

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE		
DATE:	26 NOVEMBER 2013	AGENDA ITEM:	11
TITLE:	FLATS RECYCLING INITIATIVE PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR LIZ TERRY	PORTFOLIO:	NEIGHBOURHOODS
SERVICE:	STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	MICHELLE PRIOR	TEL:	0118 937 3030 X73030
JOB TITLE:	BUSINESS SUPPORT SUPERVISOR, STREETCARE	E-MAIL:	michelle.prior@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Reading Borough Council bid for and was awarded £515,475 from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Weekly Collection Support Scheme Fund to maintain existing weekly residual waste collections and improve recycling at 11,435 households in over 400 blocks of flats with communal bins. Many of these blocks experience low recycling participation rates and high contamination rates.

1.2 The project involves the following activities with the aim of encouraging changes in resident behaviour in order to increase the amount of waste recycled, reduce levels of contamination found in recycling containers and divert more waste from landfill:

- Implementation of a communications campaign to promote awareness of recycling and waste minimisation
- Reviewing bin provision at blocks of flats
- Recruitment of a Waste Minimisation and Recycling Officer dedicated to flats
- The procurement and implementation of a Recycling Reward and Incentive Scheme for the whole borough.

1.3 This report outlines the project's progress to date and future planned activity.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Housing, Neighbourhoods & Leisure Committee notes the progress made with the Flats Recycling Initiative Project to date and that it endorses the proposed future implementation programme.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 A strand of the Sustainable Community Strategy - Cleaner & Greener Environments is to enhance and maintain our natural and urban assets, making Reading an attractive place to be, while tackling the causes and impacts of climate change. Diversion of recyclables from landfill contributes significantly to this end.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The aims of the Flats Recycling Initiative Project are:

- To promote recycling and waste minimisation.
- To increase existing levels of recycling through increased householder participation.
- To minimise the amount of waste produced by householders.
- To divert waste from being sent for disposal.
- To reduce levels of contamination of recycling containers.
- To promote a sustainable behavioural change for householders.
- Stimulate the local economy.

- 4.2 The project has been split into two phases:

Phase 1 of the project involves ensuring that each participating block has the correct provision of general waste and recycling bins and implementing the communication and education programme.

Phase 2 of the project involves the introduction of the recycling/reward scheme, which we are currently preparing to procure, with the scheme anticipated to be implemented in early summer 2014.

5. ACTIVITY AND PROGRESS

5.2 Weekly Residual Waste Collections

- 5.2.1 Weekly residual waste collections have been maintained at over 400 blocks of flats with existing weekly collections of residual waste.

5.3 Recruitment

- 5.3.1 A Waste Minimisation and Recycling Officer has been recruited, specifically for flats, to promote recycling and waste minimisation with residents and liaise with managing agents, landlords and housing officers. This post has been funded through the Weekly Collection Support Scheme fund money. The successful candidate, Bo Sambo-Donga has been in post since 1st July 2013 and is working with the existing Waste Support Officers.

- 5.3.2 In addition, a Business Support Officer has been recruited to assist in supporting the project. This role has also been funded through Weekly Collection Support Scheme money.

5.4 Bin Provision Survey:

5.4.1 A site survey has been carried out at all blocks of flats to establish the number of residual waste and recycling bins and bin stores at each site.

5.5 Trial Sites

5.5.1 Following the site surveys, ten blocks of flats, which were identified as having the highest number of residual waste bins, have been selected as trial sites. These sites will be used to trial our communications strategy and follow up activities.

Name	Address	Postcode	Ward	Number of Households
Crossway Point	Norwood Road	RG1 3LF	Park	99
Denton Court	Hexham Road	RG2 7UB	Redlands	23
Hare Warren Court	Marshland Square	RG4 8RU	Peppard	36
The Meridian	Kenavon Drive	RG1 3DG	Abbey	117
Kielder Court	Hexham Road	RG2 7UG	Redlands	21
Petworth Court	Bath Road	RG1 6PH	Minster	56
Stirling House	Silver Street	RG1 2SU	Katesgrove	18
Westgate Court	Oxford Road	RG30 1EP	Kentwood	33
Winslet Place (2 blocks)	Oxford Road	RG30 1EW	Kentwood	80
			TOTAL:	483

5.5.2 At each of these blocks the following activities will be carried out:

- Ensuring that each block has the correct provision of residual waste and recycling bins.
- Engaging with managing agents and resident groups to discuss the project and proposed changes.
- Writing to residents to explain the project and its aims.
- Producing a range of communications materials: householder leaflet, bin store signage, bin stickers, posters, managing agent/landlord guide.
- Providing residents with reusable bags for storing their recycling and conveying it to the communal recycling bins. It is hoped that this will help to reduce the amount of plastic bags found in contaminated communal recycling bins.
- Carrying out doorstepping activities to deliver the information and reusable recycling bags to residents and answer their questions or concerns.
- Carrying out roadshows for larger blocks with suitable locations.
- Pre and post implementation monitoring of levels of recycling and contamination levels.
- Follow up action to educate/support residents in blocks with low recycling participation levels/high contamination levels, working closely with managing agents and housing officers.

5.5.3 Briefing sessions will be held with the Lead Councillor and Ward Councillors to discuss the proposed changes and any planned activities at the trial sites before moving forward with phase 1 of the project.

5.5.4 Managing agents, Landlords, resident groups and committees, community and neighbourhood groups will be contacted, along with associated officers to discuss the proposals and planned activities.

5.5.5 Subject to Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee approval, the first trial sites will begin in December, with the remaining trial sites following in January. The trial will continue for 3 months. During this period officers will be reviewing and

adapting the approach taken, before rolling it out to the rest of the blocks of flats in the borough using a phased approach.

5.5.6 It is anticipated that the communication materials produced through this project can be adapted and utilised in future initiatives for households receiving kerbside collections.

5.6 Procurement and implementation of a recycling rewards and incentive scheme

5.6.1 Subject to Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee approval, the recycling rewards and incentive scheme will be introduced to households receiving a kerbside collection as well as to flats. Residents will receive points in return for recycling which they will then be able to exchange for a range of rewards.

5.6.2 The scheme will also help to promote local SMEs and other council services such as leisure and culture.

5.6.3 The specification for the scheme is currently being drafted and will be subject to a further report to this committee. The Corporate ICT team have given their approval to proceed with the procurement using the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead's electronic Dynamic Purchasing System which offers a reduced procurement timescale.

5.6.4 It is anticipated that the recycling reward scheme will commence in Summer 2014.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

6.1 By working to increase recycling rates and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill we are helping to develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

7.1 Consultation will be carried out with Managing agents, Landlords, resident groups and committees, community and neighbourhood groups, along with associated council officers to discuss the proposals and planned activities.

7.2 Letters will be delivered to residents to explain the benefits of the project and its aims. The letters, along with a leaflet and reusable bag will be delivered to flats by officers, presenting an opportunity for officers to answer any questions or concerns raised by residents.

7.3 A range of communications materials are currently being produced including: householder leaflets, bin store signage, bin stickers, posters, managing agent/landlord guide.

7.4 A number of roadshows will also be carried out in key locations to promote waste minimisation and recycling and to answer any questions or concerns raised by residents.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Councils have a Duty to collect Household Waste under Section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA). Local authorities have the flexibility to develop their waste collection services to best address local circumstances and factors.

- 8.2 The Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 further amended S45 to require the separate collection of at least two types of recyclable waste.
- 8.3 The Government's Review of Waste Policy in England 2011 set out the Government's commitment to 'increase the frequency and quality of waste collections and make it easier to 'recycle'.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Reading Borough Council has been awarded £515,475 from DCLG's Weekly Collection Support Scheme Fund. The first payment of £264K was received in May 2013 and the remaining £251K is due to be made in April 2014.
- 9.2 The DCLG Weekly Collection Support Scheme fund money will fund the project for three years.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Appendix 1: Examples of Contaminated Communal Recycling Bins
- 10.2 Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA).
Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011.

Appendix I: Examples of Contaminated Communal Recycling Bins



25/08/13



26/08/13

Flats Recycling Initiative Project:
Summary of Communications Activities for Trial Sites

Activity	Notes
Householder leaflet	To be delivered to all households. To include: pictorial information on what can be recycled along with information on what cannot be recycled, 'Top Tips', FAQs, what can be recycled at local recycling bring sites and advice on keeping the communal bin area tidy.
Householder Letter	Letter to all households to explain the project and its aims.
Reusable recycling bags	To be delivered to all households to assist them in storing/transporting their recyclables to the communal recycling bins.
Bin area signage	To include pictorial information on what can/cannot be recycled.
Bin stickers	To include pictorial information on what can be recycled.
Posters for internal communal areas within the blocks	To include information on what can/cannot be recycled, what can be recycled at local recycling bring sites.
Door to door visits	Recycling Officer (RO) & Waste Support Officers (WSOs) to visit households to deliver householder leaflets & reusable recycling bags and to address any questions or concerns residents may have. Also follow up visits for blocks where post-implementation monitoring shows high levels of contamination or low participation levels.
Contamination cards	To be delivered to householders by RO and WSOs in blocks where post-implementation monitoring shows high levels of contamination. Card will include pictorial information on what can/cannot be recycled.
Community posters	To be put up in community locations such as libraries, leisure centres, community centres...etc
Ward Councillors	Briefing sessions will be held with the Lead Councillor and Ward Councillors to discuss the proposed changes and planned activities at the trial sites.
Managing Agents/Landlords Guide	To be distributed to all managing agents/landlords..etc Details the service we provide and how they can help us.
Meet with Managing Agents/Landlords..etc	To discuss the project and any changes prior to implementation and the support they may be able to offer. Post-implementation meetings to discuss any issues or problems.
Meet with resident/community groups	To deliver information and advice on the project and also on recycling and waste minimisation in general.