



Waste Minimisation communications – university students

For consideration by: Neighbourhoods Services and
Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission

Date: 5th December 2018

Lead director: John Leach

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All wards
- Report author: Jodie Angold
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1. Purpose of report

To provide the scrutiny commission with details of the work undertaken by Waste Management to engage university students living in private housing in the city to help support them in using their waste services correctly.

2. Summary

Waste Management has engaged with students over many years, but tried some new approaches in 2018.

In previous years, officers have attended freshers fairs, provided leaflets to halls of residence at the start of the academic year, and conducted leaflet drops about the bulky waste service at the end of term.

In 2017/18 Waste Management:

- produced and issued specific leaflets to private accommodation
- attended three days of freshers fairs, distributing leaflets and static stickers to hundreds of students.
- worked with estate agents to include recycling leaflets in welcome packs.
- partnered with British Heart Foundation to install donation banks in key student areas of the city.
- offered extended Bulky Waste services to selected roads on a trial basis.
- conducted monitoring of excess waste on streets in student-dense areas.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission:

- Notes and comments on the work undertaken by Waste Management.
- Comment on the proposal to expand the donation bank service in future years.

4. Report/Supporting information including options considered:

4.1 Existing services available to students

Student properties are given the same waste services as all other properties in the city – receiving weekly refuse and recycling collections, access to a generous free bulky waste collection of up to 5 items every 2 months, and access to two household waste recycling centres and a network of bring sites. These services were discussed in more detail in the Waste Management Services Overview report presented to the Commission on the 4th July 2018.

4.2 Communications and marketing

1,950 student properties were identified as fully student properties using Council Tax information. All student properties were sent a letter in a branded envelope detailing the services available to them and the locations of the donation banks, as well as advice on avoiding a fine from leaving waste behind.

Waste Management also worked with both universities and their student unions to use emails, screens across campus (DeMontfort) and the MyUoL app to promote the scheme, using consistent imagery:



Bought more stuff than you can take home this year?

Find a donation bank and book extra waste to be collected when you move out at leicester.gov.uk/studentrecycling

Leicester City Council

Supporting council departments and ward councillors were given full details of the project.

4.3 British Heart Foundation Banks

Waste Management worked with British Heart Foundation (BHF) to install donation banks in key student accommodation areas during the period of moving out. The campaign, known as 'Pack for Good' has had huge success across the country, and is already in place at University of Leicester Halls of Residence.

After gaining councillor approval, 5 donation banks were placed around the city from mid-May until mid-July. Optimal locations were identified along walking routes between densely populated student house areas and the two universities, and approved by the highways department. A volunteer group made up of BHF and student volunteers spent a morning delivering flyers and donation bags to the roads immediately surrounding the banks. The banks collected clothing and shoes, as well as books, DVDs, and household items like kitchen ware and home décor.

Local BHF shops arranged to empty the banks weekly, adjusting the schedule as needed to meet demand. Two complaints were received when the banks first went

in, objecting to the conspicuous placement of the banks and concerns about fly-tipping, however both were satisfied to learn that the banks were temporary and introduced as part of a plan to reduce waste on streets during the move out period. BHF committed to removing any fly-tipping immediately around the bin, and to report any large items to Cleansing Services for removal; however no fly-tipping reports were made relating to the donation banks.

Over the 8 weeks that the banks were in place, 298 bags were collected, equating to 2.4 tonnes and an estimated £6,188 of donation value.

Waste Management believe the success of the donation banks, when compared to the network of permanent banks already in place for glass and paper/card, is due to their targeted and temporary nature. They provided a useful, convenient service for residents when and where they needed it, accepting a wider range of materials.



4.4 Student bulky waste trial

Waste Management organised a trial service offering extended bulky waste collections to 264 properties located on 10 densely populated student roads across the city, and identified another 244 properties on 10 similarly populated roads as a control group.

The trial properties were offered 'student waste collections' - a similar service to the existing bulky waste collections and collected in the same manner, but with no limit of the quantity of waste and scheduled to take place as soon after the last student had left as possible. A dedicated form was created to request this service, and the

existing free bulky waste service was not affected. The trial ran from May to July 2018.

A very limited number of bookings were received, all of which came from Welford Road and Lytton Road. Information on bookings was shared with City Wardens to assist with their investigations into excess waste. All bookings requested collections of bagged waste, and five included larger items such as bins, buckets, and small electricals.

4.5 Monitoring and results

The majority of student housing contracts were known to end on the 30th June, and monitoring was conducted the week before and after this date along the full length of the roads in the trial and monitoring areas. Any excess waste was recorded along with the properties they were outside, and compared to the list of student properties provided by the Council Tax department.

48% of the excess waste left outside of properties was attributed to student-occupied properties, with the remaining 52% believed to be coming from non-student households. Reported issues included excess bags of waste next to bins, overloaded bins, and other large items next to bins or on pavements.

Across the three monitoring areas, 11% of student properties presented excess waste, as well as 4% of non-student properties. Westcotes had the most issues per number of properties for both student and non-student houses.

When comparing the trial to non-trial areas, there was no evidence that the extended scheme reduced waste on streets, however with low participation this is not surprising.

There is no data available from previous years to compare to.

4.6 Conclusions and recommendations

Increased collaborative working was key to the success of the project with the City Wardens, Cleansing Services, Council Tax and Highways all providing essential support.

The trial of extended bulky waste collections had very low take-up. Waste Management is of the belief that the expectation of students to book a collection in advance, regardless of what is being offered, is the main barrier to service take up and this enhanced service will not be offered in 2018/19.

The monitoring demonstrates that whilst the waste on streets does increase in student populated areas, and that a higher percentage of student properties than non-student properties are presenting excess waste during the move out period, more than half of the total waste incorrectly presented on streets is not coming from the student properties at all. This is a deviation from the popular opinion that students are largely or wholly responsible for excess waste on streets, particular at this time of year.

The donation banks are considered the most successful aspect of the project, with a clear measurable and positive result that both diverts waste from landfill and reduces the quantity presented on streets, as well as contributing to the charity's local donation stock. It is recommended that the number of public banks is increased in future years, as well as encouraging instalment in private halls of residence to further reduce reusable items in the waste stream.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

There are no significant direct financial implications arising from this report, although clearly the less excess waste presented on streets that has to be removed, the better.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, Ext. 37 4081

5.2 Legal implications

There are no specific commercial comments except that I note the recommendation relates to donated goods and is not a reference to 'waste' as defined under the contract for waste collection services.

Jenis Taylor, Principal Solicitor (Commercial) Ext 37 1405

Section 185 Highways Act 1980 concerns placing of the donation bank containers on a pathway or highway pavement and it is reminded that such receptacles should be positioned in a safe and non-obstructive manner for oncoming vehicular or pedestrian traffic including taking into account that views should not be obstructed. Receptacles should also be maintained and checked regularly so that they are safe to use and store the goods for which they are fit for purpose. There are no legal implications with respect to the Bulky Waste Collection trial.

Salma Manzoor, Commercial Property Solicitor, Ext 2686

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Although carbon emissions from the transport and processing of waste are not currently included in Leicester City Council's Carbon Footprint calculation, these activities do have significant emissions implications. Diverting waste from landfill or further processing through the scheme will therefore have a positive impact on Leicester's City-Wide carbon emissions, and re-using items could also prevent further emissions by avoiding the manufacture of new products.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

5.4 Equalities Implications

There are no disproportionate negative impacts on any protected characteristic arising directly from the recommendations of the report. The bulky waste service, including the assisted collection service which is available where there is no one in the household who is physically able to move bulky waste to be collected, can be accessed by students regardless of the proposal to not provide an extended service in future due to low uptake.

The provision of supplementary donation banks will provide more options for students to remove waste appropriately. Options are available in the form of other charities/ donation outlets in the City who take household items as well as waste services, for those who do not wish to use BHF banks arising from the protected characteristic of religion or belief or where there are barriers to using the donation banks in relation to the protected characteristic of disability and, therefore, this will not impact on the Council's ability to meet the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Hannah Watkins, Equalities Manager, Ext. 37 5811

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None.

6. Background information and other papers:

None.

7. Summary of appendices:

None.

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a “key decision”?

No

10. If a key decision please explain reason

N/A