

Committee:	Date(s):
Port Health and Environmental Services	November 2013
Subject: Recycling Action Plan	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Information
<p>Summary</p> <p>This report details current domestic recycling performance for the City of London. This includes overall recycling rates, resident participation and the composition of the City's residual waste. It also outlines current activities being undertaken by the recycling team and proposals for future projects to increase recycling performance.</p> <p>Given the comprehensive service provision which the City has in place the most effective method for increasing recycling rates is through continued targeted communication, which encourages increased participation in the dry recycling and food waste schemes and diversion of more recyclable materials from the "black bag".</p> <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>It is recommended that Members note the report and support the initiatives being developed by the Recycling team.</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the report 	

Main Report

Background

1. At the September 2013 PHES committee, Members approved a revised City of London Corporation's Waste Strategy document which places greater focus on reuse and recycling. To produce the new waste strategy there has been a significant amount of work carried out on establishing performance baselines and projections for waste and recycling levels for the next seven years (up until 2020). The new waste strategy has been designed to be a live working document and as such an action plan is being developed to ensure that the objectives of the strategy are achieved through practical actions.
2. This report outlines current recycling performance including overall recycling rates, resident participation and the composition of the City's residual waste. It also outlines current activities being undertaken by the recycling team and proposals for future projects to increase recycling performance.

Current Position

3. The City of London has steadily improved its recycling rate in recent years from 16% in 2005/06 to 37% for 2012/13.

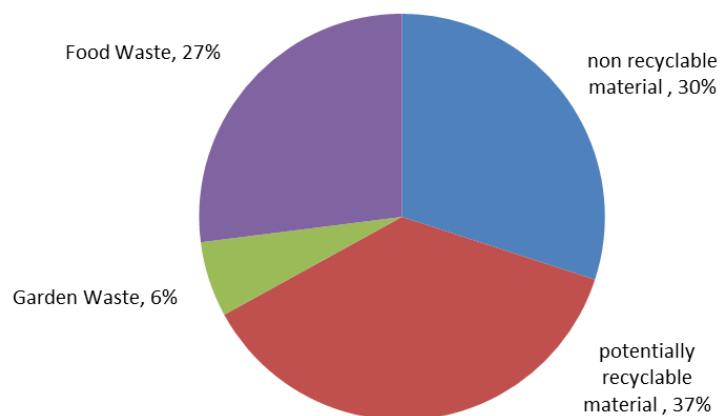
4. This increase in recycling rate has been a result of the introduction of services from; basic dry recycling (2005), food waste (2009), textiles (2007), WEEE (2011), batteries and light bulbs (2013). Additionally the City of London Recycling team have carried out regular communications campaigns and attended various community events to promote and advise on recycling.
5. The City's recycling rate compares favourably with other London boroughs and compares very well with those Inner London Boroughs of similar housing stock (flats and high rise properties) such as Westminster, Southwark, Hackney, Lambeth, Islington etc.

Table 1: Inner London Borough Recycling Rates 2011/12¹

Local Authority	% Recycling Rate
City of London	36.90%
Kensington and Chelsea	33.70%
Camden LB	33.00%
Islington LB	32.20%
Lambeth LB	27.90%
Southwark LB	27.30%
Tower Hamlets LB	27.10%
Westminster City Council	25.10%
Hackney LB	24.00%
Newham LB	22.70%

6. Despite this good performance there is still significant room for improvement. A study which the City commissioned in July 2012 of the composition of the City's black bag rubbish (residual) found that 64% of material thrown away as refuse is recyclable using the City's current recycling services.

% breakdown of Refuse (black bag waste)



7. The City carried out a participation monitoring exercise in January 2012 which showed a significant difference in resident participation levels for the food waste and dry recycling schemes across the City's housing estates.

¹ <http://www.letsrecycle.com/councils/league-tables-1/2011-12-overall-performance>

Table 2: Participation rates for dry recycling scheme

Estate	Number of properties	Number of participating properties during monitoring period	Participation rate (%)
The Barbican	2,044	1,682	82.3
Golden Lane	564	380	67.4
Middlesex Street	196	140	71.4
Mansell Street	194	107	55.2

Table 3: Participation rates for food waste recycling scheme

Estate	Number of properties	Number of participating properties during monitoring period	Participation rate (%)
The Barbican	2,044	787	38.5
Golden Lane	564	165	29.3
Middlesex Street	196	34	17.3
Mansell Street	194	23	11.9

It should be noted that the above figures are for participation on estates only. Figures for collection from private blocks are very difficult to calculate as residents have access to communal bin stores 24 hours a day. The City is in the process of installing on board bin weighing equipment which will be able to identify the amount of food waste and recycling per residential block. This figure can then be used to identify the average amount of waste or recycling produced per person in these property types. This will allow us to focus our communication efforts in a much more targeted way.

8. The figures above highlight two main issues. Firstly those residents which are participating in the dry recycling and food waste schemes may not be recycling everything they can (this is described as a low capture rate). It is likely that this is down to a lack of information and knowledge about which materials can be recycled. Secondly, some areas/estates which have a much lower participation in the scheme need to be asked why they are not using the scheme and any barriers to participation need to be addressed and removed where possible.
9. Projects which the recycling team have undertaken over the past two years include:
 1. Promotion of the Food waste recycling service through a doorstepping campaign;
 - i. This involved a team of recycling advisors visiting all properties within the City which receive a food waste recycling service. Advisors were able to distribute literature, discuss and address barriers to participation in the service and take orders for additional caddies and food waste liners.
 2. introduction of battery and light bulb recycling points on all estates and additional locations throughout the City;
 - i. A new battery and light bulb collection service was launched with the provision of new containers in 17 locations throughout the City

including estates, libraries and CoL offices. The locations were publicised heavily on leaflets, posters and via social media.

3. introduction and promotion of 'bulky waste' re-use collection service;
 - i. Officers carried out an extensive promotional campaign to promote a new partnership with the London Reuse Network. The partnership means that residents calling the City's contact centre to request a bulky waste collection are asked some preliminary questions to determine if an item is reusable. If it is then the resident are transferred through to the 'London Reuse Hotline' where they are able to book a collection. Items are collected, refurbished if necessary and then sold at a reduced price to families on low incomes.
 - ii. Officers promoted the scheme through door-to-door visits, leafleting, posters on all of the City estates and the running of a "re-use pop up shop" in the City Business Library.
4. re-branding and design of all recycling literature in line with national branding guide-lines;
 - i. The City of London recycling team engaged a design consultancy to produce a standard template and look for all future recycling information leaflet which (in-line with best practice guidance) used clear simple text, nationally recognised symbols and also incorporated a new "Recycling in the City" logo. Estate specific leaflets were produced identifying recycling points on all of the estates.
5. promotion of waste minimisation campaigns such as "Love Food Hate Waste" and No Junk Mail.
 - i. The recycling team received funding from the London Waste and Recycling Board (LWARB) to deliver 20 cookery workshops to businesses and community groups throughout the City. The focus of the workshops was "Love Food Hate Waste", a national campaign instigated by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to reduce the 7.2 million tonnes of food waste produced in the UK each year.
 - ii. The no junk mail campaign is to reduce the amount of non-addressed mail which residents in the City receive. Staff have been promoting the various means by which residents can "opt-out" at community events, via social media and on the CoL website. There are also "No Junk Mail" stickers available for residents to place on their letterbox.
6. introduction and management of 99 on street recycling units
 - i. Through a contract with Renew YS Ltd 99 recycling units have been installed throughout the City. The Recycling Team have worked closely with Renew to develop signage, apertures and the information being placed on the screens. In addition to this the recycling being collected by the units has been closely monitored by staff to ensure that it meets the acceptable quality standards for our recycling facility. The units are now collecting between 12-17 tonnes of recycling per month.
7. delivery of a series of "Recycling Roadshows" on all City estates
 - i. The Recycling Team run up to 6 "Recycling Roadshows" per year. The events are held in rotation on all of the four City estates. They are staffed in partnership with Freecycle and Amey. Residents are able to

bring along unwanted items including electricals, furniture, clothes, books and bric-a-brac. Volunteers then sort and test the items, at which point residents can come back and take away for free items which they want. The events have proved extremely popular with residents.

8. Trials to extract wood from the waste stream
 - i. There are currently trials being undertaken to extract wood from the bulky waste collection stream. Following a study conducted of bulky waste collection points in the City it was found that a large proportion of the material deposited was wood. The recycling team are currently working with Amey to refine the collection methodology to ensure a high quality wood product can be sent for recycling.

Next Steps

10. It is widely acknowledged that to maintain and increase participation in recycling schemes there needs to be on-going engagement and communication. Therefore the recycling team will continue to engage in the above activities.
11. The City will continue to carry out a variety of targeted communications focussing on the range of materials which can be recycled and attempting to remove any barriers to low or non-participation. It will be necessary to target different estates with different messages based on the data obtained. This could be delivered within the current recycling team and current budgets. This method will look to increase recycling rates through encouragement but without any financial incentive or penalty.
 1. This will consist of targeting messages such as: “did you know what can be recycled” to areas which have high rates of participation but still have potentially recyclable material in the general waste stream.
 2. Areas which have low rates of participation will be need to be engaged using different messages so that any barriers to recycling can be identified and overcome in order to encourage them to participate in recycling.
12. Officers have been evaluating the possibility of incentivising recycling/waste minimisation. There are a number of companies including “Recyclebank” and “London Green Points” who run schemes in other local authorities where residents are rewarded with vouchers or points by increasing the amount they recycle or reducing their waste. Initial quotes received for implementing these schemes by Officers have been costly and there is no evidence to suggest that these schemes alone have an impact on recycling rates in London Boroughs.

Proposals

13. The Reduction, Reuse and Recycling of materials forms a key part of the City’s Revised Waste Strategy. The Strategy has nine key objectives:
 1. The City of London Corporation becoming more resource efficient
 2. Waste Reduction
 3. Reusing materials
 4. Recycling and Composting
 5. To work with the City’s business community

6. Zero Waste to Landfill
7. Responding to Climate Change
8. Effectively engaging and communicating
9. Value for Money

The main aim of the revised waste strategy was to produce a working document which feeds through into an action plan with individual officers taking responsibility for achieving specific targets and ultimately ensuring all of the objectives within the Strategy are met.

Although maximising recycling and waste reduction is essential to all of the key objectives, Objectives two, three, four and nine will ensure that the Action plan is populated with specific actions focussed on maximising re-use, increasing residential recycling rates and minimising unnecessary waste through effective communications.

Using the information gathered above, it is proposed that officers continue to carry out targeted communications and rather than providing the same message to all City residents will produce bespoke messages and campaigns targeting the different areas of the City. Areas with high participation will be targeted to increase capture rates, with the communication message focussed around informing residents what can be recycled. Areas with lower participation will be visited and encouraged to start using the scheme.

14. It is widely accepted that face-to-face communication is the most effective method of communicating a message, this method will be utilised as much as possible and supported by the distribution of estate specific leaflets which illustrate exactly what can be recycled and the recycling points on each estate.
15. This communication will be supported by an ever increasing presence backed on Social Media. The recycling team have their own twitter account (@GreenSqMile) and regularly post events on the corporate Facebook page.
16. This targeted communication will run alongside existing campaigns which focus on waste minimisation such as "Love Food Hate Waste", the "No Junk Mail" campaign and the Recycling Roadshows which have proved extremely successful.
17. In addition to this opportunities for recycling additional materials will be continually monitored.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

18. These actions will be drawn from the recently completed Waste Strategy which strategically aligns the City with government and London wide policy as well as being in tune with internal policies to maintain the Golden Thread of dealing with waste and improving recycling. To ensure that this happened officers liaised with other corporate internal departments during the production of the strategy.
19. The objective within the Waste Strategy aligns with the City of London's Strategic Objectives:
20. Strategic Aim 2 - To provide modern, efficient and high quality local services and policing within the Square Mile for workers, residents and visitors whilst delivering sustainable outcomes.
21. Strategic Aim 3 - To provide valued services to London and the nation.

Implications

22. Costs for the disposal of residual waste are significant, (£125/ Tonne) and recently the market for recycling materials has been fairly strong, either close to nil cost or providing a modest income for every tonne that has been recycled in the City. Therefore changing people's behaviours from waste disposal to recycling will have a positive impact on our budgets for managing waste and recycling.
23. As an example, we currently dispose of 1493 tonnes of residual waste per year; this costs £125/tonne, costing £186,625. By moving 10% of the residual waste to recycling, the financial benefits would be a saving of disposal costs of £18,662 (149tonnes x £125/tonne) based on zero charge for recycling.
24. These figures clearly show the financial benefits of having a targeted campaigns focused on changing behaviour in this way.

Background Papers:

Revised Waste Strategy document 2013 - 2020

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