

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13 NOVEMBER
2012

REPORT BY HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

INCREASING DRY RECYCLING CAPTURE

WARD(S) AFFECTED:

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To update Members on the progress that has been made in improve recycling performance

**RECOMMENDATION FOR ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE; That**

(A)	The Committee note and scrutinise the progress made and continuing actions being taken to improve recycling performance in areas where take up is lower and to make recommendations as necessary.
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 At the Environmental Scrutiny Committee meeting on 26 June 2012 Members were advised that five lowest performing recycling areas had been identified and that bin hangers advising residents that they were in one of these areas, reminding them of the range of materials they could recycle and how to contact us if they required new or additional containers. The hangers were placed on the waste bins week commencing 18 June 2012.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the response from residents in these areas and any changes in recycling performance.
- 1.3 The Council measures recycling performance through two local indicators – NI192 (Percentage of waste recycled) and

NI 191 (Kilograms of wastes produced per household). The recycling performance for 2011/12 was 48.35% against a target of 50%. The amount of waste produced was 474kgs against an expectancy of 459kg.

1.4 Recycling performance in 2011/12 was lower than expected due to the economic down turn. In particular, residents are buying fewer newspapers and magazines and there is much greater use of electronic media. These are national trends. It is essential that the Council improves upon last years performance and reaches next years targets; there are several reasons for this:

- Addressing the loss of income from dry recyclable sales.
- Improving efficiency from the Council's recycling services
- Reducing landfill waste and the high costs to taxpayers of disposal (funded by the County Council).
- Engaging with those members of the public who are not currently participating or not fully utilising the recycling services
- Maximising environmental benefits of removing waste from landfill and reducing carbon emissions.

1.5 Provisional figures for April to September 2012 show an improvement in both indicators although in the case of recycling this improvement is marginal, with the percentage of waste recycled currently standing at 51.62, compared to 51.39 at the same stage last year. This figure will decline with the onset of winter as less compostable material will be collected. The initial expectancy was that the Council should achieve 50% recycling this year. Following the national trend, newspapers and magazines collected kerbside continues to fall with a reduction of 8.7% compared to the same period last year. Glass levels are static. Plastics and can collections have seen a 5.6% increase over the 4 full months that are comparable over this period. Waste arisings for the half year are 229 Kgs per household. At this stage last year they were 231 Kgs. The original expectancy for this year was 474 Kgs per household; however we now anticipate that the outturn will be below the original expectation.

2.0 Report

2.1 The areas that were selected for the initial campaign

were:

Recycling Round Ref.	Area	No. properties	Kgs per property
W1 Weds Rural Rec A	58% Bennington 34% Walkern	604	4.41
W2 Fri Rec A	62.7% M.Hadham 36% Bishops Park	908	4.75
W1 Fri Rec B	Stanstead Abbots 54.2% Hunsdon 45.7	708	4.93
W2 Thurs Rec D	Thorley North	976	5.16
W2 Mon Rural Rec A	32% Thundridge, 24% High Cross, 20% Wadesmill, 10% Barwick 10% Colliers End	666	5.2

For comparison the highest performer was:

Recycling Round Ref.	Area	No. properties	Kgs per property
W2 Thurs RecE	82% Thorley Street (including Proctors Way, London Road, Mitre Gardens and Burley Road 18% Spellbrook	236	15.29

- 2.2 Prior to the information (in the form of a 'bin hanger') being delivered, the ward councillors for the lower performing areas were advised and provided with detailed information on their areas' performance and copies of the literature their constituents would receive so they we able to prepare and champion the scheme.
- 2.3 Promotion schemes work better if they have a catchy name that can easily be recognised. This exercise was entitled 'SURGE', which stands for:
- S - Seek (to identify those rounds that are lowest performing)
 - U - Urge (those residents to recycle more)
 - R - Reiterate (recycling messages and provide information to enable residents to recycle more)
 - G - Gauge (what was the impact is upon recycling rates and waste tonnages)
 - E - Evaluate (to examine how well the project worked and to which areas would this be moved to next.
- 2.4 The response from the areas focussed on for new,

replacement or additional containers was very encouraging, with 230 requests (6% of households in these areas) being made over the first three weeks after the hangers were delivered.

2.5 The weight of material collected by all the rounds following the delivery of the hangers continued to be measured. One round, the Much Hadham/Bishops Park round, has been excluded from the analysis due to the Bishops Park area being moved to another collection round, in the interests of efficiency, thereby negating any like for like comparisons for this round. The Kilograms per property are the average of the collections that have taken place through July, August and September.

Recycling Round Ref	Area	No Properties	Pre SURGE Kgs per property	Post SURGE Kgs per property	Change (%)
W1 Weds Rural Rec A	58% Benington 34% Walkern	604	4.41	5.79	31.3
W1 Fri Rec B	54.2% Stanstead Abbotts 45.7 Hunsdon	708	4.93	5.81	17.8
W2 Thurs Rec D	Thorley North	676	5.16	5.25	1.7
W2 Mon Rural Rec A	32% Thundridge 24% High Cross 20% Wadesmill 10% Barwick 10% Colliers End	666	5.2	6.34	21.9

All rounds showed an increase in the amount of recycling presented for collection, with the increases ranging from under 2% for Thorley North to over 30% in Benington/Walkern. Thorley North remains the lowest yielding area. Whilst the change in Thorley is disappointing, at least there was a small increase, the results in the other areas have been very encouraging and none of them are now in the five lowest yielding areas. It is estimated that the improvement in participation, if sustained will generate in the region of £6,900 of additional income in material sales and recycling credits. This covers the cost of the exercise and if sustained will in future years generate income. The cost of £6,700 includes material preparation and production for successive SURGE

areas.

2.6 The lowest yielding areas are now

Round	Area	No. of properties	Kg per collection
W1 Mon D	Part Sele Farm / Welwyn Road, Hertford	989	5.33
W2 Mon D	Stansted Road, Bishops Stortford	976	5.38
W1 Mon C	Sele Farm, Hertford	625	5.39
W2 Tues A	60% Standon, 40% Braughing	859	5.40
W2 Thurs C	Scott Road area, Bishops Stortford	704	5.41

These areas comprise a further 4,150 properties to add to the 3,000 already part of SURGE as it is intended that these areas will have bin hangers encouraging their participation delivered in

- 2.7 The performance of each day round will continue to be monitored with a view to tracking the improvement of the above areas and comparing them the rest of the district, with further updates in due course.
- 2.8 The ward Councillors for these areas will be notified of this intention prior to delivery and provided with the bin hanger that will be delivered to their residents.

Implications/Consultations

- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers - None

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