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FOREWORD



It gives me great pleasure to introduce this report on recycling which is the result of a lengthy investigation. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the work of the group. Many people gave up large amounts of time to attend meetings and to share their experience and knowledge with us. Their collective expertise has been invaluable in assisting the task group to formulate practical informed recommendations which, if taken forward, we believe will increase recycling and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

It is crucial that we achieve this as we are running out of room in our existing landfill sites. Landfill tax is increasing and will continue to rise over the next few years. The cost to the Council to dispose of refuse in landfill is currently £93 per tonne for household waste and this is set to increase by another £12 per tonne in April.

To put this into perspective, this means that in 2011/12 it cost the Council £5.5m to dump our waste into landfill sites and the majority of this is tax. In a time of great economic need we simply cannot allow our scarce financial resources to be wasted this way, so it is essential we reduce, re-use and recycle our waste as much as possible.

Cllr David Porter

Chairman of the Recycling Task Group and
Environment, Sustainability and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee



TASK GROUP MEMBERSHIP



CLLR PORTER (CHAIRMAN)



CLLR STOCKLEY



CLLR HARBORNE



CLLR NAYLOR



CLLR ROBERTS



DR GOLD



MR BELL



BACKGROUND

1. In September 2012, the Environment, Sustainability and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided additional scrutiny of the recycling service was required. This was in response to concerns about the increasing cost to dispose of refuse in landfill and the fact the recycling rate for Richmond upon Thames appears to be levelling off. It was also felt to be an appropriate moment to review the recycling service to feed into the next Waste and Recycling Contract. The Committee had previously heard about the reductions in household waste and changes in recycling, such as reduced packaging and less newspapers, and it was considered these matters were worthy of scrutiny.
2. A cross-party task group, including co-opted members, was set up with a remit to examine the Council's approach to recycling with a view to reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. This included examination of the barriers to recycling, methods of encouraging people to recycle more, gathering evidence from other (comparable) local authorities, to learn from best practice, and an analysis of options for both the short and longer term.
3. To ensure this piece of work was manageable and achievable the task group agreed to focus on the following key areas: (a) Increasing participation in food waste recycling; (b) Recycling facilities / options for residents in flats and (c) Communication and behavioural change. The group met for the first time in October 2012, when the terms of reference, listed in **Appendix A**, were agreed.
4. Methodology mainly comprised a series of meetings with external and internal witnesses, who provided opinions and specialised information, which helped the task group make informed decisions about recycling. Witnesses included:
 - Paul Chadwick, Director of Environment
 - Jon Freer, Assistant Director, Development and Street Scene
 - Eve Risbridger, Head of Street Scene
 - Ella Clarke, London Communications Project Manager, Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) ¹
 - Elinor Firth, Head of Communications

¹ Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) was set up in 2000 to help increase recycling in the UK and to create a market for recycled materials.



- Risa Wilkinson, Project and Communications Officer
 - Catherine Walsh, Communications Advisor, Richmond Housing Partnership
 - Simon Martin, Resident Involvement Manager, Richmond upon Thames Churches Housing Trust
 - Stephen Didsbury, Head of Waste and Street Services, London Borough of Bexley
 - Colin Cooper, Chief Officer, South West London Environment Network
 - Dawn Cooper, Head of Customer Services
 - Hilary Morse, Head of Community Engagement and Accountability
 - Franco Murphy, Contract Manager, Veolia Environmental Services
5. Input from two local housing associations, a comparable local authority, WRAP, the South West London Environment Network, Veolia Environmental Services and council officers enabled the task group to learn from experts with considerable experience in relation to their terms of reference.
 6. Additional evidence was gathered from desk research, benchmarking and by the task group going out with the Council's recycling crews. This gave an opportunity to speak first hand with the recycling team to ascertain from them what they find every morning on the streets of Richmond upon Thames.



7. The group agreed to report back to the Environment, Sustainability and Community OSC in March 2013 to ensure findings could be considered as part of the waste and recycling procurement exercise.

FINDINGS

Financial Overview

8. It is acknowledged that the Council needed to develop its Budget for 2013/14 against a backdrop of continued pressure on public finances coupled with the introduction of radical welfare reform and changes to the way Local Government is financed.
9. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is aimed at restricting the growth in the Council Tax to zero or near zero percent whilst maintaining the quality of services provided to residents. This is a considerable challenge for the Council and involves budget reductions of approximately £30m over the 4 years from 2011/12 to 2015/16, the current Spending Review period.
10. In addition, the Government has indicated that they expect to continue reducing public expenditure beyond the current Spending Review period. This will undoubtedly impact on the Council and will inform the level of budget reductions that are necessary in future years.
11. As a result, suggestions and recommendations in this report have been made with an understanding that there is a need to continue to find ways of reducing budgets whilst maintaining essential services to residents.

The Recycling Service

12. The Council's waste and recycling services team is responsible for all aspects of the recycling service in the Borough. However it contracts out the collection of all waste and most of the recycling to Veolia who make approximately a quarter of a million collections per week. Almost every household receives a residual waste collection, two recycling collections (blue and black box) together with many being recipient of a food waste collection and the subscription green waste service.

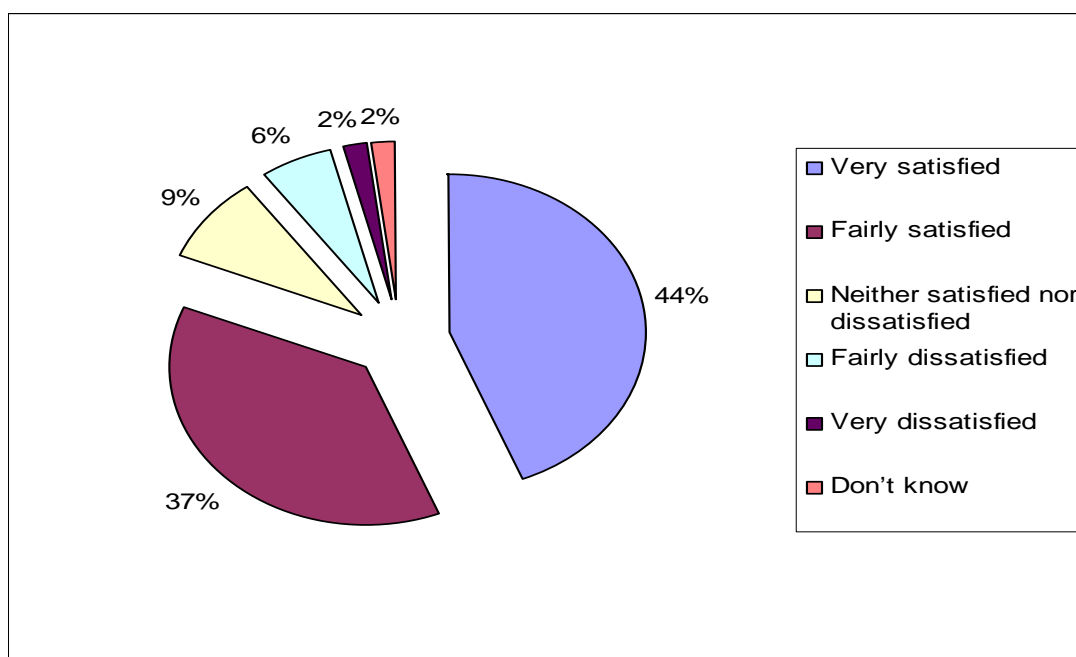


13. Veolia is only responsible for the collection of waste and recycling and for transporting it to either the transfer stations, to go to landfill, or the recycling to the council owned and operated recycling facility. The Council provides residents with up to four different recycling collections via colour coded boxes for home separated recyclable materials, food caddies for food waste and garden waste bags or bins (paid service). Once the recycling has been transported to the depot, the Council sends it to a number of recycling facilities for processing. Further information concerning what goes in each recycling container can be found in **Appendix B**.



14. The recycling service in the Borough is highly regarded externally, findings from the Residents' Survey (2012) demonstrate that residents have a positive view of the service and participation in dry waste recycling (blue and black boxes) is one of the highest in the country. However, while the food waste service is used, participation levels are not as high as they could be.

Satisfaction with recycling (Residents' Survey – 2012)



15. The recycling service is offered to properties where a kerbside collection is possible. This includes private houses and flats, rented accommodation, and social housing. It does include blocks of flats but blocks above a certain size are provided with a central recycling bin instead of individual boxes. Communal food waste recycling is not available at these locations although individual flats may choose to participate.
16. The task group were impressed with the breadth of services already provided to help minimise waste. However, there were concerns that residents may not be fully aware of the services available. These issues were picked up during the review.

Budget Information

17. The Waste and Collection and Street Cleaning budgets include very large income (£3.6m) and expenditure (£9m) budgets and variations can have significant impact on the overall budget position. The budget for 2013/14 includes a number of income streams including sales of recycling materials, trade waste (collected and delivered), green waste and bulky special collections. However, this income can be affected by market competition, contamination, contract rates and seasonal trends.
18. High value expenditure areas include: vehicle fleet and fuel costs, contractor payments and Waste Disposal Levy payments with the Council paying for its waste on a "*Pay as you Throw*" basis.
19. Budgets for 2012/13 included an allowance to guard against tonnage fluctuations. Initial indications, based on tonnage for April to November 2012, is that a potential under spend of £700K will occur during 2012/13. This under spend has been offset by a request from the West London Waste Authority for a supplementary levy payment of £553K as reported to Cabinet in December 2012. Increases for 2013/14 are expected to be £950K.
20. All of these areas are monitored on a monthly basis and the task group considered this data as part of their investigation.

Figures for Richmond upon Thames

21. In 2011/12, the last full year of data, Richmond upon Thames produced approximately 88,760 tonnes of municipal waste, including 75,401 tonnes of



household waste, and achieved a recycling and composting rate of 44.7 % (of which approximately 33.4 % was recycled and 14.3% was composted). In terms of dry recycling, compared to other London authorities the Borough is placed 4th out of 33 councils.

22. Key national performance indicators commonly used by local authorities, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department for Communities and Local Government are:

- Residual Waste to Landfill (Measured as Kg of waste/household/year)
- NI 191 Total Residual Waste per Household
- NI 192 Total Percentage of Household Waste Sent for Recycling, Compositing or Reuse

23. The task group looked at how these work, the changes brought about by the changes in definitions and the fact that there are different categories covering, Unitary Councils, Collection and Disposal Authorities and the differences in London between those authorities who have Waste Disposal Authorities and those that act as Unitary Waste Authorities.

Why should this issue be of concern to the Council?

“Much of our waste ends up in landfill, eating up precious land and creating air, water and soil pollution. As rubbish decomposes, it generates carbon dioxide and methane (a more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide) and releases chemicals and pesticides into groundwater².”

24. It costs the council £93/T to send residual waste to landfill. This is both environmentally harmful and expensive. The cost to dispose of food waste is £68/T and green waste is £36/T. In contrast, the contents of blue and black boxes are used for a variety of purposes and can be sold to generate income. So removing a single tonne of paper and card from the residual waste would save the Council over £150, so creating an incentive to invest in opportunities to increase the collection of paper as the most financially advantageous switch on an invest to save basis.
25. In West London, the focus of waste management activities has been recycling. West London Waste Authority (WLWA) is the statutory waste disposal authority

² <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/8cfd120a-2673-11e1-91cd-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2LLZnQgbs>



(WDA). They are responsible for disposing waste collected by the London Boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond upon Thames. About 1.4 million people live in this area, which covers 38,000 hectares.

26. All boroughs within the area have good recycling rates and collect a wide range of material for recycling. Whilst this has been a successful strategy with the amount of waste being sent to landfill reducing year on year there are a number of policies and other drivers looking to point the direction of waste management in West London even further.
27. These motivators, outlined by West London Waste in “*Municipal Waste Prevention Strategy for West London 2011 – 2015*”, are summarised below.

Type	Headline	Detail
Legislation	Revised Waste Framework Directive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Places a legal duty on local authorities to consider waste in the order of the hierarchy so waste prevention must be considered. A new waste hierarchy to be followed with prevention not being considered waste but preparing for reuse is considered waste. There will be a requirement for waste prevention programmes to be introduced by December 2013.
Policy	National Waste Policy Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The review is already showing a desire for moving toward a zero waste economy. With a focus on products and materials including waste prevention for all sources of waste. Local action will be a driver for change. With a focus on ensuring that items are not wasted there will be incentives to ensure the best is made of every item.
Legislation	Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of waste that West London can send to landfill is decreasing, although waste generation is dropping and the amount of residual waste is decreasing it isn't reducing as quickly as the level of allocated allowances. This has financial implications as allowances

³ <http://www.westlondonwaste.gov.uk/west-london-waste-authority/strategy/>



Type	Headline	Detail
		will have to be bought and the price of these fluctuate with supply and demand so the price can only be estimated.
Policy	Mayor of London's Municipal and Business Waste Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to promote waste prevention and informing consumers about the value of what they are throwing away. • A carbon measure will be put in place, the best method of saving carbon is by preventing waste.
Policy	West London Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several objectives and a policy were agreed in the strategy to support waste minimisation activities: • Objective 1 – Manage waste in accordance with the waste hierarchy. • Objective 11 – Work together to encourage waste reduction and reuse initiatives within the wider community. • Policy 2 – WLWA and its constituent boroughs will prioritise waste reduction and reuse. • To divert an additional 40,000 tonnes of waste from the household stream by 2020 through a variety of activities. • Get 280,000 households home composting by 2020.
Economic	Public Spending Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review prompted all public sector organisations to consider the services they provide. • If waste is avoided or reduced it does not need to be collected from residents, it does not need to be bulked and disposed of. This could represent a cost saving for all councils. • If items are reused they are less likely to need collecting by the local authority from residents' homes and taken for sorting or repairing. Items that are reused also do not need to be treated and sent for disposal. Again this could represent a cost saving for all councils.
Social	Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are differences between the six



Type	Headline	Detail
		boroughs. Some have greater levels of deprivation than others. Even within borough boundaries there are areas with different profiles. The differences between them will influence how implementation plans for the target materials will be put in place. The demographic data available differs between the 6 West London boroughs. For each action these will need to be looked at in order to ensure messages are relevant to the proposed target audiences.
Environmental	Waste Arisings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst the amount of waste sent to landfill has been decreasing there is no identified explanation for this change. With disposal costs increasing there is an incentive to reduce waste and increase diversion to other locations.
Environmental / Economic	Waste Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 60% of the residual waste being sent for disposal could be recycled or composted.

28. While comparing well against other boroughs the task group are fully aware of the various pressures to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill and that *“recycling ... waste will only get us so far⁴”*.

29. In addition, the task group acknowledge there are a number of barriers which, moving forward, threaten an improved recycling rate:

- Removal of leafing and other compostable materials due to a change in the regulations. Compost is now required to meet BSI PAS 100 criteria⁵
- Change to Controlled Waste Regulations moving independent schools out of household to commercial
- Reduction in newspaper sales in favour of electronic media

⁴ <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/8cfd120a-2673-11e1-91cd-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2LLZnQgbs>

⁵ BSI PAS 100 stands for the British Standards Institution's Publicly Available Specification for composted material. This is a national compost benchmark - the minimum requirements for the process of composting, the selection of materials from which compost is made and even how it is labelled.



- General trend towards paperless culture
- Campaigns to reduce packaging or reduce the weight of packaging
- Lack of customer faith that items are genuinely recycled

Areas for Improvement

30. Therefore, there are a number of challenges to increasing the recycling rate, whether this is the number of households who participate or the volume of waste that each household recycles. There are differences in behaviour across the varying types of households in the borough and there is a degree of confusion amongst residents on what can and can't be recycled.
31. Richmond is one of the six boroughs in the West London Waste Authority and participates in sampling waste streams to look at opportunities for further recycling as part of the work to inform the disposal procurement being run by West London Waste.
32. The methodology used to develop a sampling strategy for the project was based on ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) and was used to represent socio-demographic differences across the area. In Richmond upon Thames, Acorn groups 2 and 3 were selected as they represent 63.9% and 19.6% of the overall borough population. Further sampling was also undertaken on flats, which make up approximately 20% of households in the Borough, given the difficulties London has in providing a recycling service in flats.
33. A summary is set out below:

ACORN Category Profile	ACORN group	% of households	Number of households
Wealthy Achievers	1	7.2%	5,900
Urban Prosperity	2	63.9%	52,360
Comfortably Off	3	19.6%	16,060
Moderate Means	4	3.2%	2,622
Hard-Pressed	5	5.9%	4,834
Unclassified		0.2%	164
Total		100	81940

34. Richmond upon Thames has a good recycling rate yet a significant amount of recyclable material continues to be disposed of as residual waste and is sent to landfill. An analysis of the composition of this waste was undertaken and found to contain, in particular, significant quantities of paper/card and food waste, both of



which are recyclable / compostable. Both materials are already collected at the kerbside from low rise households. Paper/card is also available at flats. Furthermore, paper/card generates the Council an income when recycled (as opposed to costing the Council money to dispose of as landfill).

	Acorn 2	Acorn 3	Flats	Richmond average
Average residual kg/hh/wk	8.39	7.24	6.78	7.43
Food in residual (%)	28.6%	28.3%	29.7%	28.9%
Garden in residual (%)	2.5%	3.8%		2.7%
Dry in residual (%)	19.2%	19.7%	31.1%	23.3%

Participation Analysis	Service	Black Box	Blue Box	Food Waste
	% households	82%	84%	49%

35. The summary composition analysis of residual waste, above, highlights that Richmond upon Thames has a high recycling rate and a high participation rate in dry recycling services. However, there are opportunities to increase dry recycling and also in terms of participation in food waste.
36. The task group looked at the analysis of the residual waste that had been undertaken and considered, after taking advice from officers, that the principal opportunities from analysis of the residual waste pointed to increasing the capture of paper and card which would, if collected, generate the largest savings to the Council and thus make a business case for investment.
37. To help address these issues, and as listed in **Appendix C**, evidence was collected from a range of stakeholders. From this evidence, the following areas for improvements have been identified and accordingly, methods for improvements have been suggested and recommendations made.

(A) Communication, Promotion and Education

38. One of the greatest challenges facing local authorities is the need for a major change in public attitudes and behaviour to the disposal of everyday waste. Current lifestyles are such that convenience can take priority over any considerations about sustainability and environmental impact.



39. A clear theme runs through the evidence presented to the task group on the need for regular factual communication to continually refresh residents' knowledge of recycling services and to help overcome barriers to recycling. Best practice, evidence and research shows that regular communication can help to improve recycling rates, and sustain them.
40. Over the past five years the Council has communicated about recycling using a variety of methods including the media, events, community and school activities, utilising the sides of waste trucks / lamp posts, direct mail, adverts and newsletters. Each method presents pros and cons in terms of reach and successfulness.
41. However, over the past few years recycling rates have remained static and with no planned service change there isn't a "hook" that can be used to launch another full on campaign. Therefore, promoting the improved use of the current facilities is crucial.
42. To move things forward, it is important priorities are identified to ensure communications activity delivers real value. In order to do this it's important to understand why people in the Borough don't recycle and what would make them recycle. Various research findings were considered by the task group. For example, South West London Environment Network (SWLEN) were commissioned in early 2012 to organise and run a campaign to increase participation levels in recycling. Findings from door stepping exercises suggests 20% don't do food waste recycling as they think it is "yuck" and 37% aren't aware of the full range of blue and black material they can recycle. Additional work, in terms of other household trends, would be extremely useful for developing communications activity.
43. The issues below, highlighted by the South West London Environment Network report⁶, are supported by the task group.
- *"New residents often reported having no bins on arrival and expected new boxes to be automatically provided. They also reported thinking that boxes would be automatically replaced when broken or missing. When people move to the Borough it would be good to welcome them with*

⁶ *London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Community Engagement/Door-stepping (2012) South West London Environment Network*



information about the Council's recycling and composting service (this could be tied in with the provision of council tax information)."

- *"People do read leaflets but then often throw them away. They need access to detailed information at the point when they are trying to decide where to put a particular item. A more detailed website would help with this issue, or, as one resident suggested, a sticker with the latest items could be provided to residents so they can attach it to the side of the containers. The current website is very good overall but specific product information would be helpful e.g. where to put plastic lids from tetra packs, lids on glass jars etc."*
- "People have been shown to respond very well to face to face conversations. They seem far more prone to positive behaviour change as a result of a door-stepping campaign than from online or postal information distribution methods. A follow up targeted campaign looking at promoting specific mitigation methods to overcome some of the reported barriers to recycling would be likely to be very effective. It should be possible to use the provided database to devise a number of possible campaigns to ensure maximum effectiveness in the future."

RECOMMENDATIONS: Communication, Promotion and Education

(R1) To help improve understanding of what can and can't be recycled the Council's website should be updated so residents have access to detailed and up to date information (including pictures) in relation to (a) whether an item can be recycled or not (b) which bin(s) to use (c) specific product information e.g. where to put plastic lids from tetra packs, lids on glass jars etc and (d) information on where items ends up and the benefits of recycling.

(R2) That, in addition to the online "*let us know you are moving*" form, available via www.richmond.gov.uk, when people move to the Borough the Council should be pro-active and provide new residents with information about the Council's recycling and composting services and specifically ask whether new residents have boxes/containers for all items. This should be tied in with information sent out in relation to council tax registration and electoral services.

(R3) That the Head of Communications works with the Recycling Team and



Veolia Environmental Services to develop a recycling communications strategy, including both broad brush and targeted communications, which is accessible to all residents.

(R4) That in developing a communications strategy consideration is given to (a) the use of social media and (b) developing videos for the Council's website, made by employees of the council, to give customers hints and tips on recycling.

(R5) That support is given to regular door-stepping exercises, using volunteers and community champions, to overcome some of the reported barriers to recycling.

(R6) That promotion of recycling / waste minimisation goes through all existing forums including resident, community and faith groups, civic facilities (community notice boards, GP surgeries etc) and associated websites.

(R7) That consideration be given to (recycling crews) putting a targeted leaflet through a residents door when it is clear that they are not recycling correctly.



(B) Recycling Options for Flats

44. Providing recycling services to residents living in flats is fundamentally different to providing services to houses. In May 2011 the Council revised, and simplified, its recycling service for flats.

Old Service	Flats Revised Service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of up to 7 single bins (1 for each commodity) • Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only c.50% had capacity for cardboard or plastic bottles ○ Many small blocks had no room for up to 7 bins ○ Specialist compartmentalised vehicles required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified to twin bins • All have full range of commodities except food • Changes funded by a grant from the London Waste and Recycling Board (£265K) • Residents offered split white bags for storage • Allowed removal of several vehicles and an annual cost saving of £250K



45. The revised scheme added c. 1600 properties to the recycling service and has received positive feedback from landlords and managing agents:

“Easy to use” – “Bins take up less space” – “White bags are helpful”

46. Despite this feedback a number of issues were brought to the attention of the task group, including:
- Bins are still contaminated – mainly with plastic bags and bags of rubbish



- Flat dwellers are harder to reach with communications - delivery of leaflet issues; more transient population; higher deprivation level; English as second language
- A minority of managing agents are 'anti-recycling'
- Some properties have limited bin store capacity
- Flats above shops – few opportunities for bin storage for flats or commercial premises
- Shared ownership/maintenance issues

47. Based on discussions held with witnesses, and guidance issued by WRAP⁷, outlined below are opportunities and challenges around the provision of recycling services to flats.

	Opportunities	Challenges
Building Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communal areas provide an opportunity for communications and often notice boards and poster sites already exist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Security arrangements can make it difficult to enter blocks of flats to collect recycling and deliver communications materials and messages. ○ There may be little space internally and externally for storing refuse and recycling. Residents may be unable or unwilling to store material for long periods of time in their flats. ○ Flats are usually close together and linked by corridors which can increase fire risk. ○ Vehicle access can be

⁷ <http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/recycling-collections-flats-understanding-flats>



	Opportunities	Challenges
		difficult (e.g. narrow access; low headroom; restricted entry to sites; need to stop on busy road to service flats above shops).
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There may be regular management newsletters and induction packs for new residents in which information about recycling could be included. ○ Caretakers may be regularly on site and can play a role in delivering recycling services (e.g. providing assisted collections); reporting issues with recycling and refuse (such as contamination, overflowing of recycling bins etc); answering resident queries and maintaining equipment related to recycling systems. ○ Some management companies will support recycling services on the basis that it will help them to achieve environmental accreditation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flats and communal areas are subject to more legislation and policies than kerbside properties such as The Regulatory Reform Order 2005 which governs fire safety. These regulations can affect the complexity, design and cost implications of the recycling service provided. ○ There are multiple stakeholders that need to be consulted when a recycling service is launched or changed e.g. caretakers, residents associations and managing agents. This can impact on expense and time requirements.
Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Since residents in flats live in close proximity and may pass each other frequently in communal areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flats might have clusters of certain resident types (e.g. sheltered accommodation or student flats) meaning



	Opportunities	Challenges
	<p>communities can become close knit. This may lead to increased ownership of the local area, meaning that whole communities in flats may become involved in championing recycling and improving the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing networks and events may already be in place and can be used to communicate recycling messages e.g. there may be regular bingo nights or sightseeing trips. Residents will usually pass each other in communal areas so “chatter factor” can help to spread recycling messages. 	<p>different approaches to recycling and communication are needed).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There can be less ownership and visibility of refuse and recycling services if communal recycling containers and chutes are used. For example residents can put refuse down the chute and not be seen to be doing so which may mean there is less social pressure to recycle. Resident and management turnover can be high. Waste audits have shown that residents living in flats produce less refuse and recyclable materials than residents of kerbside properties. The differences in waste production may be down to differences in purchasing habits (e.g. residents that have to climb several flights of stairs may be less likely to purchase food in heavy glass jars) and the number of people per property (as flats tend to have fewer people per



	Opportunities	Challenges
		household than kerbside properties).
<p align="center">RECOMMENDATIONS: Recycling Options for Flats</p> <p>(R8) That a scheme, focusing on paper and card, be piloted, with local housing associations in particular, to help increase participation in flats recycling.</p> <p>(R9) That where possible, the amount of paper/card collected from flats before, during and after the pilot (recommendation 8) be compared in order to measure improvements in recycling.</p> <p>(R10) That the data collected (recommendation 9) be used to show whether or not a paper/card scheme for flats has potential to succeed on a larger scale or whether it should be discontinued.</p> <p>(R11) That a proactive and regular communications programme, which is clear and accessible to all, be developed to help maximise participation in the paper and card scheme for flats.</p> <p>(R12) That the Council's Recycling Team works with the borough's housing associations and private landlords to (a) promote the paper and card scheme for flats and (b) appoint recycling champions for each block who would then be able to inform residents of the services available and help deal with local issues.</p> <p>(R13) That the borough's housing associations and private landlords be encouraged to locate recycling facilities for flats in the most appropriate locations to ensure it is as easy to recycle as it is to dispose of waste to landfill.</p>		



(C) Food Waste

48. While the Borough has a high dry waste recycling level, participation in food waste recycling could be improved.
49. 49% of households participate in food waste recycling yet findings from a recent door stepping campaign, carried out by South West London Environment Network, suggests that a significant number of residents do not participate for a variety of reasons. The top 3 were “No food caddy”, “Don’t produce food waste”, and “Smells, vermin and/or the yuck factor”.
50. The issues below, outlined by the South West London Environment Network report⁸, have been highlighted by the task group:
- *“Following the provision of information and advice by the team, 21.5% of people who identified themselves as not currently recycling food waste stated they would now do so.”*
 - *“Some of those who initially stated that they didn’t do food recycling due to the “yuck factor” were unaware that they could line the container with either newspaper or food liners. When this was explained to them they were willing to give the service another try.”*
 - *“A targeted campaign to address some of the most common barriers could be helpful in encouraging higher participation.”*
 - *“Although food waste bags are now officially sold in most major supermarkets residents demonstrated a low awareness of availability of appropriate sized food waste bags and difficulty in finding them in some areas. Information about this would be useful for residents.”*

RECOMMENDATIONS: Food Waste

(R14) That support is given to a targeted door-stepping exercise, in areas with low participation in food waste recycling, in order to better understand and overcome barriers to food waste recycling.

(R15) That, in addition to the information available on the council’s website, the Council, in developing a communications strategy for recycling, provides information on (a) where liners for food waste caddies can be bought (b) why liners should be used and (c) ways to keep them clean.

⁸ London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Community Engagement/Door-stepping (2012) South West London Environment Network



(D) Other Issues

51. Issues relating to recycling incentive schemes and supplementary planning guidance were considered throughout the review.
52. The article (below) published by Materials Recycling Weeks⁹ gives a flavour of the pros and cons of various incentive and reward schemes. These issues were discussed in more detail by the Environment, Sustainability and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 29 October, 2012 when Committee considered details of the next phase of the Richmond Card, and proposals to integrate the Card with a Web Account to create a Richmond Account for residents and service users.

INSIGHT: Recycling Incentive Schemes

Fierce competition is developing to provide recycling incentive schemes to councils, with reward giant Nectar, sustainability partnership Local Green Points and US firm RecycleBank already jostling for position in what could soon be a very lucrative market.

With the government opposed to pay-as-you-throw schemes that penalise bad recycling practice, attention is turning to methods of incentivising good waste behaviour.

Birmingham City Council is to run a pilot scheme where residents in Bournville and Erdington receive 25 Nectar points every time they pit out their paper recycling boxes. The company, whose points can be redeemed at Sainsbury's, Argos and Homebase, wants to recruit other councils for similar projects.

But it will face tough competition. Local Green Points is launching a pilot reward scheme to 2,000 flats in the London borough of Bexley. A partnership between Green Rewards, Enviro Comms and the Resource Waste Advisory Group will reward residents for reductions in their level of residual waste. Six other schemes are said to be in the pipeline.

Meanwhile, the provider of the UK's first recycling incentive scheme, RecycleBank, is tendering to extend a weight-based programme in the royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to include organic waste from April 2012. So what are the pros and cons of the different systems? Windsor and Maidenhead's head of public protection Terry Gould said the weight-based scheme was the most advanced model available.

"It is very sophisticated, using chips in the bin to measure weight," he said. "People did not accept chips for penalties but we removed the suspicion and Big Brother fears. It has worked out financially with significant savings for the council taxpayer."

⁹ <http://www.mrw.co.uk/news/-insight-recycling-incentive-schemes/8619111.article>



However, critics point out that rewarding by weight fails to sufficiently credit people who reduce the waste they produce in the first place.

Local Green Points will measure the savings residents in the Bexley pilot make on their landfill bill compared to a year earlier. A proportion of this will be shared among residents in the form of points that can be redeemed or donated to one of three community projects. Director Stephen Bates says the community element is a critical motivating factor: "We want to reduce waste to landfill; which of the three Rs are used is secondary. An elderly lady living on her own will never generate as much waste to recycle as a large family."

A drawback of measuring residual waste is that it will become progressively harder for residents to beat their previous totals. Bates said this would be countered by rising landfill disposal costs keeping savings high.

Nectar believes its Birmingham scheme is the simplest and most intuitive. Client development director Will Shuckburgh said many people were already familiar with Nectar points – 18 million people collect them. One criticism of Nectar's participation-based approach is that it takes no account of recyclables thrown in the bin rather than left out for collection. Shuckburgh countered: "We could make it more complicated but we think this is the most effective way of getting results. It is acting as a reminder to get people thinking about recycling."

With the huge potential for recycling incentive schemes across the UK, the debate over methods – and the competition to provide them – is unlikely to go away soon.

Is it right to reward recycling?

AEA principal consultant Gareth Morton: "Incentives can be a good thing, but it's a short fix to get a scheme going or a short boost in performance. The trouble is what happens when you stop running them, as they tend to have very short lifespans in people's minds."

Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee chair Joy Blizzard: "The jury is still out on incentive schemes. The Nectar scheme is an interesting approach, and I look forward to seeing whether it is sustainable in the long-term. Can local authorities continue to afford this kind of approach in these straightened times? What is the exit strategy?"

"Local Green Points director Stephen Bates: "If Great Britain had a 70% recycling rate then we would not need communications and incentives. Recycling is optional and until legislation changes we need to encourage people to do it. It is not the answer but it is part of the process."

53. In looking at ways to increase household recycling the task group noted the difficulties residents in smaller properties have in managing their recycling in their homes and gave consideration to the Council's Supplementary Planning



Documents and Guidance¹⁰. For new developments, proper consideration of storage and collection is essential to ensure appropriate waste management facilities are provided.

54. The recommendations below have been put forward to ensure everything possible is being done to support and develop best practice whether this is in relation to the Sustainability Checklist, Recycling for Existing Developments, Storage of Recycling in Front Gardens or Residential Design Standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Other Issues

(R16) That the possibility of including recycling rewards be explored in the development of the Richmond Account and Card.

(R17) That the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (Recycling for New Developments with Communal Facilities) be kept under review, so that developers provide appropriate external recycling facilities, to ensure it is as easy to recycle as it is to dispose of waste to landfill.

(R18) That opportunities be taken to encourage developers to consider the need for internal and external design to take account of the need to store recyclable waste.

CONCLUSION

55. The task group are pleased to hear of the excellent work already ongoing to develop recycling provision in Richmond upon Thames. Members have witnessed first hand the high level of dedication demonstrated by recycling staff, and the crews who collect it, who are committed to doing their jobs as efficiently as possible while looking at options for essential savings.
56. However, from studying good practice in other authorities and considering a number of reports produced about participation levels in recycling, the composition of recycling and the barriers to recycling particularly for people in flats, the task group believe that more can be done to increase the level of waste recycled. Several factors have shown themselves to be important, namely:

¹⁰

http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/environment/planning/planning_guidance_and_policies/supplementary_planning_documents_and_guidance.htm



- Richmond upon Thames provides an efficient recycling service but there are opportunities for improvement, especially in food waste recycling and services for flats.
 - Communication is a vital part of increasing participation in recycling. All witnesses stressed the need to continually remind residents, both of the importance of recycling, and of the services that are available to help them reduce the amount of rubbish put out as residual waste.
 - Strong working relationships with other council departments and partners can have an impact on recycling success, namely housing, planning and Information and Communication Technology.
57. The task group believe that the recommendations within this report will support continued improvement in the future. This scrutiny review is an opportunity for the Council to reaffirm its commitment to help residents dispose of their waste both in a convenient and sustainable way.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

58. This task group was established by the Council's Environment, Sustainability and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee and so this report will be presented to its meeting on 27 March 2013 for the Scrutiny Committee's approval. The Committee will then refer the report to the Council's Cabinet, for an "Executive Response".
59. Cabinet will be asked, at its meeting on 16 May 2013, to say whether or not the recommendations have been accepted and must provide clearly stated reasons for any recommendation that is not accepted.
60. A further Overview and Scrutiny Committee report will be sought in approximately six months time, giving an update on progress with implementing the recommendations.



TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	To help improve understanding of what can and can't be recycled the Council's website should be updated so residents have access to detailed and up to date information (including pictures) in relation to (a) whether an item can be recycled or not (b) which bin(s) to use (c) specific product information e.g. where to put plastic lids from tetra packs, lids on glass jars etc and (d) information on where items ends up and the benefits of recycling.
2.	That, in addition to the online " <i>let us know you are moving</i> " form, available via www.richmond.gov.uk , when people move to the Borough the Council should be pro-active and provide new residents with information about the Council's recycling and composting services and specifically ask whether new residents have boxes/containers for all items. This should be tied in with information sent out in relation to council tax registration and electoral services.
3.	That the Head of Communications works with the Recycling Team and Veolia Environmental Services to develop a recycling communications strategy, including both broad brush and targeted communications, which is accessible to all residents.
4.	That in developing a communications strategy consideration is given to (a) the use of social media and (b) developing videos for the Council's website, made by employees of the council, to give customers hints and tips on recycling.
5.	That support is given to regular door-stepping exercises, using volunteers and community champions, to overcome some of the reported barriers to recycling.
6.	That promotion of recycling / waste minimisation goes through all existing forums including resident, community and faith groups, civic facilities (community notice boards, GP surgeries etc) and associated websites.
7.	That consideration be given to (recycling crews) putting a targeted leaflet through a residents door when it is clear that they are not recycling correctly.
8.	That a scheme, focusing on paper and card, be piloted, with local housing associations in particular, to help increase participation in flats recycling.
9.	That where possible, the amount of paper/card collected from flats before, during and after the pilot (recommendation 8) be compared in order to measure improvements in recycling.
10.	That the data collected (recommendation 9) be used to show whether or not a paper/card scheme for flats has potential to succeed on a larger scale or whether it should be discontinued.
11.	That a proactive and regular communications programme, which is clear and accessible to all, be developed to help maximise participation in the paper and card scheme for flats.
12.	That the Council's Recycling Team works with the borough's housing associations and private landlords to (a) promote the paper and card scheme for flats and (b) appoint recycling champions for each block who would then be able to inform residents of the services available and help deal with local issues.
13.	That the borough's housing associations and private landlords be encouraged to locate recycling facilities for flats in the most appropriate



	locations to ensure it is as easy to recycle as it is to dispose of waste to landfill.
14.	That support is given to a targeted door-stepping exercise, in areas with low participation in food waste recycling, in order to better understand and overcome barriers to food waste recycling.
15.	That, in addition to the information available on the council's website, the Council, in developing a communications strategy for recycling, provides information on (a) where liners for food waste caddies can be bought (b) why liners should be used and (c) ways to keep them clean.
16.	That the possibility of including recycling rewards be explored in the development of the Richmond Account and Card.
17.	That the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (Recycling for New Developments with Communal Facilities) be kept under review, so that developers provide appropriate external recycling facilities, to ensure it is as easy to recycle as it is to dispose of waste to landfill.
18.	That opportunities be taken to encourage developers to consider the need for internal and external design to take account of the need to store recyclable waste.



BACKGROUND READING

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Community Engagement/Door-stepping (2012) South West London Environment Network

Murray, S. (6 January, 2012) *Waste Opportunity: Creative management of landfill and recycling can transform landscape – and generate income*, Financial Times

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/8cfd120a-2673-11e1-91cd-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2LLZnQgbs>

Municipal Waste Prevention Strategy for West London 2011 – 2015
(2010) West London Waste

<http://www.westlondonwaste.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/West-London-Waste-Prevention-Strategy-2011-2015.pdf>

Pitcher, G. (1 September, 2011) *Recycling incentive schemes*, Materials Recycling Week

<http://www.mrw.co.uk/news/-insight-recycling-incentive-schemes/8619111.article>

Recycling Collections for Flats (2013) WRAP

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/recycling-collections-flats-understanding-flats>

Recycling for Flats (2006) Defra

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Recycling%20for%20flats%20March%202006%20WW%20Defra.pdf>

Task Group Agenda Papers and Minutes –

- 3 October 2012
- 16 October 2012
- 20 November 2012
- 10 December 2012
- 8 January 2013
- 7 February 2013
- 11 March 2013



APPENDICES

Appendix A

Terms of Reference

Appendix B

What Goes In Each Recycling Container?

Appendix C

Timetable of meetings



Appendix A

Terms of Reference

The remit of this task group is to examine the Council's approach to recycling with a view to reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. This will include examination of the barriers to recycling, methods of encouraging people to recycle more, gathering evidence from other (comparable) local authorities to learn from best practice and an analysis of options for both the short and longer term.

To ensure this piece of work is manageable and achievable the task group will focus on the following key areas:

- Increasing participation in food waste recycling
- Recycling facilities / options for residents in flats
- Communication and behavioural change
 - Looking at both the services offered by the Council and residents' attitudes to recycling and waste
 - Taking into account evidence and analysis of both resident attitudes ("demand-side" insight) and service delivery ("supply side") opportunities.
 - Understanding differences in attitudes to different opportunities, and how residents may need to be communicated with differently

To ensure findings from the review can be considered as part of the Waste Collection procurement exercise the task group will report back to the Environment, Sustainability and Community OSC by **27 March 2013**.



Appendix B

WHAT GOES IN EACH RECYCLING CONTAINER?

http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/environment/rubbish_and_recycling/household_recycling/what_goes_in_each_recycling_container.htm

Putting the wrong items in your box or bin may lead to your recycling not being collected so please check carefully that you are putting the right items in each container.

BLUE BOX RECYCLING CONTAINER AND MIXED PAPER, CARD AND CARTONS WHEELED BIN



- **Paper** (shredded paper is accepted)
- **Magazines**
- **Envelopes**
- **Cardboard***
- **Food and drink cartons** (e.g. Tetra Pak™ - no need to remove plastic lids/spouts)

It is important to keep paper, cardboard and cartons separate from the mixed containers. This is because:

- Collection crews are more likely to injure themselves collecting paper if it is mixed with glass and tin cans
- Black box and mixed containers materials are collected by a different vehicle and go to a separate destination

***Important:** Cardboard will only be collected if it is **flattened** and doesn't contain polystyrene or other unrecyclable packing.

Blue box dimensions: Capacity: 55 litres; Width: 585mm; Depth: 390mm; Height: 350mm.



BLACK BOX RECYCLING CONTAINER AND MIXED CONTAINERS WHEELED BIN



- **Plastic bottles**
- **Cans and aerosol cans**
- **Tins**
- **Foil**
- **Unbroken glass bottles and jars**
- **Other mixed plastic containers (e.g. food trays, yoghurt pots, margarine and ice-cream tubs etc)**

Black box dimensions: Capacity: 55 litres; Width: 585mm; Depth: 390mm; Height: 350mm.

DARK GREEN FOOD WASTE RECYCLING CONTAINER



The green caddy with the lockable lid is for recycling all of your food waste.

- **Meat, fish and bones**
- **Bread, pasta and rice**
- **Vegetable and fruit waste**
- **Eggs and cheese**
- **Teabags**
- **All food cooked or raw**

Capacity: 23 litres; Width: 320mm; Depth: 400mm; Height: 405mm (handle down), 630mm (handle up).



Scrutiny in Richmond upon Thames

A GREEN WHEELED BIN OR WHITE SACK (GARDEN RECYCLING)



These containers can be [ordered online](#) from the Council. This is an opt-in scheme for which there is a charge. Visit the [garden recycling page](#) for more details on the service.

- **Grass cuttings**
- **Leaves**
- **Twigs**
- **Hedge trimmings**
- **Garden prunings**
- **Weeds**
- **Plants**
- **Flowers**
- **Fallen fruit**

We do not collect: Soil, stone, wood, food, rubble, animal waste, glass or BBQ ash.

Contaminating your waste could result in the removal of the collection service without a refund.



Appendix C – Timetable of Meetings

Date	Who attended	Stage
3 October 2012	<p>Cllr Porter, Cllr Harborne Cllr Naylor, Cllr Roberts, Mr Bell, Mr Bryson, Dr Gold</p> <p>Paul Chadwick, Director of Environment Jon Freer, AD, Development and Street Scene Eve Risbridger, Head of Street Scene Christian Scade, Senior Scrutiny Officer</p>	Scoping
16 October 2012	<p>Cllr Porter, Cllr Roberts, Mr Bell, Mr Bryson, Dr Gold</p> <p>Paul Chadwick, Director of Environment Jon Freer, AD, Development and Street Scene Eve Risbridger, Head of Street Scene Christian Scade, Senior Scrutiny Officer</p>	Scoping / Evidence Gathering
20 November 2012	<p>Cllr Porter, Cllr Roberts, Cllr Stockley, Mr Bell, Dr Gold</p> <p>Ella Clarke, WRAP Jon Freer, AD, Development and Street Scene Elinor Firth, Head of Communications Eve Risbridger, Head of Street Scene Christian Scade, Senior Scrutiny Officer</p>	Evidence Gathering
10 December 2012	<p>Cllr Porter, Cllr Naylor, Cllr Roberts, Mr Bell</p> <p>Simon Martin, Richmond upon Thames Churches Housing Trust Catherine Walsh, Richmond Housing Partnership Jon Freer, AD, Development and Street Scene Eve Risbridger, Head of Street Scene Risa Wilkinson, Project and Communications Officer Christian Scade, Senior Scrutiny Officer</p>	Evidence Gathering
8 January 2013	<p>Cllr Porter, Cllr Harborne, Cllr Naylor, Cllr Roberts, Cllr Stockley, Dr Gold</p> <p>Stephen Didsbury, LB of Bexley Colin Cooper, South West London Environment Network Dawn Cooper, Head of Customer Support</p>	Evidence Gathering



	<p>Hilary Morse, Head of Community Engagement and Accountability Jon Freer, AD, Development and Street Scene Eve Risbridger, Head of Street Scene Risa Wilkinson, Project and Communications Officer Christian Scade, Senior Scrutiny Officer</p>	
7 February 2013	<p>Cllr Porter, Cllr Harborne, Cllr Naylor, Cllr Roberts, Cllr Stockley, Dr Gold</p> <p>Jon Freer, AD, Development and Street Scene Risa Wilkinson, Project and Communications Officer Christian Scade, Senior Scrutiny Officer</p>	Initial findings / recommendations
12 February 2013	<p>Cllr Harborne, Cllr Stockley, Mr Bell, Dr Gold</p> <p>Franco Murphy, Veolia Environmental Services Christian Scade, Senior Scrutiny Officer</p>	Site Visit with Veolia's Recycling Crews
11 March 2013	<p>Cllr Porter, Cllr Harborne, Cllr Roberts, Cllr Stockley, Mr Bell, Dr Gold</p> <p>Jon Freer, AD, Development and Street Scene Risa Wilkinson, Project and Communications Officer Christian Scade, Senior Scrutiny Officer</p>	Draft Report
27 March 2013	Environment, Sustainability & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Final (Committee) Report

