

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter dated 31 July 2017, regarding the household recycling rate for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. 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. Hammersmith and Fulham 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 Hammersmith and Fulham improved from 424th (out of 432) using just recycling rates up to 68th (out of 432) if the new carbon assessment is used. As the carbon usage indicator shows the full environmental impact of the waste and recycling service the use of this indicator should be encouraged.

What is working well?

- Working closely with Housing and Registered Social Providers to improve recycling on estates: installed mini banks, joint walkabouts, training caretakers and cleaners and providing free tours to the MRF, install recycling signs, displaying posters, delivering leaflets, and a range of reusable bags.
- Holding regular events to engage with residents: Swap Shops and promoting reusable nappies. Most of these were well attended last year.
- Last year, the team developed a range of new communication materials, built using the Recycle for London branding.
- Placed a recycling promotional leaflet in with annual Council tax information.
- An A5 recycling leaflet was handed out with fridge magnets, so they can be placed on fridges.
- Commissioning Local Green Points to run a green reward project on select estates last year but are not continuing due to the high running costs outweighing the benefits brought by increased recycling tonnage.
- An EU funded project run by Groundwork, named the 'Loop', is running on White City estate. One of its main purposes is to reduce waste and dumping, through reuse - unwanted furniture is fixed and collected by trained residents, and sold.
- Introducing clear disposable recycling bags to help crews spot contamination.
- Addresses that recycle poorly, are recorded, written to and visited.
- WRWA educational officers visit schools annually to promote reduce, reuse and recycle.
- We work closely with Resource London on new initiatives such food waste feasibility studies, promoting recycling week and improving communications

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

- Flats and maisonettes make up 73% of properties, of which a large proportion are high rise flats with rubbish chutes. Although these properties have communal recycling bins

placed outside, there is a significant barrier to recycle for residents, in that it is far easier to dispose of recycling using a rubbish chute in the general waste stream, than to walk outside and use a recycling bin.

- As a densely urban borough (111 people per Hectare, 6th most densely populated in the country), LBHF is restricted in the range of materials that can be collected for recycling. In short, there are not enough gardens or food waste available to make sufficient savings in disposal charges, to fund the service. Feasibility studies have been undertaken and demonstrated these collection schemes are financially unviable.
- Not many properties receiving kerbside collections have space for wheelie bins, so we provide recycling bags instead. Targeting poor performing properties is much easier and more effective if they have bins.
- LBHF 31st out of 326 on the list of most deprived local authority areas in England, and importantly, some public sector estates: White City (north-western part), Wormholt North, Charecroft and Clem Attlee, are in the top 4% of most deprived wards. Recycling, understandably, is not at the top of everyone's priorities.
- Another problem engaging with residents is 13.7% of households have only one member who speaks English and 14.5% contain not one person who calls English their main language.
- Almost one third of the borough are in the private rented sector; which equates to a highly transient population.

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

- See above.
- Different collection materials and collection methods across London and the country make recycling confusing for people, although the borough would most likely want to retain choice over collection methodology.

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

- Working with estates to improve and build bin housing/frames, closing old chutes, and installing dual rubbish and recycling chutes. A project is currently underway targeting 6 estates.
- It would help if housing providers and private property owners were made legally responsible and accountable for encouraging recycling.
- It would help if Section 46 was reinstated in its simple form to help enforce correct recycling.
- It would help if more materials are collected for recycling such as garden waste and food waste but this will require additional funding as schemes are not financially viable.
- Securing additional funds to help run larger communication campaigns including putting leaflets in all clear bags, and mailing out information to all properties, but especially high-rise flats, twice a year, also to build and run recycling social media campaigns, which would help messages reaching highly transient young renters.
In the next month, two interns will be recruited to work with local community groups to set up and run events on estates, designed to reduce waste and contamination and increase recycling.
- Work with the contractor (Serco) to make a number of operational improvements.
- Scope the potential for introducing Wheelie bins to kerbside collection properties.
- Explore new technologies, such as chipping container bins to obtain better data on recycling.
- Encourage the use of a carbon usage key performance indicator as an alternative to just the recycling rate. This KPI assesses the amount of carbon used in the recycling and waste collection, transportation and processing. Overall this indicator shows WRWA councils perform very well, as we have minimal landfill because all general waste is converted into energy and waste is transported along the River Thames.

To see the work being conducted in Hammersmith and Fulham to improve recycling please see the attached Waste Action Work Plan (appendix A). This lists the key work streams and projects currently undertaken by the Waste Action Team.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require additional informational on the work being undertaken by Hammersmith and Fulham to improve recycling.

Yours Sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact a signature.