

# WASTE STRATEGY 2018-2023



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# FOREWORD BY COUNCILLOR GRAHAM STALLARD, ENVIRONMENTAL PORTFOLIO HOLDER

The Council's waste collection service is rightly applauded by many of our residents and our members. More than 53,500 properties are visited weekly, nearly 3 million visits a year, with a very low percentage of missed bins. Costs have been contained, despite a substantial house building programme in Test Valley, by the effective reorganisation of rounds. The Council's home grown "Recycling Stars" initiative has high visibility, with particularly successful banner design competitions for primary schools. It has been my privilege to meet the winners of these competitions personally.

As a partner in Project Integra, we also share the success of Hampshire's low landfill percentage – one of the leading authorities in the UK in 2017, with only 6.14% of our waste going to landfill.

However, residents and members rightly ask tough questions about performance – what more could we do to increase our 33.1% recycling percentage, particularly with regard to the collection of recyclable material currently being put into black bins? It is because of these questions that we recognise that providing continuous improvement in respect of waste minimisation, reuse, recycling and composting is an important issue and a key priority for both residents and members.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2015-19 states within its key priority 'Enjoy: the natural and built environment' that over the next four years and beyond, it will invest in 'increasing recycling and reducing the amount of household waste'. Furthermore the plan specifically states 'We will undertake a full review of our Waste Strategy, which will consider all the options and costs for how we could increase current levels of recycling.'

This Waste Strategy therefore focuses on waste services within Test Valley and reviews the options available to develop the services offered even further.





# INTRODUCTION

## *About Test Valley*

Test Valley covers 62,758 hectares on the western-side of Hampshire. The borough contains more than 53,500 properties in a mixture of urban, semi-urban and rural areas. A large proportion of residents live in either Andover or Romsey. The population of the borough is estimated to be 123,162.

## *The Environmental Service*

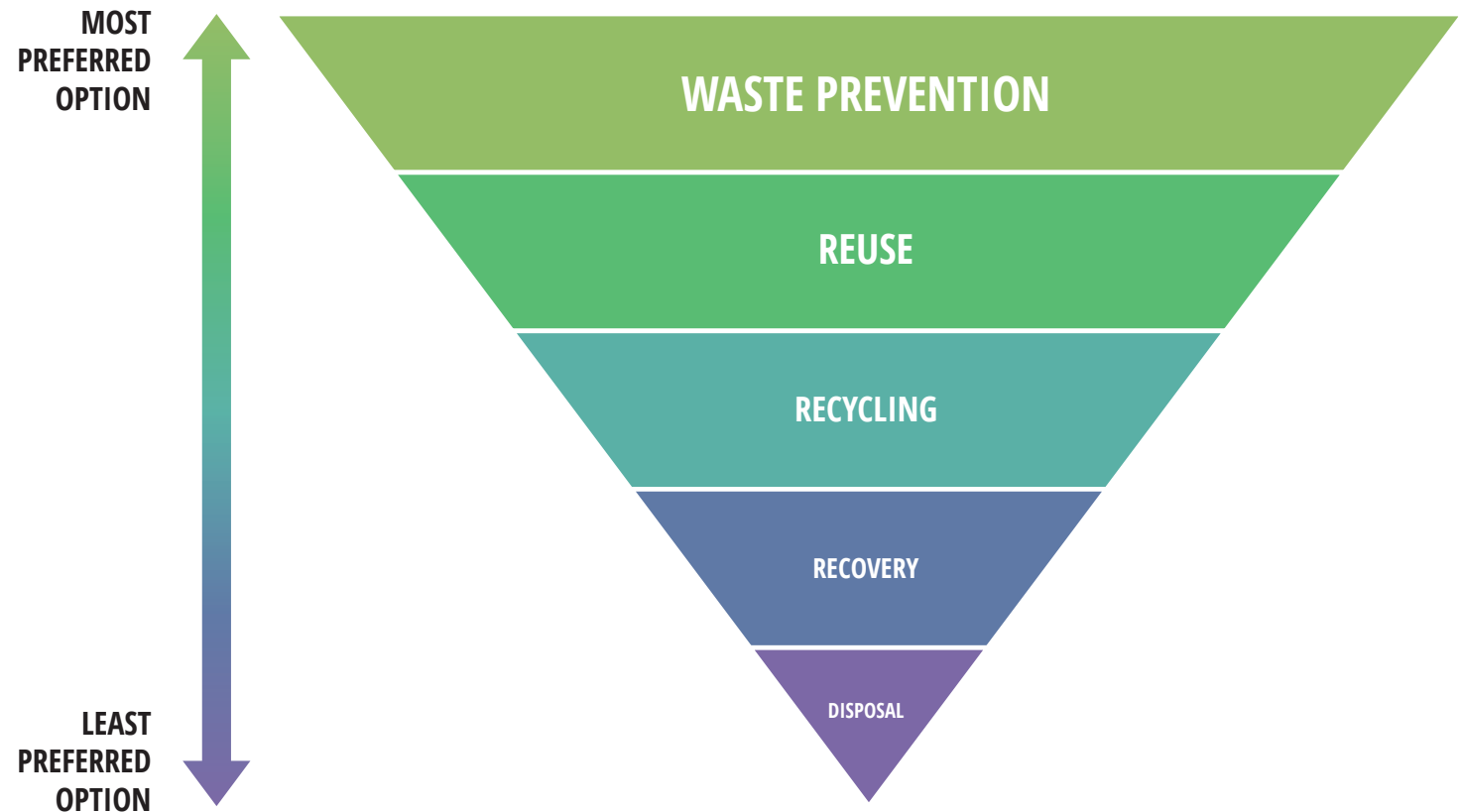
Located at Portway Depot, Andover and Bourne House Depot, Romsey, the Environmental Service is an in-house team providing the following direct frontline services:

- Waste and Recycling Collection
- Garden Waste Collection
- Street Cleansing
- Grounds Maintenance
- Transport Services

Being an 'in-house' service means we offer a reliable, high quality and efficient service for the borough's residents. We are flexible, adaptable and we are in direct control of our operations.

# WASTE HIERARCHY

The 'waste hierarchy' ranks waste management options according to what is best for the environment. It gives top priority to preventing waste in the first place. When waste is created, it gives priority to preparing it for re-use, then recycling, then recovery, and last of all disposal (e.g. landfill). The different options (in order of preference) are illustrated to the right:



# WORKING WITH PARTNERS IN TEST VALLEY

In addition to the brown recycling bins and network of Local Recycling Centres, the Council also works with a range of partners in order to prevent, reduce and recycle waste before it gets to the recovery and disposal stages of the hierarchy.

These include Andover Day Services (aluminium foil recycling) and Salvation Army, Oxfam, Traid, Bag It Up and Byronswell (textiles, bric-a-brac, books and other media).

The Council also supports other community projects such as Andover Mind's Ugly Duckling which is a not for profit, furniture recycling and renovation project and the RDS Scrapbox in Andover.



# WE LISTEN

We often get positive feedback, whether it be from daily feedback or through deliberate consultations. We know residents value the service they receive.

## *Customer Compliments*

“Very impressed with the garden waste service and the guys that operate it. Very polite, helpful and pleasant.”

“Thank you for an excellent fun filled, fact finding evening, cubs and leaders learnt many new ways to recycle.”

“Excellent helpful service from start to finish.”

“Thank you very much for bringing Recycling Stars to the summer fete on Friday. The children really loved your stall it was so much fun and very informative!”

“I would like to thank you for the efficient bin collection service you run, I think your bin staff do a good job and are always helpful and polite. I also like your website - I always forget when is a brown/black/green bin day so a quick look on the website puts me right.”

## *Community Consultations*

In 2013 and 2015, we carried out formal community consultations. Firstly as part of the launch of Recycling Stars and latterly, as part of Waste Wise – a project led by ResearchBods. Residents were given the opportunity to share their opinions on a variety of waste related topics.

In 2015/16, IPSOS MORI also carried out a satisfaction survey on behalf of Hampshire County Council. They found that with regards to the range of materials recycled, Hampshire residents were less satisfied (66.1%) than the national average (76.1%). They also found that Hampshire residents were less satisfied (64.6%) regarding the information on what can and can't be recycled, compared to the national average (70.3%). However, Hampshire residents were more satisfied with their collection (79.3%) compared to the national average (77.2%).



# STRATEGIC CONTEXT

## *Local Context*

Test Valley Borough Council is a Waste Collection Authority (WCA) with a statutory duty under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended) to arrange for the collection of household waste in its area. The statutory duty does not prescribe the method of collection of household waste. The Council can consider options, therefore, in terms of the type and frequency of collections that are made available in the borough.

Responsibility for waste management in England and Wales is split between the Environment Agency, as waste regulator, and local authorities in their roles as WCA and the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA). For Test Valley Borough Council, Hampshire County Council is the WDA and is responsible for ensuring provision for the disposal of all waste collected in their area by WCAs, providing facilities for householders to deposit their own waste and arranging for the disposal of this waste. Central Government has overall responsibility for setting waste management policy.

Since the formation of Project Integra (PI) in the 1990s, there has been a consistent mix of dry recyclables collected and sorted by Hampshire's WCAs and WDAs. PI has also worked to expand other recycling services and there is currently a fairly consistent waste collection service across Hampshire. Most authorities (9 out of 13) collect residual waste fortnightly in bins, and two of the four authorities that collect weekly, use sacks. Eight authorities collect glass at the kerbside (five do not) and all authorities collect garden waste fortnightly, and all except two charge for these collections.

## *National Context*

Currently, the UK's recycling rate is 43% (2015/16). EU states currently have a target (set in the revised Waste Framework Directive) of achieving 50% recycling rates by 2020. The rate at which the recycling is currently increasing will not enable the UK to meet this target and this could lead to fines for the UK Government. Under the terms of Section 48 of the Localism Act, these fines could be passed to LAs, although Defra have not confirmed that this will be the case and there is no clear mechanism for how this would work in practice. Furthermore, a new legislative package on waste may also come into force before the UK's departure from the EU. A new common EU target is being proposed - recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2030.



# PROJECT INTEGRA

We are a partner in Project Integra (PI). PI is the partnership of:

- the 11 district/borough authorities in Hampshire
- Hampshire County Council
- the unitary authorities of Portsmouth and Southampton
- Veolia Environmental Services (VES), the integrated waste management contractor

All partners work together to provide an integrated solution to Hampshire's municipal waste. Project Integra has won many awards and commendations for its work in the field of refuse and recycling. In 2000, it was awarded Beacon Council status for 'Working in Partnership'.

# INFRASTRUCTURE

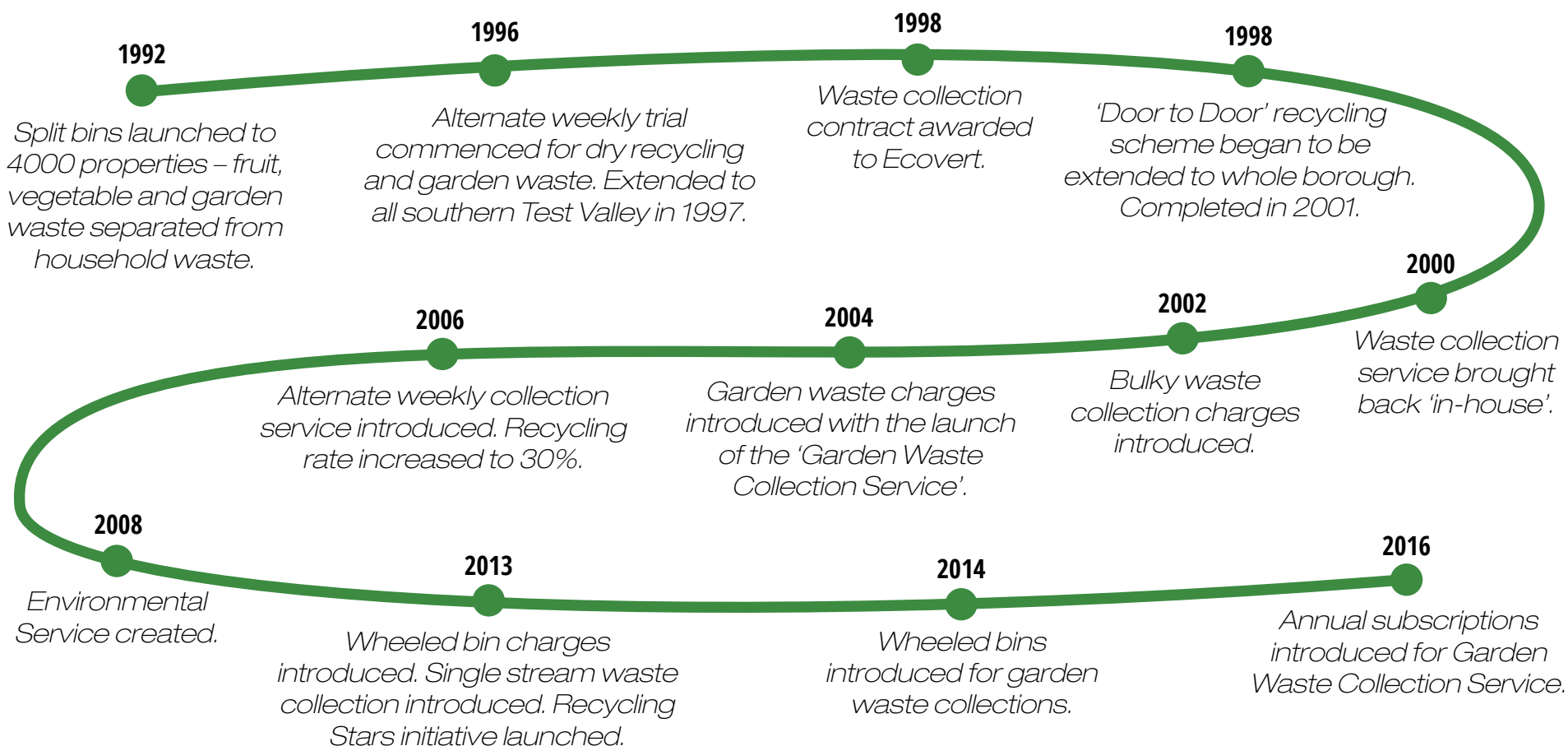
- 8 transfer stations. The sites at Harewood and Otterbourne are used by Test Valley Borough Council.
- 2 Materials Recovery Facilities located in Portsmouth and Alton. These are where recyclable materials are sorted before they are sent for reprocessing.
- 2 composting sites which process garden waste into Pro-Grow soil conditioner.
- 3 Energy Recovery Facilities located in Chineham, Portsmouth and Southampton.
- 26 Household Waste Recycling Centres.

“What happens to the collected materials is what interests me”

# OUR WASTE JOURNEY IN TEST VALLEY

Waste service provision is normally a case of evolution over a period time and not something that happens overnight. Changes in service provision can come about primarily as a result of changes in legislation and funding.

Here is a brief history of waste in Test Valley:



# WHAT DO WE DO

We operate thirteen waste collection rounds collecting household waste and recyclable materials, alternating each week.

In 2016/17 we collected nearly 24,500 tonnes of household waste from the black bins and nearly 8,000 tonnes of recyclable material from the brown bins. Once this material had been sorted at the Materials Recovery Facility, over 1,000 tonnes was rejected. This rejected material (a mixture of household waste and items we cannot recycle) had to be disposed of in a landfill site or burnt at one of the county's Energy from Waste facilities instead. Recycling bin contamination is becoming an increasing issue throughout Hampshire. Within Test Valley we have put measures in place to try and reduce this and we are closely monitoring our levels of contamination.

We also provide garden waste, bulky waste and clinical waste collections. The Garden Waste Collection Service is a popular service with more than 12,500 households subscribing annually, contributing over 7% to the borough's 33.1% recycling rate (2016/17).

We maintain a network of over 100 local recycling centres which collect a variety of materials: glass bottles and jars, textiles, media and books, cartons and aluminium foil. In 2016/17, we collected more than 2,500 tonnes of glass for recycling.

We also clean the borough's streets and the material we collect (litter, detritus, leaves etc.) all negatively counts within our recycling rate calculations. In 2016/17, nearly 2,500 tonnes of street cleansing material was included in the calculation.

*“It's good that you can have two recycling bins emptied each time”*







# BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

The Recycling Stars initiative was launched in 2013. It was initially led by a project team consisting of officers from a variety of services including representatives from Customer Services; the Chief Executive's Policy Team and Communications Team and the Environmental Service. The team was also joined by the OSCOM lead on the Environment and the Portfolio Holder for the Environment.

The aim of the project team was to work together to review the council's approach to recycling awareness and to revise the approach, where necessary, in order to bring about improvement in performance. The overall aims of the project were to:

- Increase awareness
- Increase participation
- Minimise waste
- Decrease contamination
- Increase recycling rate

The Recycling Stars initiative, which is now led by the Environmental Service, focusses on promoting our current services. It does not deal with increasing recycling through the introduction of further collection services or materials.

Changing recycling behaviours is key to Recycling Stars' success. We are achieving this in a number of ways such as providing informative bin stickers, hangers, tags and postcards. A comprehensive recycling guide has also been created and the team attend a number of events during the year ensuring the initiative remains high profile. Engaging with and supporting local groups, organisations, businesses and schools is also key to our success. Recycling Stars also maintains a high profile on social media with its own Facebook page, with over 1000 likes. Recycling Stars also has its own supporters network, with over seventy parish councils, schools, community groups and businesses participating – spreading the recycling messages further afield.



# HOW ARE WE DOING?

We monitor our recycling rate on a quarterly basis, and our figure is published annually.

The recycling rate is the percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for reuse, recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion. It is important to note that the indicator is calculated using all of our collected waste and therefore includes both domestic and street cleansing waste (excluding fly tipped waste). Consequently, the more street cleansing waste that is collected, the more our recycling rate is negatively affected.

The top chart shows the 2015-16 recycling rates of local authorities in Hampshire.

## Improving our recycling rate

Our waste collection teams regularly check the brown recycling bins to make sure they are free from non-recyclable items, known as contaminants. These can include general household waste, glass, plastic food packaging and plastic carrier bags etc. Within Project Integra, the average contamination

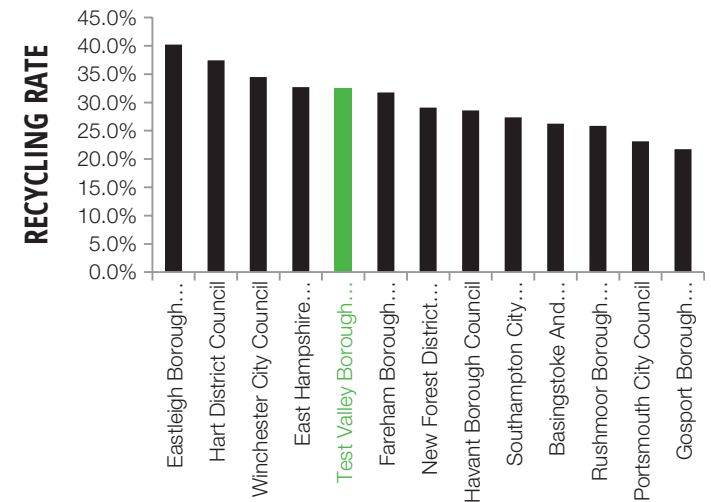
rate is currently 12.89% (April to August 2017) and Test Valley's rate is 11.95%. Unfortunately the rate is increasing, which has implications on the quality and value of the material collected. Disposal costs also increase – in fact dealing with contamination costs Hampshire County Council £1.2 million each year.

Hampshire County Council has been lobbying the Government to change the recycling rate performance indicator to include Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) Aggregate. This material, which is a by-product as a result of burning waste using ERFs, would increase recycling rates by around 10% if it could be included.

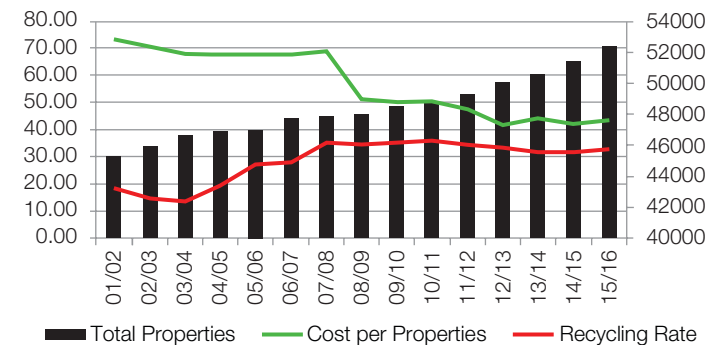
## Improved overall performance

The bottom chart clearly demonstrates the improved performance in terms of cost and how we have absorbed an extraordinary increase in housing numbers over recent years at the same time as significantly reducing costs. It also shows how the recycling rate, which increased until 2007/08, has since plateaued.

**HAMPSHIRE AUTHORITIES RECYCLING RATE 2015-16**



**WASTE PERFORMANCE OVER TIME**



# THE CHALLENGE

In recent years, our recycling rate has remained fairly constant and our contamination rate is increasing. Residents are asking for an improvement in the materials that are collected and nationally, other authorities are achieving better results. The challenge for Test Valley Borough Council and its partners is to increase the capture rate of materials at the same time as reducing the level of contamination.

In addition to the challenges we face around increasing the quality and the amount that that is recycled, we have the added pressure of delivering high quality services to an ever increasing population. Over the last four years 4,000 properties have been built within the borough and this rate of increase is set to continue for years to come.

# NEXT STEPS

In 2015, the Project Integra partnership identified a need to look at potential changes to the waste collection and treatment infrastructure to increase efficiency and to capture and manage the additional recyclable material that goes to the Energy Recovery Facilities (ERFs). In 2016, the partnership then determined that the following should be considered:

- Revisions of the MRFs to include pots, tubs, trays and cartons;
- A joint communications and behavioural change campaign and
- The development of a framework for improved glass collection.

In 2017, the partnership supported the business case for a new single Super Material Recycling Facility (SMRF) with an expanded range of recyclables to include pots, tubs, trays and cartons. In addition, Hampshire County Council appointed a behavioural insights agency to commence working on a communications and behavioural change campaign and it was agreed that countywide glass collections will be a long-term aim.

The partnership has also implemented a refreshed Waste Prevention Plan for the period 2017-19. The aim of the plan is to further reduce waste generation levels within Hampshire, to be in line with the England average and to reduce expenditure and increase income regarding the management of waste.

# THE WASTE STRATEGY - DEVELOPING OUR FUTURE OPTIONS

When developing future options there are three broad areas to consider:

- Service Change
- Behavioural Change
- Policy Change

Service change broadly means changes to the material mix or collection systems. The outcome of the recent Project Integra review has broadly dealt with this aspect.

Behavioural change refers to the transformation of a person's conduct and activities. In this context it centres on what we can do with residents to improve their understanding and approach to recycling.

With regards to policy change, the council has a range of waste related policies that have been developed over time. The policies relate to collection frequency, bin sizes, charges, restrictions and concessions, for example, extra bin capacity and assisted collections, and these policies could be reconsidered.

Following consultation with the public (Recycling Stars survey and focus groups, Waste Wise online community and Hampshire County Council's IPSOS MORI survey), staff and councillors, looking at what our neighbours and similar local authorities do, and taking account of best practice a number of options and ideas have been produced.







# THE OPTIONS

We could consider introducing an **Incentive** or **Rewards Programme**. Research suggests a simple incentive scheme, similar to that run by neighbouring authorities, would be easy to introduce and could result in an immediate effect with positive stories and improved participation and quality of materials. Careful consideration would need to be given to the types of prizes issued each time.

Our consultations suggested that a **Kerbside Food Waste Collection Service** could be introduced. However, introducing such a service borough wide would have significant capital and revenue cost implications, and is therefore beyond any existing budget. Consideration should also be given to the sustainability of the yield, as such schemes are known to produce diminishing returns as households reduce the food waste they produce.

A gap analysis has been carried out to identify new locations for our network of **Local Recycling Centres**. Gaps were identified in two village locations. We will aim to identify locations for LRCs in these villages, and in particular for glass banks. Our consultations also proposed

the use of **Mobile Local Recycling Centres**, however our gap analysis revealed that there is sufficient coverage and these would not be of any benefit.

An innovative idea proposed by our consultations was to provide **Free Storage / Sorting Options for Homes**. Options could include bags or small bins to help householders sort their waste within the home. Consideration would need to be given to the style of container offered and whether it would be offered free or subsidised.

On a similar theme, our consultations suggested we review **Home Composting**. The Council currently offers compost bins at a discounted rate through a Hampshire partnership with [getcomposting.com](http://getcomposting.com). We could consider further promotions of these discounted bins, or organise big sales with compost bin manufacturers.

Garden waste was also considered with a view of providing a **Free Collection of Garden Waste**. In doing so, we would increase our recycling rate to an estimated 40%, however, we would lose all of our income and there would be extra capital and revenue cost implications for



the council. Furthermore, within Hampshire, a high quality material is collected and Pro-Grow, an organic soil conditioner is produced. It is important to note that our collected material could have increased contamination if such a scheme were to be introduced.

We could consider the introduction of **Swap Shops** but due to the popularity of online selling sites, they will derive little benefit for us. Such activities could be run on a small scale by communities as part of bigger events.

Our consultations proposed a **Review of Collection Frequency (Three Weekly)** but reduced frequencies would mean food waste and nappy waste collections would have to be arranged on a weekly basis with associated additional costs.

Our consultations also proposed a **Review of Bin Sizes and Bin Charges**. For alternate weekly collections, research suggests that a 240 litre capacity bin is usually the standard size. This is the standard bin size for Test Valley. Within Hampshire, only Eastleigh BC provides smaller bins at 180 litres, but they provide weekly food waste collections, thus reducing the amount of waste that needs to go in their household waste bins. We have made recent changes to differentiate the costs between household waste

and recycling bins and compared to the rest of Hampshire our bin charges are fair.

To improve our communications, we could consider **Targeted Behaviour Change Campaigns** using a customer insight tool such as Acorn. This would mean we could produce tailor made campaigns with the aim of increasing participation and improving the quality of the recycling we collect.

Our consultations touched on proposals considered by the Project Integra review such as a **Kerbside Collection of Mixed Plastics (Pots, Tubs and Trays)** and a **Communications Campaign**. As the outcome of the Project Integra review is known, we will work with our partners to progress these proposals to implementation. Our consultations also suggested **Kerbside Glass Collections** which has also been considered by the Project Integra review and will form a future project.

Finally, our consultations suggested a **Kerbside Collection of Other Materials (WEEE, Textiles, Batteries)**. Such collections are carried out by other local authorities. For such a scheme to be a success within Test Valley, our collection vehicles would need to be reviewed to identify whether they can safely carry containers to hold these materials.



# WASTE STRATEGY – THE ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan contains all of the viable options and ideas put forward through the consultations. We will consider and develop each of these ideas where possible and where they may also involve a cost, a separate business case will be created for necessary approval.

IDEA	BRIEF PLAN	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS	POTENTIAL TIMESCALE
<b>Incentive / Rewards Programme</b>	Design a Recycling Stars reward programme with monthly prizes.	Improved participation Greater brand awareness Improved recycling rate Improved contamination rate	Recycling Rate Contamination Rate MAF analysis	Can commence within a few months. Would be managed by the Waste and Recycling Officer.
<b>Targeted Behaviour Change Campaigns</b>	Create tailor made campaigns using Acorn customer insight tool	Improved localised participation and recycling rate Improved contamination rate	Recycling Rate Contamination Rate MAF analysis Customer satisfaction	Can commence within a few months. Would be managed by a project team including the Waste and Recycling Team and Policy Team.
<b>Free Storage / Sorting Options for Homes</b>	Launch a Recycling Stars branded initiative for subsidised bins/free sorting bags	Improved participation Improved recycling rate	Recycling Rate Number of units distributed/ used. MAF analysis	A service project for the next financial year. Would be managed by the Waste and Recycling Manager.
<b>Offer discounted home composting units</b>	Promote discounted units and/ or big sales	Less garden waste/food waste collected at the kerbside	Recycling Rate Number of units distributed/ used. MAF analysis	Discounted units can be promoted at anytime. A big sale would be a service project for the next financial year. Would be managed by the Waste and Recycling Officer.
<b>Kerbside Collection of Other Materials (WEEE, Textiles, Batteries)</b>	Consider offering kerbside collections for these materials, using existing fleet of collection vehicles, adapted accordingly.	Increased recycling rate	Recycling Rate MAF analysis Customer satisfaction	A service project for the next financial year. Would be managed by the Waste and Recycling Manager and Transport Manager.