

I have been visiting the Atkinson Secure Children's Home as a Corporate Parent for the past seven years on a monthly basis. I was delighted, therefore, that it has received a glowing report after government inspectors said that each child feels 'safe and secure' and receives 'good-quality individualised care.' The County Council-managed children's home specialises in the welfare of children aged from 10 to 17 who are likely to either abscond, suffer significant harm or injure themselves.

A team of Ofsted and CQC inspectors visited the home, and rated educational outcomes, safeguarding, leadership and the progress of the children as 'good.' Inspectors said that the staff are highly motivated and dedicated, and the children are listened to and fully involved in their care planning. Each child is given opportunities to express their needs and to explain what is important to them and to make contributions towards their own futures and to life in the home.

The report adds: "The staff's warm relationships with the children encourage positive behavioural change...they provide clear and structured boundaries...consequently, children reduce their risk-taking behaviour, feel safer and learn from their experience. This is a well-managed home."

An action plan to help reduce the amount of food waste has been endorsed by the County Council's Cabinet. It follows a Food Waste Spotlight Review commissioned by the Corporate, Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee, which I Chair, last year.

Representatives from food charities, councils and anaerobic digestion plants attended the review to discuss why food is wasted, how to reduce it and ways to improve its collection.

Almost a third of all food purchased in Devon is thrown away every year – UK businesses annually waste 1.9 million tonnes. The review heard that householders were continuing to incorrectly dispose of food waste. Almost a third of the contents in an average residual waste bin is food waste, which could be composted or recycled.

The review concluded that several key actions could help. Firstly, clear, consistent messaging on household food waste recycling is needed. Secondly, greater collaboration with food waste charities should be encouraged to improve food waste education. Parish and town councils should also be supported to combat food waste by making use of organisations like community fridges. Finally, businesses should be encouraged to combat food waste.

It is crucial that any declaration of a climate emergency is followed up with action, so I'm pleased to see that the Council has commissioned a full analysis of the carbon impacts of its waste management services from international environmental consultancy Eunomia Research & Consulting Ltd.

Eunomia's emissions modelling will establish the carbon footprint of DCC's waste management services, including the emissions from reuse, recycling, composting, anaerobic digestion, residual energy recovery, landfill and transport. Carbon contributions from each of Devon's eight district waste collection as well as its recycling centres will be included in the analysis. The research will also factor in the need to meet a 65% recycling target by 2035.

Communities and residents across the County are being called on to vote for their 'People's Choice Hero' as part of the 7th annual Thank You Awards. A shortlist has been created from the nominations made by the public and can now be viewed and voted for on the Recycle Devon website. Votes will be open until 31 January 2020.

All the shortlisted candidates have been invited to attend an awards ceremony at County Hall in March. The Thank You Awards are organised by Recycle Devon, and were first launched to recognise those

people who do that bit extra to help ensure Devon remains clean and green. There were over 40 nominations in seven different categories for this year's awards including School Recycling Hero, Collection Crew/Operative and Small Business Champion.

Recycle Devon is a partnership of 10 councils including Devon County Council, Torbay Council and the eight District Councils.

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