

**Report for: Environment PDG**

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Date of Meeting:	07 November 2023
Subject:	Review of Bin-it 123 including Side Waste Collection
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Josh Wright, Cabinet Member for Environment and Services
Responsible Officer:	Darren Beer, Operations Manager – Street Scene and Open Spaces Matthew Page, Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste
Exempt:	None
Wards Affected:	All – District wide
Enclosures:	None

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)**

This report considers the following:

- The effectiveness of the council's waste and recycling scheme, known as the Bin-it 123 scheme, as implemented in October 2022
- The steps the service have taken to raise awareness of the public in the District around the need to use appropriate containers and caddies for recycling.
- The non-collection of side waste and the steps being taking to educate and support the public before enforcement action is taken.
- Future options for consideration and the way ahead.

## **Recommendation(s):**

**To review the contents of this report and provide recommendations for future reports**

### **Section 2 – Report**

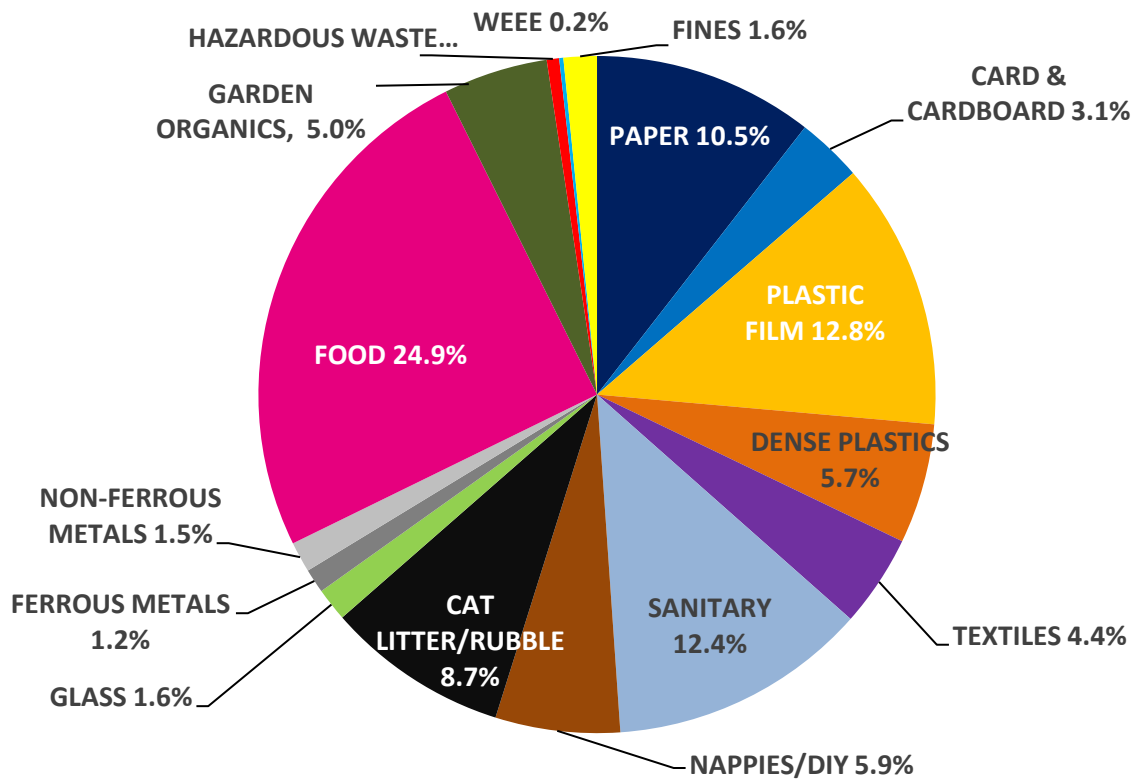
#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 A review of the current waste and recycling scheme was presented to the Environment PDG in August 2023 and a request was made to provide a further update for November 2023 on the performance of Bin-it 123.
- 1.2 This report outlines what education and enforcement that is currently taking place around side waste and recycling. It outlines a way forward in terms of raising further awareness of good recycling practice to maximise the reduction in our carbon footprint.
- 1.3 Included in the report are ideas and suggestions provided by members with a view to review and provide further narrative for members to make informed decisions on future steps and proposals.

#### **2.0 Background Information**

- 2.1 It is possible that Government will mandate how recycling collections are completed in the years ahead, including garden and food waste collections, along with the types of material to be recycled. This will be fulfilled through Defra legislation (Consistency in Household and Business Recycling, Extended Producer Responsibility and Deposit Return Scheme). For reference, Consistency is now known as Simpler Recycling.
- 2.2 At the time of publishing this report, the Government announced the broad future direction of travel regarding Waste and Recycling services due to be implemented from the 1 March 2026. Many of the components we are already delivering such as weekly food recycling and garden waste collections.
- 2.3 In terms of the detail of Waste and Recycling collections and how these will be carried out, we await the detail and the legislative next steps that will be taken particularly between now and the next general election. We do not anticipate that our current Bin-it 123 scheme will change and it is up to us to make the current scheme work as well for the public as possible. Hence the importance of this report.

2.4 The graph below shows an analysis of 200 residual waste bins in Mid Devon that was carried out at the beginning of October 2022, prior to the commencement of three weekly residual waste collections:

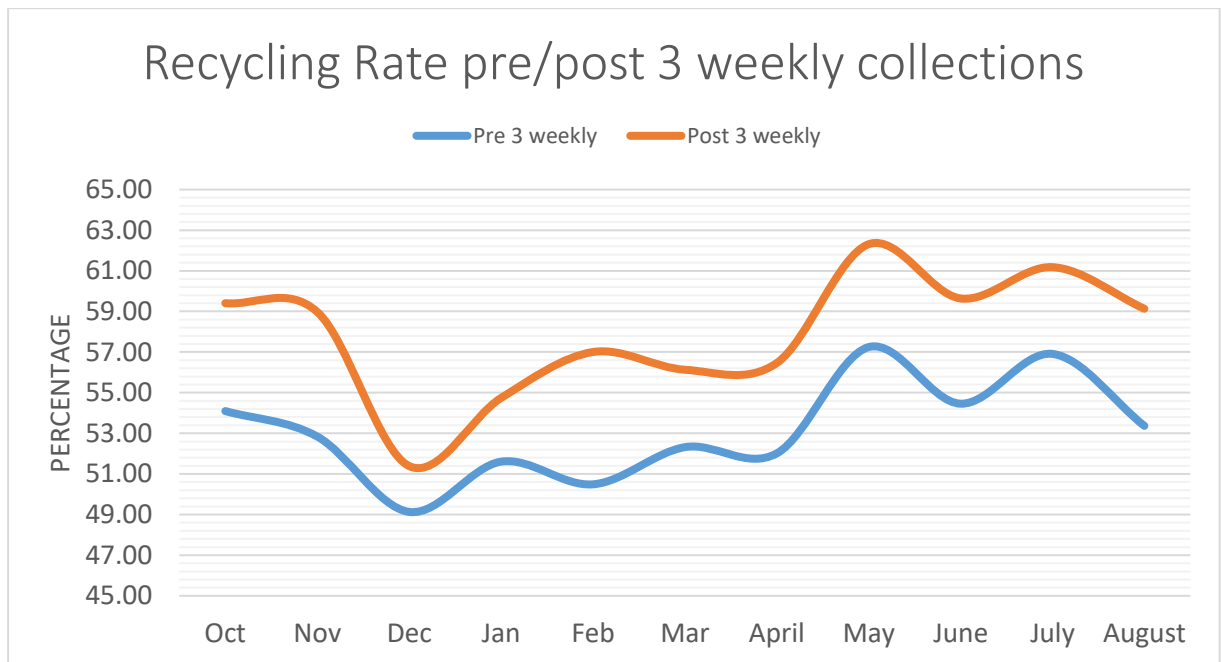


2.5 It clearly shows the volume of materials that could be recycled including around 25% food waste. There has been vast improvements in Mid Devon, which can be seen in Section 3, thanks again to the support of the majority of our residents.

2.6 Devon and Torbay’s 2022 Residual Waste Composition Analysis identified that the diversion of food waste into organic waste collection services is particularly important to help reduce costs and improve performance. An accompanying report identified other key actions to improve service efficiency and to reduce costs, including the enforcement of side-waste policies. The report highlighted that if recyclable waste had been put in the right bins, this could save approximately £3.6m in Devon, and £2.0m in Torbay.

### 3.0 Review of Bin It 123 Performance including Statistics

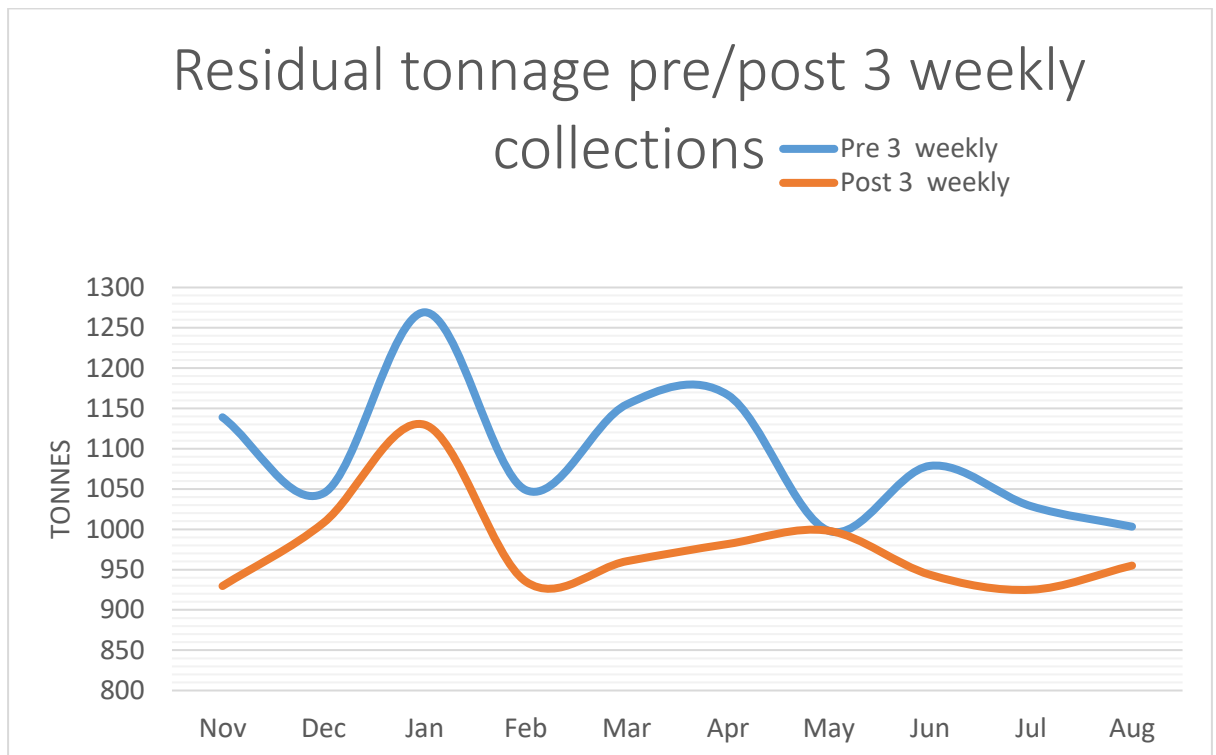
3.1 The below graph shows recycling rates for Mid Devon (NI192), October 2021 to August 2022 (blue line) and October 2022 to August 2023 (orange line). It clearly shows the positive impact of introducing three weekly waste collections into the District. It shows the similar seasonal trends with around a 4.5% recycling rate difference.



3.2 The below shows in table form the information from the above graph.

	Pre 3 x weekly (%) 2021/22	Post 3 x weekly (%) 2022/23
Oct	54.09	59.41
Nov	52.84	58.98
Dec	49.13	51.39
Jan	51.60	54.74
Feb	50.49	57.00
Mar	52.32	56.13
April	52.01	56.46
May	57.24	62.31
June	54.46	59.64
July	56.91	61.18
August	53.37	59.13

3.3 The below graph shows the residual waste collected (tonnes), November 2021 to August 2022 (blue line) and November 2022 to August 2023 (orange line). Again, as in 3.1 the graph shows the positive comparisons both before and after the introduction of three weekly collections and the mirroring seasonal changes but with a clear reduction in the tonnages collected.



3.4 The table below shows the details from the graph above.

Month	Pre 3 weekly (tonnes) 2021/22	Post 3 weekly (tonnes) 2022/23
Nov	1138.95	929.61
Dec	1044.73	1008.06
Jan	1269.23	1129.72
Feb	1048.78	935.3
Mar	1154.92	960.41
Apr	1166.64	981.78
May	998.05	998.13
Jun	1078.67	943.67
Jul	1028.73	924.99
Aug	1003.23	955.01
Total:	10931.93	9766.68

3.5 As can be seen from the table above there has been a reduction of 1165 tonnes collected (over a ten month period) since the roll out of three weekly collections compared to the same period before the roll out. This is a significant positive change and filters into the data collected (NI191) for

residual waste collected per household annually, which was 364.5 kg/household in 2021/22, 327 kg/household in 2022/23 and currently forecast to be around 315 kg/household in 2023/24.

- 3.6 The table below compares the recycling rates by District across Devon and Torbay between 2021/22 and 2022/23.

<b>NI192</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>Change (%)</b>
East Devon	61.00%	59.50%	-1.60%
Exeter	25.50%	24.50%	-1.00%
<b>Mid Devon</b>	<b>53.70%</b>	<b>55.40%</b>	<b>1.80%</b>
North Devon	48.20%	45.60%	-2.60%
South Hams	46.70%	44.80%	-1.90%
Teignbridge	55.60%	53.80%	-1.80%
Torridge	53.90%	52.60%	-1.30%
West Devon	54.10%	53.90%	-0.20%
<b>Devon</b>	<b>55.10%</b>	<b>54.00%</b>	<b>-1.10%</b>
Torbay	37.10%	38.20%	1.10%

- 3.7 The table shows that only Torbay and Mid Devon increased their recycling rates in 2022/23 compared to the previous year. Both made significant changes to their waste and recycling collection schemes with Mid Devon increasing the recycling rate by 1.8% during this period. This is even more impressive when nationally, reports have suggested that recycling rates have remained static or decreased across the country. It should also be noted the current performance in Mid Devon (3.2) compared to the 2022/23 figures.
- 3.8 Overall the material recovery streams have shown a decline across the Districts, such as plastic and textiles whilst there has been some recovery from packaging based streams such as cardboard and glass. It is likely that changes to packaging type, composition, and density, as industry aims to reduce packaging placed on the market, will play a part in these reductions now and in the future. Mid Devon has seen considerable increases in areas such as food waste collected, which has given markers to show that the scheme is working in diverting this product into the blue food caddies. There has also been further increases in the tonnages collected for card, aluminium and steel.

#### **4.0 Steps taken to raise awareness of the public in the District around the need to use appropriate containers and caddies for recycling**

- 4.1 A series of measures have been taken by Officers to raise awareness of the public regarding the future tightening of restrictions regarding side waste and the need to use the appropriate containers and caddies for recycling.
- 4.2 Measures have included press releases outlining the success of the Bin-it 123 scheme to date and encouraging more recycling through National Recycling Week, a radio advert put out on Radio Exe for three weeks requesting residents recycle as much as possible, and social media postings on a variety of topics and proactive enforcement of littering and fly tipping from the District Officer team.
- 4.3 There was also a positive mention of our increase in recycling rate on the BBC Spotlight Evening News on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

#### **5.0 Education and Enforcement regarding non collection of side waste**

- 5.1 Bin-it 123 has now been in place for a year which has included the waste and recycling crews collecting side waste from households. This has help embed the new scheme and support residents with these significant changes through education and advice. As can be seen from the tables above there has been a considerable improvement in the recycling rate along with a reduction in the waste collected. The majority of residents support the scheme and follow good practice with regards the waste hierarchy. See graphic below:



- 5.2 There are still however some considerable issues associated with persistent non-recyclers. Some households are still putting recycling out for collection in black bins and seagull sacks instead of using the appropriate recycling containers, which in turn slows down rounds. This is limiting our recycling collection rate, and ultimately the scheme is not reaching its full effectiveness.
- 5.3 We are now in a position to take the next step through further education, support and enforcement of Bin-it 123. The service was given the go ahead by both the Environment PDG and Cabinet in August for tighter restrictions

around residents leaving out side waste along with the requirement for residents to use the appropriate containers and caddies for recycling (and black bin for residual waste).

- 5.4 At the time of writing this report, 13500 households have been audited and of these around 1800 are still putting out side waste for collection, which equates to around 13% of those households reviewed still not complying with the scheme.
- 5.5 The following steps highlight the education and enforcement that will be taken to ensure residents support the scheme and follow good practice. A flow chart is also attached (Appendix 1 - Education and Enforcement regarding non collection of side waste):
- a) A team of Recycling Officers have begun auditing the above issues and accompanying the collection teams in the District until information on all households has been collated.
  - b) At this point a letter will be sent to those that have not followed the scheme (See Appendix 2 – Letter to residents) pointing out the reason behind the letter being sent.
  - c) A further audit will be undertaken for three more weeks to understand the impact the letter has had on residents complying (or not) with the scheme.
  - d) Those residents not complying will be sent another letter informing them that side waste will no longer be collected with guidance on how to reduce waste and what can be separated for recycling. There will also be a sticker placed on the bin stating that side waste was placed out for collection. This will also be supported through education by door knocking those residents not complying with the scheme.
  - e) From week seven no side waste will be collected and Recycling Advisors will continue door knocking, collecting information on those addresses still not complying with relevant information passed on to the Enforcement Team.
  - f) The Recycling Officers will continue to support residents through advice and review of bin contents to ensure waste is placed in the correct container.
  - g) The Enforcement Team will begin the formal process where education has not produced the desired results. A formal notice of the intention to take action can be served on the property. At this stage an Enforcement Officer will need to be involved to help explain the service and issue advice. However this stage is recorded and monitored.
  - h) A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued where all attempts at education have failed. A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) can be issued if education has been unsuccessful in effecting a change in resident's behaviour and side waste is still presented or the resident does not recycle.

Note: During the Christmas period it is proposed to still collect side waste but request that residents comply where possible.



## 6.0 Future Options for Consideration

- 6.1 Members have made a series of comments and suggestions regarding future proposals for consideration at Environment PDG. Members are asked to further input into these suggestions taking into consideration both the financial and operational implications for the Council. The list includes but is not restricted to:
1. Review the viability of collecting coffee pods in the District
  2. Review the viability of collecting pots and pans in the District
  3. Further education around the right product in the right box
  4. Further work with schools

**Financial Implications:** None in relation to this report.

It should be noted that an increase in recycling tonnages for each material will increase our recycling credits for that material. This increase also has an effect on the income received from each product. At present this is difficult to determine due to the constant variations in market values. Shared savings through the DCC Shared Savings Scheme would potentially increase as we decrease waste and increase recycling.

**Legal Implications:** Under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act Waste Collection Authorities may by means of notice specify how householders present their waste for collection.

**Risk Assessment:** The risks associated with the recommendations in this report relate mainly to the handling of appropriate education and enforcement activity – both areas where the current team have significant experience. This report recommends a further tightening up of the policy, and as such the risk of not addressing these issues are that the policy does not achieve its full effectiveness. In the event that any future changes are trialled (or mandated by government) a register of risks would need to be compiled in advance of those proposed service changes. There are potential risks, including impacts on; carbon emissions, the carbon footprint, operational costs and other resources required (from containers to personnel).

**Impact on Climate Change:** An increase in recycling would further enable the Council to reduce its carbon footprint and hit its carbon net zero commitment. Recycling is one of the most 'mainstream' concepts of addressing overarching sustainability goals, therefore it is vital to make sure that the council is maximising the effectiveness of both its scheme design, but also its operational implementation. Being a large rural district, our waste and recycling vehicles cover a lot of mileage annually, and there are opportunities to potentially reduce fuel usage with the future types of vehicles Mid Devon would be looking to procure.

**Equalities Impact Assessment:** The service will continue to provide assisted collections according to the current policy; considerations for residents residing in

HMOs, flats and properties with no outside space will be included in any proposed project plan. The service would review the lessons learnt and best practice from recent changes along with a review of other councils who have successfully implemented strategic changes to their waste collections operations.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** This report identifies with the 'Environment' priority area of the Corporate Plan for 2020-2024 *'increase recycling rates and reduce the amount of residual waste generated'*. Supporting and enabling customers to recycle and reduce residual waste contributes to Mid Devon District Councils' commitment to the Devon Climate Emergency.

### **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:** Andrew Jarrett  
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151  
**Date:** 30 October 2023

**Statutory Officer:** Maria De Leiburne  
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer  
**Date:** 30 October 2023

**Chief Officer:** Stephen Walford  
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director  
**Date:** 30 October 2023

**Performance and risk:** Steve Carr  
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager  
**Date:** 30 October 2023

**Cabinet member notified:** Yes

### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Darren Beer, Operations Manager – Street Scene and Open Spaces  
**Email:** [dbeer@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:dbeer@middevon.gov.uk)  
**Telephone:** 01884 255255

**Background papers:** N/A