

TO: JOINT WASTE DISPOSAL BOARD
17th June 2021

PROGRESS REPORT
Report of the re3 Project Director

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief the re3 Joint Waste Disposal Board on progress in the delivery of the re3 Joint Waste PFI Contract.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That Members note the contents of this report.**
- 2.2 **That Members request an update on the rigid plastics recycling trial, as described at 5.26, to be presented at the next meeting.**

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 None for this report.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The purpose of this report is to brief Members in relation to progress in delivery of the re3 Joint Waste PFI Contract.

5 PROGRESS IN RELATION TO WASTE MANAGEMENT

re3 and Council Performance Statistics

- 5.1 Members will be aware that all three councils have now commenced a food waste collection. Food waste collections were rolled out to all houses in Reading Borough Council in February 2021 and the existing complement of, principally 240 litre, residual waste bins were replaced with smaller ones. In March 2021, Bracknell Forest commenced food waste collections across the borough and changed the collection frequency for residual waste from fortnightly to three-weekly. The reduction in residual waste capacity, alongside the new collections have had a positive impact in the recycling rate and this can be seen most clearly in the data for the new contract year.
- 5.2 Quarter 1 of 2021/22 will be the first full quarter reflecting these changes, and the introduction of the new bags (for paper and card) in Wokingham. Officers will continue to provide regular updates on the recycling rate (which incorporates both the waste collected by the councils and that delivered to the two recycling centres). A more detailed breakdown of the data for April is provided in Appendices 1 and 2, alongside the equivalent (April-June) data for 2020/21.

April 2021

BFC – 56.64%
RBC – 52.46%
WBC – 53.68%

- 5.3 As the changes described above were introduced late in 2020/21 their impact on the provisional full year results were limited, as shown in the table below. However, with

continued council focus on recycling services, officers would expect the April statistics to be more reflective of future performance.

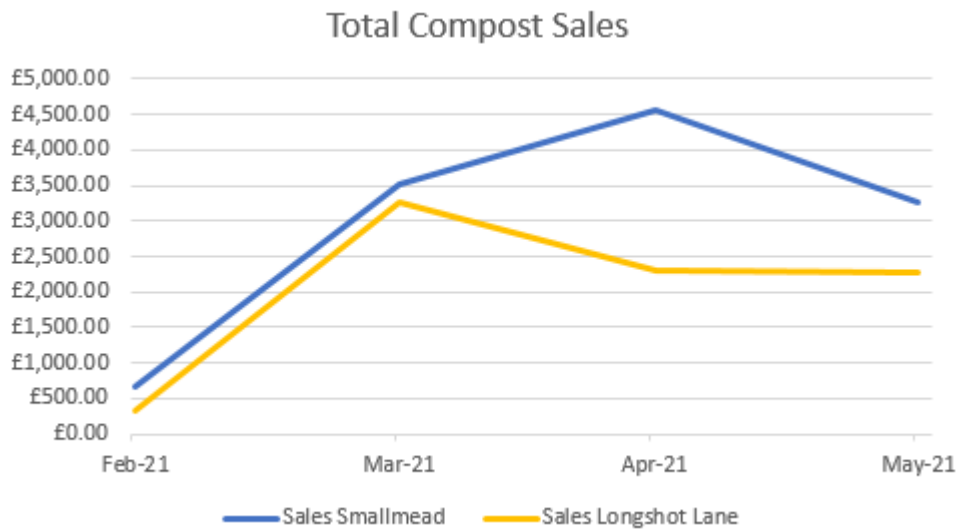
Recycling Rate

Council	2019/20 Full Year Recycling Rate	2020/21 Full Year Recycling Rate
Bracknell Forest	42.9%	43.4%
Reading	35.3%	36.1%
Wokingham	50.3%	49.5%

- 5.4 A breakdown of the April recycling rate has been presented in Appendix 2. The growth in food waste, and its positive impact on recycling is apparent.
- 5.5 Also notable is the increase in the ‘other’ category within Reading. The decline in recycling rate, for the same period in 2020/21, was particularly pronounced in Reading due to a suspension in green waste collection service. As green waste collections have returned to normal, this contributes to the greater increase in recycling rate seen for RBC.
- 5.6 Bracknell Forest and Reading have seen increases in their kerbside recycling tonnages following on from the recent changes. Whilst decreases in residual waste capacity could have led to increases in MDR contamination, the MRF sampling data has not shown this to be the cause of the additional tonnages.
- 5.7 Members will note that a significant reduction in MDR contamination has been seen in Wokingham. Overall contamination has dropped from about 19% of MDR (mixed dry recyclables) to less than 10%. This will be a result of the introduction of the new recycling bags, which prevent paper and card from becoming saturated with rain water. Like the changes in residual waste capacity mentioned above, the introduction of new bags could also have led to an increase in unwanted contamination, but the MRF sampling data has not yet shown this to be the case.
- 5.8 There have been no rejections of Wokingham MDR since the middle of March.
- 5.9 As shown at Appendix 1, kerbside recycling rates for Bracknell and Reading have increased when compared to last year. Members will recall that the kerbside recycling rate presented, represents council waste, collected for recycling, as a proportion of total household waste. This will be a result of the new food waste collections. In contrast this figure has gone down in Wokingham. This is because the kerbside recycling rate was unusually high in Qtr1 2021/22 due to temporary closure of the recycling centres, caused by the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic.

re3Grow

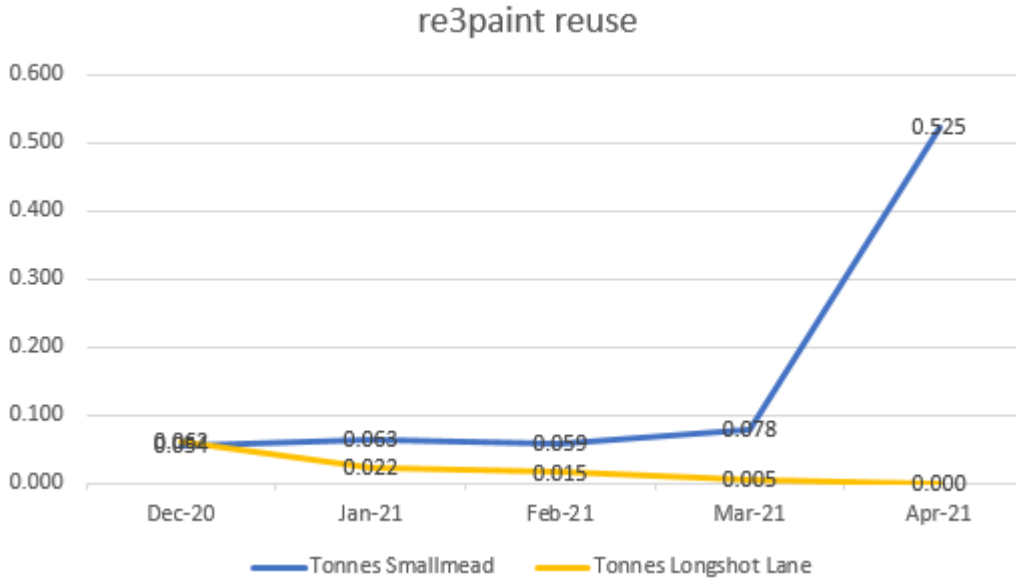
- 5.10 Following a winter break, the sales of the re3grow compost commenced on 22nd February. A total of 6,045 bags of re3grow compost were sold, with total income of £20,190 by the end of May 2021. The income received covers the cost of production and administration within the re3 Project Team and FCC.



- 5.11 re3grow sales has performed very well during the year to date. re3 currently has less than 2,000 bags remaining meaning that over 75% stock has been already sold.

re3Paint

- 5.12 *re3paint*, a community paint reuse scheme has been in operation since December 2020.
- 5.13 The re3paint – Community Paint Reuse initiative allow residents to collect free tins of full or partly used paint that were deposited at the Recycling Centres. Reclaimed paint can be used for their own projects or to help their local charity and community groups.
- 5.14 The service has not received a sufficient exposure during the lockdown period and winter months. The average diversion of paint from Longshot Lane and Smallmead were 26 kg and 56kg respectively.
- 5.15 To grow the service popularity, in April there has been a change of the location of paint containers at the Reading site (next to the Meet&Greet area). This step combined with an increased promotion on the social media and via the re3 newsletter, resulted in distributing over 500kg of leftover paint from the Reading site alone.
- 5.16 Similar changes that aim at the better visibility of the paint reuse container have been undertaken at the Longshot Lane.
- 5.17 Further promotional activities include adding stickers to the containers that explain the benefits of the scheme and invite residents to share their redecorating work that can be used to raise awareness of reducing paint waste.
- 5.18 Officers will also make guidance available to residents on the types of paint which is suitable for reuse and recommend that residents harden any water-based paint that is too old or minimal to be reused.



Rigid Plastics Recycling Trial

- 5.19 The re3 Partnership is keen to explore the options available for extending their recycling services and Officers have previously looked into a number of different possibilities for the recycling of rigid plastics.
- 5.20 By weight, rigid plastics make up approximately 11% of all residual waste received at Smallmead recycling centre according to the most recent compositional analyses, from 2019. At Longshot Lane this figure is even greater at almost 17% and rigid plastics are the most abundant material, by weight, in the residual waste stream at this site.
- 5.21 In January 2019, Officers reported to the Joint Waste Disposal Board that the costs of the options identified at that time were believed to be prohibitively expensive and that the long-term markets were too unstable.
- 5.22 However, Officers have continued to keep the markets under review as proposed, and a suitable option has now been identified. This option will enable rigid plastics from the re3 partnership to be processed within the UK. A small amount of compaction is also permitted to the waste. This will enable the haulage of the material to be more cost effective under this arrangement.
- 5.23 Officers have agreed to a trial being undertaken at both re3 recycling centres so that the costs and benefits of this service can be fully assessed.
- 5.24 Items that it will be possible to recycle via this trial will include storage containers, buckets, plastic patio furniture, gutters and drainpipes and large children’s garden toys. Brittle plastics, rubber, fibreglass and upholstered plastics are amongst items it will not be possible to recycle at this time. The trial will therefore enable the partnership to establish the quantity of waste that can be diverted from landfill and the input needed in order to meet the quality requirements of the offtaker.
- 5.25 At the time of writing this report, Officers are in the process of planning communicational activities in support of the trial and it is anticipated that the trial will commence in early July. If it proves to be successful, it is hoped and expected that this can become a permanent service for residents.
- 5.26 Officers will continue to keep Members informed as the trial progresses and

recommend that an update is requested for the next meeting, in September.

Climate Change

- 5.27 Each of the re3 partner councils has made purposeful commitments to take action to reduce their carbon emissions and previous reports presented estimates, using Government maintained conversion factors, of the direct impact of waste treatment.
- 5.28 Using metrics developed by WRAP - The Carbon Waste and Resources Metric (Carbon WARM) and re3 disposal data, re3 Project Team can showcase Greenhouse Gas emission impact, measured as carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) to supplement traditional weight-based monitoring.
- 5.29 An online calculator that shows how recycling of single household items ie. aluminium can, plastic bottle or cereal box can contribute to efforts in combating a climate change will be added to the re3 website.
- 5.30 Using this tool, residents can see how much CO₂e can be saved by recycling and will learn how this amount of CO₂e relates to the number of cars taken off the roads.
- 5.31 These calculations will be used to develop recycling awareness messages within a wider focus on the environment and practical steps that residents can take.

6 COMMUNICATIONS

Advertising

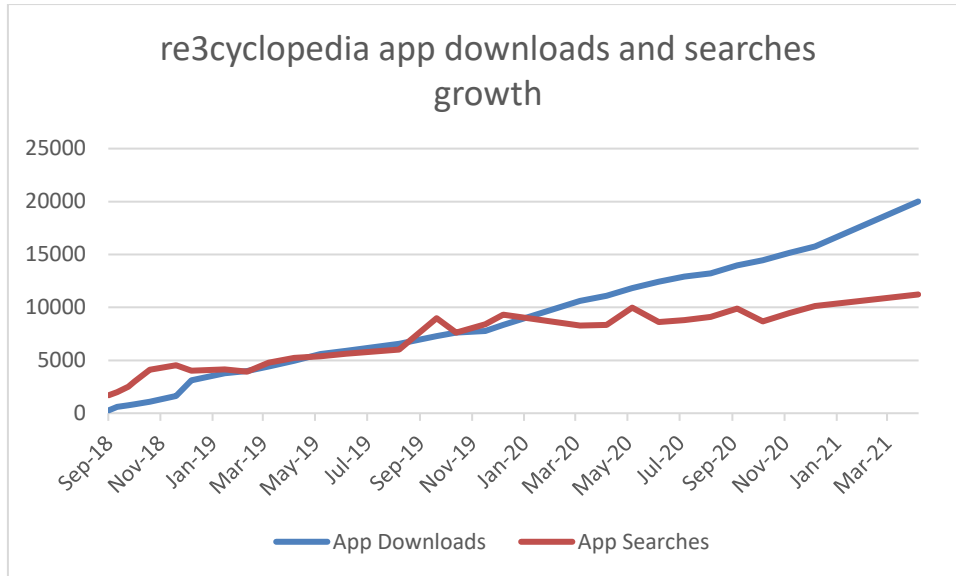
- 6.1 Adverts with a food waste theme were placed in residents' magazines which are being distributed across each of the Boroughs during spring and summer months.
- 6.2 An advert features the benefits of the food waste recycling process, with a focus on energy production.
- 6.3 A series of social media assets, with a similar theme, are being developed and will be shared with the Councils for their use.

re3cyclopedia app

- 6.4 The re3cyclopedia app have seen a rapid growth of its users in the period of last 12 months, as shown in the graph below. Since April 2020, the cumulative number of downloads has almost doubled reaching 20,002 by the end of April 2021.
- 6.5 Since the beginning of the 2021, the number of searches is consistently above 10,000 per month.
- 6.6 Each month, over 70% of app users also accessing other waste and recycling Council information or use the app as a fast-track access to the Click & Tip booking system. This suggest that the app is now being used for many purposes, not just the re3cyclopedia waste item search.
- 6.7 A development of a product barcode scanning feature – the first of its kind anywhere in the UK is at the final – beta testing stage.
- 6.8 The upgraded app will work by scanning and recognising a product from the manufacturer/retailer database, then performing an automated lookup in the app database of products and returning the correct recycling information for that product to

the end user broken down by component part.

- 6.9 Material recycling information does not generally exist in manufacturer/retailer barcode databases. Due to lack of this information, the process of inputting the barcodes to the back end of the app and matching it with the re3 database is manual.
- 6.10 The re3cyclopedia database currently contains more than 11,000 products and so far, the scanned barcode information has been matched to over 3,000 popular items within the re3 recycling database.
- 6.11 The upgrade will be available to all users by late summer/early autumn 2021.



7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY

Head of Legal Services

7.1 None for this report.

Corporate Finance Business Partner

7.2 None for this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

7.3 None.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

None

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Principal Groups Consulted

Not applicable.

8.2 Method of Consultation

Not applicable.

8.3 Representations Received

Not applicable.

Background Papers

October 2020 re3 Board

Contacts for further information

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APPENDIX 1 – WASTE STATISTICS

Bracknell Forest

Category	Background	Cumulative Performance			
		April 2021/22		April-June 2020/21	
C1A Statutory Recycling Target	This target is the traditional 'recycling rate' target that should be comparable with other councils in the UK.	56.64%		43.96%	
C1B Kerbside Recycling	Using the respective weekly council kerbside collections is an effective way to recycle. This indicator looks at this service alone.	37.42%		29.45%	
C1C Including Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA)	<i>Despite displacing 'virgin' materials, the recycling of IBA into building blocks is not yet counted as 'recycling' by the Government. Nonetheless, re3 recognises the value of this activity.</i>	7%		8%	
C1E Contamination	<i>Contamination is the term used to describe items which are not supposed to be present within recyclables. The level of contamination is, therefore, an indicator of the effectiveness of waste collection arrangements. It also has an impact on recycling because at high levels of contamination it can become harder to separate 'good' recyclables from the unwanted items.</i>	Target	84.91%	Target	84.56%
		Non Target Paper and Card	6.43%	Non Target Paper and Card	6.55%
		Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	8.66%	Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	8.88%

Reading

Category	Background	Cumulative Performance			
		April 2021/22		April-June 2020/21	
C2A Statutory Recycling Target	This target is the traditional 'recycling rate' target that should be comparable with other councils in the UK.	52.46%		32.16%	
C2B Kerbside Recycling	Using the respective weekly council kerbside collections is an effective way to recycle. This indicator looks at this service alone.	35.52%		21.80%	
C2C Including Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA)	<i>Despite displacing 'virgin' materials, the recycling of IBA into building blocks is not yet counted as 'recycling' by the Government. Nonetheless, re3 recognises the value of this activity.</i>	10%		11%	
C1E Contamination	<i>Contamination is the term used to describe items which are not supposed to be present within recyclables. The level of contamination is, therefore, an indicator of the effectiveness of waste collection arrangements. It also has an impact on recycling because at high levels of contamination it can become harder to separate 'good' recyclables from the unwanted items.</i>	Target	84.54%	Target	78.58%
		Non Target Paper and Card	1.10%	Non Target Paper and Card	2.96%
		Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	14.36%	Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	18.46%

Wokingham

Category	Background	Cumulative Performance			
		April 2021/22		April-June 2020/21	
C3A Statutory Recycling Target	This target is the traditional 'recycling rate' target that should be comparable with other councils in the UK.	53.68%		52.76%	
C3B Kerbside Recycling	Using the respective weekly council kerbside collections is an effective way to recycle. This indicator looks at this service alone.	33.30%		38.34%	
C3C Including Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA)	<i>Despite displacing 'virgin' materials, the recycling of IBA into building blocks is not yet counted as 'recycling' by the Government. Nonetheless, re3 recognises the value of this activity.</i>	8%		8%	
C1E Contamination	Contamination is the term used to describe items which are not supposed to be present within recyclables. The level of contamination is, therefore, an indicator of the effectiveness of waste collection arrangements. It also has an impact on recycling because at high levels of contamination it can become harder to separate 'good' recyclables from the unwanted items.	Target	90.31%	Target	80.75%
		Non Target Paper and Card	0.35%	Non Target Paper and Card	7.63%
		Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	9.34%	Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	11.63%

APPENDIX 2 – BREAKDOWN OF RECYCLING RATE

