



**Developing a financially & environmentally
sustainable household waste
collection service**

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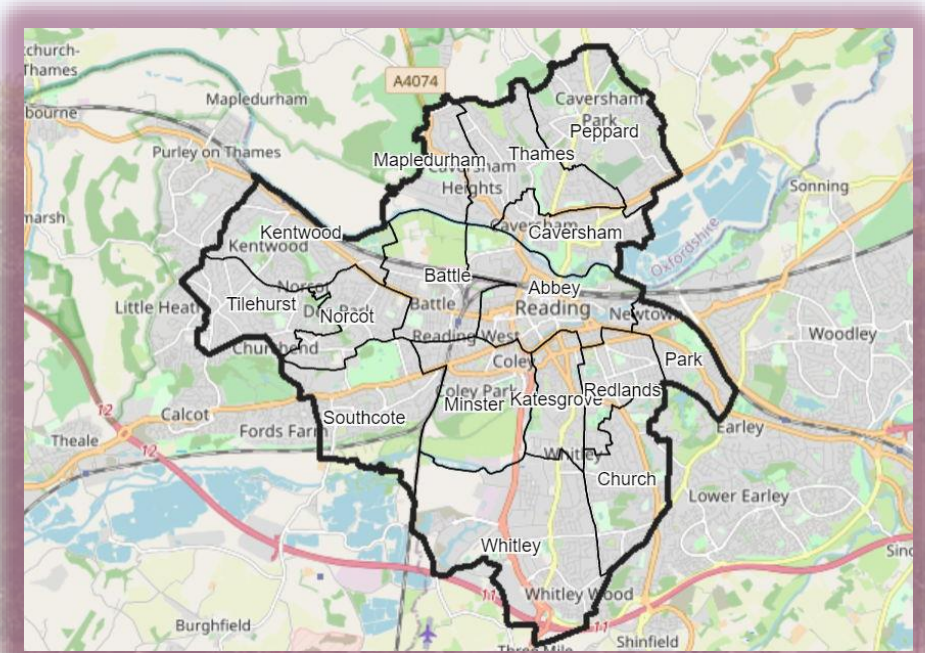
Reading Borough Council

Reading is a unitary authority and the principal regional and commercial centre of the Thames Valley, also a major retail and leisure destination

161,000 residents (ONS 2019)

73,000 properties that we collect waste from

Working in partnership with Bracknell Forest & Wokingham Councils in re3 waste disposal PFI contract



Household Waste Collection in Reading

Position in 2019

Alternate weekly collections:

Residual Bin 240 litre

Recycling Bin 240 litre

Garden Waste Bin 240 litre (On subscription)

Waste Recycling Banks across the Borough for glass collection

Recycling rate - 32%

Ranked 300 out of 338 in Local Authorities recycling table

The Council recognised the need for transformational change to its approach to household waste management



Options Considered

Policy committee report – 26th September 2019

5 options were evaluated, and business cases prepared for:

1. Weekly food waste collection added to current service
2. No food waste collection and fortnightly residual collection from smaller 140 litre bin
3. No food waste collection and 3 weekly residual collection
4. Weekly food waste and 3 weekly residual collection
5. Weekly food waste and fortnightly residual collection from smaller 140 litre bin

Needed to take into account - Government Resources and Waste Strategy 2018



New Household Waste Collection Service

Weekly food waste and alternate weekly collection



140 Litre Residual Waste Bin



240 Litre Recycling Bin



23 Litre Food Waste Container



5 Litre Food Waste Caddy



Local Recycling Banks



240 Litre Garden Waste Bin (On Subscription)

Introduction of a Recycling & Enforcement team consisting of 5 Officers



Designed to deliver 5 key objectives

- **Increase** the rate of **recycling from 32% to 43.5%**
- **Reduce** the amount of **residual waste** collected from household properties
- **Drive efficiency savings** through revised round scheduling and reduced residual waste treatment costs
- **Reduce carbon emissions** from both collection and waste treatment processes
- **Reduce** the revenue **cost-of-service provision by £342k**



Project Phases

Delivered in 3 phases:

- 1. Early adopter roll out – 3,300 varied households**
- 2. Phase 1 – 56,000 residential households**
- 3. Phase 2 – 14,000 – high and low rise flats**

Learnings from five early adopter areas:

- Increase understanding and aims of the project
- Reduce levels of contamination
- Understand barriers to participation in the project
- Inform effective communication channels in time for Phase 1



Result of the pandemic

Need to revise timetable

Original timetable

- Early adopter areas service (3,300) properties begins 6th July 2020
- Phase 1 service to 56,000 properties to begin 1st October 2020
- Phase 2 service to 14,000 high level flats to begin later in 2021 – once Phase 1 had been successfully implemented

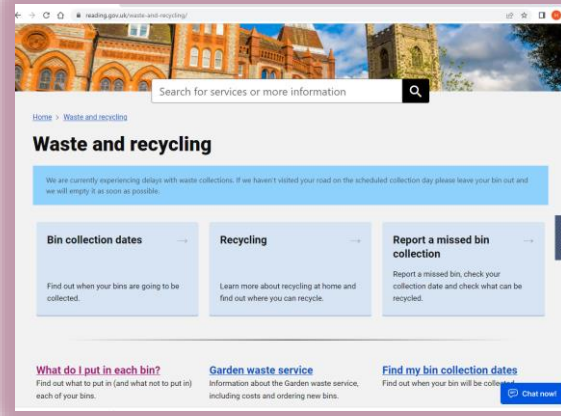
Revised timetable

- Early adopter areas service (3,300) properties began on the 5th October
- Phase 1 service to 56,000 properties due to begin 1st February 2021
- Phase 2 service to 14,000 high level flats due to begin later in 2021, once Phase 1 had been successfully implemented



Project Delivery

- All rounds were rescheduled and routes optimised
- New Whitespace in cab system introduced
- New 2 year collection calendars delivered to residents
- 5 Food waste vehicles were procured
- Additional waste operatives were recruited
- New 140 litre bins, food waste containers and food waste caddies provided
- Enhanced website information including frequently asked questions page
- Additional Customer Fulfilment Centre staff



Supported by:

- Member all party Task & Finish Group
- Extensive communications campaign
- Officer Project team



Communication Campaign

- Video Q&As with Councillors and waste operatives showing how it works
- Livery of all waste vehicles
- Promoted on social media
- Article in residents magazine (and follow up article) to 70,000 households
- Several articles in residents email to 100,000 residents
- Subsequently also named the food waste trucks to help engage children with food waste



Results of introducing the new service

Deliverables Achieved

- An **increased and sustained recycling rate of 52%** from 32%
- **2.5kg's** of food waste per participating household, per week, against a target of 1.4kg (2.7kg at peak)
- **Carbon saving of 4,700 tonnes** per annum against historic operations
- **Efficiency achieved** through revised round scheduling and reduced residual waste treatment costs
- **A net revenue cost saving of £500k**



Sustained throughout 21/22 and to date!



What's next?

- Complete Phase 2 roll out
- Continue electrification of RCV fleet
- Further reducing contamination levels
- Preparation for Environment Act changes

