

1.0 Analysis of Q.8 Comments & Ideas Literal Responses

1.1 Response Rates

Table 1. Responses Coded by Topic

	# Responses
1 - Recycling/composting	73
2 - Reducing	11
3 - Re-using	1
4 - Strategy delivery	2
5 - Residual treatment	1
6 - Cost	15
7 - Service changes	60
8 - Community	0
9 - Education	20
10 - Other	15
Total - including other	198

1.2 Recycling/Composting

This section received the highest number of comments reflecting the importance with which it is viewed by respondents. The most common point made in this section was the desire for plastic & cardboard to be collected from kerbside, with some 22 respondents commenting on this point:

“To be able to recycle more rubbish like plastic milk bottles, juice cartons, plastic from envelopes, food packaging like bread, microwave meals, cardboard like cereal boxes and frozen food packaging. I get annoyed that my plastic and cardboard can't be collected with other stuff I put out for the every other 2 week recycling collection.”

“As I have said we need a consistent policy on recycling. Very haphazard in Gloucester City. Need to be able to recycle cardboard, plastic bottles and garden waste as well as tins and bottles in all areas.”

“Bulkiest waste problem is plastic bottles so being able to put them in black box would be helpful. Cardboard is also a problem as we don't have room to compost.”

“I find that plastic bottles like milk and cardboard are my main recyclables and these are not collected. A bin would be better than a box as less likely that paper would blow about.”

“Plastic is the main problem. It is bulky and full of air which I imagine is the reason there is no kerbside plastic collection so we take ours to the plastic bank but most people don't. Could the kerbside collection vehicle not have some sort of compressor so plastic could be collected? The same applies to cardboard.”

“I am surprised that in today's technology we are still putting a load of plastics (Bottles, shopping bags and packaging into our rubbish bin which as we all know does not disintegrate and therefore is in the landfill for years doing more damage. When can we expect Plastics to be recycled.”

“We already recycle as much as possible but very little is collected from the house and we must visit recycling centres to do so. I would like a full collection service for plastics and cardboard as I understand that these can not be placed in the current green boxes. We already have a brown bin for garden waste.”

“We live in Twyning near Tewkesbury - why are there not collections for cardboard, plastic bottles and ordinary paper (not just magazines and newspapers)? Also - why can't we recycle general plastic packaging eg tomato cartons, plastic wrappers??”

“A lot of my rubbish is cardboard and plastic bottles. Being disabled with two young children I find it hard to go to the recycle centres, and the ones at the supermarket are out of my reach. I would do much more if facilities were made to collect cardboard and plastic from home.”

“Plastics & cardboard make up the major volume of my waste that is not collected/recycled. I currently manage to dispose of plastic bottles & cardboard at recycling centres. However I know many other people do not & it goes in household waste bin. It is not environmentally friendly or often convenient to drive to a waste centre.”

Convenience of service was noted by a number of respondents as a desirable feature:

“This is something I feel very strongly about, and the easier councils make it for people to recycle their waste, the better.”

“Separate different coloured wheeled containers for recycling at home would be great. E.g. blue for paper, yellow for plastics, green for glass. My rubbish bin is almost empty and has wheels. I have

two recycle boxes and they are very heavy to carry to the pick up point....”

“To encourage recycling it should be as easy as possible. Some people don’t have side access to their house or a front garden so have to take their bin in through the house, having to move lots of different bins would be discouraging.”

“Why do we not have wheelie-bins? Everyone else in the country seems to have them, and councils will not collect anything that is outside the bin, thereby restricting the amount of waste collected and forcing people into more recycling.”

“Please consider elderly and disabled people when planning for additional recycling. Such groups find it difficult to move bins etc but still have a strong desire to recycle.”

A number of respondents were concerned that waste should be managed as close to source as possible:

“To an intelligent rational person, it is environmentally unsound to collect garden and food waste, transport it for miles, process it into compost, and then re-transport the compost product (assuming a market is found for it). Each household should deal with their own food and garden waste - by minimising its generation and by composting at home for use in the garden. It appears that local authority waste management strategy is being driven by commercial interests - turning household waste into cash cows for the waste conglomerates....”

“...2.waste should be treated as close to the point of production as possible to comply with your sustainability criteria. During its initial treatment it loses most of its bulk/weight and therefore there is less to transport when it might have some value. 3. A year or so ago BBC Points West showed a clip on a block of flats (in Bath I think) where there was a chute for food waste which went straight into a composting unit in the cellar and became available for residents to use in their window boxes etc. This seems to be worth pursuing on a wider scale.”

“...I am also concerned about the recycling of waste taking part as near to the source where it originated as possible, so for example flying large quantities of recyclable materials to a developing country, for example is counter productive since the energy expended in delivering the material is of itself very harmful to the environment, and could be considered to be counter-productive! Similarly, if as many of us as possible could compost our own waste rather than having a large truck coming to collect it. (I don't personally have a garden that creates waste, and so that option is not relevant to me) I believe that everything should be manufactured in such a way that it is recyclable, and that the

source of waste should be made responsible for its recycling. Also that packaging should be made in such a way as to make it 100% recyclable.”

The desire for garden waste collections was noted by a number of respondents:

“Garden waste should be collected more frequently during summer months.”

“As we live in the Forest of Dean we have had a fortnightly collection of garden waste for a long time which works well and is very popular. It would be nice to have a wheelie bin for plastics as these have to be taken to Ross to recycle together with cardboard.”

“Already have separate collection for garden waste - although disappointed that you have to pay for it. Rather than two weekly leftover collections could this not be weekly but with a much smaller bin. Therefore cut down on leftover waste actually collected but less vermin/hygiene and smell issues?”

“...The green waste scheme seems to be working well but the kitchen waste agenda appears to be driven more by commercial interests than real need.”

“Having free garden waste collection instead of filling up the brooks, doing away with green nesting sites and filling the drains up with gravel where households have got rid of there lawns.”

“Garden waste is already collected in the Forest of Dean and it is an excellent service....”

“As stated before collect re-cycling weekly and refuse fortnightly. Offer garden waste re-cycling to town centre homes - we probably have bigger gardens than many in the suburbs.”

Home and community composting was also advocated by a number of people:

“Food waste should be composted at home, and for those who don't have garden there should be parish based local food composting collection schemes, and all green waste should be composted in community compost schemes locally.”

“Please support community composting initiatives. Cardboard recycling could be improved. Recycling for businesses could do with improvement.”

“All our garden waste, peelings etc are recycled in our compost bins. People should be encouraged to compost at home as far as possible rather than having extra plastic bins. There should be a collection point for used batteries at supermarkets, like the foil banks.”

“Garden and green waste, where possible, should be composted at home. In a rural environment this is much more feasible than in a

town environment. Fortnightly collection of food waste especially in the summer when it is hot is a dangerous practice as it will again be the cause of disease and rat infestation. If global warming and thereby hotter summers for this country are likely we should take continental countries and their rubbish collections as an example. Spain collects and empties street rubbish bins every few days during the winter and every day in the summer.”

1.3 Reducing

In this section the theme that emerged strongly was the need for business to play its part. Packaging waste was the overriding concern to come through in people's comments:

“...Have a local tax on medium to large retailers to reduce packaging and a fine if no recycling points are situated on their car park. Make it a planning need to have recycle points on every need medium - large business planning application.”

“...The starting point has to be to reduce waste at source, not fine people for being unable or unwilling to deal with it...”

“...Also more pressure needs to be applied to commercial organisations to reduce packaging and make more use of biodegradable materials.”

“... I do think, however, that producers need to re-think their packaging strategy on a lot of consumables.”

“...2. Get the supermarkets to move away from plastics packaging and into bio-degradable such as corn starch 3. Improve facilities to recycle plastic bags and plastic foodwrap.”

“Start where the problem is in the first instance - with manufacturers and food wholesalers.”

“Put a limit on the amount of packaging that can be used for each product sold in shops.”

“ ...While everyone is in agreement that we need to reduce waste, I would make two key observations - 1. You will never achieve this until businesses are compelled to reduce the amount of packaging they use to package goods, this in turn is unlikely as we are becoming a more remote society where products are delivered to the home after ordering via the internet or similar ...this delivery element needs high levels of packaging to protect goods in transit...”

1.4 Reuse

There was only one comment recorded that specifically addressed re-use:

“Encourage people to mend and reuse things, even recycling should be a last resort.”

1.5 Strategy Delivery

There were two comments in relation to strategy delivery. Both these suggested that Gloucestershire should endeavour to make itself a leader in Britain:

“Why consult about the 'how'? There are already plenty of examples of local councils managing recycling schemes for Gloucestershire to analyse for best value and best practice. Why consult 'whether Gloucs should do this or that for recycling benefits'? The answer's obvious... yes, Gloucs should do more, now get on and do it. Take a leap... make it compulsory before government legislation does so anyway... be a leader!”

“Go for it you guys! I challenge you to make Gloucs the leading county in Britain for waste management and other environmental issues. (Do you use bio-degradable household chemicals? If not why not?!)”

1.6 Residual Treatment

There was only one comment that related to residual treatment:

“This entire questionnaire has apparently been drawn up to justify a preferred solution....”

1.7 Cost

A number of people expressed concerns about impact of the costs of waste management on their council tax:

“Any attempts to minimise collections - in association with vastly increasing council taxes - would be strongly resisted.”

“...Will we get a reduction in our council tax? Not flippin likely.”

“...At what extra cost would this incur on the council tax?”

In contrast to this view a number of respondents expressed concern that the environment should not bear the brunt of attempts to constrain costs:

“I know you have to think about costs but it shouldn't be your only consideration when thinking about environmental issues.”

“Unpalatable as it may be to contemplate further Council Tax rises (or rises in central taxation), any notion that recycling should be practised only when it is "economic" (ie, pays for itself or costs very little) has to be abandoned. We simply cannot go on day by day burying and burning tons of rubbish if the environment is to remain bearable for our descendants. Local (sophisticated and non-polluting) recycling plants must be built, allowing almost everything ...to be recycled (or used to generate power) within the Borough and

without the environmental costs of long-distance transport. What has been standard practice in, for instance, Germany and the Netherlands for many years must not be allowed to continue to be characterized as "impractical" or "uneconomic" in the UK. There is, however, a clear role for central government here in providing the necessary legislation and funding the necessary infrastructure from central taxation. Local authorities should campaign vigorously and publicly for this, while doing everything possible radically to reduce levels of non-recycled waste within their areas and within their current competence."

"...Finally, the county council should act in the interests of their taxpayers, not their commercial partners. It is taxpayers who stand to benefit from reversing greenhouse gases, so the whole waste management exercise shouldn't primarily be a money-making venture by the waste companies."

1.8 Service Changes

The overwhelming majority of comments in relation to service changes were regarding AWC/Fortnightly collections of residual, with 46 out of the 60 comments being on this topic¹. A majority of these were opposed to the idea of AWC collections:

"General household waste which can not be recycled needs to be collected weekly, waste left longer than this smells appalling, attracts flies, is difficult to store and is unhealthy. I know this as I used to live in North Devon where green waste and general waste was collected on alternate weeks."

"How will you deal with rats if you move to fortnightly collections? Rats will be abundant especially in summer. How will you know if someone is not recycling? There are legal (data privacy) issues, you can't just rifle through people's bins. You will end up with a costly court case. Some people don't recycle because they reduce or reuse instead - they have nothing left to recycle."

"Bins left to fester for a whole fortnight would make life in this town impossible. Already in the spring, summer and autumn it is quite a smelly place and would be impossible to contemplate. The refuse collectors already have a problem with the packaging and waste on a weekly basis so to collect fortnightly they would need larger Lorries."

"I would strongly oppose the idea of fortnightly as opposed to weekly collections of rubbish. In some households this would present real problems, and possible health risks."

¹ A total of 61 comments were received in relation to AWC across all topics

“Absolutely NOT. Fortnightly waste collection is not an option and is all about saving money...”

“Q7 concerns me as it begs the question of fortnightly collection. I believe fortnightly collection would encourage rodents and foxes and be a public health issue. If for whatever reason the fortnightly collection was missed then rubbish would be in situ for a month which does not bear thinking about.”

“I am very concerned about only having a fortnightly collection. I have to keep all my household rubbish inside my home, after a fortnight this would be very unhygienic, particularly for sanitary waste (which we are encouraged not to flush away). In addition, experience with a fortnightly recycling collection tells me that it's difficult to remember which week is collection week. I don't want to have to bring my rubbish back inside having left it out in the rain and dirt on the pavement all day.”

“To collect leftover rubbish fortnightly is a retrograde step, and will only encourage fly-tipping, not recycling.”

“The danger with moving to a fortnightly collection is the risk of vermin, public disaffection and increased flytipping.”

“Disagree with fortnightly collection.”

Balanced against this however a reasonable number of respondents indicated support for AWC – particularly if food waste and recycling collections are improved:

“If the council were to collect cardboard and plastic bottles (along with milk cartons, aluminium, clothing, paper ...) then I would have no problem with a fortnightly collection (and there are nine of us in our family)....”

“A lot of my 'rubbish' is cardboard and if this could be included in the recycling bins, I would be happy with a fortnightly rubbish collection. But a weekly collection of food waste would be good because I think people would complain about the smell, especially in the summer.”

“We already deal with the above quite effectively. Would have no objection to a fortnightly rubbish collection.”

“1. So long as food waste is collected weekly, I feel that all other rubbish/waste could be collected on a two week basis. 2. Use of wheeled bins MUST NOT be compulsory, due to fact that many properties can not wheel their bins to the rear and they are left as an 'eyesore' at the front....”

“I think that having a fortnightly waste collection service is an excellent idea; I do feel that there may need to be some flexibility in the service though. If we were to have another very hot summer like 2006, I'm sure rubbish would start to decay and smell, perhaps the

collections could be altered in these circumstances? Then revert back to fortnightly in cooler weather.”

“I would strongly agree with having food waste collected weekly and having the leftover rubbish collected fortnightly as it is generally the food waste that creates an unpleasant smell and can result in maggots.”

“Until we can include plastics and cardboard in the recycling (Cheltenham) it is unreasonable to collect the leftover rubbish fortnightly.”

The issue of the space required in households for source separation of materials was noted by several respondents:

“It is all very well if people have the space needed to store all these various things. I think you can easily collect fortnightly from villages where people have gardens and sheds but if you are going to get a large estate to re-cycle then you have to collect on a weekly basis.”

“In principle the move to more recycling is the ideal and I wholly support it. But how many bins and boxes will people need to fulfill council targets - especially when recycling becomes compulsory, as it inevitably must? We do not all have gardens / sheds or gardens big enough to house rows of wheelie bins!”

“Larger bins for recycling would be a benefit. Many families cannot fit 2 weeks worth of glass, cans, and paper in the boxes. Plastics and cardboard should also be collected. There should be more local facilities for collecting aluminium foil for recycling. Also places where non-rechargeable batteries can be left for proper disposal (surely the vast majority of these get dumped in the usual bins)....”

1.9 Community

No comments were noted in respect of community issues.

1.10 Education

A desire for clear communications and instructions on what and how to recycle was expressed by a number of respondents:

“It is essential that people are given a definitive list of what is and is not recyclable. I live in the Stroud area, and about half of the material carrying the recyclable label is regularly left behind by the collectors. Incidentally, can you tell me the difference between waste paper in sheet form and shredded paper. The answer, according to Stroud, is that shredded paper is not collected and recycled.”

“...Are people even aware that these should not be sent to landfill? More education needed - leaflets through doors?”

“...having innovative ideas such as getting schools involved in the new recycling will be key, they often drive their parents behaviour on recycling.”

“The focus needs to be on educating people. (1) If school children are educated about recycling hopefully they will encourage their parents to recycle.”

“Immigrant households need to be targeted especially because they may not be aware of recycling provision/facilities and may not be able to understand any literature on recycling.”

1.11 - Other comments

Compulsory recycling received a number of comments. Some of these were in support of the idea:

“The councils need to recruit staff to go round the streets so that they can spot the households putting out a lot of rubbish. The same staff also need to inspect the green bins put out for recycling, so they can spot the households that are not recycling or not recycling all the materials that provision has been made for. They should then pay these people a personal visit and explain the merits to them of recycling and how bad it is for the environment if they don't. This should be the first approach and if it is does not work they should be fined. It is not fair that council tax should go up because of a hard core minority that refuse to recycle properly.”

“If the instructions are clear, easy-to-follow with clear penalties if too much is wasted then more people will adopt your scheme.”

“I feel everyone should be made to recycle and we should do it the way it is done in Devon.”

“There are always certain people who cannot be bothered to recycle and will perhaps fly-tip/dump their rubbish rather than sort it out. If recycling becomes compulsory then much stricter fines should be imposed on fly-tipping and littering.”

“I think that recycling should take place as a matter of course, and that we have a responsibility to educate those who choose not to recycle, possibly with the imposition of fines(?)”

A similar proportion however also expressed opposition to the idea of compulsory recycling:

“I don't believe people should be fined for waste that they cannot recycle through government schemes. More should be done to encourage food suppliers and supermarkets to reduce their packaging.”

“...Fining people is ridiculous, who will enforce it? Who will collect it? As it is civil law it is open to challenge and thus additional cost to the council.”

“It is really a matter of changing attitudes. Fining people is not the answer, but there are many selfish people who need to understand that it is utterly antisocial not to take recycling seriously. It is also frustrating to see cans and, in ASDA, plastic milk cartons, put in the skip uncrushed, so that the lorry is going around full of air!! There could be a TV campaign to point this out.”

“I think it would be totally wrong to make recycling compulsory & especially to fine people - it will lead to people dumping their rubbish in other people's bins and cause neighbourhood disputes. What is needed is ENCOURAGEMENT and incentives - why not offer a free wheelie-bin cleaning service to every household that recycles a set minimum amount of rubbish?”

“...3. To fine/force people to recycle will never work. It must be achieved by education and involvement....”