

## **Update for Scrutiny Committee:**

### **Recycling Service Summary:**

#### **Household recycling collection services currently operated in the borough**

1. Southwark currently operates the following recycling collection services:
  - Fortnightly recycling collections (as part of an alternate week collection service) in tandem with weekly organic waste collections – 43,618 properties
  - Clear bag doorstep collection – 44,350
  - Near entry communal recycling facilities – 54,078
  - Out of the above, 19,927 properties receive a clear bag doorstep collection in tandem with near entry facilities

#### **Service updates and developments since October 2011**

2. The past six months have seen major developments and improvements introduced to the recycling and refuse services and infrastructure offered by the council.
3. These started with the rollout of alternate weekly recycling and refuse collections for kerbside properties, in tandem with the introduction of weekly doorstep collections of food and garden waste. At the same time we converted the kerbside recycling service to commingled, removing the requirement to separate out items. We were also able to expand the materials that residents in the borough can recycle, with food and drink containers such as Tetra Pak being collected from the doorstep and all bring sites for the first time. Wherever necessary, all residents in the borough received their new collection calendars and service information leaflets explaining how to use their new services and the new items that could be recycled.
4. The last quarter of 2011 also saw the completion and commissioning phase of the borough's new integrated waste management facility at Devon Street off the Old Kent Road. The turn of the year saw the closure of the existing Household Waste Reuse and Recycling Centre at Manor Place, and the opening of a new and improved public facility at the Old Kent Road site. All residents in the borough received details of the change and directions to the new site by means of a full page advert in the winter edition of Southwark Life. All users of the Manor Place site in the weeks leading up to its closure were presented with details and directions for the new site.
5. Also on site, the borough's new interactive recycling education centre, named the Recycling Discovery Centre and designed by a team behind the Launchpad exhibits at the Science Museum, has been completed. Primary schools across the borough are being invited to visit us and learn about the importance of recycling and sustainability.
6. January also saw the installation of six bring banks across the borough specifically for residents to recycle small electrical items, which cannot be accepted by our normal doorstep recycling collections. These can be found at:
  - Peckham Rye Park on Strakers Road
  - Bel Air Park on Gallery Road
  - Surrey Quays shopping centre car park
  - Camberwell Green bring site
  - Southwark Bridge Road bring site, outside of Mint Street park
  - Sainsburys at Dog Kennel Hill

7. Another project designed to help residents recycle, the mobile recycling centre, seen below, was launched in March. This vehicle, funded by the London Waste and Recycling Board, will visit 8 estates (Kingswood, Consort, Brandon, Comber, Rockingham, Tabard Gardens, Dickens and Aylesbury) every month and allow residents to recycle items such as textiles, wood, small electricals, batteries, dvd's and cd's from near their doorstep.



### **Upcoming developments on recycling services**

#### **Potential for expansion of food waste collection services**

8. Since October 2011, just over 43,000 kerbside properties in the borough receive a weekly mixed food and garden waste doorstep collection service.
9. Over the next few months we will be expanding this service to include the few thousand ground floor estate based properties that currently receive a garden waste service. In addition to this, we are very keen to hear from residents in blocks of flats that would be interested in receiving a communal food waste collection service. In their most recent service information leaflet, all residents living on estates were invited to contact the council if they would be interested in a communal food waste service being installed. We have been trialing the system in blocks of flats on Friern Road in East Dulwich since last summer, and following resident feedback we are already identifying further blocks where it may be possible to introduce the service.
10. A key issue that has been evident from the trials at Friern Road is that of contamination of the communal food waste containers. We have recently installed new communal containers at Friern Road, with much smaller apertures and a lockable lid, and will be monitoring closely the effect this has on contamination levels.

#### **Kerbside AWC service engagement**

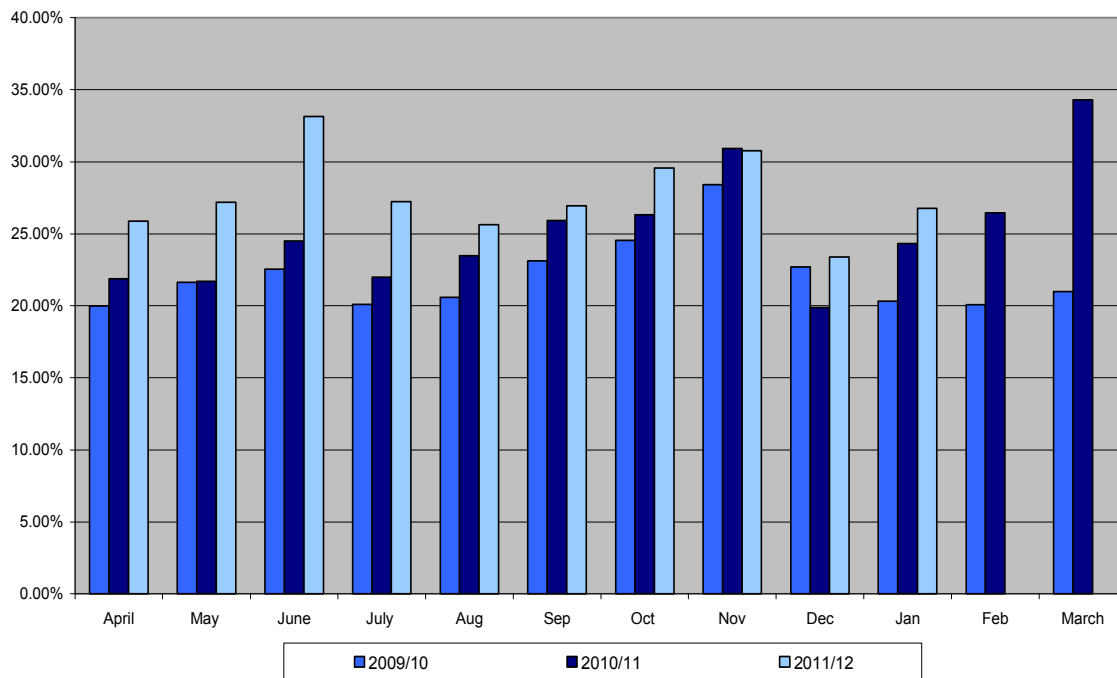
11. During April, May and June, recycling support officers will be undertaking a programme of engagement with residents on the kerbside service, focussed on further increasing participation and reducing contamination levels. As a precursor to this project, all residents on this service will be receiving a leaflet in the first week of April, thanking them for their efforts so far and the resultant effect on the borough's recycling rate. It will also remind residents how and what to recycle, and in particular what shouldn't be put into their recycling containers.

### Clear bag doorstep collection service improvements

12. A key priority is an improvement in participation levels from those properties on the clear bag collection service. During the spring and summer we will be assessing levels of participation in the scheme across the borough. This information will help us target communications effectively and we will be proactively engaging with tenants and residents' associations, housing managers and the residents themselves to improve knowledge and interest in the service. We will also be looking to expand the service into any appropriate blocks that do not yet receive a doorstep collection.

### Recycling performance

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



13. The average for the months since the launch of the new kerbside services at the start of October is **27.6%**. Performance over these four months comfortably exceeds the recycling performance for the same period last year.
14. Based on figures to date, we are **anticipating an end of year recycling rate** in the region of **27.5 – 28%**.
15. Looking more specifically at those kerbside properties on the new **AWC and food waste service**, the average recycling rate since launch in October 2011 has been a very encouraging **52.2%**.

## **Levels of enquiries and complaints since the rollout of new services in October 2011**

### **Stage 1 Complaints**

16. The rollout of new receptacles and launch of new collection schedules in October led to a spike in the number of complaints received regarding our services. These have now significantly reduced though not yet to pre-rollout levels:

Month received	Stage 1 totals
September 2011	33
October 2011	152
November 2011	132
December 2011	70
January 2012	75
February 2012	61

### **Stage 2 Complaints**

17. The level of stage 2 complaints has remained very low throughout the process, showing that any problems with the service are being identified and resolved once a report is received.

Month received	Stage 2 totals
September 2011	0
October 2011	0
November 2011	1
December 2011	2
January 2012	1
February 2012	0

18. Anecdotally, the most common complaints still being received are regarding confirming the most appropriate configuration of containers for particular properties or streets with certain circumstances, or reports of crew confusion after the widespread changes to schedules introduced in October, leading to repeat missed collections. We are confident that these are teething problems with the services which we are working hard to eliminate.