

RAG status	Missed target requires action	On target but with minor issues	On target
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How does the council use evidence based and best practice to influence resident behaviour change to boost recycling?

Recommendation 1: Take forward the case study brought by Committee Member of a development in their ward to see how the planning process has been working historically

Comments from Service:

We will use case studies to help develop the final version of our new Supplementary Planning Guidance. This will involve review of lessons learnt from the case studies to improve on the planning process.

The Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 sets out how and where new development should come forward. A part of the overarching vision in the Local Plan focuses on high standards of environmental sustainability to achieve improved air quality, reduce carbon emissions, increase recycling and mitigate climate change. The way in which waste is produced and managed will affect the chances of the vision being realised.

The Tower Hamlets Local Plan includes a policy (DMW3) that requires proposals for new developments to take full account of how waste will be produced and collected. In order to assist architects and developers to meet the requirements of policy DMW3, the Public Realm division had prepared supplementary planning guidelines, setting out the council's expectation in terms of external storage capacity for waste and recycling and providing information about the nature of the waste and recycling service provided by the council and the design aspects necessary in order that the new development conforms to the council's service methodology.

Officers within waste services have historically provided comments on planning applications on the basis of these supplementary planning guidelines and objections have been made via the planning officer, when proposals haven't met the guidelines.

In order to improve the waste management legacy from new developments, by seeking to increase waste reuse and recycling and require developers to have a greater focus on the "user journey", a new Reuse, Recycling and Waste Supplementary Planning Document (RRW SPD) is being developed. The SPD will require developers to compile a reuse recycling and waste plan and submit this to the council as part of the planning application. The plan must consider all five stages of waste

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management that will take place in the development once it is occupied:

- Occupier separation
- Deposit points for reuse recycling and waste
- Collection from the development
- Servicing of the reuse, recycling and waste system
- End destination and ongoing monitoring

Going forward, the Technical Officer – Development Control, within the Environmental Services Improvement Team, will review the reuse, recycling and waste plans submitted by developers and will provide comments to the planning officer as to whether the plan conforms to the requirements set out in the SPD and whether or not the proposals are acceptable. As the Plan must cover how the development will be managed once occupied, a part of the process will be to engage with managing agents to provide guidance on signage and communication materials to help influence resident's behaviour upon moving in.

The draft SPD is currently undergoing public consultation and will be presented to the Mayor in Cabinet in due course for adoption.

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Prepare new Reuse Recycling and Waste SPD for consultation	Fiona Heyland/Marissa Ryan Hernandes	Feb 2021	Draft SDP developed by project team including Public Realm, Strategic Planning, ReLondon (previously Resource London) and BPP consulting	Completed action
Public consultation for draft SPD	Marissa Ryan Hernandes/Fiona Heyland	End March 2021	Six week public consultation commenced on 8 th February 2021	Completed action
Finalise SPD following public consultation	Marissa Ryan Hernandes/Fiona Heyland	End April 2021	Commencement of public consultation slightly delayed due to the need	On target but with minor issues

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			to meet new accessibility guidelines for the format of the SPD document. Consultation responses now being reviewed.	
Present SPD to Mayor and Cabinet for adoption	Marissa Ryan Hernandes/Fiona Heyland	July 2021	Scheduling for Cabinet in progress	On target
Complete recruitment to Technical Officer Development Control post	Catherine Cooke	End April 2021	Recruitment of a permanent replacement to the post had been delayed due to covid	On target but with minor issues

Recommendation 2: Review the location of estate bins to minimise contamination by passers-by

Comments from Service:

This is part of the process for rolling out the estates recycling improvement package. It will include site assessments to find best location for bins that help reduce abuse and contamination from passers by.

This will require agreement from the managing agent and landlord.

It is the responsibility of the managing agent or landlord to provide adequate recycling facilities for their residents, to ensure they are conveniently located and that the recycling is not contaminated with incorrect materials at the time of collection. Through the Estates Recycling Improvement Project work is in progress to roll out new recycling facilities (the flats recycling package) on a proportion of Tower Hamlets Homes Estates. The flats recycling package includes the use of reverse lid lock bins and improved signage that help to reduce contamination and inform residents about what can be recycled.

Promoting the use of reverse lid lock bins and the wider flats recycling package to other managing agents and landlords may help

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to reduce contamination. ReLondon (previously Resource London) has developed a cost benefit tool to assist managing agents to understand the benefits of rolling out the flats recycling package on their estates. Information and advice on best practice will be disseminated through the Public Realm sub-group of the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum. A dedicated webpage is also being developed to provide managing agents and landlords with information and access to communications materials that can be used to help inform and support their residents to use the recycling facilities correctly.

Where site visits have been undertaken and they have highlighted that the bins are in a location that leaves them exposed to abuse by others a request can be made to the managing agent or landlord to consider relocation.

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Develop web page specifically for landlords and managing agents incorporating links to available communications materials	Louise Houston	End March 2021	Content for webpage has been developed and webpage has been created	Completed action
Roll out flats recycling package to a minimum of 25 THH estates	Louise Houston	End March 2021	This activity has been in progress as part of the wider Estates Recycling Improvement project	Completed action
Identify 'hotspot' areas where contamination of the bins is frequent	Catherine Cooke/Louise Houston	End June 2021	Hot spots being identified from contaminated bin reports and recycling loads	On target
Liaise with the managing agents/landlords from these blocks/estates to review location of the recycling bins and to provide guidance for possible relocation. Aim to complete reviews on 20 sites.	Catherine Cooke/Louise Houston	End December 2021	Through THHF and Public Realm Sub Group	On target

Recommendation 3: Making changes to physical barriers to help influence positive behaviour change

Comments from Service:

The flats recycling package the service is rolling out is based on two years of research that have identified barriers to positive behaviour change. The flats recycling package focuses on providing common service standards that help reduce physical barriers and influence positive behaviour change.

The flats recycling package includes:

- Clean and well-maintained bins and bin areas
- Adequate collections to prevent overflows and appropriate recycling capacity (minimum 60l/hh/wk)
- Appropriate apertures on recycling bins big enough to accept plastic bags of recycling and with locked reverse lids
- Collection of the six main recyclable materials
- Clear and visible signage on and above the bins
- Convenient location of recycling bins for residents
- Recycling leaflet sent to residents once a year
- Posters highlighting recycling messages displayed in a central location (where possible)
- Residents informed of what they should do with bulky waste

Key recommendations from the research include: • Housing providers, building managers and service providers can improve recycling capture rates in purpose-built flats by working together to put in place and maintain the standards defined in the Flats Recycling Package on every estate. • The ReLondon Flats Recycling Package toolkit offers practical advice and guidance to help housing providers, building managers and services providers to implement the Flats Recycling Package in purpose-built flats. The toolkit will be available in March 2020.

As part of rolling this package out to THH estates in 2020/21 we are fine tuning this approach. To understand the cost / benefits and promote wider take up of the toolkit for introducing the flats recycling package

<https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit-flats-recycling-package>

The planning, design and build of new development will also include designing out of physical barriers

A key focus of the Reuse Recycling and Waste SPD is to require developers to implement more innovative mass collection systems for new larger developments such as the underground bins or Automated Waste Collection Systems (AWCS) such as the system used at the Wembley development, rather than continued reliance on standard bin rooms and communal euro containers. Such systems utilise small above ground apertures for waste and recycling to be deposited making the facilities easier to use for many residents.

Overcoming the physical barriers in existing property stock could be difficult, smaller bins are not always suitable especially now the quantity of cardboard is increasing. The reverse lid lock bins being rolled out to THH estates should prove to be easier to use in some respects, as you do not need to open the whole lid to place recycling inside, only the flap to the aperture.

Where this issue is identified, the matter could be raised with the managing agent as caretaking teams may be able to offer assistance to residents. If this option is not available the managing agent would be recommended to change to reverse lid lock bins.

A key element of the Flats Recycling Package is to ensure bin areas are clean and well maintained and to make sure recycling bins are in convenient and accessible locations with clear signage. This is seen as critical to motivate residents to recycle more.

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Promote the Flats Recycling Package to managing agents and landlords through the Housing Group, website and direct communications.	Catherine Cooke/Louise Houston	End Dec 2021	Webpage for managing agents has been created Tower Hamlets Housing Forum and Public Realm sub-group meetings	On target

Recommendation 4: Reconsider clear bag provision for flats as an intervention to aid behaviour change on recycling

Comments from Service:

Plastic recycling sacks have been used to support the council's dry recycling service for some time. A proportion of the housing stock in Tower Hamlets (houses and flats above shops without their own recycling wheelie bins) relies on the recycling sacks as their only method of containment for their co-mingled dry recycling. However, residents in flats have come to rely on the recycling sacks despite the ability to place recycling loose into the communal recycling bins.

The distribution of recycling sacks is currently focused on the following methods:

- Twice yearly delivery of supplies of recycling to approximately 24,000 properties on the kerbside sack collection service. The delivery takes place each June and December, providing in total 104 recycling sacks to each household.
- Provide supplies of sacks to designated pick up points, e.g. Idea Stores, and a small number of additional community locations, on a regular basis. Residents who live in houses or flats are able to collect recycling sacks from these designated pick up points.

The current budget available for the distribution of recycling sacks is only sufficient for a limited quantity of recycling sacks to be provided to the pick up points each week.

Whilst the plastic sacks have low value in terms of a secondary recyclable material and if used and disposed of incorrectly have a potential to create litter, the ability for residents living in flats to obtain the plastic recycling sacks provides a conduit through which they can take part in the recycling service. However, as residents who live in high rise properties have access to communal bins it is possible for them to actively engage in recycling by placing their materials loose in the communal bins and our communications messages promote placing recycling loose in communal bins.

The reverse lid lock bins, that are being rolled out as part of the flats recycling package, help to reduce levels of contamination in the recycling bins and lend themselves to recycling being placed in the bins loose. Reusable bags are being provided on request as part of the flats recycling package roll out on Tower Hamlets Homes estates providing a more sustainable option than reliance on the plastic recycling sacks.

The service needs to ensure that it facilitates access to the recycling service and that residents living in flatted properties are able to easily engage in the service

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Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Ensure key message regarding placing recycling loose in communal bins is incorporated in all new communication materials	Catherine Cooke	Completed	This message is already on the leaflet for flats and will be used as new communication materials are developed	Completed action
Promote the use of reusable recycling bags as part of the roll out of the flats recycling package on THH estates and to other managing agents via the managing agents web page	Louise Houston	Completed	The webpage has gone live	Completed action
Review options for alternative use and distribution models for the recycling sacks and report options for consideration by Cabinet Member	Fiona Heyland	End April 2021	Working in association with the Waste Operations Team	On target but with minor issues
Develop online communications for social media to further highlight that the recycling sacks are not required by residents living in flats with communal bins	Catherine Cooke	End July 2021	Working in association with Communications Team	On target
Key message regarding placing recycling loose in communal bins promoted at collect points in Idea Stores and Libraries	Louise Houston	End July 2021	Working in association with Communications Team	On target

Recommendation 5: Investigate and application small grants programme for small private developments along the lines of the SME energy efficiency programme

Comments from Service:

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The roll out of the flats recycling package to a proportion of THH estates has been funded by an allocation of Mayor's Priority Growth Funding. There is no further allocation of this funding beyond the current financial year (2020/21). Alternative sources of funding will need to be sought to expand the roll out of the flats recycling package more widely.

The funding for the energy efficiency small grants comes from the Carbon Offset Fund. This money is from building developments in the Borough that do not meet the energy standards required on site and therefore pay an offset to us. The money is then used on programmes across the Borough to reduce carbon emissions. There is currently no similar grant funding arrangement in place for waste and recycling services.

The service will need to explore whether the activity would qualify for the use of CIL contributions and opportunities to bid for CIL funding. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) legislation enables the Council to allocate between 15% and 25% (depending on circumstances) of the CIL receipts to the Neighbourhood Portion, which is to be spent on local infrastructure priorities agreed with the local communities where development is taking place. In Tower Hamlets, the council gives local people a greater say in priorities and proposals for spending on local infrastructure improvements. Residents may vote for some of the funding (LIF) to be spent on Public Realm improvements, such as more or improved recycling bins,

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Review current round of LIF projects voted for by residents to identify suitable projects where improved recycling facilities have been requested.	Richard Williams/Fiona Heyland/Catherine Cooke	May 2021	Review of LIF 2020 round 2 is currently in progress	On target but with minor issues
Explore opportunities for Tower Hamlets CVS to help with community engagement to promote the flats recycling package as a project for LIF funding	Richard Williams/Fiona Heyland	July 2021	Engage Tower Hamlets CVS to explore opportunities to take this forward	On target
Explore opportunities for the service to bid for CIL funding.	Richard Williams/Fiona Heyland	July 2021	Working with Planning and Regeneration to explore options	On target

Recommendation 6: Ensure the council's Waste and Recycling Service factors in the cost element for Flats Recycling Package and demonstrate the value of the council's existing initiatives for example mixed-recycling-collection when undertaking cost-benefit analysis

Comments from Service:

A cost benefit analysis tool developed by ReLondon is being used to highlight the extra costs required to roll out the Flats Recycling Package. This allows the additional costs to the local authority, landlords and housing providers to be quantified. It supports the business case for change allowing the cost and benefits to be quantified.

Toolkit – Making recycling work for people in flats: cost/benefit analysis tool

<https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit-making-recycling-work-for-people-in-flats-cost-benefit-analysis-tool>

Whilst the service has been rolling out the Flats Recycling Package on a proportion of THH estates the service intends to promote the Flats Recycling package to other Housing Providers and Landlords and encourage them to implement the package of measures on their own properties. There will be an opportunity to showcase the improvements on completion of the roll out programme.

As a result of the ReLondon research a cost benefit tool has been created for use by Housing Associations and the Boroughs. The aim of the tool is to measure the additional costs and benefits of implementing the Flats Recycling Package covering both set up and ongoing costs.

Whilst cost is one factor for consideration, the cost benefit tool also seeks to quantify the benefits to Housing Providers and Borough and the wider social benefit from the Flats Recycling Package. Diversion of waste to recycling and reduced contamination contribute to improvements in the following measures:

- Reduced CO2 emissions from landfill/energy from waste
- Value of improved residents experience (including reduced litter etc)
- Value of materials diverted from landfill or energy from waste

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The service will be evaluating the roll out of the flats recycling package on THH estates and will be collating qualitative and quantitative data to highlight the impact the improvements.

The service will be looking for other managing agents and landlords to follow and implement the flats recycling package on their own estates and the cost benefit tool is available for them to use via the ReLondon website.

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Promote the cost benefit tool to other managing agents and landlords	Fiona Heyland/Catherine Cooke/Louise Houston	Ongoing	The service will be showcasing the work undertaken with THH through the THHF and Public Realm Sub Group	On target
Run the cost benefit tool on the remaining THH estates	Louise Houston	End June 2021	Information from roll out to 25 THH estates to inform this process	On target

Recommendation 7: Review the pilot of the food waste to flats scheme and the target audience. Develop plans so that council's Waste and Recycling Service is ready to go when this statutory duty comes in

Comments from Service:

Expanding the food waste service to flats is part of the Tower Hamlets Waste Strategy

Implementation of the new pilot food waste collection for flats has been delayed due to the covid 19 pandemic. Successive national lockdowns and social distancing requirements have prevented the planning and preparatory work being undertaken to prepare for the implementation of the pilot. An expansion of the food waste collection service to flats is currently not funded.

The government's second round of consultation on the requirements for mandatory separate food waste collections has also been delayed due to the covid pandemic. However, there is an expectation that the consultation documents will be issued

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imminently (April 2021). It is anticipated that the consultation documents will set out what new burden funding will be made available, and when, to support the government's mandate, or whether growth funding would be required to expand the food waste service to flats if new burden funding is not made available.

A number of blocks have already expressed an interest in taking part in the pilot, their details have been kept on file. Once covid restrictions are eased the service will look to commence the preparatory work for implementing a pilot for flats, subject to available funding.

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Respond to government consultations on the (mandatory) separate collection of food waste	Fiona Heyland	End July 2021	Anticipated the consultation will be published before the end of April 2021 and the consultation period will be 12 weeks.	On target
Commence site visits and planning for food waste pilot	Catherine Cooke	June 2021	Locations identified for initial phase of pilot	On target
Develop service costings for pilot and wider roll out of the service and prepare growth bid if new burden funding is not forthcoming from government	Catherine Cooke	End August 2021	Costs from initial phase of pilot will inform wider expansion cost	On target

Recommendation 8: Schools programme, working closely with the young mayor to improve engagement with young people and support behaviour change on recycling

Comments from Service:

Up until the covid pandemic took hold in March 2020 waste services had been delivering a schools engagement programme via a series of in person classroom, assembly or activity sessions. Also as noted in the challenge session report, the council's Materials Sorting Facility (MRF) contractor has hosted school visits to the MRF education facility.

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The recurring lockdowns, shutting of schools and social distancing measures has meant this programme of engagement had to be put on hold. Going forward the service proposes to develop a suite of online educational materials that can be utilised by schools in the classroom or home learning environment.

Site visits to the MRF education facility and other activities and events will be organised when the covid situation eases sufficiently for face to face engagement events to be carried out safely.

With the support of the Communications team the service will engage with the Young Mayor and other key stakeholders to develop a comprehensive package of engagement and behaviour change resources.

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Develop schools engagement programme ready to be introduced in to schools in the new schools year (2021/22)	Louise Houston	End of July 2021 Launch in schools Sept 2021	Working in association with Communications Team	On target
Explore whether Eco-schools programme could form part of the council's schools education programme.	Louise Houston	End July 2021	Liaise with other London Borough where Eco-schools programme has been introduced	On target
Work with Corporate Comms to develop communication and engagement material targeted at young adults	Louise Houston/Catherine Cooke	End October 2021	Working in association with Young Mayor and Youth Council	On target

Recommendation 9: Using Influencers of particular age groups (18-34) to engage, motivate and channel key messages to improve behaviour change on recycling

Comments from Service:

Ensuring communications activities are relevant to all age groups is an important part of our engagement work.

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Whilst it is accepted that the use of influencers on Instagram is a common and successful way to promote lifestyles and brands and engage with the 18 to 34 year age group, their effectiveness to promote council services is uncertain.

The service will look to work with the Communications team and engage with the Young Mayor and Youth Council to get ideas and input into developing a communication strategy and action plan that will incorporate appropriate communications channels for target audiences

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Work with Corporate Comms to develop a campaign focusing on the use of residents, local businesses and community groups on social media to promote positive behaviours	Catherine Cooke	End October 2021	Working in association with Young Mayor and Youth Council	On target

Recommendation 10: Improving recycling education messaging so there is a common framework of understand from residents

Comments from Service:

The service will be developing a communications plan based on the latest industry research, with the ability for us to get feedback on our proposed approach from experts at ReLondon.

The research carried out by ReLondon highlighted that residents often perceived information from different sources as contradictory and often applied their own “rule of thumb” when deciding if an item can be recycled. The research found that clear and visible signage on the recycling bins and in the bin stores and posters, highlighting recycling messages, displayed in central locations ensured residents would have easy access to clear and reliable information.

Communication material has been developed for the flats recycling package. The communication material is being rolled out on the THH estates as part of the roll out of the flats recycling package.

The communication material is also available for managing agents and landlords to download or they can request leaflets and posters. The materials all have the same branding and messaging to ensure there is a consistent approach to educating

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residents on recycling and waste management. The design, language and content follow WRAP guidance who have researched the best approach for recycling messages.

The service will be working with the Communications team to improve the information available to residents, to ensure they have access to information about what happens to the waste and recycling that they place out for collection.

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Work with Comms Team to review website to improve content and information	Louise Houston/Catherine Cooke	Ongoing End December 2021	Ongoing amendments to reflect service changes and updates Liaise with Comms Team to improve layout and content	On target
Develop recycling and waste minimisation engagement activities plan	Louise Houston	End July 2021	Working in association with Communications Team	On target
Develop and promote new Recycling Champions scheme	Louise Houston	End August 2021	Liaise with local community groups and Housing associations	On target

Recommendation 11: Recycling performance targets to be more ambitious (stretched) not just realistic and resident contribution to be framed in how progress is being made a local level

Comments from Service:

The recycling rate set by the Mayor of London in the London Environment Strategy is for London to recycle 50% of Local Authority Collected Waste by 2025 with an aspirational target of 50% of Household Waste to be recycled by 2030. The target is

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ambitious and the ReLondon report on the research project states it will be challenging to meet the target with current levels of resources and existing legislation.

To contribute to London's overall recycling rate Tower Hamlets set an ambitious target of 35% of Household Waste to be recycled by 2022 within the Tower Hamlets Waste Strategy 2018 to 2030. The recycling target for 2020/21 is 22%. A recycling target for 2021/22 will be set as part of the service planning process. We are re-evaluating our recycling target based on forecast impact of rolling out the flats recycling package between 2021/22 and 2022/23

The findings of the ReLondon research project have highlighted the particular challenges faced by London Boroughs that have a high proportion of residents living in flats. Through the research the barriers to recycling have been found to be many and complex and despite improvements in capture and recycling rates being achieved on the estates that took part in the research it is important to note the improvements were from a very low base.

Monitoring recycling performance is currently undertaken at the recycling round level, the service is however trialling on board weighing equipment on two refuse collection vehicles. This technology may facilitate a better understanding of recycling performance on a site by site basis in the future. Monitoring the impact of the roll out of the flats recycling package on THH estates is being undertaken and will give the service some quantitative and qualitative data regarding the impact the flats recycling package is having on these estates.

Action	Owner(s)	Deadline	Comments	RAG
Monitor impact of the flats recycling package on 25 THH estates	Louise Houston	End June 2021	THH to have an ongoing KPI	On target
Review effectiveness of onboard weighing systems being piloted on two refuse collection vehicles	Richard Williams/Fiona Heyland	End July 2021	Currently there is limited access to this onboard weighing system data	On target but with minor issues
Work with Comms Team to develop mechanism to provide regular positive feedback to residents on recycling performance	Catherine Cooke/Louise Houston	End September 2021	RP newsletters	On target
Focus on measurement - weekly tonnage / monthly tonnage change kg/household benchmarks for typical	Catherine Cooke/Elena	Ongoing	Best weeks tonnage capture for a round sets a	On target

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households	Samitier		target for that team and gives focus on finding ways to improve on this	
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