

# **Review of Household Waste Recycling in Herefordshire**

**Report by the Household  
Waste Recycling Review  
Group  
February 2007**

**For presentation to the Environment  
Scrutiny Committee -12th March 2007**

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## **Chairman's Foreword**

*The Household Waste Recycling Review Group would like to thank all those who have helped to contribute to this report. The Group are strongly committed to the recycling of waste in Herefordshire and hope that our review can be used to further the work of the Council's Waste Management section and its partners.*

*The Group found a high level of satisfaction with the current system of recyclable collection and the Council's household waste collection sites. We recognise never the less the disappointment of many residents outside the catchment area for kerbside collection.*

*We were particularly impressed by the positive outlook and success of our neighbouring authorities in South Shropshire and Worcester City in their recent switch to wheelie bin systems.*

*We have carefully examined the evidence and hope that our recommendations are accepted in the spirit they are intended.*

*I would like to take the opportunity to put on record the group's thanks for the work undertaken by Richard Wood and Laura Preece, without whom we would be unable to present the report.*

**Councillor K G Grumbley**  
**Chairman of the Household Waste Recycling Review Group**



# **Household Waste Recycling Review – Summary**

## **Introduction**

In September 2006 the Environment Scrutiny Committee established a group to review the current methods and performance of household waste recycling in the County, to investigate any possible improvements to the system and subsequently advise the Cabinet Member on future policy in this area. The Review Group worked against a background of impending tougher Government targets and the re-letting of the Council's current household waste collection contract in 2008.

## **Method of Gathering Information**

The Review Group split the task into 2 parts; first to review current system performance, then to review the future policy expressed in the adopted Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire & Worcestershire. To assess the current system, evidence was taken from a rural Parish Councillor, Market Town Councillors (Bromyard and Ross-on-Wye), a Hereford City Councillor and EnviroAbility/Contractor representatives from the Ross recycling box collection programme. To gain a wider perspective on the subject to enable a balanced assessment of future policy, evidence was then taken from Waste Management Officers from Worcester City and South Shropshire Councils and the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP), the Government agency responsible for National policy and programmes. Finally a visit to Ludlow in South Shropshire enabled first-hand observation of waste collection in a high-performing authority, which has recently adopted "wheelie" bins.

## **The Current System and the Need to Change**

There is a high level of satisfaction in the County with the current black bag and kerbside system where it is in operation. Combined recycling and composting accounts for 28% of the waste stream against the 21% target. Public acceptance of the need for recycling is good as are participation rates. However, the public lacks understanding of the current cost of waste collection and disposal, let alone the future cost implications. There is disappointment that the kerbside system does not reach wider but acceptance of the high cost of further extending it. Household waste sites were generally praised although opening hours at some of the market town sites were limited. Bring sites (localised collection point for recyclable materials) were well patronised and there is probably scope to extend this network through consultations with Parish Councils and supermarkets. The recycling symbology, particularly on plastics, is confusing. The EnviroAbility box recyclable collection in and around Ross-on-Wye is an outstanding success. Any changes there will need to be carefully managed. Green garden waste is currently largely the householder's responsibility. Green sacks purchased from the Council are disposed of with the normal rubbish. Household waste sites have green collection facilities for material, which is subsequently composted.

## **The Future Collection System**

Any future system is predicated on a Government target which will almost certainly rise to at least 40% for combined recycling and composting. It would therefore be prudent to adopt a system which will enable the County to reach a 40% target with flexibility for further increases. The Review Group was keen to establish whether there was any realistic alternative system to wheelie bins which are widely used by the best performing authorities. No witness could advise of such a system. The main conclusion of the Group is that a switch to wheelie bin collection system is the

only practicable way forward if targets are to be met and financial penalties for non-achievement avoided. The major disadvantage of the system is that to contain costs it will be necessary to run an alternate week collection cycle. (i.e. First week rubbish, second week recyclables). As waste collection is the most visible service the Council provides, any change must be smoothly managed and executed. There is plenty of scope for a public relations disaster if this is not managed actively and sensitively.

We are fortunate that nearby authorities (Worcester City and South Shropshire) have recently adopted wheelie bins and there is a wealth of experience of this major change. The changeover will be a major programme for the Authority and it will be essential that every Member and Officer embraces the change, as all will be tackled by residents at some stage during the introduction. The introduction will need to be phased geographically across the County and there will be manpower resource implications in forming a project team.

**Observations – the following observations, outside the scope of the review, were made:**

Commercial Waste. - It is counterproductive to emphasise the household recycling imperatives without addressing the commercial waste operation. For example, it is discouraging for residents to observe commercial glass collections being mixed with general waste for landfill.

Packaging. - There is a continuing increase in household rubbish due to the growing popularity of mail order/internet shopping and associated packaging. Furthermore, the free plastic carrier bags dispensed by shops cause litter and further household waste. Government reduction initiatives would be helpful.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Review Group has made a number of recommendations in response to its findings:

- 1.1. that Cabinet reaffirm its commitment to the household waste recycling elements of the Joint Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire & Worcestershire including the requirement to change over to wheelie bins and alternate weekly collections; (para 4.14 )**
- 1.2. that wheelie bins be purchased with pre-installed identification chips (para 4.9)**
- 1.3. that Cabinet secure total Member and Officer support for the change; (para 4.15)**
- 1.4. to ensure a smooth transition from current collection to wheelie bin collection Cabinet give early consideration to: the need for focused project management systems to be implemented; and adequate and timely manpower resources – a ‘change team’ – to be in place; (para 4.16)**
- 1.5. the Cabinet Member again contact Enviroability and Worcester Community Recycling (WCR) to reinforce the need for diversification of their service which could include reuse of collected materials; (para 6.5)**

**1.6. that the Cabinet Member:**

**1.6.1. reviews the current bring site network with a view to expanding where appropriate, through consultation with relevant Parish Councils on the most suitable local sites (para 7.3); and**

**1.6.2. indicate his support to WRAP in its work at a national level to encourage supermarkets to participate in the provision of bring sites and waste reduction; (para 7.3)**

**1.7. that the Cabinet Member reviews the Household Waste site opening hours with a view to extending the availability of the facility; (para 8.3)**

**1.8. that the Cabinet Member gives greater publicity to the facility to recycle household batteries at the Council's Household Waste sites; (para 8.5)**

**1.9. that the current system for green garden waste collection and disposal is continued but reviewed when a two bin system is introduced; (para 9.8)**

**1.10. that a comprehensive detail of recycling symbology, as appropriate to Herefordshire, is promulgated in Herefordshire Matters; (para 10.2)**

**1.11. that the Cabinet Member inform the public of the current and projected cost of waste collection to emphasise the need to reduce waste volumes and control Council Tax increases. (para 11.2)**

**1.12. The Executive's response to the Review including an action plan be reported to the first available meeting of the Committee after the Executive approved its response; (para 18.1)**

**1.13. A further report on progress in response to the Review then be made after six months with consideration then being given to the need for any further reports to be made. (para 18.1)**



# Household Waste Recycling Review – Main Report

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of the Review was to examine the current methods and performance of household waste recycling in the County, to investigate any possible improvements to the system and subsequently advise the Cabinet Member on future policy in this area.
- 1.2. Members of Strategic Monitoring Committee at their meeting on 20th July 2006 identified a number of issues as possible areas for scrutiny. The meeting concluded that a review be undertaken into household waste recycling in the County and indicated a number of issues the review should cover. At its meeting on 25th September 2006 Environment Scrutiny Committee agreed a Scoping Statement for the review (see **Appendix 1**) and appointed Cllr P.J. Dauncey; Cllr K.G. Grumbley (as Chairman of the Review Group) Cllr J.G.S. Guthrie; and Cllr J.W. Newman to serve on the review.
- 1.3. The Review was undertaken between October and December 2006. This report sets out the key findings and contains recommendations to the Cabinet Member (Environment) and likely referral to Cabinet.
- 1.4. The Review Group worked against a background of impending tougher Government targets and the re-letting of the Council's current household waste collection contract in 2008. The Review Group were tasked to undertake a short sharp review.
- 1.5. The Review Group would like to express its thanks to all those who assisted the Review Group and submitted evidence during the review. These are listed in **Appendix 4**.

## 2. Method of Gathering Information

- 2.1. Prior to the first meeting of the Review Group, written information was submitted for perusal. Further documents were considered during the review and a list of the key documents is included at **Appendix 5**.
- 2.2. The Review Group commenced the review in October 2006 with the first meeting that discussed the appropriate methods of gathering information. The Review Group discussed the written information previously supplied.
- 2.3. The Review Group split the task into 2 parts; first to review current system performance, then the future policy expressed in the adopted Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire & Worcestershire. To assess the current system, evidence was taken from a rural Parish Councillor, Market Town Councillors (Bromyard and Ross-on-Wye), a Hereford City Councillor and EnviroAbility/Contractor representatives from the Ross recycling box collection programme. To gain a wider perspective on the subject to enable a balanced assessment of future policy, evidence was then taken from Waste Management Officers from Worcester City and South Shropshire Councils and the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP), the Government agency responsible for National policy and programmes. Finally a visit to Ludlow in South Shropshire enabled first-hand observation of waste collection in a high-performing rural authority which has recently adopted "wheelie" bins (black, green and recyclables box).

- 2.4. The Review Group are aware that the results of the Herefordshire Satisfaction Survey which includes questions on recycling are expected to be released around March 2007 and therefore have not had the benefit of the findings.

### **3. Current Collection System and the need to change**

- 3.1. The current system uses a bag method of collection: a black bag for residual waste collected weekly; and two coloured bags for recyclables collected alternate weekly. This system operates throughout much of the county and collects paper, textiles, cans/tins and plastic bottles for recycling. In Ross-on-Wye the same black bag system operates for residual waste but the recyclables are collected using boxes by Re-Box; a partnership between Herefordshire Council, Worcestershire Community Recycling (WCR) and Enviroability. This system collects paper, textiles, cans/tins and glass. The bag system of collecting recycling cannot accept glass, as it is not practicable for health and safety reasons. Whereas the box method cannot take plastic bottles due to lack of space in the boxes and collection vehicle.
- 3.2. There is a high level of satisfaction with the current black bag and kerbside system where it is in operation. There is disappointment that the kerbside system does not extend more widely throughout the county but there is general acceptance that there would be a high cost to extend these schemes further. Public acceptance for the need of recycling is good as are participation rates. However, the public lacks understanding of the current cost of waste collection and disposal, let alone the future cost implications.
- 3.3. Combined recycling and composting in Herefordshire accounts for 28% of the waste stream against the Government target of 21%. In order to reach future national targets it will be necessary to change collection methods. The current methods do not allow a full comprehensive range of materials to be collected for recycling. The system also does not provide a limit on the amount of black bags presented for collection. This is likely to produce a huge cost implication in the future as the Council would face European fines of £150 per tonne of waste sent to landfill over the authority's allowance. The landfill allowance given to authorities is decreasing annually, whereas charges are set to increase.

### **4. Future Collection System**

- 4.1. Any future system is predicated on a Government target which will almost certainly rise to at least 40% for combined recycling and composting from 2010. It would therefore be prudent to adopt a system which will enable the County to reach a 40% target with flexibility for further increases.
- 4.2. The selected collection system needs to be compatible with the waste processing systems it will feed. Currently it is assumed that these will be autoclaved e.g. that used by Estech, and by co-mingled MRF (Materials Reclamation Facility)
- 4.3. Further clarification on waste collection is awaited following the Government's review of the National Waste Strategy, now expected to be published late March 2007.
- 4.4. The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy is driven by Government and European legislation, and forms a framework for the management of municipal waste in the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire until 2034. It has been prepared jointly by all of the Local Authorities who have responsibility for managing waste across the two counties, with support and input from the Environment Agency. It sets out the authorities' commitment to work together to

fulfil a set of principles, policies and targets which strive to ensure that waste production decreases and recycling and recovery of value from waste is increased. The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy drives a move towards alternate weekly collecting system using wheelie bins.

- 4.5. Having expressed a degree of initial concern the Review Group was keen to establish whether there was any realistic alternative system to wheelie bins, which are widely used by the best performing authorities. No witness could advise of such a system. The major disadvantage of the system is that to contain costs it will be necessary to run an alternate week collection cycle. (i.e. first week rubbish, second week recyclables). However, 2004/05 recycling figures show that the top ten performing authorities all operate alternate week collections. Conversely, none of the bottom ten performers do. Alternate week collections are also operated by 16 out of the 21 Beacon Authorities for waste and recycling in 2007. Such a system also allows a limit to be put on the amount of residual waste put out for collection. The main conclusion of the group is that a switch to an alternate weekly wheelie bin collection system is the only practicable way forward if targets are to be met and financial penalties for non-achievement avoided.
- 4.6. As waste collection is one of the most visible services the Council provides the change must be smoothly managed and executed. There is plenty of scope for a public relations disaster if this is not managed actively and sensitively. We are fortunate that nearby authorities (Worcester City and South Shropshire) have recently adopted wheelie bin collection systems and there is a wealth of experience of this major change.
- 4.7. Worcester City did not have significant reported problems with flies and maggots, despite the hot summer in 2006. Depending upon temperature, maggots will hatch within days or even hours of eggs being laid, and can turn into adult flies within one week. Therefore maintaining a weekly refuse collection system does not solve the problem of flies and maggots. Preventing flies from finding food is the only way of solving this problem. Many authorities have reported that containing waste in bins reduces flies and maggots.
- 4.8. The Worcester City method of collection follows the Joint Waste Management Strategy, utilising a two bin system with alternate weekly collection. A 240 litre green bin is used for recycle and 190 litre black bin for residual waste. Householders were able to opt for smaller bin sizes if required. The recycle from the green bin comprises glass bottles and jars, tins, cans, newspapers, plastic bottles and thin paper and card. The recycle is collected and transferred to bulk haulage vehicles where it is taken to a Materials Reclamation Facility (MRF) and mechanically sorted into its component materials. The contents of the black bin is currently sent to landfill although it is planned to introduce autoclaving facilities within Worcestershire and Herefordshire to process residual waste.
- 4.9. Worcester City purchased wheelie bins with identification 'chips' already installed. The Review Group believe that 'chips' will lead to more efficient waste management in the future. The cost of purchasing wheelie bins with pre-installed chips is far less than retrospectively fitting chips. The Review Group therefore **recommends** that wheelie bins be purchased with pre-installed identification chips.
- 4.10. The South Shropshire method of collection utilises a bin system but is different to Worcester City and hence the Joint Waste Management Strategy. South Shropshire use a green bin, a black bin and a green box. The green bin is used for storing paper gift wrap, cardboard, food and garden waste. The black bin is

used for non-recyclable rubbish and the green box is used for newspapers, magazines, tins, cans, and glass bottles and jars. Collection of the green and black bins is alternate weekly.

- 4.11. In line with Worcester City the Joint Waste Management Strategy outlines the two bin system operating in Herefordshire and the remaining Districts of Worcestershire. Redditch is expanding its two bin system and Wychavon are due to start theirs in 2008.
- 4.12. The success of any proposal for recycling and refuse collection will be dependant on the availability of processing facilities such as a co-mingled MRF for mixed recycle and autoclaving for residual waste. Planning permission for autoclaving facilities have been secured in Herefordshire and Worcestershire with an application pending for a MRF in Worcestershire.
- 4.13. The changeover will be a major programme for the Authority and it will be essential that every Member and Officer embrace the change as all will be tackled by residents at some stage during the introduction. The introduction will need to be phased geographically across the County and there will be manpower resource implications in forming a project team.
- 4.14. The Review Group **recommends** that Cabinet reaffirm its commitment to the household waste recycling elements of the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire including the requirement to change over to wheelie bins and alternate weekly collections.
- 4.15. In view of the high potential for adverse public relations the Review Group consider it imperative, and therefore **recommends**, that Cabinet secure total Member and Officer support for the change.
- 4.16. The Review Group also **recommends** that to ensure a smooth transition from current collection to wheelie bin collection Cabinet give early consideration to: the need for focused project management systems to be implemented; and adequate and timely manpower resources – a ‘change team’ – to be in place.

## 5. Managing the introduction of Wheelie-bins

- 5.1. Having heard Worcester City and South Shropshire Councils experience of introducing wheelie-bins to their areas the Review Group strongly believe that the Cabinet Member should give early consideration to the systems of management needed to implement such a project – as recommended above. The Review Group heard that good pre-introduction planning e.g. undertaking advice roadshows, consultation and mapping the area in terms of bin requirement, was essential to ensure a smooth transition. South Shropshire had employed a project manager, a publicity officer and three telephone helpline assistants specifically to facilitate the project.

## Issues Raised During the Course of the Review

### 6. Ross-on-Wye Re-Box Scheme.

- 6.1. The EnviroAbility box recyclable collection in and around Ross-on-Wye is an outstanding success as evidenced by their 80+% participation rate. Any changes there will need to be carefully managed.

- 6.2. The Re-Box partnership consists of the Council (both Environment and Social Services), Worcestershire Community Recycling (WCR) a commercial recycling company and the Ross-on-Wye based charity EnviroAbility. WCR and Enviroability are currently funded by the Council to carry out kerbside recycling collections using a box system.
- 6.3. The Review Group have heard how the local scheme was formed, the range of recyclables collected; the method of collection; the local people they employ and the acknowledgements they have received for their good works.
- 6.4. The Review Group are aware that WCR and EnviroAbility have been informed of the likely change to a two bin, alternate week collection across the County and that discussions have taken place regarding the need to diversify their work into areas such as reuse, although it is not clear at this stage what they propose.
- 6.5. The Review Group are concerned that the new collection contract in 2008 will severely impact on the operation of this organisation and in view of the work force it employs **recommends** that the Cabinet Member again contact Enviroability and WCR to reinforce the need for diversification of their service which could include reuse of collected materials.
7. **Bring Sites** –(localised collection point for recyclable materials e.g. at supermarkets, village halls or pub car parks).
- 7.1. Bring sites were well patronised, although some supermarkets do not participate, and there is probably scope to extend this network through consultations with Parish Councils and supermarkets.
- 7.2. The local bring sites provide an opportunity for the public to dispose of their recyclables, usually while already out and about in their car and indications are that the public are satisfied with this aspect of the service. While there are a number of sites spread around the County (see map at **Appendix 2**) the Review Group consider there may be scope for a small number of further sites to be strategically located in areas not served by current bring sites or covered by the kerbside collection service. Consultation should then be undertaken with relevant Parish Councils to ascertain the most appropriate local site(s). The Review Group were also aware that at the time of the review not all supermarkets had signed up to the 'Courtauld Commitment' (agreement to reduce packaging waste) and some do not provide bring site facilities in Herefordshire. Morrison's do not provide any facilities for recycling plastic carrier bags. In view of the easy accessibility of supermarket sites the Review Group considered that the Cabinet Member should use his influence, both locally and nationally via WRAP, to encourage supermarkets to participate in recycling and waste reduction schemes.
- 7.3. The Review Group **recommends** that the Cabinet Member review the current bring site network with a view to expanding where appropriate, through consultation with relevant Parish Councils on the most suitable local sites and indicate his support to WRAP in its work at a national level to encourage supermarkets to participate in the provision of bring sites and waste reduction.

## 8. Household Waste Sites

- 8.1. The Review Group heard that Household waste sites were generally praised although opening hours at some of the market town sites were limited.
- 8.2. All the household waste sites e.g. Rotherwas and the main market towns, are relatively new and purpose designed facilitating the collection of a range of

recyclables. Comments received by the Review Group were overall very complimentary. The sites have good collection rates. However, the Review Group are aware that many members of the public may not visit the local market town, and hence the facility, on the day it is open.

- 8.3. The Review Group **recommends** that the Cabinet Member consider reviewing the Household Waste site opening hours with a view to extending the availability of the facility.
- 8.4. The Review Group acknowledge that household sites receive a range of recyclables including car batteries. However, many members of the public may not appreciate that they can also take ordinary household batteries. While acknowledging that the disposal of this type of battery can be expensive due to the cocktail of elements that go into their make up the Review Group consider that greater public awareness of this facility should be made.
- 8.5. The Review Group **recommends** that the Cabinet Member gives greater publicity to the facility to recycle household batteries at the Council's Household Waste sites.
- 8.6. The Review Group have noted the introduction of Commercial Vehicle & Trailer (CVT) permits, detailed in the Worcestershire County Council letter dated 18th January 2007, and hope that this will not lead to any increase in fly-tipping.

## 9. Green Garden Waste

- 9.1. The Review Group are aware that within the current legal framework garden waste is household waste for which a charge may be made. This charge is reflected in the cost of purchasing a Council green garden waste sack from a number of outlets across the County.
- 9.2. Green sacks purchased from the Council are filled by the householder and disposed of with the normal black-bagged refuse to landfill. Alternatively, householders can take their garden waste to Household Waste Sites, all of which have collection facilities for garden material, which is subsequently composted.
- 9.3. On the introduction of wheelie-bins current thinking in line with Worcester City and other Waste Authorities is that garden waste will not be allowed to be deposited into the black refuse wheelie bin. If it is found in the bin then it will not be emptied and a sticker will be placed on the bin explaining why. However, initially this will be difficult to enforce due to the detailed monitoring required. The bin size will also be a significant deterrent to continuing the practice. Herefordshire's approach should be to follow Worcester City and other waste authorities' lead in stating that garden waste isn't allowed through the collection system using wheelie bins but to highlight that the Household Waste Sites would still accept it.
- 9.4. More emphasis will be made on home composting and Household Waste Sites will continue to take garden waste for composting. As the proposal for the new collection system only provides for wheelie-bin collection and no side waste the Group appreciated that the 'green bag' would probably be phased out.
- 9.5. Home composting promoted by the Council and WRAP is seen as being very successful. The Council encourages home composting and sells subsidised home composters to householders. This is seen as the most sustainable practice as garden (and some kitchen) waste can be composted and reused in the garden without reliance on collection and processing systems.

- 9.6. The Group suggested that the Cabinet Member would need to make sure that the public are clear about why the 'green bag' was being phased out and clear about what they need to do with their garden waste.
- 9.7. On the evidence received the Review Group consider that the level of promotion for the Herefordshire home composting scheme had been adequate as training was also given to the public on delivery. This may benefit the Council if 'composted waste' was included by government in future targets. The Group also wished to see the continued promotion of home composting.
- 9.8. The Review Group **recommends** that the current system for green garden waste collection and disposal is continued but reviewed when a two bin system is introduced.

## **10. Plastics, Packaging and Labelling**

- 10.1. During the review the Review Group were made aware of a number of important issues which have national as well as local impact and took the opportunity to raise these issues when they interviewed the ROTATE Manager (Recycling and Organics Technical Advisory Team). In brief the issue and response were:
- 10.1.1. Why some plastics can be included for recycling and some cannot. The range of plastics collected was dependent on whether the Local Authority was able to dispose of the wide range of plastics in use.
- 10.1.2. There is a continuing increase in household waste due to the growing popularity of mail order/internet shopping and associated packaging e.g. for the delivery of washing machines. The Review Group were informed that WRAP will be investigating the general increase in packaging, some of which was generated by the increase in Internet sales and delivery companies. However, it was acknowledged that there were two sides to the story in that goods needed to be delivered in a fit state.
- 10.1.3. The recycling symbology, particularly on plastics, is confusing. WRAP were working with manufacturers and the retail sector to revise the packaging and symbols used.
- 10.1.4. The continual increase in use of free plastic supermarket carrier bags was considered to contribute to litter issues and increased volume in household waste. The Review Group noted that WRAP were working with the Government on reduction initiatives. While the government is working on a voluntary agreement with supermarkets to reduce, not only the number of carrier bags, but packaging generally, some large supermarkets were already promoting 'bag for life' and 'green points' schemes.
- 10.2. The Review Group **recommends** that a comprehensive detail of recycling symbology, as appropriate to Herefordshire, is promulgated in Herefordshire Matters.

## **11. Publicity and the availability of information to public**

- 11.1. The Review Group conclude that, having seen or heard regional and local publicity campaigns to encourage recycling, the majority of the public were aware of the need to recycle. However, there was evidence that many were unsure about the opening times and facilities on offer at their local sites. With the likelihood of greatly increased costs for landfill, every effort must be made to encourage further recycling and the overall reduction of waste. The Review Group consider that the public need to be informed not only about the

environmental cost but the personal financial cost e.g. the actual increased cost to the household through the Council Tax, of not reducing household waste.

- 11.2. The Review Group **recommends** that the Cabinet Member inform the public of the current and projected cost of waste collection to emphasise the need to reduce waste volumes and control Council Tax increases.

## **12. Bulk Collection**

- 12.1. The Review Group noted that the Council provides a collection service for bulky items and that there is a charge for this service at £15 for up to three items and a further £5 for additional items. This service is provided by Full House, who provide a good service in collecting and where possible recycling items.
- 12.2. The Review Group also noted that while the Council provide a 'parish freighter' collection service, the fee to the parish did not cover the actual cost to the Council. However, the Review Group considered that the service, namely the provision of a waste collection vehicle on an occasional basis, was complementary to the overall waste collection service.
- 12.3. It was further noted that there are a number of social enterprise organisations in the county who also collect items for re-use.

## **13. Fly Tipping**

- 13.1. With the likely introduction of wheelie-bins the Review Group questioned representatives from Worcester City Council and South Shropshire Council on the level of fly-tipping in their areas. Both indicated that while a minimal level of fly-tipping unfortunately continued, no increase had been attributed to the introduction of alternate week wheelie-bin collections.

## **14. Commercial Waste**

- 14.1. While not within the scope of the review the subject of commercial waste arose during interviews. The Review Group were informed that trade waste arisings are not permitted by government to be counted as part of the recycling target and that in the main commercial waste wasn't sorted for recyclables. The Review Group consider it is counterproductive to emphasise the household recycling imperatives without addressing the commercial waste operation. For example, it is discouraging for residents to observe commercial glass collections e.g. from a public house, being mixed with general waste for landfill.
- 14.2. The Review Group noted there are a significant number of commercial waste recyclers and these, mainly local contacts, are listed at **Appendix 3**.

## **15. Means of measuring the success of the Service**

- 15.1. On a monthly basis recycling and composting performance is reported and is checked against Government targets. The current combined recycling and composting performance is at 28% against a Government target of 21%.
- 15.2. Over the last 3 years recycling and composting performance has exceeded government targets.
- 15.3. Along with the other Waste Authorities, Herefordshire Council is awaiting the Government's review of the National Waste Strategy. This is due for publication in March 2007 following some delay to include review of the current energy

policy and global warming. New National Targets for combined recycling and composting are expected to be announced at 40% by 2010.

15.4. The Group are aware that a suite of national/local targets on waste and recycling are reported to the Cabinet Member on a monthly basis. These targets are also monitored, and reported by exception, to Environment Scrutiny Committee. A number of key targets are also monitored, and reported by exception, to Cabinet via the Integrated Performance Report. The Group consider that given due consideration by Cabinet Member/Cabinet and rigorous scrutiny by the Environment Scrutiny Committee adequate scrutiny, the current monitoring procedures should be adequate.

## **16. Links to the Community Strategy**

16.1. The Review Group believe that the recommendations contained in this report will contribute to the themes in the Community Strategy for Herefordshire and in particular: 'making the County a safe and pleasant environment to live and work in for both the citizens of the County and its many visitors'.

## **17. Conclusions**

17.1. From the evidence obtained during the review the conclusions of the Review Group, based on the key questions in the scoping statement are:

- 17.1.1. Overall the public were basically satisfied with the Waste Service.
- 17.1.2. Positive feedback had been received following the further roll out of the kerbside collection service although some members of the public remained disappointed that they remain outside the catchment areas.
- 17.1.3. In view of the current collection contract; Joint Waste Strategy and government review of the National Waste Strategy there was little scope to influence the outcome
- 17.1.4. Current kerbside collection should be expanded where cost effective to do so.
- 17.1.5. There may be scope for a small number of additional bring sites in targeted areas.
- 17.1.6. Overall comments regarding the household waste sites have been complimentary, however, opening times could be reviewed.
- 17.1.7. Green bag collection should continue as present but the need for the service will need to be reviewed when there is a change in the method of collection.
- 17.1.8. Overall the public appreciate the need for recycling however what can be recycled may not be entirely clear.
- 17.1.9. The Review Group have not considered the cost of changes to the service as this is dependent on a wide range of variables.
- 17.1.10. The Review Group consider that the current range of measurements and reporting used to judge the success of the service to be sufficient.

## **18. Next Steps**

18.1. The Review Group expects that subject to approval by the Environment Scrutiny Committee the report will be presented to the Cabinet Member (Environment) for consideration and likely referral to Cabinet. The Review Group then expects that the Executive's response including an action plan will be reported to the Environment Scrutiny Committee at the first available meeting of the Committee after the Executive has approved its response. It would then

expect a further report on progress in response to the Review to be made after 6 months with consideration then being given to the need for any further reports to be made.

<b>REVIEW:</b>	<b>Household Waste Recycling</b>	
<b>Committee:</b>	Environment Scrutiny Committee	<b>Chair:</b> Councillor K.G. Grumbley
<b>Lead support officer:</b>	Mr Richard.N. Wood	

## SCOPING

### Terms of Reference

- To review the current methods of household waste recycling in Herefordshire and performance against Government targets.
- To investigate how improvements can be made to the recycling service in the future, in light of the previously adopted Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire & Worcestershire (The Strategy), changes in legislation, the review of the National Waste Strategy and new contractual arrangements.
- Following the review to advise the Cabinet Member (Environment) of the best policy to put in place to a) reduce waste and b) increase waste recycling in the Herefordshire.

### Desired outcomes

- For the current household waste recycling service and future proposals to have been fully examined in public and in an open and transparent way (subject to confidentiality imposed by contracts or ongoing contract negotiations.).
- For Members of the Review to have considered the various recycling methods currently available and proposals for the future to meet Government targets in line with the adopted Strategy.
- For any future service to be capable of implementation in Herefordshire in collaboration with partner organisations.

### Key questions

- How is the current household waste recycling service performing in the context of Government targets and legal requirements?
- What issues have been raised by the public – how has the Council responded – what has been the reaction of the public?
- What are the internal/external factors that affect recycling in Herefordshire and what level of influence does the Council have to change these factors?

- Within the legal framework, what options are there to improve the current policy particularly in line with the adopted Strategy?
- What areas of household waste recycling can/should be improved?
- Can or should kerbside collection be expanded to other areas of the County?
- Are the current bring-site facilities sufficient?
- Are the Household Waste Site facilities sufficient eg capacity, opening times, range of collection, ease of use?
- Is the Council's current policy towards 'green bag' recycling appropriate and what is the public perception concerning this policy?
- Is recycling understood by the public - Is it clear what can and cant be recycled – what are the barriers to getting the public to reduce waste – how can these barriers be overcome?
- What would be the implications of changing the recycling service (e.g. financial cost, increased need for resources, environmental cost/benefit etc).
- What means of measurement are or can be used to judge the success or otherwise of any policy. Are national targets being met – are local targets set at appropriate levels?

### **Links to the Community Strategy**

The Review Group will identify how the outcome of this review contributes to the objectives contained in the Herefordshire Community Strategy including the Council's Corporate Plan and other key plans or strategies.

### ***Timetable***

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
Agree approach, programme of consultation/research/provisional witnesses/dates	First meeting of Review Group to be held in September or early Oct 2006
Collect current available data	
Collect outstanding data	
Analysis of data	
Final confirmation of interviews of witnesses	
Carry out programme of interviews	
Agree programme of site visits	
Undertake site visits as appropriate	
Update to Environment Scrutiny Committee	-
Final analysis of data and witness evidence	

Prepare options/recommendations	
Present Final report to Environment Scrutiny Committee	4 <sup>th</sup> December 2006 or a special meeting?
Present options/recommendations to Cabinet	Jan/Feb 2007
Cabinet response	
Implementation of agreed recommendations	
<b><i>Members</i></b>	<b><i>Support Officers</i></b>
Cllr PJ Dauncey Cllr K.G. Grumbley (Chair) Cllr J.G.S. Guthrie Cllr J.W. Newman	Richard Wood (Waste Services Officer) Laura Preece (Recycling Officer) Paul James (Democratic Services Officer)

## APPENDIX 2



## LIST OF COMMERCIAL WASTE RECYCLERS

<b>PAPER</b>	<b>Enviroability Enviroshred</b>
<b>PAPER/CARDBOARD</b>	<b>Hereford Waste Paper Dave Baker</b>
<b>ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT - PC's</b>	<b>Enson Group Ltd Enviroability Keymood UK Limited UK IT Recycling Ltd MANN</b>
<b>NAPPIES</b>	<b>Green Nappies Project</b>
<b>GLASS</b>	<b>Under discussion with Veolia and Enviroability</b>
<b>WOOD</b>	<b>SITA Onyx in conjunction with Smiths Gloucester</b>
<b>METAL</b>	<b>RE Evans Metal Merchant Hereford Metal Recycling</b>
<b>ALUMINIUM CANS</b>	<b>Alupro</b>
<b>PLASTIC</b>	<b>Farm Plastics Recycled Keymood UK Limited</b>
<b>PLASTIC CUPS</b>	<b>Save-a-cup</b>
<b>FLUORESCENT TUBES</b>	<b>Enson Group Limited</b>
<b>FRIDGES &amp; FURNITURE</b>	<b>Full House Furniture &amp; Recycling Services Limited Hereford Lifestyles</b>
<b>FOOD WASTES - COMPOSTERS</b>	<b>Bioganix Wiggly Wigglers</b>
<b>WASTE COOKING OIL</b>	<b>Longama</b>
<b>BATTERIES</b>	<b>G &amp; P Batteries</b>

COMPANY NAME	COLLECT	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS
Bioganix	Food industry wastes, perform in-vessel composting of food waste to create high grade organic fertiliser	Wharton Court Leominster HR6 0NX	01568 610033	<a href="mailto:nick.helme@bionix.co.uk">nick.helme@bionix.co.uk</a>
Bio-Logic Design	Waste water treatment/small scale sewage for your site.	Archenhills Stanford Bishop Worcestershire WR6 5TZ	01886 884721	
Enson Group Ltd	Nationwide business collections for all electronic equipment, packaging and fluorescent tubes.	Unit 422  Kemble Glos GL7 6BA	0845 3702120	<a href="mailto:enquiries@ensongroup.co.uk">enquiries@ensongroup.co.uk</a>
Enviroability	Offer a full range of recycling facilities ink jet cartridges, PCs, Telephones, Newspaper, junk mail, glass, aluminium cans (check) & used tools	Ryefield Centre Grammar School Close Ross-on-Wye HR9 7QB	01989 768273	<a href="mailto:enquiries@enviroability.org.uk">enquiries@enviroability.org.uk</a>
Enviroshred	Confidential paper for recycling, completely recycled into compost	Lower Brook Kingsland Leominster HR6 9QB	01568 708900	
Farm Plastics Recycled	Waste agricultural plastic for recycling:- Silage wrap, Sheeting, Crop film and Feed bags	North Farm Bosbury Ledbury HR8 1JY	01531 640381	<a href="mailto:info@farmplasticsrecycled.co.uk">info@farmplasticsrecycled.co.uk</a>
Full House Furniture & Recycling Services Limited	Donated furniture, fridges and cookers always wanted; offered to people on low incomes	Unit 1 Holme Lacy Industrial Estate Hereford HR2 6DR	01432 342042	
G & P Batteries	All batteries	Crescent Works Industrial Park Willenhall Road WS10 8JR	0121 5683200	<a href="mailto:enquiries@g-pbatt.co.uk">enquiries@g-pbatt.co.uk</a>

COMPANY NAME	COLLECT	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS
Green Nappies Project	Nappy laundry service covering most of South Herefordshire	Ryefield Centre Grammar School Close Ross-on-Wye	01989 760919	
Hereford Lifestyles	Computers, Cookers, Furniture, Mobile phones, Tools and restoration of domestic appliance ie washing machine	20 Berrington Street, Hereford HR4 0BJ	01432 359799	<a href="mailto:herefordlifestyles@demon.co.uk">herefordlifestyles@demon.co.uk</a>
Hereford Metal Rec	Scrap metal will collect via skip & asbestos through skip, can take small quantities to St Weonards	Holmer Trading Estate Hereford HR1 1JS	01432 361670	
Hereford Waste Paper	Paper & cardboard in the three counties area	County Park Pixley Nr Ledbury HR8 2RW	01432 266702	
Longama	Used cooking oil - free collection	Unit 5b Thorn Business Pk Rotherwas Hereford HR2 6JT	01432 263484	<a href="mailto:admin@longama.co.cuk">admin@longama.co.cuk</a>
Mann	PC monitors and TVs	Ashburton Industrial Estate Ross-on-Wye HR9 7BW	01989 760000	<a href="mailto:equiries@mann-org.com">equiries@mann-org.com</a>
One World Recycling	Demolition, construction wastes	One World Recycling 2A Cornwall Place High street Buckingham MK18 1SB	01280 822181	

COMPANY NAME	COLLECT	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS
Plinlimon Trust	Paper and card that is shredded for animal bedding, profits go to Dial-a-ride	77-83 Whitecross Road Hereford, HR4 0BJ	01432 264696	
RE Evans Metal Merchant	All scrap metal - cars, machinery, brass, copper, lead etc	18 Cobhall Cottage Allensmore Hereford HR2 9BW	01432 277313	
Veolia	Commercial recycling. Range of recyclables - on demand. May offer glass collections	Gatehouse Road Rotherwas Industrial Estate Hereford HR2 6RQ	01432 277303	
Revolve by Cutouts Limited	PCB recycling - only manufactures of computers only	Unit 12C Heath House Mill Heath House Lane Bolser Moor Huddersfield HD7 4JW	01484 645281	<a href="mailto:info@revolve-uk.com">info@revolve-uk.com</a>
UK IT Recycling Ltd	Recycling PCs & used electricals, free collection UK wide	Unit 2 Duncote Mill Walcot Telford TF6 5ER	01952 740200	
Pont Eco Ltd	Plastics recycling, Electronic materials and DVDs, CDs, VHS & video	Alton Road Ross-on-Wye HR9 5NB	01989 566288	<a href="mailto:info@recyclingpeople.co.uk">info@recyclingpeople.co.uk</a>
Save-a-cup	Plastic cups marked with 06 on bottom and PS around the side - Hereford monthly collections. Need to have at least 3 bags available (3,000) cups	Bridge Street High Wycombe HP11 2EL	01494 510167	<a href="mailto:info@save-a-cup.co.uk">info@save-a-cup.co.uk</a>

**Acknowledgements**

The Review Group thank the following for attending interview, hosting the information visit or providing evidence during the review:

Councillor Mrs G Churchill - Bromyard and Winslow Town Council;

Councillor D. Bedford – Ross-on-Wye Town Council;

Councillor Mr A. Taylor – Hereford City Council,

Mr D. Humble – EnviroAbility, Ross-on-Wye

Mr N Spencer – Worcestershire Community Recycling (WCR)

Ms R. Froggatt - Worcestershire Community Recycling (WCR)

Councillor D. Lowe – Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor Group Parish Council;

Mr Mike Harrison - Head of Environmental Services, Worcester City Council

Ms L. Crichton – ROTATE Manager (Recycling and Organics Technical Advisory Team) which is part of WRAP

Mr B. Jones – Director, Environment and Development, Shropshire District Council, Ludlow.

Mr M Foxhall – Waste Services Manager, Shropshire District Council, Ludlow.

Mr I. Hancock, Depot Manager, Biffa Waste Services Ltd, Ludlow. (Collection contractors for South Shropshire).

The Review Group were assisted and heard evidence from Mr R Wood, Waste Services Manager, and Ms L. Preece, Recycling Officer, Herefordshire Council. Mr P. James, Democratic Services Officer advised and provided administrative support to the Review Group.

**Documents considered during the review.**

1. Initial briefing note by the Waste Services Manager.
2. Various leaflets issued by the Council:
  - 2.1. Kerbside recycling in Herefordshire - what can I recycle?
  - 2.2. frequently asked questions relating to the kerbside collection of recyclable materials,
  - 2.3. Guide to recycling at Household Waste Sites in Herefordshire;
  - 2.4. Freecycle,
  - 2.5. free compost clinics,
  - 2.6. A guide to reuse organisations in Herefordshire,
  - 2.7. Nappacino mornings,
  - 2.8. fit a food waste disposer).
3. Report produced by WRAP on the Alternate Week Collection (AWC) process.
4. "Managing waste for a brighter future" being the Municipal Waste Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2004-2034. (available in paper or CD versions).
5. Notes of a presentation given by Mr Harrison, Worcester City Council to district council(s) entitled 'Introduction of Alternate Week Wheeled bin Collection'
6. Letter dated 18th January 2007 from Worcester County Council entitled "Input Control Measures – Household Waste Sites".

Please contact Herefordshire Council's Waste Management section on (01432) 260051 for information on the availability of the above documents.

## Glossary of terms

**Autoclaving Facilities** - Facility to steam treat waste to produce refuse derived fuel or building product materials.

**Bring Sites** – localised collection point for recyclable materials e.g. supermarket, village hall or pub car parks.

**Commercial Waste** – Is defined in schedule 4 of the Controlled waste regulations 1992. It includes waste from an office, showroom, hotel, club, society, market and government buildings.

**Commingled MRF (Materials Reclamation Facility)** - A recycling facility that sorts and processes collected mixed recyclables to individual streams for market.

**Community Strategy for Herefordshire** – Prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership the strategy brings together the shared priorities of local communities, organisations, groups and networks to improve local services and quality of life.

**'Courtauld Commitment'** - a groundbreaking agreement reached in 2005 involving all of the leading supermarkets and convenience store chains– responsible for 92% of groceries sold in the UK – under which they agreed to work with WRAP to: *design out packaging waste growth by March 2008; deliver absolute reductions in packaging waste by March 2010; and identify ways to tackle the problem of food waste.*). Source: [www.wrap.org.uk](http://www.wrap.org.uk)

**EnviroAbility** – Established in Ross-on-Wye as a charity and not-for-profit company in 1999. The primary aims and objectives are to provide and promote projects, which benefit disadvantaged groups of people in the community and the environment.

**Full House** - A Herefordshire charity that accepts donations of furniture and household items which are refurbished (if required) and sold on at low cost to people on proven low income. Placement organisation for training (admin and transport) opportunities. Contractual work with local authority for the collection of bulky household items.

**Re-Box** – Scheme launched in 2004 by EnviroAbility in partnership with WCR Ltd and Herefordshire Council to enable EnviroAbility to collect a wider range of recyclables (inc. paper, cans, glass and textiles) in the Ross-on-Wye and surrounding area.

**Recyclate** – Material that can be recycled.

**Residual Waste** - Material remaining after designated recycling material has been removed.

**ROTATE** - (Recycling and Organics Technical Advisory Team) launched in June 2004 as an addition to WRAP's existing programmes for local authorities. It is a free advisory service that provides hands on advice to local authorities (in England and Northern Ireland) on their collection programmes and on their local communications and awareness programmes for kerbside and bring schemes and household waste recycling centres.

**Side Waste** – Any surplus waste left outside the bin.

**WRAP** –(Waste & Resources Action Programme) is a not for profit company created in 2000 as part of the Government's waste strategies across the United Kingdom.