

Agenda for Scrutiny Committee and Overview Committee Joint Meeting Thursday, 10 December 2015; 6.00pm



[Members of the Scrutiny Committee](#)
[Members of the Overview Committee](#)

Venue: Council Chamber, Knowle, Sidmouth, EX10 8HL
[View directions](#)

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- 1 Election of Chairman
- 2 Appointment of Vice Chairman
- 3 [Public speaking](#)
- 4 Apologies
- 5 [Declarations of interest](#)
- 6 [Matters of urgency](#) – none identified
- 7 To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including press) have been excluded. There are no items that officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.

Matters for Debate

- 8 **“I’m On Board” Improved recycling trial in The Colony Exmouth and New Feniton** (pages 3 – 21)
Presentation on the recent trial and opportunity to debate the emerging service for refuse and recycling prior to securing the future contract.

Voting on any proposed recommendations will be conducted separately for each committee.

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[Decision making and equalities](#)

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Report to: **Scrutiny Committee**

Date of Meeting: 10 December 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Review date for release None



Agenda item: 8

Subject: **'I'm On Board' Improved recycling trial in The Colony Exmouth & New Feniton**

Purpose of report: This report is intended to update Overview & Scrutiny on the results from the trial which has been running since mid September in The Colony Exmouth and New Feniton. The improved recycling service and reduced residual waste collection trial was agreed by Cabinet in June. The trial is being run to test the improved recycling scheme ahead of the appointment of a new recycling and waste collection contractor in June 2016.

It is hoped that this report will demonstrate to the committee that the trial has shown; through the data we have gathered, customer questionnaire feedback, customer experiences and those of our teams, that the improved recycling service with reduced residual waste collection is viable. Furthermore we hope to show that by using this method we will help our customers recycle more, improve our recycling rate to surpass the EU target of 50% by 2020, protect the environment for future generations by reducing the waste we send for disposal and provide a service which is economically viable given the council's continuing budget constraints.

Recommendation:

- 1) The joint committee recognise the positive results of the trial in both The Colony & New Feniton (Increase in recycling from 37 to 55% and 41 to 58%, and respective reduction in residual waste, with only 10 service issues raised by residents.**
- 2) Given the success of the improved recycling rate (from 39% before the trial to 56% during) Officers use the trial results to influence the evaluation of tenders for the new recycling and waste collection contract.**
- 3) That the successful project planning and communications effort be noted and the approach replicated for any further rollout of the service change.**
- 4) We continue the trials and maintain the monitoring and evaluation process.**

Reason for recommendation: We feel that the trial has been a great success as it has increased the average kerbside recycling rate from 39% to 56% (district rate is currently from 44%, but includes other non-kerbside arisings). The trial has resulted in a 19% reduction in residual waste being sent for disposal from 7.9 tonnes per week (before the trial) to 6.4 tonnes per week now.

There had been some concern from residents and the media prior to the trial about how families would cope with the reduced residual collection frequency and also how those with nappies or incontinence pads (AHPs

absorbent hygiene products) would cope. However due to the extensive communications effort and strong planning of the team, including lots of time spent in the communities, actual issues concerning bin space, smells or ability to cope that we have dealt with have only come to 10.

We did speak to some families who had concerns about nappies, but through waste minimisation advice we have managed to assist them. **To date no one has taken up the offer of additional fortnightly sacked collection for nappies or AHPs or additional residual capacity for these items.**

Questionnaire feedback so far has been positive, we don't yet have the detailed analysis as the closing date for receipt is 30th November.

Officer:

Service Lead – StreetScene, Andrew Hancock & the Recycling & Waste Team ahancock@eastdevon.gov.uk

Financial implications:

Our customers would like an improved recycling service and have consistently told us this through Viewpoint surveys and other methods. Increasing the recycling service without changing another element of the service may not drive good uptake of the improved recycling and is likely to cost the Council more than the current service does to operate (which already accounts for 25% of the general fund balance each year). Improving the recycling service alone will put further pressure on the remaining 75% of the general fund (by increasing service costs) to find the savings we need as a council to balance our budget.

If we reduce the residual waste collection frequency, because much of the waste which was in this bin has been diverted into recycling, we may be able to make a saving from our current recycling & waste collection budget and we have set a realistic target in the Transformation Strategy.

Legal implications:

There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.

Equalities impact:

Low Impact

People who have a disability or who are elderly may require assistance to place out for collection the increased number of recycling containers and the potentially heavier wheeled bin. We already offer an assisted collection service for people with this need and this service would continue as part of any new collection service.

Those using nappies or incontinence pads (AHPs) may have concerns about how they will cope with a reduced residual collection frequency. In the trial we have offered a 3 step approach of assistance, which includes going and meeting concerned residents to see how we can practically help:

- Double wrap the products and dispose of them in their current waste bin,
- If they find this difficult, we will assist the resident and, if appropriate, supply additional capacity bins,
- If this doesn't work for the household, they will be offered a sacked fortnightly collection with assisted collections if required.

To date no one in the trial has requested the additional fortnightly sacked collection for nappies or AHPs or needed additional capacity for their residual waste due to these items. We intend to continue to offer this service if we roll out this method of collection with our new collection contractor.

Risk: Medium Risk

We believe the risk is a reputational one and we can expect some media attention if we select this method of collection going forward. However the trial hopefully illustrates how through an effective communications strategy and engagement with our residents we can allay many of people's fears. The BBC Spotlight piece featured in the recycling trial presentation to be given at the Overview & Scrutiny meeting, along with the experiences of our recycling champions, some of whom were originally sceptical about the trial show this is possible.

If we take the 10 issues we have had to solve in the combined trial area which consisted of approximately 1400 properties (0.71%), using this ratio as a guide **we could expect to deal with around 482 issues across the district if we roll this out (collecting from the 68,000 locations)**. We will need an increase in our communications, CSC and recycling team resource to roll out the new service and this will be fully detailed in our February Cabinet report regarding the new collection contract.

Links to background information:

- Example communications documents:
- [Mailer](#)
- [Members Briefing](#)
- [Stickers Sample](#)
- [Avoided waste disposal savings – draft paper](#)

Link to Council Plan:

- Living in an outstanding place / Delivering and promoting our outstanding environment.

1. 'I'm on board' - Improved recycling trial introduction

- 1.1 A report was presented to Cabinet on 7th January 2015 detailing the steps required to procure a new recycling, waste collection and associated services contract for East Devon, to replace the current collection contract with SITA which is due to end on March 31st 2016.
- 1.2 A further report was presented to Cabinet on June 17th 2015 detailing the opportunity to provide a trial of a new improved kerbside recycling service, including collection of cardboard and mixed plastics together with three weekly refuse collection, in two areas of the district [Feniton and the Colony area of Exmouth]. The trial was suggested and agreed as a way to test the efficacy of the new recycling and waste collection system, the public reaction to the trial service model and to provide an in-depth analysis of the effect on collected tonnages of the new collection system of recycling, food waste and of non recyclable wastes placed for collection by residents.
- 1.3 For a number of years Viewpoint surveys and waste surveys have indicated that residents want an extension of our recycling scheme to help them recycle more at the kerbside and to include cardboard and mixed plastics. Our current recycling rate is 44% of the waste stream and whilst there is an opportunity to increase participation rates, our best opportunity of improving on this performance is to extend the range of materials that can be recycled by householders through kerbside collection. There is also an EU target to recycle 50% of the waste stream by 2020, so an improved service would also help us meet this.

- 1.4 The aims of the trial have been to help residents recycle more, to give them a collection service that's more sustainable, that looks to the future. To improve on our current recycling rate of 44% and to at least meet the 2020 EU target of 50%. To provide better environmental and economic performance; We must protect our environment. We live in a beautiful area – an outstanding place – and being more responsible with the rubbish we produce by recycling more and wasting less will benefit us all and protect our environment for future generations.
- 1.5 The Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board have been considering good practice and innovation in waste collection and opportunities for financial efficiencies. Earlier this year we hosted a delegation invited from Falkirk Council who outlined their experience of changing waste collection arrangements. They emphasised the sustainability credentials of improving recycling and reducing residual waste collection services, and the fact that they still visited households every week to collect waste, they had simply changed a large proportion of that waste, recycling it rather than sending it for disposal. They have implemented a 3 weekly residual waste collection service and have recently approved a move to 4 weekly collections.
- 1.6 Through the procurement process for a new recycling and waste collection contract we have given potential bidders information in various bidders documents seeking a dialogue with potential contractors on an enhanced recycling collection combined with options for 3 and 4 weekly residual waste collections as well as our current arrangements. We have emphasised our ambitions at a Bidders Open day earlier this year, as well as at the ISOS (Invitation to submit outline solution) and ISDS (invitation to submit detailed solution) competitive dialogue sessions with those companies interested in bidding for our service.
- 1.7 We know that several local authorities and waste partnerships are considering or have trialled three weekly collections. Bury Council have implemented a system of three weekly waste collections, but they are using larger 240 litre residual waste bins. The Somerset Waste Partnership has run trials. Trials can be controversial with householders and would appear to be contrary with the DCLG 'Bin Bible' published in January 2014. However in councils such as Falkirk the results have been greatly increased recycling rates, reduced waste sent for landfill, lower than expected dissatisfaction from residents and some savings on collection costs (when weighted against the costs of maintaining the councils original frequency for residual waste and at the same time improving the recycling service).
- 1.8 Our improved recycling service with reduced residual collections is very innovative and we shouldn't underestimate the fact that we are among the very early adopters of this service style in England, with only a couple of other councils already adopting this method. The potential benefits as evidenced through the trial are great, but there is also the potential for great reputational damage if we get the communications strategy and support for residents wrong.
- 1.9 Work on the procurement of the new contract is continuing. The Best and Final Offer (BAFO) documentation has been sent out to bidders and their completed submissions will be received by the council on Monday 16th December 2015. Following this the procurement team will review all the information and report their recommendation for the successful bidder to cabinet in February. We then intend to award the contract after the required Alcatel standstill period on 26th February 2015. The results from the improved recycling and reduced residual waste collection trial will be fed into the procurement decision. The procurement timetable has been altered as reported to cabinet in September and we are currently negotiating an extension to SITA's collection contract to fit with the new timetable. SITA's

contract will now finish in June 2016, with the successful contractor from our current procurement taking over service provision from this point.

2. Preparations for the trial

- 2.1 Since June 2015 we have been had a project working group of officers from across the council (including the Recycling team, communications, Strata (ICT & design), Legal and CSC) as well as partners from SITA planning the trial to ensure it went as smoothly as possible. The team were working towards the mid-September start date of the trial. This was the earliest time we could get everything ready as there was a lot of preparation work to do in terms of planning communications, designing leaflets, ordering new recycling sacks, ICT preparation including website changes; changes to our East Devon app and back office systems. We wanted to start the trial as soon as we were able to give us a good amount of data to feed into any future decision on service change.
- 2.2 The trial started in mid September. There is no set end period and if results continue to be encouraging the intention is to continue the new collection method in the trial areas until the new service rolls out across the district (should this be the basis for the contract award and service going forward). There is a nominal 3 month review period for the trial from its start in mid September to mid December to tie in with this scrutiny report and to inform our procurement decision. We are due to receive the customer questionnaire feedback on the trial on 30th November and will circulate the analysis of these questionnaires prior to the meeting.
- 2.3 SITA's development team helped us to formulate possible collection methods for the improved recycling trial. Following feedback from Members during the commissioning phase of the procurement we knew that the preferred option in terms of additional receptacles for recycling was to keep things to a minimum and as simple as possible. To that end we selected an additional 70ltr green reusable sack to contain the additional materials. We didn't specify what the householder had to put in the new sack or their existing green box, but we think for any full roll out we will need to do this.
- 2.4 Strata did a huge amount of systems work to help us start the trial on time. Due to the short timescale it was not feasible for them to bring in and train up additional resource, so the council decided to pause work on Open for Business and direct the Strata resource to make the systems changes for the recycling trial. As part of the trial we needed to make changes to the customer relationship management system, Lagan, where the collection rounds, missed bins etc are recorded. Changes to several other systems and databases were also made, some of the work took several months. The largest piece of work was completing the data cleansing of round information to allow the Cloud 9 in cab system to be used in the trial areas. This was really important to ensure we had accurate information about collections, rounds and presentation of bins.
- 2.5 Our scheme, with the introduction of recycling sacks, increases the capacity of recycling, with householders being able to use the 180 litre grey bin; 55 litre recycling box; 25 litre food caddy; and 70 litre recycling sacks. Currently there is 170 litres per week volume for all types of waste, and through the trial we have provided 210 litres of volume (for properties trialling three weekly refuse collections).
- 2.6 The Colony, Exmouth and New Feniton were chosen as trial areas as we felt they were good representations of our community as a whole. The Colony also represented a challenge in terms of areas to store additional materials for collection and due to the high density of housing in the

area. The project team felt it would be a good place to test and that if the trial could succeed here, it would be a fair representation of whether it could work. The trial areas were initially thought to be of around 900 homes in size, which was appropriate for SITA to service with one crew. We later found that there were 742 properties in New Feniton and 625 properties Exmouth (The Colony) serviced by the trial.

- 2.7 Ward profile data for New Feniton and The Colony Exmouth show that they have a good mix of different age groups and household profiles to inform our trial. The full ward profile information can be found in **annex 1** at the end of the report. It shows that both areas have slightly higher rates of families and households with young children than the East Devon average, which we felt was good as these households often produce more waste and so we were able to test how they would cope. Both areas had lower rates of those over 65, but at 21% and 15% respectively, we still felt this gave us good insight into how this age group would cope.
- 2.8 To keep costs down SITA used our existing stillage type collection vehicle fleet for the trial areas. There are specialist kerbside sort vehicles available, the market leader being Romaquip. We were able to arrange a demonstration of this type of vehicle to coincide with the trial. The results of this were positive and this is the sort of vehicle we would envisage using if we go forward with this improved recycling service. Our estimates of the trial costs from SITA are circa. £4,226 per month. This low additional monthly cost demonstrates that SITA have worked with us to assist with providing the trial. SITA invoices are processed in arrears, so at time of writing we are processing SITA's September invoice to measure the cost of the trial. The current procurement exercise will show us the full cost of any different collection methods ahead of making a final decision, but we are projecting that costs for this service option will be lower than if we operate the service with a fortnightly residual collection at the same time as improving the recycling collection.
- 2.9 In the two trial areas we have extended collections of recyclable items to include cardboard and mixed plastics. Every week we collect recycling and food waste, with non recycling waste collected every three weeks. The trials are already demonstrating that as residents are able to recycle more in their weekly collection, they are producing less rubbish in their grey wheeled bin. We are still collecting every week, but we are now recycling the waste which was previously sent for disposal.

3 Communications

- 3.1 We knew from our own experiences and those of others such as Falkirk that our communications strategy could be the making or breaking of this trial. This is why a big part of the project team's work was planning the communications effort, this included timing the delivery of leaflets and mailers to have the best effect, having a good presence in the trial areas, doing Members and Press briefings and responding to lots of enquiries from the press and on social media. We believe our well planned communications campaign has helped the residents in our trial areas to understand what we are trying to achieve. Communication activities have included:
- Targeted mail to all residents before the trial clearly explaining what they can recycle.
 - A team of recycling and waste officers visiting the trial areas regularly to engage and help residents overcome any problems.
 - 2 x Road show events in The Colony and Feniton.
 - Bringing on board residents who are really keen on the trials – our recycling champions - who are helping us spread the word and encouraging others to recycle more.

- An ongoing press and social media campaign. The trials have received press coverage from all sections of the media.

3.2 Examples of communications documents can be found linked at the start of this report.

4 The Recycling and Waste teams work during the trial

- 4.1 We took on an additional fixed term member of staff for the trial (as well as an additional resource in the CSC) due to the volume of effort required to make it a success. In the roll out of any new service from June next year we will require some additional resource to ensure we can communicate with our residents effectively. This resource will be detailed in our February cabinet report.
- 4.2 The team have organised mail-outs to residents living in the trial area and ran road-shows in each area to give residents the opportunity to raise any questions before the trial began; these events were well attended and supported by local councillors.
- 4.3 Before the trial began waste management officers visited the trial areas to build up a picture pre trial. Flats and houses of multiple occupation were noted and evidence was gathered on fly-tipping and littering hotspots so that we could monitor if there would be an increased problem during the trial.
- 4.4 The team maintained a high presence during the first two cycles (6 weeks) of the trial in each area with visits to each trial area the day before collection, day of collection, and post collection. This high visibility meant the team were approachable and could deal with any concerns that arose. As the trial has settled down the team have maintained a visible presence but the intensity has reduced.
- 4.5 The team found 5 properties in the Colony and 2 in New Feniton that required some support prior to the start of the trial with their recycling and waste management; the team spoke to the residents giving advice about what recycling can be collected and how to fill their bins by compressing waste and reducing air that takes up bin capacity. Other homes, which looked set to have full bins were given a waste management leaflet which gives tips on how to reduce their residual waste. We delivered 12 leaflets in The Colony and 7 in New Feniton.
- 4.6 Two properties within the Colony were in receipt of weekly residual collections prior to the trial. Having received the trial information and following a review by and with the help of the Recycling and Waste Team, these properties were successfully changed to the three week residual waste collection system.

5.0 Nappies and incontinence pads – Absorbent hygiene products (AHPs)

- 5.1 The team were prepared for any issues residents might find with nappies and incontinence pads and it was agreed to advise residents to double bag nappies or incontinence pads to mitigate smell, and if capacity was an issue a special sacked fortnightly collection could be requested. Alternatively, residents with children in nappies could trial real nappies.

- 5.2 During the trial we did a lot of publicity around AHPs to try and alleviate concerns. We put a simple 3 step message on all of our communications, the 3 step approach of assistance, which includes going and meeting concerned residents to see how we can practically help:
- Double wrap the products and dispose of them in their current waste bin,
 - If they find this difficult, we will assist the resident and, if appropriate, supply additional capacity bins,
 - If this doesn't work for the household, they will be offered a sacked fortnightly collection with assisted collections if required.
- 5.3 **So far no requests have been made for additional capacity for nappies or incontinent pads, or for them to be collected as a sacked fortnightly collection in addition to the three weekly waste collection** which indicates that families are coping well with the 3 weekly collections without any issues.
- 5.4 It also appeared in the waste analysis data that the quantities of nappies reduced during the trial, possibly indicating a reduction in usage as residents become more aware of the quantity of waste they produce over the three week period.

6.0 Issues in the trial areas – Only 10 to date!

- 6.1 The recycling and waste team have spoken to over 300 residents across the trial areas, from the commencement of the road-shows to date (we are approaching week nine of the trial). So far the team have only received a handful of service issues or concerns regarding the trial. **10 in total**, these are explained below:
- 6.2 At the beginning of the trial one family with a newborn baby approached the team whilst they were visiting the area, the residents raised concerns that they would not manage a three weekly collection and their bin was full with a bag of side waste on week three. A waste review was performed to look at what waste was put in the waste bin and the result showed that a large amount of recycling had been put in the bin and this information was shared with the residents with photos showing the evidence of recycling was found in the waste bin. It was discovered that only one resident was recycling in the property and they agreed to both recycle and are now managing well with a three weekly collection.
- 6.3 2 issues in Feniton - Prior to the commencement of the trial, after the initial letters had gone out, we had 2 Feniton residents talk to us with concerns, one at the road-show and one over the phone. The residents already took card and plastics to the recycling centre and had full residual bins each fortnight. On speaking to the residents it transpired that these two properties were large families of five and were entitled to a larger wheeled bin. We delivered new bins to them in time for the start of the trial which provided them with the extra capacity needed to last three weeks.
- 6.4 Waste officers also met a Colony resident whilst patrolling the streets who said he was worried. In the course of the conversation it transpired that he was entitled to a larger bin because there were four in the household, including a baby in nappies. We ordered a larger bin for him also.

- 6.5 We had a call in November from a resident asking about nappy collections. After speaking with the resident it transpired that she had been coping okay with the three weekly scheme without the nappy collection but her baby had become sick. This meant that the amount of nappies had increased significantly for a few days until the illness passed. Seeing this as a short problem Waste Management collected the excess nappy waste as a one off.
- 6.6 A resident who had no current issues with the trial was fearful that with all the additional waste produced at Christmas time that they would not manage, we reassured the resident that we are prepared for Christmas and collection dates would not extend more than the three weeks and our contractors have a common sense approach for the post Christmas collection.
- 6.7 The team discovered that an HMO [House of Multiple Occupancy] was not recycling well at the start of the trial, we discussed with the residents ways to keep their waste bins secure and helped organise their recycling bins so they were more easy to use. The residents are now coping well with their recycling and waste.
- 6.8 An HMO with residents where English isn't their first language caused concerns with contaminated recycling and large amounts of waste. The team spoke to some of the residents and assessed the bin capacity required for the residents; a larger bin was supplied and more recycling containers. Although there is still a large volume of waste produced there is also a large amount of recycling and the residents are managing with the trial.
- 6.9 An HMO was recently found not to be recycling and was struggling with their waste, the team have spoken to the residents and will be supplying additional bin capacity; the house had only one bin and the residents had not been recycling; the residents were given advice on recycling. The residents were very happy to receive the team's support.
- 6.10 During street inspections it was apparent that a property on Egremont Road was going to struggle. They had a full bin after one week and there was no evidence of recycling. By knocking on the door we established that the resident was Chinese and didn't speak any English. To help this resident understand the trial the recycling and waste management team produced a Chinese translation of the recycling leaflet. Since then the resident has been recycling more and has brought their residual waste under control.
- 6.11 The team have also dealt with some negative social media comments; however these have often been from people living outside East Devon or the trial areas.
- 6.12 Throughout the trial the team have worked in partnership with StreetScene operations to monitor litter and flytipping levels. There have been no increases in side waste or fly tipping resulting from the trial.
- 6.13 Another positive impact of the trial and the high level of presence on the ground is that the teams have been able to deal with issues of multiple bins at a property, incorrect bin size (either too big or too small for number of residents) and replace damaged or broken containers.

7. Trial analysis from week 1 to week 9

- 7.1 The results are very encouraging with over 90 % of households participating in the trial. **Annex 2** shows the full recycling and residual waste tonnages which have been collected through the trial so far.
- 7.2 Exmouth (The Colony) 1st recycling collection saw recycling increase from 2.2 tonnes to 3.5 tonnes – That's a 1.3 tonnes increase in just seven days- (59% increase).
- 7.3 New Feniton's 1st recycling collection saw an increase from 2.9 tonnes of recycling the previous week to 5.2 tonnes - an extra 2.3 tonnes. (79% increase).
- 7.4 This resulted in recycling rates increasing in The Colony from 37% to 55% and in New Feniton from 41% to 58%, as shown in Annex 2. While the addition of mixed plastics would have contributed a minimal increase due to being lightweight, cardboard accounted for 7 points of this 18 point increase in the Colony and 8 points of the 17 point increase in New Fention. This clearly demonstrates that although the additional recyclable items helped improved these rates, it has been assisted more by residents recycling a greater quantity of the materials we already collect, further diverting valuable resources from the current disposal route. We believe that the 3 weekly residual waste collection has helped people focus more on recycling as much as possible.
- 7.5 The introduction of new recycling materials has invariably increased the overall waste arisings in each area, mainly due to cardboard and mixed plastics being diverted from the Household Recycling Centres and being collected at kerbside instead. However it is important to note that where residents have noticed capacity in their residual bins after three weeks, some have had an extra clear out which will also increase waste arisings. It is clear that some households could manage their residual bin for a further week and hence a four weekly collection still with a 180ltr wheeled bin could be a possibility.
- 7.6 The Colony's 3rd recycling collection weighed in at 3.4 tonnes and New Feniton's weighed in at 4.6 tonnes. The Colony's 6th recycling collection weighed in at 3.3 tonnes and Feniton's weighed in at 4.7 tonnes. The Colony's 9th recycling collection weighed in at 3.9 tonnes and Feniton's weighed in at 4.9 tonnes. This shows a consistent and sustained increase in the amount of waste we are helping people to recycle, which is not being sent for disposal.
- 7.7 We've seen huge increases in weekly food waste collections in both trial areas. Feniton collected 5 times the amount in its first collection, with 0.37 tonnes collected in the last week of the old system and 1.84 tonnes being collected in the first week of the new service. The Colony went from 0.77 tonnes to 0.95 tonnes in the first week of the trial and 1.26 tonnes in the second week.
- 7.8 After two cycles in The Colony many residents had bins still with capacity and some with only one bin bag in it on week three (waste collection week) the recycling that week weighed 3.3 tonnes.

- 7.9 After two cycles many New Feniton residents had capacity left in their bins and some were almost empty on week 3, the recycling collected that week weighed 4.7 tonnes.
- 7.10 So far the recycling collected up to week 6 of the trial was equal in weight to 3 double decker buses. The improved recycling scheme has saved 140 African elephants worth in weight from going to waste disposal (at Oct 2nd).
- 7.11 The tonnages of residual waste sent for disposal have decreased on average by 22% in the Colony and 18% in New Feniton. The Colony was sending 3.73 tonnes per week for disposal, which is now down to 2.92 tonnes. In Feniton before the trial 4.20 tonnes of waste was sent for disposal each week, which is now down to 3.46 tonnes.
- 7.12 People outside the trial areas have been asking us when they can get involved too – in fact a few have tried to sneak in and be involved by photocopying our leaflets and stickers.

8 Residents feedback

- 8.1 The following quotes show some of the great feedback we have received from residents during the trial:
- 8.2 "I live in a top floor flat in Exmouth and used to have a weekly collection I agreed to try out going three weekly and it is working out really well." Miss Luckhurst and child in nappies, Exmouth
- 8.3 "Being able to recycle more is no problem. You have to be a bit more organised, but it becomes a natural thing to do after a few days. If we don't do anything, the area will suffer with all the waste. I don't want that for my grandchildren." – *Mr S 85, Exmouth (residents use incontinence pads)*.
- 8.4 "I work full time and regularly go to the local recycling centre at a weekend to drop off my mixed plastics. The trial means I can do something nicer with my free time." – *Jan Whittle, Exmouth*
- 8.5 "I was brought up to recycle so the trial is brilliant. I have to admit though, that even I can't believe how little we waste now, because we can recycle so much more. "It's a real eye opener. We've got to look after our countryside because once it's gone, it's gone." – *Rosemary Lee, Feniton*.
- 8.6 "I've got two young girls and we throw away far too much. Recycling card and plastic has made a real difference to how much goes into our waste bin. It's unbelievable really. I was really sceptical and I never thought it would work, but it does." – *Paul Bennett, Exmouth*
- 8.7 "When I first heard about the trials I thought it was a joke. I thought 'how are we going to manage with our waste bin only being collected every three weeks with four adults in the house?' But the trial has been a bit of a revelation for us. For the first week, we kept referring to the list that the council sent us. Then, after a while, we just got used to it. In this last week, I've put one carrier bag in my waste bin. It would be at least half full by now. It's amazing!" – *Julie Thorne, Feniton*

8.8 “What used to go into our waste bins – such as yoghurt pots and meat trays – goes out for recycling now.

8.9 It’s a real transformation. Our waste bin is virtually empty and our recycling bin and bag is overflowing every week. My girls love jumping on the recycling to squash it down.” – Zoe Flockhart, Feniton

9 Feedback questionnaires

9.1 On 30th October we sent out questionnaires to all residents in the trial areas as well as making the questionnaire available online for anyone who wanted to fill it out. We wanted to get feedback directly from those who had taken part to help us decide if the trial had been a success and was a viable collection method to roll out to the whole district under a new collection contract next year.

9.2 The closing date for return of the questionnaires is 30th November 2015. So far we’ve had 488 paper ones back and 54 online, making a total of 542. For community engagement purposes this 40% return is a reasonable rate, but we are hoping it may be higher by the time we reach the closing date.

9.3 The paper questionnaires are currently being input into the system by a company called SNAP (who we use for all corporate questionnaire engagement). The online ones are generally positive and residents found it easy to take part. The only issue raised so far is the recycling bag – that it doesn’t seal, isn’t very good quality, could blow away in wind.

9.4 We will table more detailed information and feedback from the questionnaires at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting.

10 Social media feedback

The image shows a screenshot of three tweets from the account Recycling EDDC (@RecyclingEDDC). Each tweet includes the East Devon logo, the account name, the date, and the text of the tweet. The first tweet is from Oct 9 and says "Great feedback glad to hear it's going well #onboard". It features a photo of a man in a black shirt holding a green recycling bag. The second tweet is also from Oct 9 and says "Great to have such committed recyclers 'On Board'". It features a photo of a man in a blue shirt putting items into a recycling bin. The third tweet is from Oct 7 and says "Feniton 1st 3 weekly waste collection went smoothly a resident in Station Rd said wheelie bin is so empty & the trial is great @eastdevon". It features a photo of a recycling bin.

Recycling EDDC @RecyclingEDDC · Oct 9
Great feedback glad to hear it's going well #onboard

East Devon @eastdevon
'Had my doubts, but EDDC's recycling trial is going well for my family.' Paul Bennett, Exmouth (The Colony) #onboard

Recycling EDDC @RecyclingEDDC · Oct 9
Great to have such committed recyclers "On Board"

East Devon @eastdevon
'It's crazy not to recycle,' says Exmouth (The Colony) resident Alan Smith. 'It keeps my town tidier.' #onboard

Recycling EDDC @RecyclingEDDC · Oct 7
Feniton 1st 3 weekly waste collection went smoothly a resident in Station Rd said wheelie bin is so empty & the trial is great @eastdevon

"I am eating humble pie; it's amazing how much I am recycling"

Kara Mundy, Exmouth resident

"Make it everywhere love it!" New Feniton resident

11 Conclusion

- 11.1 The improved recycling trial with reduced residual waste collection in The Colony, Exmouth and New Feniton has been a big success. The recycling rate overall in both areas is up to 56% with the potential to be even higher with Feniton having achieved almost 60%.
- 11.2 The 19% reduction in residual waste during the trial is very important. This would help East Devon be one of the highest achieving authorities in the UK for waste minimisation. Furthermore this reduction could help us in meeting savings targets if we can agree a savings model with Devon County Council on avoided waste disposal costs (**information on this can be found in the draft paper entitled: Avoided waste disposal savings – draft paper linked at the top of this report**). Using the figures from the trial and applying these across the district, we could expect to see a reduction in waste sent for disposal of almost 5000 tonnes per year. This is a very rough estimate and based on a snapshot of tonnages, but provides an indication of the importance of this trial both in terms of reducing disposal costs, but also protecting the environment through diverting waste away from disposal.
- 11.3 We are currently reviewing a detailed report by MEL Research, who we used to do a forensic analysis of the waste and recycling collected before and during the trial. Although this is a detailed analysis it is still only a snap shot of 100 properties and therefore the overall tonnages collected during the trial have been used to show the overall affect. The MEL research will give us a forensic breakdown of the makeup of the recycling and residual waste collected and will allow us to see where to focus our collection materials and education.
- 11.4 To date the trial has been shown that despite initial concerns which residents understandably had, with the right amount of communication and customer contact and a "we are here to help" attitude, the Council can support the community in achieving a top national recycling rate. It is reassuring how throughout this trial residents have surprised themselves with how well they have done to increase recycling rates so significantly and how their perceptions have changed over the frequency of residual collections. We have successfully been able to communicate to our customers the change in mindset; we still collect every week; but now we recycle much of the waste that used to be sent for disposal. The effect of this is that we are protecting the environment for future generations, will be able to meet the EU target of 50% recycling by 2020 and should be able to provide a saving to help balance the council's budget (both from collection costs and if it can be agreed with DCC, a share of the avoided waste disposal costs).
- 11.5 It is understandable that media attention will always focus on news stories such as this and try to report on people's fears, but as we demonstrated with the BBC Spotlight feature, with good communication we can illustrate the sound positive story here and show that with our support residents can cope with this service change. Good communication, using both social media as well as more traditional methods and providing the opportunity and support of face to face contact is the lynch pin in turning stories and media interest into positive news stories, selling

the great achievements of our residents. Any negative comments from residents have often been due to a lack of or wrong information. To help disseminate the trial information further afield every Christmas hanger contains a link to the trial information on the Council's website.

11.6 Our findings have been fairly consistent with those of Filkirk who found that even after introducing three weekly collections the majority of waste in the residual stream was still food. We have also found that despite the large increases in food recycling a significant quantity still remains in the residual waste stream and shows we can always do more. We believe the trial has demonstrated a very compelling and positive argument for moving to an improved recycling collection service with 3 weekly residual waste collections. It also shows through waste analysis that there is future scope for exploring further improvements in recycling, recycling education and the possibility of reducing residual collections to 4 weekly to further improve our recycling rate.

Annex 1 - Profile for the wards that include new Feniton and The Colony. Data has been extracted from the report “An Economic, Social and Environmental Summary Profile of East Devon Wards 2011”.

Age profile	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
National	17.64	13.1	27.38	25.44	16.45
East Devon	14.29	9.69	19.44	28.38	29.89
Feniton and Buckerell	17.85	8.44	22.78	29.2	21.72
Exmouth Town	15.73	13.77	29.98	24.77	15.76

Household profile	One person	Married no children	Married with children	Lone parent
National	30.25	23.75	19.29	10.65
East Devon	30.93	24.84	16.49	7.36
Feniton and Buckerell	26.38	21.61	29.66	6.36
Exmouth Town	38.73	17.43	17.73	12.62

Housing profile	Detached	Rented	Socially rented	Overcrowded
National	22.56	34.32	17.63	8.54
East Devon	38.41	22.95	9.34	3.63
Feniton and Buckerell	34.05	13.67	3.28	1.91
Exmouth Town	2.79	41.62	4.42	12.02

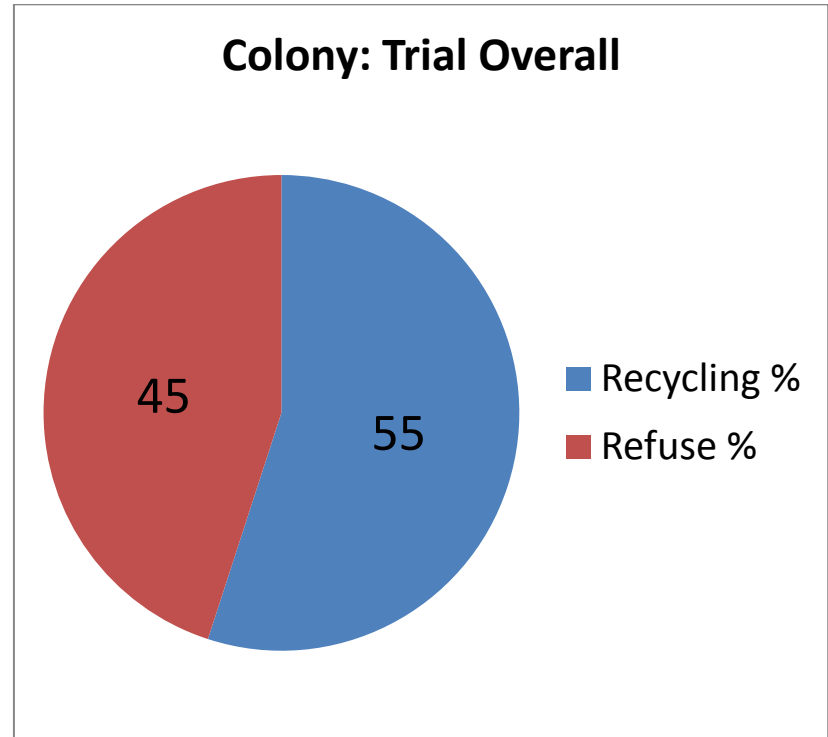
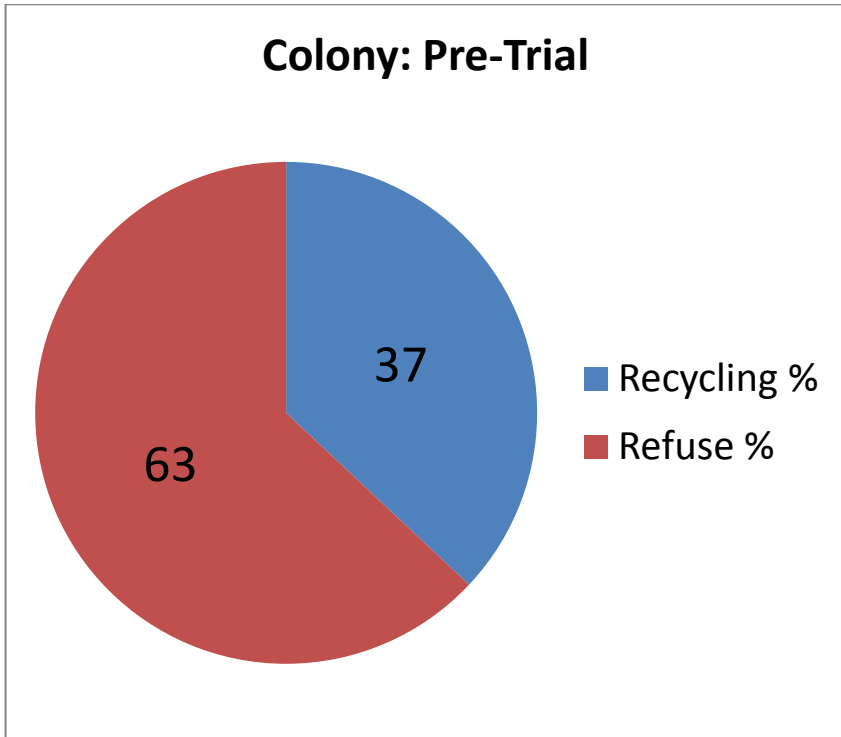
Source: 2011 data : An Economic, Social and Environmental Summary Profile of East Devon Wards. Local Futures Group. Registered office: 43 Eagle Street, London. WC1R 4AT.

Annex 2 – Recycling & Waste tonnages from the trial

COLONY	Y	Z	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9
Date	04-Sep	10-Sep	17-Sep	24-Sep	01-Oct	08-Oct	05-Oct	22-Oct	29-Oct	05-Nov	12-Nov
WEEKLY RECYCLING (Kg)	2120	2192	3512	3320	3350	3300	3280	3320	3440	4150	3900
REFUSE (Kg)		7450			8720			8460			9080

FENITON	Y	Z	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9
Date	09-Sep	16-Sep	23-Sep	29-Sep	07-Oct	14-Oct	21-Oct	28-Oct	04-Nov	11-Nov	18-Nov
WEEKLY RECYCLING (Kg)	2900	2940	5240	4660	4640	5120	5020	4740	4330	3960	4490
REFUSE (Kg)		8400			10540			10140			10500

	Colony: Pre-Trial	Colony: Trial Overall
Recycling %	37	55
Refuse %	63	45



	Feniton: Pre-Trial	Feniton: Trial Overall
Recycling %	41	58
Refuse %	59	42

