

Report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services

Kerbside Recycling: City Wide Expansion 2009 - 2010

Summary

1. An update to the City Council's Waste Strategy was approved in September 2008 with a series of specific actions to be progressed to achieve a 50% recycling target for household waste by December 2010. This report provides an update on the rollout of kerbside recycling and alternate weekly collections to all households that will help to meet this target.

Background

Household Waste Recycling Act 2003

2. The Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 requires all Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs) in England to provide all households with kerbside collections for at least two recyclable materials by 31 December 2010.
3. Current performance against this requirement shows that 11,510 properties do not meet the criteria of the Act. This includes 7,520 properties that do not have any recycling service and 3,990 properties with only one recycling material collected.

Groves Project

4. In October 2007, a budget of £80k was agreed for 2008/2009 (with a full year budget of £160k) in order to test varying recycling and refuse collection methods in the terraced properties and flats of the Groves.
5. The basis of the pilot is to provide the necessary information and data on which to plan the rollout of kerbside recycling to all households in the City that have limited recycling collections or no service at all.

City Wide Expansion Of Kerbside Recycling & AWC

6. In October 2007, Members agreed to a rollout of recycling across all households from April 2009 with a provisional annual cost of £241k. Details of rollout are subject to data and findings arising from the Groves project.

7. The expansion of the kerbside recycling service means that there will be more consistency in service provision across the city and all householders would be able to contribute to recycling. It will also ensure that the Council will achieve compliance with the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 by December 2010. This would cover approximately 11,510 properties (including flats and other communal properties), made up as follows:
 - i. 7,520 households with no recycling service
 - ii. 3,990 households with a limited (paper only) service
8. The costs of introducing recycling to all households were updated in September 2008. Members approved an annual revenue budget of £210k for two recycling rounds, this is in addition to the budget already agreed and as indicated in para 4 (above). In addition Members approved an additional capital budget of £229K for containers which could be covered by the Waste Infrastructure Capital Grant 2008 - 2011. A growth bid will be submitted later in 2009 for budget to complete the city wide roll out in 2010.
9. In September 2008, Members also approved that provision of full recycling should be supported by the introduction of an alternate week system of collection of residual and recyclates (AWC) across the City. Consideration needs to be given to the 12,250 properties which currently receive a full dry recycling service but maintain a weekly refuse collection service. The introduction of AWC is proven to reduce waste taken to landfill. Therefore, the total number of properties that will change to AWC is 23,760 and includes those properties currently receiving a limited or no recycling service and currently have weekly residual collections (para 7).

Consultation

10. The rollout programme for kerbside recycling and AWC will include extensive communications with residents, members, council front line staff and other appropriate groups, for example Resident's Associations.
11. As part of the Groves trial, focus group consultation was undertaken with disabled residents about the existing arrangements for refuse and recycling collection and the options for the future. Focus was put on potential problems in areas of terraced housing. Surveys of residents in the houses and flats have provided useful quantitative data regarding the collection methods being trialled. The consultation and survey results, along with other feedback given to us throughout the trial, will be used to formulate the roll out plan.

Analysis – Project Development

Groves Area

12. Progress has been made on the development of phases 1 and 2 of the project. This work is being evaluated and the information will be used to plan the expansion of service to terraced and other properties throughout the rest of the city in 2009 and 2010.

Phase 1: Groves – Terraced (320 properties)

13. Since the 14th October 2008 alternate week collections commenced from the front edge of these properties. Residents have been using a range of containers to store and present their refuse and recycling.
14. Phase 1 feedback (based on survey response). This terraced area is predominantly privately owned properties although a number are privately rented with some student lets. The majority of residents are aware of and do participate in the kerbside collections however, those that do not generally prefer to use local bring sites. Since the collections changed in October, most households now recycle a greater variety of materials at the kerbside, largely made up of plastic bottles, food tins & drink cans and cardboard, which they did not recycle previously. There is a divide in the opinion that the AWC has encouraged an increase in the amount that residents recycle. Most rate our service as being good or excellent and leaflets and letters have proved to be the most effective forms of communication used throughout the trial so far. Both boxes and recycling stations have been trialled and most are satisfied with all aspects of the container including size, storage and moving. While there is some question over the appearance of the street on collection day, the kerbside boxes appear to be the most favourable overall. Those that have been using a wheeled bin for their refuse also raised the issue of the streets appearance on collection day but generally found it satisfactory in all other aspects. Other residents remain on a sack collection for refuse and are similarly satisfied with their arrangement. Largely residents have had no difficulty in managing their waste in the alternate week collection period.
15. Green boxes with lids have emerged the most popular and practical containers for recyclables however, some favour the mobility advantages of using a recycling station (a modified wheeled bin that contains two boxes and a tray). Encouraging residents to segregate the differing materials into multiple boxes has assisted collections greatly and enabled us to conclude that a three box system is the best approach to presenting recycling. A good participation has resulted in significant recycling tonnages on a regular basis considering the small number of properties throughout these streets.
16. Having initially offered residents a choice of either a wheeled bin or sacks for landfill refuse, the hybrid system proved challenging to operate. Some residents have taken advantage of an offer of a storage bin for holding sacks

between fortnightly collections. This appears to be a good compromise and reduces any health risk from storing loose sacks.

17. Recent changes have enabled us to trial a uniform refuse collection method in a number of streets. Some residents have expressed their dislike for wheeled bins, which cannot be stored away from view. Whilst we appreciate that they are not always aesthetically pleasing, wheeled bins do perform an important function in safely storing refuse for two weeks and allowing our collection operatives to operate safely whilst minimizing the manual handling of sacks.

Wheeled bins also enable us to set a limit on the amount of residual waste that can be presented, whereas sack collections do not. This could be addressed by limiting the number of sacks that a household can present each collection, for example by supplying and collecting only council branded sacks. At present, one sack is provided per property per week, but a supply of 4 sacks per fortnight would be the equivalent to the capacity of one wheeled bin. There would be some financial implications for this.

18. Phase 1 continues as we explore the possibility of categorizing house types within individual streets and developing a model collection service. It is intended that city wide use of wheeled bins will be encouraged, where possible, for the collection of refuse. Exceptions will exist where the safety of residents and our operations are compromised. A set of criteria will be used to determine whether wheeled bins are suitable and, if not, the best alternative collection method.
19. Preference exists for a wheeled bin collection from the front edge of property followed by wheeled bin collection from a central collection point, communal (shared) wheeled bin collection, sack collection from front edge of property and, lastly, sacks presented in a central collection point is the least preferred option.

Phase 2: Groves – Flats (325 properties)

20. In early December 2008 we supplied 27 blocks with communal recycling containers. At the same time, new bins replaced the existing landfill containers following a review of the total capacity required at each block. With an alternate week collection in mind, this remained largely unchanged in order to encourage residents to utilize the provision of recycling containers.
21. Every container has been clearly labeled to indicate its function in a bid to raise awareness and ultimately reduce the amount of waste taken to landfill. A range of recycling containers are being trialed at various locations throughout different size and shape blocks. Each resident has been provided with a re-useable bag to store and carry recyclables from their flat to the recycling point.

22. All bin chutes have been closed to prevent blockages over a fortnightly period, but also encourages residents to dispose of recyclable materials at the same time as taking their rubbish out.
23. Recycling collections began with immediate effect while the alternate week collection of refuse and recycling was postponed until after the Christmas period to avoid any confusion. This granted us time to consider our approach to issues such as side waste and fly tipping which were an existing concern prior to AWC.
24. Having previously had no recycling facility, the participation has been outstanding. And the impending evaluation of this phase, promises to confirm our approach to the introduction of recycling and AWC in flats city wide.

Performance

25. The kerbside recycling collections are being very well used with an average of 2.1 tonnes of recycling collected from the houses per fortnight and 1.72 tonnes from the flats. The recycling rate for the houses is approximately 35%.
26. Participation by residents in the terraced streets is very good. The number of kerbside recycling containers being presented averaged at 63% at the start of the collections, with 83% of residents classed as participating (a household is counted as participating if they present their recycling once during 3 consecutive collections). Recycling tonnages remain constant, but set out rates would be expected to drop over the course of time and the set out rate is now averaging 47%. Flats residents participation is encouraging with 99% of respondents to the postal survey claiming to use the recycling bins.

City Wide Expansion

27. A project team is being set up to deal with the detailed work involved with the introduction of recycling and AWC to flats, terraced and other properties. Individual tailored solutions will be required for many locations and particularly for flats and other communal properties. The project team will consist of a waste strategy officer, a waste support officer, a supervisor and administrative support. The project team will be in addition to core service staff and all the posts will be on a temporary basis until the expansion is complete.

28. Proposed timetable for rollout of kerbside recycling and AWC is shown below:

Date	Area	Property Type	Number of Properties
June / July 2009	Phase 3 – Groves	Terraced & Flats	1,000
July 2009	Phase 4 – City Wide	Flats & Other Communal	3,000
October 2009	Phase 5 – City Wide	Mainly Terraced	3,990
April 2010	Phase 6 – City Wide	Mainly Terraced	3,220 (estimate)
October 2010	Phase 7 – Rural	Farms & Isolated Properties	300
July 09 to December 2010	Migrate properties currently with full recycling service to AWC	Mixed	12,250

29. Details of specific work involved in each phase of the timetable:

Phase 3: Groves - Terraced / Flats (approximately 1,000 properties)

30. June / July 2009 - This area represents the first major step in the kerbside expansion project and is based on the principles established in the earlier work of Phase 1 and 2. Properties currently receiving a limited recycling collection will be upgraded to the full service.

Phase 4: City Wide - Flats / Communal (approximately 3,000 properties)

31. July 2009 - Rollout recycling and AWC to flats and communal properties. Some of these properties already have a recycling service but many do not receive any service. Phase 2 of the Groves project is key to ensuring a successful rollout to these properties.

Phase 5: City Wide - Terraced / Other (approximately 3,990 properties)

32. October 2009 - Extend recycling at properties with limited paper only recycling service.

Phase 6: City Wide - Terraced / Other (estimated 3,220 properties)

33. April 2010 - Rollout recycling to terraced and other properties that have no recycling service.

Phase 7: Rural - City Wide – Farms / Isolated Properties (approximately 300 properties)

34. October 2010 - Rollout recycling to farms and isolated properties that have no recycling service.

Migration of Properties Onto AWC

35. The migration of properties onto AWC will be an ongoing process from July 2009 to December 2010 and will be implemented in tandem with the roll out of kerbside recycling.
36. During the various phases of the city wide rollout of kerbside recycling and AWC the suitability of properties for garden waste collection will also be looked at.

Corporate Priorities

37. The Without Walls Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2025 will provide a sustainable framework which will aim for York to be a city with low levels of pollution and waste production and high levels of recycling. The rollout of kerbside recycling and AWC throughout the city will make a significant contribution to fulfilling this aim.
38. This work contributes strongly to the corporate strategy direction statement of placing environmental sustainability at the heart of everything we do.
39. The rollout of kerbside recycling and AWC throughout the city is an important factor in the delivery of the corporate priority of decreasing the tonnage of biodegradable waste and recyclable products being sent to landfill for disposal.
40. This work also contributes to delivering the aims of the Corporate Sustainability Strategy by reducing York's CO2 emissions, increasing recycling and managing waste to the best practice standards.

Implications

41. Implications of the rollout of kerbside recycling and AWC are:
- **Financial** - Members have approved the budget for the city wide expansion of kerbside recycling and AWC.
 - **Human Resources (HR)** - Additional staff are being recruited to help deliver the project.
 - **Equalities** - A strategic equality impact review has been undertaken following the corporate model.
 - **Legal** - There are no legal implications.

- **Crime and Disorder** - There are no implications in this report.
- **Information Technology (IT)** - There are no implications in this report.
- **Property** - There are no implications in this report.
- **Enforcement (Neighbourhood Services)** - The Groves project is only small in terms of the number of properties involved but there has still been a considerable input of resources needed from enforcement staff. As services are expanded throughout the city the role of the enforcement team will need to be reviewed to ensure that resources are not too stretched.
- **Housing Services / Managing Agents / Landlords / Residents' Associations** - There will need to be extensive consultation with all of these stakeholders to establish suitable storage arrangements for recycling and refuse containers.
- **Friends of St Nicolas Fields** – The charity carry out recycling operations at 5,350 households in the city centre under a Service Level Agreement with the council. The charity is currently reviewing its own position regarding future service provision. There will need to be an ongoing engagement to ensure that we maximise the potential of this sector in delivering the rollout.

Risk Management

42. The risks associated with this report are already contained in the Magique Risk Register for Environmental Services.

Recommendations

43. Members note the progress made on kerbside recycling and alternate weekly collections and approve the proposed timetable for the city wide expansion of the service.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

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Report Approved

Date 27 April 2009

Chief Officer's name: **Adam Wilkinson**

Title: **Interim Director of Neighbourhood Services**

Report Approved

Date 27 April 2009

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *List information for all*

Implication: Technical /

Name: Shaun Donnelly

Title: Waste Management Officer

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Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

- 'Waste Management Strategy 2007/8 to 2013/14' Executive Report, October 2007.
- 'Waste Management Strategy 2008/2014 - Refresh' Executive Report, September 2008.