

Transport and Environment Committee

10am, Tuesday, 25 August 2015

Landfill and Recycling

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|-------------------|-----|
| Item number | 7.8 |
| Report number | |
| Executive/routine | |
| Wards | All |

Executive summary

This report updates the Committee on performance in reducing the amount of non-recyclable waste sent to landfill and on increasing the amount of waste recycled.

Whilst total annual waste arisings increased in 2014/15 by 1.2%, monthly arisings to date (April - May 2015) are 4.4% lower than for the same period in 2014/15.

The amount of non-recyclable waste disposed of in the period April – May is down 6.9% on the same period in 2014/15. The projected tonnage of landfill to year end is 116,289, 1.4% tonnes less than the Capital Coalition Pledge target of 118,000 tonnes.

The percentage of waste recycled in the period April – May has increased, compared to the same period in 2014/15, with the average recycling rate to date increasing by 1.5% to 43.6%. The forecast end of year recycling rate for 2015/16 is 44.1%.

Households on phases 1-3 of the new kerbside recycling service are showing an average 101% higher recycling yields and a 20% reduction in non-recyclable waste.

Links

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Coalition pledges | P44, P49, P50 |
| Council outcomes | CO17, CO18, CO19 |
| Single Outcome Agreement | SO4 |

Landfill and Recycling

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee notes the contents of this report.

Background

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Transport and Environment Committee on 15 January 2013, members requested regular updates on performance in reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill and increasing recycling.

Landfilled Waste and Recycling

- 2.2 Capital Coalition Pledge 49 outlines the Council's commitment towards increasing recycling levels across the city and reducing the proportion of waste going to landfill. This includes targets to reduce annual landfill tonnage to 118,000 tonnes and to increase the percentage of waste that is recycled to 50%.
- 2.3 Significant progress in implementing the changes required to deliver both service improvements and landfill savings have been made, including the implementation of managed weekly collections in September 2012, and the kerbside recycling redesign, which commenced in September 2014, in a five phase roll out.

Complaints

- 2.4 At the meeting of the Transport and Environment Committee on 27 August 2013, members requested that the performance reports also include updates on complaints made about waste services.
- 2.5 There are 242,878* residential dwellings in Edinburgh which receive multiple refuse and recycling collections. On average there are approximately 480,000 collections a week. Current complaints targets are based on the number of collections carried out, but are not adjusted for seasonal variation.
- 2.6 The figures also include complaints that may be made in error, for example where a resident has not presented their bin and misses the collection, and then contacts the Council to report a missed collection.

* source Corporate Address Gazetteer

Waste Arisings

3.1 Prior to 2014/15, the tonnage of total waste (waste arisings) had been falling, with consistent reductions in waste arisings experienced since 2006/7 (Figure 1). Waste arisings in 2014/15 however increased by 1.2%.

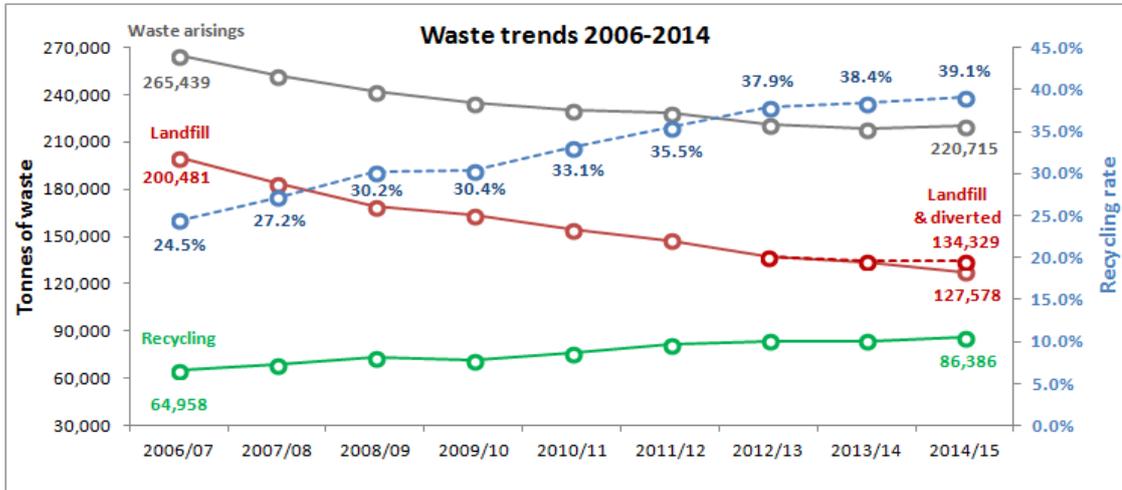


Figure 1 - Waste trends 2006/7 to 2015/16

3.2 At the beginning of this financial year it was forecast that, the rising trend in total waste will continue in 2015/16, and that arisings will increase from 220,715 tonnes collected in 2014/15 to 226,200 tonnes.

3.3 To date (April to May 2015/16) however, waste arisings are 4.4% less than were recorded in the same period in 2014/15 (Figure 2).

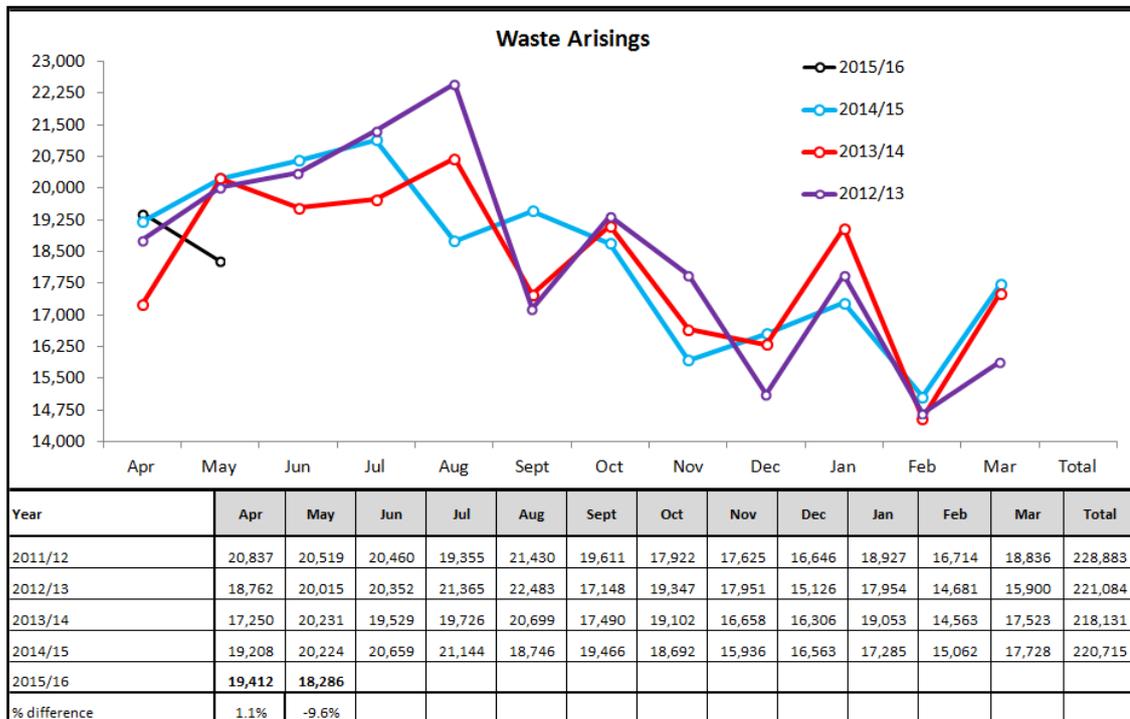


Figure 2 - Waste arisings

3.4 Waste arisings are closely monitored on a monthly basis and the tonnages recorded in 2015/16 will be used to inform and adjust, if necessary, the end of year forecasts for non-recyclable waste and recycling tonnage.

Non recyclable waste

3.5 Waste that cannot be recycled is disposed of as landfill or diverted as refuse derived fuel (RDF).

3.6 Waste processed as RDF, whilst it is included in waste arising tonnages, is not counted as recycling or landfill. Currently some of the waste collected at Community Recycling Centres that cannot be recycled, and a portion of non-recyclable waste collected via kerbside collections, are disposed of as RDF.

3.7 It has been forecast that 116,289 tonnes of non recyclable waste will be disposed of via landfill and 10,200 tonne diverted as RDF in 2015/16, with the overall tonnage of non recyclable waste forecast to be 126,489 tonnes (Table 1). Capital Coalition Pledge 49 sets a target of reducing landfill tonnage to 118,000 tonnes which, due to the diversion of some non recyclable waste as RDF, is forecast to be achieved in 2015/16.

| | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 forecast |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------------|
| Tonnage total waste (waste arisings) | 265,439 | 252,237 | 242,221 | 235,162 | 230,576 | 228,883 | 221,084 | 218,131 | 220,715 | 226,200 |
| Non recyclable Landfill tonnage | 200,481 | 183,697 | 169,186 | 163,788 | 154,293 | 147,669 | 137,249 | 133,531 | 127,578 | 116,289 |
| Non recyclable Diverted (RDF) tonnage | | | | | | | | 746 | 6,751 | 10,200 |
| Non recyclable Landfill and diverted | 200,481 | 183,697 | 169,186 | 163,788 | 154,293 | 147,669 | 137,249 | 134,277 | 134,329 | 126,489 |
| Recycling tonnage | 64,958 | 68,540 | 73,034 | 71,373 | 76,283 | 81,214 | 83,835 | 83,854 | 86,386 | 99,711 |
| Recycling rate | 24.5% | 27.2% | 30.2% | 30.4% | 33.1% | 35.5% | 37.9% | 38.4% | 39.1% | 44.1% |

Table 1 - Waste trends and 2015/16 forecasts

3.8 In the year to date (April-May 2015/16), 6.9% less non recyclable waste (landfill and refuse derived fuel) has been disposed of than for the same period in 2014/15. In the same period, 21,250 tonnes of non recyclable waste has been collected, which is 3.9% less than forecast. The tonnage of non recyclable waste is closely monitored on a monthly basis and is used to ensure accuracy in the forecasting of the Waste Service disposal budget.

3.9 The City of Edinburgh and Midlothian council are working together to deliver a sustainable solution for the disposal of non-recyclable residual waste which will see the eradication of disposal via landfill by 2018. More information can be found at www.zerowastefuture.com.

Citywide recycling rate

- 3.10 The citywide recycling rate for 2015/16 is currently forecast to be 44.1%. This is less than Capital Coalition Pledge 49 target of a recycling rate of 50%, but if achieved, will be a 4.9% improvement on the rate of 39.1% recorded in 2014/15. 99,711 tonnes of waste are forecast to be recycled in 2015/16.
- 3.11 To achieve a 50% recycling rate in 2015/16 would require an additional 13,389 tonnes of waste to be diverted from landfill over what has been forecast. A breakdown of how the different recycling schemes in the city contributed to the total recycling in 2014/15 is detailed in Figure 3.

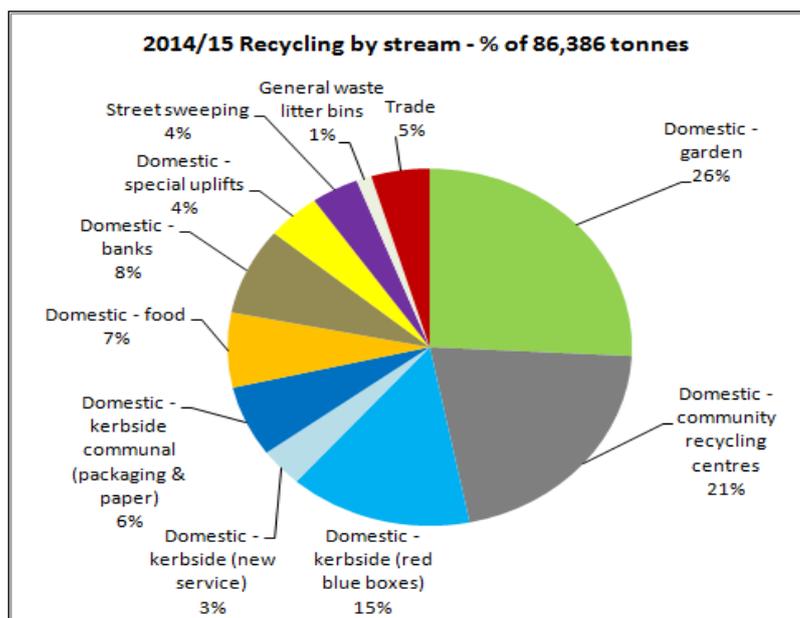


Figure 3 – components of recycling tonnage 2014/15

- 3.12 A summary of the current and past recycling rates by month is detailed in Figure 4.

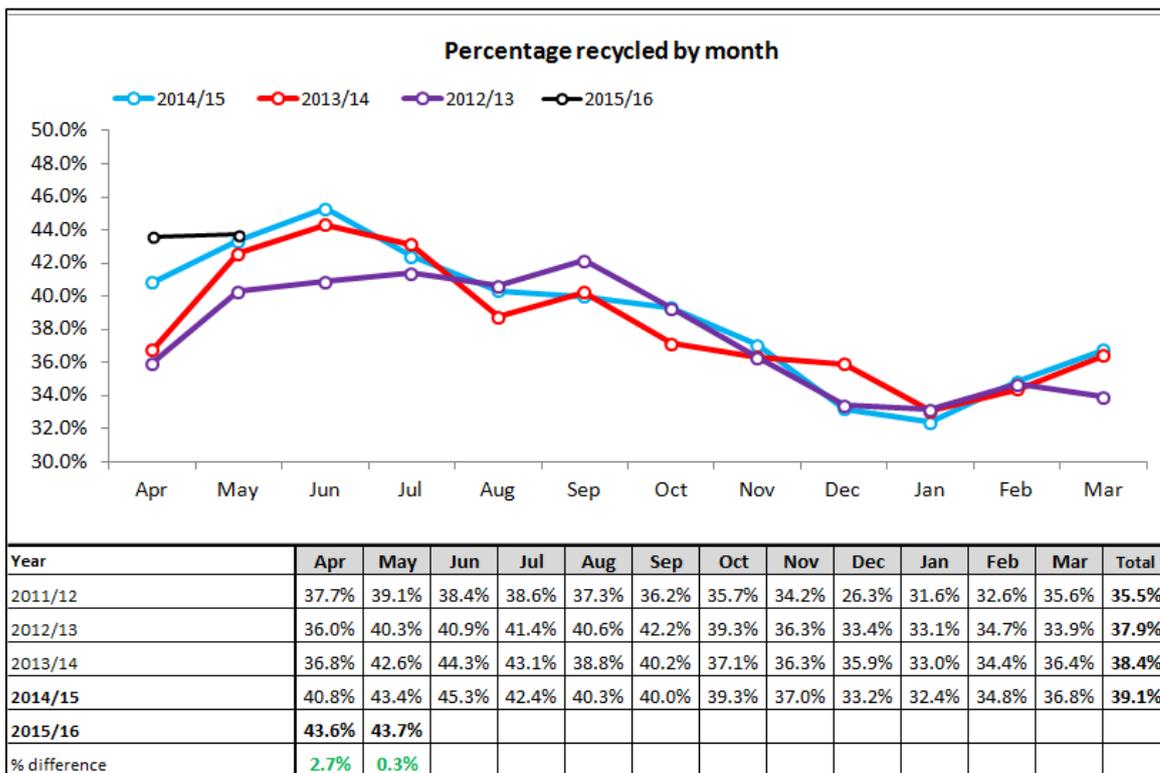


Figure 4 – Recycling rate

New kerbside bin/box recycling service

- 3.13 The first four phases of a five phase programme to roll out a new kerbside bin and box recycling service (a replacement to the existing red and blue box service) to 140,000 residents, have been successfully delivered. Phase 1 commenced in September 2014/15, phase 2 in late November 2014, phase 3 in late March 2015 and phase 4 was rolled out as programmed in June 2015. Phase 5 is scheduled for October 2015. This is a major change to recycling provision in the city, as the new bin/box service simplifies the recycling process for kerbside residents and increases the range of materials collected. It is forecast that, in 2015/16, the new service will have a positive impact on the overall citywide recycling rate of approximately 3%. This has been accounted for in the end of year forecast of 44.1%.
- 3.14 A summary of the performance of all kerbside recycling at the end of May is detailed in Figure 5. It can be seen that the new recycling service, which at that time served 60,000 households, is outperforming the existing blue and red box service for which, in May, some 130,000 residents were eligible for.

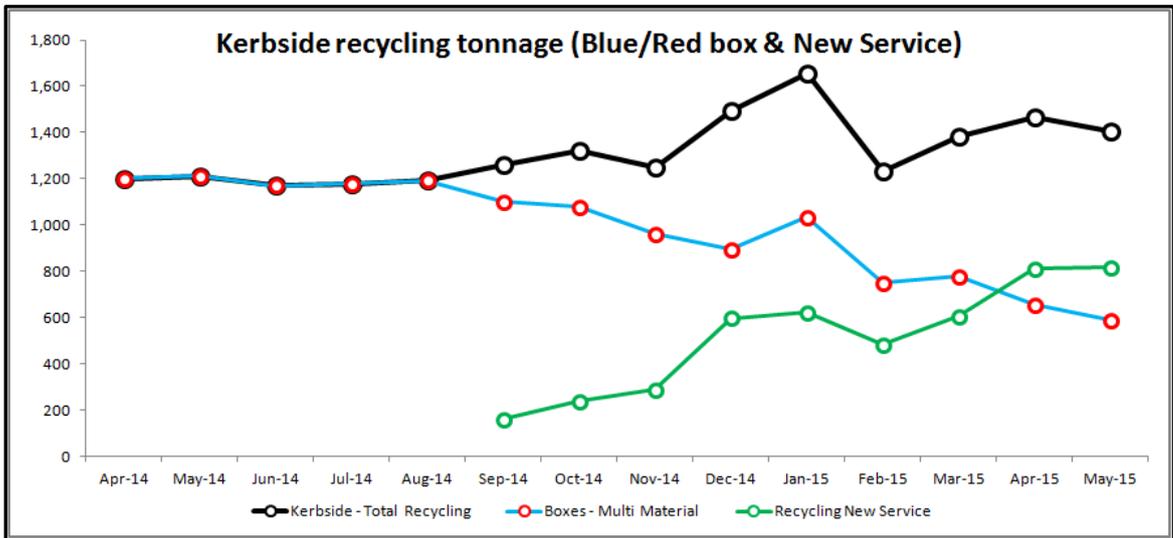


Figure 5 – Kerbside recycling tonnages

3.15 Residents have engaged positively with the new service. Recycling yields per household per week for the new service are 101% higher than when residents were using red and blue boxes, with recycling yields increasing from a pre-service citywide average of 1.9kg/household/week to an average of 3.8kg/hh/wk in May 2015 (figure 6)

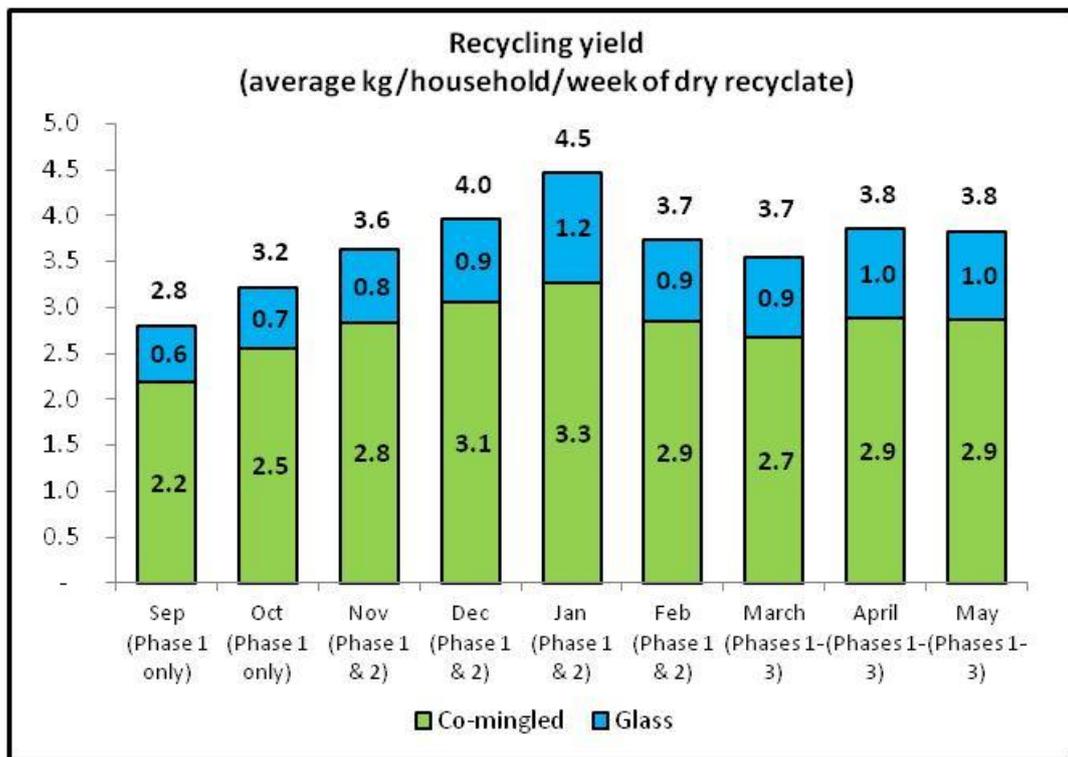


Figure 6 - average recycling yields Phase 1 -3 households

3.16 As part of the new kerbside recycling service, new 140 litre landfill wheeled bins have been introduced to households. This is having a positive effect on reducing landfill, with landfill tonnages reducing by an average of 20% of their pre-service tonnage in March 2015 (Figure 7).

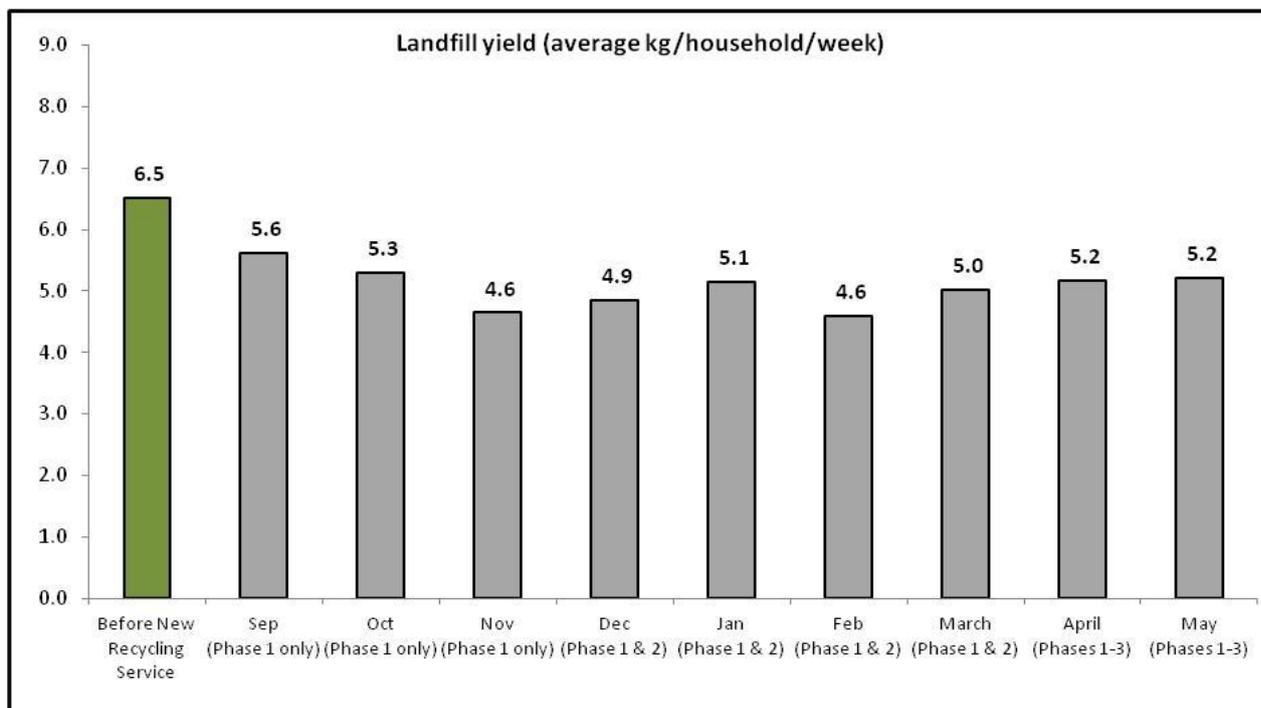


Figure 7 – Average landfill reduction, new recycling service routes

Domestic communal recycling

3.17 While provisions exist which allow people to recycle paper, mixed packaging and food, using the on street communal bin system, Waste Services is looking to enhance this service to achieve:

- An emphasis on balance in the bin capacity provided for recycling versus landfill;
- combined paper and packaging collections in a single stream, to mirror that used in new service kerbside collection areas;
- an increase in the number of points at which glass can be recycled on the kerbside; and
- where applicable, the substitution of the existing red and blue box service to remove duplication of recycling services within those streets where communal recycling banks already exist.

3.18 Waste Services is currently operating two communal recycling pilots which address these aims. These are programmed to complete in the second quarter of 2015/16 and, once evaluated, it is hoped that this approach can be rolled out across this city. Further information on the pilots can be found on the Council [website](#).

Complaints

3.19 Weekly complaint numbers since 2012 are detailed in figure 8 below.

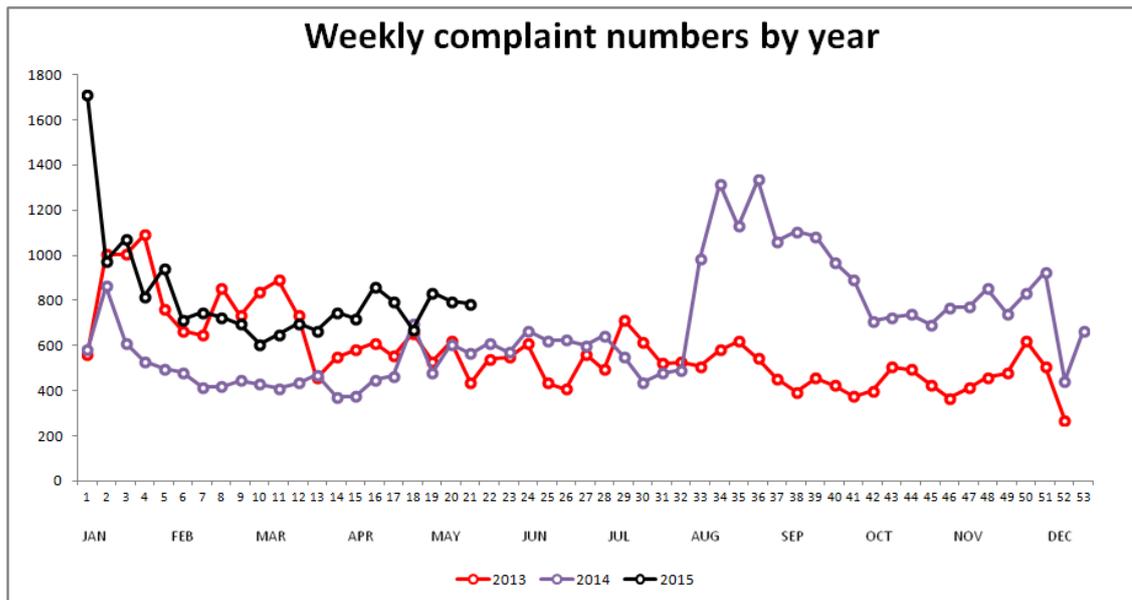


Figure 8 – weekly complaint number 2012-2015

3.20 On average to date (April to May), there were 765 complaints a week. With approximately 480,000 collections a week, this translates to 0.16% of collections resulting in a customer complaint. The majority of complaints received are regarding the non-collections of waste (95%).

3.21 A comparison of complaint numbers regarding non-collection of waste in May 2014 and May 2015 by collection stream is detailed in figure 9. Complaints regarding the non-collection of individual residual (landfill wheeled bins), food (food kerbside caddies) and garden waste were the most common in May 2015.

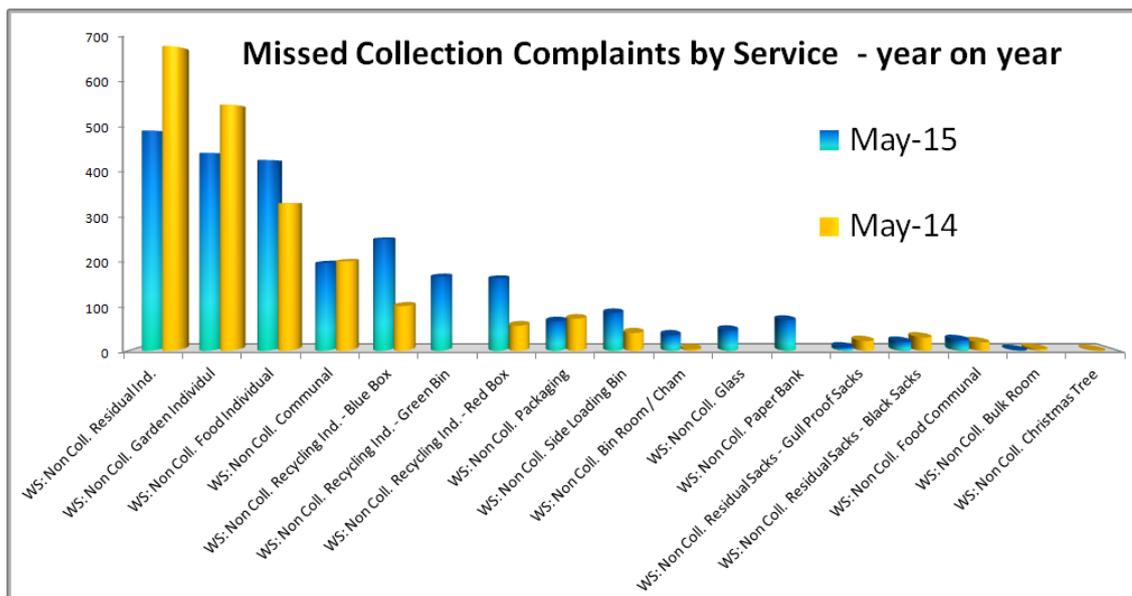


Figure 9 – 2014/15 complaint numbers by collection stream

- 3.22 All complaints are recorded on Confirm, an asset and enquiry management system. Householders are able to raise a complaint via the telephone with the customer contact centre or customer care team, and are also able to notify Waste Services of a missed bin via the external website.
- 3.23 Currently, Waste Services does not differentiate between types of complaints e.g. between complaints from addresses that are known to have been missed for operational reasons, and complaints where a bin has been missed in error. If, for example, collections have been delayed due to a vehicle breakdown, but alternative arrangements have been put in place to complete the route early the next morning, customers are currently able to log a complaint via the website and it will be recorded. Similarly if a customer has not presented their bin at the correct time and missed the collection, they are able to record this as a missed bin complaint and request that this is collected.
- 3.24 Given the way in which complaints are currently recorded, it is difficult to differentiate between these types of complaints and incidents where the bin has been missed in error by the crews. Complaint recording is being reviewed, to allow the service to focus reporting and analysis on where bins have been missed in error. Proposals to implement revised reporting in 2015/16 are currently being developed.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Achievement of the Council's targets for increasing recycling and reducing landfill.

Financial impact

- 5.1 Dependant on the waste stream, landfill waste is disposed of via a number of disposal contractors. It costs on average, £110.08 a tonne to landfill waste.
- 5.2 In addition, there are charges associated with transporting landfill waste by rail from the transfer station at Powderhall to the landfill site at Dunbar. Rail transport charges, which are in addition to disposal charges, are billed on a cost per train basis. To date in 2015/16, rail freight costs are approximately £69,000 per month.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The information contained in this report is a review of the current performance of landfill and recycling. This report does not impact on any existing policies and no risks have been identified pertaining to health and safety, governance or compliance. Further, there are no regulatory implications that require to be taken into account.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 The Council is meeting its public sector duty to advance equal opportunity for residents to recycle by using a range of communications methods. Written information is available through leaflets and electronic media. Road shows and door knocking visits provide face to face contact with residents and visits from recycling advisers are available on request. All material can be translated on request. Consultation was carried out via demographically representative focus groups and via on line and written questionnaires to ensure that a full and representative range of views were obtained. Assistance with the presentation of recycling and waste containers is available for those who require it to ensure everyone has access to these services. The above has ensured that information is available for all within the equality and rights framework.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Increased recycling will help to divert waste from landfill and support the achievement of greenhouse gas reduction targets, and reductions in local environmental impact.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Engagement and communications work is ongoing for the new kerbside recycling service. The Community Engagement team within Waste Services has supported three phases of implementing the new service to 60,000 households, and is now focusing on the fourth phase. The current stage, which started in June includes a further 40,000 households. Support has included comprehensive targeted communications for residents, briefings for key stakeholders and community groups, events, and door to door engagement and dealing with enquiries. From September 2014 the Recycling Advisors have made over 3665 visits to provide information about the new service and offer extra advice after the crews reported the wrong items were in the recycling bin.
- 9.2 Communications on the new recycling service have been well received by residents. A survey of Phase 3 residents, undertaken in January 2015, found that 89% agreed or strongly agreed that the information they received about the new service was easy to understand. Further, 92% agreed or strongly agreed that they were given all the information they needed about the new service. These are slightly higher than the average satisfaction scores for the combined first three phases of 85% of residents strongly agreeing that the information they received about the new service was easy to understand, and 90% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were given all the information they needed about the new service.

9.3 Waste Services are supporting each phase of the rollout with recycling advisors working alongside crews on recycling routes. This assists us to deal with any immediate issues householders may have and also to accurately identify householders who would benefit from further guidance in utilising the new recycling service fully.

Background reading/external references

N/A

John Bury

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Links

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|---------------------------------|---|
| Coalition pledges | <p>P44 – Prioritise keeping our streets clean and attractive</p> <p>P49 – Continue to increase recycling levels across the city and reducing the proportion of waste going to landfill</p> <p>P50 – Meet greenhouse gas targets, including national target of 42% by 2020</p> |
| Council outcomes | <p>CO17 – Clean – Edinburgh’s streets and open spaces are free of litter and graffiti</p> <p>CO18 – Green – We reduce the local environmental impact of our consumption and production</p> <p>CO19 – Attractive Places and Well maintained – Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm</p> |
| Single Outcome Agreement | <p>SO4 – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric</p> |
| Appendices | N/A |