




Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
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Dear Secretary of State,

There has been significant media coverage recently over the impact of HGV driver shortages on Britain's supply chains, especially to supermarkets. It is clear that the combined impacts of the ongoing high rate of Covid infections and of Brexit are causing severe issues for this part of the transport sector.

I am writing today to raise my concerns, which I know are shared by many other local councils, of the impact that this shortage of drivers could have on the delivery of vital local services, in particular waste and recycling collection. Ealing's council-owned provider of these services, Greener Ealing Ltd, has worked hard to put plans in place to mitigate the impact of shortages, but there remains a risk of disruption if shortages persist into the longer term. I am aware that other councils are in a less fortunate position at this point, with one nearby borough having to suspend garden waste collections entirely due to a shortage of drivers. As you will appreciate, a consistent waste collection for residents is vital to tackling climate change, but service disruptions could lead to reduced recycling and the contamination of waste streams.

It is clear from both the point of view of securing supply chains and of providing council services that there needs to be urgent action to address the shortage of HGV drivers. I am therefore writing to ask that you do two things:

Firstly, to ask Home Office ministers to add HGV drivers to the Shortage Occupation List so that local authorities can recruit easily from outside the UK when they are unable to fulfil their needs from the existing labour pool;





Secondly, to take urgent action to cut the currently extended waiting times for tests for new Driver CPCs. I appreciate that restrictions during the pandemic have caused something of a backlog, but this situation is now becoming urgent and requires rapid attention.

Our waste and recycling service drivers have worked incredibly hard throughout the pandemic to ensure the continuity of this vital service to residents. However, they are now badly overstretched due to the ongoing driver shortages. We urgently need ministers to take action to address this nationwide-issue and make it easier for us to recruit the drivers we need.

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deirdre", followed by a stylized flourish.

Cllr Deirdre Costigan
Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Climate Action