



ISLINGTON

RECYCLING

**REPORT
OF THE SUSTAINABILITY REVIEW
COMMITTEE**

London Borough of Islington

September 2004

FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR

This report of the Sustainability Review Committee on Recycling has been written at a key point in the Council's implementation and delivery of recycling services for the borough. Only in the last few months have we seen the council hit the Audit Commission's target of recycling 10% of the borough's waste - up from 3.5% in 2000. We have a borough-wide collection service, with green boxes for street properties and on-site collection points for housing estates. And we have recently seen the launch of the borough's Recycling Centre.

I am confident that the recommendations of this committee, if accepted by the Executive, will go much further in helping us increase our recycling rate. Recycling is a key priority of this council and it plays a vital role in creating a sustainable community in Islington, London and beyond.

I would like to thank the previous Chair, Councillor Wally Burgess, and his committee who contributed greatly to the final report that I am presenting to you today; and all members of the public and our partners who contributed valuable information to this Recycling Review.

COUNCILLOR LUCY WATT

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUSTAINABILITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Councillors

Lucy Watt (Chair)
Angela Brook
Bruce Neave
Wally Burgess

Anna Berent (Vice-Chair)
Stefan Kasprzyk
Doreen Scott
Mick O'Sullivan

Substitutes

Graham Baker
Donna Boffa
Lisa Spall

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Sustainability Review Committee would like to thank all the groups and individuals who assisted the scrutiny process.

The Committee would like to give special thanks to the representatives of the following organisations who have met with members to outline their perspective on the issues.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Greater London Authority | - Peter Daw |
| London Waste Action | - Simon Read |
| London Remade | - Olivia Tait |
| London Community Recycling Network | - Ben Metz |
| London Borough of Tower Hamlets | - Worku Lakew |
| Islington Waste Savers | - Norman Beddington |
| North London Waste Authority | - Will Gardiner |
| ICSL | - Max Wood |
| Boleyn Road Area Housing Panel | - Jessie White |
| Central Street Area Housing Panel | - Helen Cagnoni |
| London Borough of Hounslow | - Richard Wood and Fred Thompson |

OFFICER SUPPORT

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Scrutiny and Democratic Services | - Peter Murphy |
| Environment and Conservation | - Caroline Brimblecombe |

THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Identify ways to maximise diversion and improve the operation of recycling schemes

- a) Research and pursue ways to recycle on a much wider scale and to increase volumes significantly in the near-term.
- b) Research alternatives to green box collection such as commingled collection.
- c) Explore ways to assist residents on estates and in flats above shops to recycle more (eg addressing storage problems and collection methods).
- d) Work with contractors, caretakers and others to keep estates recycling sites and the surrounding area tidy, and the sites operating to a high standard.
- e) Review options for recycling additional materials on a regular basis.
- f) Periodically research innovative practices in other local authorities, and incorporate elements as appropriate for Islington.

2. Involve Area Committees in the promotion of recycling

- a) Nominate a committee member whose role it would be to champion recycling.
- b) Make recycling a regular item on Area Committee agendas.

3. Engage the public

- a) To encourage and facilitate the public to participate in recycling through targeted promotion, doorknocking, and community-based initiatives (eg Waste Action Islington).
- b) Consult with residents on how to improve recycling services by liaising with community groups, the residents survey, Area Committees, Eyes for Islington and for example focus groups.
- c) Make Council staff and contractors aware of the requirement to increase recycling by way of the Sustainability Board, internal recycling publicity, and the Recycling Ambassadors initiative (for collection operatives).
- d) Give recycling more prominence on the Council's website, and facilitate the topic in the same fashion as 'Areas on line'.
- e) Include information about the location of recycling centres and what can be placed in green boxes in the new residents pack.
- f) Publicise the Reuse and Recycling Centre continuously in the press and related media, and emphasise how people without a car can use it.

- g) Intensify resources aimed at raising awareness and increasing participation in recycling on estates, such as through partnerships with community groups and doorknocking.
- h) Promote and support Community Waste Action Groups, particularly on estates.

4. Enhance partnerships with community groups

- a) Promote and support community involvement, eg by way of Waste Action Islington, and charities currently recycling.
- b) Support the voluntary sector in securing funding through Community Recycling and Economic Development (CRED) and other programmes as appropriate.
- c) Continue to promote and expand the Council's free recycling service to charities.
- d) Advertise re-use charities (e.g. furniture for the homeless) more widely.

5. Increase involvement with schools

- a) Continue to link schools recycling to an education programme for all pupils to get them into a lifelong recycling habit, building on the Council's existing recycling educational resources (eg the recycling game, treasure chest etc).
- b) Strengthen and support the Islington Environmental Education Network and the Islington Environment Network.
- c) Communicate with School Governing Bodies regularly reminding them of the need for recycling by means of the CEA @ Islington 'Governors Newsletter' which is circulated termly.
- d) Ask School Governing Bodies to monitor their school's recycling performance and support them in doing so.

6. Engage the business community

- a) Increase involvement with Islington's business community to enable businesses to recycle more and to adopt best practice in waste management.
- b) Publicise initiatives such as the Waste Watch ResourceXchange.
- c) Introduce and promote schemes such as Encams' Tidy Traders programme.

7. Maximise external sources of funding

- a) Proactively pursue all available sources of external funding and resources e.g. London Recycling Fund, Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP).
- b) Explore the use of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding or other available resources for the reuse of bulky waste (eg on estates).

8. Address the disincentive to waste minimisation posed by the existing way of charging for waste disposal (default levy system).

1. INTRODUCTION

The Sustainability Review Committee was tasked with undertaking a review that looked at recycling in Islington. The Committee commenced this work at its meeting on 22nd January 2004.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the review agreed by the Committee were as follows:

To assess L.B. Islington's current position on recycling and progress towards meeting both local and government recycling targets, including reviewing recent efforts and initiatives to assess their overall contribution.

To look at best practice both in London and elsewhere and to compare LBI's current methods.

To look at alternative approaches to the collection of recycling in the context of the North London Waste Authority's proposed joint strategy.

3. METHODOLOGY AND TIMETABLING OF THE REPORT

3.1 Following the agreement of the Scrutiny Initiation Document by the Sustainability Review Committee, officers devised a programme of work, taking into account relevant stakeholders and the evidence members would consider.

3.2 The methodology undertaken in securing evidence from witnesses was varied and flexible in order to obtain the best information possible. Some sub-groups visits were undertaken and information from them was fed back to the Committee in papers and through the reporting of the Chair.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Since 1999 Islington has developed its recycling programme from a network of bring sites to a comprehensive programme which includes weekly kerbside collection for all street properties, a recycling and re-use centre (to open Autumn 2004), free recycling for schools and charities, and schemes serving Council estates and blocks of flats. Recent successes include securing capital funding to expand recycling on estates, and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) funding to promote recycling on estates and in schools.
- 4.2 Statutory performance indicators for recycling were introduced in 2001 using 1998/99 as the baseline. Under this framework Islington is required to recycle 10% of household waste in 2003/04 and 18% in 2005/06. As a constituent member of the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) Islington also contributes to the disposal authority's targets of 12% recycling by 2003/04 and 18% by 2005/06. The NLWA Joint Waste Strategy has been consulted on internally and is now out for public consultation. The Joint Waste Strategy focuses on the processing capacity required to achieve waste diversion targets and on the technologies that will support this. It proposes recycling targets of 35% by 2010 and 45% by 2015. The Strategy emphasises the fact that effective working partnerships among all stakeholders will be required to achieve these targets.

5. THE COMMITTEE'S FINDINGS

The current situation in L.B.Islington

- 5.1 All of Islington's residual waste now goes to landfill sites outside London. The EU Landfill Directive as implemented in the UK will constrain landfill supply and increase the cost. Local authorities will be required to minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill in order to avoid the cost of buying additional landfill permits. Major reductions in the amount of degradable waste landfilled are also now required in order to minimise greenhouse gas emissions. EU Directives, national legislation and economic conditions all drive recycling performance. Decisions taken at the local level regarding programme design, collection method and education and promotion are key to achieving the targets.
- 5.2 Following the introduction of kerbside recycling, Islington has seen year on year increases in tonnage recycled. Though Islington's schemes compare favourably with high-performing and Beacon Councils, the borough continues to face challenges in achieving its targets. Participation in the kerbside scheme is approximately 50%, which compares favourably with other boroughs such as Camden (45%). (N.B. Participation is defined by Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) as placing materials out for collection as least once over a 4 week period).
- 5.3 The introduction of additional public recycling facilities and extending recycling to 131 estates has had a modest impact on the recycling rate. Introduction of recycling facilities at tube stations and selected 'gateway' points is not expected to make a large contribution to the overall recycling rate but will make recycling more visible and represents best practice. Similarly, most charities and schools will recycle small but consistent amounts, these schemes are key to embedding recycling in the community and supporting the Council's environmental education goals encouraging from a young age the concept of recycling.
- 5.4 Resident turnover in Islington is high and this has an impact on awareness of the scheme, as well as on the cost of publicising and promoting the Council's recycling schemes. Green box replacement rates are high as boxes go missing when residents move.
- 5.5 Targeted promotion based on best practice and peer-reviewed research findings has been developed to increase participation and in turn increase tonnage collected. Green box participation is measured annually and all collection rounds are weighed twice per annum. In this way opportunities to improve performance can be identified and issues flagged up. Focus groups are planned to look into ways to address non-participation.
- 5.6 Contract specifications for the Hornsey Street Re-use and Recycling Centre will require the site operator to divert a minimum of 50% of materials for recycling. Those using the site will receive information materials providing practical advice on how to reduce waste and also how to ensure materials they no longer need can be re-used or recycled effectively.

The Critical Issues

5.7 From early on in this review the Committee identified the following critical issues:

- The increasing cost and constrained supply of landfill sites.
- The collection method required to maximise diversion of recyclable materials.
- Emerging legislation requiring diversion of targeted waste streams (e.g. waste and electronic equipment).
- Vesting the community in recycling and waste diversion.

The increasing cost and constrained supply of landfill sites

5.8 A key element of the implementation of the EU Landfill Directive in the UK entails the introduction of tradeable landfill permits. This will constrain the supply of landfill and in turn increase the cost. In addition to increased investment in recycling, composting and similar waste diversion schemes (e.g. bulky waste) investment in new and emerging waste technologies will be required. The North London Waste Authority (NLWA) Joint Waste Strategy addresses infrastructure development and proposes a change in the method of household recycling collection to ensure maximum recovery potential. New collection services and facilities will be required to enable **Islington** to meet the higher recycling and composting rates indicated within the North London Joint Waste Strategy (NLJWS). Co-ordination of recycling services with processing and bulking facilities will also be necessary.

The collection method required to maximise diversion of recyclable materials

5.9 When introduced the current method of collection (battery-operated pedestrian controlled vehicles, or PCVs) used in Islington had the advantage of being able to guarantee coverage to all street properties in the borough. As it is labour-intensive it also creates employment in an environmentally sustainable enterprise, and in using battery-operated vehicles there are no direct emissions or vehicle noise. Introduction of controlled-parking zones has made it possible to cover the same number of households as currently served by PCVs with conventional 'stillage' vehicles. Use of PCVs however, does not offer the flexibility needed to add materials to the scheme.

5.10 As the Council's current method of collection is labour-intensive it is comparatively costly. A recent comparison of recycling collection costs across London placed Islington's at the higher end in terms of cost per household. Changing the method of collection would enable the Council to add materials to the scheme such as cardboard and plastics. Worker health and safety could also be safeguarded as manual handling would be reduced. The PCVs are coming to the end of their lives and a decision will need to be taken to replace them or to opt for investment in an alternate collection method. The Committee was informed that two recycling rounds have been selected for trial collection using a stillage vehicle in 2004. A report on the trial of this vehicle is awaited at the time of writing this report.

5.11 Collection options fall broadly into two categories, source separated and co-mingled. Source separation requires operatives to sort materials at the kerb into compartments on the collection vehicle. Vehicles therefore occupy the roadway for longer periods of time. In a co-mingled system collection time is minimised as materials are placed out in bags by householders (or in wheeled bins for recycling) and collected and placed directly on the vehicle with no further separation. Often the materials are placed on

the same vehicle as the refuse which makes it possible to collect recycling and refuse at the same time and also minimises the number of vehicles stopping at each property to provide the service. The co-mingled system requires use of Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) for sorting prior to being sent to reprocessors. The source separated system enables materials to be sent direct to reprocessors and also minimises the risk of contamination. Glass can be easily included on a source separated scheme, but poses challenges in co-mingled systems. Either system requires some level of separation by the householder, as non-recyclable refuse must be kept separated from the recyclable materials.

- 5.12 The NLWA is proposing to build a series of MRFs, beginning in 2006 enabling boroughs to shift to a co-mingled system of collection. In the absence of access to a MRF a stillage collection would enable the Council to serve the existing collection rounds more efficiently and also to add materials to the service.
- 5.13 A successful joint bid has been made to the London Recycling Fund (LRF) to establish collection of garden and kitchen waste. This will enable Islington to divert green waste from 8,000 households for centralised composting. The NLWA is planning to build an in-vessel composting facility in 2005/06. Islington will, at the same time, support home composting and is supporting a community composting proposal within the joint bid. Doorstep collections would require a change in the current collection method. This proposal would support community composting efforts within Islington and would introduce a Master Composter Programme to disseminate best practice and foster local skills in home composting.

Emerging legislation requiring the diversion of targeted waste streams (e.g. waste and electronic equipment)

- 5.14 The UK has until 13th August 2004 to transpose the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive into national legislation. Other requirements of the directive will come into force in 2004, 2005 and 2006. Collection targets of 4kg per person a year for domestic appliances have been set. There is scope to collect waste electronic equipment at the Hornsey Street Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Vesting the Community in Recycling and Diversion

- 5.15 There has been lower than anticipated participation in recycling in spite of providing services which meet or exceed best practice guidelines. Recent research shows that providing services and promoting them are not in themselves guarantees of success. Changes in attitude and in prioritisation of recycling as an activity are necessary. In order to overcome these barriers promotions have been targeted on those sectors most amenable to changing behaviour. Focus groups are planned for 2004/05 to identify methods of overcoming obstacles to participation among non-participants. Targeted outreach and door-knocking are underway on selected Council estates. Bids to the Community Recycling Economic Development (CRED) fund (with Groundwork) and to the London Recycling Fund (LRF) have been made to support additional outreach work in 2004/05. Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) funding is also in place to support education and publicity on Council estates. An average of £1 per household per annum is required to publicise recycling effectively and it is the opinion of officers that more will be required to effect sustained change.

Other authorities, organisations and existing and emerging community recyclers

- 5.16 The Committee took the view that whilst it was important to hear about best practice in other Local Authorities it was just as important to hear from the strategic authority involved, from organisations who could make funding available or who had a good knowledge about London's existing and emerging community recyclers. The following paragraphs from 5.17 to 5.42 set out a brief summary of what we heard from these organisations which have informed our recommendations to the Executive.

The London Recycling Fund

- 5.17 Simon Read of the London Recycling Fund gave a presentation to us about the Fund which is a partnership between the Mayor of London, the Association of London Government and London Waste Action.
- 5.18 The London Recycling Fund was established in early 2002 and began operation in May 2002. Since then over 70 grants have been made, allocating £24.9million to a range of recycling and waste minimisation projects. The strategy of the Fund has always been to encourage additional investment by applicants and their partners. This has resulted in significant additional investment by waste authorities and their private sector partners – resulting in the core Government funding of £24.9 million supporting projects worth a total of over £45 million.
- 5.19 We have learnt that the Government has recently announced a further £135 million that enables the National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund for England to continue for the financial years 2004/05 and 2005/06. Ministers allocated £20.55 million of the £135 million, to the London Recycling Fund (LRF) over the same period. The Fund's delivery strategy is to stimulate efforts and measures that result in a reduction of the amounts of household waste produced in London and to improve the management of waste that cannot be avoided.
- 5.20 As mentioned earlier a successful bid has been made to the LRF to establish a collection for garden and kitchen waste. However, the Committee were of the opinion that the LRF represented a real opportunity for Islington to access further funding to pilot more schemes on say Estate Recycling.

The Mayor of London's Municipal Waste Strategy

- 5.21 Peter Daw of the Greater London Authority gave a presentation on the Municipal Waste Strategy for London, which was published in 2003. The Mayor's Vision for Waste in London is that by 2020, municipal waste should no longer compromise London's future as a sustainable city.
- 5.22 The Plan's policies are based on the premise that London will need to make significant changes in the way it manages its waste. The plan emphasises waste minimisation, recycling and sustainable waste management and disposal. The role that partnerships and co-operative working play in delivering change is highlighted, as is action by a wide range of stakeholders. The Strategy sets out 44 policies, followed by 101 detailed proposals.
- 5.23 The Committee were of the view that the Mayor of London's Municipal Waste Strategy whilst not assisting Local Authorities in London directly could help Islington to tap into

funding from organisations such as the LRF. The Committee thought it important that Islington should enlist the support of the Mayor's Office wherever possible.

London Remade

- 5.24 London Remade is a strategic partnership between the business sector, London Boroughs, regional government, waste management companies and the not-for profit sector. The organisation is primarily funded by the London Development Agency and has a pan-London orientation. It focuses on the economic aspects of recycling and regeneration.
- 5.25 Olivia Tait from London Remade gave a presentation to us about the concept of 'closed loop' recycling. Ms. Tait outlined the need to rethink how rubbish was dealt with by focussing not only on collection and reprocessing but by making sure that markets were developed for recycled products. The Committee was informed that 'closed loop' recycling involved the provision of goods, which can be taken back after use, recycled and remanufactured into new end-use products. Ms. Tait outlined its economic as well as environmental advantages. Members were advised of some existing 'closed loop' schemes which have been implemented in various sectors, including the airline industry and in hospitals. She also explained the benefits of 'closed loop' recycling at venues and events in order to reinforce and replicate recycling behaviour outside of the home environment.
- 5.26 The Committee accepted that there appeared to be some merit in the 'closed loop' proposals put forward by London Remade. However, we thought that any individual scheme proposed would require extensive analysis of its practicality before proceeding to implementation.

London Community Recycling Network

- 5.27 The London Community Recycling Network (LCRN) is a not for profit organisation that supports and represents London's existing and emerging community recyclers. It provides services ranging from training and advice to assistance in areas such as fundraising, legislation, business development, management systems, IT and technical aspects of service delivery.
- 5.28 Ben Metz from the LCRN gave a very interesting presentation to us outlining the current role of community recycling and its wider social benefits, including the creation of employment. He provided case-study examples that illustrated the benefits of community recycling, including the Tower Hamlets Community Recycling Consortium, which had been effective both in supporting recycling and as an innovative approach to addressing community issues.
- 5.29 Mr Metz impressed upon us the scope for authorities to take social considerations into account when contracting out services and the specific implications of this for recycling. He stressed the role of community benefit clauses in service delivery contracts as a method of maximising social inclusion in a way that is compatible with good procurement and administrative procedures. He was of the view that community based recycling organisations were often able to deliver services more effectively to certain groups because their particular structures enabled them to operate successfully in environments where other organisations could not.

- 5.30 Mr Metz also referred to the North London Waste Strategy and outlined the disadvantages for the Council if it tied itself to a long-term, large-scale, capital-intensive contract for recycling and outlined the benefits of a more locally-focussed, flexible approach.
- 5.31 The Committee thought that there was much in what Ben Metz had said about working with the community to improve recycling rates and which could inform our recommendations to the Executive. With regard to Ben Metz's points on the North London Waste Strategy we were not convinced that there were any real practical alternatives to the Council's current intentions on the Strategy.

Tower Hamlets Community Recycling Consortium

- 5.32 Tower Hamlets Community Recycling Consortium is a not-for-profit local community recycling company. Its aims include increasing the level of recycling from households and other sectors and in doing so to create local employment.
- 5.33 Worku Lakew (Tower Hamlets Community Recycling Consortium) attended one of our meetings and provided further information relating to the organisation's work. He informed the Committee that the consortium had a five-year contract with Tower Hamlets Council for delivering a recycling collection service to flats within the borough. He explained that the organisation undertook recycling services for over 45,000 properties and provided details of the materials collected. Mr. Lakew also detailed some of the social benefits of their work and pointed out that the consortium employed mostly local people, some of whom had no formal qualifications or relevant experience.
- 5.34 Mr. Lakew outlined the benefits of engaging hard-to-reach residents and pointed to the relatively high participation rate. He explained how the consortium was run and provided further operational details of their work. Mr. Lakew advised that trolleys were used for collection purposes and that residents' recycling containers were supplied with a unique electronic chip in order to make them easily identifiable.
- 5.35 The Committee were impressed with what appeared to be a very good scheme operating in Tower Hamlets, and confirmed our view that there were very real benefits to be had in working with community recycling organisations to increase levels of recycling.

Islington Waste Savers

- 5.36 Islington Waste Saver (IWS) is a community sector recycling service provider whose aims are to increase the level of recycling in Islington and to create local employment.
- 5.37 Norman Beddington presented information to the Committee on the work of IWS, and their role as a local employer in a sustainable enterprise. He explained that the group had no formal contract with either ICSL or the Council although they had provided recycling services in the borough for over 5 years. Mr. Beddington outlined the difficulties of operating without a formal contract in terms of planning and added that the lack of resources hindered research and development work. He advised the Committee that IWS had a relatively good record on missed collections but stated that it was difficult to compare performance with the ICSL collection team. He explained how IWS had continued to be a good working partner and outlined the need for this to be recognised contractually.

- 5.38 The Committee were in no doubt that Islington Waste Savers make a significant contribution to recycling in Islington, however the Committee thought there might be more to be achieved from their working relationship with the Council and this should be explored.

North London Waste Authority (NLWA)

- 5.39 The North London Waste Authority is (NLWA) was established in 1986 as a statutory waste disposal authority following the abolition of the GLC. The Authority's prime function is for arranging the disposal of waste collected by its seven constituent boroughs. The waste is disposed of under a contract with London Waste Ltd.
- 5.40 Will Gardiner from the NLWA attended one of our meetings and outlined the joint waste strategy that has been produced in partnership with the seven member authorities. It sets out how the NLWA proposes to deal with the waste challenge facing North London in the period through to 2020. The strategy includes a comprehensive waste minimisation programme, a significant investment in recycling and composting and an enhanced role for new technologies to enable the recovery of energy from waste. It sets challenging targets and is underpinned by research into the best practicable environmental option for managing North London's waste.
- 5.42 The Committee were of the view that the Strategy appeared to offer significant opportunities for Islington to improve its recycling rates and to access the benefits of working with the six other member authorities.

Islington Cleansing Services Limited (ICSL)

- 5.43 ICSL is part of the Accord plc group. ICSL provides the London Borough of Islington with refuse collection, recycling and street cleansing services. The contract provides mutual benefit in the development of a commercial waste business as a result of a profit share arrangement with the Council.
- 5.44 Max Wood, Managing Director of ICSL, attended one of our meetings and outlined the role of ICSL in recycling. He explained that ICSL collected dry recyclables weekly from approximately 37,000 households in the borough and that they had a very low missed collection rate. As well as kerbside collection, Mr. Wood pointed out that ICSL provided a recycling service for schools, charity organisations and other bodies within the borough. He also outlined recent work on garden and kitchen waste collection financed by the London Recycling Fund.

- 5.45 The Committee discussed with Max Wood the advantages of employing different collection methods such as a co-mingled system and how these could contribute to collection targets. We emphasised the need to consider the skills required of employees for different collection systems and that there was a need for a cultural change so that recycling was considered the norm with residual waste a smaller proportion of the waste stream.

Recycling on Estates

- 5.46 If recycling in Islington is to be a success then considerable efforts will have to be made to increase the levels of recycling on Islington's many estates.
- 5.47 The Committee heard evidence from the respective Chairs of the Boleyn Road Area Housing Panel – Jessie White and the Chair of the Central Street Area Housing Panel – Helen Cagnoni. Both Chairs had similar concerns about recycling on estates. They found that the recycling bins tended to attract a lot of unsightly rubbish. It was difficult for people on estates to keep a recycling box through lack of space and if they were kept outside they would be thrown over balconies or kicked along walkways. Many residents on estates wanted to recycle but the level of vandalism and anti-social behaviour made this difficult and the Council should appreciate this. Residents on estates did not like the wheelie bins and emphasised the importance of consulting with residents in siting the bins. If the Council were asking residents on estates to re-cycle then the Council needed to help with storage and by keeping the place clean and tidy otherwise people felt they were contributing to an eyesore.
- 5.48 The Committee understood many of the concerns expressed by the Chairs of the AHPs and accepted the special measures the Council might have to take on some estates to help residents recycle and this has been reflected in our recommendations.

The London Borough of Hounslow

- 5.49 Several members of the Committee visited the London Borough of Hounslow to observe the boroughs arrangement for recycling. The borough had approved its Waste Strategy in April 2003. Hounslow was praised in its Comprehensive Performance Assessment for innovation with regard to recycling.
- 5.50 Hounslow's innovative practices had brought about a significant increase in the levels of recycling in the borough. They had also been successful in securing funding from the London Recycling Fund.
- 5.51 The Council's kerbside 'green box' recycling collection was contracted to a community-recycling organisation with a 6 year contract. 72,000 households have a green box. Residual waste is collected separately in-house by way of a black sack collection. Hounslow uses two different sized vehicles, depending on the size of the road.

- 5.52 Particularly interesting to Islington Members was Hounslow's approach to estate recycling which had been praised by the Audit Commission. They use estate frames which are popular with residents and have helped to increase Hounslow's recycling rates. The piloting of the frames was assisted by funding from the London Recycling Fund. Vandalism has been minimal.
- 5.53 Hounslow's Civic Amenity site underwent a major redevelopment in 2001/02 with the help of investment from the London Recycling Fund. The site has good links with residents and works with the borough schools who visit the site. The site is open from 6.00am to 5.30pm and sometimes longer in the summer.
- 5.54 Hounslow is an outer London Borough and in many ways is not comparable to Islington. However, we did consider that there might be things Islington could learn about for example, their success with Estate recycling and the use of a community recycling organisation on a large contract basis.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Islington introduced the Getting Greener environment awareness campaign in 2002/03. The campaign promotes the Council's environmental initiatives as well as encourages people to get involved and to take responsibility for protecting and improving their local environment. Two of the Council's key objectives are to increase the proportion of recycled household waste and to decrease the use of landfill. These objectives underpin the Council's goal of promoting environmental sustainability across the borough.
- 6.2 In 2003/04 the Council established an inter-departmental working group – the 10% Target Team to co-ordinate progress towards recycling goals. The intention was that key decisions would benefit from a joint working approach and communications would be enhanced. Unexpected delays to the opening of the Re-use and Recycling Centre required a review of options. A range of alternatives for increasing diversion were evaluated but did not represent value for money in the short term. Therefore the Council invested significantly in promoting participation in existing schemes using proven marketing techniques, such as – targeted door-knocking in street properties – two targeted estates projects including door knocking in partnership with the voluntary sector.
- 6.3 There is no doubt that these marketing techniques have helped to increase recycling rates. However, to achieve the targets required of the Council significantly more needs to be done to both encourage and enable people to recycle. From listening to the people who have come to give evidence to the Committee and from the practices we have learned about in other authorities there is no doubt that the great majority of people think that recycling is a good thing, but it needs to be encouraged and facilitated. We believe the recommendations we have made in this report will go some way to achieving that end.

APPENDICES TO THE REPORT

- Appendix A - Approved SID
- Appendix B - List of Background Papers