

# **Scottish Borders Council**

## **Garden Waste Removal**

**Ross Sharp-Dent - Waste Manager**

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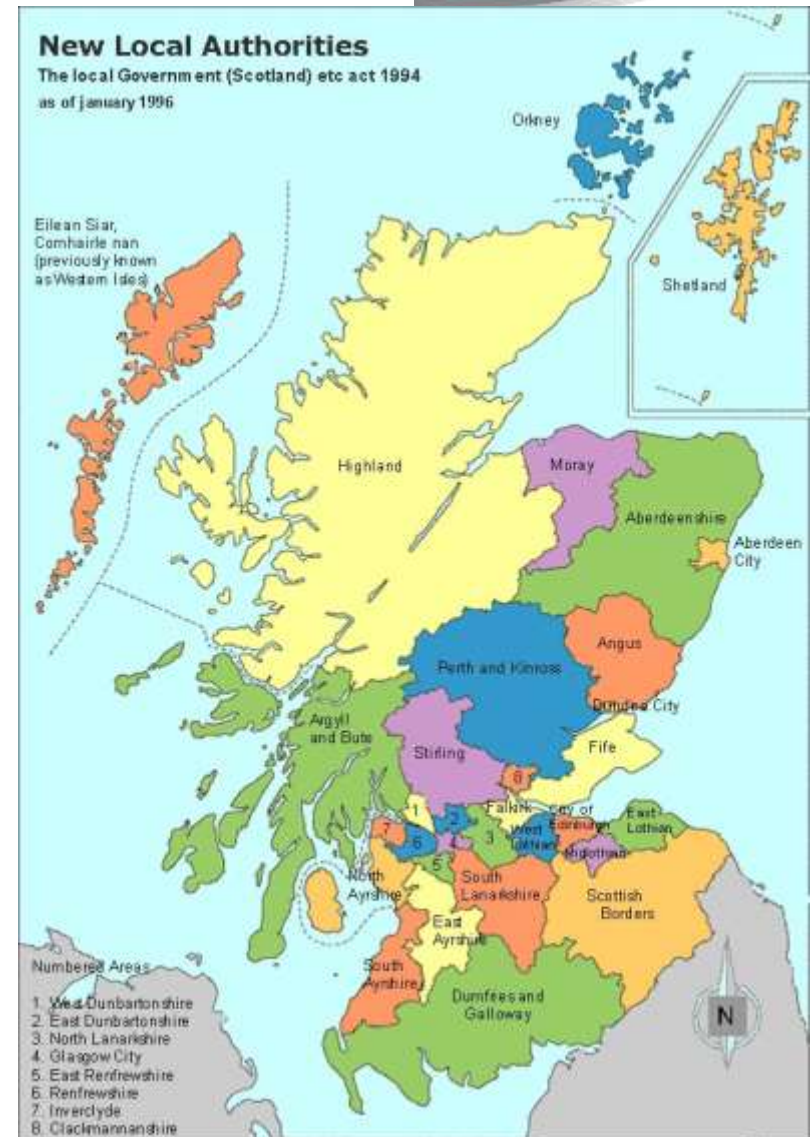
# CONTEXT

## Area

- 6<sup>th</sup> largest local authority in Scotland
- 4,732sq km

## Population density

- Ranked 7<sup>th</sup> least populated local authority in Scotland
- 24 people per sq km



## Households

Approximately 57,000:

- ~38,000 urban
- ~19,000 rural

## Population

Approximately  
113,000



## Kerbside Collection Service (2013/14)

Collection Type	Capacity	Frequency	Coverage
Residual Waste	180 litre	AWC	100%
Dry Mixed Recyclate (DMR)	240 litre	AWC	100%
Garden Waste	180 litre	AWC - Mar to Nov  4 Weekly - Dec to Feb	~38,000 h/hlds  Just urban areas (within 30mph limits)

- Garden Waste Tonnage:

Source	Annual Tonnage
Kerbside	6,000
Community Recycling Centre	2,000
Parks Department	600
Total	8,600

- Large contribution towards household recycling rate i.e. 6%
- Costs £610,000 per annum to provide

- Rural areas consistently raised equality issues
- Pressure to expand service to rural areas
- High customer satisfaction levels
- Service well liked by residents
- Not a statutory service
- Council required to bridge £28 million p.a. budget deficit by 2017/18



# GARDEN WASTE REVIEW

1. Status Quo
2. Withdrawal of the service
3. Charged for service in urban areas
4. Charged for service to the whole of the Borders
5. Co-mingled collection with food waste

# Key reasons for withdrawing Service



- No statutory requirement to provide the service
- 4 out of 9 rural local authorities do not provide a kerbside service
- One third of households in the Borders did not receive the service
- Potential £450k per annum saving
- It will help protect other key statutory services provided by the Council

- Additional financial pressure of providing food waste collections
- Alternative disposal options:
  - Home composter available to all affected households
  - Improved access to Network of Community Recycling Centres to be increased
  - Capital investment in existing CRC
  - As a last resort garden waste can be put in residual bin

# COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

- Householder Leaflet/Guidance
- Issued to all affected households





- Garden waste bin lid sticker

**GARDEN WASTE  
COLLECTIONS STOP  
31 MARCH 2014**

**For more info log on to:  
[www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling)  
or call 0300 100 1800**



- Local Press Adverts



**KERBSIDE GARDEN  
WASTE COLLECTIONS END  
31 MARCH 2014**

**Garden waste roadshows  
coming soon**

Visit one of the garden waste roadshows being held across the Scottish Borders in March, April and May.

Find out about:

- Composting at home
- How to order a free home composter
- Taking your garden waste to a Community Recycling Centre

For roadshow dates and venues, please check the Council's website or the information leaflet sent to all affected households

**[www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling)  
0300 100 1800**



## Implementing the decision comprehensive Communications Plan:

- Posters



**Kerbside garden  
waste collections**

**What can you do with garden waste?**  
You can compost at home and take advantage of our **FREE** compost bin offer or take it to a community recycling centre.

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**What can you do with your garden waste bin?**  
Please keep your bin if you can find a use for it. We will collect unwanted bins over the summer. Check out collection schedules in the summer edition of SB Connect magazine.

Visit one of the 16 roadshows being held in March, April and May.  
Find out dates and venues at [www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling)

More info:  
🌐 [www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling)  
☎ 0300 100 1800



Scottish  
Borders  
COUNCIL

# Removing the Garden Waste Service



## Implementing the decision comprehensive Communications Plan:

- Bus Rear Poster
- X 13 buses

A green rectangular poster with white and dark green text. The text reads: "Garden Waste compost at home or take it to a Community Recycling Centre". Below this, there are two website URLs: "www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling" and "www.askorganic.co.uk". In the bottom right corner, there are two logos: a circular logo with "ASK" and the Scottish Borders Council logo.

**Garden Waste**  
**compost at home or take it to a**  
**Community Recycling Centre**

[www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling) | [www.askorganic.co.uk](http://www.askorganic.co.uk)

ASK Scottish Borders COUNCIL

- **Roadshows**
- 16 over 8 days – March, April & May
- ASK Organics – Composting partners
- Approximately 300 attended

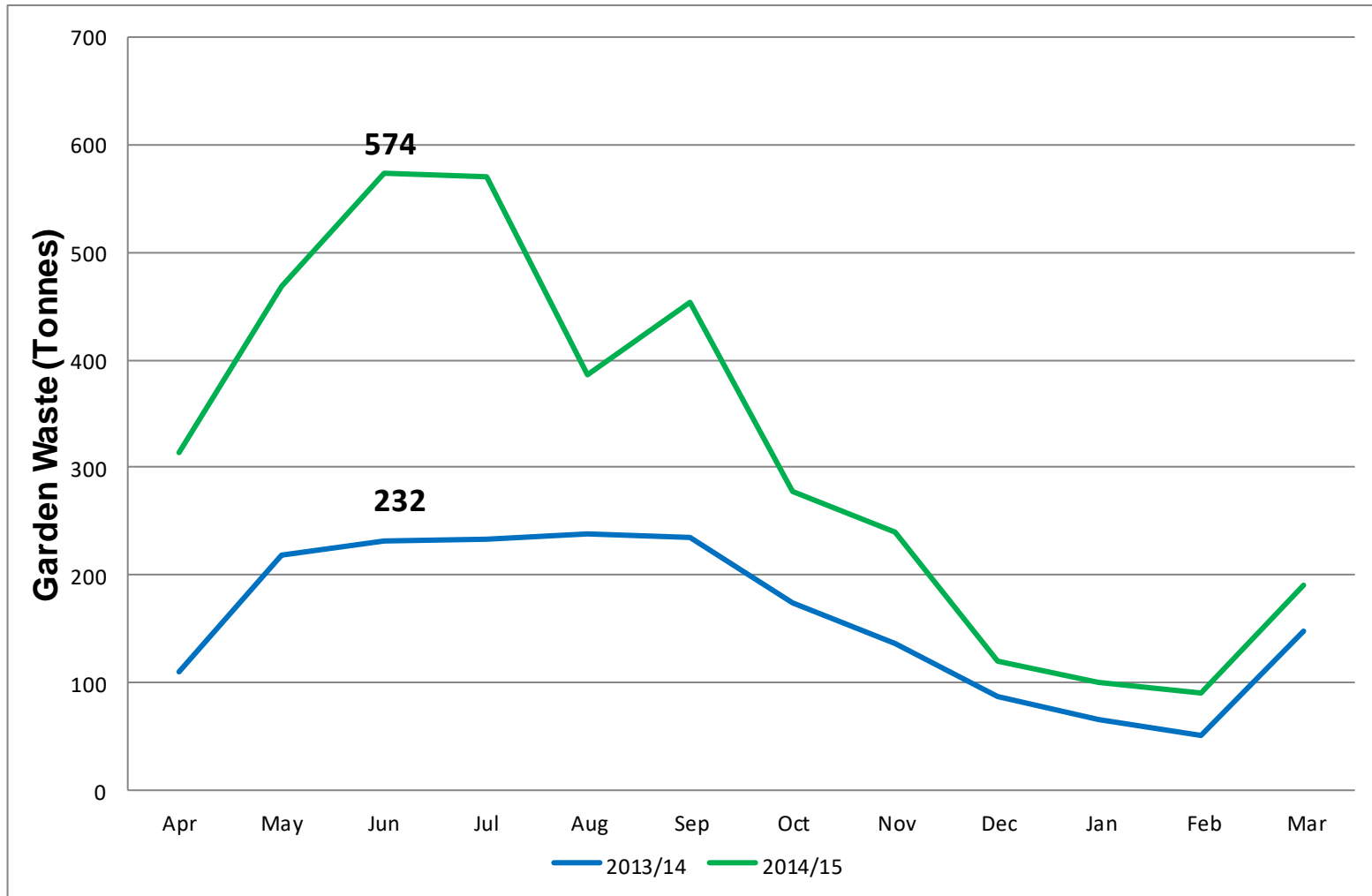


# IMPACTS OF REMOVING THE SERVICE

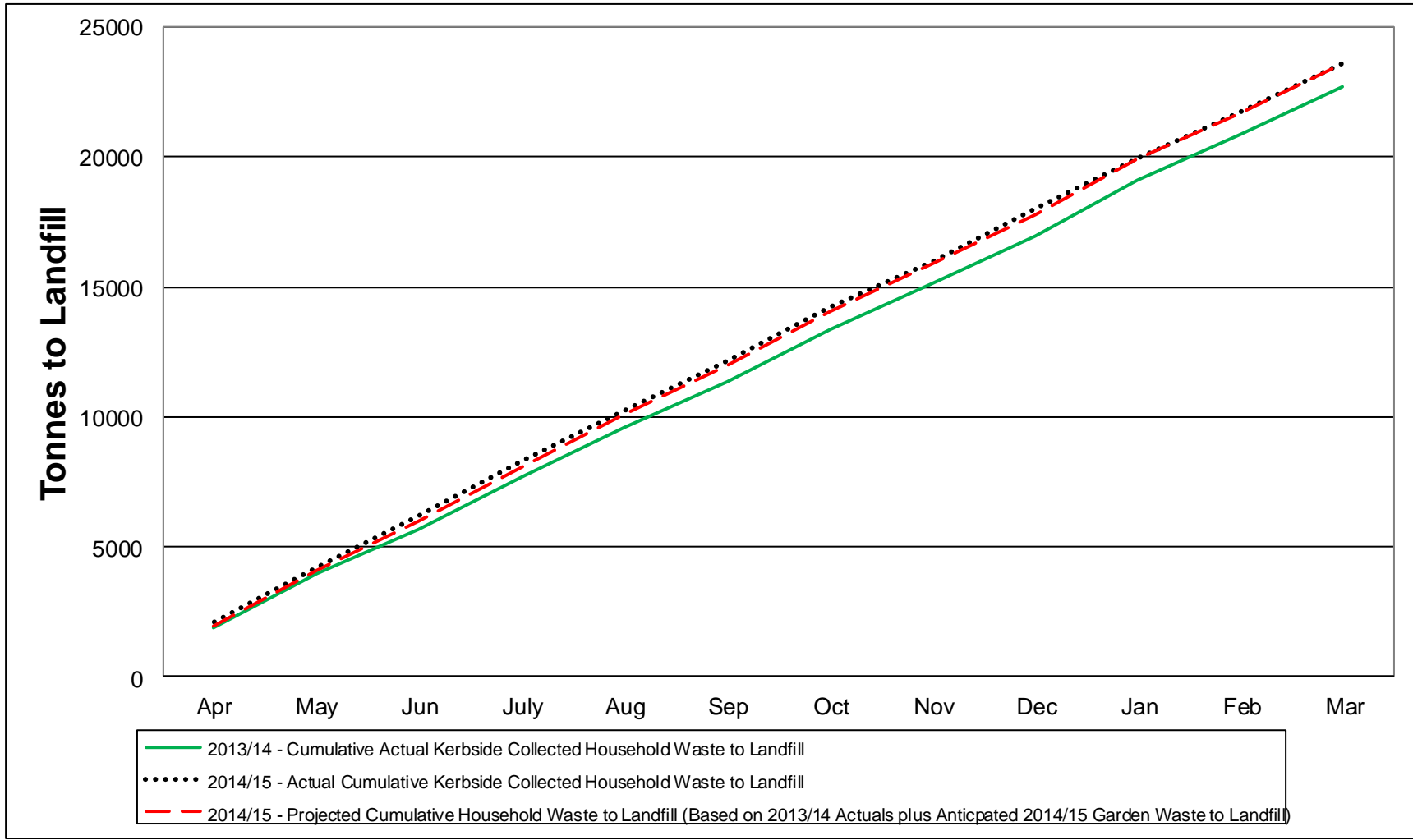
- 3,500 compost bins issued free of charge
- 5 private sector organisations set up to provide kerbside garden waste collections Services.

- Anticipated garden waste displacement:
  - 50% - Composted at home or lost from the system
  - 35% - Taken to Community Recycling Centres
  - 15% - Put into the general waste bin
  
- Estimated household recycling rate will reduce by 6%

# Impact on CRC's

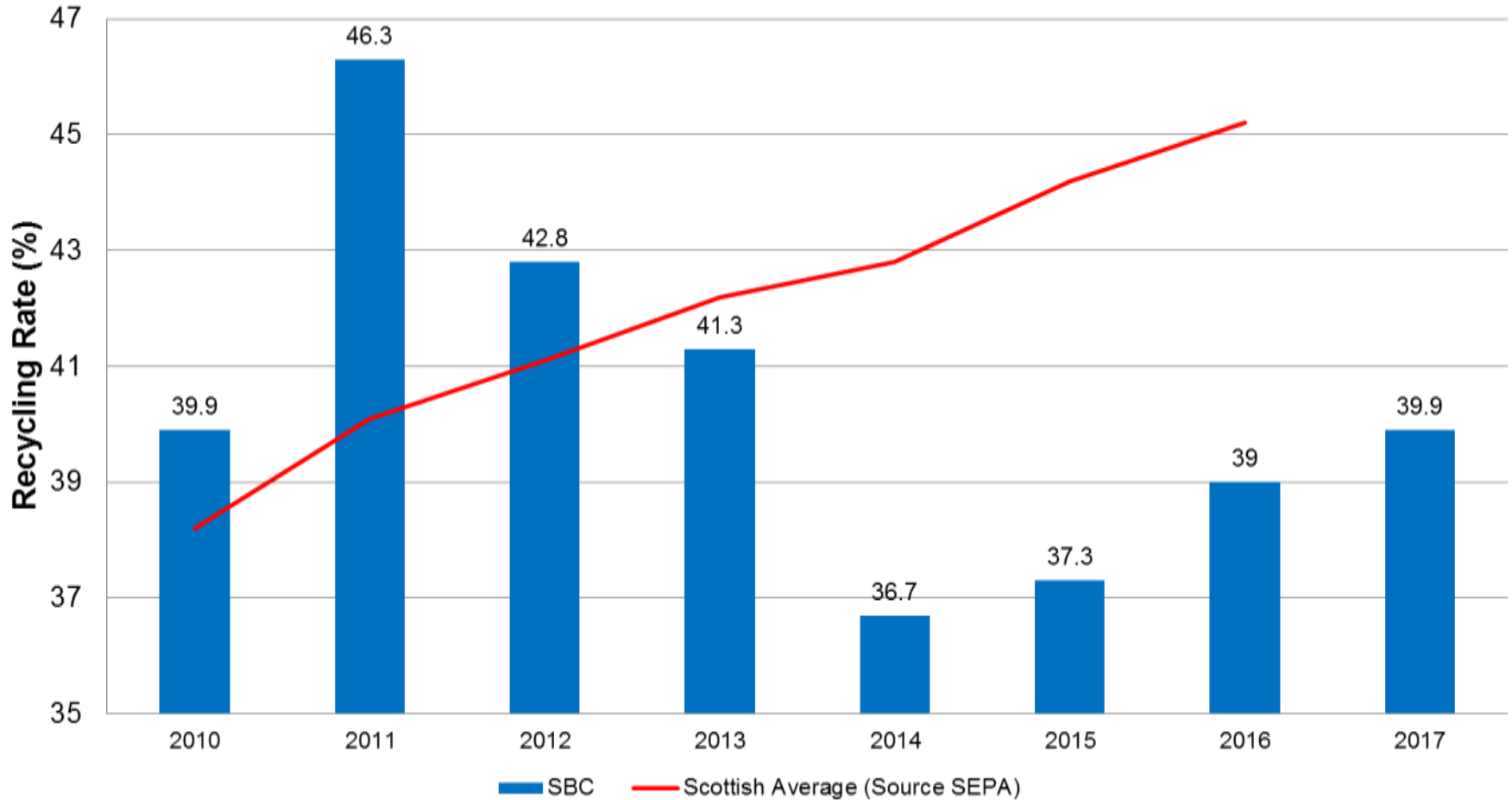


# Impact on Household Waste to Landfill

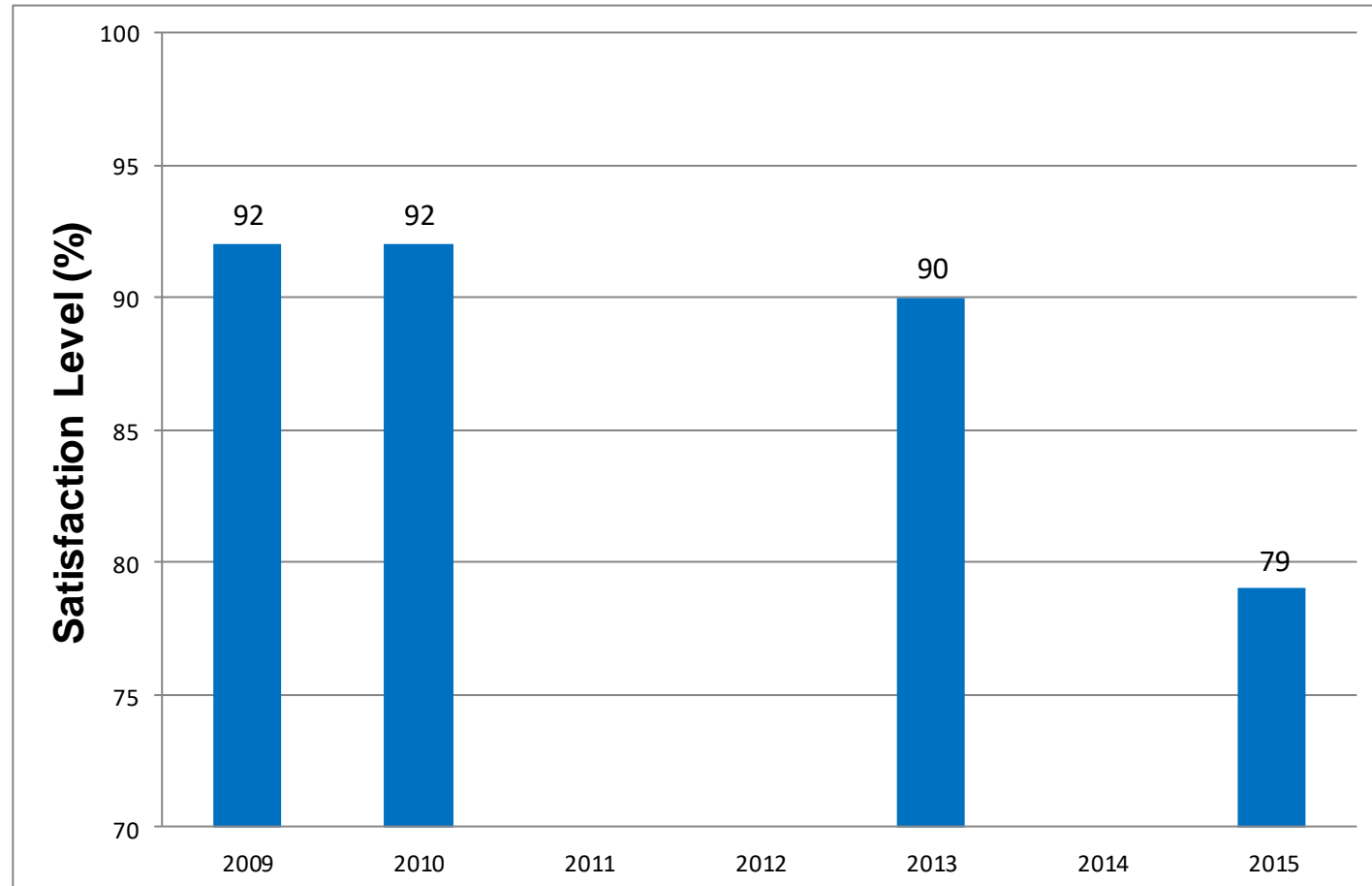




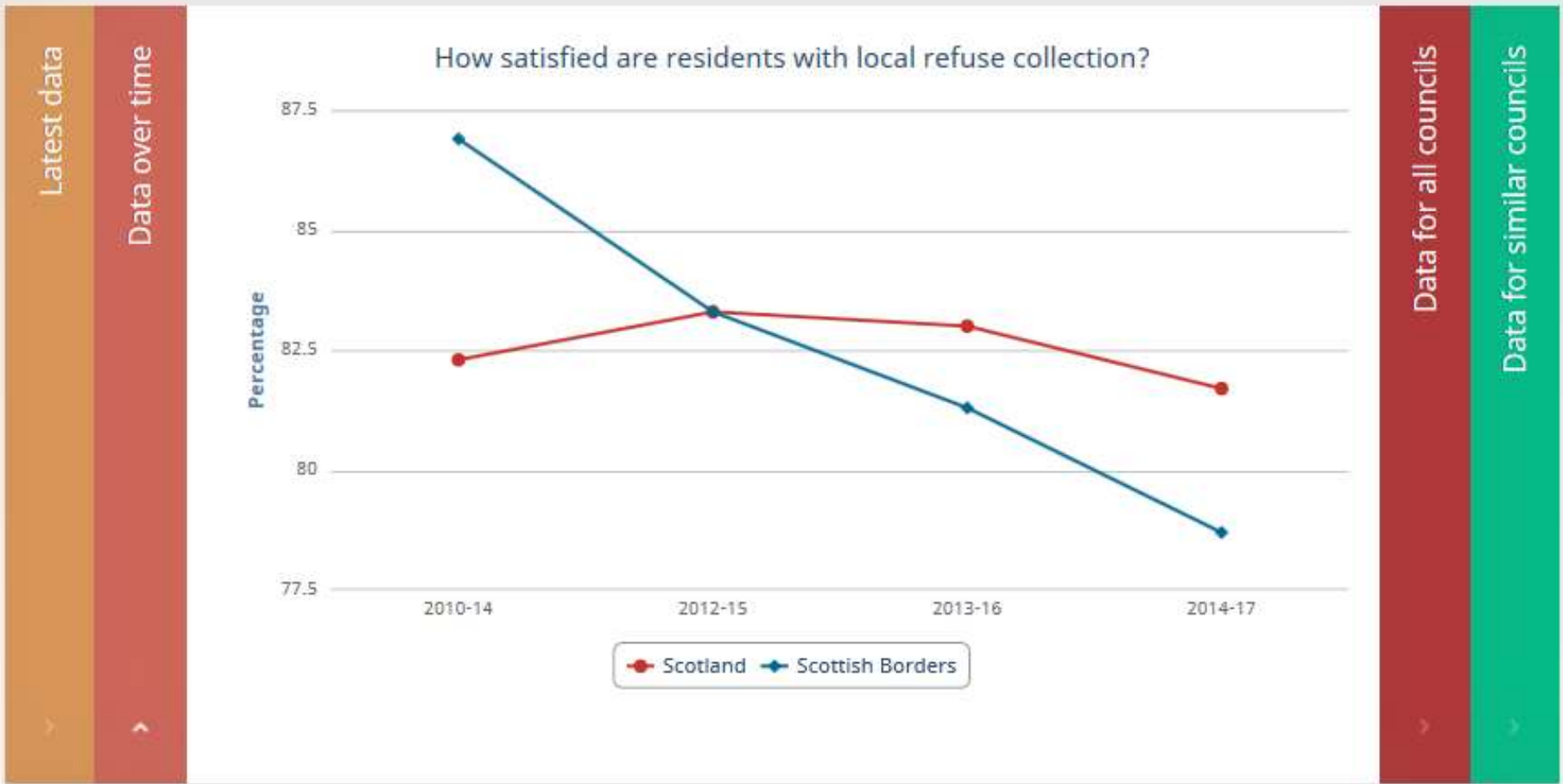
# Impact on Recycling Performance



## SBC Household Survey



## Local Government Benchmarking Framework



# CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNT

# High Profile Decision

## General Questions - Scottish Parliament: 6th February 2014

The Scottish Parliament

Subscribe



## General Questions - Scottish Parliament: 6th February 2014

The Scottish Parliament

Subscribe



7:50 AM, THU 06 DEC 2013

**"This has been a very difficult decision for the council to make"**

Scottish Borders Council have revealed plans to stop collections of garden waste.

The local authority hope to save £450,000 a year by stopping their garden waste service.

They have also revealed proposals to provide food waste bins to a number of Border towns, and there are plans to open a recycling centre in Kelso.

The plans go before councillors next week.



- The Green Bin Petition – 7,675 signatories
- Main issues:
  - Recycling centres failed to cope with increased demand
  - Service withdrawn before new Kelso CRC developed
  - Anecdotal evidence of increased fly tipping
  - Increased car movements
  - No consultation
- Discussed at Petitions Committee on 23 October 2014

- Garden Waste Motion proposed at Council 30 October 2014 requesting:
  - Letter to be issued to all Rural Community Council's outlining support available
  - Discuss options to work with 'Resilient Communities'
  - Develop specific webpage to raise awareness of private sector contractors providing a garden waste collection service.
  - Further communication.
- Update on Garden Waste Motion presented to Council on 2 April 2015.

# Summary



- The decision to withdraw the service remain sound:
  - Non-Statutory Service
  - £450k per annum saving
  - Helped to protect other key services
- Our estimated displacement figures were surprisingly accurate
- Recycling performance reduced significantly

- Satisfaction levels reduced
- We didn't cope with the increased throughput at CRC's:
  - Not enough capacity
  - Poor site design
  - Staff moral impacted by negative feedback
  - Increased complaints regarding service
- The private sector are likely to fill the gap in the market

## **Advice if you are considering withdrawing your Garden Waste Service:**

- Ensure you undertake a detailed public consultation prior to taking any decisions
- Do not under estimate how much the public like the garden waste service
- Invest in your CRCs before removal of the service
- Ensure you have a detailed communication campaign
- Expect your customer satisfaction levels to reduce

**Thank You**

# Removing the Garden Waste Service

## Implementing the decision comprehensive Communications Plan:

- Councillors Briefing Note

Note 2 - February 2014

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE [www.scotborders.gov.uk](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk)

**Garden Waste Service Removal**  
Councillors Briefing Note



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Significant progress has been made since the decision to remove the kerbside garden waste service was confirmed at the full Council meeting on 12 December 2013.

The key focus has been around planning and developing communications to affected householders with a view to clearly explaining why the decision was made, what to do with garden waste from 1 April, how to order a free home composter and what to do with garden waste bins.

We will be extensively promoting the 16 public information roadshows that are being held over eight days in March, April and May. We hope to engage with as many householders as possible during these sessions which will have both Ask Organic and our own staff attending. Orders will be taken for a free composter at these roadshows. Please feel free to drop in.

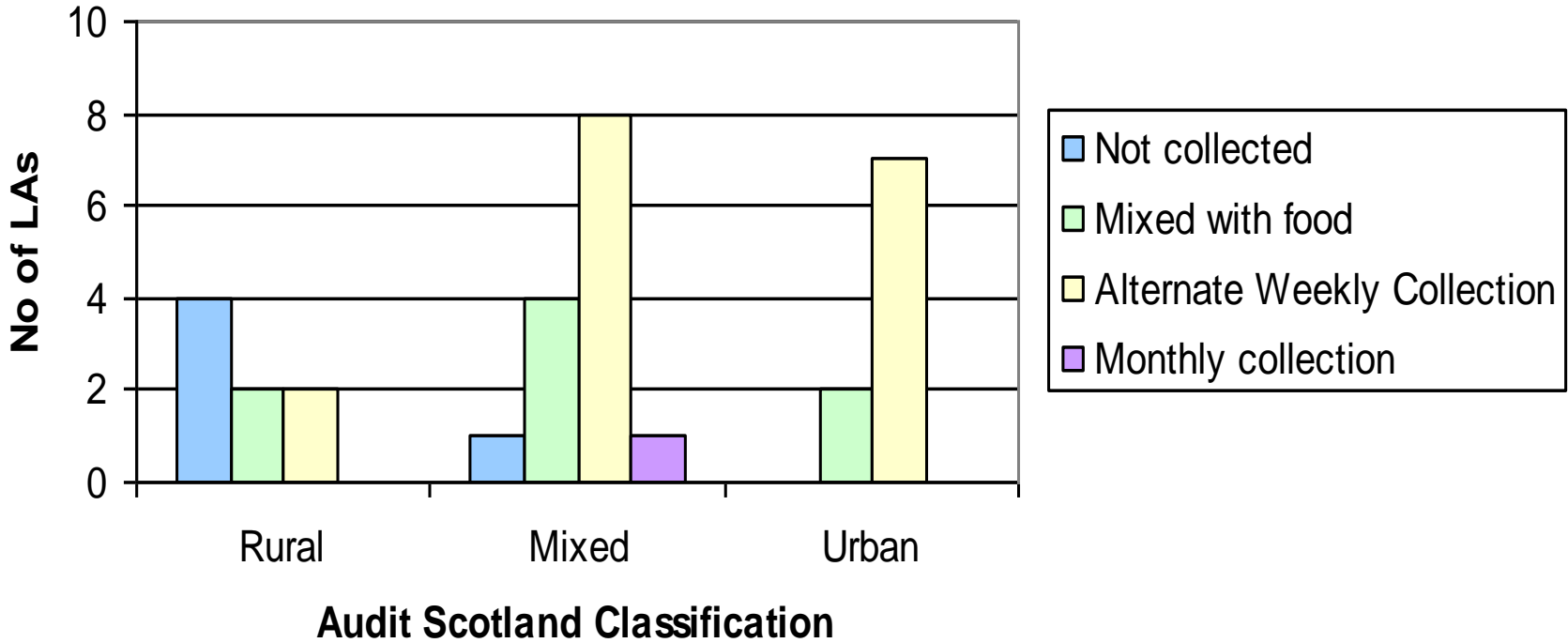
## December 2013 – Council Approved:

- Integrated Waste Management Strategy
- New Community Recycling Centre (CRC) to be developed
- Review of CRC trade waste policy **Key Statistics**
- Review of CRC locations, opening times and layout
- Food waste service to be implemented from summer 2015
- **Removal of kerbside garden waste collection service – 31 Mar 14**

## 2013/14 Scottish Local Authority Context

Type of Garden Waste Service	Number of Local Authorities
Separate kerbside collection	19
Co-mingled food and garden collection	8
Do not provide a kerbside collection	5

### Garden waste collection method by Local Authority





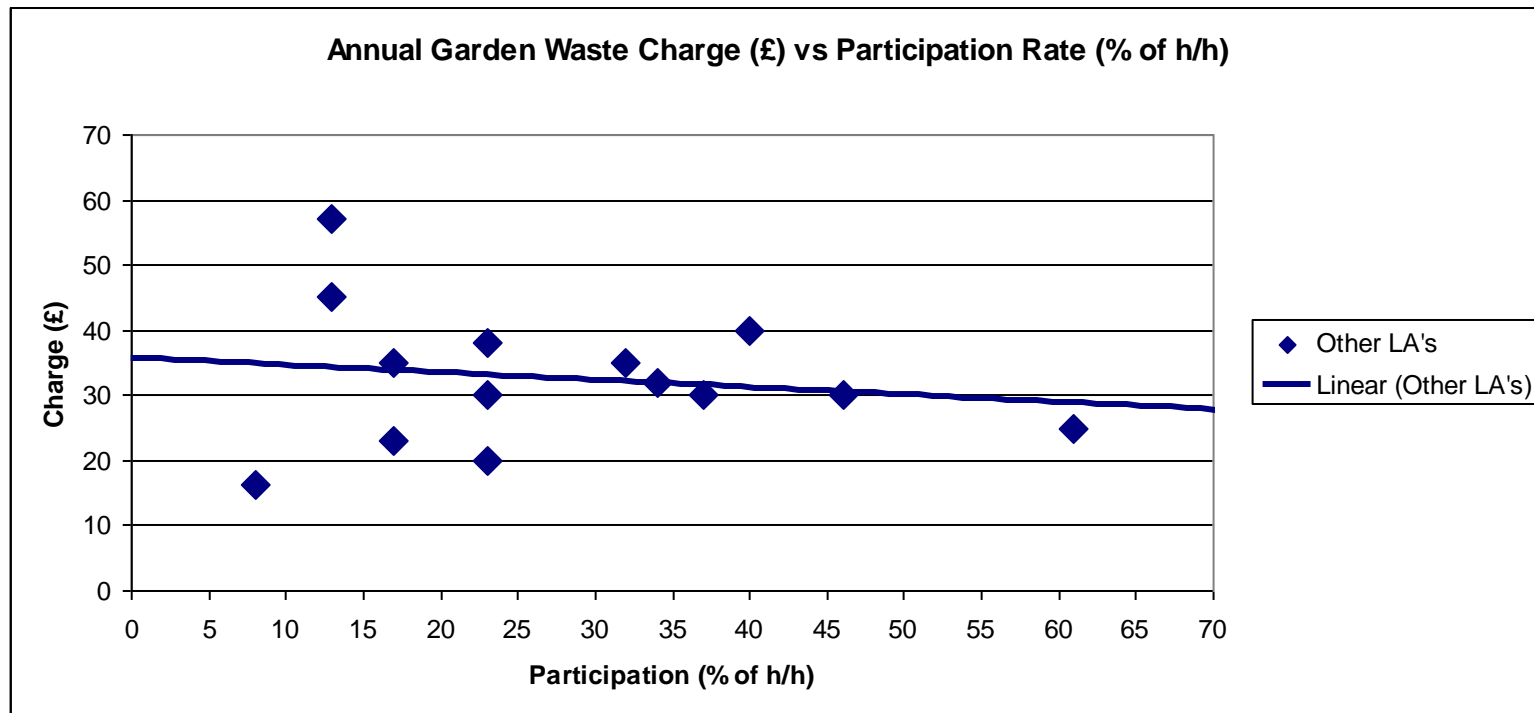
## National Summary of Household Kerbside Garden Waste Collections (WRAP 2010/11)

	Operate an organic scheme	Charge for the organic scheme
England	93%	29%
Wales	95%	32%
Scotland	88%	0%
Northern Ireland	81%	0%
UK	92%	25%

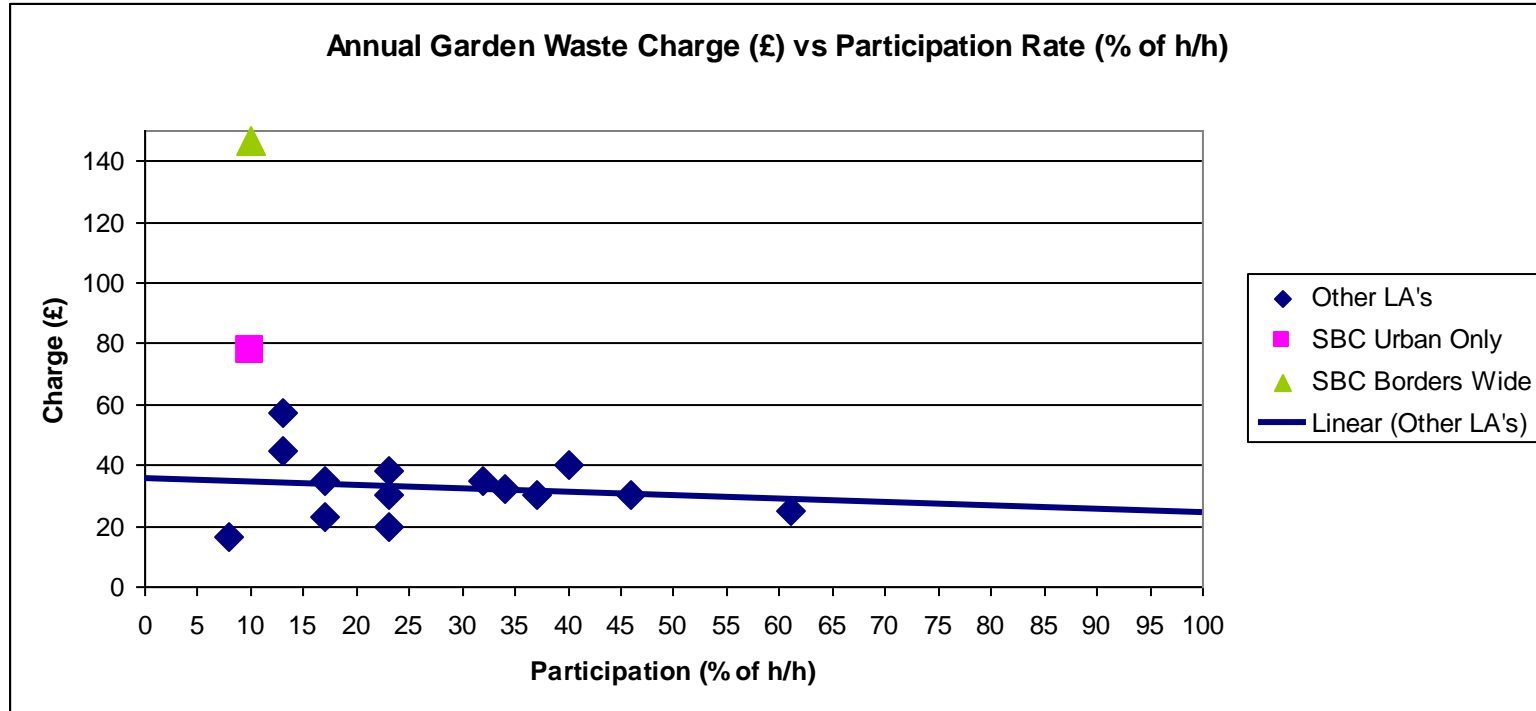
- Approx 25% of Local Authorities charge
- Average charge was £25/yr, with a maximum of £70/yr

## Review of LA's in England Charging for Garden Waste in 2013

- Sample size = 23 Councils in England
- Average charge = ~£35/yr
- Average participation rate = ~25% (only 14 Councils able to provide info)



## Charged for Service vs. Participation



- Unable to achieve 10% participation rate at proposed charges (i.e. £77.60/yr and £146.55/yr).

# Removing the Garden Waste Service

## Reaction so far:

- Negative press coverage
- 6 official complaints
- 140 enquiries
- 2,754 compost bin requests
- 2,600 compost bins delivered
- 5,275 ASK Organics website hits in April 2014
- Private sector interest in providing kerbside service has been good
- Increased usage at Community Recycling Centres
- Increase in requests for second residual waste bins

## Outstanding Actions:

- Collecting unwanted garden waste bins
- Storing garden waste bins
- CRC Trade Waste Policy
- Upgrading CRCs
- Development of new CRC

## Aims

- To ensure that the waste services delivered by the Council are 'fit for purpose' and financially sustainable in the long term.
- To provide clear strategic direction for municipal waste management in the Borders through to 2025.
- To guide future decision-making.
- One of the proposals was to withdraw the kerbside collection of garden waste.

## Strengths & Weaknesses Review

Option	DESCRIPTION	Saving	Annual Household Charge for Service	Recycling Impact	Delivers Savings	Take-Up Uncertainty	Pricing Uncertainty	Admin Issues	Public Reaction	Equity of Service
1	Status Quo : Do Nothing	£0	NA	GREEN	RED	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	RED
2	Eliminate Completely Garden Waste Service with 15% displacement	-£448,652	NA	RED	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	AMBER	RED	GREEN
3	Create a "Charged For" Service with existing Households	-£452,846	£77.60	AMBER	AMBER	RED	RED	RED	RED	RED
4	Create a "Charged For" Service for ALL Borders Households	-£444,319	£146.55	AMBER	AMBER	RED	RED	RED	RED	GREEN