

**Projects and Circular Economy Update**

**SUMMARY**

This report provides an update on the West London Waste Authority (WLWA) projects.

- The Food waste investment projects are capturing more food waste for recycling from residual waste through the delivery of Borough specific business cases.
- Residual waste composition analysis is due in September to establish what is remaining in the waste and to identify trends and usage of recycling services.
- WLWA have started new repair and reuse workshops at the Abbey Road site to divert material from waste and develop green skills.
- Solar panels are being installed on Abbey Road site to reduce energy costs and increase the renewable energy generation.
- A new WLWA website is being launched in June to help with resident communications and improve access to sustainability and waste information and resources.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 1) *The Authority is asked to note the information within this report.*

**1. Introduction**

This report covers the main project updates, governance of the wider programme is managed through the WLWA senior leadership team.

**2. Project Development**

There are six key areas of WLWA's project programme (Data Management, Smart Cities, Household Reuse and Recycling Centre (HRRC) transformation, Food Waste, Shared Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding plan, Double Recycling Infrastructure) each with an Environment Director and Member lead. Policies for each of these six areas were jointly developed and approved by the Authority in March 22 to deliver a unified approach to whole system change.

**2.1. Food Waste**

The food waste investment project was initially designed to incentivise an increase in food waste being removed from the general waste collection, with a target of doubling food waste collected in three years. Boroughs identified capital costs to be a hurdle for the expansion of the services and the funding was changed to provide an upfront investment of £500k for Boroughs to deliver service development project initiatives which would generate a return on investment through the food waste system i.e. collecting more of the food that had been thrown in the general waste stream within the food collection service within 3 years of the funding being received.

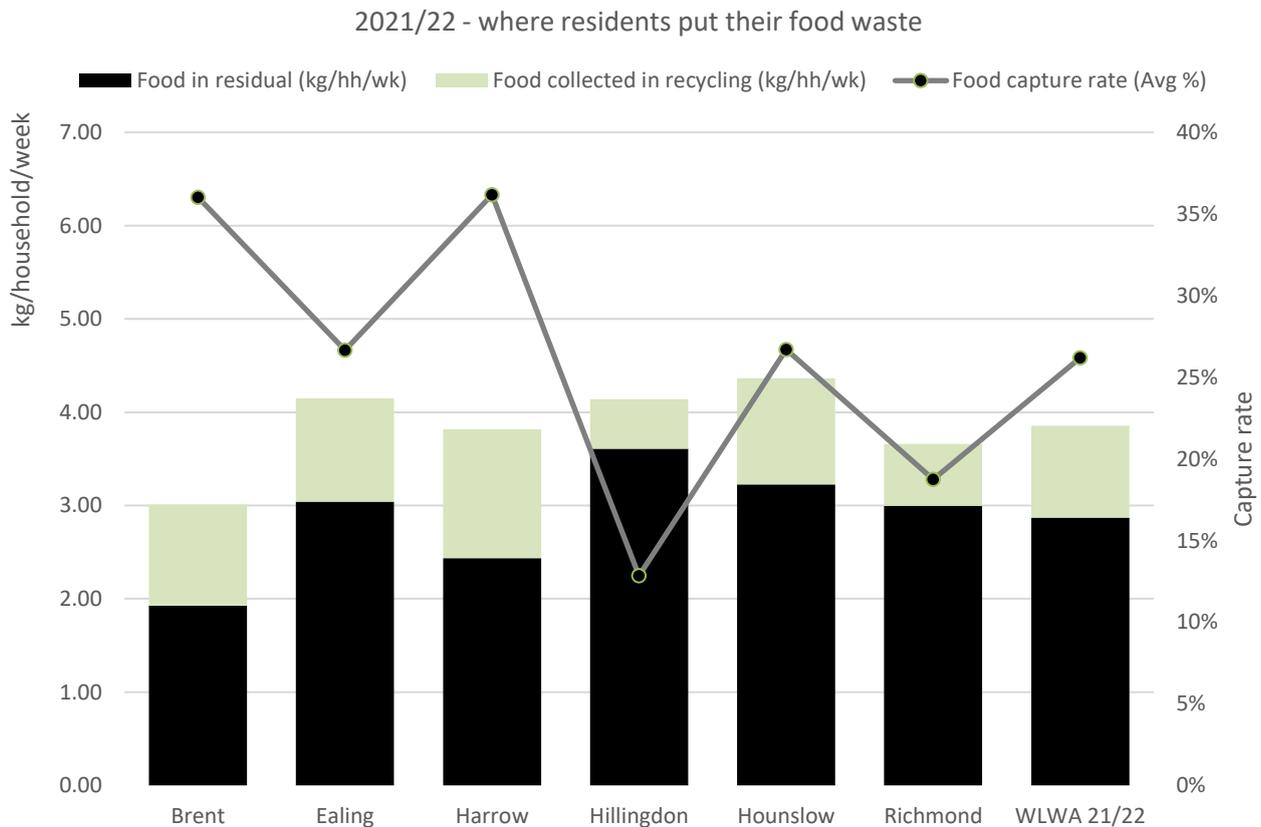
WLWA Project Managers are continuing to work with all Boroughs to assist with delivery of the food recycling projects. Specific Borough project updates will be presented at the September

meeting and a capture rate study brought to the December meeting incorporating the waste composition analysis as detailed in 2.3 below.

Food waste measures including tonnages and capture are monitored regularly to identify changes to the services such as a reduction in food being thrown away, the amount of general waste being discarded and the amount of waste by collection service measured per household (kilograms per household per week kg/HH/wk).

Capturing and analysing the different metrics for the performance of the food waste service will be essential to understand the impact of the investment as the flows of different materials change in the future as a result of external impacts. These impacts are expected to include the cost-of-living increases, food price increases, potential economic slowdown and increasing housing development.

Using the 2 years prior to 2020-21 as a baseline, there has been an increase in the total recycling of food as more residents separate their waste to use the different services they receive. The graph below shows the amount of food remaining in the general rubbish collection (residual waste, dark bars on the graph), how much is being collected from food waste services (recycling, light coloured bar) and the percentage capture of food waste (line on the graph). Residents are more likely to use services that are easily accessible, easy to use and well run, the delivery of the service development projects will continue to make the recycling of any discarded food the easy choice for residents.



## 2.2. HRRC investment fund

WLWA projects and operations teams are working with Ealing and Hounslow to develop their proposals for the use of the £200,000 HRRC improvement fund. These projects will be

developed, and implementation will begin before the end of July.

### 2.3 Waste Composition Analysis

The next waste composition analysis is planned for September 2022. The previous analyses were conducted in June 2021 and March 2020. Feedback received from the boroughs following the previous analysis will support shaping the specification of the analysis in 2022.

## 3. Net Zero & Circular Economy

### 3.1. Fixing Factory

The [first fixing factory in London](#) was launched on 23<sup>rd</sup> April at the Abbey Road Household Reuse and Recycling Centre in partnership with the Restart Project (funded by National Lottery). The fixing factory will collect, repair and redistribute laptops and tablets to local community groups and marginalised individuals. A brand-new Fixing Factory sign installed at the site was designed by local artist, Matt Small, using old broken tech.

Monthly repair sessions started on the 4<sup>th</sup> June, the Fixing Factory will be open to residents to see the team of repairers in action fixing donated laptops & tablets. This project will also deliver a training programme for local youths/residents to obtain a certification and green skills to support them to get on a green job ladder.



### 3.2. Electrical Repair Directory (Restart Project)

The west London [the Repair Directory](#) has now been developed. Covering 8 Boroughs (all 6 of WLWA's constituent boroughs, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (H&F) and Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC)). The Directory is embedded in WLWA's brand new website, providing residents with a list of local businesses where they can get their electrical items repaired. In total, 147 repair businesses meeting the selection criteria were identified. Brent 24, Ealing 11, Harrow 11, Hillingdon 23, Hounslow 22, Richmond 22, H&F 15, RBKC 19). The Boroughs' communications teams will be provided with a pack to start wider promotion of the Directory and the Boroughs are also encouraged to link to our Directory from their council's website.

### 3.3. Circular Economy Hubs

Conversations are currently progressing with 3 potential sites/partners: Ealing Council; Brent Council; and London Community Kitchen (Harrow). Various circular economy organisations including the Library of Things, local repair cafes and a refill station have been approached to discuss potential partnership opportunities.

### 3.4 Abbey Road Decarbonisation

A grid application was submitted to allow solar panels to be installed at Abbey Road. Social impacts (working conditions and environmental impacts) were considered when selecting the appropriate panels. It is anticipated that the project will be paid back in c.6 years and c.7.4t CO<sub>2</sub> saving per annum.

Four electric vehicle charging points have also been installed and are now functional. This will ensure the WLWA electric vehicle is carbon neutral as it is charged on site with electricity through a green energy tariff.

#### **4. WLWA Website**

A brand new website for WLWA was launched on 15<sup>th</sup> June. The site was developed with the mobile-first concept, allowing the design to be flexible and user friendly for various devices (smartphones, tablets and PCs). The new website features a modern look and structure; routing that prompts visitors to think about what else they can do with the items before visiting reuse and recycling centres; carbon/environmental impacts of items. In addition to the Repair Directory for electricals, further development is planned to incorporate a 'virtual circular economy hub' this year.

#### **5. Risk**

New legislation and details regarding EPR, DRS and the Environment Bill, that will impact on all waste services are expected soon. Officers are factoring potential impacts in during the development of all projects.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

The additional food waste captured in 2021/22 is c.4100 tonnes with an estimated return of c.£420,000 in savings from removing this material from the general waste collection. The estimated food waste reduction in general waste will be assessed following the next waste composition analysis to capture the return through waste reduction.

The solar energy project at Abbey Road requires an initial investment of approx. £30,000 for the panels. Based on an estimated £5,080 savings in import electricity costs, we anticipate net savings of £202,307 over 25 years for the organisation. The project's payback is c.6 years.

WLWA projects are designed to test and change the whole system to deliver benefits financially, environmentally and socially. Due to the whole system approach, there are aspects of the delivery and returns that require significant partnership working and multiple stakeholder changes, as such absolute returns are modelled, risk assessed and tracked but cannot be guaranteed.

**7. Staffing Implications** – Two members of staff (CE Manager and a Project Officer) are now on maternity leave. We are planning to recruit for a maternity cover shortly to fill the shortfall in team resources.

**8. Health and Safety Implications** – All fieldwork has been risk-assessed for the tasks to be completed. Fixing Factory at Abbey Road has been risk assessed and relevant agreements are being put in place between the project partners (the Restart Project and Ready-Tech-Go).

We are currently reviewing the current Health & Safety guidance around working with young people at Abbey Road to enable us to provide opportunities (work experience, site visits/educational) for them to visit the site. This is addressed in the Operations update.

Additional Health and Safety training is being planned for the team to ensure all members are informed to a standard to help raise awareness on site visits.

**9. Legal Implications** - none

#### **10. Joint Waste Management Strategy**

The projects mentioned in this report are intrinsically linked to the Authority's Joint Waste Management Strategy. The projects are driving the design of the new policy through data, best practice and

identification of opportunities, as well as delivering change to meet the desired outcomes and targets in the Strategy.

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