

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	8 April 2014
Subject: Litter Management in the City's Open Spaces	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>The processing of waste takes up significant resources in terms of labour and disposal costs for the City Gardens section. In order to try to reduce costs whilst helping increase the City's recycling rates, the City Gardens section undertook a year's trial by replacing general waste bins in the City's open spaces with recycling bins and promoting recycling to our customers.</p> <p>Overall the trial has been a success and has reduced our litter management costs as well as increasing the City Gardens' recycling rates. There have been no adverse comments as a result of the trial.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the report. 	

Main Report

Background

1. At a meeting of the Open Spaces, City Gardens & West Ham Park Committee on 8th October 2012, Members approved a report recommending the replacement of twenty seven general waste bins with recycling bins and to promote recycling in our gardens for a trial period of one year.
2. The year-long trial began in February 2013 when 16 recycling bins were purchased and installed and have now been in use for over a year. Taking account of comments from Members, the City's recycling manager and feedback gathered from the gardening team, a design was chosen that gave users the choice of both non-recyclable and mixed-recyclable receptacles. Recycling instructions were detailed on the bins using Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) recognised symbols. The trial also included eleven existing non recycling bins. A list of the sites where the new recycling bins have been located is shown in Appendix 1.
3. Information was provided to, and help sought from, our users in order to assist us with recycling, and this was promoted in our newsletters, displayed in notice boards in our gardens and disseminated to our contact list, friends group and volunteers. Gardeners were provided with a "Frequently Asked Questions" sheet to help them answer queries from members of the public.

Results

4. Over the trial period the promotion of mixed recycling and the introduction of recycling bins in key open spaces has been an overall success. The table below demonstrates the reduction of waste being classed as non – recyclable to recyclable and the reduction in cost associated with litter management over the last three years.

	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14	
	Weight (tonnes)	Cost (£)	Weight (tonnes)	Cost (£)	Weight (tonnes)	Cost (£)
Non-recyclable	404.29	58,092	246.82	37,238	209.82	31,656
Mixed recyclable	2.36	182	2.73	222	12.21	992
Green waste	34.46	2,058	103.72	6,465	122.18	7,840
Total	441.11	60,332	353.27	43,925	344.21	40,488

Table 1. waste tipping volumes and charges 2011-2014

Waste Stream	2011/12/13	2013/14
	Cost per tonne (£)	Cost per tonne (£)
Non-recyclable	150.87	150.87
Mixed recyclable	81.23	81.23
Uncontaminated green waste	62.33	64.17

Table 2. waste stream charges per tonne

5. Despite the recycling interpretation detailed on the bins, some members of the public continue to throw non-recyclable waste into the recyclable section of the bin and vice versa. This was particularly apparent in gardens such as St Paul's Churchyard and West Smithfield Rotunda Garden. Unlike the previous open top bins, the new bins have required more time for an operative to empty and change bags due to lockable doors and the partition feature to enable the waste to be collected separately. During the quieter winter periods, journeys to the City's disposal facility have incurred half loads due to the two different waste requiring separate journeys.
6. As part of the trial, samples of both non-recyclable and mixed-recyclable collections from both types of bin were sent for analysis to ascertain whether contamination levels fell within acceptable tolerances. Surprisingly it was found that waste from both types of bins generally contained similar levels of contamination and was within a tolerance acceptable to the waste handler. However this arrangement required the operative to undertake a visual inspection of waste bags and rejecting any that appeared to be contaminated. This has meant that the City team was able to recycle a greater amount of garden litter than originally anticipated.

Next Steps

7. As summer approaches the City Gardens section will continue to monitor and encourage recycling in our gardens. Although this arrangement enables City Gardens to reduce its waste handling costs at present, for the future this is dependent upon no changes to the analysis of contamination. If the contamination levels change indicating that litter needs to be more selectively recycled, additional recycling bins with restricted apertures may need to be purchased.

Financial Implications: Financial implications are outlined in point 4.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

8. Provided that contamination rates remain low and that officers are able to continue to increase the volume of recycling in future years, this initiative should continue to identify modest savings for the City Gardens section.
9. This recycling project links to the City's Strategic Aim to: Provide modern, efficient and high quality local services and policing within the Square Mile for workers, residents and visitors with a view to delivering sustainable outcomes.

Conclusion

10. The trial of recycling in City Gardens has generally been successful. Surprisingly low contamination rates of mixed-recyclables and non-recyclables has enabled the team to simplify their operations by disposing larger volumes of waste as recyclable than was originally expected. To increase recycling rates in the future further work needs to be undertaken promoting recycling in the City Gardens with members of the public.

Appendix 1. The locations of recycling bins within City Gardens

Background Papers

Litter Management in the City's Open Spaces (8th October 2012)

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