

Booking to visit the tip set to become permanent

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Ever since the Little Marcle Road waste site reopened following Lockdown 1, it became necessary to book a visit. When the new system started, it was not possible to book a slot on the same day, which was very inconvenient if you were finally able to mow your lawn on a sunny day and needed to get rid of the cuttings immediately. And booking could only be done online - no good for those without internet access.

In August, it became possible to book on the day - but your booking would not show up on the list the attendant is sent at 07:00 that morning. More recently, new bookings are sent to the attendant's mobile phone within 30 minutes (though there are times when this fails)... Some infrastructure has been put in place to facilitate this - clearly something that would not have happened if the booking system was planned to be phased out after the pandemic.

Online booking is unnecessarily long-winded, but it is possible to shorten the process by bypassing Herefordshire Council's website and going direct to: capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/WasteSiteBookingPublic/. Those who cannot book online may do so by phoning 01432-260000, but obviously this is only possible during office hours.

Although visitors are advised to download the PDF emailed to them for the booking and display it on their phone, this is not necessary: all that is required is to note the booking number that is sent to you. Another slight improvement to the system is up to 4 visits may be made within a period of 14 days - up from only two - but this is still no use for a major house clearance, etc. The hassle, together with limited opening hours (which are, fortunately, no more restricted than in pre-pandemic days) encourages fly-tipping.

Visitors to the Ledbury site may arrive by bike or on foot as well as with a motor vehicle, though non-motorised users are told they must not jump a queue of cars. In reality though, there are seldom any queues - the one advantage of this new regime. This system has probably made people plan their visits more carefully, rather than go with just one item. It does, however, prevent those who do not live in Herefordshire or Worcestershire using any site within either county: Bromsberrow residents, even though having an HR8 postcode, now have to go to Hempsted, which is on the other side of Gloucester.