



Haringey Council

Briefing for:	Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel 21 st March 2013
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Title:	Report back from panel visit to 6 estates to view waste and recycling facilities.
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Lead Officer:	Martin Bradford, Policy Officer, 0208 489 6950
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1. Introduction

1.1 As part of its assessment of local waste and recycling services, the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel is assessing how recycling can be improved from flatted developments / estates. This work has included:

- A site visit to local estates to view waste and recycling facilities.
- An evidence gathering session with specialist waste and recycling agencies, other local authorities and local Registered Housing Providers.

1.2 The purpose of the panel visit to local flatted developments/ housing estates was to:

- Obtain an illustrative view of the challenges / opportunities of recycling from estate properties;
- Provide an opportunity to speak with local estate managers about local recycling issues and view recycling facilities.

1.3 The panel aimed to view a sample of estates managed by Homes for Haringey as well as other Registered Housing Providers. The table below provides list of those estates visited.

Estate	Housing Service Manager
Sky City, N22 (Noel Park)	Metropolitan Housing
Wall Court, Stroud Green Road, N8 (Stroud Green)	Homes for Haringey
Chettle Court, Ridge Road, N4 (Stroud Green)	Homes for Haringey
Stellar House, Altair Close, N17 (Northumberland Park)	Homes for Haringey
Hale Village, N15 (Tottenham Green)	Newlon Housing
Ferry Lane, N15 (Tottenham Green)	Homes for Haringey

1.4 The briefing provides notes and panel discussions resulting from the visit to the 6 local estates to view waste and recycling facilities undertaken on 25th February 2013.

2. Sky City (N22), Metropolitan Housing

2.1 This is a development above Shopping City Wood Green, which comprised of 200 properties managed by the Metropolitan Housing Trust. There is no kerbside access to any property and all waste must be taken down 2 floors to the rear entrance of Shopping City.

2.2 Within the current system of waste and recycling collection on the estate, residents take recycling to paladin bins which are distributed across the estate. Paladin bins are then taken in the lift to the ground floor for collection. Residents are required to bag up residual waste (including food waste) which is placed in one of two sheds on site. The estate caretaker then collects all residual waste, places it in a compactor before being deposited in a skip on the ground floor (via chute). There was an open storage area for bulky items of waste.

2.3 A number of problems were evident from discussions with the estate manager and caretaker as well as from observations of the panel:

- There were problems with mice and cockroaches in the sheds where residual waste was collected;
- There were problems with missed collections which caused a backlog and build up of waste;
- There were often problems with the lift/ compactor which caused a backlog and build up of waste;
- Rubbish cart cannot always access the rear of the building to retrieve waste due to blockages from other delivery vehicles.

2.4 The caretaker noted that under the previous waste contract there was two way contact (with the driver) ahead of collection, so that any necessary preparations could be made. Under the new contract, there appeared to be little consistency in crews and drivers collecting from site which affected local communication (i.e. when is best to collect/ when rear access is blocked etc). This has resulted in more instances of missed collections.

2.5 The panel noted that it may be better if the waste and recycling collection system was swapped at the estate, where residual waste is taken to paladin bins and dry recycling is deposited in the sheds. This would help to reduce vermin problems in the sheds and make the caretaking job (of transferring waste) more pleasant.

2.6 It was also suggested that further engagement with local residents by the contactor and or SFL could be beneficial in agreeing a new waste and collection scheme. It was also noted that there was an identical estate on the opposite side of Sky City (managed by a different housing provider) which could benefit from localised consultation for scheme development.

3. Wall Court, Stroud Green Road, N8 (Stroud Green)

3.1 This is a development consisting of 4 blocks, each containing between approximately 25 and 50 housing units (about 200-250 units). There is a bring scheme for recycling in operation on site, where residents are expected to leave

recycling in communal paladin bins which are located at the front of each building. Residents can deposit residual waste in a chute (from their balcony) which is deposited in a communal paladin bin below (there are approximately 8 such chutes per block). Residual waste is collected weekly. There was also a shed on site for the storage of bulky waste items.

- 3.2 Estate managers/ caretaking staff did not report any significant issues with waste and recycling on site, though it was noted that volumes of recycling were relatively low (compared to residual waste). Recycling bins were located at the front of the building and near commercial properties and alongside a busy pedestrian footway, both of which precipitated occasional contamination (casual and sometimes more purposeful). This intelligence is passed back to Veolia (contractor).
- 3.3 Estate managers/ caretaking staff had a general policy of leaving recycling bins unlocked. Although this has led to some contamination of the bins, it helped to reduce the amount of side waste from residents not being able to place large recycling items (or bags of recycling items) in the bin.
- 3.4 The panel observed that recycling volumes appeared to be low in the bins that were inspected. It was suggested that the estate would benefit from further engagement and education to make residents aware of what can be recycled. It was not clear if there was a residents association here which could provide the initial focus for such engagement.

4. Chettle Court, Ridge Road, N4 (Stroud Green)

- 4.1 This is a large block comprising of approximately 80 flats (over 4 stories). Waste and recycling paladin bins are stored around the back of the building and both are collected weekly. There is also a bin storage for large bulky items of waste.
- 4.2 There did not appear to be any outward problems with recycling from this estate, as there had never been any recycling returns (from contamination of bins). However, the volume of recycling did not appear to be high. There was an occasional problem with side waste with bags of recycling not being placed in the recycling paladin.
- 4.3 Many of those bags placed in the recycling bin were black bags which made it difficult to determine whether correct recycling was being placed in the bins and if waste was contaminated. It was suggested that a site such as this could offer an opportunity to trial clear bags for use in a recycling bring scheme.
- 4.4 The panel noted that there were still a number of green boxes being used on site.
- 4.5 A local resident contacted the scrutiny service to feedback on local waste and recycling issues from this estate. A summary of the main issues raised by this resident are given below:
 - In the particular area where this resident lives there is only residual waste collection. To recycle, the resident has to go to another side of the estate. This was felt to be a significant deterrent to recycling and underlined the need to have both waste and recycling collections at the same location.

- The resident is still not sure about where the recycling goes once it leaves Haringey, and the efficacy of co mingled waste which was a deterrent to recycling. This would appear to underline the need for further local engagement and education.

5. Stellar House, Altair Close, N17 (Northumberland Park)

- 5.1 This is a 16 story flatted tower block of approximately 65 properties. There is currently a chute system in operation for residual waste and there is one chute aperture (hopper) per floor. Recycling is a bring scheme to paladin bins which are located on the ground floor at the rear of the building.
- 5.2 The aperture (hopper) is not large which means that it is difficult to put large items down the residual waste chute. As a consequence, the estate manager noted that there were few problems with chute blockages on this particular site.
- 5.3 It was the estate manages perception that residents of Stellar House were not bad recyclers (compared to other similar buildings). It was also noted that there was not a problem with recycling returns from this site either, an indicator that contamination was not a problem. Upon inspection, the panel noted that there was not much volume of recycling offered for collection in the communal paladin bins (which was 3 days off).
- 5.4 There were not any major problems with missed collections since the new contract was established with Veolia. In checking back records, the estate manager noted that there had only been 3 missed collections. However, the estate manager indicated that there had been lot of changeover in the Veolia crews which made local communication and service continuity difficult between estate managers and waste collection services.

Agreed: The panel suggested that a system should be developed to ensure that waste collection crews/ estate service managers could contact each other ahead of collection. It was suggested that estate Managers details could be placed on Veolia Round Sheets to facilitate communication/ information exchange.

- 5.5 The panel discussed whether the use of some form of bags (re-usable) or sacks (disposable) could be introduced at sites such as Stellar Court as this may assist residents in storing and taking recycling to the communal collection point. It was noted that such bags (if disposable) could be left with the caretaker /concierge service for residents to pick up.
- 5.6 The panel discussed whether this one chute block could support a waste and recycling collection reversal; with the chute being converted for recycling and a bring scheme instituted for residual waste at a communal collection point. There were concerns that this system would need substantive buy in from residents as the risk of contamination was high and with little likelihood of identifying offenders in such a large block with a chute.
- 5.7 It was noted to the panel that there was a similar block close by (Kenneth Robbins House) which had two chutes (front and back), both of which were currently being

used for residual waste. The panel felt that this site would be a good opportunity to trial a chute conversion, to make one chute for recycling and retain one for residual waste.

Agreed: That Kenneth Robbins Court suggested to be used as a trial for chute conversion (one for recycling and one retained for residual waste) as a part of a wider scheme for assessing and concerting waste chutes.

6. Hale Village, N15 (Tottenham Green)

6.1 This is a new flatted development managed by Newlon Housing and comprises of 550 properties in Tottenham Hale. Properties include those in shared ownership, social housing and student accommodation. The estate has been opened in a number of stages from 2011. The volume of waste and recycling from the site has been high in the first 18 months as would be expected for a new development.

6.2 Bring schemes are used for residual waste, recycling and food waste on the development (no bags are allowed in any of the hallways). There are paladin bins for both recycling and residual waste, while there are 240l bins for food waste. If residents are unable to take waste and recycling down to the communal collection points (e.g. infirmed) then caretaking staff may assist (this is not publicised). Waste is collected weekly.

6.3 Given the size of the development and the needs of local residents (e.g. a lot of new people moving in), Newlon have established a number of systems to help collect waste and recycling and to reduce the tonnage of waste that goes to landfill. These measures help to reduce costs of the corporate cleaning contract that Newlon has and include:

- A separate cardboard store room is in operation on site. This is collected by a local business which recycles this material to make pizza boxes.
- A dedicated storage room for bulky items which can possibly be reused or recycled (e.g. furniture items) before onward pick up by Restore (reclaim and reuse). Approximately 40 tonnes of waste dealt with in this way.
- There is also a lockable external metal container for the storage of electrical, wood and other materials for recycling.
- Mattresses (5-6 a week) are also collected through a private arrangement of £15 per mattress (which is then recycled).
- Through the above measures, it was estimated that the cost of disposal of bulky items has been reduced from £80,000 to £45,000.

6.4 Waste and recycling process is enforced: there are porters/ concierge service who monitor the whole site on CCTV. There is CCTV in all communal bin areas which can monitor waste disposal. In addition, entry is by key fob only, meaning that there is limited opportunity for external fly tipping. Those found to be infringing the waste and recycling system are issues with a housing letter and notice reminding of the estate agreement. Enforcement action taken in about 1 in 100 residents.

6.5 Newlon also operates a fun day biannually for local residents and their families, part of which is to promote use of local recycling systems.

6.6 There is a food waste recycling system in operation on site for which compostable bags are provided free of charge to local residents. These are stored next to the food waste collection bins for easy pick up. There have been a few missed collections of food waste over the past 12 months. The housing provider indicated that this is an area it would like to develop further.

7. Ferry Lane, N15 (Tottenham Green)

7.1 The panel were unable to visit the Ferry lane estate as planned due to time limitations. It was possible however to speak to the estate service manager who provided a summary of some of the waste and recycling issues on this estate.

- There is a problem with the larger communal bins in that the flaps (through which waste is deposited) are often too small to accommodate the bags of mixed recycling that people bring down to the bins. As a result, this often gets left beside the bin as side waste and is therefore susceptible to contamination and doesn't look nice for the area.
- As a trial in Reedham Close, Kessock Close, padlocks have been left of the bins and this seems to have improved issues with side waste being left as people can now put all the rubbish in the bin via the bags they bring down.
- There is a problem with off estate residents dumping and fly tipping on Ferry Lane estate.
- Erskine Crescent: there are smaller recycling bins for this street which is currently only collected fortnightly. As a result, there is a problem with overflowing bins and sidewaste (and contamination).
- There is an ongoing problem with the responsiveness of Veolia in respect of large item or bulk collections – these are not collected frequently and the ESM has to constantly keep chasing up for clearance.