

You've Bin Tagged!

**South Lanarkshire Council's Recycling Quality
Initiative**

Kirsty McGuire, Waste Adviser

- Setting the Scene
- Discovering the Problem
- Phased Intervention Measures
- A look at some stats
- Next Steps

Setting the Scene

- South Lanarkshire 5th most populous Local Authority in Scotland
- Over 150,000 households
- Co-mingled (no glass) recycling collection introduced in 2003 predominantly to avoid landfill tax. Separate glass collection introduced several years later. Glass bins provided in 2009.
- Introduced food/ garden waste collection to comply with Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012. Opportunity to review other kerbside recycling collections.
- Rolled out new '4 Bin Service' to over 110,000 households during 2015 and 2016.
- Mixture of service provision in flats – dependent on access and space restrictions.

4 Bin Service (Standard Service)



- Black/ Green Bin
 - Blue Bin
 - Burgundy Bin
 - Light Grey Bin
- Non-Recyclable Waste
Paper and Card Only (Fibre Mix)
Food and Garden Waste
Glass, Cans and Plastic (Container Mix)

Setting the Scene (Previous Recycling Contracts)

- Contract for treatment of recyclable waste had been in place since 2006.
- Gate-fee applied (never received income from contractor)
- Quality and compositional risk with contractor
- Recycling performance set out in terms and conditions (95% minimum) yet no guarantees were given to contractor about quality.
- Risk from market fluctuations also sat with contractor
- Material direct delivered by RCVs and sorted at MRF (No bulking facilities)
- Minor complaints from contractor about contamination until end of 2015:
 - MRF Code of Practice?
 - Operation Green Fence?

New Recycling Contract

- Extensive market testing exercise prior to new tender made it clear that contractors were no longer willing to accept risk.
- If the Council wanted to attract market interest and guarantee Best Value then necessary to change attitude towards risk.
- 'Basket' approach adopted for the Pricing Mech.

Contract Comparisons

Previous Contract

- Compositional Risk Solely with Contractor
- Market Fluctuations – Risk borne solely by Contractor
- Quality – Risk borne solely by Contractor
- Fixed Gate-Fee for Duration of Contract

New Contract

- Monthly sampling results impact on price/ income
- Monthly mid-point prices impact on price/ income
- Loads with >20% non-target/ contamination are rejected. Costs borne by the Council
- Price/ Rebate changes on a monthly basis.

- New contract awarded November 2017
- Commenced 1 April 2018
- Rebate for Mixed Paper and Card anticipated in Waste Services budget for 2018/19

- First loads delivered 16 April 2018
- Waste Education Team on site to verify loads met acceptance/ rejection protocol
- 14 loads delivered to the site on the first day – only 5 were accepted.

First Day Problems!

Example of a rejected load from Day 1



What we did next

Management Team met with Operations Staff, Union Representatives, Public Relations Team and devised **a 4 Phase Intervention Plan**

Phase 1: SHORT TERM OPERATIONAL CHANGES

Phase 2: COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

Phase 3: YELLOW 'INFORMATION TAGS'

Phase 4: FORMAL SERVICE STANDARD (**RED TAGS**)

Phase 1 Intervention Measures

- Short Term Operational Changes introduced in May
- Introduced to divert heavily contaminated material away from the processor.
- Visual check by loaders:
 - Emptied on first pass if contents were acceptable
 - Lid flipped open if contents unacceptable
 - Acceptable material delivered to processor.
 - Crews then collected bins that had been rejected on first pass. This material was then taken to Rigmuir for landfilling
- Collection crews were enthusiastic (though sceptical that anything would change in the medium to long term)
- Phase 1 continued until Phase 2 commenced and all blue bins had been labelled with a new information sticker .

Phase 2 Intervention Measures (from April to October)

- Reviewed website content
 - (consolidated info, made it easier to find, simpler to understand)
- Stickers Programme
 - (not without drama!)
- Internal Communications
 - Global E-Mails (high proportion of SLC staff are also residents)
 - Briefings to Housing and Social Work
 - Meetings/ Briefings to Contact Centre
- Press Articles
 - ‘Blitz on Blue Bin Blunders’
 - ‘Going Red to Turn Blue Bins Green’
 - Issue was picked up by local and national newspapers
- Social Media Updates
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
- A5 Flyers to all Households

Blue Bin Information Sticker



Phase 3 Intervention Measures (Yellow Information Tag)

- Phase commenced in July (Northern Area) and August (Southern Area)
- Crews still checked the bins but contaminated bins were 'yellow tagged'.
- Yellow tagged bins were no longer collected later that day – instead collected with residual bins the following week
- Could only ever be a short term measure!!!

Phase 3 Intervention: Yellow Information Tags



Examples of Contaminated Blue Bins (Yellow Tag Phase)



Phase 4 Intervention Measures: Formal Service Standard Approved

- Report went to Community and Enterprise Committee 22 August 2018
- Approval for contamination service standard given
- Red Tags applied to contaminated recycling bins from 1 October 2018
- Tagged bins not emptied – householders required to remove contamination and re-present 4 weeks later OR take to HWRC

Flyer sent to all households prior to
1 October 2018

Important Bin collection Info

From 1 October 2018 we will not empty
recycling bins that contain the wrong items

- If your recycling bin has been **red tagged** we will not empty it
- Contaminated waste **cannot** be recycled and this material has to be disposed of at landfill or incinerated
- You must remove any contamination and re-present the bin on the next scheduled collection day for that colour of bin
- You can dispose of contaminated items in your black/green bin or at any of our six Household Waste and Recycling Centres.

For details of these recycling centres and information on what you can recycle from home, please visit our website

www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk:
'Bins, Recycling and Uplifts'

- For further information or assistance please call
0303 123 1020



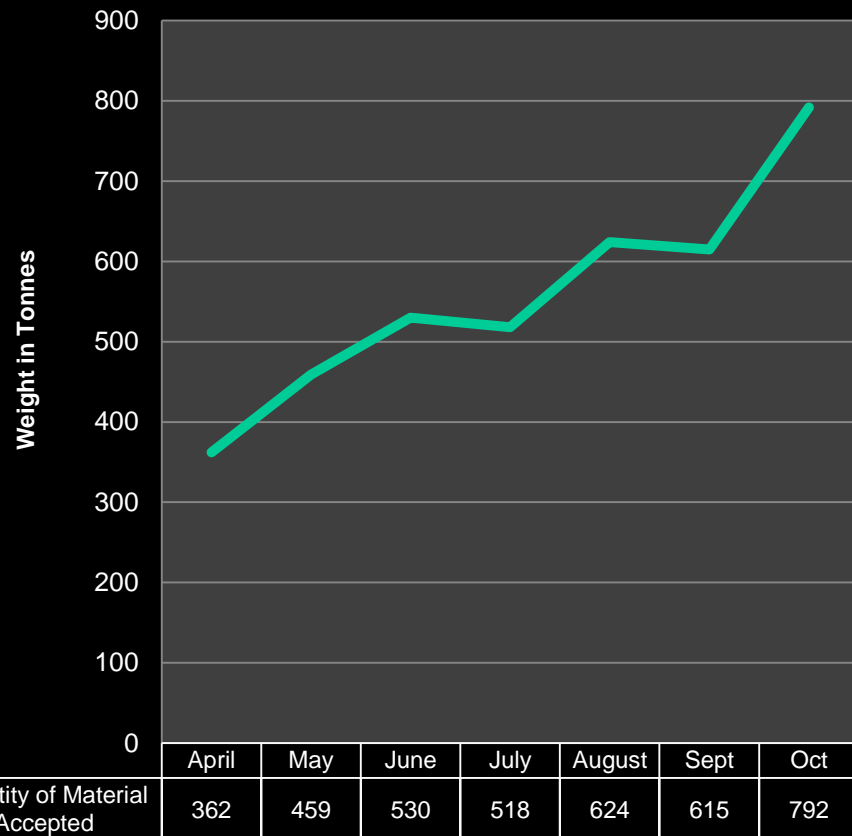
First Month of Red Tag Initiative:

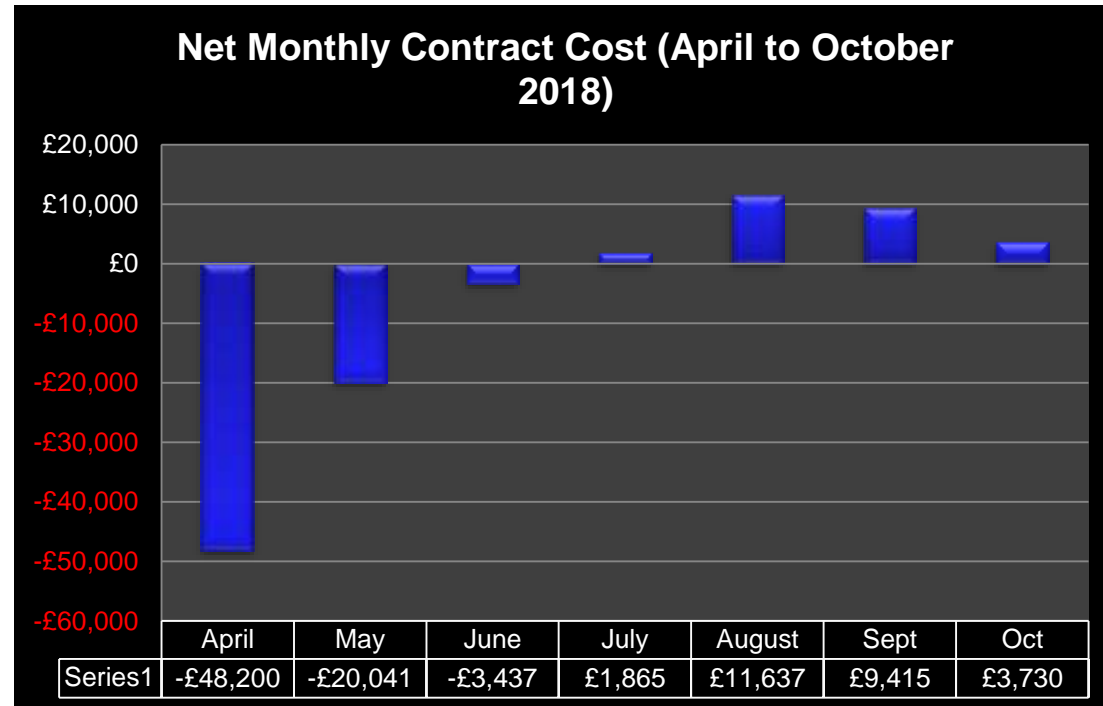
121,295 properties have a blue 'paper and card' bin

4,390 of these properties received a red tag
(3.6% of all bins collected)

194 enquiries received by Waste Education Team

Blue Bin Material Accepted by Processor (April to October 2018)

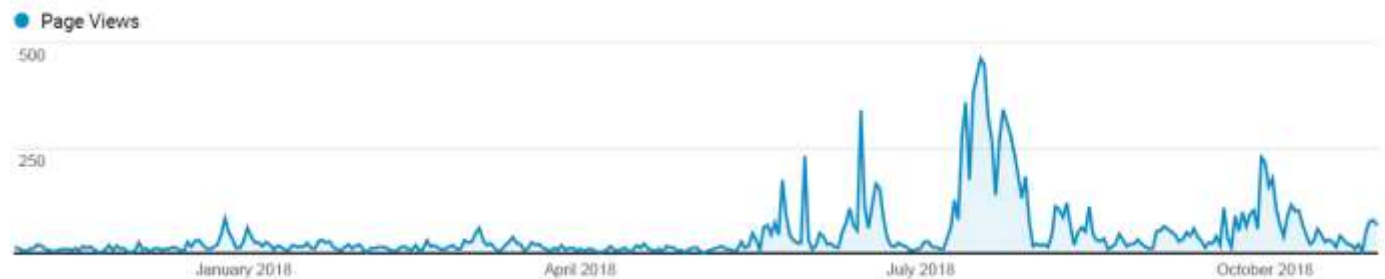




Graph below relates to visits to Council's dedicated 'blue bin recycling page'. First spikes in May and June coincide with issue of internal global e-mails about contamination in blue bins.

Spike in July coincides with first 'yellow tag' messages posted on social media (17 July)

Dedicated 'You've Bin Tagged Page' went live 28 September: 829 views in September and almost 6,000 views in October



Recycling Nirvana!



What Next?

- Rolling 'red tags' out to all recyclable and compostable waste streams
- Keeping the crews motivated (especially with on-going service reviews and efficiency drives)
- Continued Education and Awareness Raising
- On-going Householder Communications
- Planning for new tendering exercise

Thanks for listening..

Any Questions?