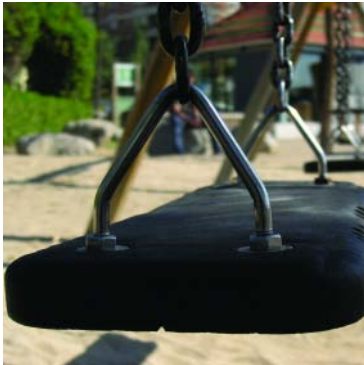


Recycling at Breckland



Where there's muck there's brass. Serco's enforcement activity helps improve household recycling and raises money for recycled play areas.

Serco's enforcement action in Breckland has reduced recycling contamination by 100 Tonnes per month.



In July 2005 the Serco and Breckland Strategic Partnership Board met to discuss persistent contamination problems in some of Breckland's most deprived estates. The problems focused on a number of key estates in Thetford where householders were placing everyday refuse in their recycling bin.

Contamination of recycling bins had been a problem for the Council for some time, with repeated Council mailings and newsletters failing to make a difference. The contamination was costing up to £10,000 per month for loads that should have been recycled by the County's recycling waste processor.

The team discussed and agreed strategies which focussed on a co-ordinated twin track approach, the first providing financial incentives to recycle and the second, adopting a harder enforcement approach on those who didn't recycle.

The schemes went live in October 2005 with a joint approach. Serco staff and Council Officers, yellow and red-carded the households who didn't correctly recycle. The council implemented the recycling stars scheme and provided regular progress updates to the press and local community groups.

The campaigns were accompanied by extensive local press coverage and a series of resident surgeries in each town were set-up. These gave people the opportunity to drop by and discuss the schemes or any problems they had with recycling with Council staff.

Serco and the Council worked closely on presenting a united front to offenders. Serco accurately captured which

addresses were red carded and the nature of contamination noted in each bin. Then they passed this information to the Council's customer contact centre and streetscene teams on a daily basis.

When the scheme went live, local police gave Serco and Council staff escorts in cases where they were threatened by a small number of local people. This diminished with time and by January 2006, Serco refuse crews and Council officers were able to undertake the enforcement operation unaccompanied.

Stars were awarded to each householder who correctly presented their recycling bin each week. Local people were asked to log onto the Council's website to nominate local good causes the recycling stars could be put towards. The Council's environment committee chose two local schools to receive money for new play areas with a recycling theme.

In 2006 Serco's refuse crews received a Norfolk waste Partnership Award in recognition of their recycling enforcement efforts.

Don't just take our word for it...

"The recycling enforcement campaign has been a huge success and solved a persistent environmental problem that has been contributing to landfill and costing local council tax payers a lot of money. Serco staff played an important role in identifying and dealing with the issue and supported council locally as part of regular collection rounds."

Sarah Cram, Streetscene Manager, Breckland DC

