

REPORT TO:	Petitions and Community Empowerment Review Committee
MEETING DATE:	18 September 2024
BY:	Executive Director for Council Resources
SUBJECT:	Petition PET0224 – Calling on East Lothian Council to reinstate fortnightly green bin collections

#### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present petition PET0224 to the Petitions and Community Empowerment Review Committee for consideration. The petition is entitled 'Retain Fortnightly Green Bin Collection in East Lothian'.
- 1.2 The petition text reads:

Retain fortnightly green bin collection, as a change to every three weeks could have a significant impact on our environment and the cleanliness of our local communities. A reduction in waste collection services could lead to an increase in waste related issues, such as littering and fly tipping, vermin infestation, and even health hazards due to rotting waste.

### 2 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Committee consider the petition and takes action as required.

#### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A petition was submitted by Catherine King, principal petitioner, on 6 May 2024, and was deemed to be competent. The petition had been scheduled to be heard at the meeting of the Petitions and Community Empowerment Review Committee on 17 June 2024, but was rescheduled due this meeting falling within the pre-election period.
- 3.2 At the time of submission, there were 2450 signatories. At the time of writing this report, there appear to be 2782 signatories to the online petition.
- 3.3 Further details of the petition are contained within the petition form at **Appendix 1**. The Lead Petitioner included some comments from petition signatories in the petition form, and further comments can be found

online at the following link: <u>Supporter comments · Retain Fortnightly</u> <u>Green Bin Collection in East Lothian · Change.org</u>.

3.4 The petition can be viewed by contacting the Clerk to the Petitions and Community Empowerment Review Committee.

## 4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no immediate policy implications arising from this report. Depending on the action required and agreed by the Committee, there may be policy implications relating to particular issues arising from competent petitions. These will be subject to a separate report to the relevant committee, as required.

## 5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

## 6 **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial dependent on the action agreed by the Committee.
- 6.2 Personnel dependent on the action agreed by the Committee.
- 6.3 Other dependent on the action agreed by the Committee.

### 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 East Lothian Council Standing Orders – Appendix 1: Scheme of Administration – Petitions and Community Empowerment Review Committee.

AUTHOR'S NAME	Becky Crichton
DESIGNATION	Committees Officer/Clerk to the Petitions and Community Empowerment and Review Committee
CONTACT INFO	rcrichton@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	9 September 2024

Appendix 1: Summary of petition for consideration



## PETITION TO EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

Name of Principal Petitioner (and organisation if applicable) (Block Caps)	CATHERINE KING
Address of Principal Petitioner (inc Postcode) (Block Caps)	
Contact telephone number of Principal Petitioner	
Title of Petition	RETAIN FORTNIGHLTY GREEN BIN COLLECTION
Petition text. We the undersigned call on East Lothian Council to	Retain fortnightly green bin collection, as a change to every 3 weeks could have a significant impact on our environment and the cleanliness of our local communities. A reduction in waste collection services could lead to an increase in waste related issues, such as littering and fly tipping, vermin infestation and even health hazards due to rotting waste.
What action have you taken and who have you contacted before submitting this petition and what was the result of this?	Councillor John McMillan to highlight that this is a discriminatory policy which affects disabled families and families with young children. We discussed by phone call and his assistant has sent me this paperwork.
Please provide more information about your petition	Nappies, female sanitary products and adult incontinence pads are not recyclable. The new system is discriminatory to any family affected by this, as we are asked to store them and bag them for collection. Why are families expected to handle waste in this manner, when previously we could bag it and leave it in our bin, then wheel out the bin discreetly. The new service does not provide this and is completely unworkable. Due to smells, flies, birds etc. ELC is offering a home visit to families to check they are using their recycling bins and to see how much incontinence waste there is – this is completely unacceptable and discrimination against the most vulnerable in society. There have been significant posts on social media where the system is not working. It also seems unfair to go



Signature of Principal Petitioner	Catherine King
	residents in their communities.
	Below is some of the comments made on the online petition and as there was no space to add them, I have used the space accordingly, to give ELC a sense of how this is impacting the
	City of Edinburgh Council accepts online petitions and I really hope ELC does the same.
	Whilst the petition below would require me to stand somewhere and collect signatures – you will find them on the online petition.
	https://www.change.org/p/retain-fortnightly-green-bin- collection-in-east-lothian
	This is an electronic petition and can be found here –
	Over a short time 2449 people have taken the time to respond to this petition. I haven't heavily promoted, but some of the comments and hardship people are facing due to a decrease in waste services is already affecting mental health.
	Lastly we – the public spend a lot of time litter picking, beach cleaning and caring about our communities. Asking people to take their litter home, when their bin is already overflowing will not work and we fear a significant increase in littering which will affect wildlife and the wider environment.
	Rats are on the increase, with new builds, displacement and now public bins are overflowing as people start to dump their rubbish in public bins. There has been numerous reports of rat infestations up and own the country and we fear there may be an increase.
	Council back to a system of bags at the side of the road for council workers, who previously had a machine to lift buckets.



# Council Your details will only be held by East Lothian Council and will not be used for any purposes other than in relation to this petition.

For Office Use:	
Date Received:	6 May 2024
Receiving Officer:	B. Crichton
Petition Reference:	PET0224

Signature	Print Name (Block Caps)	Contact Address
Elizabeth Guest	We are a family with 2 toddlers. This is not sustainable for us. Ive emailed and attempted to phone. They haven't replied. I hope this will get them to listen!	
France Allen	I'm in a flat and there is a communal bin store, when I went in on Tuesday to put my rubbish in all bins were full and overflowing and I couldn't get mine in to any bins, plus black bags on floor and terrible smell.	
Mhairi Fleming	Having 2 young children in nappies makes this change very impactful on our household. We already recycle everything allowed by East Lothian council but it's not enough, our green bin is overflowing by week 3.	
Andrew McDade	Currently paying over £200 a month in council tax with a raise in price recently and seeing a reduced and very poor service. 3 weeks without a bin collection? The smell and rot in the bins will be horrible in the summer months. People with babies and dogs. Nappies and poo bags. Absolute disgrace.	
Daine Cornwall	It makes absolutely no sense to have an accumulation of; cat, dog or human faeces (hopefully from nappies) rotting in a bin anywhere in this country. What on earth are the council thinking. If anything recycling should be held back, not the weekly rubbish uplift. Disgusting	
Lorna Kelly	I recycle and use the bins/bags provided but my green bin is still full every fortnight so will be worse moving to every 3 weeks. We are a household of 4 adults so don't qualify for a bigger bin. Perhaps if bigger bins were provided to families who need them then 3 weekly collections wouldn't be such and issue.	



Council		
	Family of 5 we struggle with fortnightly uplifts as it	
Emily Graham	is! And we recycle as much as possible already.	
	I am a household of 4 adults. We won't last 3 week	
Mollie Kerr		
Christopher Zientara	ELC cuts services, but increases the cost. They	
	announced next year Council Tax will raise 10%.	
	Yet over last few years we lost most of the brown	
	bin collection and now they want to decrease	
	green bin collection too.	
	Moreover, their arguments are that we can drive to	
	the recycling facilities. I can't drive. What people	
	like me are supposed to do? Take rubbish on the bus?	
Diane Fraser	I support this petition 100%!	
	I struggle with the two weekly collection, having to wait a further week will just encourage fly tipping	
	and rat infestations - ridiculous in this day and age	
	and what we pay council tax for!	
Jen Tays	Soiled nappies, dog poo bags, all sorts of	
	misdemeanours having to wait three weeks would	
	be disgusting	
	Three weeks is far too long. I have three kids who	
Debbie Gray	stay with us and a step daughters who	
	visits/sleeps over regularly who had asn. You're	
	lucky if the bin lasts the two weeks considering the amount of nappies etc. Instead of cutting services	
	cut the councillors wages and stop the ridiculous	
	pay rises they give themselves.	
Adele O'Neil	I have a dog and a little one in nappies, there is no	
	way that dirty nappies and dog poo should be lying	
	in a bin for 3 weeks.	
Judy McGovern	A 3 week bin collection is a serious health hazzard.	
	We already have rat problems in Ormiston this will	
	just escalate the issue.	
Thomas Roche	This will impact me and my household negatively.	
Eva Thomson	As a family of 4 who do recycle we still have a full	
	bin by the end of 2 weeks and sometimes a bag	
	waiting to go in. If we go to every 3 weeks this	
	would unrealistic as we recycle as much as	
	possible already.	
	We are a family of 4 who barley manages to make	
Ashli Calder	it through the two week collection, we are not	
	entitled to a bigger bin so where will this leave us? With piling waste in the garden?	



Council	
I do not want my children to grow up seeing the	
state of the town with fly tipping and rubbish	
everywhere because the council have made this	
stupid decision.	
We are paying the same council tax for less of a	
service and on top of that, we are expected to	
cram the same amount of rubbish for an extra	
week into the same size bin. This is absolutely	
ludicrous, it won't be possible. We recycle as much	
as we can and we are already at capacity by two	
weekly collections.	
I believe the decision to move to 3 weekly to be	
wrong. There was plenty of time to find a method	
of consultation. A change in the re-cycling	
collection would likely have been more acceptable.	
We are a household of 4 with 2 children using	
nappies, we will struggle to have our green bin	
taken every 3 weeks as opposed to 2, it will be	
overflowing. We recycle everything we can	
already!	
	<ul> <li>I do not want my children to grow up seeing the state of the town with fly tipping and rubbish everywhere because the council have made this stupid decision.</li> <li>We are paying the same council tax for less of a service and on top of that, we are expected to cram the same amount of rubbish for an extra week into the same size bin. This is absolutely ludicrous, it won't be possible. We recycle as much as we can and we are already at capacity by two weekly collections.</li> <li>I believe the decision to move to 3 weekly to be wrong. There was plenty of time to find a method of consultation. A change in the re-cycling collection would likely have been more acceptable.</li> <li>We are a household of 4 with 2 children using nappies, we will struggle to have our green bin taken every 3 weeks as opposed to 2, it will be overflowing. We recycle everything we can</li> </ul>