

Remade South East in partnership with Surrey County Council



Waste Market Development Project Delivery for Surrey County Council



CARDBOARD AND PAPER

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Executive Summary

1. Elmbridge High Street Cardboard Recycling Scheme

Project Objective

Surrey County Council's project objective was to develop commercial recycling collections of cardboard in town centre locations as a sustainable alternative to landfill. In order to complete this objective, the Council engaged Remade South East to carry out the management of the project. Remade South East is a regional waste market development organisation that specialises in delivering projects to stimulate markets for recycled and recyclable materials.

The commercial collections were targeted at retailers and office based businesses on high streets in Elmbridge.

High Street locations:

- Cobham
- Esher
- Weybridge
- Walton
- East Molesey.
- Claygate (added towards the end of the project)

Research

To establish the most useful and appropriate recycling schemes a door step survey of each of the main high streets was undertaken to identify current waste arisings, waste management provision, recycling collection provision and collection considerations.

The findings from the door step survey confirmed that there was a real need for a dedicated recycling service for cardboard and waste paper. The service needed to be flexible and easy to use because of the lack of storage area and restricted access to the high streets. In addition there was a need to focus on education to inform businesses about the restrictions of disposing commercial waste and recyclables through domestic routes.

Two main methods were considered to find a recycling route for the paper and cardboard. The first option was to locate a baler near a high street location to enable businesses to drop off their paper and cardboard for baling. The second option aimed to create a link with a local company that already offered or was able to offer a paper and cardboard collection and promote their service to businesses in each of the town centres.

The second method was chosen as the more viable option mainly due to the difficulty in finding suitable and secure locations for balers and the equipment and personnel necessary to operate the machinery.

Eight collection companies were identified as suitable project partners. Each of the companies were contacted, sent a project brief and asked to submit an expression of interest document which was used to rate their suitability to deliver a recyclables

collection service. Hungry Recycling were chosen as the company that could offer the best and most flexible solution.

Discussions took place with Hungry Recycling to refine the details of the collection service. It was agreed that collections would take place every Friday and customers could either have paper and cardboard collected loose from their premises or rent a storage bin if they had space. It also agreed that the service would cost customers £3 per collection provided that 100 businesses signed up to the scheme, this would allow Hungry Recycling to cover their costs.

Cobham High Street was chosen to launch and pilot the collection trial in order to monitor how the scheme would be received by local businesses and how the collections would work in practice. The Cobham service was launched on 11th January 2008 with the other main high streets of East Molesey, Walton, Esher and Weybridge launched in early February 2008. The Claygate collection was launched at the end of the project in April 08. In total 560 businesses in all of the town centre areas received the scheme leaflet.

To market the trial scheme promotional leaflets were produced for each of the town centre areas and hand delivered to businesses. Also window stickers were produced and sent to all participating businesses. A press release was issued when the pilot scheme was launched in January 08 and a second release issued at the end of the project in April 08. A launch event was organised and local Business Guilds and Chambers of Commerce were contacted to let their members know about the project.

Trial scheme results

In total 69 businesses signed up for the collection scheme and 15.95 tonnes of paper and cardboard was diverted away from landfill.

Continuation of the scheme

Although the project did not reach the target of 100 businesses signing up, Hungry Recycling was pleased with the number of new businesses customers they gained and will continue to run and promote the scheme beyond the end of this project.

Conclusions

The project benefited from a strong partnership, with good working relationships being developed between Surrey County Council, Elmbridge Borough Council, Remade South East and Hungry Recycling.

There was a quick initial uptake from businesses taking part in the scheme indicating that there is a willingness among small businesses to improve their environmental and waste practices. A follow-up promotional visit to each of the town centre areas maintained interest showing that constant promotion is needed to increase business participation.

Discussions with small independent shops highlighted the fact that a large proportion of recyclable waste was being disposed through domestic recycling collections and local bring bank facilities.

The launch of the scheme came at an appropriate time. The waste pre-treatment legislation changes and landfill tax increases have provided strong economic incentives to businesses to segregate their recyclable business waste.

Working with smaller waste companies gives more flexibility than bigger waste service providers. As a relatively new start up communication lines into Hungry Recycling were very good with any enquiry from customers and project partners were followed up immediately.

Recommendations

- The recycling issues faced by businesses on Elmbridge town centre are broadly representative of other high street areas in Surrey. Therefore the project partners would be in a good position to roll out this scheme across the county at low cost.
- Where possible distribution of marketing and promotion materials should be undertaken face to face with business as this approach seemed to yield better results than relying on mail shots.
- Further work could be done to engage with other forms of businesses such as hospitals, schools, universities, hotels etc.
- There is great potential to expand the collection and include other materials.
- The findings of this trial should be disseminated to other regional partners outside Surrey.

<i>Contents</i>	<i>page</i>
Executive Summary	2
Contents	5
Elmbridge High Street Paper and Cardboard Recycling Collection Scheme	
1. Project objective	6
2. Methodology	6
2.1 Research	6
2.2 Identifying suitable recycling methods and collection companies.....	7
2.3 Implementing a collection trial scheme	8
2.4 Promotion and marketing	9
3. Trial scheme results	10
4. Continuation of the scheme	11
5. Conclusions	11
6. Recommendations	12

Elmbridge High Street Paper and Cardboard Recycling Scheme

1. Project Objective:

Surrey County Council's project objective was to develop commercial recycling collections of cardboard in town centre locations as a sustainable alternative to landfill. In order to complete this objective, the Council engaged Remade South East to carry out the management of the project. Remade South East is a regional waste market development organisation that specialises in delivering projects to stimulate markets for recycled and recyclable materials.

The commercial collections were targeted at retailers and office based businesses on high streets in Elmbridge.

High Street locations:

- Cobham
- Esher
- Weybridge
- Walton
- East Molesey.
- Claygate (added towards the end of the project)

Project timescale: October 2007 – March 2008

2. Methodology

To establish the most useful and appropriate recycling schemes a door step survey of each of the main high streets was undertaken to identify current waste arisings, waste management provision, recycling collection provision and collection considerations.

The findings from this research were used to identify appropriate collection methods, explore the best option that would suit all of the high street locations, implement a collection trail scheme and highlight the best marketing techniques to reach local businesses.

2.1 Research

The major findings from the door step survey indicated:

- The majority of waste being produced by businesses on the high streets was cardboard from deliveries and paper from back office operations.
- Only a small number of businesses had sufficient space at the back of their premises to store waste.
- Only a small number of businesses had a dedicated regular waste collection service.
- A visual survey indicated that the majority of businesses were having their general waste collected by either Biffa, Sita or Veolia.

- The roads that ran through the high streets were narrow restricting the type and size of vehicles that could potentially collect recyclable material.
- Only a small proportion of high street businesses already had recyclable collections.
- Discussions with businesses highlighted a lack of recycling provision with but only a small number having regular collections
- A visual survey indicated that Biffa and Veolia offered collections for segregated cardboard
- Discussions with businesses indicated that a number of retailers were disposing of their general waste and recyclables through domestic recycling collections and local bring bank facilities.



Storage of cardboard on Cobham High Street



Road access on Cobham High Street

The findings confirmed that there was a real need for a dedicated recycling service for cardboard and waste paper. The service needed to be flexible and easy to use because of the lack of storage area and restricted access to the high streets. In addition there was a need to focus on education to inform businesses about the restrictions of disposing commercial waste and recyclables through domestic routes.

2.2 Identifying suitable recycling methods and collection companies

Two main recycling methods were considered to find a recycling route for paper and cardboard. The first option was to locate a baler near a high street location to enable businesses to drop off their paper and cardboard for baling and storing until there was sufficient quantity for a recycling collection. The second option aimed to create a link with a local company that already offered or was able to offer a paper and cardboard collection service in Elmbridge and promote their service to businesses on each of the high streets.

The second method was chosen as the more viable option mainly due to the difficulty in finding a suitable and secure location for a baler and the difficulty in obtaining the necessary equipment and personnel to operate the machinery.

Eight companies were identified that had recyclable collections in Elmbridge or had existing collections that could potentially cover the high street locations. These organisations were SITA, BIFFA, Veolia, Grundons, Severnside Recycling, KK Balers Ltd, Hungry Recycling and Rabbit Recycling.

Each of the companies were contacted, sent a project brief and asked to submit an expression of interest document which was used to rate their suitability to deliver a

recyclables collection service. Rabbit Recycling were the only company that decided not to submit an expression of interest, mainly because they felt the project was too limited and did not address the issues of plastics recycling.

The expression of interest documents were assessed by three representatives from Surrey County Council, Elmbridge Borough Council and Remade South East using an agreed numerical scoring system based on the companies' abilities to meet the project requirements. Hungry Recycling were marked highest on each of the score sheets as the company that could offer the best and most flexible service.

Hungry Recycling already managed a collection round for cardboard, paper and tin cans from businesses throughout Surrey and were set up to provide dedicated recycling collections. They offered a very personal and flexible service which put an emphasis on building up a relationship with their customers. They operate small collection vans which could easily be manoeuvred through the narrow town centre roads and offered a collection service directly from customers' premises which allowed businesses without an outside storage area to take part in the scheme. They did not ask customers to sign a contract which enabled businesses to opt in and out of the scheme very easily. They identified local end markets for the recyclables collected using a facility in Croydon (Sevenside Recycling) to bulk the paper and cardboard before it was sent for reprocessing at mills in Kent.

2.3 Implementing a collection trial scheme

Discussions took place with Hungry Recycling to refine the details of the collection service. It was agreed that collections would take place every Friday and customers could either have paper and cardboard collected loose from their premises or could rent a storage bin if they had space. The project partners also agreed that the service would cost customers £3 per collection provided that 100 businesses signed up to the scheme. This would allow Hungry Recycling to cover their costs.

Cobham High Street was chosen to launch and pilot collections in order to monitor how the scheme would be received by local businesses and how the collections would work in practice. The Cobham service was launched on 11th January 2008 with the hand delivery of a promotional leaflet to 114 shops. The trial took place over a four week period with 21 businesses signing up and 3 tonnes of paper and cardboard collected.

The encouraging results from the Cobham trial led to the roll out of the collection service on the other main high streets of East Molesey, Walton, Esher and Weybridge in early February 2008. Claygate has a smaller High Street and the trial in this area was not launched until early April 2008 when each of the town centres were visited for a second time to further promote the scheme. In total 560 businesses in all the town centre areas received the scheme leaflet.

Fig 1: High street launch dates and leaflets delivered

High street	Launch date	Leaflets delivered
Cobham (pilot scheme)	11 th January 2008	114
East Molesey	8 th February 2008	104
Walton	8 th February 2008	110
Esher	11 th February 2008	97
Weybridge	12 th February 2008	102
Claygate	2 nd April 2008	32

As the project progressed businesses from outside high streets areas contacted Hungry Recycling to enquire about the scheme. Hungry took the approach that they would include them in the scheme if they were close to the main high street areas. The businesses that did not fall into these areas were charged a slightly higher rate for their collections but were still included in the scheme.

2.4 Promotion and marketing:

To support the work carried out in the research and trial stages of the project a number of promotional activities were undertaken:

Leaflets

Leaflets were produced for each of the high street areas and hand delivered to businesses. This approach was taken to enable the project team to gain direct personal contact with business managers rather than sending an anonymous mail shot. Although some shops were more receptive and had more time to discuss the scheme than others this gave the project a face and gave businesses the opportunity to ask questions and sign up for the scheme straight away. 500 generic leaflets were produced at the end of the project and handed to Hungry Recycling to continue and grow the scheme beyond the end of the project.



Walton high street promotional leaflet

Why join up?
Landfill tax will increase by 28 pence each year until April 2010. The cost of sending your waste to landfill in that period will double!

Recycling paper and cardboard will help reduce your costs and the amount of waste your business sends to landfill.

New legislation brought in on 30 October 2007 requires business waste to be pre-treated, so before sending to landfill at least one material stream should be recycled.

Recycling paper and cardboard will help meet your businesses pre-treatment requirement.

This is a business recycling project led by Surrey County Council in partnership with Elmridge Borough Council and Remade South East.

To sign up for collections or for more information contact Rob White at Hungry Recycling (08707 522 580 or info@hungryrecycling.co.uk) or complete the form below and send to Hungry Recycling, Unit 1, Downs Farm, Flegate Road, Ewel, Surrey, KT17 3BY.

Yes, please collect my cardboard and paper

Contact Name _____

Retail Address _____

Tel No: _____

There are 3Rs in Surrey:
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Printed on 100% recycled paper

Window stickers

Window stickers were produced and sent to all participating businesses so they could show their customers and other businesses on the high street they were taking part in the scheme.

Press releases

A press release was issued when the pilot scheme was launched on Cobham high street in February 2008 introducing the scheme and a second release issued at the end of the project in April 2008 disseminating the project results.

Launch event

A launch event took place on the evening of Tuesday 19th February 2008 at Mercedes Benz World in Weybridge. Businesses from all of the high street areas were invited to attend and hear details of the scheme and to listen to an Environment Agency presentation outlining businesses waste responsibilities. The event was well attended with around 40 people attending, half of which were local businesses.

Business Guilds and Chamber of Commerce interaction

Local business guilds and chambers of commerce were contacted to let their members know about the project:

- East Molesey Business group – Andrew Kent met with representative on the 11th February 2008 to promote the scheme and launch event
- Cobham Chamber of Commerce – Andrew Kent attended a branch meeting on the 12th February 2008 to promote scheme and launch event
- Esher Business Guild – Andrew Kent attended a branch meeting on the 28th February 2008 to promote the scheme

3. Trial scheme results:

In total 69 businesses signed up for the collection scheme which was below the original target of 100 (this is explored further in section 4).

Each of the town centres were similar, in terms of shop numbers, layout and shop types, so it was expected that each high street would contribute around 20 business sign ups each. Cobham contributed over a third of businesses with Weybridge almost hitting their estimated target of 20. The success of Cobham could be attributed to the fact the scheme was launched first and had an extra month to gain momentum but the main reason could be that a well known shop owner was identified by Elmbridge Borough Council as a champion to promote and encouraged other businesses to sign up to the scheme. Unfortunately other champions for the other trial areas were not identified which could explain the low sign up numbers. Claygate was launched at the end of the project and at the time this report was produced no businesses had signed up, although during the launch 5 businesses indicated that they were very interested in the scheme and would be signing up in the near future.

Fig 2: Business sign up

High street	Businesses
Cobham	24
Walton	11
East Molesey	9
Esher	9
Weybridge	16
Claygate	0
Total	69

In total 15.95 tonnes of paper and cardboard was collected. The target at the beginning of the project was to divert 15 tonnes away from landfill by March 2008. Collection figures were very encouraging regularly hitting between 1.8 and 2 tonnes per week during the later stage of the trial which highlights the large volumes of waste paper and cardboard that would have otherwise been going to landfill.

Fig 3: Tonnes diverted from landfill

Date	Quantity (tonnes)
18 th Jan	0.48
25 th Jan	0.58
1 st Feb	1
8 th Feb	0.9
15 th Feb	1.36
22 nd Feb	1.26
29 th Feb	2.01
7 th March	1.88
14 th March	2.56
21 st March	1.84
28 th March	2.08
Total	15.95

4. Continuation of the scheme

Although the project did not reach the target of 100 businesses signing up, Hungry Recycling was pleased with the number of new businesses customers they have gained and are committed to continue running and promoting the scheme beyond the end of this project.

Hungry Recycling were able to renegotiate a higher gate fee with Severnside Recycling to supplement their income and from April 08 will increase the collection charge for new customers to £4 per collection. Existing customers that signed up during the trial phase will continue to be charged £3 per collection. Hungry Recycling have also committed to supply monthly tonnage figures to Remade South East and Surrey County Council so the success of the project can be monitored in the future.

5. Conclusions:

The project benefited from a strong partnership, with good working relationships being developed between Surrey County Council, Elmbridge Borough Council, Remade South East and Hungry Recycling. All the partners participated in promotional activities such as high street leaflet deliveries and the promoting the launch event to local businesses.

There was a quick initial uptake from businesses indicating that there is a willingness among small businesses to improve their environmental and waste practices. Interest peaked after the initial launch on the main high street areas followed by a drop off of business enquiries. A follow-up promotional visit to each of the town centre areas maintained interest showing that constant promotion is needed to increase business participation.

A number of businesses indicated that they were interested in using the scheme but were waiting for their current waste disposal contracts to be cancelled before they signed up to use the scheme. Many waste management companies have a 3 – 6 month cancellation clause in their contracts. This could explain why some businesses did not initially sign up immediately.

Businesses that were not located on the high streets showed interest in the scheme, some of which had large quantities of waste cardboard stored. Businesses that were

located in close proximity to the high streets or on a Hungry Recycling collection route were included in the scheme but any businesses located away from these areas were quoted a separate price for collection as it wasn't economical to offer the £3 collection fee. The costs were in the region of £10 - £50 per collection depending on location. Only a small number of these businesses were willing to pay the increased prices as they perceived the cost as too high.

Discussions with small independent shops highlighted the fact that a large proportion of recyclable waste was being disposed through domestic recycling collections and local bring bank facilities. Although businesses knew they were not permitted by law to dispose of their waste through these routes, they wanted to 'do the right thing' and recycle without increasing business costs. This scheme gave them an alternative inexpensive option to recycle and reduced the inconvenience of having to take paper and cardboard home to recycle.

The launch of the scheme came at an appropriate time. The waste pre-treatment legislation changes and landfill tax increases have provided a strong economic incentive to segregate recyclable business waste. Increased awareness of environmental best practice and increased disposal costs have contributed to the business take up of the scheme and these factors will continue to influence waste decisions over the coming months and years.

Working with smaller waste companies gave more flexibility than bigger waste service providers. As a relatively new start up communication lines into Hungry Recycling were very good with any enquiry from customers and project partners followed up immediately. This was mainly because they didn't have thousands of customers so had the time to focus on the new customers generated from this project. They were also very keen to gain the new business as this was fundamental to the establishment and growth of their organisation. This may not have been the service received if an established larger recycling company had been chosen as the project delivery partner, as a small scheme like this may not have been given the appropriate time and care needed to be a success.

Recommendations

- The recycling issues faced by businesses on Elmbridge town centre are broadly representative of other high street areas in Surrey. Therefore the project partners would be in a good position to roll out this scheme across the county at low cost. The findings also indicate that the scheme could be replicated in other areas of the South East region by other project teams with a similar skill base.
- Where possible, distribution of marketing and promotion materials should be undertaken face to face with business as this approach seemed to yield better results than relying on mail shots and built up an immediate relationship with the business.
- A longer trial period would have gained data from those companies who needed to exit their existing contracts. Businesses on Cobham high street that wanted to cancel their current waste contracts had only just started participating in the scheme at the end of the trial.
- Further work could be done to offer a scheme to businesses located outside built up locations that cannot benefit from the economies of scale that being based on a high street can offer.

- Further work could be done to engage with other forms of businesses such as hospitals, schools, universities, hotels etc.
- There is great potential to expand the collection and include other materials like plastic bottles, food packaging and drinks cans.
- The findings of this trial should be disseminated to other regional partners outside Surrey.