

Meeting:	Environment, Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Meeting date:	26/11/2024
Report of:	James Gilchrist, Director of Environment, Transport and Planning
Portfolio of:	Executive Member for the Environment and Climate Emergency (Cllr J Kent)

Recycling Overview Report

Update on Recycling

- 1.1 Members have asked for a briefing on the collection of recycling across the city of York. This report outlines the existing recycling practices and evaluates current performance with respect to collection and disposal methods.
- 1.2 This report presents performance data on recycling collections from other nearby Local Authorities for comparison and also provides recommendations for further work to seek to increase recycling rates across the city.

Background

- 2.1 Waste Services are responsible for the collection of domestic waste and commercial waste across the city. The 'standard' waste collection service offered to residents across the 92,420 households in the city is as follows:
 - Household waste collected fortnightly (via a black wheeled bin or black sacks)
 - Recycling waste is collected fortnightly via recycling boxes (two boxes for glass, tins/cans and plastics and one box for paper/card)

- Garden waste is collected fortnightly between March and early December each year in a 180 litre green wheeled bin (this moved to an opt-in subscription service from August 2024)
 - Please note that at some flats and high rise buildings there may be a limit on space, therefore collections are often in larger communal style bins (e.g. 660 litre or 1,100 litre bins).
 - There are a small number of properties in the city centre that have their recycling waste collections performed by St Nick's.
- 2.2 Kerbside recycling collections were first introduced by the City of York Council (CYC) in the late 1990's with a small trial of around 900 households. Collections have expanded in a phased approach since that time and collections became alternate weekly for most of the city in 2005.
- 2.3 All 92,420 households now receive a fortnightly kerbside recycling collection (except 172 rural properties where the service is not viable). Collections are in two material streams:
- paper and cardboard.
 - glass, plastic, cans, and aluminium foil.
- 2.4 Residents are required to present their recycling boxes with the materials separated into the two material streams outlined above. Two boxes are for glass, plastics, cans and aluminium foil and one box is for paper and cardboard.
- 2.5 Households are provided with three 55 litre boxes for storing and presenting recyclables. Boxes and lids have been provided without charge since 2020. Nets are no longer issued as it was agreed that these were too easily lost during collection. Additional boxes and lids are available upon request and can also be collected from the two Household Waste Recycling Centres (proof of address is required). In 2023/24, the service has delivered 9,344 recycling boxes to residents and for new housing developments.
- 2.6 Flats are provided with shared communal wheeled bins for recycling the same material streams. These larger bins are either 660 litre or 1,100 litre containers depending on the number of flats and space available.
- 2.7 St Nick's offer a weekly recycling collection service in the city centre, serving approximately 2,657 households. These

households are hard to access and cannot be served by a 'normal' waste collection vehicle. This service operates under a five-year contract agreement, which is due for renewal on 31st March 2029.

- 2.8 Bring banks and Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC's) also offer residents further opportunities for the presentation of recycling.

Current Methods of Collection at Kerbside

- 3.1 Since the introduction of recycling in the 1990's, CYC had operated a three-material stream system, with (i) glass, (ii) plastic/cans and (iii) paper/cardboard being collected separately from one other. Following a public consultation in 2021 and the investment in a new recycling vehicle fleet, this approach was revised to a two-material stream system as it remains today. Residents can now present all colours of glass bottles and jars together with plastics, cans and aluminium foil in one container, with paper and cardboard presented separately from other materials.

Mixed plastic

- 3.2 The range of plastics taken at kerbside has increased steadily over time. Initially only plastic bottles were taken due to the high-quality plastic and guaranteed markets. This was also a simple message to convey to residents.
- 3.3 As processing technology has also improved, the range of materials has expanded. In 2014, following a small trial study, all plastics labelled PET 1 and HDPE 2 plastics were accepted at kerbside.
- 3.4 From October 2022 kerbside collections have included all light-coloured plastic materials labelled PET 1, HDPE 2, and PP 5. These plastics now have consistently strong recycling markets which ensure they will be accepted for recycling.
- 3.5 Dark and black-coloured plastics cannot be properly detected by scanners at recycling facilities, as the pigments used do not reflect infrared light. As a result, they can end up contaminating other recyclables, such as glass bottles. Therefore, we do not yet accept these plastics at the kerbside.

- 3.6 Plastics presented for recycling are processed in the UK where PET materials are recycled into the drink bottles and clothing markets. The HD plastic bottles (e.g. such as milk containers) are recycled in the UK into the milk containers and for the production of containers for cleaning products. PP5 materials (e.g. yogurt pots etc.) are recycled in the UK and are used for the production of plant pots, buckets and paint trays.

Glass

- 3.7 A range of mix-coloured glass bottles and jars are accepted as part of kerbside collections (e.g. wine bottles, jam jars, sauce jars etc). Residents no longer have to separate glass materials from other recyclates, except paper and card. Glass presented for recycling is processed in Knottingley, where it is colour separated and used in glass works. Some glass is also used in the aggregate markets as it is too small to separate.

Aluminium foil and tins

- 3.8 Foil for Snappy, part of the Snappy Trust charity, recycled aluminium foil, cans and cables from HWRC's and collection points across the city from 2012 until the initiative ended in October 2022. From this point forward, aluminium foil was introduced at the kerbside and St Nick's took over the recycling of aluminium foil and cables collected at HWRC's, as well as a small number of remaining collections points in the city. Separate data on the amount of aluminium foil collected at kerbside is not collected.
- 3.9 Aluminium products presented for recycling are processed in Warrington and have two main avenues for re-use, the first is for the production of new aluminium cans and the second is for use in the motor industry and the aerospace industry with materials going to Land Rover Jaguar and British Aerospace among others.
- 3.10 Steel cans are processed in Leeds and recycled as part of the production of steel cladding and steel girders.

Paper and cardboard

- 3.11 Cardboard is one of the most extensively recycled materials globally; however, its processing differs significantly from that of

glass or plastic. Paper products, such as cardboard, are broken down into liquid pulp, baled, and sent away for reprocessing. These materials are collected separately from other recyclable waste to ensure proper handling and efficient recycling.

- 3.12 It is important that collected card and paper remain clean and dry. Wet materials need additional resources to be dried and can be classed as contamination.
- 3.13 Paper and cardboard that is collected in York is processed in the UK at a pulping plant. Cardboard is made back into new cardboard sheeting and paper is recycled into the production of new paper board.

Processing of recycling

- 3.14 The majority of the vehicle fleet used for recycling collections consists of Twin-Pack wagons which allow for the collection of recyclates as two streams. When the vehicles tip-off at Harewood Whin each part of the vehicle is emptied independently into two bays: one for glass, tins and plastics and one for paper and cardboard.

Co-mingling

- 3.15 As outlined earlier in the report, recycling at communal properties (e.g. flats, student accommodation etc) is contained within larger communal bins as opposed to recycling boxes. The service operates two standard recycling collection vehicles (RCVs) to empty recycling waste from these communal properties as well as some commercial properties across the city. All recyclables are collected as a single mixed stream and this method is known as fully co-mingled recycling, which presents several significant challenges:
- **Increased Processing Costs:** Sorting co-mingled recyclables requires additional processing at MRF's, leading to higher operational costs.
 - **Reduced Material Quality:** Mixing materials in a single stream can lead to higher rates of contamination, reducing the overall quality of recyclates and their suitability for reprocessing.

- Compliance with TEEP Regulation: The 2012 TEEP legislation mandates that recyclables must be collected in a way that ensures a high standard of material quality. Any change in collection methods must adhere to TEEP requirements.
- No Rebates: Recyclates collected in a co-mingled fashion typically do not qualify for financial rebates, further reducing the economic viability of this method. Work is currently being undertaken to address how this might be changed
- Use of large communal wheeled bins: Co-mingled collections in York requires the use of larger 4-wheeled bins, which need to be collected by the commercial waste team due to the type of vehicles required (i.e. these can be emptied into a single cell vehicle).

3.16 The current gate charge for tipping co-mingled recycling is £76.60 per tonne versus the current rebate value of £79.26 per tonne.

Garden waste

- 4.1 A separate garden waste collection at the kerbside has been in operation since October 2005. Approximately 66,000 households across the city had access to kerbside garden waste collections. The service is delivered over a 40 week period between early March and early December each year.
- 4.2 Until July 2024, garden waste was collected at kerbside from approximately 66,000 households, utilising 180-litre green wheeled bins. This was a free service, provided to all eligible households. Streets historically classed as ineligible, and therefore excluded from the service, were generally terraced areas thought to be without gardens. This assumption has since proved to be incorrect and where practicable CYC has expanded garden waste collection to include extra properties, further increasing recycling rates.
- 4.3 Garden waste is taken to Harewood Whin, where it is composted using the windrow method. This remains the most effective disposal method available. Yorwaste bags and sells the resulting compost at Hazel Court and Towthorpe household waste recycling centres.
- 4.4 On 5th August 2024, part-way through the garden waste season, the Garden Waste Subscription Scheme (GWSS) was introduced.

Residents now need to annually sign-up to the scheme and pay for a collection. The level of participation has been very high with 39,301 subscriptions sold in 2024; this represents a 59.4% subscription uptake.

4.5 It is too early to evaluate the impact of the introduction of the garden waste subscription scheme on recycling figures given that the scheme was introduced in August 2024. However, a reduction in recycling tonnage is anticipated as not all eligible properties will be participating in the scheme. For example, data for this year, between March and August 2024 shows 8,898 tonnes collected, compared to 9,715 for the same period in 2023.

4.6 Between 2020 and 2023, nearly 60,000 tonnes of garden waste were collected via kerbside recycling collections. The table below shows the annual tonnage for the last four seasons, leading up to the launch of the GWSS. Garden waste tonnages have been affected by covid and weather conditions:

Year	Kerbside Garden Waste Tonnes
March 20 - Dec 20	11,738.7
March 21 - Dec 21	13,055.8
March 22 - Dec 22	11,502.8
March 23 - Dec 23	13,399.5

Table 1: Tonnage of Garden Waste Collected at Kerbside, 2020-24

4.7 It should also be remembered that St. Nick's provide a garden waste collection service for the properties they collect from the city centre, with an average street participation rate of 22.9% (see Annex 1). This service is excluded from the GWSS and remains free for residents due to the very low level of garden waste presented for collection.

4.8 Garden waste is also collected for composting through the HWRC's. In 2017/18 nearly 2,000 tonnes were collected this way. The figure has remained stable over the last six years and in 2023/24 was 2,100 tonnes.

4.9 Over 70% of local authorities now charge for garden waste collections. Charges vary across the country with some authorities charging as high as £99 per season for garden waste collections. Table below presents comparable data regarding the collection of garden waste by Local Authorities in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Authority	Garden waste service*		
	Free/chargeable	Price	Frequency collection
City of York Council	Charge	£46.50 (2024) Pro-rata'd to £21	Fortnightly Season - Mar to Dec
North Yorkshire Council	Charge	£46.50 (2024)	Fortnightly Season - Mar to Dec
Leeds City Council	Free (rolling out to additional 5k properties)	N/A	Fortnightly Season - Feb to Nov
East Riding of Yorkshire Council	Free along with food waste	N/A	Fortnightly Season - all year round
Hull City Council	Free mixed with food waste	N/A	Fortnightly Season - all year round
Kirklees Council	Charge with waiting list to join	£55 (2025) £2 per bag for non-bin areas	Fortnightly Season - Mar to Nov
Calderdale Council	Charge	£48 or £46 if paid online	Fortnightly Season - Mar to Nov
Wakefield Council	Free	N/A	Fortnightly Season - Mar to Nov
Barnsley Council	Free	N/A	Fortnightly Season - Mar to Nov
Sheffield City Council	Charge	£55 (2024) £63 (2025)	Fortnightly Season - Mar to Nov
Bradford Council	Charge	£30 (2024) £53 (2025) (£50 early subscribers)	4-weekly Season - All year with 4 weeks break for Christmas
Doncaster Council	Free (2024 charges for additional green bins)	N/A	Fortnightly Season - Mar to Nov

Table 2: Garden Waste Data from Nearby Local Authorities, 2024 *all listed LA's utilising 240L bins for collections.

Recent Recycling Campaigns to Increase Recycling

5.1 The Recycling Journey, CYC website video, was created as part of the transition from a three-stream material collection system to a two-stream system, aimed at enhancing visual communication with residents.

The new format is designed to streamline the recycling process and make it clearer and more accessible for the community,

ensuring that residents are well informed about the changes and their role in contributing to effective waste management.



5.2 Every Can Counts - Alupro Rainbow Installation in York March 2023 to highlight the importance of recycling aluminium cans.



5.3 A5 Kerbside Recycling flyer – distributed in July 2024, as part of the new fully chargeable Garden Waste Subscription Scheme information pack. This was distributed to 66,000 homes.

This flyer provides essential details on proper kerbside recycling, helping residents to make the most of the recycling services available. It is also targeted at areas with a high number of contamination reports, the flyer acts as a practical tool to educate households about what can and cannot be recycled.

This aims to reduce common recycling mistakes, such as incorrect items being placed in recycling containers.



- 5.4 Waste Update Newsletter – part of ‘Our City’ online communication tool, designed prior to launching GWSS in July 2024. Created as part of our efforts to keep residents informed and engaged.

The July 2024 newsletter was sent to 33,251 residents that had their email address registered with us. This email had an ‘open’ rate of 75.6% (nationally this figure is 42%). By subscribing to the email Waste Newsletter, residents will receive monthly updates on a wide range of topics, including campaigns, recycling initiatives, service improvements, events etc. Additionally, the newsletter includes useful links to resources and guidance on how residents can contribute to a cleaner, greener city.



- 5.5 The Annual Recycling Week campaign – held in October each year and initiated by WRAP, is designed to raise awareness about the importance of effective recycling practices. This year, CYC’s social media campaign, which ran from 14-20 October, focused on educating residents about alternative recycling locations, helping to reduce the need for visits to HWRC’s.

On Monday 14th October a special edition of the ‘Our City’ newsletter went out focusing on recycle week. This also had an open rate of 70%.



Recycling Performance

- 6.1 The table below shows the amount of waste collected in York over the last ten years together with the recycling and composting rate.

Year	2013/ 14	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 2222	2022/ 23
Total number of households	85,960	86,290	87,010	87,430	89,250	90,280	90,740	91,240	91,720	92,090
Total household waste (tonnes)	85,595	85,876	87,561	84,785	85,791	88,235	81,075	81,192	83,151	79,017
Collected household waste per person (kg's)	424.6	441.9	418.5	402.2	407.8	418.5	383.4	383.4	411	384.8
Household waste sent for recycling, reuse and composting	37,320	38,206	37,516	36,016	38,485	38,450	39,220	35,830	35,900	32,861
NI192 – percentage of waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting	43.63	42.5	42.8	42.5	44.9	43.6	48.4	44.1	43.2	41.6

Table 3: CYC Household Waste Tonnages & Recycling Rates 2013-23

- 6.2 Total household waste, as shown in Table 3, has declined by 8% in the 10 years, 2013-2023, whilst the number of households has increased by 6%.
- 6.3 The city's household recycling rate (which includes recycling, reuse, and composting) has remained relatively stable over the last 10 years – slightly above 40%. This is mirrored by figures for many other Local Authorities in England and the National Indicator Performance. Annex 2 shows the National Indicator N192 data for Quarter 1 (April – June) 2024 and places CYC firmly in a middle-ranking position. The lack of change in recycling rates is also to be expected considering no significant changes in service have been made in this time, particularly changes which would significantly affect tonnages.
- 6.4 The slight decrease in recycling performance in 2022/23 reflects the significantly lower green waste tonnages in that year, due to the drought during the summer of 2022.
- 6.5 Recyclates are collected using other methods including via the HWRC's, the bulky waste service, at bring banks and by Third-Party Recycling groups. Along with kerbside garden waste, these

collections all contribute towards the recycling rate. However, the greatest contribution to the city's recycling rate is from the kerbside collection of recycling with over 32,861 tonnes collected in 2022/23. The chart below highlights performance over the last 10 years:

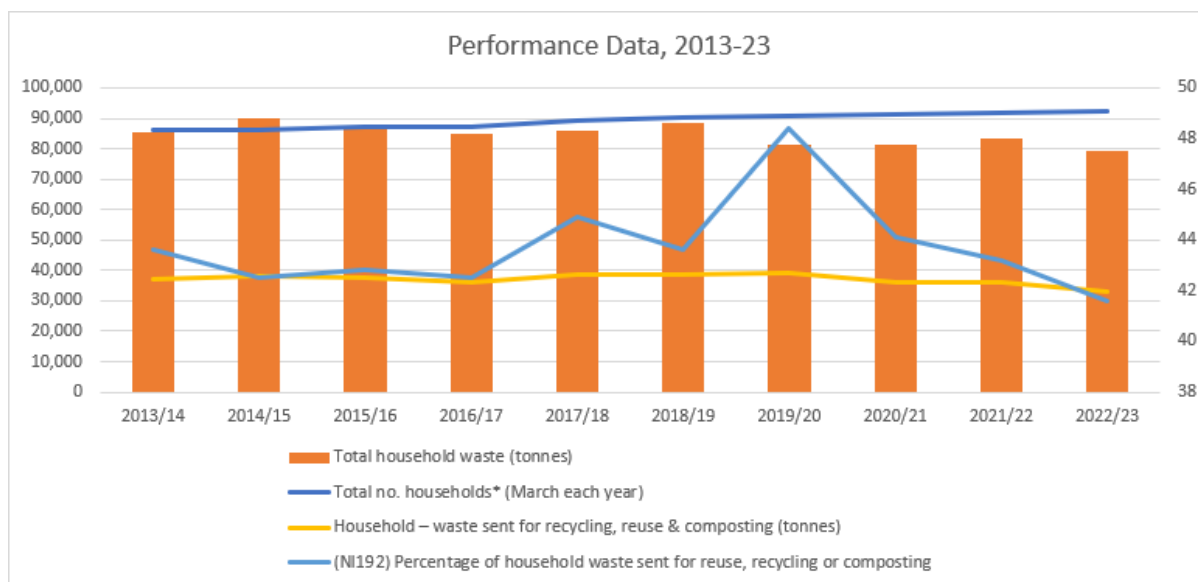


Chart 1: CYC Recycling Performance 2013/14 - 2022/23

Other Methods of Collecting Recycling Materials

Bring Banks and Third-Party Recycling Credits Scheme

- 7.1 The recycling bring bank network across York was originally formed in the 1970s, before the provision of a kerbside recycling service.
- 7.2 There are currently 31 bring bank sites located throughout the city, including 4 sites that participate in the Third-Party Recycling Credit Scheme (3PRC). These sites collect not only materials handled by the kerbside service but also items such as cartons, books, and textiles. City of York Council (CYC) no longer manages the emptying of bring banks directly, collaborating with Printwaste, Yorwaste, and various charities to ensure that the banks are emptied, and the sites remain free from fly-tipping.
- 7.3 Tonnages and associated cost/rebate information for recent collections from bring banks of materials not collected at kerbside, are provided in table below:

Bring Bank Material	2022/3 (tonnes)	2023/4 (tonnes)	Cost to CYC	Rebate to CYC
Books (charities)	20.5	17.9	No charge	None
Textiles (charities)	22.7	27.9	No charge	At HWRC banks only*
Cartons (Printwaste)	11.7	11.7	£1,854 annum, 2024/5	None

Table 5: Bring Bank data, 2022-4 *rebates are provided for textiles banks at HWRC's, and not at textile bring banks across the city.

- 7.4 Under a long-standing agreement, Printwaste collects cartons from three of the five bring sites without a charge to CYC. The remaining two sites, Bishopthorpe Road car park and St Andrews Church car park have collection fees.
- 7.5 Whilst collections from bring sites provided by charities are without charge to CYC and add to recycling rates, there is little control over the number of sites, their location, or their collection frequency. This inevitably adds pressure to the Public Realm team to clear fly-tipping left at many of the bank sites, which can be excess recyclates or more often, simply refuse.
- 7.6 Yorwaste, operating under the Teckal Agreement, carries out most of the collections from bring banks within York. Materials collected are glass, plastic bottles, dry mixed recycling, cans, tins, paper, and card.
- 7.7 The 3PRC was introduced in the 1990s, during a period when kerbside collections did not cover rural areas. This initiative extended recycling opportunities and enabled small organisations to claim a financial credit for the tonnage of materials collected. The current rate of credit is £43 per tonne.
- 7.8 The number of bring bank sites managed by CYC, including those receiving recycling credits, has gradually declined. This is largely due to companies requesting their removal - often because of fly-tipping - or organisations closing or withdrawing from the 3PRC scheme.
- 7.9 There are also bring sites which are not managed by CYC and therefore not included within the recycling rates e.g. Salvation Army textile recycling at Tesco's Clifton Moor. More recently, many shops have introduced recycling of items in-store which are less-widely recycled e.g. make-up at Boots; plastic wrap and films, and

household batteries at most supermarkets; spectacles at opticians; cycle equipment at Decathlon; and light bulbs and DIY offcuts at B&Q.

- 7.10 The service is currently reviewing the location and provision of some bring bank sites as there is a risk that some commercial premises may be using these sites for their own purposes. The service will also review the Third party recycling credit scheme with a view to taken proposals to the Executive member in the coming months.

Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

- 8.1 There are two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) in York: Hazel Court and Towthorpe. There was previously a third HWRC at Beckfield Lane but this closed in 2012.
- 8.2 HWRC's provide residents with facilities for recycling of household items including the following: garden waste, wood, paper, cardboard, car batteries, household batteries, household chemicals (e.g. creosote and paint), metal, cans, plastic bottles, glass, textiles, bric-a-brac, bicycles, hard plastics, UPVC/PVC frames, aluminium foil and cables, gas bottles, fire extinguishers, small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), fluorescent tubes and fridge/freezers.
- 8.3 Most recently this has been extended to include specialist recycling or reuse for medical equipment such as walking and accessibility aids (2022) and coffee pods (2024) and vapes (2024).
- 8.4 As part of cost-saving measures, from May 2024 Hazel Court HWRC has been closed on Wednesdays. Additionally, both Towthorpe and Hazel Court are closed at the earlier time of 6pm from April to September (was previously 7pm). These changes align Hazel Court with other HWRC's in North Yorkshire, including Towthorpe, which has been closed on Wednesdays since 2013.
- 8.5 It is too early to ascertain whether these adjustments have had a significant impact on recycling tonnages. However, from ANPR data the service has observed in the 21 weeks since 29th April 2024 there have been 88,930 visits to Hazel Court HWRC compared to 90,451 visits in the same 21 week period in 2023 (a reduction of 1,521 visits). In the 8 week period from the

introduction of garden waste subscription scheme (5th August to end September) we have seen 2,215 fewer visits in 2024 compared to the same period in 2023 (30,239 visits in 2024 compared to 32,454 visits in 2023). The weather may have had an impact on these numbers, and it is too early to draw definitive conclusions.

- 8.6 CYC also maintains two longstanding Service Level Agreements (SLAs), renewed annually, with community-led initiatives: Re-Cycle and The Recycling Project. These initiatives are dedicated to recovering reusable items from waste disposal sites and returning them to the community. Re-Cycle is responsible for refurbishing and repairing bicycles (as well as educating and training young people in mechanics), while The Recycling Project diverts over 20 tonnes of waste from disposal. Both initiatives take items from the HWRC's for refurbishment and reuse and make a substantial contribution to local waste reduction efforts.

Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

- 8.7 In January 2023, the Environment Agency began introducing new rules for the storing and disposing of certain upholstered furniture items, believed to contain persistent organic pollutants (POPs). These are the substances that persist in the environment, accumulate in living organisms, and pose a risk to our health and the environment. The legislation is altering working practices at HWRCs and bulky waste collections. It is also likely to reduce levels of reuse and make disposal more difficult for commercial traders and charities from December 2024.
- 8.8 Going forward, more materials are likely to be included within POPs legislation e.g. mattresses.

HWRC charges

- 8.9 Charges were introduced for plasterboard and rubble accepted at HWRCs in 2013. From 31st December 2023 the Government made changes to rules around waste from do it yourself (DIY) activities. Residents can now dispose of limited amounts of DIY waste such as plasterboard and bathroom suites, without charges.

York City Centre and St Nick's

- 8.10 York city centre accommodates approximately 6,000 households, the majority of which are flats and apartments situated above shops and businesses. St Nick's services about 2,700 of these households (with a bespoke service due to access restrictions) with the remainder of these households located within purpose-built apartment complexes (typically served by large communal style bins).
- 8.11 Typically, residents serviced by St Nick's face limitations regarding storage space, and waste collection poses challenges due to access issues. Collections are carried out using a combination of 60-litre reusable bags and 55-litre kerbside boxes. Reusable bags are used especially in pedestrianised areas e.g. Aldwark where boxes would remain an obstruction on the highway.
- 8.12 Since 2001, the charity organisation St Nicks has been providing a weekly, multi-stream, sort-at-the-kerbside collection service for properties within the city walls and nearby hard-to-access areas, utilising two small electric vehicles and cargo bikes. Since 2017, this service has been conducted under a formal contract.
- 8.13 As stipulated in the contract, St Nicks receives a 3PRC rebate for plastic, mixed cans and tins, foil, cardboard and paper, glass, and garden waste at a rate of £43 per tonne.
- 8.14 Residents are encouraged to recycle a variety of materials, including metal cans, aluminium foil, glass bottles and jars, paper and cardboard, and plastics labelled PET1, HDPE2, and PP5. Additionally, the service accepts cartons, cables, leads, wires, plastic writing implements, candle and wax waste, as well as garden waste for composting. The small-scale nature of the collections allows St Nicks to access additional reprocessors and collect materials which CYC is currently not able to.

8.15 Since the commencement of the previous five-year contract, in period from 2017 to March 2024, St Nick’s collected 2,535 tonnes of recycling. Table below details the recycling tonnage collected for each year including the two-year extension:

St Nicks Recycling collections							
Pre-contract collections					2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Tonnes:					208.14	235.55	242.01
Contract year:	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Tonnes:	300.01	258.89	310.91	415.65	412.45	415.78	421.39

Table 6: St Nicks Recycling Tonnages, 2014-24

Bulky Waste Collections

9.1 Yorwaste operates a bulky waste collection service from residential properties, on behalf of CYC. The bulky waste service covers the collection of fridges, freezers, asbestos, and bulky items such as beds and wardrobes. Yorwaste also provide individual assessments for larger or heavier items such as fence panels.

9.2 The cost of bulky collections had been a set price for ‘up to 10 items’ plus a fee for each fridge/freezer up until 1st April 2024 when the pricing structure was altered to the following:

- 1-3 items are collected for £30: or
- 4-10 items for £50
- Set price for fridges or freezers remaining - £18 for 2024/5

Financial Year	Cost of Bulky Collection Service
2018/19	£44
2019/20	£22
2020/21	£22
2022/23	£24
2023/24	£27
2024/25	£30 / £50

Table 7: Cost of bulky collections 2018/19 – 2024/25

9.3 The price of the bulky service was halved in 2019 and the price was frozen in 2020 during COVID. Incremental price rises then resumed until the pricing structure was amended in 2024.

Recycling Markets and Rebates

10.1 Yorwaste continually monitors the recyclates markets to ensure that CYC has access to reliable markets and receives the best income. Yorwaste manage the recycling for York and for most of North Yorkshire Council. Recyclates re-processors are regularly audited to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. These may include permit or licencing conditions including any statutory and duty of care obligations.

10.2 Rebates are paid monthly by Yorwaste on steel, aluminium, plastic, glass, and mixed paper/card, on a monthly basis, minus gate fees.

Chart 1 shows the rebate value received in the last financial year for these key materials and reflects the volatile and unpredictable nature of prices. The total value for these rebates in 2023/24 was £777,345.47.

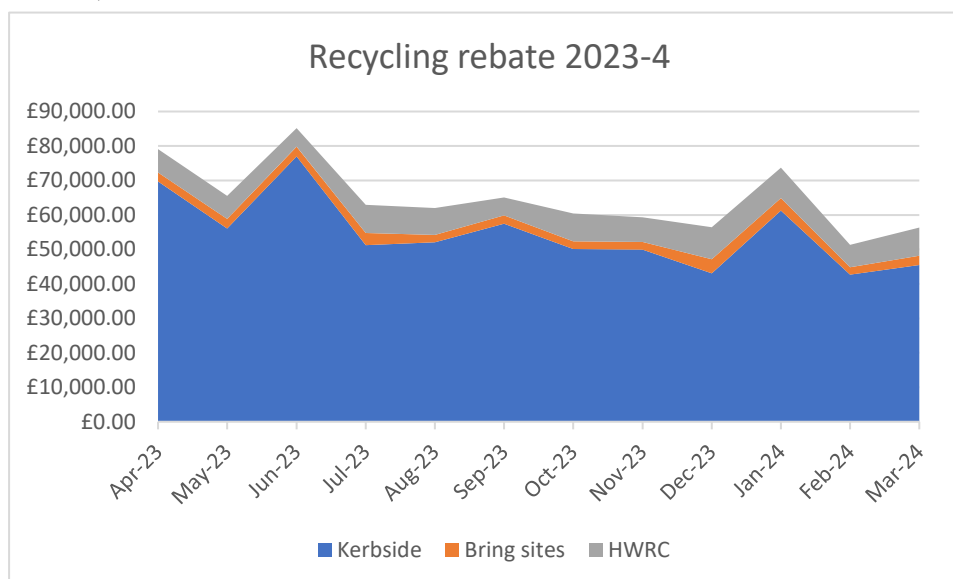


Chart 2: Rebate values from key recyclables received at kerbside, HWRCs and bring sites, 2023-24.

10.3 Rebates are also paid for textiles, scrap metal, bric-a-brac, automotive batteries and UPVC or PVC plastic brought to HWRCs. The sums are paid to Yorwaste and passed on to CYC. This equates to £128,514.54 for 2023/4. Chart 2 shows these in more detail.

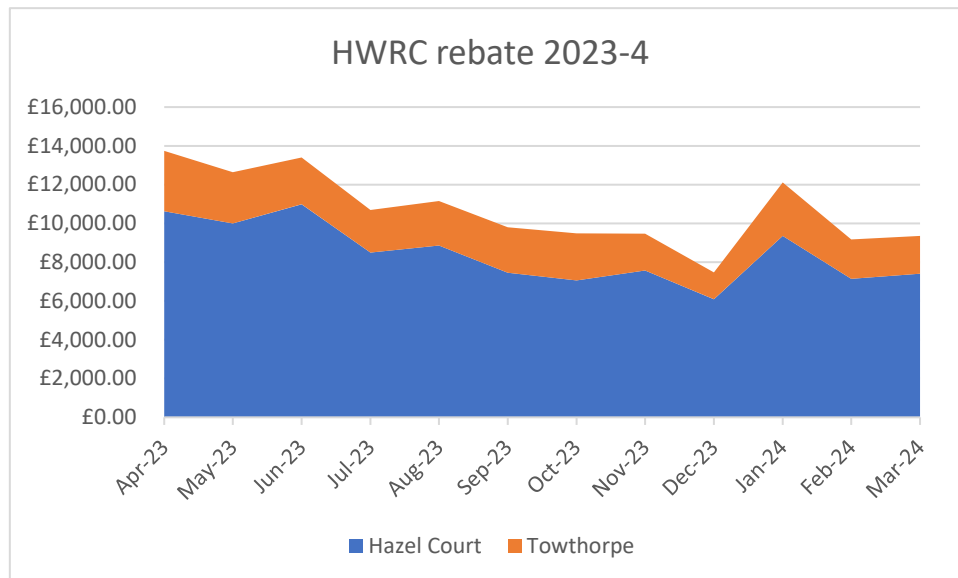


Chart 3: Rebate values from HWRC materials, 2023-24

Future Drivers - Simpler Recycling

11.1 Under UK Government plans announced in 2023 to simplify and increase recycling across the country, a further expansion of recycling services at kerbside will be needed. The Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2024 came into force in June 2024 and provides the legislative framework for some of these changes.

11.2 From 31st March 2026, local authorities in England must collect a core of five waste streams from domestic properties: metal, glass, plastic, paper/card (which can remain fortnightly collections) with a weekly food waste collection (please note that CYC, along with North Yorkshire Council has a dispensation not to collect food waste separately at the kerbside as this waste is already treated through an anaerobic digestion process at Allerton Park).

11.3 The proposed changes means that Plastic should include the following:

- a) plastic bottles made of PET and recycled PET, polypropylene (PP) and high-density polyethylene (HDPE)
- b) pots, tubs and trays made of PET, PP and polyethylene.

- c) PE and PP plastic tubes larger than 50mm x 50mm
- d) cartons for food, drink and other liquids, including aseptic and chilled cartons.
- e) plastic film packaging and plastic bags made of mono-polyethylene (mono-PE), mono-polypropylene (mono-PP) and mixed polyolefins PE and PP, including those metallised through vacuum or vapour deposition (this is from 2027 onwards).

11.4 The introduction of carton collections (d above) is likely to have a small impact on overall tonnages and a slightly larger impact on the volume of recycling collected. This will need to be accompanied by an education campaign to advise residents on the need to rinse and squash cartons to reduce space and avoid contamination.

11.5 Plastic films and bags (e) need to be part of kerbside collections from the end of March 2027. Currently, many supermarkets collect and recycle this material directly from shoppers. Trials under the Flexible Plastics Fund, including those at Newcastle City Council (since June 2023) of around 5,000 residential properties have received a 40% participation rate.

11.6 Currently in the UK, most MRF's (materials recovery facilities) do not yet have the ability to separate plastic films and bags from co-mingled recyclates, so these materials are likely to be collected at kerbside within plastic bags. Under Government proposals as part of EPR (extended producer responsibilities), the Government is attempting to make more funding available in the waste and recycling markets for these technologies to be developed.

11.7 Furthermore, Defra has endorsed, as part of the Simpler Recycling reforms, a minimum of fortnightly residual waste collections, despite evidence to suggest that restricted collections promote residents 'recycling behaviour'.

11.8 These measures will have a significant impact on the service provided, including but not limited to the demand for vehicles; staffing levels; container provision, such as caddies or liners for food waste; behavioural change, and communications with residents. It should also be borne in mind that if food waste collections do become mandatory, this would place additional

pressure on space at the operating depot at Hazel Court which is coming close to capacity.

11.9 The proposed government changes will also have a substantial impact on CYC collections from business and communal properties in York, as collections from the latter are managed through the Commercial rounds due to the large bin sizes and for some properties in the city centre. Investigations are currently underway to look at how recycling collections from these properties can be managed in such a way as to reduce co-mingling and enhance the rebate from communal recycling collections.

11.10 Waste Composition analysis could also quantify the percentage of refuse, which is recyclable, including cartons, plastic film/bags, as well as items currently collected at kerbside. It would help inform further recycling campaigns and could allow targeting on a geographical basis, and/or by housing type.

Recommendations to Seek to Increase Recycling Rates

12.1 **Options analysis and consultation** - It is recommended that the Members approve further scrutiny of the options outlined below for enhancing reuse and recycling. The investigations could include surveying residents about their preferred recycling options, presenting a range of options which meet the demands of recent legislation, with the aim of developing a costed action plan at a later stage.

12.2 **Bring Bank and 3PRC Report** – The recommendation of this report is to take a future report to the Executive Member which seeks to remove bring banks classified as commercial and withdrawing the third-party recycling credit scheme on materials already collected by CYC at the kerbside (excluding St Nicks)

12.3 **Survey of communal bins** – an audit of containers currently provided in communal areas and better labelling and signage to encourage recycling and reduce contamination.

12.4 **Review of current co-mingling collections** – Linked to recommendation above in 12.3, to continue the on-going analysis of fully co-mingled recycling collections with a view to moving to

twin-stream where practicable. This will require some routing and rounding work within the service.

- 12.5 **Review collection arrangements at businesses such as Air Bnb's and Holiday Lets** – investigate options to seek to better regulate and improve waste collection arrangements and recycling at these sites, reviewing potential options such as the provision of recycling bags etc.
- 12.6 **Further resident education** - It is vital that residents are well-informed about the types of materials accepted for collection at kerbside, and how they should be presented, thus ensuring the continued collection of high-quality materials. The additional inclusion of cartons, plastic films/wraps, and a food waste collection service, will require further engagement with residents to explain these changes. A city-wide communications programme is recommended to educate households on which recyclates are eligible for recycling. The proposed approach includes the distribution of printed materials, alongside the use of the CYC webpages, newsletters and social media platforms, to effectively promote this initiative.
- 12.7 **Enhancing recycling rates in low-performing areas** - Monitoring efforts to identify which areas could benefit from targeted interventions. This includes areas with low participation rates, locations known for full or overflowing refuse bins, such as flats, and areas where recycling boxes are either underutilised or contaminated, for instance, student areas.

To ascertain these factors, a thorough review of existing data is advisable, alongside monitoring of collection activities and collaboration with operations team and housing managers. The implementation of the 'Bags to Bins' project is anticipated to further bolster recycling rates in some of these targeted areas, as the project aims to enhance household waste collections for residents in certain terraced neighbourhoods across the city. It is recommended to increase educational campaign in those areas.

- 12.9 **HWRCs** – undertake further work to identify any abuse of the permit system, and if these could impact on traffic flow. Evaluate the current usage of the site by residents, businesses and charities visiting HWRCs to seek to provide a valuable tool for better monitoring of materials received (e.g. DIY waste), ensuring better

control over waste management practices and potential impact on traffic flow.

12.10 Further analysis of wider bring bank provision in line with Simpler Recycling – It is recommended that a detailed analysis of the wider bring bank network be completed, set against future legislative requirements where more materials will be collected at kerbside (cartons, plastic films and wraps) and the need for bring bank facilities when kerbside collections are often stood down, for example the Christmas holidays.

12.11 Link with student research - continue to work with York University Sustainability Clinic to identify and support environmental projects which may help CYC better communicate recycling and reuse messages to students.

12.12 Waste Composition Analysis (WCA) of refuse bins – as outlined in para 11.10. WCA is a study that provides information on the weight of materials that are in a given waste stream. This involves obtaining samples of these waste streams and sorting them into predefined categories which are then weighed.

12.13 Publication of an Annual Recycling Performance report for York– as an informative tool to enhance residents' understanding of waste management, its environmental impact, and the importance of recycling as well as tracking our performance. This approach could be similar to the budget analysis included with council tax bill mailings and could link to the Carbon Zero commitment.

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Background Papers and Policy

- Public reports pack 25012024 1600 Executive
- <https://www.wastedataflow.org/reports/default.aspx>
- <https://www.york.gov.uk/RecyclingCollections>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/exemptions-and-statutory-guidance-for-simpler-recycling-in-england/outcome/government-response>
- <https://www.wrap.ngo.uk>
- <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/food-waste-city-level-report.pdf>
- <https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/global-plastics-treaty>
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2024/666/contents/made>

Annexes

- Annex 1: St Nicks Street list with average participation and garden waste uptake
- Annex 2: National Indicator N192 Performance Q1 2024/5 recycling

Glossary

CYC – City of York Council
3PRC – Third Party Recycling Credits Scheme
WEEE - Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment
POPs - Persistent Organic Pollutants
GWSS – Garden Waste Subscription Scheme
HWRC – Household Waste Recycling Centre
WDF – Waste Data Flow

MRF – Materials Recovery Facility
ANPR – Automatic Number Plate Recognition
TEEP – Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable
(Compliance Regulations 2011 and 2012 for Waste)
RCV- Recycling Collection Vehicle