

# LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

**Report to:** Community Safety & Environment Policy & Accountability Committee

**Date:** 24/01/2022

**Subject:** Prototype Containerisation and Food Waste Collection Service

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**Responsible Director:** Sharon Lea, Strategic Director of Environment

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## SUMMARY

The report provides an update on the Council's prototype wheeled bin and food waste collection service in the borough and shows the positive impact that it has had on recycling levels. The Council has also been assisted by the prototype service to further improve its excellent performance on waste reduction and now stands in 5<sup>th</sup> place nationally in the amount of waste produced (per person) by residents.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the Committee to note the analysis of the prototype service over the last 12 months and that further feedback and co-production work with residents takes place before any extension of the scheme be considered.
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**Wards Affected:** College Park & Old Oak, Askew, Addison, Ravenscourt Park, Fulham Reach, Parsons Green & Walham

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<b>Our Values</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the H&amp;F Values</b>
Building shared prosperity	Hammersmith & Fulham is a connected community that's on the up. The prototype provides a modern waste collection service, meeting the demands of residents and providing the associated benefits of a cleaner environment where businesses want to invest and opportunities for local jobs.
Creating a compassionate council	The prototype places great emphasis on engagement, compassion and providing a bespoke flexible service that accommodates needs of residents.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	Rather than using available legislative powers (s46 Environmental Protection Act 1990) to carry out a blanket imposition of containers on residents, we are carrying out a prototype service and working with residents to identify the bins that best suit their property type and waste requirements, and to allow residents to experience and comment on how the new service operates.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The prototype scheme reduces the council's waste disposal costs, allowing more money to be made

	available for other public services
Taking pride in H&F	The prototype scheme collects household waste and recycling in containers rather than bags, reducing litter spillage and keeping our streets cleaner.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	The prototype allows residents to recycle food waste, increase recycling and reduce waste, which could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 39%.

## Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None

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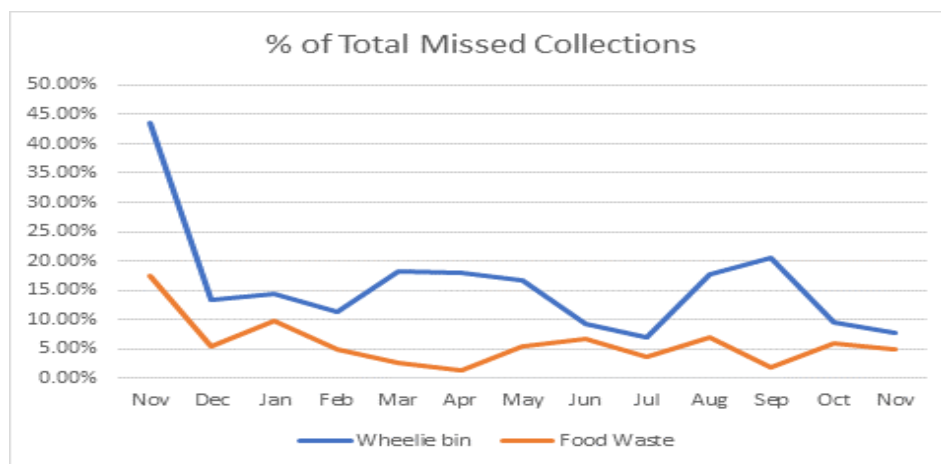
### DETAILED ANALYSIS

1. The prototype collection service for food waste and wheeled bin household waste and recycling commenced on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
2. This report sets out how the scheme areas were selected, the communications with residents and stakeholders prior to collections commencing, the consultation that has been ongoing throughout the roll out of the service, and the planned consultation that will take place to gauge residents' experience of the scheme.
3. The proposal to carry out a prototype service was brought forward within a report to the Cabinet regarding the extension of the waste, street cleansing and recycling contract. The report was approved by Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019.
4. As with any prototype service of this size, officers were conscious that some properties that were assessed as suitable for inclusion may need to be reassessed. A standard bin configuration of 1 x 140 litre refuse bin and 1 x 240 litre recycling bin was deemed appropriate based on estimates of household waste capacity across the 4,600 properties.
5. Using the Council's value of doing things with residents and not to them, officers devised a range of co-production options and container sizes to offer to residents. Residents could choose a refuse or recycling container of 140L, 240L or 360L following appropriate assessment. Where space was limited, a popular option was to agree to shared containers. On the rare occasions where it was evident that a property was wholly unsuitable for the prototype service, the bins were removed.

### Performance in the prototype area

6. Since November 2020 over 791,000 collections have been completed.
7. The recycling rate in the prototype area has risen and remained at 40% compared borough-wide to 26%.

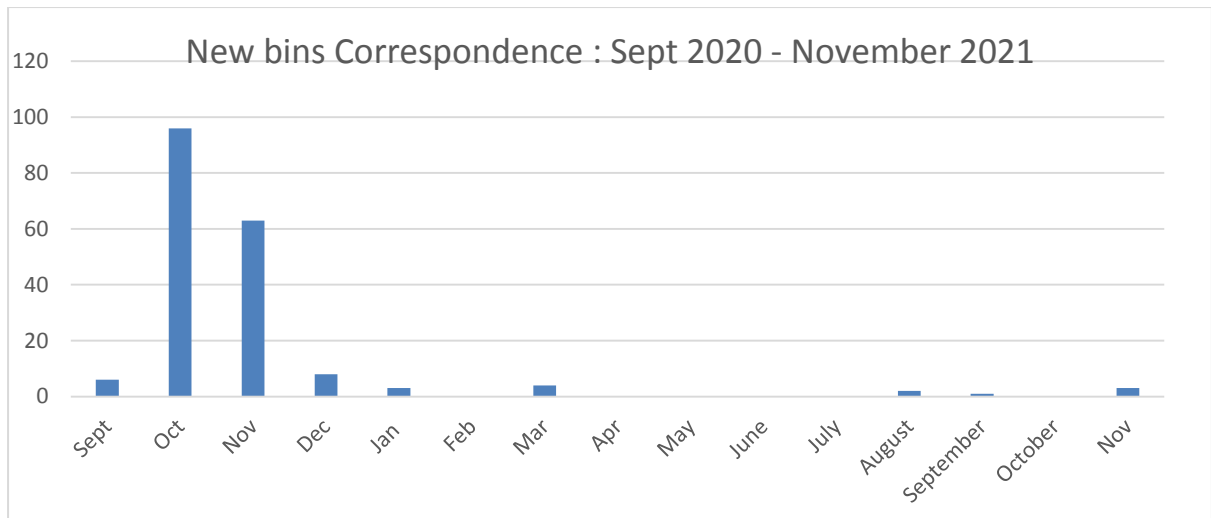
8. The service has collected over 1,000 tonnes of dry recycling material and 450 tonnes of food waste.
9. The service has performed well with less than 48 (0.0006%) complaints over the past 12 months, mostly regarding container returns to properties.
10. The graph below shows the percentage trend of missed collections for the wheeled bin and food waste collection service. The high level of missed bins initially reflects the bedding in period in November 2020 when both operatives and residents were getting used to the new service. Overall, it demonstrates that using bins reduces missed collections. The temporary increase in August and September is directly attributed to national HGV driver shortages and use of agency staff.



11. A fortnightly meeting is held with Serco and this continues to address ongoing problems experienced with residents' late presentation or the crews and this is demonstrated by the overall downward trend.

### Resident engagement

12. Throughout the prototype period officers have been working with the Council's corporate communications team to engage with residents via social media.
13. The dedicated mailbox has remained live throughout with officers checking the mailbox on a regular daily basis. Most of the correspondence has been clarification requests and property re-assessments. Please see graph on the next page.



14. Officers conducted approximately 1,000 face-to-face interactions with householders from 2<sup>nd</sup> November to 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 during the initial new service delivery. These included property reassessments, container exchanges and assessments for assisted collections.
15. Beginning in June 2021, a borough wide engagement plan commenced to support residents, our collection crews and to drive service performance. The need to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and to keep residents and colleagues safe restricted the project to written or telephone communication beyond July 2021.
16. Since the launch of the new service, the complaints received about the service are minimal and the cleanliness of the streets within the prototype area has improved which has been highlighted by residents who have received this new service.
17. Where queries have been raised regarding the new containers and their impacts on conservation areas, officers have consulted with colleagues in Planning and provided feedback to residents on the specific queries raised.

Planning advise:

*“Notwithstanding the environmental benefits of the new refuse/recycling collection scheme in increasing take-up of recycling in the Borough, the revised refuse/recycling scheme is not considered to detract from the character and appearance of our Conservation Areas overall. The provision by the Council of refuse bins/recycling containers as part of the scheme may also assist in resolving a number of untidy land issues which can occur within these areas and reduce incidents involving the spillage of waste from split refuse bags.”*

18. At the start of a new service, a small minority of residents objected to the wheeled bins, either on aesthetic grounds or on grounds of perceived convenience, even where they have enough space to store the containers.
19. Rather than a blanket imposition of the council’s powers granted under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, officers engaged positively with

these residents to encourage them to trial the new service and hopefully see the positive outcomes arising from it over the past year.

20. As well as the regular monitoring of feedback received, the next steps to measure resident views on the service will be survey work in the prototype service areas in June and July 2022. We will do this door-to-door to ensure we capture as accurate a picture of resident views as is possible (rather than needing people to proactively contact or respond to us). The timing of this work will mean that residents will have had over a full year to use the service (important given the seasonal nature of waste) and will run at a time of year when any impact from Covid-19 is likely to be minimised to ensure safety and improve participation.

### **Updated New Service Analysis**

21. The average household recycling rate across the borough is approximately 26%, which is regrettably within the bottom quartile for London, whereas the recycling rate is 40% in the prototype area.
22. Approximately one third of residual household waste is food waste and, outside the prototype area, this currently goes to an Energy from Waste plant. The separately collected food waste in the prototype area, however, can be recycled. The process being used creates a fuel from food waste and, in addition, can separate off carbon dioxide for use in a range of applications.
23. For the food waste collection service to be successful it is best practice for it to be part of a containerised waste collection system. Wheeled bins help residents to segregate their waste, which fosters waste reduction behavior to improve re-use and recycling levels while limiting the total amount of refuse generated.
24. Furthermore, by separating food waste residents can actually visualise the volumes they are throwing away and this drives further reductions in food being wasted and its disposal.
25. Similarly, by having limited refuse capacity, this drives recycling into the recycling container. Having a permanent container option to dispose of recycling outside of the home with a reasonable capacity further encourages residents to recycle more and to reduce their waste.
26. We have actively seen these behavior changes practiced within the prototype area: We have not collected more waste, but the recycling rate has increased to 40% because residents have recycled more and reduced their waste production. This reduces waste disposal costs and helps us towards our ambition to be a greener borough and supports tackling the climate emergency. Waste and resource management is an integral component in meeting the global COP26 commitment to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.
27. As the table below shows H&F has constantly reduced the amount of waste produced since 2018 and now has improved its position and achieved 5<sup>th</sup> best in the country, this is partly due to the new service being piloted over the past year.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Collected household waste per person (kg) (Ex BVPI 84a)</b>	<b>National League table</b>
2020-2021	247.4	5th
2019-2020	246.1	6th
2018-2019	253.7	6th
2017-2018	262.5	7th

### **Key learning factors**

28. The smaller 140L recycling bin can be offered to a greater range of properties as their default standard container.
29. Bin sharing is popular and should therefore be encouraged widely.
30. It is important to offer a flexible range of containers and enable residents to change to the most appropriate size.
31. Property reassessments in partnership with residents are essential to achieve successful outcomes and must continue to be offered. This has been important for resident satisfaction and coproduction of the service.
32. Further work will be developed with our co-production team to make the service more inclusive. Consideration will be made to provide a notch or brail on bins as identifiers.
33. The prototype service was introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic and it is therefore important that the prototype service continues to be evaluated in the coming months as waste behaviours may continue to evolve with greater or lower levels of home working and online shopping, for example.
34. As part of the H&F Vision, the views of residents, elected members, and co-production with residents will form part of any recommendations put forward for any future extension of the scheme as well as considerations relating to the specification for our new waste management contract from 2023 onwards.

### **LIST OF APPENDICES**

None.