

**CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR:**  
*IMPROVING RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING  
PERFORMANCE IN CHARNWOOD*

**CONSULTATION  
DOCUMENT**

Produced by Charnwood Borough Council  
October 2003

## **Contents**

[Purpose of this Document](#)

[What is the Policy Context?](#)

[Background](#)

[Decisions That Have to be Taken](#)

[The Options Currently Under Consideration](#)

[Possible External Funding Sources](#)

[What Must the Chosen Option Achieve?](#)

[APPENDICES](#)

## Purpose of this Document

The aim of this document is to provide all the people, bodies and organisations that are being consulted with an insight into the range of options available to Charnwood Borough Council in improving its recycling and composting performance and meeting its declared targets.

For a consultation exercise to be successful, all consultees need to have sufficient background knowledge to enable them to reach informed opinions. This document presents a comprehensive summary of the background information in an unbiased way.

## What is the Policy Context?

Increasing the percentage of waste recycled to 36% by 2005/06 is one of the priorities contained in the “A sustainable environment” section of the Borough Council’s Corporate Plan for 2003-2007. The figure of 36% is in line with the recycling and composting targets set by the Government.

The Borough Council has also committed to increasing the amount of waste recycled and composted by the same target date under the Leicestershire Public Service Agreement (LPSA).

## Background

Every household in Charnwood produces waste. Most is collected by the Borough Council and transported to sites run by Leicestershire County Council for disposal. The majority of the waste collected is dumped in landfill sites. For a number of years Charnwood Borough Council has recognised that burying waste is not acceptable and has promoted waste minimisation, reuse and recycling.

Currently the Borough Council achieves a recycling rate of approximately 18% and a composting rate of approximately 1%. These figures are calculated from the weight of material collected by the Borough Council in the following manner: -

- The fortnightly “green sack” ‘co-mingled dry recyclable’ collection service. (the mix of plastic bottles, newspapers and magazines, tins and cans that we currently ask to be put in the green sacks )
- The twice-yearly textile collection service.
- The network of approximately 60 recycling ‘bring sites’ (bottle banks etc) spread across the borough.
- The ‘on demand’ garden waste collection scheme (brown sacks).
- Material collected by a number of local voluntary organisations within Charnwood.

Leicestershire County Council also promotes recycling and composting and achieves significant results from the weight of material delivered to the Recycling and Household Waste Sites at Loughborough, Shepshed and Sileby by Charnwood residents.

It is recognised that there will be considerable public interest in recycling performance and the options available to the Council for improving it. This document will be available to all who take part in the public information and consultation exercises.

**The information and opinion collected across the borough during this consultation will inform any decision taken by the council regarding recycling options.**

The following sections provide a broad picture of the type of options that the Borough Council is considering. In addition there are answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ's) about practical and financial matters.

### Decisions That Have to be Taken

In order to successfully improve recycling and composting performance there are a number of relatively simple, but not necessarily easy, decisions to be made. Details of these can be found in Appendix A but can be summarised as follows: -

#### **How much material should we be aiming to recycle and compost?**

The target has been set at 36% for Charnwood. The only choice that we have is whether to aim at a higher target.

#### **What materials should we aim to collect?**

At present we collect paper, plastics, cans and tins, mixed in a green sack. We can consider cardboard, glass and garden waste. The range is limited by what can be done with it once collected and how it is separated from the rest of the waste we collect. The materials permitted within the green sack are limited by the County Council's ability to separate them at their Materials Recycling Facility (MRF).

#### **Should the materials be collected separately or mixed?**

The problems of separation at the MRF are overcome if the *householder* keeps each material stored separately before collection. More or specialised collection vehicles would then be required to transport the material to the disposal point. Sorting mixed waste can also be carried out at the kerbside, again using specialist vehicles.

NB. Glass cannot be mixed with other materials for safety reasons.

#### **What containers could the materials be stored in?**

There are three storage options, sacks, boxes and wheeled bins. The choice depends on the type of material to be stored, the point of storage and the point of collection, the weight / volume of material that is to be stored and the length of time the material is to be stored for. Such considerations like this that inform the various options.

#### **Where will the material be collected from?**

The choice is between 'point of storage' (known as backdoor collection because that's where many people keep their bins) or the kerbside. The point of storage option means that the refuse collectors have to transport the waste from the point of storage to the public highway.

With the kerbside collection option, the householder takes the contained waste to a point within the property's boundary, as near to the public highway as practical. This option significantly reduces the waste collection costs.

### The Options Currently Under Consideration

A wide range of options are available to increase recycling and composting performance from current levels... however not every option will achieve the aim of 36% material recycled. The following six options are considered because we think they represent the best, significantly different, ways of *improving* on current performance levels.

It is important to note that the estimated additional annual costs are based on national evidence from specialist consultants, evidence from Charnwood and other authorities supplied by our contractor and local knowledge. The figures are provided for comparison purposes and can only be taken as broadly indicative of final scheme costs.

The main characteristics of each option are listed below: -

**Option A – Concentrate on the collection of mixed dry recyclables ('dry recyclables' are newspapers / magazines and cardboard, tins and cans, plastic bottles, glass bottles and jars i.e. not kitchen waste) by enhancing the existing collection method.**

- Two sacks and one box per property
- Co-mingled materials (mixed paper, tins & cans, plastic bottles) in one sack, cardboard in the other sack and glass bottles/jars in the box
- Weekly collection frequency
- Residual (the rest of the rubbish) domestic waste service to stay as it is
- Projected recycling performance rate = 26%
- Projected composting rate = 4%
- Estimated additional annual cost = £1,510,000

**Option B – Concentrate on the collection of mixed dry recyclables by providing better storage facilities with greater capacity for them.**

- One wheeled bin and one box per property
- Co-mingled materials in the bin and glass bottles/jars in the box
- Fortnightly collection frequency
- Residual domestic waste service to stay as it is
- Projected recycling performance rate = 24%
- Projected composting rate = 4%
- Estimated additional annual cost = £1,040,000

**Option C – Concentrate on the collection of mixed dry recyclables by integrating the collection of refuse and recyclables into a single service**

- Two wheeled bins per property
- Smaller bin for residual domestic waste and a larger one for co-mingled dry recyclables
- Provide weekly collection, one week residual waste next week recyclables
- Projected recycling performance rate = 30%
- Projected composting rate = 4%
- Estimated additional annual cost = £550,000

**Option D – Concentrate on the collection of garden waste whilst maintaining present performance on mixed dry recyclables**

- One wheeled bin or reusable heavy-duty sack for garden waste
- Fortnightly collection frequency
- “Green sack” recyclable collection service to stay as it is
- Residual domestic waste service to stay as it is
- Projected recycling performance rate = 14%
- Projected composting rate = 15%
- Estimated additional annual cost = £820,000

**Option E – Enhance the collection of both dry recyclables and garden waste by introducing a kerbside sort (Special lorries and crews that sort recyclable waste literally at the kerbside) scheme and integrating the collection of residual waste and garden waste.**

- Co-mingled dry recyclable material in one 55 litre box per property
- Fortnightly collection frequency with kerbside sort enabling glass and cardboard to be added to the range of materials collected
- Two wheeled bins per property
- Smaller bin for garden waste and larger one for residual domestic waste
- Provide weekly collection, one week residual waste next week garden waste
- Projected recycling performance rate = 31%
- Projected composting rate = 15%
- Estimated additional annual cost = £720,000

**Option F – Enhance the collection of both dry recyclables and garden waste by introducing a kerbside sort scheme and a garden waste collection scheme.**

- Co-mingled dry recyclable material in one 55 litre box per property
- Fortnightly collection frequency with kerbside sort enabling glass and cardboard to be added to the range of materials collected
- One wheeled bin per property for the collection of garden waste
- Fortnightly collection of garden waste

- Residual domestic waste service to stay as it is
- Projected recycling performance rate = 22%
- Projected composting rate = 15%
- Estimated additional annual cost = £1,260,000

All of these options will increase Charnwood's present rate of recycling and composting but **only options C, E and F approach or exceed the declared targets**. No other specific options are available that will produce the necessary "step change" in performance.

In producing the figures included in these options the following assumptions have been made: -

- All materials are collected from the kerbside.
- The County Council will continue to pay recycling credits (cash for the amount of waste we recycle) at the present rate.
- Where additional items such as boxes and wheeled bins are necessary the cost is included as an annual lease cost.
- The development of a waste awareness / promotional campaign associated with waste minimisation and recycling issues is included within the additional cost.

Traditionally Charnwood residents have been provided with a collection service from the point of storage (backdoor) but over recent years more and more households are taking their refuse to the kerbside. Retention of a backdoor collection regime across the whole of the borough would increase the estimated annual additional cost by up to £400,000. (The further that refuse collectors have to carry the waste the more it costs)

#### Possible External Funding Sources

It is understood that the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is to give financial assistance to local authorities for "Sustainable Waste Management Initiatives". Local authorities in England will receive £135 million for sustainable waste management initiatives in coming years.

It is anticipated that the procedure for the allocation of funds will be similar to the previous occasion, when Leicestershire Authorities submitted a number of bids, only some of which were successful. *Feedback suggests that the bids that were successful presented the best benefit / cost ratios, in other words those schemes which achieved significant increases in recycling and / or composting performance at the most economical cost.*

Ongoing revenue costs are unlikely to be met by DEFRA, but one off capital costs may be eligible for grant (i.e. DEFRA *may* pay for some of the upfront costs of new lorries etc). It is anticipated that by the time bids for 2005/06 need to be submitted, the Borough Council will have an agreed detailed action plan in place and will hopefully be successful with a funding bid.

#### What Must the Chosen Option Achieve?

For any scheme to be successful it must: -

- Achieve the declared recycling and composting targets by 2005/06.
- Represent good value for money.
- Engage the interest and enthusiasm of Charnwood residents.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix B : Comparison of Qualitative Aspects of the Options

The qualitative aspects of each of the options are compared under the following headings: -

- Implications for public engagement
- Implications for implementation
- Practical effects for the householder
- Tailoring the service to meet local and individual needs
- Health and safety issues – new issues for the householder
- Health and safety issues – new issues for the contractor
- Effects on the local environment
- Robustness of options in the long term
- Implications for the disposal authority

From previous research carried out across Leicestershire during the development of the Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy it is apparent that success depends on: -

- the scheme being as simple as possible and easy to participate in.
- the number of containers being kept to a minimum.
- well informed residents, who understand what is proposed and why it is being done.

The final proposals reach the current targets and also be flexible enough to respond in the future when the Government introduces even higher targets. Also improvements in the technologies used to separate co-mingled materials mean that a wider range of materials will be accepted at the disposal point. Currently the range of materials that is allowed in Charnwood's "green sack" scheme is limited by the ability of the waste disposal authority to separate them.

### Appendix C : Summary of How Other Authorities Throughout the Country are Achieving 30% Plus

All Councils have been set demanding targets by the Government, based on their recent performance. Appendix C provides a summary of how the top performing Councils are meeting or aim to meet their various targets. Unfortunately it is not possible to provide information relating to the costs associated with these schemes as current figures are not available and straight comparisons would not be meaningful.

It can be seen that there is no one method of achieving success and present schemes are often influenced by previous provision. Collection frequencies vary, although many collect recyclable material fortnightly as we currently do in Charnwood.

#### Appendix D : Summary of How Other Leicestershire Authorities Aim to Meet Their Targets

Appendix D summarises information relating to all other Leicestershire Districts together with similar information gleaned from Rushcliffe Borough Council under the following headings: -

- Published targets
- Existing service delivery methods
- Proposals for meeting targets

Each authority has been set a different target and each has a different approach to meeting its target.

#### Appendix E : Strategic Approach to Waste Minimisation

In order to ensure that all relevant factors are taken into account in the decision making process, the Borough Council employed a firm of consultants that specialise in waste management issues to comment on the actions taken by the Council to date and suggest alternative approaches or options that could help the Council achieve its declared targets. This Issues Document combines information produced by Charnwood officers and that supplied by the consultants, Indecon Limited.

An issue highlighted in the consultants report relates to waste minimisation. The level of waste production throughout the country increases each year. It has been estimated that, at the present rate of growth, the amount of rubbish thrown out will double over 20 years. For any of the options contained in this document to succeed the increase in waste production must be halted or reversed. In order to do this it is suggested that the Borough Council needs to develop a waste awareness / promotional campaign strategy.

Appendix E sets out the consultants suggested framework for such a strategic approach. The estimated additional costs identified earlier in this document include the costs associated with an on-going awareness raising/publicity exercise.

#### Appendix F : Responses to Frequently Asked Questions

Since November 2002, when the first report was presented to Cabinet on the review of the refuse collection and recycling service, concerns have been raised about changing Charnwood's current service. Some questions have been regularly asked, and these are listed, with their answers, in Appendix D. This list is not exhaustive and any participant in the consultation process wishing clarification of any items included in this Issues Document should make contact with the Borough Council in one of the following ways: -

- By letter to the Cleansing Section, Charnwood Borough Council, Southfields, Loughborough, LE11 2TN
- By fax to the Cleansing Section on 01509 210211
- By e-mail to cleansing @charnwoodbc.gov.uk

It is inevitable that during the consultation process additional questions will be asked. This document can be found on the Borough Council's web-site ([www.charnwoodbc.gov.uk](http://www.charnwoodbc.gov.uk)) and Appendix F will be continually updated during the consultation process to include the additional questions and answers.

### Summary of Appendices

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Description</b>
A	Decisions to be Taken when Establishing a Recycling/Composting Scheme
B	Comparison of the Qualitative Aspects of the Options
C	Summary of How Other Authorities Throughout the Country are Achieving 30% Plus.
D	Summary of Existing and Proposed Recycling Methods of Near Neighbours
E	Waste Awareness / Promotional Campaign Strategy
F	Responses to Frequently Asked Questions