

RECYCLING ENHANCEMENTS

The Borough Council has undertaken a wide ranging public consultation during the latter part of 2003 and early 2004 on how the refuse and recycling service should be changed to enable Charnwood to reach the much higher target of a 36% recycling rate by 2005/06. This is more than double the current recycling rate of 17%. This target is statutory and failing to meet it could result in Charnwood incurring financial penalties and other sanctions.

A range of high performing schemes from around the UK have been considered and advice sought from independent consultants and our contractor, Onyx Municipal. All the evidence suggests that it is not possible to bring about this massive change in attitudes and habits by means of education and promotion alone. There has to be a change in the system.

The public consultation was framed around six original options A to F. During the consultation many opinions were expressed, ideas exchanged and assumptions challenged. The outcome of this process is that Cabinet have resolved to adopt a system which isn't any of the six original options but embodies elements of all of them and responds to many of the concerns voiced during the consultation. Cabinet believes that the new system represents the best balance between cost and performance.

THE SYSTEM

Material	Papers, magazines, tins, cans & plastic bottles (i.e. existing green sack materials)	Cardboard packaging (including cereal, pizza, washpowder boxes)	Glass bottles & jars and textiles	Garden waste	Residual waste which cannot be recycled or composted
Container	Green sack (stored in the green bin already provided)	Red sack* (could be stored in the old refuse bin where one exists)	Blue box, with the textiles contained in a carrier bag placed on top	Brown wheeled bin (compostable sack for occasional users)	Black or grey wheeled bin probably in 140, 180 and 240 ltr sizes for different sized households
Frequency of collection	Fortnightly alternating with residual waste	Fortnightly alternating with residual waste	Fortnightly alternating with residual waste	Fortnightly alternating with residual waste	Fortnightly alternating with recycling & composting
Collecting point	Edge of property (e.g. end of drive or by garden gate)	Edge of property (e.g. end of drive or by garden gate)	Edge of property (e.g. end of drive or by garden gate)	Edge of property (e.g. end of drive or by garden gate)	Edge of property (e.g. end of drive or by garden gate)
Other details	Sacks (green & red) will be delivered in bulk every six months.	*The red sack will be combined with the green sack within 2yrs when a new recycling facility is ready	Textiles includes all clean dry clothing and household fabrics + shoes in pairs	This service is charged and optional – rate to be set. Frequency during winter may be reviewed in light of results	Some exceptions or assistance will need to be provided for frail or disabled people and for certain types of properties
How does this element respond to the consultation?	Builds on the existing system which people are familiar with and like. Retains the existing green bin most of which are good for several years yet.	Builds on the existing system adding cardboard in a separate sack initially and combined in green sacks asap	Builds on existing system adding glass and textiles	Provides garden waste collection to those who are willing to pay for it and does not undermine composting at home or via tips	This is the only essential wheeled bin – it restricts residual waste and thereby promotes recycling

IMPLEMENTATION

The glass and textile collection are the subject of a DEFRA bid which we have been informed is at least partially successful although details are still awaited. Depending on lead times for boxes and vehicles, collections could start as early as July and the cardboard collection could start at the same time.

Lead times for wheeled bins are longer but we should be aiming for a phased introduction from the end of 2004 so that we have full implementation by end of March 2005. The recycling target we have to meet is 36% averaged throughout the year April 2005 to March 2006 so the new system needs to be fully operational at the beginning of that period.

Other improvements are planned to the various recycling centres on public car parks and at supermarkets etc around the Borough. These could also be funded from DEFRA. In any event, the Council intends to upgrade these facilities in the near future and also provide weekend mobile recycling centres for garden waste, glass and possibly cardboard from March 2004. These mobile sites will be situated where there are gaps in recycling and composting provision. The number, frequency and location of these mobile sites will be adjusted to complement the new system as it is introduced.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The introduction of a system like this to approximately 64,000 households involves a huge amount of planning before the first wheeled bin arrives in Charnwood. We are aware that some people are concerned that they will not be able to manage the wheeled bin, which is an essential part of this system, because of disability or frailty. Similarly, some people are worried that their property cannot accommodate a wheeled bin or it is unsuitable for other reasons such as multi-occupancy buildings.

We will be contacting you nearer the time to work out solutions to these problems. However, we must balance these issues against the need for a system which is as uniform as possible so that recycling performance is not jeopardised.

Full Council gave further consideration to the proposed system on Monday 1st March, 2004. The matter was referred back to Cabinet for a final decision on Thursday 17th March, 2004 and the views of individual members were submitted to that meeting. Cabinet's decision was to adopt the system described above. Issues of property specific problems and assistance were discussed in some depth during Cabinet's discussion and it was emphasised that exceptions and assistance will be made where necessary. However, in order to maximise the recycling performance, these will be limited to cases of real need.

If you are still concerned, by all means contact Charnwood's Environmental Co-ordinator David Cannon on 01509 634504 (not Wednesdays) or email david.cannon@charnwoodbc.gov.uk .