

**TO: JOINT WASTE DISPOSAL BOARD**  
**15th June 2023**

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**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 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That Members note the contents of this report.

2.2 That Members review the proposed revisions to charges for non-household waste, described at 5.15, and confirm if these should be implemented to deliver full cost recovery.

2.3 That Members instruct Officers to proceed with the 'WEEE bank' project, as described from 5.21; to roll out a network of collection points for small electrical appliances.

2.4 That Members agree to receive a report on the implications of the coffee pod recycling service, 6 months after its launch at the Recycling Centres.

**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 The provisional full year recycling rates for 2022/23 are presented below, alongside a comparison with the full year of 2021/22.

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>Change</b>
BFC	56.2%	54.5%	-1.7%
RBC	51.5%	49.5%	-2.0%
WBC	54.2%	52.9%	-1.3%

5.2 Members will observe a decrease in the recycling rates of all three councils.

5.3 In Bracknell, residual waste tonnages have only fallen by 1% whilst recyclables tonnages have fallen by 7%. The biggest overall reductions have been in kerbside green waste, food waste, mixed dry recycling and bring bank tonnes.

5.4 In Reading, residual waste tonnages have fallen by 3% whilst recyclables tonnages

have fallen by 8%. The biggest overall reduction has been in food waste, but mixed dry recycling and bring bank tonnes have also seen reductions.

- 5.5 In Wokingham, residual waste tonnages have fallen by 8% whilst recyclables tonnages have fallen by 15%. The biggest overall reduction has been in garden waste, but mixed dry recycling, food waste and bring bank tonnes have also seen reductions.
- 5.6 A full breakdown of the tonnages is shown in Appendix 1, alongside some further narrative.
- 5.7 Officers will continue to monitor and report the recycling rates and any national trends.
- 5.8 The full year contamination rates for 2022/23 are also presented below, alongside a comparison with the full year of 2021/22. This table relates to the level of incorrect items found within the mixed dry recyclables (MDR) collected from the kerbside. This information is compiled through statutory sampling of the waste.

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>Change</b>
BFC	15.4%	14.7%	-0.7%
RBC	17.9%	22.9%	5.0%
WBC	12.7%	14.1%	1.4%

- 5.9 It is important for levels of contamination to be reduced, as the presence of incorrect items in the MDR can make it harder for the Material Recycling Facility (MRF) to process the good recyclables effectively.
- 5.10 The full composition of the 2022/23 samples is presented in Appendix 2, with the top contaminants highlighted in yellow.
- 5.11 Analysis of the data shows that the contamination rate in Reading has risen as a result of an increase in the 'general rejects' category.

### **Review of HWRC Charges**

- 5.12 Whilst Local Authorities are required to accept household waste without charge at their Recycling Centre facilities, there is currently no obligation to accept construction and demolition waste. This is classed as industrial waste for the purposes of providing Recycling Centres and can include waste materials created from home improvements such as hardcore, soil from landscaping activities, plasterboard, and asbestos.
- 5.13 Charges for these waste types are not uncommon at Recycling Centres and a review of policies in place at neighbouring Council facilities is included at Appendix 3.
- 5.14 For re3, charges for these materials are designed to recover the cost of handling and disposing of non-household waste and are non-profit making. The charges also ensure that the person benefitting from the works funds the cost, rather than this being covered by all taxpayers.
- 5.15 As a result of increased costs, Officers reviewed the prices being charged for disposal of non-household waste at the re3 Recycling Centres. To ensure that costs could be fully recovered in 2023/24, Officers proposed that the price for soil and rubble should increase from £2.50 to £3.00, for each 25L unit. The charges for non-household soil and rubble were previously set at £3 per 25L bag between October 2018 and April 2021.

- 5.16 At the March meeting of the JWDB, Members instructed Officers to present further details on the implications of the charges, and the likely impact if these were to be removed. Prices have remained at £2.50 in the meantime.
- 5.17 Officers can confirm that the income from the soil and rubble charges was £90k in 2022/23; based on a charge of £2.50 per 25L unit. If these charges had not been in place, overall costs to the Council would have been higher by this amount.
- 5.18 It should be noted that these figures are only a partial reflection of the impact of the charges. Tonnages of soil and rubble received at the re3 Recycling Centres fell significantly when charges were introduced in 2016. It is difficult to state the precise impact of the introduction because other operational changes (most notably the introduction of commercial and commercial type vehicle permits) were made in the same year. However, the combined extent of the reduction can be seen in Appendix 4.
- 5.19 It is likely that the tonnages of soil and rubble would increase significantly if the charges to residents were to be removed. The cost per tonne for handling and disposing of soil and rubble in 2023/24 is £106.69. Therefore, every additional 1,000 tonnes of soil and rubble could cost the re3 Councils up to £106,690. (This is an upper limit. Soil from gardening activities is not chargeable and staff do not charge for non-household soil and rubble where quantities of less than 25L are deposited. Therefore, for every 1,000 tonnes, only a proportion is chargeable.)
- 5.20 Members are invited to consider whether soil and rubble prices should remain at £2.50 per unit for the remainder of 2023/24, be increased to £3 per unit, or be removed (at a future date, to be agreed).

#### **WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) Banks**

- 5.21 At the January meeting of the Joint Waste Disposal Board, Members instructed Officers to investigate the idea of using a network of recycling banks to collect small electrical appliances (such as kettles, irons and hairdryers). Such banks would provide a convenient service for residents, which could encourage them to dispose of electrical items in the correct manner. This in turn could help to maximise the recycling rate; and reduce the risk of fires caused by the incorrect disposal of items containing batteries at the re3 facilities.
- 5.22 Officers held meetings with other local authorities who already operate a bring bank service for electrical items, and with the re-processor who currently collects these items from the recycling centres. An application for funding was subsequently submitted to the Material Focus WEEE fund covering the anticipated cost of renting and operating 30 banks across the re3 area, until 2031. It also factored in the costs of communicating and monitoring the service and supporting local repair cafes.
- 5.23 An initial review of the standard Material Focus contract has already been conducted by the legal team at Bracknell Forest Council and a further review will take place once the contract has been populated for re3. To cover off any procurement risk, Officers are in the process of seeking some additional quotes from re-processors to ensure that the best value option is ultimately progressed. Once this process is complete, further discussions will take place with Material Focus, and with the appointed contractor. It is recommended that Members instruct Officers to progress with the project and install banks for small electrical appliances across the re3 area, subject Material Focus being happy to fund the initiative.
- 5.24 re3 Officers have been liaising with colleagues in the waste collection teams so that a

list of preferred locations for the banks can be drawn up. Each location considered is an existing glass bank site so that the need for additional monitoring is reduced and existing knowledge could be used to determine suitability. Officers have sought to focus on areas where residents may find it hard to access the recycling centres, but also to ensure that there is a good spread of banks across the re3 and council areas. In addition, sites have been considered with the following aims in mind:

- High foot fall.
- Low risk of vandalism.
- Space to accommodate a bank
- Land-owner approval

5.25 The service will be promoted through social media, newsletters, recycling centre adverts, digital audio campaigns and council magazines. A photo competition could also be considered. With good communication, it is estimated that between 8 and 10 tonnes of small electrical items could be collected through the network of re3 banks each month.

5.26 Subject to Members happy to proceed, Officers will share the proposed list of bring bank sites for approval and keep Members informed as the project develops. It is anticipated that the banks will be rolled out in more than one stage, but with the first batch hopefully in place over the summer.

### **Coffee Pod Recycling**

5.27 The Podback service was created by the producers of some of the UK's most popular coffee brands to help facilitate recycling of the plastic and aluminium coffee pods which are used in machines at home to create café-quality drinks. These pods have historically been difficult to recycle because they are small, light, still contain coffee granules after use, and have a film lid. The Podback scheme seeks to bring the coffee industry together to create a single recycling solution.

5.28 During 2021, Officers looked into kerbside collection options for coffee pods through the Podback scheme but it was not possible to find a suitable service that the pod collections could operate alongside. Officers expressed interest in an alternative service at the Recycling Centres, but this was not the focus of the Podback scheme at the time.

5.29 Trials at recycling centres have since commenced and Podback have invited re3 to take part, following the previous discussions. The re3 trial will sit alongside trials at two other councils and is intended to establish resident participation.

5.30 Approximately 80% of UK coffee pod brands will be targeted through the scheme and re3 residents will be invited to bring these to the Recycling Centres, alongside their other wastes. The pods will then be collected by Podback and taken away so that the coffee can be extracted and sent for anaerobic digestion. The plastic and metal will be recycled within the UK and a full duty of care/spot market audit report will be conducted before the service commences.

5.31 There will be no cost to re3 in participating, and the service will be managed by FCC. In the event of any issues, the re3 Partnership will terminate the arrangement. However it is anticipated that this should be a straight-forward and positive addition to the Recycling Centre service.

5.32 The service is likely to commence in July 2023 and it is recommended that Members review the progress of the project, via a report to the re3 Board, approximately six

months after this date.

### **Consultation: Near Elimination of biodegradable waste disposal in landfill from 2028**

- 5.33 Government is consulting on the aspiration to reduce to near zero the use of landfill for the disposal of biodegradable waste, from 2028. The call for evidence opened on 26<sup>th</sup> May and will close on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023.
- 5.34 Although it has not been possible to prepare responses to the consultation questions in time for the re3 Board meeting, it is proposed that the re3 partnership makes a submission of evidence before the deadline on July 7<sup>th</sup>.
- 5.35 The principle of achieving near zero landfill is a positive one, and an aspiration which corresponds closely to the original aims of the re3 partnership. However, as with other recent legislation, it is not completely clear how this aspiration will act coherently with other, previously announced legislative objectives.
- 5.36 As Members may be aware, Government consulted, in 2022, on the introduction of an emissions trading levy for energy from waste (EfW) plants. The purpose of the levy would be to encourage carbon capture and storage technology to be incorporated (retrospectively or through the design of new plants) in the EfW process. Unfortunately, there are queries over whether that technology can be introduced without significant costs. Accordingly, and in the absence of available alternatives, the levy would have the impact of a tax for many users of EfW plants, such as local authorities. The re3 Project Team estimated that the cost of the levy could be over £2mpa.
- 5.37 There is a clear operational relationship between a significant reduction in the use of landfill and the introduction of an emissions trading levy. Both are important choices by the Government, which can be justified on environmental grounds. However the first will initially drive an increase of material which would qualify for the latter.
- 5.38 A draft response will be shared with the councils before the deadline and for consideration by Members.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY**

### Head of Legal Services

- 6.1 None for this report.

### Corporate Finance Business Partner

- 6.2 None for this report.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 None.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None

### Climate Impact Assessment

6.5 None.

## 7 CONSULTATION

### 7.1 Principal Groups Consulted

Not applicable.

### 7.2 Method of Consultation

Not applicable.

### 7.3 Representations Received

Not applicable.

## Background Papers

JWDB Reports - March 2023

## Contacts for further information

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## **APPENDIX ONE – Waste Tonnage Breakdown**

### Bracknell Forest Council

#### Tonnages

Waste	Source	2021/22	2022/23	Tonnage Change	Percentage Change	Notes
Residual Waste	Kerbside Residual	16200.43	16029.03	-171.40	-1%	
	HWRC Residual	2300.12	2389.76	89.65	4%	
	Other Residual	822.58	727.12	-95.46	-12%	Partially a reduction in bulky waste
	MDR Rejections	1681.51	1714.82	33.31	2%	
	HWRC Non-Recycled	180.40	175.61	-4.79	-3%	
Recyclable Waste	Kerbside MDR	6041.81	5379.62	-662.19	-11%	
	Other Council Collected	583.23	965.30	382.07	66%	Mainly due to increased street sweeping tonnages
	Bring Banks	3597.96	2976.07	-621.89	-17%	Mainly reduced glass
	HWRC Card	416.38	424.66	8.28	2%	
	HWRC Scrap metal	521.92	531.92	10.00	2%	
	HWRC Wood	1638.26	1719.31	81.05	5%	
	HWRC WEEE	543.99	570.22	26.23	5%	
HWRC Other	513.10	530.87	17.77	3%		
Composting	Kerbside Food	5983.10	5362.96	-620.14	-10%	
	Kerbside Garden	5562.40	4943.16	-619.24	-11%	
	HWRC Garden	1533.77	1474.88	-58.89	-4%	
	Other	240.05	331.94	91.89	28%	Caused by increased street sweeping tonnages

### Summary

		2021/22	2022/23	Tonnage Change	Percentage Change
Total		48361.02	46247.26	-2113.76	-4%
By Waste	Residual	21185.04	21036.35	-148.69	-1%
	Recyclable and Compostable	27175.98	25210.92	-1965.06	-7%
By Source	HWRC Total	7647.95	7817.24	169.30	2%
	Kerbside Total	35469.25	33429.59	-2039.66	-6%
	Bring Banks	3597.96	2976.07	-621.89	-17%
	Other	1645.87	2024.36	378.50	23%

## Reading Borough Council

### Tonnages

Waste	Source	2021/22	2022/23	Tonnage Change	Percentage Change	Notes
Residual Waste	Kerbside Residual	21681.56	21384.68	-296.88	-1%	
	HWRC Residual	1844.80	1764.67	-80.13	-4%	
	Other Residual	1533.60	1197.47	-336.13	-22%	Mainly a reduction in litter and street sweepings
	MDR Rejections	2133.78	2272.51	138.74	6%	
	HWRC Non-Recycled	161.11	175.83	14.71	8%	
Recyclable Waste	Kerbside MDR	7649.96	7139.53	-510.44	-7%	
	Other Council Collected	684.60	270.66	-413.94	-60%	Mainly a reduction street sweepings
	Bring Banks	3074.46	2671.21	-403.25	-13%	Mainly reduced glass - but textiles too.
	HWRC Card	397.22	412.48	15.26	4%	
	HWRC Scrap metal	577.05	592.01	14.96	3%	
	HWRC Wood	1873.35	1937.11	63.76	3%	
	HWRC WEEE	559.60	604.81	45.21	7%	
	HWRC Other	580.23	523.20	-57.03	-11%	Mainly increased due to the introduction of rigid plastics. Some other areas have declined.
Composting	Kerbside Food	7542.70	6429.74	-1112.96	-15%	
	Kerbside Garden	4154.64	3860.63	-294.01	-7%	
	HWRC Garden	1530.97	1313.35	-217.62	-14%	
	Other	368.68	488.81	120.14	25%	Caused by an increase in schools' food waste

### Summary

		2021/22	2022/23	Tonnage Change	Percentage Change
Total		56348.31	53038.69	-3309.62	-6%
By Waste	Residual	27354.85	26795.16	-559.69	-2%
	Recyclable and Compostable	28993.46	26243.54	-2749.92	-9%
By Source	HWRC Total	7524.33	7323.45	-200.88	-3%
	Kerbside Total	43162.64	41087.09	-2075.56	-5%
	Bring Banks	3074.46	2671.21	-403.25	-13%
	Other	2586.88	1956.94	-629.93	-24%

## Wokingham Borough Council

## Tonnages

Waste	Source	2021/22	2022/23	Tonnage Change	Percentage Change	Notes
Residual Waste	Kerbside Residual	25319.83	23989.03	-1330.80	-5%	
	HWRC Residual	3528.80	3000.23	-528.57	-15%	
	Other Residual	1457.88	1278.83	-179.06	-12%	Mainly a reduction in litter
	MDR Rejections	2157.42	2443.27	285.85	12%	
	HWRC Non-Recycled	297.59	259.87	-37.72	-15%	
Recyclable Waste	Kerbside MDR	7750.82	6788.04	-962.77	-12%	
	Other Council Collected	782.45	739.26	-43.19	-6%	Caused by lower recyclable content in the street sweepings
	Bring Banks	4026.40	3657.99	-368.41	-9%	Mainly reduced glass - but textiles too.
	HWRC Card	695.67	608.79	-86.89	-12%	
	HWRC Scrap metal	943.14	820.19	-122.96	-13%	
	HWRC Wood	3012.48	2665.11	-347.38	-13%	
	HWRC WEEE	970.53	866.33	-104.20	-12%	Mainly a reduction in large WEEE
	HWRC Other	944.89	771.87	-173.02	-22%	Down across a range of items
Composting	Kerbside Food	6425.57	6082.18	-343.39	-5%	
	Kerbside Garden	10282.66	9236.40	-1046.26	-10%	
	HWRC Garden	2623.49	2023.18	-600.31	-23%	
	Other	348.38	487.09	138.71	28%	Caused by an increase in street sweeping tonnages and a higher compostable content.

## Summary

	2021/22	2022/23	Tonnage Change	Percentage Change
Total	71568.00	65717.65	-5850.35	-8%
By Waste				
Residual	32761.53	30971.23	-1790.29	-5%
Recyclable and Compostable	38806.47	34746.42	-4060.06	-10%
By Source				
HWRC Total	13016.60	11015.56	-2001.04	-15%
Kerbside Total	51936.30	48538.93	-3397.37	-7%
Bring Banks	4026.40	3657.99	-368.41	-9%
Other	2588.71	2505.17	-83.53	-3%

## Waste Tonnage Narrative

Point	Description
1	Total household waste arisings have reduced for all three councils. This may be related to the costs of living.
2	The recyclable waste tonnages have reduced more than the residual waste tonnages, leading to the drop in overall recycling rates.
3	Most of the tonnage reduction has been seen at the kerbside.
4	Food waste tonnes have reduced across all three councils, but especially in Bracknell and Reading, where the collections were new last year. One factor may be increased consciousness of food waste as a result of participation in the service. Another factor may be the cost of living.



<b>5</b>	All three councils have also seen a reduction in their Mixed Dry Recycling (MDR tonnages), but there has also been an increase in the rejection levels seen overall. This is a reflection of total contamination and process rejects in the plant.
<b>6</b>	Garden waste tonnages have fallen, and this could be linked to the dry weather seen in the summer. Although the kerbside tonnages in Reading have reduced less than seen in Bracknell and Wokingham, it should be noted that the collection service was suspended for a period during 2021.
<b>7</b>	Bring bank glass tonnages are declining but are still above pre-pandemic levels, so could continue to fall.
<b>8</b>	A much larger decrease is seen in the recycling centre tonnages for Wokingham than for the other two councils. Tonnages have reduced at both recycling centres, but changes in tonnage allocation, linked to patronage data, result in less of a tonnage change being seen in Bracknell Forest and Reading. Although tonnage has changed, the recycling rate at both recycling centres has remained constant between the two years.

## **APPENDIX TWO – Composition of ‘Mixed Dry Recycling’ (2022/23)**

Contamination Category	Material	Bracknell	Reading	Wokingham
<b>Target Recycling</b>	News & Pams	<b>13.18%</b>	<b>14.90%</b>	<b>18.38%</b>
	Mixed Paper	<b>6.57%</b>	<b>6.34%</b>	<b>7.01%</b>
	Card	<b>40.14%</b>	<b>34.44%</b>	<b>36.54%</b>
	Tetrapak	<b>1.53%</b>	<b>1.37%</b>	<b>1.52%</b>
	Steel Cans & Tins	<b>4.10%</b>	<b>3.40%</b>	<b>3.87%</b>

	Aluminium Cans & Tins	3.14%	2.36%	2.67%
	Aluminium Trays & Foil	0.22%	0.14%	0.18%
	PET Clear Bottles	5.19%	4.66%	4.77%
	PET Clear Trays	2.38%	2.16%	2.82%
	Mixed Plastics	4.28%	3.43%	4.04%
	HDPE	3.29%	2.65%	3.18%
	Particulates	1.26%	1.29%	0.88%
	Non-Target Paper	0.50%	0.28%	1.15%
	Non-Target Card	1.08%	1.33%	1.29%
	Ferrous Metal	0.37%	0.64%	0.22%
Contamination	Non-Ferrous Metal	0.00%	0.00%	0.01%
	Polypropylene (PVC)	0.00%	0.01%	0.00%
	Plastic Film (LDPE)	1.17%	1.32%	1.40%
	Rigid Plastics	0.57%	0.95%	0.54%
	Textiles & Shoes	0.59%	0.65%	0.31%
	WEEE	0.04%	0.22%	0.04%
	Wood	0.20%	0.43%	0.21%
	Plasterboard	0.00%	0.04%	0.00%
	DIY Rubble/Ceramics	0.00%	0.03%	0.01%
	Garden Waste & Soil	0.11%	0.01%	0.00%
	Glass	1.00%	2.07%	0.75%
	Food Waste	0.02%	0.23%	0.14%
	Disposable Nappies	0.04%	0.11%	0.06%
	Hazardous Waste	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	Foils wrapping paper, wall paper	0.15%	0.05%	0.04%
	Black Plastics	0.28%	0.32%	0.38%
	General rejects (Bags with waste)	1.87%	6.51%	2.60%
	General Rejects (other)	4.20%	5.03%	3.22%
	Particulates	2.52%	2.58%	1.83%
		<b>Total Contamination</b>	<b>14.71%</b>	<b>22.85%</b>
	<b>Total %</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Please note:

- The top 5 contaminants have been highlighted for each Council.
- Non-target paper and card is often wet.
- The 'General rejects (bags with waste)' category relates to any bags containing a mix of household waste. Recyclable waste may be present in some cases, alongside other waste types such as food.
- The 'General rejects (other)' category contains all contamination not otherwise listed. It might include materials such as crisp packets, crisp tubes, pill packs, wet wipes and face masks. Where items have been placed inside one another and cannot be separated, these will also fall into this category.
- Particulates are items too small to be sampled. The main particulate is usually loose shredded paper.

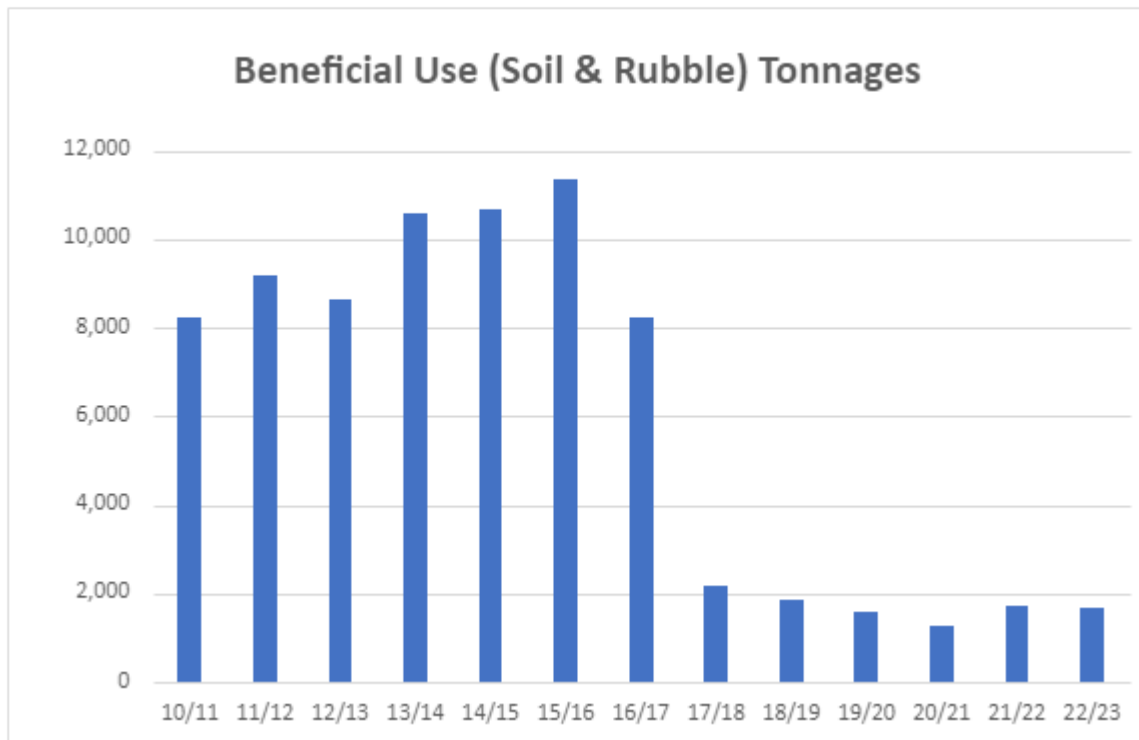
### **APPENDIX THREE – Recycling Centre Charges**

<b>Council</b>	<b>Rubble</b>	<b>Soil</b>
Buckinghamshire Council	£3.50 per 25L unit	£3.50 per 25L unit
Hampshire County Council	£3 per standard rubble bag or per item of sanitary ware	£3 per standard rubble bag
Oxfordshire County Council	£2 per 20L bag or per bathroom or kitchen item	£2 per 20L bag
Slough Borough Council	£3.70 per 25L bag	None Found

Surrey County Council	£4 per bag (50cm x 77cm)	£4 per bag (50cm x 77cm)
West Berkshire Council	£2.70 per 25L bag	£2.70 per 25L bag
Windsor and Maidenhead Council	None Found	None Found

Data obtained from council websites on 25/05/2023.

**APPENDIX FOUR – Soil and Rubble Tonnages**



Charges for soil and rubble were introduced in September 2016.