

# OSC Spotlight

## Waste & recycling services performance

October 2022



# Mayoral Pledges



Strategic Plan action milestones developed to deliver a ***Clean and Green Future***

- Work with the service to deliver further improvements, including education on recycling
- Encourage our community to become involved in community walkabouts to check standards are being maintained across the borough
- Wage war on fly tipping, using our boroughwide CCTV and a policy of prosecuting offenders
- Clean up our borough with more bins, litter sweeps and a mission to drive down missed bin collections



# Introduction / key facts



- Residual waste collected from 140,000 properties twice a week Recyclable waste collected from 140,000 properties once a week
- Organic / food waste collected from 20,000 properties once a week
- 300,000 collections a week & 15,600,000 collections a year
- 2021/22 total waste and recycling 113,106 Tonnes – 88,273 Tonnes from households
- 450km of roads and pavements swept and cleaned (both sides of pavement)
- Plus graffiti removal, fly tipping collections, cleaning hard surfaces including bins



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- How scrutiny can help us improve



# Background



- Approx. £18.6m net budget. Collections and Street Cleaning - 350 staff
- Approx. £10.2m net budget for waste and recycling disposal
- Waste and recycling service brought back in-house - March 2020
- Management restructure to merge LBTH client team and Veolia operational management functions – January 2022
- During COVID, operational changes, restrictions, staff shortages and sickness
- Unexpected mechanical failures
- 85% of properties are flats



# Factors influencing performance



- High number of residents living in flats using communal / shared bins producing more waste but recycling less
- Rapid property and population growth
- Increases in waste from people working at home
- High levels of contamination
- Need for planned service and infrastructure improvements to be fully implemented

## Significant growth in number of properties

- There has been a 7% increase in total number of properties in the borough (8,770 more since 2019)
- Tower Hamlets is the most densely populated borough in England with 15,695 residents per square kilometre





# Factors influencing performance



## High number of flatted properties

- Tower Hamlets = 88% Vs London = 56% & England = 24%
- TH has 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number of flats and maisonettes in London.
- We have more flats and less houses, garden waste collection and harder to deliver food waste services which has increased recycling performance elsewhere.

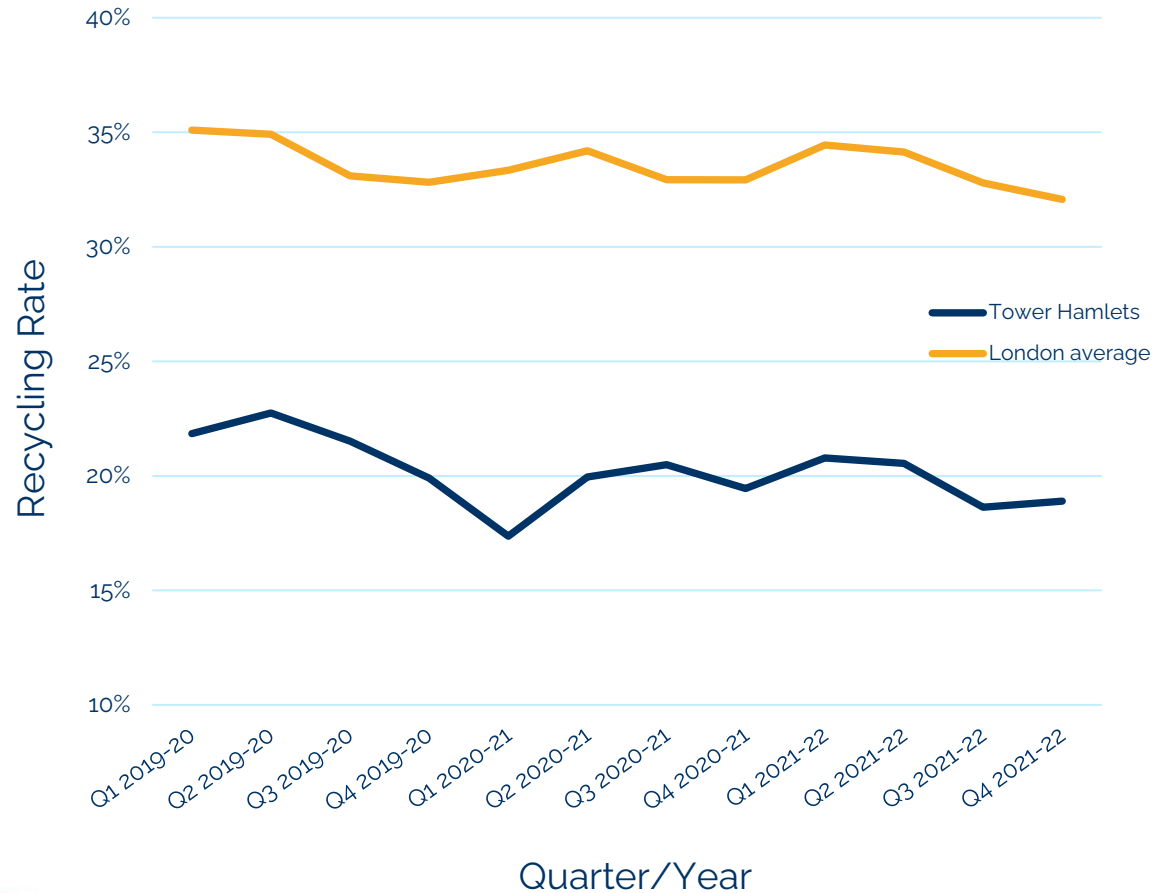
## High contamination & low participation rates

The contamination rate in our dry recycling is high.

Year	Average Annual Contamination rate (dry recycling)
2019/20	27.69%
2020/21	25.06%
2021/22	23.70%
Q1 2022/23	30.08%



# Performance - recycling



Our recycling performance dropped in 2020/21 to 19.3% significantly below the London average of 33.4% and inner London average of 28%. Estimates at Q1 this year are that performance will reduce further to around 17% in 2022/23.

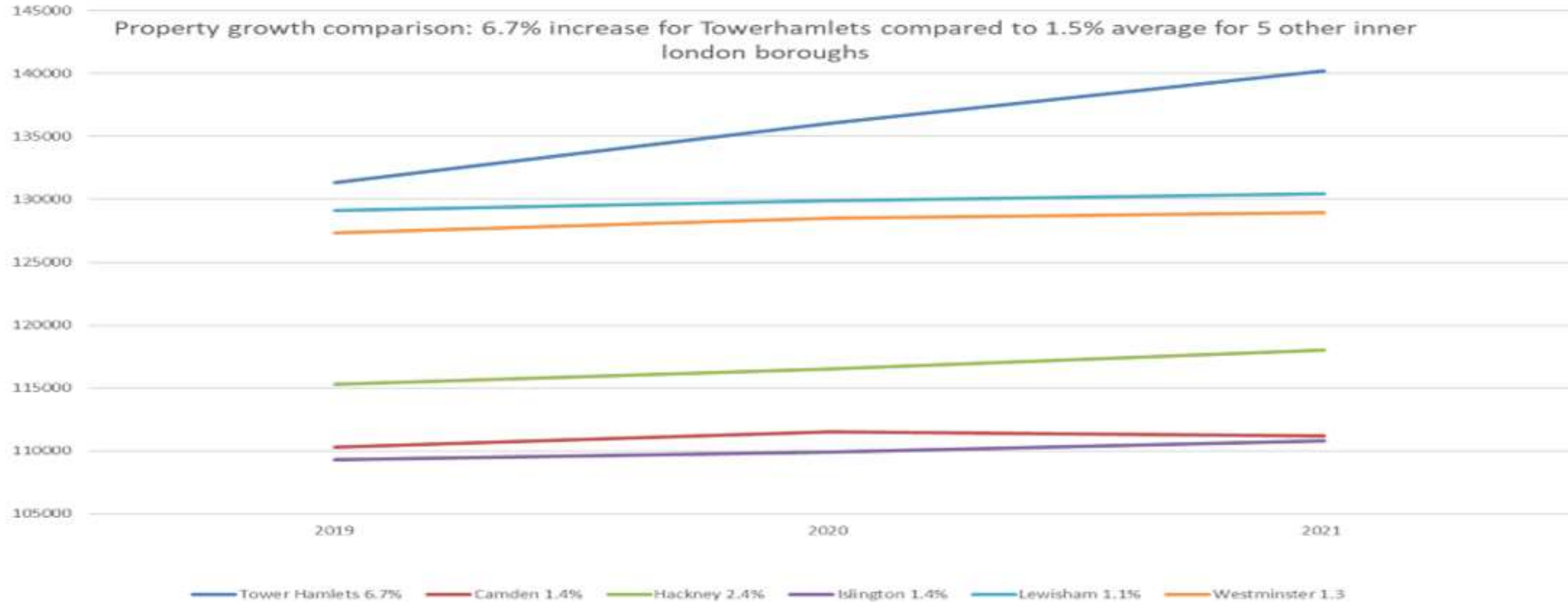
3-year comparison with other similar inner London boroughs

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Tower Hamlets	21.5%	19.3%	19.7%
Camden	25.9%	28.6%	28.1%
Hackney	28.3%	28.1%	29.3%
Islington	29.6%	31.3%	28.5%
Lewisham	26.6%	28.4%	28.9%
Westminster	20.4%	23.9%	21.3%





# Performance - recycling

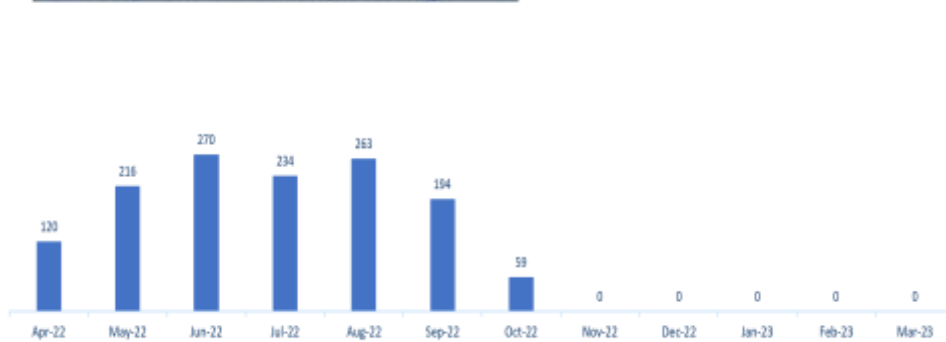


# Performance – street cleansing



- The number of reported incidents of fly-tipping has increased
- Proactive inspections of streets by the service averages 100 per month.
- Most fly-tips recorded are bags on streets
- 4,235 incidents of flytips reported (up 227.8% compared to same period last year)

Total Inspections Monthly Running Totals



Fly-tips by type – 10th – 16th October  
(Source – Whitespace)



# Improvements – Street Cleansing



- Increased collection of dumps and fly-tips at night with 2 vehicles currently in operation
- Increased clearance in the west of the borough with an additional vehicle deployed
- Increased cleansing activities along "mainlines"
- Increased inspections

## Independent Tranche Scores Litter (Target 92)

January 2022 – 92.5%

February 2022 – 93.5%

March 2022 – 93.8%

April 2022 – 95%

May 2022 – 91.3%

June 2022 – 93.8%



# Performance – missed Waste collections



- Collection rate between 99.91-99.94% since 2016/17
- Collection rates have shown no difference since the service has come back in-house
- Missed collections equate to an average of 244 bins per week (300,000 waste and recycling bins collected per week)
- The service has employed more frontline supervisors to support crews
- Optimisation of collection rounds will provide better managed rounds and improve performance

Financial Year	Number of properties receiving collections (per year)	Number of missed collections (per year)	Collection rate (%)
2016/17	15,600,000	10,419	99.94%
2017/18	15,600,000	9,780	99.94%
2018/19	15,600,000	12,238	99.92%
2019/20	15,600,000	12,703	99.92%
2020/21	15,600,000	10,227	99.93%
2021/22	15,600,000	14,684	99.91%
2022/23 YTD (Q1)	3,900,000	2,221	99.94%
Grand Total	97,500,000	72,272	99.93%



# Challenges to service improvement



- Work underway to review the hours and frequency of operation of street cleansing function
- Capacity to deliver the changes whilst managing business as usual
- Physical environment in which the service operates
- Lack of suitable depot and available waste transfer facilities
- Lack of waste restriction policies
- Residual collection rounds that are inefficient
- Challenges with access to sites





# Financial challenge



- Significant investment required (Table 1)
- High contamination rate for recycling (up to £41 per tonne more for reject loads) (Table 2)
- Recycling costs more to process than sending waste directly to Energy from Waste (EfW). Recycling cost is 40% higher per tonne than sending waste for disposal and set to increase next year in line with CPI (Table 3)
- Estimated £3.5m needed for new reforms to roll out food waste

Table 1: investment projects

Investment needed in next 7 years	£
Depot redevelopment including new waste transfer and bulking facilities	£40m
Fleet replacement	£40m
Container replacement	£4m

Table 2: Gate fee prices at Bywaters MRF

Gate fee prices at Bywaters Materials Recycling Facility (MRF)	
Gate fee level and contamination %	Gate fee cost/tonne
Level 1: 0 to 5%	£110.59
Level 2: 6 to 15%	£120.86
Level 3: 16 to 25%	£131.13
Level 4: 26 to 50%	£141.40
Level 5: over 50% rejected loads	£151.67

Table 3: Cost comparison

Cost comparison of processing recycling at Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) and Energy from Waste (EfW)	
13793.38 tonnes collected in 2021/22:	Total cost per year (£000s)
Processed through MRF at Level 1 (£110.59)	1,525
Sent to EfW (£89.59)	1,236
Cost difference	290
Less Rebate (£13.07)	-180
Net cost difference	109





# Using feedback to improve performance



Our SLA is to inspect, record and rectify within 5 working days

Our resident reporting software captures complaints and incident reports. Interrogated daily by the service

## Complaints

110 waste complaints received by the council in Q1 2022/23, fewer than previous quarter and fewer than same period previous year. Broken down as follows:

- Waste and recycling: 41
- Domestic refuse and communal: 27
- Bulk waste: 15
- Food & garden recycling doorstep: 12
- Food & garden recycling communal: 10
- General street cleansing: 5

Ward	PYTD street cleansing	YTD street cleansing	Variance YTD vs PYTD
Limehouse	2	5	150.0%
Poplar	39	71	82.1%
Mile End	67	69	3.0%
Bromley South	34	33	-2.9%
Island Gardens	27	24	-11.1%
Canary Wharf	56	44	-21.4%
Bow East	56	41	-26.8%
Blackwall and Cubitt Town	37	26	-29.7%
Shadwell	109	65	-40.4%
St Katharine's and Wapping	25	13	-48.0%
Lansbury	40	20	-50.0%
Bow West	34	15	-55.9%
St Dunstan's	89	39	-56.2%
	56	23	-58.9%
St Peter's	210	85	-59.5%
Spitalfields and Banglatown	131	52	-60.3%
Bromley North	90	34	-62.2%
Weavers	207	75	-63.8%
Stepney Green	25	8	-68.0%
Whitechapel	212	66	-68.9%
Bethnal Green	117	22	-81.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,663</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>-50.1%</b>

Recording and analysing reported street cleansing incidents



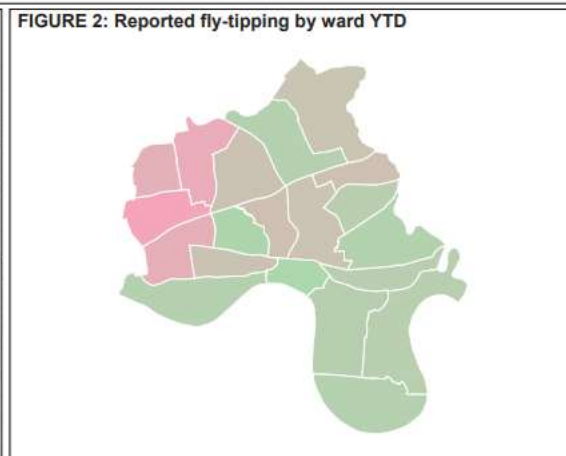
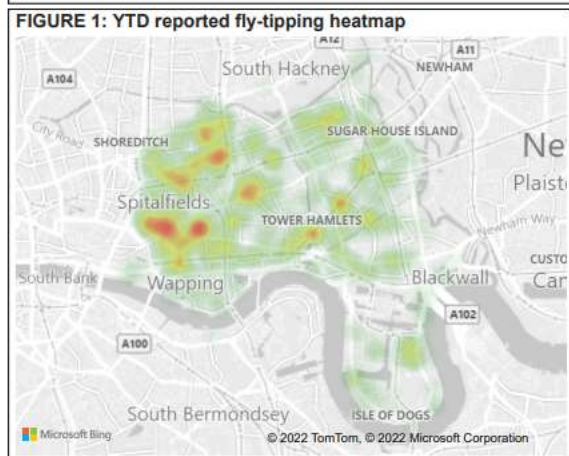
# Using data to improve performance

## M27: Reported fly-tipping incidents



**TABLE 1: YTD v PYTD comparison: Reported fly-tipping**

Worksheet Type	PYTD numbers	YTD numbers	Variance	PYTD SLA pass rate	YTD SLA pass rate	YTD vs PYTD SLA pass rate
Fly Tip Small 1-4 Items	924	615	-33.4%	57.4%	27.2%	-30.2%
Fly Tipping	886	788	-11.1%	53.3%	24.0%	-29.3%
Fly Tip Large 5+ Items	201	314	56.2%	43.3%	26.4%	-16.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,011</b>	<b>1,717</b>	<b>-14.6%</b>	<b>54.2%</b>	<b>25.6%</b>	<b>-28.6%</b>



**FIGURE 4: YTD v PYTD reported dirty streets by ward**

Ward	PYTD street cleansing	YTD street cleansing	Variance YTD vs PYTD
Blackwall and Cubitt Town	12	41	241.7%
Spitalfields and Banglatown	104	226	117.3%
Bromley North	73	106	45.2%
Bow East	67	87	29.9%
Weavers	147	175	19.0%
Canary Wharf	34	38	11.8%
Mile End	87	95	9.2%
St Peter's	187	193	3.2%
Bethnal Green	110	101	-8.2%
Island Gardens	34	31	-8.8%
St Dunstan's	54	48	-11.1%
Bromley South	123	107	-13.0%
St Katharine's and Wapping	59	47	-20.3%
Bow West	39	31	-20.5%
Poplar	40	31	-22.5%
Shadwell	62	46	-25.8%
Stepney Green	141	93	-34.0%
Whitechapel	22	11	-50.0%
Lansbury	478	182	-61.9%
Limehouse	114	24	-78.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,011</b>	<b>1,717</b>	<b>-14.6%</b>

**FIGURE 5: YTD - Top 5 worst streets**

Street	YTD street cleansing
Repton Street	62
Bethnal Green Road	39
Roman Road	37
Whitechapel High Street	34
Commercial Street	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>197</b>

- Daily / weekly analysis by Operational Services.
- Performance scorecards for each area in the service.
- Reported quarterly to Director by relevant Service Managers
- Escalation measures in place
- Corporate performance indicators reported quarterly to Cabinet and public





# Communications - fly tipping



**Launch 'wage war on fly tipping' communication campaign to increase education, advice & awareness of enforcement action we will take**



Crews collect hundreds of tonnes of fly-tipped waste each month, but action will always be taken against the culprits

**Cleaning up our streets by taking on fly-tippers**

**Council taking 'zero tolerance' approach to flytipping as enforcement fine is heavily increased**



An example of flytipping in Corbridge Crescent

Businesses in the habit of dumping illegal waste in Tower Hamlets face heavy fines after the council gave the green light to new flytipping penalties.

The decision to increase the fixed penalty notice (FPN) for flytipping to £400 from £80 - with no early payment option - was made at a meeting of the council's Cabinet last week.

**Just desserts for fly-tipper fined over £5,300**



A Whitechapel ice-cream and dessert shop, with branches across London and Essex, has been ordered to pay £5,364 by the courts for illegally dumping waste in the street.

The Urban Chocolatier Whitechapel branch was ordered by Thames Magistrates Court to pay fines totalling £4,000 and £1,364 in costs and charges at a hearing in March.

The court heard how Tower Hamlets Council environmental services officers contacted the branch several times because their large waste bin was placed away from the premises on the opposite side of the road, where the business could not control their waste. The bin was also overflowing with bags of rubbish dumped on the pavement beside it.

Council officers issued a notice requiring the business to take certain steps to dispose its waste properly, then issued a £150 fixed penalty notice when the business failed to do so. The company continued to act unlawfully and was prosecuted for illegal disposal of waste and breach of their 'duty of care'.

**Lutfur Rahman, Mayor of Tower Hamlets, said:**

"We will not tolerate businesses using our borough as a dumping ground for waste.

"Businesses must have a contract with a registered waste carrier that is fit for purpose and can adequately deal with the amount of waste the business produces. We will prosecute those who don't."

Help us tackle fly-tipping. Report it through the Love Your Neighbourhood app or on our website, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/flytipping](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/flytipping)

Posted on Friday 20th May 2022

**£3,000 penalty for fly-tipper**

A Brick Lane fly-tipper has been ordered to pay more than £3,000 by a magistrate, after being caught illegally dumping waste in the street.

Seoul Garden restaurant was ordered by Thames Magistrates Court to pay a £1,000 fine and £2,132 in costs at a hearing earlier this month over the offence.

The court heard how council environmental services officers patrolling the area caught a restaurant worker red-handed, as two black sacks of waste were dumped in a local fly-tipping hotspot.

Council officers issued a £400 fixed penalty notice for the offence – the maximum amount allowed under law – which then went unpaid, resulting in the prosecution and the court's order to pay more than £3,000.





# Communications - litter



The best of London  
in one borough



# What we are doing to improve – operational changes



Service	Key changes	Due dates
Cleansing	Reviewing frequency and timing of street cleansing service to improve performance, accounting for 24/7 economy and differences to geography and footfall across the borough	Review to be completed by early November 2022
Domestic collection	Borough wide realignment of how and when the residual and recycling wastes will be collected.	Mid-January to end March 2023
Commercial waste	Separated service from the current comingled collection and to operate 7 days per week twice per day	Early to mid-December 2022
Waste Disposal and future planning	Contract extension for MRF contract – Bywaters Government changes Environment Act 2021	01/03/2023 Unknown but expected from 2024/25 onwards





# What we are doing to improve – flats recycling

- £2.13 million to roll out these improvements (FRP) to over 100,000 flats in 3 years
- More and better recycling bins
- Education and awareness training
- Improved signage
- A toolkit for building managers & landlords on how to improve flats recycling





# Using data to improve performance – contamination rates



- Based on sampling with visual assessment carried out by the materials recycling facility (MRF) contractor.
- Produced to assign each load to the relevant gate fee level for contamination
- Significant cost implication of contamination

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Th	Fr	Sat	Sun	Average
<b>RY - 01</b>	14.1%	12.1%	12.3%	14.3%	15.3%	14.3%		13.7%
<b>RY - 02</b>	11.6%	11.8%	11.8%	14.8%	13.0%	11.9%		12.5%
<b>RY - 03</b>	15.9%	15.5%	17.0%	15.8%	13.2%	13.0%	14.3%	15.0%
<b>RY - 04</b>	18.9%	23.0%	15.9%	15.8%	16.7%	10.0%		16.7%
<b>RY - 05</b>	14.5%	16.0%	13.5%	11.6%	10.4%	11.8%		13.0%
<b>RY - 06</b>	9.4%	10.9%	11.9%	10.4%	11.7%	13.8%		11.4%
<b>RY - 07</b>	13.2%	13.1%	16.5%	14.2%	14.0%	11.3%	8.5%	13.0%
<b>RY - 08</b>	17.1%	15.5%	11.2%	11.8%	11.6%	11.2%		13.1%
<b>RY - 09</b>	13.6%	16.1%	12.8%	14.3%	11.3%			13.6%
<b>URS-01</b>					6.0%			6.0%
<b>URS-02</b>					4.3%	3.5%		3.9%
<b>Average</b>	14.2%	14.9%	13.7%	13.7%	11.6%	11.2%	11.4%	12.0%



# What we are doing to improve – recycling engagement and waste minimisation events

## Recycling champions

- Empower residents to help spread the word about reducing, reusing and recycling and influence neighbors, friends and colleagues
- Currently have 43 champions
- We will continue to engage, strengthen and grow the network and aim to recruit 40 more champions before the end of 22-23

## Recycling stalls & waste minimisation events

- including mending workshops, food waste reduction workshops and clothing swaps





# What we are doing to improve – more recycling improvement and engagement projects



New webforms & webpages

New contamination communications

Small scale food waste pilot on two estates

Remember these **top recycling tips**:

- Don't use black sacks
- No food waste
- And remember to rinse!

Visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/recycling)

Request a garden waste bag

A-Z recycling guide

Managing agents and landlords guide to rubbish and recycling for purpose-built flats

Increasing Community and home composting

**Food Recycling**  
Your new food waste recycling service

What do I put in my food bin?

Yes please
Household food waste (including bones)
Meat, fish, poultry, game, off-cuts
Vegetables, fruit, potatoes, mushrooms, herbs
Soft cheese, butter, margarine, oil
Yoghurt, soups, stews, curries, sauces
Small quantities of hard cheese, bread, biscuits, cakes, pastries, pies, tarts, puddings, ice cream

Plastic bags can not be used and please remove any packaging before putting food in the bin



Recycling education sessions in schools

Help look after the environment by recycling all these things

- Cartons
- Plastic containers
- Cardboard
- Paper

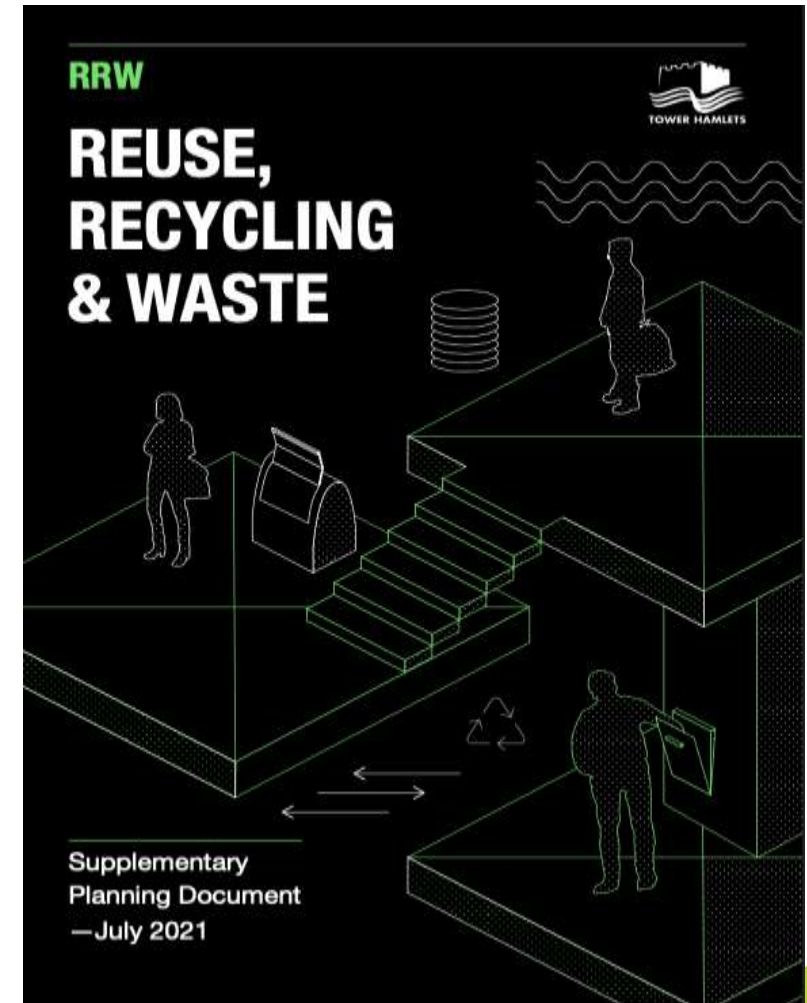


# What we are doing to improve - design and build of new developments



The SPD was developed by Public Realm and Strategic Planning through a joint project with ReLondon

- Provides step by step guidance for developers.
- The document is presented in a clear format, including a “How to use this Document” section
- Expects waste management systems proposed by developers to be designed with the ‘User Journey’ in mind.





# Communications - recycling



# Future drivers for change

## The Environment Act 2021

Delivers on the Government's 25-year environment plan

- Minimise waste
- Promote resource efficiency
- Move towards a circular economy
- Tackle waste crime



A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to  
Improve the Environment



## 3 areas of waste & recycling policy reform

- Extended producer responsibility for packaging waste
- Deposit return scheme for beverage container
- Consistent collections requirements





# How can scrutiny add value?



- Scrutinise and challenge current performance and proposed action to be taken to improve operational performance
- Comment on the proposed amendments to policy direction- particularly on behaviour change re: recycling and the forthcoming changes in legislation under the Env Act 2021.
- Proposing new policies
- Challenging existing customer service levels and proposing action to be taken to improve customer satisfaction and value for money
- Engage in the development and delivery of the agreed action plans to improve performance

