



*Cllrs Ray Theodolou (GCC) Chris Coleman (CBC) Mairilyn Smart OBE (FoDDC) Sue Coakley (CDC) Jim Mason Chair of Gloucestershire Joint Waste Team (TBC) Brian Robinson (FoDDC) Steve Jordan (CDC) with Adam Henson (fourth from right)*

## Welcome to the first newsletter from the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Team!



The Gloucestershire Joint Waste Team provides waste and recycling services on behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council, Cotswold District Council, Forest of Dean District Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council.

We hope that this quarterly roundup of news and information from us will be an interesting read and we would welcome your comments so that we can shape the newsletter as it moves forward. This quarter our main features are all about food, so sit back and digest!

### Andigestion bring on the bubbles

Food waste collected from households across Cheltenham, Forest of Dean, Gloucester and Tewkesbury is now being recycled at the pioneering new Anaerobic Digestion plant near Bishop's Cleeve and Members of the Joint Waste Committee and Officers of the Joint Waste Team were given a guided tour during September's official opening. The site can process up to 34,000 tonnes of food waste per year. The food is broken down naturally by bacteria to produce a gas which is cleaned and either injected into the gas grid or used to provide renewable energy for local homes. The by-product, an organic liquid fertiliser, or 'digestate' is being used by local farmers and helps to reduce their reliance on chemical fertilisers. Andigestion were fortunate to have well-known farmer Adam Henson open the site, and he seemed pretty keen to trial some of the liquid digestate on his own farm! As well as food waste from residents, Andigestion accepts food waste from local commercial outlets, and was recently awarded a contract to collect from schools across Gloucestershire until October 2016.

There have been some comments from residents about why any plastic bag can be used as a caddy liner, and what happens to them afterwards? When Andigestion accept the food waste it is mixed with recycled water, and large metal paddles effectively tear off any packaging waste in the food "soup". The plastic is then separated, washed and baled. At the moment the plastics are sent to landfill, though Andigestion hope to trial recycling the plastics later this year. Something worth considering is that although plastic has a fair volume, the weight of plastic sent to landfill by Andigestion is only between 0.5% and 1% of the total weight of waste processed. Residents can of course still line their caddies with paper or cornstarch bags. (NB Plastic bags are not acceptable in food waste from Cotswold District Council residents.)



*The bag-splitting paddles at Andigestion's plant.*

### “No food waste in your bin” campaign

Food makes up the single biggest type of waste by weight in Gloucestershire at around 20,000 tonnes per annum, and a weekly kerbside food recycling service is offered by all partnership councils, as well as Gloucester City Council. Around a third of residents use this service, however, only around 10,000 tonnes of food is currently being recycled, with the rest being landfilled. While this is slightly better than the national average it still comes at a cost to county taxpayers of around £1.6million in landfill tax alone.

A recent Waste And Resources Action Programme (WRAP) funded trial in Somerset showed that by placing “no food waste” stickers on refuse bins, and providing bin hangers with additional information to residents a 20% uplift in food recycling was achieved.

In an attempt to achieve similar success here in Gloucestershire, bright yellow stickers and eye-catching bin hangers have been systematically attached to refuse bins across Cheltenham, Forest of Dean, Tewkesbury, the Cotswolds and Gloucester. Right from the start, the response from residents has been very positive. All councils have seen an increase in orders for caddies and other recycling containers and - although it's early days - an initial upturn in both food waste and recycling collected. We did have problems with distribution of stickers in some areas and these are being reviewed.

### Love Food? Hate Waste!

So - if we have an efficient food recycling service, and we're asking people to use it, why worry about food waste? The seven million tonnes of food and drink waste thrown away by UK households annually is enough to fill Wembley Stadium nine times over. Of this:

60% is avoidable (i.e. bread, apples, potatoes etc)

17% was 'possibly avoidable' (i.e. things that some people eat and others choose not to, such as crusts and potato skins).

23% was unavoidable waste (i.e. tea bags, banana skins and poultry bones).

Unsurprisingly, this all comes at a huge environmental and financial cost to us. Across the UK an average of 79% of food waste from homes is sent to landfill, with just 21% being recycled to generate energy, digestate or compost. So in Gloucestershire we are doing well by recycling 33% of food waste but it would be better if we reduced the amount of avoidable food waste.

On average, the amount of food bought and then binned in each household was the same as sticking £14 out of every £100 spent on food straight into the bin. There are also wider environmental impacts with wasted food. Many billions of litres of water, and around 20 million tonnes of CO2 is linked to the production, transport and packaging of food waste.

Land is also needed to grow and process all this food that ultimately gets binned too. An estimate by Wrap suggests that this equates to an area almost the size of Wales.

According to WRAP evidence, most avoidable food waste was binned either because it “wasn’t used in time” or because “too much had been prepared”, and so the Joint Waste Team are supporting the national Love Food Hate Waste campaign, which aims to help householders reduce their food waste through practical suggestions and tips around planning, portions and storage.



### Fareshare SouthWest

Thousands of tonnes of perfectly good in-date food are also wasted by the food industry due to packaging errors, out of date promotions, discontinued lines and over-orders etc. FareShare South West is based in Bristol and works with regional suppliers to minimise fit-for-purpose fresh, frozen and long-life food going to waste by sending this food to organisations that provide meals for vulnerable people who cannot afford a healthy diet, among them homeless and elderly people, children, refugees and people with mental & physical health problems.

Currently twenty-six groups in Gloucestershire receive food from Fareshare and in one month this year the equivalent of 11,048 meals were delivered straight to local groups in Cheltenham, Stroud and Gloucester City in cool-boxes supplied by the Joint Waste Team.

If you are aware of any community group that would be interested in finding out more, please contact Fareshare directly.



*Fareshare food being served at the Black Elders Luncheon Club, Gloucester*

### In other news:

#### Premises Waste Contract

The GCC Support Services team, with the input of the Joint Waste Team, are currently working on a new waste and recycling contract for schools and GCC premises throughout the county which will be available from late 2016. The focus will be on encouraging sites to move waste up the hierarchy through the commissioning of comprehensive, cost-effective dry and food waste recycling and residual waste collection services.

#### Communications roundup

The Joint Waste Team have been putting together some radio advertising to encourage residents to “give recycling a try” during the thirst-inducing Rugby World Cup bonanza. The message has gone out on Heart FM and The Breeze to remind residents to recycle any extra bottles or cans they might have while enjoying the celebrations.

#### HRC update

The County Council will be making improvements to Hempsted HRC to help future-proof it for the residents of Gloucestershire. For quite a few years now the traffic flow around the site has been hampered by the narrow top area of the site where most residents want to access. One of the project aims is to open up this top area and make plenty of room for cars to manoeuvre as well as creating a dedicated exit lane. There will also be a reuse shop at the site entrance enabling customers to drop off reusable items before they enter the site or to purchase items from the shop themselves. The area of the site will increase through a new lease with Cory, the site owners, and this will help Kier, the HRC contractor, relocate bins so that they can all be serviced from inside the site, a safer and less disruptive operation.

Kier has started collecting NHS walking aids at all the HRCs after a request from Gloucestershire Industrial Services who supply this equipment to patients.

The Cheltenham based charity 'Repaint' has started collecting good quality tins of paint deposited at Wingmoor Farm. The site staff assess whether the tins are likely to be good enough for resale and store them up until Repaint pop in to collect.

Large appliances such as washing machines, tumble driers and cookers that are in working order are put to one side at Hempsted HRC. The Gloucester-based reuse charity 'Furniture Recycling Project' call in when there is a suitable quantity and take the appliances back to their workshop in Gloucester Docks for testing and repair if necessary before selling them to the public.

The Reuse Shop at Fosse Cross HRC is still proving to be very popular with our residents in the Cotswolds. The shop typically sells nearly two tonnes of furniture, bric-a-brac and bicycles in a month. However, for safety reasons, they don't sell electrical goods or toys designed for very young children.

Since April the Gloucester based charity 'The Gloucestershire Bike Project' has collected over 7 tonnes of bikes from Hempsted, Oak Quarry, Pyke Quarry and Wingmoor Farm.



*One of the more unusual items brought for recycling!*

### Stroud Service Change

The Joint Waste Team has also been giving support to Stroud District Council while they plan for their forthcoming major recycling service changes due to take place in 2016. Details about it can be found in their newsletter [here](#)

### Forest Service Review

An 8-week public consultation was conducted in the Forest of Dean over the summer. The survey was posted out to 2,000 homes and was available online. Copies were also distributed to local libraries and leisure centres and available to pick up from the FoDDC's offices in Coleford. Press releases and social media were also used to raise awareness and encourage residents to take part. A total of 2,311 responses were received

- 1,023 paper and 1,288 online - before the closing date of 1 September 2015. The results will be used to help shape the future provision of recycling services in the district.

### Next time!

In the next issue we have articles about the Gloucestershire Real Nappy project, information about textile recycling, and details of what our volunteer Master Composters have been up to!

### Feedback

What did you think of the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Team's newsletter? Was there something you wanted to read about that we didn't include this time round? Feedback (good, bad or indifferent!) is welcomed. Please email [waste@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:waste@gloucestershire.gov.uk)



Happy harvesting!