



**The Hertfordshire Waste Partnership (made up of the county and district councils) published its Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy in November 2007. This document will be the foundation for how Hertfordshire's household waste is dealt with in the coming years. Publication of the Strategy followed a public consultation between January and March 2007. The consultation received an excellent response with 11,000 people registering their views.**

**This leaflet is a summary of the Strategy. The full Strategy documents and consultation report are available at [www.wasteaware.org.uk/strategy](http://www.wasteaware.org.uk/strategy)**

## **The need for a Strategy**

In 2006 Hertfordshire residents produced more than half a million tonnes of household waste that costs around £40 million to collect and dispose of. We currently send 60 per cent of this waste to landfill sites, but this has to stop. We need to minimise the amount that we throw away and find alternatives to sending waste to landfill.

The Strategy splits this work into three strands;

- **Waste reduction**
- **Recycling and composting**
- **Disposal**

At the heart of the Strategy is the principle that reducing the amount of waste we produce is better than recycling and recycling is better than disposal.

## **Waste reduction**

Projections used in the Strategy forecast that, in 20 years time, the amount of waste we produce each year will be 200,000 tonnes higher than today.

To help counter this, the Strategy makes a priority of work that will either reduce the amount of waste we produce or encourage people to reuse materials rather than throw them away.

This will include promoting schemes such as home composting and reusable nappies. We will continue to promote organisations that help people find a home for unwanted furniture and materials. The WasteAware campaign will continue to educate residents about waste and what they can do about it.

During the consultation, it became clear that the amount of packaging used by supermarkets is a big concern for residents. Because of this, the Strategy includes a commitment to work with manufacturers and retailers to encourage a more environmentally sustainable approach to packaging.

Almost 98 per cent of residents feel that it is important to reduce the amount of waste we produce and 99 per cent of residents believe that manufacturers and retailers should reduce the amount of non-recyclable packaging they use. Over 80 per cent of residents support the promotion of reusable nappies, home composting and reuse organisations.

### **Key actions include;**

- Continuing to offer reduced-price home composters
- Continuing the campaign to encourage the take up and sustained use of real nappies as opposed to disposables
- Working with charities and small businesses to help residents and businesses find organisations that will accept their waste for reuse
- Investigating reusing more of the waste collected through bulky waste collections and at Household Waste Recycling Centres.





## Recycling and composting

Recycling and composting form a core part of the Strategy. Hertfordshire's residents already have a good record, recycling and composting 36 per cent of household waste. We aim to improve on this and the Strategy contains a commitment to recycle at least 50 per cent of household waste by 2012.

The Strategy commits us to increase the use of existing services where possible and to introduce new services, targeting new materials for recycling or composting.

All district councils collect green garden waste, and some include kitchen waste and cardboard in their schemes. We are working towards the construction of new facilities that will allow all authorities to compost kitchen waste and cardboard.

Household Waste Recycling Centres where residents can take a wide variety of materials to be recycled will continue to be provided.

There is a possibility that, if we produce more waste, we could end up needing to dispose of the same amount, even if we increase our recycling rate. To prevent this, the Strategy contains a target of reducing the amount of waste left over after recycling and composting (residual waste) to 285kg per person by 2012.

Around 70 per cent of residents support the target of recycling 50 per cent by 2012, and of those who don't, the vast majority want the target to be higher. Three-quarters of residents want to see more materials collected for recycling and 83 per cent of residents believe that recycling should be compulsory. Residents are generally not supportive of charging households for the amount of rubbish produced, smaller bins or fortnightly collections.

## **Key actions include;**

- Reviewing mixed card, organic kitchen and garden waste collections
- Investigating increasing the range of materials that can be recycled
- Considering actions to reduce the quantity of residual waste collected
- Exploring measures to ensure that all residents have equal access to recycling, including residents who live in flats
- Continuing to raise awareness of the need to recycle, and the options available, through the WasteAware campaign.

## **Disposal**

However effective we are in reducing, reusing and recycling waste, there will always be some material left over. The Strategy commits us to moving away from a reliance on landfill for waste that cannot be reused or recycled.

## **Why do we have to change?**

- Most of Hertfordshire's landfill contracts will run out by 2009 and there is a lack of suitable sites to create further landfill facilities.
- Even if we could find suitable sites we would still need to look at alternatives. Landfill is harmful to the environment. Buried rubbish produces a liquid called leachate, which has to be controlled to prevent it polluting groundwater, and methane a potent greenhouse gas which contributes significantly to global warming.
- The cost of landfill is increasing. The government is continually increasing landfill taxes and has imposed stricter environmental controls. Local authorities have been set limits for the amount of waste they can send to landfill and will face a fine of £150 for every tonne by which the target is exceeded.





Without new waste treatment and disposal facilities we will be facing millions of pounds in extra costs, which could have a big impact on council tax bills.

The Strategy sets out how we will decide on the type of treatment and disposal technologies to use. No option is ruled out and we will carefully consider the cost effectiveness and reliability of each option. We will also work with neighbouring authorities.

The consultation made it clear that the public want us to consider the following when planning new facilities:

- minimising transportation to the facility
- cost effectiveness and affordability
- environmental impact (e.g. noise and emissions)
- potential for turning waste into energy (e.g. local heating or electricity).

The need to consider these concerns has been included in the Strategy.

We need to develop these facilities urgently. We need to have the capacity to treat 60,000-80,000 tonnes of waste by 2012, and 145,000 by 2018.

95 per cent of residents think it is important to consider turning waste into energy. 90 per cent think it is important to consider the cost effectiveness of any new facilities and 86 per cent think we should minimise the transportation to the facility. 95 per cent think it is important to consider the environmental impacts of any new facility.

### **Key Actions include;**

- Developing a detailed Strategy for dealing with residual waste
- Appointing contractors to provide residual waste treatment and final disposal
- Ensuring that the first residual treatment facility is operational by 2012.

## How we will do this

Dealing with waste is a big challenge. If we are going to achieve all the targets in the Strategy then we all have a role to play.

Hertfordshire's county and district councils are committed to working together to tackle this issue. The Strategy commits us to looking at what financial and operational benefits there might be in working more closely together, both within the county and with neighbouring authorities.

The success of the Strategy also depends on the willingness of Hertfordshire's communities and residents to take responsibility for their waste. The results from the consultation clearly demonstrate how important this issue is to people, and we will continue to raise awareness of the challenges and promote the possible solutions.

## For more information

**The full Strategy documents are available at  
[www.wasteaware.org.uk/strategy](http://www.wasteaware.org.uk/strategy)**

