

<b>Scrutiny</b>	<b>Agenda Item: 5</b>
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<b>Meeting Date</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2010
<b>Report Title</b>	Recycling performance indicators
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Executive Member for Performance and Finance
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Dave Thomas, Head of Commissioning & Customer Contact
<b>Head of Service</b>	Dave Thomas, Head of Commissioning & Customer Contact
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Alan Turner, Cleansing Services Manager

## Background

1. Recycling collections are undertaken to all areas of the borough encompassing over 55,000 households. Prior to July 2006 Swale's recycling rate stood at 14% of all household waste collected. A thorough analysis of recycling options was undertaken by the council's internal contract working group supported by White Young and Green Environmental Consultants where it was concluded that the preferred scheme and most likely to produce optimum performance was what has since been termed the 'twin bin scheme'. The twin bin scheme effectively is an alternate week collection with residual waste (green bin) being collected one week followed by a recycling collection (blue bin) the following week. The blue bin collection is supplemented by a fortnightly opt-in garden waste collection service (brown bin).

Green bin – All residual waste deemed as non recyclable.

Blue bin – Glass, paper, cardboard, cans and plastic bottles.

Brown bin – All garden waste.

The blue bin includes a 40 litre glass collection caddy where glass is separated from the other contents of the bin. The glass is offloaded at Princes Street depot where it is baulked before being taken on for processing in Derbyshire.

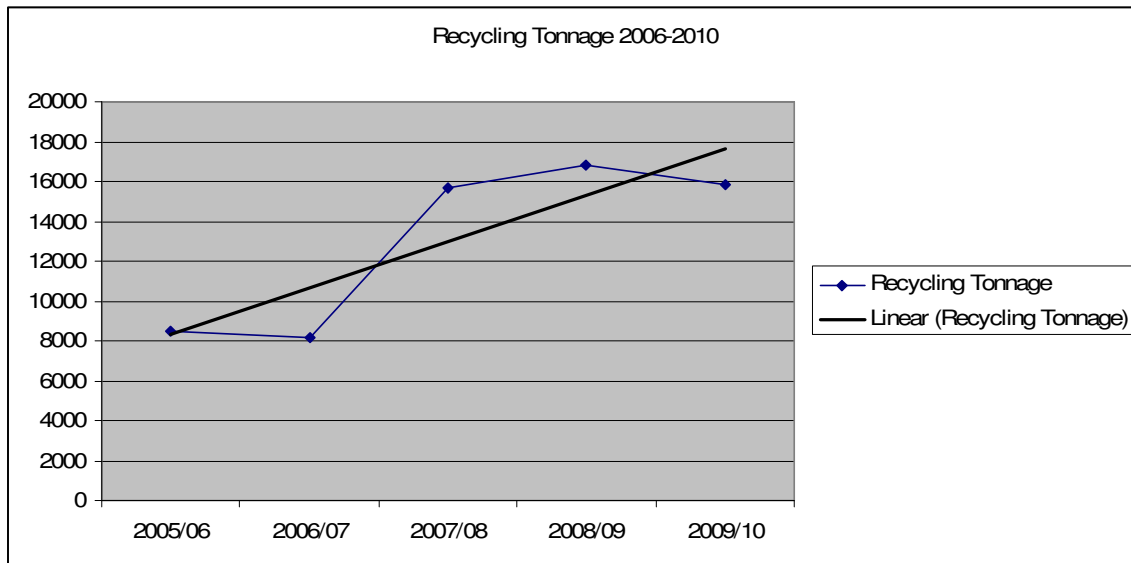
All other waste residual and recyclable is taken to separate bays at Church Marshes Waste Transfer station in Sittingbourne where it is also

- balked before being taken to Allington to produce energy from waste and sorting at the Material Recycling Facility (MRF) respectively.
2. At the pre-tender stage in 2005 it was agreed by the working group with Executive approval that four options were open to Swale. Option 1 was approved by Executive as the base specification at the Executive meeting of 7 January 2006. Option 1 provided an alternate weekly collection as described previously in this report. Option 1 as a stand alone specification would achieve a recycling rate of 27-30% (As presented to Executive 6 September 2006). Following deliberation by Executive Option 3 was decided on as the best option available to Swale. Option 3, is as Option one but with the additional collection of garden waste and glass. This was expected to achieve a recycling rate of between 34-37%. (As presented to Executive 6 September 2006). However to achieve this rate was dependant on a customer base of 8,000 – 10,000 brown bin customers.

### **Factors Contributing to the Under Achievement of Performance Indicator NI 192.**

3. The scheme itself has been and continues to be successful to the level predicted at the pre-tender stage. The level of achievement has been cited by both DEFRA and the Waste Improvement Network, nationally, as a top 20 dry recycling performer (2008/09) and the dry recycling element of the scheme is the highest performer in Kent (2008/09).
4. The main priority of waste minimisation is being achieved and Swale has reduced its overall household waste for three consecutive years by 9%, 9% and ½% respectively. (The latter to be ratified by audit)
5. The audited recycling rate for 2008/09 of 33.99% compared against an aspirational Swale target of 39% but did exceed expectation based on all of the factors taken into consideration at the pre-tender stage.
6. The unaudited rate for 2009/10 is 32.24% which indicates a reduction of 1.75% on the previous year 2008/09. (33.99%)
7. An increase of some 1200 tonnes of residual waste during 2009/10 was somewhat offset by a reduction in bulky waste (600 tonnes). The increase is in part due to additional properties being occupied but still represents an increase of around 10kg of residual waste per household per annum; which impacts on the outcome of both NI 191 & NI 192.
8. Overall recycling within the borough fell by 958 tonnes during 2009/10 with the largest impact being on the twin bin scheme with a reduction of around 500 tonnes over the year. Based on item 11 this suggests that some residents are discarding recyclable items through the green bin. However

as the graph indicates the scheme itself has peaked and will level off. This was anticipated pre-tender.



SMT amended the 2010/11 target from 39% to 36% and the current unaudited performance for April – June 2010 is 31.6% compared to 32.03% for the same period 2009. However this is inclusive of an additional 170 tonnes of street arisings due to the heavy gritting experienced throughout the winter period due to heavy snowfall and these arisings are measured against NI 192. (Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting)

### Measures in Place to Improve Performance.

9. To achieve current targets (below) the scheme is dependant on the expansion of the brown bin scheme which has currently 4,000 customers. It is required from both financial and performance perspectives to grow a database of 8,000-12,000 customers. It is anticipated the former will be achieved October 2011 and the latter October 2013. Maintaining current levels of dry recycling added to the predicted growth of the brown bin scheme should enable targets to be met. The scheme is being actively promoted throughout the borough and while limited, resource has been made available by cleansing at no significant additional cost to promote the scheme through outdoor events, fetes etc. held throughout the borough during the summer months as well as advertising through council mediums and local media circles. Growth is reasonable against the background of the current economic climate.

NI 192 – (Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting)

Performance Targets – NI 192.

2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
36%	38%	39%

10. To ensure the stabilisation of the dry recycling element of the twin bin system we are actively promoting the method through trial schemes such as High Street recycling, Beach Promenade recycling and strategic glass collections. High Street and Beach Promenade trial recycling collections are in place to replicate the blue bin scheme excluding glass. These schemes will be expanded if proven successful. Strategic glass collections will be undertaken in those areas where it's not possible to introduce the twin bin scheme and bins will be located conveniently for residents use. We are further exploring opportunities to recycle street arisings waste (litter, cans, glass, plastic, cans etc) in partnership with the Sheppey prison cluster. Street arisings collected in litter bins and by Verdant mobile teams are currently disposed of through the residual waste stream and amounts to around 20% of total street arisings collected by Verdant teams and mechanical sweepers (total of around 2,500 tonnes of litter and detritus per annum is cleared from our streets) and impacts on NI 192 outcomes. Our innovative beat sweeper recycling pilot is currently being trialled and we aim to recycle 80% of all waste disposed of in our high streets.
11. We have set up the only independent WEE (Electrical waste) collection points in the county in conjunction with SWEEEP who are based in Sittingbourne at no additional cost to the council and are confident that this will be expanded further over the coming year. We are also exploring the area of kerbside textile collections but this is an extremely volatile market and prone to literal highway robbery as there are unscrupulous individuals who will forage ahead of the crew stealing the textiles for their own gain while prices remain high. We have some experience of this with our recent trial scheme with LMB (Canning Town) and HM prison cluster.
12. While many initiatives either are or will be in place the dry recycling element is not far from maximisation. Worcester City Council were the top dry recycling performer in the country with an outturn of 36% (2008/09) which does suggest that Swale are very close to maximising dry recyclable collections therefore a strategy of stabilisation and incremental improvements is in place. To guarantee achievement and surpass current targets a robust approach to reach the 12,000 brown bin customer target is required. However the most effective and assured method is food waste collections where at the last audit undertaken it was concluded that 37% of green bin contents was food waste (approx. 12,000 tonnes) By removing the food waste content from the residual waste stream the effect would be a huge decrease of residual waste from around 33,000 tonnes to

21,000 tonnes and a marked increase in recycling to around 50-60% of all waste recycled which would far surpass the All England Upper Quartile performance of 43%. Any future waste contract must incorporate food waste collections.

13. A recent customer survey undertaken to 1500 residents indicated that 98% of residents were happy with the twin bin scheme and reliability of service.

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