



Charging for Garden Waste – the pros, cons, the costs

A lessons learned whistle stop tour!

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- 1. Background**
- 2. Decision making process**
- 3. Mobilisation**
- 4. Operational Considerations**
- 5. Impact**
- 6. Next Steps**





1. Background

- 146,118 households
- (111,500 with a brown garden waste bin / 95,000 typical garden properties)
- 240 litre **brown** wheeled bin (limit of one per house)
- Fortnightly (4 Week Xmas shut down)
- Operating for 10 years, growing from 3000t to 19,000t pa
- 12/13
Recycling performance: 40.5% (**15.3% garden waste**)



2. Decision making process (1)

- **History of political instability**
- **2012 Elections = single party (Labour) majority – opportunity to develop a clear corporate plan and tough decisions**
- **Budget deficit (£109 Million over three years – equating to £746 per household)**
- **Corporate Priority to protect the most vulnerable**
- **Cabinet requested a range of 13/14 “officer budget options” Summer 2012**
- **“What Really Matters” borough wide public consultation launched Autumn 2012**
- **Final budget options decided March 2013**

2. Decision making process (2)

- **Garden Waste Subscription Service Budget Option savings **£1.151M** over 3 years**
- **Consultation Results**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I support this under the circumstances	26.2%	1308
I accept this if it is absolutely necessary	22.1%	1101
I find this completely unacceptable	51.7%	2583

2. Decision making process (3)

- **Common comments/concerns documented during consultation:**

Expectation of excessive fly tipping

Increased landfill costs due to displacement to residual bin

Support from households without gardens

Some households concerned about affordability – a back door council tax increase

- **Cabinet took into account the responses and survey results and:**

Offered a £5 discount for online sign up

Promoted “sharing of brown bins with neighbours”

Promoted free alternatives (HWRC’s)

Provided a home composting budget (Y1: £25K, Y2: £50K, Y3: onwards £20K)

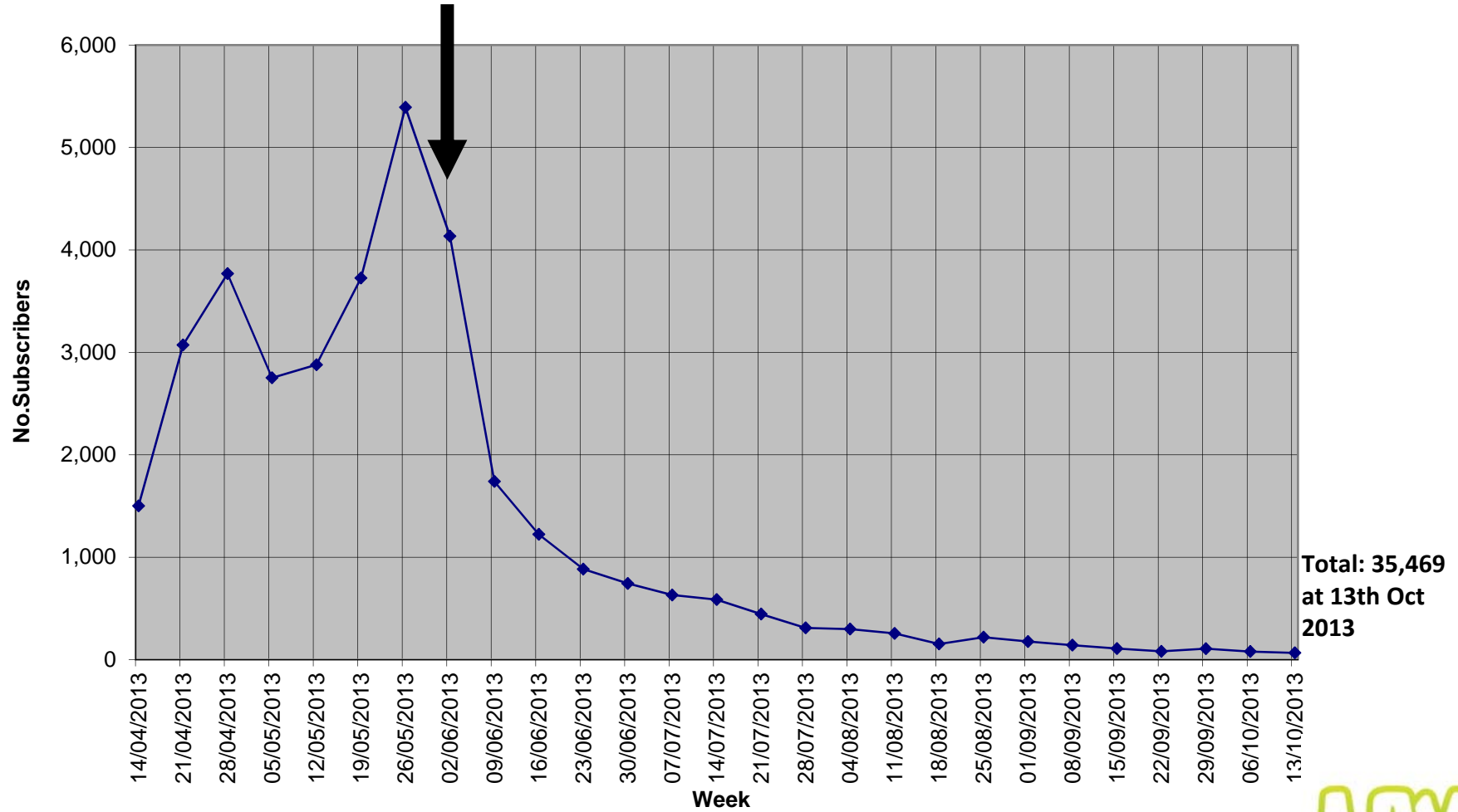
3. Mobilisation (1)

- **IT support critical –first meeting held 6 months prior to Cabinet decision -**
 - developed CRM customer service requests in test CRM system
 - Online payment option set up
- **Explored Direct Debit option – not enough time to procure and set up**
- **Notification of cessation of free service:**
 - Leaflet to all garden waste properties sent March/April (sample provided) -
 - Biffa stickered brown bins over 2 collection cycles March/April
- **Web info with FAQ's, home page link at all times.**
- **Call centre staff recruited and trained (5 with a view to increasing to 8)**
- **Opened for payments WB 14th April**
- **No Side Waste/ Lid down on residual bin (plus bin audit) being enforced by crews**

Weekly GW Subscription Total

Go Live date: 4th June

Week Total



Total: 35,469
at 13th Oct
2013



3. Mobilisation (2)

Issues:

- Late sign ups (.... Expectation to receive the service straight away – turn around time for permits 5 working days)
- Some residents not putting stickers (permits!) on the bins
- Anticipated media and political interest (MP/ward councillor/ opposition leader, local radio)
- Enquiries and complaints:
 - Petition (130 signatories) to remove the charge
 - Challenges to £5 online discount not available to all (pensioners)
 - Residents wanting a free bin because they collect up “council leaves”
 - Refund requests from residents who thought we had banned garden waste from the residual bin. (None given refund policy in place).

4. Operational Considerations/ Issues

- **High customer expectation** now they are paying
- **In-cab PDA's upgrade....** To cope with property level data
- **Outsourced waste collection service (Biffa)...** Lack of control over operational decisions
- **Crew motivation / buy in** (potential reduction in crews)
- **Brown bin-take back**
 - tender awarded (£300-£381 per tonne income -approx 100 bins per tonne) 42% of bins need to be collected (from 75,000 available) to cover collection costs (£80K budgeted for) Research shows that **average bin returns 35-40%**

4. Other Considerations/ Issues (2)

- Green Waste processor – Claims due to fall in tonnages
- Savings negotiations with waste collection contractor
- Use of offers/ deals – LA restrictions
- Pro-rata charging (or not!)
- Section 45/ Section 46 EPA: To ban or not to ban!

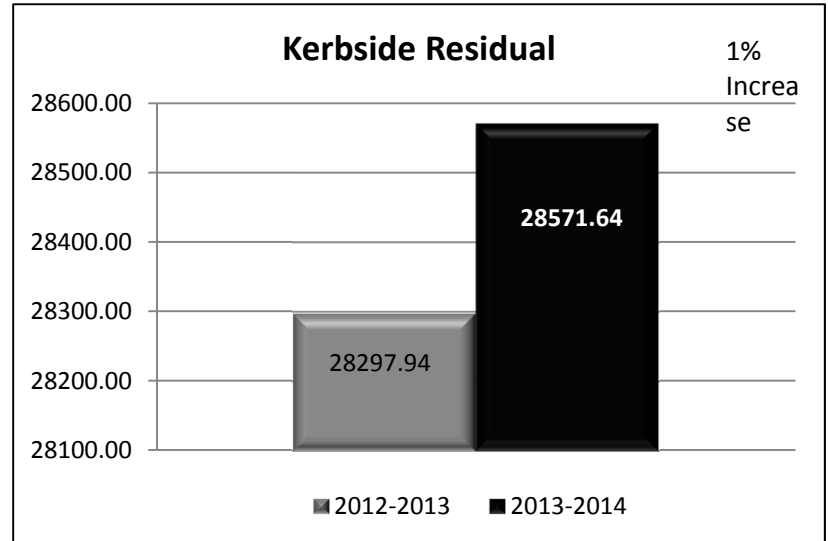
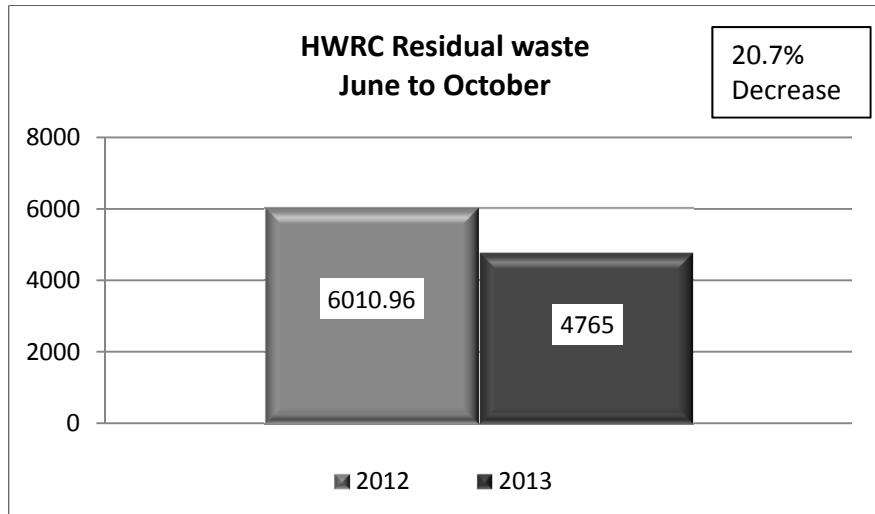
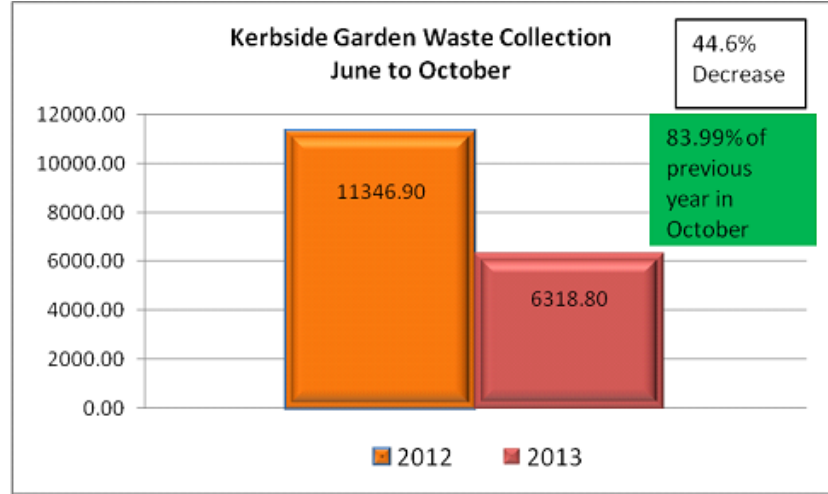
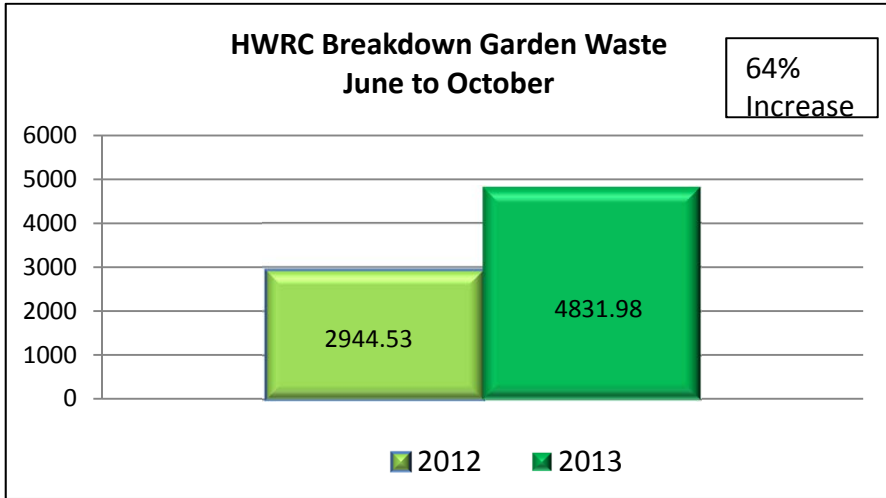
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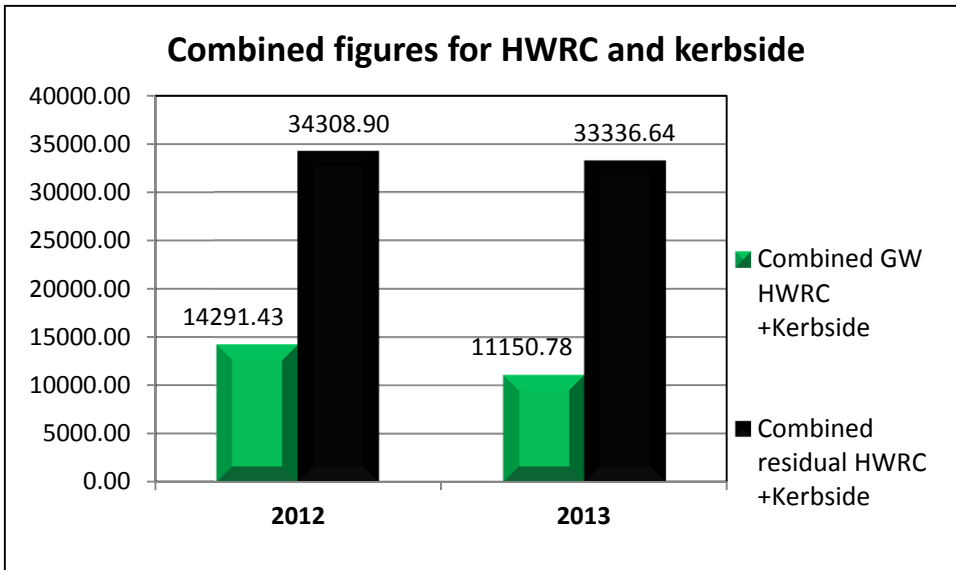
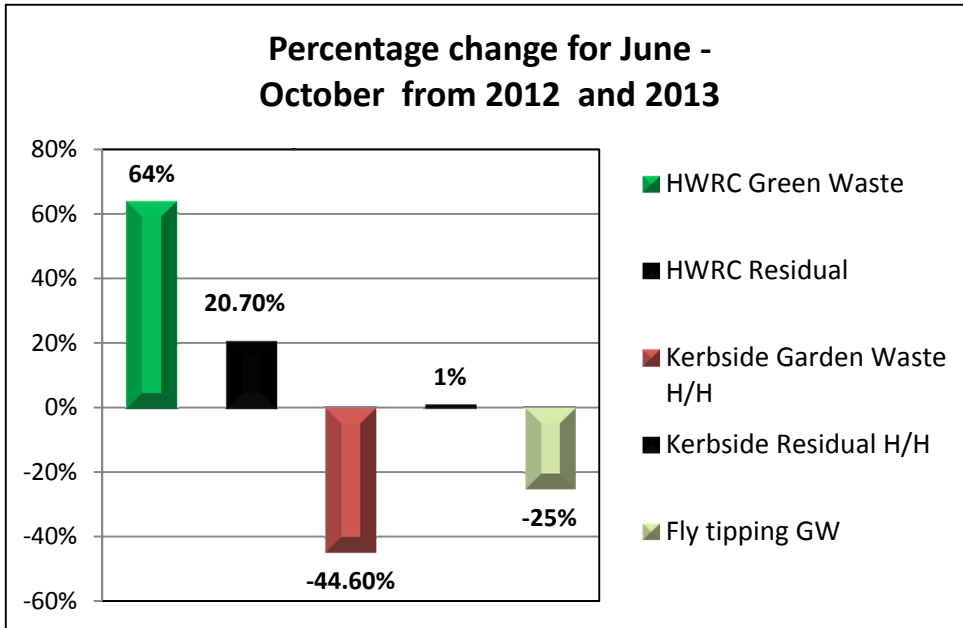
Right to charge: Under Schedule 1 para 4 of the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012/811 which make garden waste collection a prescribed case for the purposes of s45 (3) of the EPA 1990 .

“If you want to prescribe bin contents (as in preclude certain items) then you have to serve a notice under s46 to be 100% sure of then being able to rely on the non - collection provision under s45.”

5a. Tonnage Impact

- Figures to end October indicate we are collecting approximately 55.4% of previous years tonnage in the same period from 31% of households.
- Predicting 12,500 tonnes over the year from 35,500 households. The expectation was always that the people who subscribed would be the ones that used the service most and therefore provide a high yield.
- Ultimately we will get a much higher yield per household because the resident is now free to have multiple bins if they feel the need and can afford it (730 to date)
- 2012/13 recycling rate: 40.6%
- Forecasted recycling rate 13/14: 36%





Overall **2.8% reduction** in residual waste (HWRC plus Kerbside)

Overall **12% reduction** in garden waste collected (HWRC plus Kerbside)

Waste Composition Analysis

% and kg/hh/wk for total residual garden organic waste May – October 2013.

SAMPLE	ACORN 1		ACORN 3		ACORN 4		ACORN 5		COMBINED	
	OPT IN	OPT OUT	OPT IN	OPT OUT	OPT IN	OPT OUT	OPT IN	OPT OUT	OPT IN	OPT OUT
MAY	3.61%	1.84%	1.68%	0.15%	N/A	1.16%	0.05%	2.22%	1.95%	1.44%
OCTOBER	0.13%	5.03%	0.00%	6.34%	0.79%	2.48%	3.79%	10.26%	1.51%	6.12%
KG/HH/WK GARDEN	OPT IN	OPT OUT	OPT IN	OPT OUT	OPT IN	OPT OUT	OPT IN	OPT OUT	OPT IN	OPT OUT
MAY	0.12	0.12	0.04	0.01	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.13	0.05	0.07
OCTOBER	0.01	0.36	0.00	0.77	0.06	0.18	0.31	1.03	0.12	0.54

79% soil and turf

27% soil and turf

41% soil and turf

0% soil and turf

Rough estimate on impact on residual tonnage:

Increase of 0.4Kg per none subscribing household per fortnight = 6.8K (April to Nov) x 77,000 none subscribers =

523t pa

Recycling performance impact

Council	Charge	Extra bins	Take-up %	Tonnage before	Tonnage after	% Loss of tonnage	Recycling Rate Before	Recycling Rate 2011/12
Bromsgrove District Council (2009)	32	Yes	46%	7,459	5940.63	20%	43.49%	41.69%
Rushcliffe Borough Council (2011)	25	Yes	54%	12,406	10276.08	17%	54.11%	50.99%
Gloucester City Council (2011)	36	Yes	37%	7,508	4606.38	38%	45.60%	38.75%
Melton Borough Council	32	Yes	34%	insufficient data for true picture				41.91%
Wirral Council	35	Yes	37%	18,995	12,500	34%	40.60%	

5b. Financial Impact

£35 Charge (£30 online)

£20 Additional bins (plus £37 to buy a bin) - 730 to date – target 5000 by Y3.

Risk Assessment : (High / Medium / Low)	H	M	L
<u>Revenue Implications</u>	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Total Expenditure	-551,898.00	-90,946.00	293,934.00
Total Income	1,133,500.00	267,000.00	100,000.00
Net Expenditure	581,602.00	176,054.00	393,934.00
Forecast additional saving	60K	80K	246K
TOTAL NET SAVING of Option 2	£1,151,590 (386K additional saving forecasted)		

*Full savings table sample to take away today**

6. Next Steps

- Brown bin take back project (November 2013)
- Secure operational savings with Contractor (November 2013)
- Re-route rounds to maximise efficiency (Spring 2014)
- Review payment options (Direct Debit/ Standing Order etc...) (2014)
- Additional bin marketing (February to May 2014)
- Consideration of Section 46 Notices (prior to June 2014)
- Home composting promotion – targeting none subscribers – ongoing
- Formal recalculation of budget saving option – further savings to bridge the deficit! (Summer 2014 to feed into the 15/16 budget options)
- Sharing knowledge – case study preparation (2014) and possible LA workshop late June/Early July 2014 – expressions of interest to:

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