

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 18 March 2014

Landfill and Recycling Update

Item number	7.8
Report number	
Wards	All

Links

Coalition pledges	P44 , P49 , P50
Council outcomes	CO17 , CO18 , CO19
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4

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Executive summary

Landfill and Recycling Update

Summary

This report updates Committee on performance in increasing recycling and reducing the amount of waste being sent to landfill.

The amount of waste sent to landfill continues to decrease with a reduction of 6425 tonnes (5.48%) in the period April 2013 and January 2014 compared to the same period for the previous year.

Based on tonnage data for the period ending January 2014 and taking into account seasonal factors, it is forecast that 130,824 tonnes will be sent to landfill this year - 6425 tonnes (4.7%) less than the previous year. It is anticipated that 86,076 tonnes of waste will be recycled in 2013/14 and that our year end recycling figure will be 39.5%.

The proportion of all waste (including street sweepings) recycled this year to date (April 13 – January 14) is 39.8% compared to 38.5% for the same period in 2012/13.

A range of public engagement work is ongoing to promote recycling which includes a door knocking campaign aimed at raising awareness of what food waste can be recycled is currently running until end of March 2014.

This report also includes an update on complaint numbers. In 2013/14 there have been on average 502 complaints per week. This is 29.5% less than the average number of complaints per week in 2012/13 (738 complaints per week). With around 300,000 collections, this equates to a weekly complaint rate of 0.17%. Waste Services are continuing to work hard to reduce the level of complaints further.

Recommendations

To note the contents of the report.

Measures of success

Achievement of the Council's targets for increasing recycling and reducing landfill.

Financial impact

Although the projection for landfill to the year end exceeds the budget target, it is still a reduction of 4.7% compared to 2012/13 performance.

Based on figures up to January 2014, there is a budget pressure of £1.5m on the Landfill budget. This will be contained and met from within the overall Waste Services budget.

Equalities impact

The Council is meeting its public sector duty to advance equal opportunity for residents to recycle by using a range of communications methods. Written information is available through leaflets and electronic media. Road shows and door knocking visits provide face to face contact with residents and visits from recycling advisers are available on request. All material can be translated on request. Consultation was carried out via demographically representative focus groups and via on line and written questionnaires to ensure that a full and representative range of views were obtained. Assistance with the presentation of recycling and waste containers is available for those who require it to ensure everyone has access to these services. The above has ensured that information is available for all within the equality and rights framework.

Sustainability impact

Increased recycling will help to divert waste from landfill and support the achievement of greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Consultation and engagement

A range of public engagement work is ongoing to promote recycling which includes door knocking, radio and bus advertisements and local events with a particular emphasis on promoting what food waste can be recycled and how. The food waste campaign is continuing throughout February and March, and is supported by a series of events across the city.

This financial year, to date, 68,402 properties have been visited, with 27,758 residents being spoken to about recycling on their doorstep.

Public consultation was held during the first quarter of 2013, using demographically representative focus groups, with residents from both low and high density housing areas. The research was commissioned to understand the general public awareness, perceptions and attitudes towards recycling communications. This research is helping to shape communication messages in future campaigns. A further questionnaire on attitudes to food waste recycling and communications was carried out in November and is helping to shape the current recycling campaign.

Background reading / external references

N/A

Landfill and Recycling Update

1. Background

- 1.1 At the Transport and Environment Committee on 15 January 2013, members requested regular updates on performance in increasing recycling and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. On 27 August 2013, members requested that the performance reports also include updates on complaints made about waste services.
- 1.2 The environment improvement programme, *improve it*, included proposals to move ahead with managed weekly collections alongside targets to significantly reduce landfill tonnages and increase recycling of waste. Managed weekly collections were implemented in September 2012.

Landfilled Waste and Recycling

- 1.3 The *improve it* programme aims to deliver transformational change in a number of environment services including Waste Services. The most significant waste targets were to reduce landfill tonnages to 118,000 tonnes (from 137,247 in 2012/13) and increase the percentage of waste that is recycled to 50%.
- 1.4 Significant progress in implementing the changes required to deliver both service improvements and landfill savings has been made including the implementation of managed weekly collections in September 2012.

2. Main report

Landfill

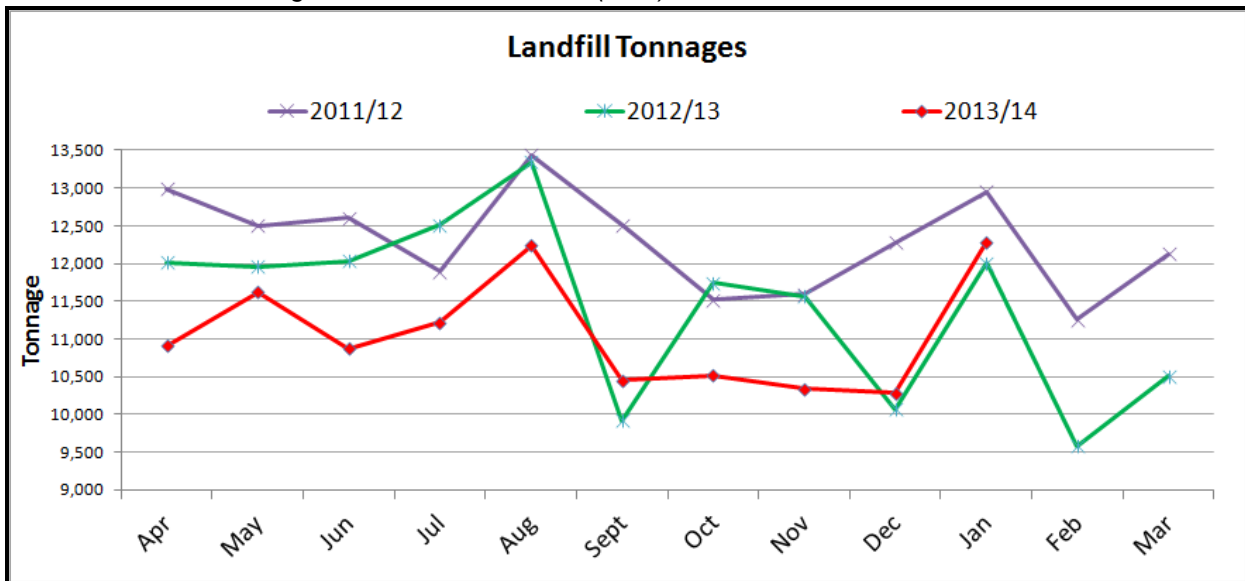
2.1 Landfill tonnage for 2013/14 (see Table 1 below) is 110,733 tonnes for the year to January 2014 - this is a reduction of 6425 tonnes (5.48%) on the same period in 2012/13.

2.2 The projection for landfill to the year end, taking into account seasonal fluctuations, is currently 130,824 tonnes. This represents a reduction of 4.7%, or 6,425 tonnes on the year 2012/13. With landfill costs of £100.34 per tonne, this reduction represents a saving of £664,684.

Table 1: Landfill Tonnes 13/14 & 12/13 YTD November 2013

	YTD January 2014	YTD January 2013	Difference		13/14 Target	13/14 Year End Forecast	12/13	Difference	
			Tonnes	%				Tonnes	%
Landfill	110,733	117,158	6425	5.48%	118,000	130,824	137,246	6,425	4.7%

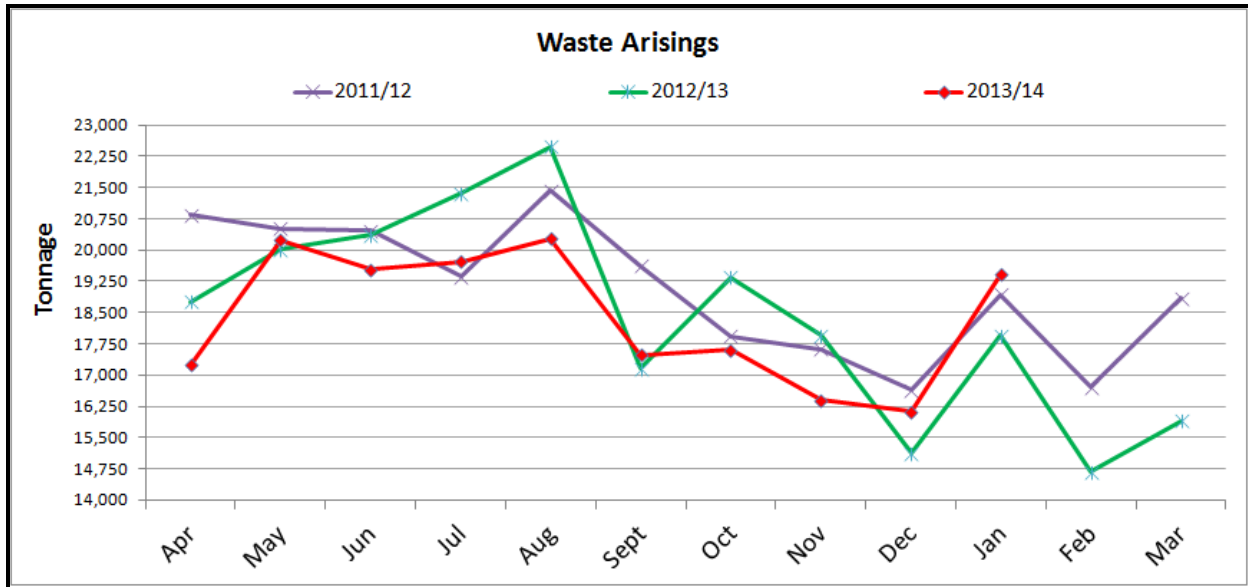
Chart 1: Landfill tonnages 11/12, 12/13 & 13/14 (YTD)



2.3 There is not a simple correlation between the amount of waste landfilled and the amount recycled - there are multiple factors impacting on the amount of waste going to landfill that make it a complex picture. The total amount of waste collected, the composition of that waste, as well as other seasonal factors, all impact upon performance. The total tonnage of waste has been falling each year (see Chart 2), with the amount of waste collected to January in 2013/14 being 3.4% less than for the same period last. This has contributed in part to a

reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill, but it has also contributed to a decrease in the recycling tonnages collected year to date (see sections 2.5 – 2.10). This is partly due to the amount of some recyclable materials such as paper in the waste stream decreasing in line with national trends and the general move by manufacturers to light weight packaging.

Chart 2: Total Waste Tonnages 2011/12 – 2013/14



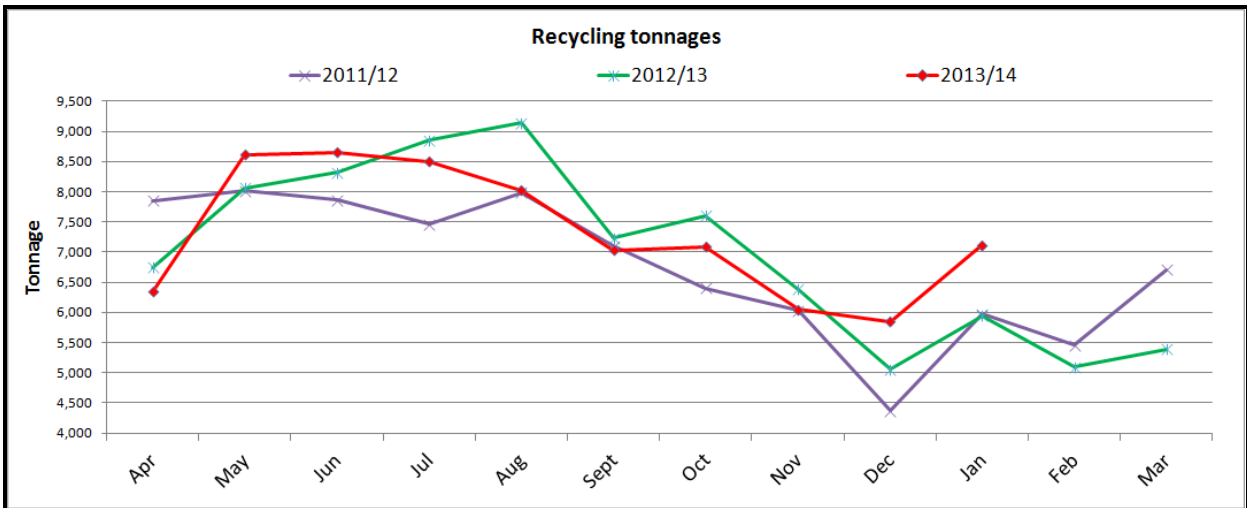
Recycling

2.4 The percentage of waste recycled (see table 3 below) including street sweepings between April 2013 and January 2014 is 39.8% compared to 38.5% for the same period in 2012/13. Although tonnages are slightly lower than the same period last year (see Chart 3), the decrease in the total amount of waste collected means that the percentage recycled has increased by 1.3% year to date.

Table 2: Percentage of waste recycled 2012/13 & 2013/14 YTD

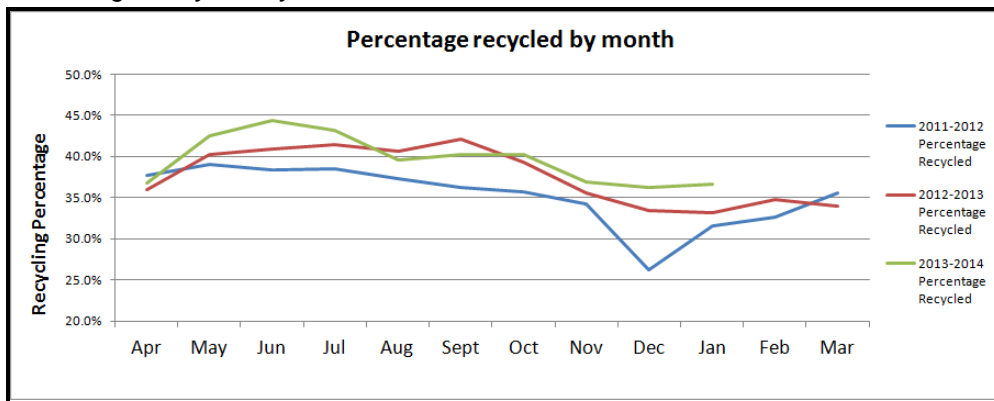
	YTD January 2014		YTD January 2013		Difference	
	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate
Recycling	73,291	39.8%	73,345	38.5%	-54	1.3%

Chart 3: Recycling Tonnes 11/12, 12/13 & 13/14 (YTD)



2.6 Chart 4 below shows the comparison of monthly recycling percentages for the last 3 years which shows that recycling percentages have shown significant improvement for most of 2013/14 to date.

Chart 4: Percentage Recycled by month 11/12, 12/13 and 13/14



2.7 The tonnage of kerbside box recycling for April 2013 to January 2014 combined is 12,376 tonnes, this is an increase of 510 tonnes (4.3%) on the corresponding period in 2012/13.

2.8 The tonnage collected through packaging banks and Community Recycling Centres (CRC) has also increased (see Table 4 below).

Table 3: Year to date recycling by scheme 2012/13 & 2013/14

Waste Stream	2013/14 (April-Jan)	2012/13 (April-Jan)	Difference
Kerbside Blue/Red Boxes	12,376	11,866	510
Kerbside Garden Waste	17894	18,722	-828
Food Waste	4292	3659	633
Recycling Banks (textiles, books, glass & paper banks)	5742	6576	-834
Packaging Banks (cardboard, plastics & cans)	2799	2471	328
Communal Paper Bins	1637	1577	60
Trade	4036	4119	-83
CRC	17345	15905	1440
Special Uplifts	2696	2705	-9
Street Sweepings	3848	5086	-1238

2.9 Based on performance to date in 2013/14, the current projected year end recycling rate (see Table 5 below) is 39.5%.

Table 4: Year End Recycling Tonnages 12/13 (forecast) & 11/12 (actual) 12/13 Year End Forecast

	12/13 Year End Actual		13/14 Year End Forecast		Difference	
	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	%
Recycling - All Waste	83,835	37.9%	86,076	39.5%	2241	1.3%

2.10 New contracts to extract recyclable material deposited in residual skips at the CRC sites, as well as waste obtained via manual street sweeping and the emptying of street litter bins, commenced in November 2013. Previously this waste was being sent to landfill. Since the contract commenced 1369 tonnes of waste has been diverted from landfill.

2.11 Following approval of the outline business case by this Committee on 27 August 2013, work is underway to implement a new redesigned kerbside recycling service which will generally replace the red and blue box scheme in a phased programme commencing summer 2014. It is anticipated that the new service will:

- Collect a wider range of materials;
- Require less separating of recyclables (excluding glass) into separate boxes; and
- Provide increased capacity.

It is estimated that these changes will lead to a 5% increase in the overall recycling rate in 2014/15.

- 2.12 Committee also requested that further work is undertaken to identify the most effective and affordable option for enhancing and expanding communal recycling provision in the high density and tenemental housing areas of the city. The outcome of this work is the subject of a separate report to this Committee. In the meantime, Waste Services have been making small scale improvements including new clearer labelling of recycling containers and providing new recycling banks in response to requests from elected members and local communities. Improvements to the maintenance and management of on street packaging and recycling banks and those at other locations such as supermarkets are also being drawn up.

Communication

- 2.13 A range of public engagement work is ongoing to promote changes in public behaviour to increase recycling and landfill diversion. This includes door knocking, improving and reviewing information provided on recycling services, engagement activity and promotional campaigns. A city-wide campaign to encourage food waste recycling is underway and will continue throughout March, promoting what food can be recycled and how.
- 2.14 Staff engaged in door knocking have switched from targeting low participation areas to targeting food waste recycling routes and focussing on those areas more demographically likely to recycle. This year to date (1 April 2013 – end of January 2014) 68,402 properties have been visited, with 27,758 residents being spoken to about recycling.
- 2.15 ARE, the successful Zero Waste food waste processing contractor, have offered to provide additional funding for the promotion of food waste and discussions are underway to agree the engagement of more recycling advisers to carry out additional door knocking.

Complaints

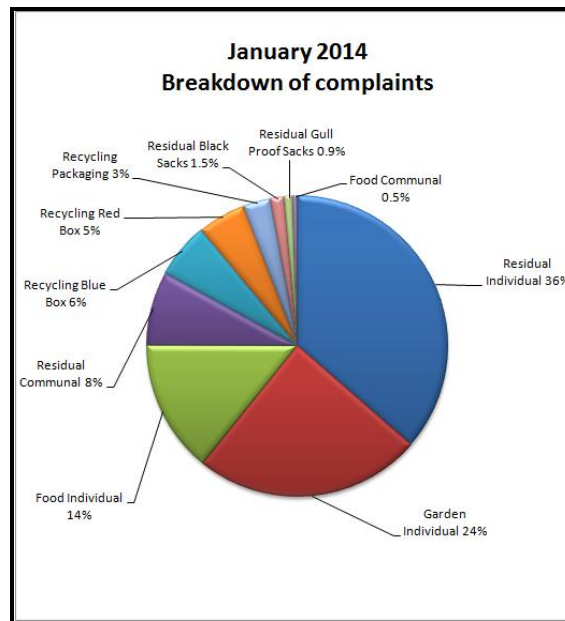
- 2.16 Weekly complaint numbers since 2011 are shown in Chart 5 below. The peak in complaints in September 2012 was associated with the implementation of new routes in refuse collection. Overall, there has been a downward trend in complaint numbers since then. It is worth noting when comparing complaint numbers with previous years, that food waste collections were piloted from

spring 2011 and rolled out across the city more widely during 2012/13. This added up to 200,000 additional collections per week.

2.17 The service received 2,674 complaints in the month of January against a target of 1,632 (63.8% worse than target).

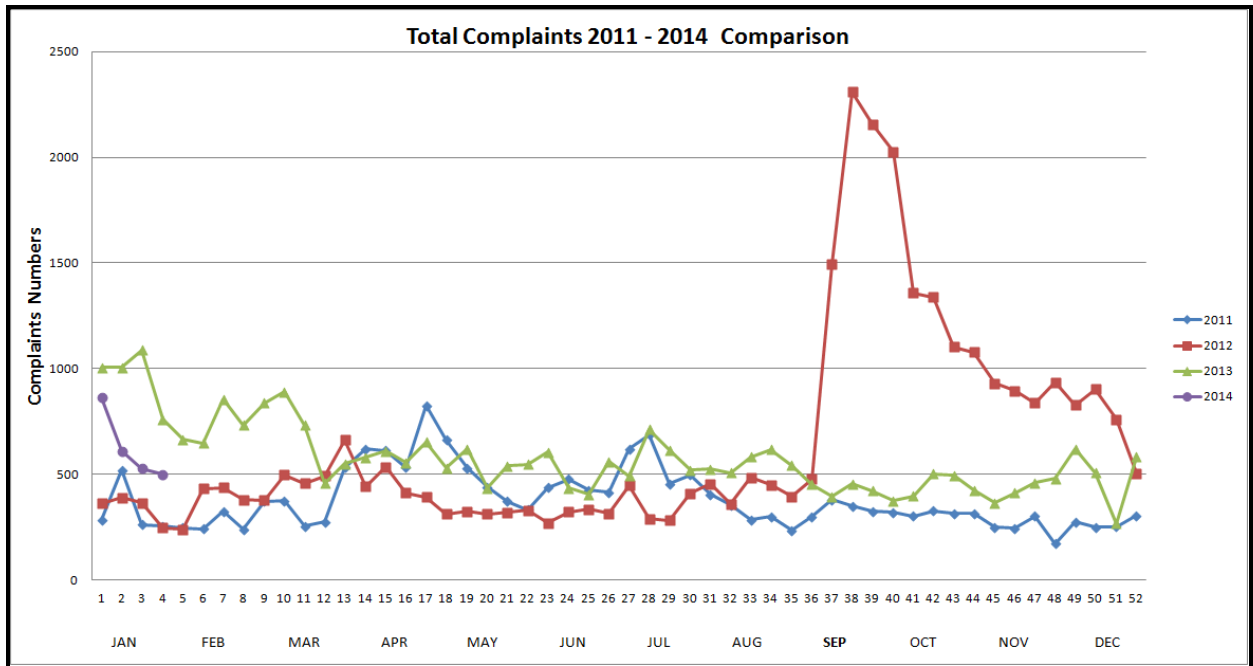
2.18 The majority of complaints in January were regarding residual refuse collections (36%). Chart 5 overleaf shows the full breakdown by service area. Missed collections are the subject of 93% of all complaints.

Chart 5: *Missed collection complaints – January 2014 by service*



2.19 Although the incidence of complaints is very small compared to the number of collections carried out (see Chart 6 below), it is acknowledged that there is never an acceptable level of complaints. Waste Services continue to work hard to reduce the number further. Rescheduled festive refuse collection arrangements contributed to the higher than usual number of complaints in January. The Service has held an initial review, with the aim of establishing best practice around the delivery of the festive service. When complete, lessons learned will be used to inform the delivery of the 2014/15 festive collections.

Chart 6: Total complaints per week January 2011 to January 2014



- 2.20 The Confirm On Demand environmental system went live in Waste Services and in the Contact Centre as scheduled on 16 December 2013. All enquiries, service requests and information requests are now being logged and progressed through the system. Assets are also being maintained using Confirm. In addition to Confirm On Demand, Confirm Connect (mobile technology) went live at Murrayburn – Community Waste Officers, Trade Waste Sales Advisors and Recycling Advisors are now able progress and log enquiries remotely. Confirm On Demand has been introduced to the front line supervisors in Refuse Collection who now have the responsibility of allocating work to their crews through the system. The implementation has gone relatively smoothly so far. The only issues occurring are primarily down to users learning and adapting to the new systems and processes.
- 2.21 Phase II of the Confirm roll out (Confirm Connect) has now commenced and is being rolled out via a phased programme, with the crews who service the packaging banks currently trialling the system. We anticipate that all refuse collection crews will be undertaking their routine and ad hoc work using Confirm Connect by April 2014.
- 2.22 The introduction of Confirm On Demand, with the associated increase in customer information and accuracy, is allowing us to revise our policies to provide a more customer focused service. The first policy that has been considered is the way we manage repeat complaints. Previously, due to systems limitations, we were only able to report on repeat complaints at a street level, rather than a customer level. Following the introduction of Confirm On Demand, we have developed a customer focused procedure, whereby complaints are tracked at a household level, regardless of what refuse service the complaint is about. This allows us to better address the root cause that has

led a customer to complain. The policy, which is currently being developed and will be outlined in full in the next report, defines a repeat complaint as a customer having cause to complain about any aspect of our service in an 8 week period.

- 2.23 A programme of staff engagement and route reviews is underway to improve the reliability of collections and focus attention on a right first time approach. A more detailed analysis of complaints is also being undertaken so that more targeted action can be taken to reduce the numbers.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To note the contents of the report.

Mark Turley

Director of Services for Communities

Links

Coalition pledges	P44: Prioritise keeping our streets clean and attractive. P49: Continue to increase recycling levels across the city and reducing the proportion of waste going to landfill. P50: Meet greenhouse gas targets including the national target of 42% by 2020.
Council outcomes	CO17: Clean – Edinburgh’s streets and open spaces are clean and free of litter and graffiti. CO18: Green – We reduce the local environmental impact of our consumption and production. CO19: Attractive Places and Well Maintained – Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm.
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4: Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Communications Activity

Appendix 1 – Communications Activity

Door Knocking

- This year to date (1 April 2013 end of January 2014, 68,402 properties have been visited, with face to face contact being made with 27,758 residents.
- Staff have switched from targeting low participation areas to targeting areas with those in the demographic categories which research shows are most likely to change their behaviour and focussing on food waste collection routes.
- ARE, the successful Zero Waste food processing contractor, have offered to provide additional funding for the promotion of food waste and discussion are underway to agree the engagement of additional recycling advisers to carry out door knocking.
- Participation studies have been carried out in areas with higher and lower food waste tonnage to get a better understanding of current behaviour. This data is currently being analysed to produce actions and areas to focus on for forthcoming food waste communications and engagement work.
- Food waste advisors have also concentrated on areas with the new communal service as this was rolled out.

Renewing the signage on communal recycling bins

- A programme to replace stickers on recycling banks is 80% complete. This programme will be completed as soon as possible and residents in these areas will be surveyed to understand further how information can be improved.

Engagement

- Local groups that could be targeted will be identified e.g. those interested in sustainability / allotment holders etc and there is scope to see about joining up with other community groups such as mother and toddler groups etc, to reach out to different audiences and develop community champions.
- Staff continue to work with Changeworks and their volunteers.
- Different venues for additional events are being identified, e.g. road shows in supermarkets, leisure centres, cinemas, student campuses and Princes Street.
- Staff continue to work with neighbourhoods e.g. working in North neighbourhood where additional banks have been sited and properties highlighted by neighbourhood team visits.

Campaigns

- A further additional food waste awareness raising campaign has run and will be supported with a further phase of the campaign on what and how to recycle from January to March 2014. There will also be a strong digital element to campaign as a high percentage of residents are online. This will be combined with more traditional elements. This campaign will run up until March 2014. Whilst the focus will be on food the campaign will be flexible enough to broaden out to include all forms of recycling whenever the opportunity arises.

A student campaign ran on 2 September, with a Facebook competition and a series of events throughout Freshers Week to highlight the recycling services. Additional events also took place in January attended mainly by international students. Further engagement work is planned in June to coincide with the end of term when extra waste is being produced as students move out of their accommodation.