on 5 October and, if approved to proceed, would be subject to a public consultation before any final decision is taken. I wanted to make you aware of the proposal in advance of the Cabinet papers being published.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Pat Gould
Cabinet Member – Countryside, Coast and Culture

Copy to: Councillor Julie Costley

Docking Recycling Centre briefing

1. Background

Docking Recycling Centre is located on land owned by Norfolk County Council, next to a closed landfill site. The Council is reviewing services as part of its wider budget proposals. Closure of Docking is one option being considered and is not yet a final decision. It would be subject to public consultation and the Council's formal decision-making process.

2. Use of Docking Recycling Centre

- Around 10,500 recycling bookings each year, averaging approximately 51 bookings a day.
- Ranked 19th out of Norfolk's 19 recycling centres for visits.
- 499 tonnes of material handled in 2025/26, ranking 19th out of 19 for tonnage.
- Four customer parking spaces and 112 booking slots on each opening day (Friday – Monday).
- 93% of bookings are made by King's Lynn and West Norfolk residents.
- Average customer travel distance of approximately 3.55 miles as the crow flies.

Across the Norfolk network, 55,730 tonnes were handled in 2025/26. Docking Recycling Centre accounted for less than 1% of total network tonnage.

3. Alternative recycling centres

Alternative site	Distance from Docking	Indicative drive time
Heacham Recycling Centre	7.2 miles	15 minutes
Wells-next-the-Sea Recycling Centre	11 miles	18 minutes
Hempton Recycling Centre	11.3 miles	18 minutes
King's Lynn Recycling Centre	19 miles	29 minutes

Distances and journey times are indicative and will vary according to starting point, route and traffic conditions. The current assessment is that closure would not significantly affect the Council's 20-minute drive-time policy. Under normal traffic conditions, towns and villages would remain within 20 minutes of an alternative centre, although a limited number of individual properties may be slightly beyond this threshold.

4. Financial saving

Closing Docking Recycling Centre will deliver a saving of £60,000, which is based on labour costs. Two members of staff are based at Docking Recycling Centre. Both

employees would be offered suitable work at alternative recycling centres, subject to consultation, available roles and the normal employment processes.

5. All recycling centre data 2025/26

Rank	Recycling centre	Total tonnage	Total bookings
1	Norwich North	10,159	150,264
2	Norwich South	7,570	129,022
3	Caister	6,243	93,198
4	King's Lynn	4,178	75,763
5	Thetford	3,925	72,392
6	Dereham	3,296	70,549
7	Worstead	2,488	49,977
8	Strumpshaw	2,236	41,283
9	Hempton	2,183	41,271
10	Sheringham	2,117	50,346
11	Ashill	1,843	34,567
12	Morningthorpe	1,695	28,767
13	Wereham	1,460	28,398
14	Wymondham	1,381	27,166
15	Bergh Apton	1,312	22,723
16	Heacham	1,263	31,028
17	Snetterton	1,206	25,151
18	Wells	668	14,569
19	Docking	499	10,390
	Grand total	55,730	996,824