

Report for: Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement PDG

Date of Meeting:	24 June 2024
Subject:	Formal Review of Bin-It 123
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Josh Wright, Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement
Responsible Officer:	Darren Beer, Operations Manager – Street Scene and Open Spaces Matthew Page, Head of People, Performance and Waste
Exempt:	N/A
Wards Affected:	All – District Wide
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

This report outlines:

- The effectiveness and progress of the Council’s waste and recycling scheme, known as the Bin-It 123 scheme, as implemented on 10 October 2022.
- The key practical steps taken by the Waste and Recycling service to date regarding implementation, the identifying of the new schemes key achievements and the proposal of next steps to further maximise the effectiveness of the scheme and further build its credibility and success.
- The steps the service have taken to raise public awareness in the District around the need to use appropriate containers and caddies for recycling.

Recommendation(s):

1. **To review the contents of this report**

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 further update in November 2023 on the performance of Bin-It 123.
- 1.2 This report outlines what the service is doing around education and enforcement to reduce residual waste while increasing recycling. It outlines a way forward in terms of raising further awareness of good recycling practice to maximise the reduction in our carbon footprint, including the waste hierarchy around reduce, reuse and then recycle.

The Waste Hierarchy diagrams



- 1.3 The Government released its intentions with regards the Collection and Packaging Reforms (CPR), around Simpler Recycling on 09 May 2024. These reforms also includes Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS).
- 1.4 At the time of publishing this report, the Government announced the broad future direction of travel regarding Waste and Recycling services with legislation that was due to come before parliament in the following areas (but passage of the legislation has been paused due to announced General Election):
- By 31 March 2025, businesses (excluding micro-firms) must recycle metal, glass, plastic, paper, card, and food waste
 - By 31 March 2026, local authorities must collect these six waste streams (excluding plastic film) from households, with weekly food waste collection
 - By 31 March 2027, micro-firms must recycle all except garden waste, and plastic film collection will extend to all households and premises.
 - By 31 March 2027, local authorities must collect plastic films and flexibles

- 1.5 MDDC are already delivering in areas such as weekly food recycling and regular garden waste collections along with collecting the core recycling materials; paper, card, glass, plastic, steel and aluminium. The Council already exceed these minimums including collecting and recycling textiles, batteries and small electricals.
- 1.6 The current Government produced draft statutory guidance on the minimum frequency (two weekly) of residual waste collections, which authorities are required to have due regard for (and a good reason for any variation). This position (and what it means) is currently being reviewed by Mid Devon and other local authorities who operate three or four weekly collection schemes with regards to obtaining further clarity from the newly elected administration post the 4 July General Election.
- 1.7 It was announced on 25 April 2024 that DRS will be delayed nationally and now rolled out across the UK in October 2027. This means further uncertainty to the medium term direction for Mid Devon and, as with the above guidance, further clarity will be sought after the 4 July General Election.
- 1.8 There are still some considerable challenges and issues associated with persistent non-recyclers in the District. 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 and limits our recycling collection rate. This was noted by Town and Parish representatives who recently toured our Carlu Waste and Recycling depot in Willand to learn more about our Waste and Recycling pathway.
- 1.9 A series of measures have been taken by Officers to raise public awareness to the future tightening of restrictions regarding side waste and the need to use the appropriate containers and caddies for recycling.

2.0 Key steps taken regarding Bin-It 123

- 2.1 The Bin-It 123 three weekly collection scheme was introduced in Mid Devon in October 2022 following a trial in both urban and rural areas in July 2021.
- 2.2 Bin-It 123 scheme aims to increase recycling and reduce residual waste collected. Both of these are critical to reducing the District's carbon footprint and help it meet its carbon net zero commitment. Mid Devon is ranked each year nationally in terms of its recycling and waste performance.
- 2.3 The Council currently receives financial remuneration from selling the recyclate, recycling credits and the Devon County Council (DCC) Shared Savings Scheme which rewards councils for decreasing the residual waste

collected and therefore disposed by DCC. This reduces the overall cost of the service provided to the District.

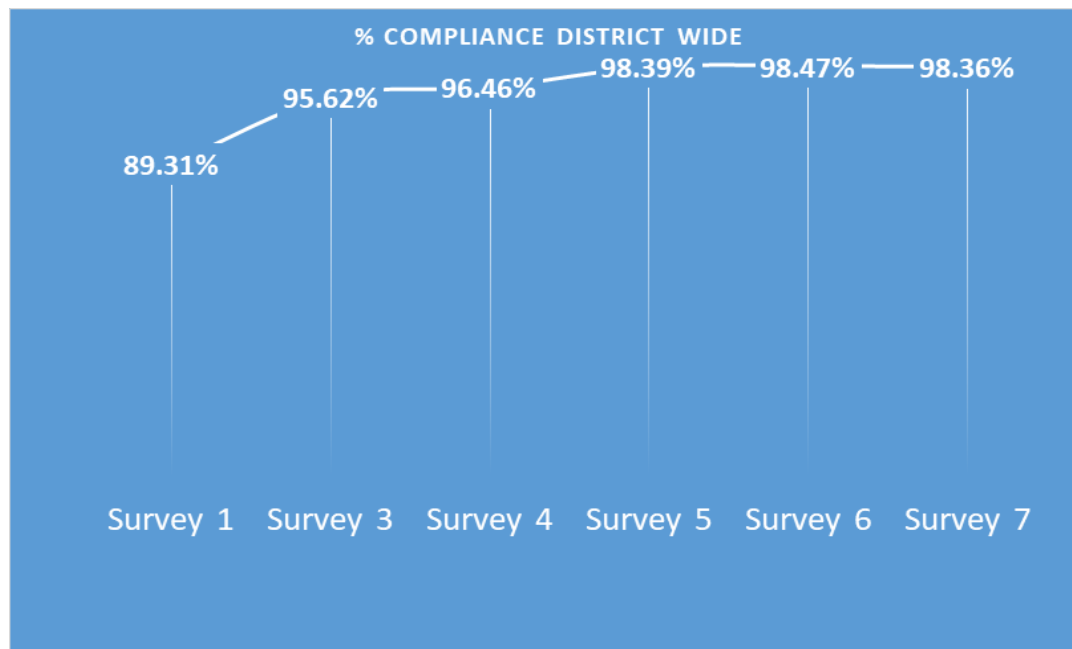
- 2.4 A lengthy transition period of 16 months was observed following the implementation of Bin-It 123 in October 2022 to help residents to become familiar and accustomed to the new arrangements. This allowed education and awareness raising of best practice, as well as the delivery of new black bins/seagull sacks and recycling containers to residents.
- 2.5 The campaign included posting videos online regarding how to recycle more and help comply with the scheme, radio adverts as well as regular briefings and updates provided to members through the previous Environment PDG and Cabinet.
- 2.6 The collection of additional side waste (black bag waste), as well as materials not placed in either the black residual bin/seagull sacks or the recycling containers was stopped on 26 February 2024. The amount of side waste left out in each part of the District and by whom has been recorded by the crews when completing their rounds.
- 2.7 The Council has invested in Recycling Advisers to give practical advice and guidance to residents through house visits and telephone calls. This assistance has been well received and has helped to decrease side waste disposals and raise compliance with the Bin-It 123 scheme.
- 2.8 A discussion group was facilitated as part of the State of the District debate held in March 2024 about how to further increase our recycling rate. This stimulated a healthy debate and request from Town and Parish representatives to learn more about our Waste and Recycling pathway and to be given data to better understand the performance of their own area.
- 2.9 As a result of this request, town and parish representatives were invited to attend a tour of the Carlu Depot, Waste and Recycling Service on 02 and 16 May 2024. Both tours were well attended and stimulated productive debate on how better compliance could be encouraged amongst residents with more waste put into recycling containers and less into residual bins and sacks.

3.0 Results of the Bin-It 123 scheme and what it has achieved

- 3.1 The recycling rate for Mid Devon District Council has risen by nearly 5% since the Bin-It 123 scheme was introduced to 53.4% to 57.9%. Residual tonnage in the District has also reduced by approximately 250 tonnes per month.
- 3.2 Mid Devon was ranked in the top 10% for the 2022-23 financial year (up 5% since 2021-22) and we aspire to go even higher when the official 2023-24 rankings are published in February 2025.

- 3.3 The Council received formal recognition from the Office for Local Government for being one of the most improved councils in the country for our recycling and residual waste performance. We were asked to present to other peer group councils in the country on how we had achieved our success and the lessons we had learned from the experience.
- 3.4 The Council has received increasing financial recognition from the Shared Savings agreement for delivering lower residual collection rates and better recycling levels. This year we are currently forecast to be awarded £520K, an improvement of over £100K on our projected income target. This additional reward can be reinvested into our key public facing services.
- 3.5 The Council has reduced the amount of additional side waste left out from residents across the District from 4,079 before December 2023 to just 279 occurrences per collection cycle in April 2024.

Compliance Graph – November 2023 to present



4.0 Next steps and how we can improve

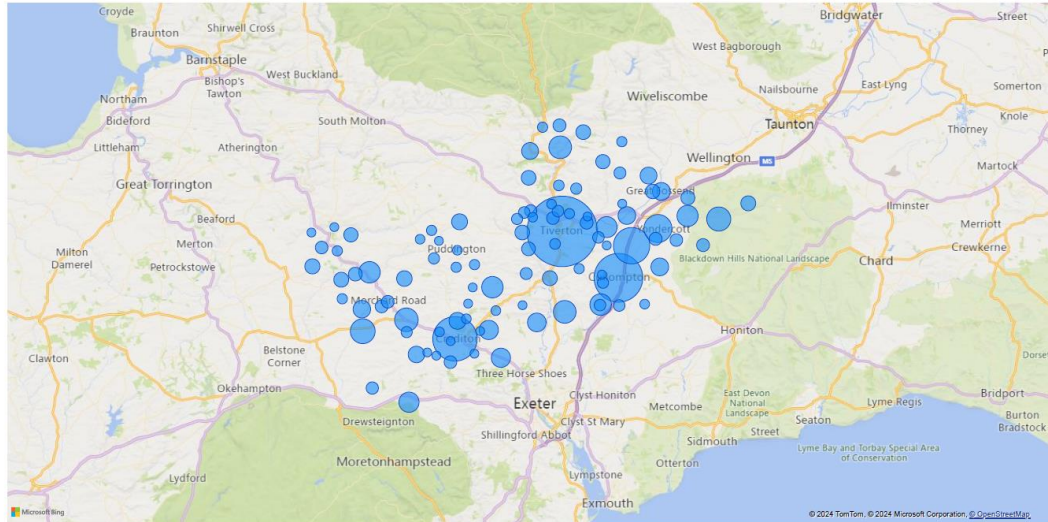
- 4.1 Following the State of the District debate, Town and Parish Councillors were invited to attend two tours of our Waste and Recycling depot at Carlu to learn more about our collection pathway. Both tours received very good feedback and an awareness of the large amount of recycling that is still being placed in residual black bags rather than recycling containers.
- 4.2 In addition, Town and Parish Councils have received comprehensive data on the levels of side waste put out by their own areas of the District and how these have improved since stopping side waste collections in February 2024.

The maps below shows the differences in locations and numbers of those putting out side waste on survey one and survey six.

Side Waste Incidents (Baseline Survey 2023)

Number of Incidents

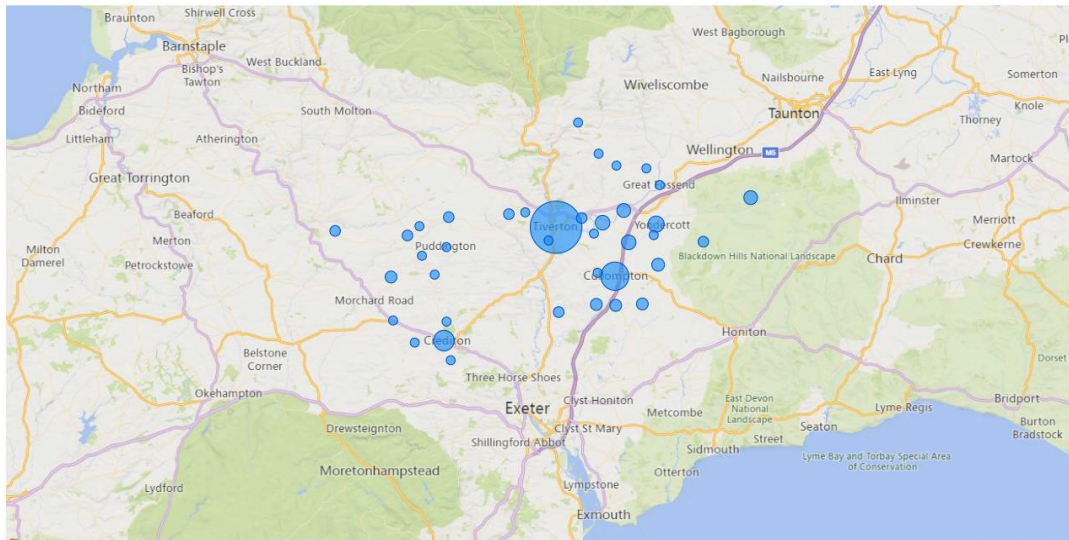
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Side Waste Incidents (Survey Six April 2024)

Number of incidents

279



- 4.3 Both of the above issues (the opportunity to increase recycling and the side waste performance) have been promoted through recent press releases and online social media postings. This has included a virtual tour of the Waste and Recycling depot.
- 4.4 The Environment Enforcement team are working with our Waste Crews to identify residual waste that is put out for collection more than three days either side of the wards collection date. Where this takes place a littering enforcement notice has started to be given to the relevant households.

- 4.5 The Recycling Advisers are continuing to visit residents to assist with practical guidance and advice. The District Officers are also continuing to investigate issues of potential environment enforcement including fly tipping and littering.
- 4.6 The Waste Management Team and District Officers are taking steps to proactively monitor and review waste disposal in current problem hotspots. We encourage Town, Parish and District representatives to continue to make us aware of where and when these problems occur.
- 4.7 At the time of publishing this paper two drop in surgeries have been arranged and publicised for Town, Parish and District representatives to speak with the Waste Management Team and discuss challenges and issues that are arising from the scheme. These are taking place at our Carlu Waste and Recycling depot on the afternoons of Wednesday 19 and 26 June at 3.00pm.

5.0 Looking Ahead

- 5.1 The Council will work with other authorities who carry out three or four weekly bin collection schemes to obtain further clarity on the Simpler Recycling statutory guidance once Parliament reconvenes after the July 4 General Election.
- 5.2 The Waste and Recycling service will continue to monitor issues around side waste and work with Town and Parish representatives, together with our District members, to address these challenges and consider appropriate solutions.
- 5.3 The number one upcoming challenge for the District is to now build on the implementation of Bin It 123 to further reduce our residual and increase our recycling. This can be achieved by residents placing as much waste as possible in containers and food caddies rather than black bins and sacks.

Financial Implications

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.

There will be legal requirements to adhere to legislation around Simpler Recycling once it has been given parliamentary approval.

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. The Corporate Plan is currently under review.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 13 June 2024

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leburne
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 13 June 2024

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director
Date: 13 June 2024

Performance and risk: Steve Carr
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager
Date: 03 June 2024

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
Telephone: 01884 255255

Background papers:

None