

**Report to** Sustainable development panel  
26 March 2014

**Report of** Environmental Services Development Manager

**Subject** Integrated Waste Management Strategic Objectives:  
Quarterly Update No 1 2014

---

**Item**

**5**

### **Purpose**

To update members on progress against the waste and recycling service action plan (SAP) and the integrated waste management strategic objectives.

### **Recommendation**

To note the contents of this report.

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority a safe and clean city and the service plan priority to deliver an efficient and effective waste service whilst increasing landfill diversion rates.

### **Financial implications**

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Stonard – Environment and transport

### **Contact officers**

Chris Eardley, Environmental Services Development Manager 01603 212251

### **Background documents**

None.

# Report

## Introduction

1. In accordance with the December report to SDP, this is the first quarterly report updating members on progress against the service action plan (SAP) for the new waste and recycling strategic objectives. This report focuses on four particular areas within the SAP where there has been 'reportable' progress since December and also includes updated statistical information on recycling performance..

## New MRF recycling service

2. The works to upgrade the MRF are significant, with the new building and new equipment more than doubling the current footprint of the site. Works are currently exactly on schedule, with the added bonus that it is now almost certain that the plant will continue to operate effectively throughout the rebuilding without any requirement to close the site and transport recycling elsewhere. The proposed start date for the new service is October 1<sup>st</sup> 2014.
3. The joint venture involves Norse, the seven district councils and the county council working together. As a result, new management structures and reporting arrangements will be established to administer the service. This council is operating as the administering authority for the first two and half years of the JV, giving Norwich the opportunity to help to develop the new governance arrangements and the new working practices. Full details of these new arrangements including an illustrative 'organogram' for the governance structure, the mobilisation plan for the plant, the communications plan and the Norwich implementation plan, will all be presented at the next quarterly update to the SDP in June.

## Garden waste service

4. The garden waste service has provided residents with a convenient method of disposing of garden waste for nearly seven years. Since its inception little has changed in the administration and management of the service, but it has grown to a point where there are now over 8,700 customers generating £365k p.a. of subscription income.
5. Due to some issues recently identified at the time of renewal, it has been agreed to establish a new project team to create a new business engineered end to end process in line with all the new technologies available now and in the future. This will move the service forward, improving the efficiency of the renewal process, the debt management and the initial service set-up – including reductions to both bin delivery and first-collection times.
6. As a result of some late renewal issues several hundred customers have had their bins removed. This approach was successful and many of these customers have subsequently paid for a new service. Whilst there have been a handful of errors in the recovery the service has already been significantly improved. Costs will also be reduced and both the renewal process and the recovery of debt will be made considerably more efficient.

7. Alongside this, and following recommendations from internal audit, the terms and conditions governing the service have been substantially revised. These are now much more robust and provide clarity to both customers and officers for the future management of the service. The new t's and c's can be viewed on the garden waste page of the council's website.
8. Officers will update members on the progress of the new project group and on any procedural changes which will have an impact on customers.
9. In November 2013 1,000 surveys were issued to a geographical cross section of Norwich residents who lived in terraced houses with small gardens and did not subscribe to the garden waste service. The roads targeted were - Knowsley Road, Beaconsfield Road, Winter Road, Edinburgh Road, Helena Road, Gladstone Street, Lincoln Street, Portland Street, Dover Street, Highland road, Muriel Road, Mornington Road, Henley Road, Grange Road.
10. The survey asked residents whether, if the council introduced a smaller garden waste bin for a reduced annual charge, they would be interested in subscribing. A total of 132 responses were received, of which 30 said yes, 52 maybe and 50 no.
11. Given that the survey was specifically targeted at properties which are ideally suited to a smaller brown bin (terraced streets, small gardens and not currently receiving a garden waste service) the total yes votes as a percentage of the total number of surveys is only 3%.
12. A 140 litre brown bin would be a special production request and as such the council would be required to purchase a minimum order of one full load. This would amount to 920 bins at a total cost of around £16,000. Unfortunately the survey results are not sufficient to encourage a belief that the cost of the smaller bins would be recovered in the short-term.
13. Given that there will be a substantial administrative workload as a result of the forthcoming changes to processes added to the disappointing response to the survey it is not proposed to pursue the smaller brown bin option at this time. Instead, it is proposed to re-issue the same survey to a different set of addresses (matching the same criteria) later this year to see whether a more encouraging response is available. With the combined set of results this option can then be reconsidered early in 2015.

### **WEEE event, Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February**

14. The recycling 'door-knockers' organised a WEEE collection event on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February at the airport Park-and-Ride in association with the British Heart Foundation (BHF). Around 2,500 properties in the immediate vicinity were leafleted prior to the event, which was also advertised on local radio, the council's website, by press release and by various promotions organised by the BHF.
15. The event lasted for five hours during which one hundred and forty cars visited the site depositing a range of electrical equipment including televisions, computers, vacuum cleaners, toasters and kettles. It was noticeable that the majority of vehicles contained numerous electrical items and very few attended with just one item. Those attending were predominantly from the Broadland and North Norfolk districts as well as the northern Norwich suburbs.

16. The material collected was separated into two streams – items for potential re-use (taken by the BHF) and items for recycling (taken by Biffa). In total almost two tonnes of material was recycled and the BHF reported that the material collected for re-use had a potential resale value of £4,700 – meaning that the BHF earned £940 an hour from the event.
17. Residents were delighted to have the opportunity to deposit these items and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. It is therefore intended to run further events around the city in future, officers are currently assessing potential locations and members will be informed whenever future events are planned.

### **Recycling waste cooking oil and fats**

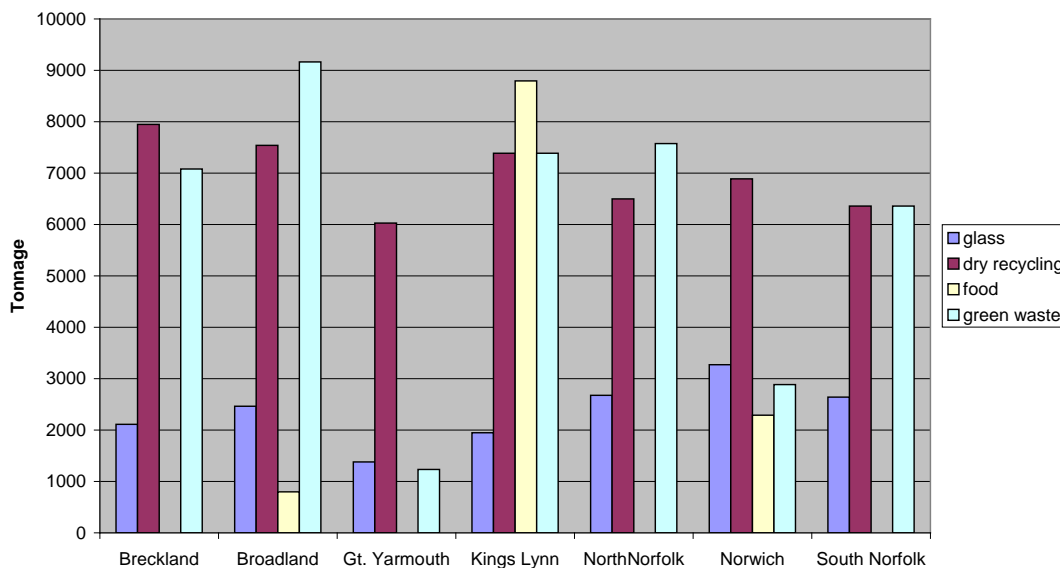
18. It is estimated that over 100 million litres of cooking oils and fat are poured down drains every year in the UK. Water companies spend approximately £15million per year on reactive blockage clearances and further costs are incurred for cleaning-up after floods. There are approximately 200,000 sewer blockages in the UK each year and the water companies estimate that 75% are caused by fats, oils and grease. These blockages account for 55% of all sewer flooding incidents and more than 3,000 properties are flooded each year as a result of fats, oils and grease blockages. All of these costs are ultimately paid for through customers' bills.
19. The council has been working with Anglian Water and Bensons Oils (a used oil recycling company) to identify potential sites for used oil recycling banks in Norwich, following-on from a successful collaboration between AW, Bensons and South Norfolk District Council.
20. A pilot scheme to assess the viability of this service will be launched at six locations –
  - St Saviours car park
  - Tuckswood centre
  - Enfield road shops
  - Morrisons, Riverside
  - Sainsburys, Queens road
  - Waitrose, Eaton
21. The new banks will accept cooking oils and fats in plastic containers or glass bottles. The entire container is deposited in the bank and all plastic and glass is guaranteed to be recycled. The collected oils are recycled into bio-diesel. It is estimated that every litre of oil that is diverted from drains to recycling has the potential to reduce individual water bills by 14p.
22. AW are supporting the council in generating publicity for the new facilities and providing some promotional material. Bensons provide and operate the banks free-of-charge in return for the oil deposited in them. There are no costs to the council but there is an income stream from the recycling credits paid by the county council based on the tonnage of material recycled.

23. The banks will be installed within the next few weeks and various methods of publicity will be used to promote the pilot scheme. The amount of material collected will be included in the recycling figures reported regularly to the SDP and the success of the scheme will be measured one year after the banks are installed.

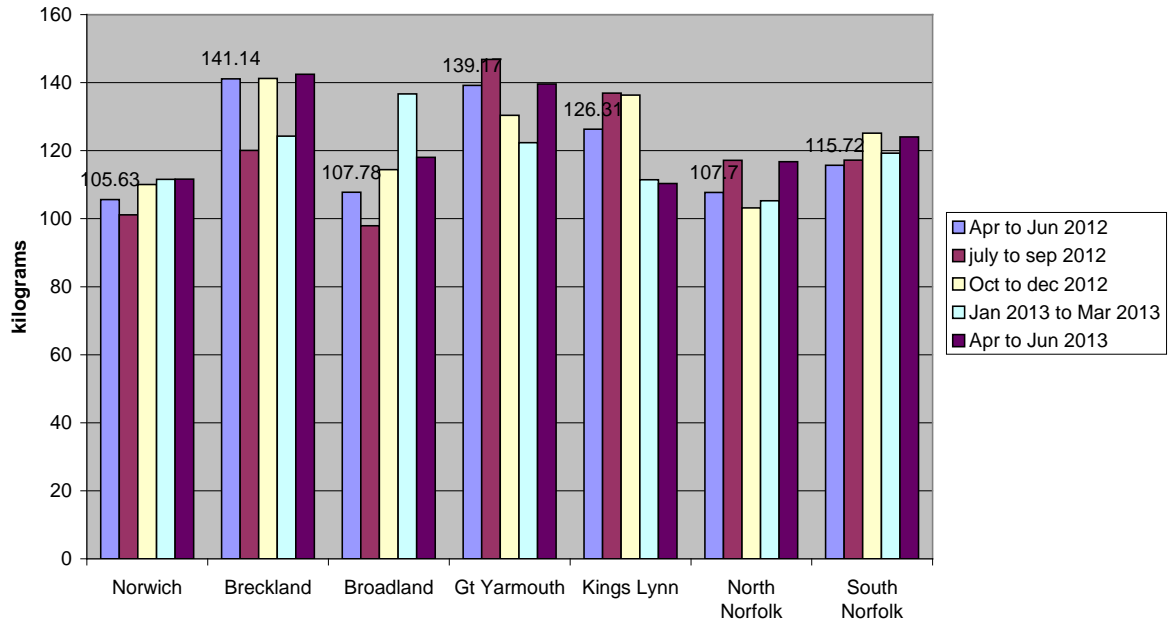
### Recycling performance and data

24. As previously agreed, these quarterly updates to the SDP will include performance indicators. The graphs below represent the latest county-wide information on recycling tonnages and waste per household. Norwich remains as the district producing the least waste per household in the county. Whilst overall recycling tonnages remain lower than desired, it is still the case that Norwich produces a greater tonnage of dry recycling (blue bins + glass) than any other LA in the county.

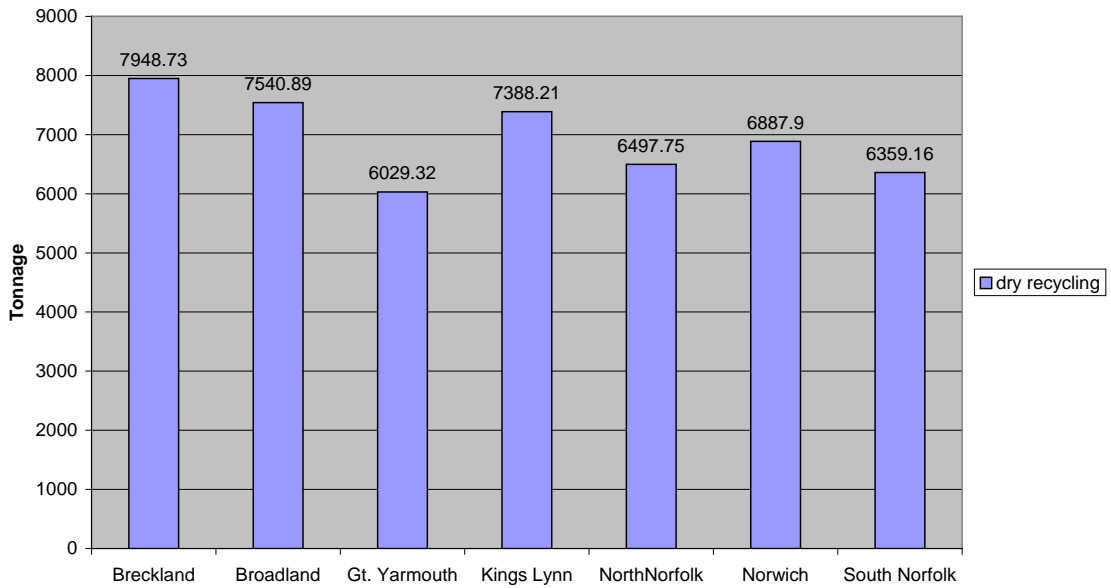
Breakdown of recycling figures - Norfolk



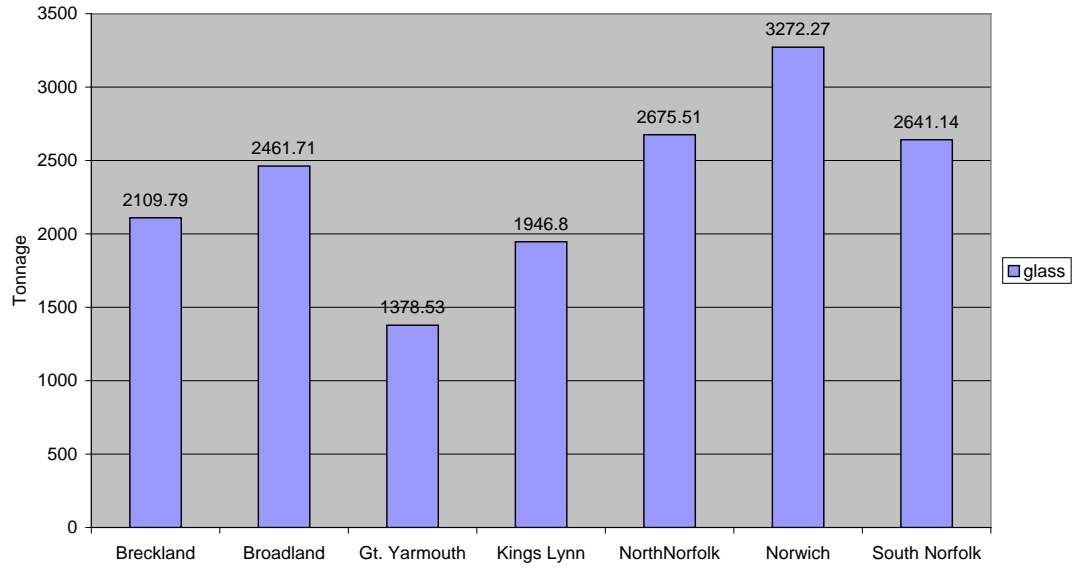
### waste tonnages per household



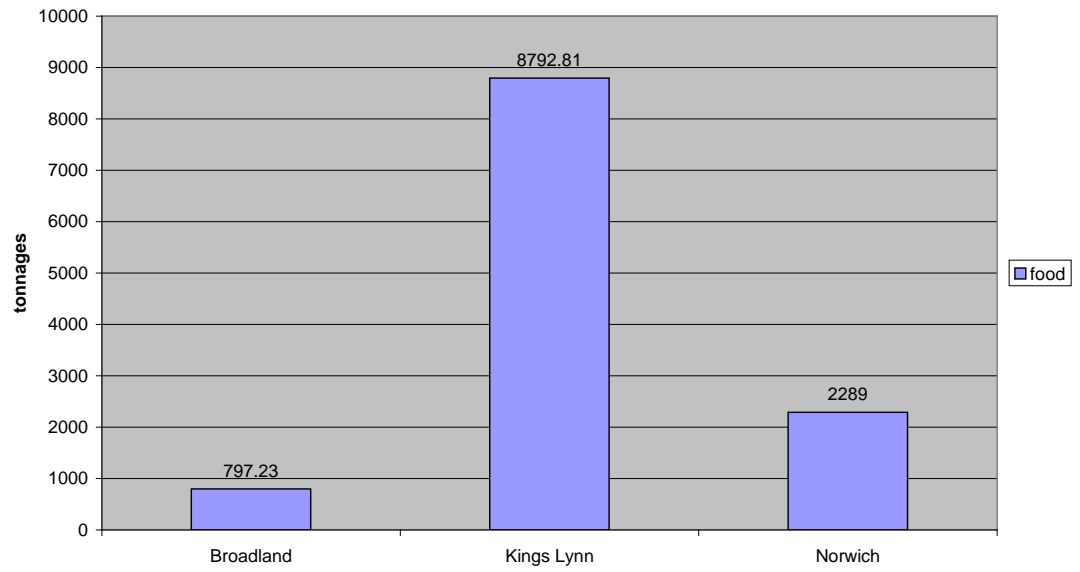
### dry recycling tonnages 2012/13



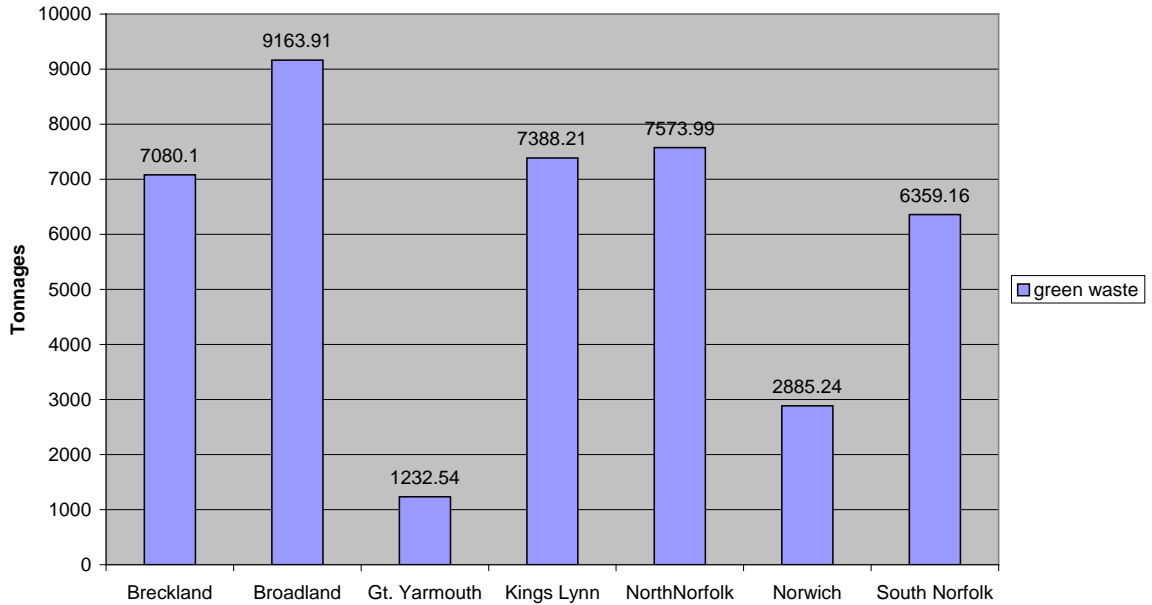
glass tonnage all councils 2012/13



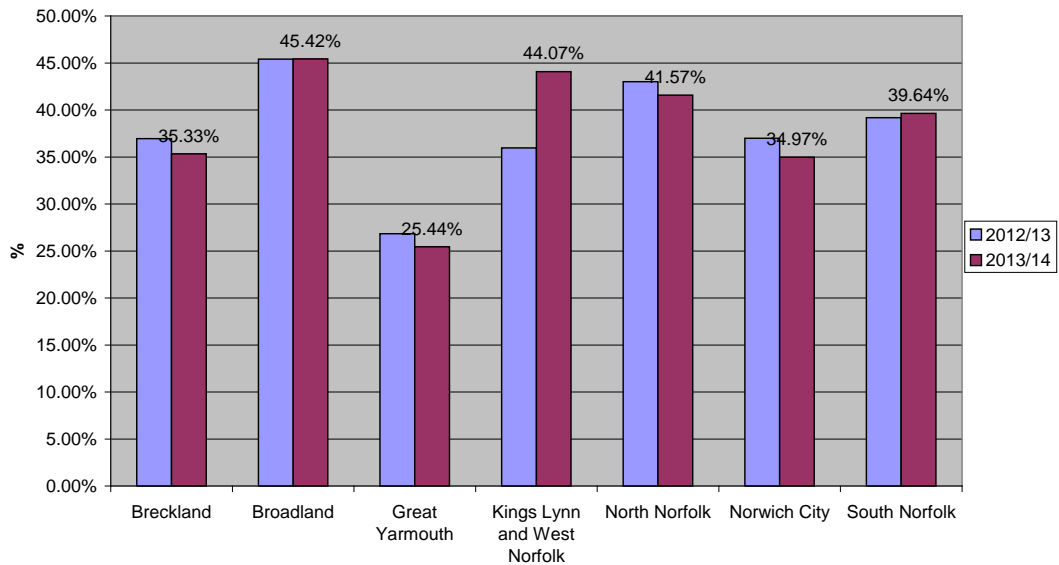
food tonnages 2012/13



### Garden waste tonnages 2012/13



### recycling percentages - all councils 2012/13 and Q1 2013/14



25 There have also been some encouraging signs in the early part of 2014. In January a total of 768 tonnes of dry recycling (not including glass) was collected. This is the highest monthly blue bin recycling tonnage ever collected. The glass and food waste figures are also significantly higher than previous months. Whilst January always 'out-performs' other months, the spike this January is the highest yet recorded.

26 As part of the new MRF service (paragraphs 2 and 3) all contracts for the sale of recycling material are being re-negotiated. At present more than 95 per cent of the material collected in Norwich remains in the UK to be recycled. When the new contracts are completed officers will provide the SDP with details on the new end-markets for recycling material, but it is unlikely that there will be any significant



change to the percentage recycled in the UK. All food and garden waste collected is composted in Norfolk.