

10 January, 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

**RE: Household Recycling**

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter dated 31 July 2017, regarding the household recycling rate for the London Borough Lambeth. As requested below is a high-level summary of our current progress and challenges in the Borough. I would like to start by reassuring you that increasing recycling rates is one of the key priorities for the Council and we have an enthusiastic and passionate Waste Action Team in place to work with residents to achieve this.

Also I wanted to highlight to you the strong environmental credentials of this Council which are not reflected if the basic recycling rate is used to measure performance. Lambeth performs extremely well if a carbon measurement (AEF – Average Emission Factor) is used to calculate the full environmental impact of the waste management service in terms of carbon usage, as we have very limited landfill, and use barges to transport non-recyclable waste to an energy from waste plant. In 2016 Ricardo-AEA produced a waste management carbon league table for all local authorities and Lambeth was in the top quartile out of 432 councils. As the carbon usage indicator shows the full environmental impact of the waste and recycling service the use of this indicator should be encouraged.

Lambeth developed its Waste minimisation strategy in 2011. Over the past 6 years we have implemented a number of policies and service changes and have shown continuous improvement in our recycling performance. Starting at around 21% in 2011 Lambeth has recently exceeded the 30% threshold in the first quarter of 2017

**What's working well?**

- In 2011 we launched the Lambeth waste minimisation strategy which communicated with all residents informing them of what and how to recycle as well as introducing compulsory recycling
- In 2013 we introduced a food waste collection service for kerbside properties and reduced residual capacity from 240 litres to 140 litres per property.

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- In 2017 we introduced wheeled bins for dry recycling to replace the single use sack. This has resulted in an increase in tonnage contributing to a higher household recycling rate. The table below summarises Lambeth's NI192 rate over the past two years and the estimated rate for the first quarter of 2017/18.

Period	Kerbside recycling rate %	NI192 %
2015/16	37.03	28.7
2016/17	36.84	28.8
Estimated Q1 2017/18	42.7	31.12

Other initiatives to increase recycling have included

- Engagement with flats above shops has shown improved cleanliness with waste and recycling presented correctly during specified timescales. It's anticipated that engagement would need to be ongoing due to the turnaround of tenants.
- Environmental Services forums are held six-monthly with representation from a variety of stakeholders including BIDs, street champions, local councillors, contractors and residents. The main purpose is to promote and encourage better use of the Council's waste and recycling facilities.
- We've been working closer with our planning teams and consult on all new builds and redevelopments to ensure adequate waste management plans are in place with appropriate receptacle storage.
- Promotion of our subscription garden waste collection service using bin swingers has seen an increase in subscribers.
- Introducing security guards at our HRRC to ensure non-residents and commercial are no longer using the site. This has achieved a reduction across all streams with wood waste reducing by 50%.
- Lambeth's Street Champions network is growing with over 600 active residents involved. They assist with tackling a variety of issues including promotion of recycling services.
- The first phase of the TRiFOCAL London project to target food waste prevention and recycling has commenced with Lambeth's official launch scheduled for November.
- Six-monthly WEEE events are held in local supermarket car parks and promoted via social media.
- We've adopted the WRAP branding guidelines for recycle for London across our communications to encourage consistency with other London Boroughs.

### **Are there any particular reasons affecting waste and recycling locally to you?**

- As an inner London borough with one of the highest population densities in the country, communal recycling is a challenge that often presents high contamination levels.
- Working with developers to design kitchens and bin storage areas that are convenient for the user and that support the separation of waste.
- Working with developers to include waste disposal systems that can take food out of the residual waste stream.
- Having such a high proportion of high rise developments, house conversions and properties of multiple occupancy makes behaviour change a challenge as these properties are subject to shared waste facilities. Shared facilities make it difficult to target those individuals who would most benefit from engagement and outreach.

- The transient nature of Lambeth's population as a whole makes it difficult to deliver sustainable behaviour change.
- We experience a higher level of contamination across our estates affecting our overall recycling rate.

**Are there obstacles outside your authority's control that may affect your recycling rate?**

- As above
- A broader range of appropriate and local waste treatment infrastructure could help drive down haulage and treatment costs thereby improving the economics of recycling/composting.

**Over the longer term, what are the biggest challenges and opportunities you see in driving recycling improvements locally?**

- Having an enforced mandatory recycling policy in place is an opportunity. However the financial resourcing for this is a challenge
- Increasing the amount of kerbside waste streams collected to include streams such as textiles is an opportunity. Again, the financial resourcing is a challenge.
- Working closer with our housing teams to establish workable solutions that will improve the quality and increase the quantity of recycling is an opportunity

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted Signature]