

The Cheshire Household Waste Management Strategy



A background to the strategy



The Cheshire Local Government Association (LGA) set up a Waste Task Group in 1999 to produce a strategy for the management of household waste. The Waste Task Group comprises representatives from the County Council and each of the Borough Councils. The Government has encouraged waste disposal and collection authorities to work together.

Current waste management practices in Cheshire rely heavily on landfilling and levels of recycling are relatively low. This is not sustainable and needs to change. Much of the waste that is currently thrown away represents a resource, which could be reused.

A new strategy is also required to meet Government and European Union policies which seek to change significantly the management of municipal waste, as set out in the Government's Waste Strategy 2000 and the EU Landfill Directive. The policies seek to reduce waste, increase recycling and composting and divert waste away from landfill.



Major changes will be needed to the way in which waste is managed in Cheshire if Government targets for recycling and recovery are to be met.

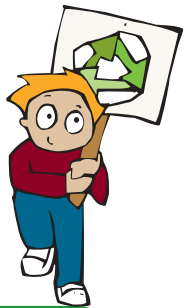
In 2000/01, 423,000 tonnes of household waste were produced in Cheshire, with each household disposing of 1.4 tonnes either into their bins or sacks, or to "bring" sites and Household Waste and Recycling Centres, a significantly higher rate than the Shire County average. In recent years waste volumes have increased by 5% per year which, if continued, would lead to a doubling of household waste within 15 years.

Although 15% of Cheshire's waste was composted or recycled in 2000/01, **the majority (85%) was still disposed by landfill**. This cannot continue because of European and national legislation. In Cheshire, this means **more than doubling recycling to 33%** by 2005/06 and achieving a recovery rate of 67% by 2015.

In addition the costs of collecting and disposing of increasing amounts of waste, combined with the costs of landfill tax, have resulted in higher Council Tax bills. **Costs will continue to increase** but by more unless existing practices are changed.

The Task Group agreed the following objectives for the Strategy, taking into account results from a preliminary consultation exercise. These are to...

- Reduce the amount of waste landfilled
- Increase re-use, recycling and composting of waste
- Deal with waste as close as possible to its source and within the boundary of Cheshire
- Minimise its impact on the environment
- Minimise the risks to health in the way waste is treated
- Minimise the cost to Council Tax payers
- Choose options that are practical and low risk to service delivery
- Minimise inconvenience to householders



Consultants AEA Technology were commissioned to:

- Assess existing waste collection and disposal practices
- Advise on waste minimisation initiatives
- Advise on future waste collection and management options
- Assess the costs and environmental burdens of future options
- Identify the best practicable environmental option (BPEO)
- Advise on the implementation of the BPEO

The Best Practical Environmental Option was agreed as a draft strategy. This comprised:

- A waste minimisation and education strategy
- The kerbside collection of dry recyclables and organic waste
- Improved Household Waste and Recycling Centres and "bring-to" facilities
- The development of new material recycling and composting facilities
- An Energy from Waste facility(ies) for the treatment of residual material
- Landfill for the disposal of residual waste



Public responses to the draft strategy showed:

- 95% of respondents broadly supported the proposed approach
- 97% of respondents were willing to reduce their waste output
- 97% of respondents were willing to separate recyclable materials
- 84% of respondents agreed that energy from waste should be considered once as much recycling and composting as possible has taken place
- 71% of respondents said that they were willing to pay for the higher costs of recycling as a solution to reduce reliance on energy from waste





The Cheshire Partnership propose policies to:

Encourage the reduction of waste

Reasons

The most effective way of solving the waste problem is not to create it in the first place. Current rates of growth will double waste volumes in the next fifteen years. If waste growth continues, costs will continue to escalate and Government targets for increased recycling and composting and diverting waste away from landfill will be harder to achieve.

54% of the waste collected from Cheshire households in 2000 was made up of paper, card and plastics, much of which is the result of packaging and junk mail. Green waste made up 23% of household waste in 2000. Actions by householders to avoid heavily packaged goods, use refillable containers, refuse junk mail and compost kitchen and garden waste at home could reduce household waste volumes by up to 50%.

Actions will include:

- Development of a joint waste minimisation action plan
- Raising awareness of waste issues
- Advice to households about ways to reduce the amount of waste
- Development and promotion of home and community composting
- Lobbying government and industry about packaging
- Encouraging Regional and National awareness raising campaigns
- Identification of sources of funding

The Cheshire Partnership propose policies to:

Maximise levels of recycling and composting by...

- The separate collection of recyclable materials at the kerbside
- Promotion of participation in recycling schemes
- Improvement of Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and other “bring-to” sites to maximise the range and volume of recycled materials collected
- Expansion of composting facilities to deal with the increased volume of compostable materials collected
- Development of Material Recycling Facilities (MRFs) and Refuse Transfer Stations to collect and distribute the recyclable materials
- Encouraging the development of markets for recycled materials



Reasons

Although recycling rates have improved in recent years to 15% in 2000/01 much more needs to be done to meet Government targets for Cheshire of 33% in 2005/06. To achieve these levels will require the introduction of separate kerbside collection of recyclable materials throughout Cheshire. High levels of participation, as much as 75%, in these schemes will be needed.

Household Waste and Recycling Centres and other “bring-to” sites at supermarkets and car parks form an important part of household waste collection facilities. Many of the existing HWRCs require improving to increase their capacity and allow a wider range of recyclable materials to be collected.

New facilities will be required to collect and sort recyclable materials. Additional composting sites will be needed to compost the increased amount of green waste collected. There is also a need to establish markets and end uses for all these materials. Recycling only happens when the materials are reused.

Actions will include:

- Development of detailed implementation plans for each Cheshire District
- Trials of differing collection methods and container systems to establish the best and most effective systems to suit specific areas
- Based on these trials, provision of separate containers and advice to all households to promote separation of recyclable materials
- Measures to improve low rates of participation
- A programme of prioritised improvements of Household Waste and Recycling Centres and other “bring” sites
- An implementation plan for new built facilities including Materials Recycling Facilities and Refuse Transfer Stations
- A programme of expansion of composting facilities
- Discussion with industries to promote the use of recycled products
- The introduction of “green” purchasing policies





The Cheshire Partnership propose policies to:

Review the need for Energy from Waste in 2004 by...

- Assessing the rates of recycling and composting achieved over this period and expected in the future
- Investigation of the development of alternative thermal treatment facilities to incineration
- Monitoring the growth of household waste

If required the scale and type of any thermal treatment selected will depend on

- the expected volume of residual waste
- the most appropriate technology available on the basis of environmental and health impacts and efficiency.

Landfill will continue to be required albeit on a more limited scale for final disposal of residues.



Reasons

At this stage it is still expected that a thermal treatment facility will be needed to meet Government targets for diverting waste from landfill. However the decision on the need for and type of facility can be delayed until 2004 due to the following factors:

- Current contracts for waste disposal run until 2008 and these allow sufficient quantities of materials to be taken out of the waste stream to meet the short term recycling targets.
- Uncertainty about the volumes of waste requiring further treatment. Initiatives to boost recycling to meet Government targets will be monitored over the next two years to assess their success relative to the targets, and the potential for achieving any higher rates to meet the longer term European and national targets for recycling and recovery and landfill reduction. The success of waste reduction measures can also be judged.
- Uncertainty about the most appropriate technology in the long term. The technologies for thermal treatment of waste are under rapid development. These may present alternative methods of treatment and provide for reduced environmental impact.

However decisions may be needed in 2004 on the need for and type of facility if a new facility needs to be ready for 2008.

Actions will include:

- Monitoring waste growth and participation and recycling rates in new or improved collection systems
- Forecasting future participation and recycling rates
- Investigating the feasibility of alternative thermal technologies
- Assessing the need for thermal treatment and the type and size of any facility required
- Informing and engaging with the community



This Final Strategy will be implemented by partnership working between the Authorities and options for improved joint working will need to be considered.

Reasons

The Government have made it clear in "Waste Strategy 2000" that they expect Waste Collection and Waste Disposal Authorities to develop effective working relationships to deliver Household Waste Management Strategies. The current division of responsibilities can work against an integrated approach to waste management. The Government have indicated that they will consider changes to legislation to support closer working.

Ensuring the development of an integrated approach and increased co-operation between local authorities will be a key factor in delivering more sustainable waste management and meeting the challenging targets for increased recycling and recovery, and reduction in landfilling.

Actions will include:

- Exploring the opportunities for joint working through organisational change
- Examining the funding options to support organisational change
- Implementing the preferred solution



Things you can do to help



Reduce your waste...

- Avoid buying heavily packaged goods
- Use refillable containers where possible
- Reuse shopping bags or take boxes to the supermarket
- Prevent junk mail by phoning 0845 7034599
- Buy milk in returnable bottles from your milkman
- Compost vegetable and garden waste at home
- Support charitable collections of your unwanted clothes or other items



Recycle your waste...

- **Separate your recyclable materials and compostable waste for the collections in your area**
and
- **Take other recyclable materials or your bulky green waste to your local recycling bank or Household Waste and Recycling Centre.**

This strategy is available in libraries and District Council offices. If you want **further information** about its implications for your area, please phone:

Cheshire County Council (the Waste Disposal Authority) on **01244 603502**

OR the Borough Council Collection Authority serving your area:-

Chester City Council
01244 402532

Congleton Borough Council
01270 769475

Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council
01270 537821

Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council
0151 356 6743

Macclesfield Borough Council
01625 504300

Vale Royal Borough Council
01606 867845

You can also find further information on the County Council's Waste Management Service website at

www.cheshire.gov.uk/waste

Links to the District Council's websites are at **www.cheshire.gov.uk/waste/recyclin.htm**

Printed on 75% recycled paper and in a minimum of 12 point type.

If needed, this information can be made available in Braille or other languages.