

# Tackling Bulky Waste in the South East

Solutions for waste carpets and mattresses

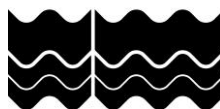
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REMADE  
SOUTH EAST

## Workshop Summaries

East Sussex  
County Council



Funded by:



### WORKSHOP ONE - 'Carpets and Flooring'

Facilitator: Alan Potter

**Discussion: How do we increase collection, reprocessing and end markets for carpets and flooring?**

**What material is the biggest issue?**

*Carpets more than general flooring due to their size and bulk*

**Who is responsible?**

*Contract or household suppliers and fitter?*

- *Both suppliers and fitters are responsible for contract and household supply*

**Some suppliers/fitters/manufacturers offer a 'take-back' scheme – what are your thoughts?**

- *Controlled process meaning it is 'easy' for the customer*
- *For large commercial fits it is a good incentive for the client*
- *Should it be charged for?*
  - *£ per m<sup>2</sup>*
  - *Does this money cover the actual cost to the supplier/fitter?*
- *How easy is it for the fitter to take the removed flooring away, storage, transport costs etc?*
- *How can the fitter send it back to the supplier to should the supplier collect it?*
- *Manufacturers – after a few years it can be hard to tell where the product came from to send it back, also that company may no longer offer the scheme*

**What are the barriers or issues with recycling/reprocessing?**

- *Geographical coverage*
  - *Collections are needed*
  - *Or one point to take the materials to*
  - *If collections are infrequent then storage can become an issue*
- *Costs*
  - *Collecting a single material can prove more costly if the collection points are spread over a large area.*
  - *Gate fees can be comparable to landfill but the transportation costs adds on more*
- *Quality*
  - *The best material needs to be clean, dry and have been kept undercover. this poses issues for smaller organizations who only have the space for a single bin*
  - *Lower quality material can potentially be taken by reprocessors/WM companies at a lower rate*
- *Segregation - How should this be done?*
  - *At source enables the material to be reprocessed as it is more likely to be 'clean'*
  - *At source relies on knowledge and training, also storage facilities*
  - *After collection segregation can mean the carpet is contaminated and its only use is EFW*
  - *After collection segregation relies on that MRF to have the right equipment to separate it fully*

**What are the next steps forward?**

- *Collaboration!*
  - *A service is needed purely dedicated to carpet installers(fitters)*
  - *Costs will depend on frequency, location and volume*
  - *Clean specialist MRFs are needed regionally*
  - *Small local social enterprises should be considered as an option not just regional due to logistics of moving carpet around and the energy and transport implications of it being regional.*
  - *Develop local 'drop off' points at large retailers*
- *Help and Support from Remade*
  - *Small private companies are finding recycling/reprocessing a 'large leap' from current practice*

## WORKSHOP TWO - 'Mattresses and Soft Furnishings'

Facilitator: Diana Lock

**Discussion:** **How do we increase collection, reprocessing and end markets for mattresses and soft furnishings?**

***What are the positives and negative drivers for the collection and reprocessing of mattresses?***

<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>
Landfill can be up to 4 x cheaper than recycling mattresses.	Landfill tax accelerator will make recycling a more financially viable option.
Lack of regionally spread recyclers cause collection and transportation costs to be high	Some companies make the decision to reuse/recycle for ethical rather than financial reasons e.g. environmental and corporate social responsibility.
Poor quality mattresses e.g. wet or contaminated, cause reprocessing options to be limited	Depending on location, well organised transport logistics can mean recycling options may be easier than landfill.
Current lack of enforced drivers or legislation causes a lack of incentive to divert from landfill.	Better separation and storage of mattresses is more likely to happen if companies see gaining 'green credentials' as a way of achieving a more competitive edge.
Lack of space at HWRCs and MRFs limits the scope for additional services or the development of a bulking station	Carbon Reduction Commitment and other schemes boost the demand for recycling initiatives.
Environmental waste management license requirements inhibit the establishment of new sites which can accept bulky waste for reprocessing.	There is the potential for a network of businesses to be created which provide infrastructure services giving better coverage across the South East.
	Unused local authority land or utility company land could be used to provide sites for bulking and storage of mattresses as these are often already licensed for waste handling.

### **General comments made during the workshop**

#### **Lack of awareness**

*Despite increasing public expectations for greater recycling it is thought that the majority of the public do not perceive mattresses as a waste disposal problem.*

#### **Cost saving requirements; local authorities**

*Local authorities (and businesses) are under pressure to reduce costs. Implementing a new recycling material stream would represent an additional cost that cannot be justified. Due to different services in waste management being split between 'collection' and 'disposal' authorities, the cost for 'fly-tipping' may not be factored into the decision on whether or not to provide bulky waste separation facilities.*

#### **Take-back schemes**

*Take-back schemes offered by retailers do not always mean that the waste is recycled. Any income made for charges for disposal may not necessarily be invested back into recycling initiatives.*

#### **Reuse potential**

*The re-use organisations present stated that they received very few mattresses that are of re-use quality. However recycling companies suggested that they regularly receive mattresses suitable for re-use, some of which are new mattresses rejected from retailers because of torn packaging.*

#### **Next steps forward**

1. Remade will facilitate the collaboration between recyclers and re-use organisations to ensure re-usable items are captured.
2. Remade will work with those present to encourage partnerships between recyclers and retailers to ensure the development of funded take-back schemes which recycle mattresses.
3. Remade will explore the availability of un-used local authority or utility company land in order to encourage the development of regional bulking and storage facilities.
4. Companies and organisations present agreed to work together to find solutions for achieving economies of scale across the South East.