Local authority trade waste and recycling survey 2010

This report provides highlights of an annual survey to identify what waste services and advice is being provided to Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) in England.
WRAP’s vision is a world without waste, where resources are used sustainably.

We work with businesses and individuals to help them reap the benefits of reducing waste, develop sustainable products and use resources in an efficient way.

Find out more at www.wrap.org.uk
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Every year the BREW Centre for Local Authorities, which has now become amalgamated into WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme), conducts a survey of all the local authorities in England to monitor the provision of trade waste and recycling services. In 2010 the scope of the survey was extended to enquire about Commercial and Industrial (C&I) waste strategies and local authority in-house recycling. The telephone survey is carried out in February and achieves a 100% response rate.
Summary

Between 2007 and 2010

- The percentage of authorities that provide a residual trade waste service (either collection and/or bring) has increased from 56% to 65% of authorities.
- The number of authorities that provide a trade recycling service (either collection and/or bring) has nearly doubled from 23% to 43% of authorities.

Between 2009 and 2010

- The percentage of authorities that provide a residual trade waste service (either collection and/or bring) has increased from 60% to 65% of authorities.
- The percentage of authorities that provide a trade recycling service (either collection and/or bring) has increased from 38% to 43% of authorities.
- The most common materials to be collected for recycling are paper and cardboard.
- The majority (83%) of authorities that provide a recycling service price it cheaper than residual waste services.
- Despite a promising increase in the provision of recycling services, there remains a significant gap between the percentage of authorities that provide trade waste services that also provide recycling services. Regionally the largest gap is in Yorkshire and Humber followed by the East Midlands (see Figure 2).
- The percentage of authorities that provide resource efficiency/waste reduction advice to businesses has increased from 51% to 57% of authorities.
- 50% of local authorities said that they included C&I Waste in their strategies, either stand alone or as part of their municipal waste strategy.
Figure 1 % of authorities that provide waste and recycling services to SMEs 2007-10

% of Authorities that Provide Waste and Recycling Services to SMEs 2007-10

- Recycling
- Residual Waste

2007 2008 2009 2010

Figure 2 % of authorities that provide waste and recycling services by region 2010

% of Authorities that Provide Waste and Recycling Services by Region 2010

- Waste only
- Recycling

East of England
East Midlands
London
North East
North West
South East
South West
West Midlands
Yorkshire & Humberside
### Table 1 Number of Authority Types by Region

The table above provides a view of the authority types by region at the time of research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Disposal</th>
<th>Unitary</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East of England</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire &amp; Humber</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results 2010

Trade residual waste services

Collection:
- 225 authorities provide a trade residual waste collection service
- This represents 69% of all unitary and collection authorities
- 89% of residual trade waste collection services are operated in-house and 13% are contracted out\(^1\)
- 96% of services are available authority wide. This question sought to establish if local authorities were offering a service across the whole of their area or in a particular geographical location. This is particularly relevant when looking at geographically large unitary authorities

Bring:
- 16 authorities provide a trade residual waste bring facility
- This represents 13% of all unitary and disposal authorities

Trade recycling services

Collection:
- 143 authorities provide a trade recycling collection service
- This represents 44% of all unitary and collection authorities
- There has been an increase in the number of collection and unitary councils providing recycling collection services by 4% since 2009
- 63% of authorities that provide a residual waste collection service also offer a recycling service
- 85% of recycling collection services are operated in-house and 19% contracted out.\(^2\)
- 88% of recycling collection services are available authority wide.\(^3\)\(^4\)

\(^1\) This totals 102% because some authorities provide both collection and bring facilities
\(^2\) This totals 104% because some authorities provide both collection and bring facilities
The most common materials to be collected from businesses are card and paper with 99 and 98% of authorities that provide recycling collection services, picking up these materials (Figure 3).

83% of authorities that provide a trade recycling service (either collection and/or bring) charge less for recycling than residual waste services.

**Figure 3 materials collected by authorities**

- 10 authorities provide both bring and collection recycling services
- More authorities provide recycling bring facilities than residual waste bring facilities. All the authorities that operate residual bring site facility also provide recycling bring facilities
- 22 authorities provide a trade recycling bring facility
- This represents 18% of all unitary and disposal authorities.

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3 An example of where an authority operates a recycling collection service in one area only is the new Cornwall Council where services provided by the former Carrick District Council are being maintained at the local level.

4 It should be noted that some councils only offer recycling services to existing residual waste customers as they do not have capacity within the service to take on more customers. For this survey these councils have been classed as operating area wide, despite them not being able to service all businesses.
**Resource efficiency advice**
- 57% of authorities said that they provide some kind of resource efficiency/waste reduction advice to businesses
- This represents a 6% increase from 2009
- More authorities based in the East of England provide advice than any other region (59%) and the fewest provide it in the North East (16%)
- 40% of authorities promote a re-use scheme for businesses in their area

**Figure 4 % of authorities that provide resource efficiency advice to businesses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Authorities That Provide Resource Efficiency Advice to Businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**C&I waste strategies**
50% of respondents said that their council had a C&I Waste strategy, either a stand-alone strategy or as part of their municipal waste strategy. 39% said that no strategy existed and 11% were not sure.

**Local authority office recycling**
Local authorities were asked questions about the recycling they did in their own offices. The scope of this question was limited to asking about the recycling provision in the office that the respondent worked in. Only one respondent said that there was no recycling provision in their building; this person was based in a call centre. Of the authorities that do recycle in their offices, all recycle paper, 99% recycle card, 61% recycle metal/cans and 59% recycle plastics. 89% of respondents said that there was a dedicated team within the authority who promoted recycling and energy efficient practices to staff.
Other comments and observations

- It became clear when interrogating the results that a number of interviewees cited household recycling services, particularly HWRCs as being available to businesses. However, when double checking this it was clear that they do not accept trade waste or recycling. One local authority website linked to household recycling collections when clicking on ‘trade waste’.

A number of interviewees said:

- That no trade waste or recycling services were available. However, the BREW Centre knew this to be untrue because they had provided funding to kick start these services.
- That a recycling collection service for SMEs was in the pipeline for 2010/11
- They are in the process of developing a C&I Waste Strategy or are considering it
- They are trying to develop consistent recycling provision across council buildings.
Conclusions and Recommendations

- There continues to be an increase in the percentage of authorities providing waste and recycling services to SMEs.
- The gap between the percentage of authorities providing residual waste services but not recycling services is reducing. Despite this, 37% of authorities that provide a residual waste collection service do not provide a recycling service.
- There is an increase in the number of authorities providing resource efficiency/waste reduction advice to SMEs.
- There is a need for local authorities to ensure that their websites are up-to-date and clearly state what services are available to businesses.
- Local authorities need to ensure that staff are aware of what trade waste and recycling services are available to businesses.
- Local authority staff may need awareness training on key waste legislation including Duty of Care and why SMEs should not be using household waste and recycling services.

Further research

Further research would be useful to identify:

- Reasons why some local authorities (17%) are charging the same price for recycling services as residual waste services.
- The capacity of local authority waste/recycling services and if demand is being met or if businesses are being turned away.
- Whether demand for recycling services by SMEs is being met across all regions by material.
- How many authorities are co-collecting trade waste with household waste and what methodologies they use. This information may be of particular use to authorities wishing to commence trade waste/recycling collection services in rural areas.
- What proportion of trade and industrial waste is being collected by local authorities and what proportion of that is being recycled.
- What market failures exist which affect the availability of acceptable recycling services for businesses, especially SME's.
- How local authorities manage the boundary between household and trade waste from dual purpose addresses.
Limitations

- Due to some council’s moving from 2 tier to unitary structures it is difficult to examine trends in actual number changes and it is therefore more accurate to report in percentages.
- Best endeavours to speak to people in waste services were made in order to get the most accurate data. This was not possible in all cases.