

## **Environment Development Policy Group Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2004.**

### **Briefing Note 1**

#### **Devon Composting Partnership - Background Information**

##### **1) Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Bid**

In 2002 the Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) released funding to local authorities for waste minimisation and recycling projects. Since then there have been two further rounds, the third of which has invited Local Authorities to bid for funding from a further £135 million to be made available for sustainable waste management initiatives across England.

The fund previously allocated financial support to categories such as 'low performance' and 'community initiatives'. However, the third round of funding is focused on the progress that authorities should be making towards delivering 2005-06 performance standards from a minimum of 10% performance in 2003-04.

The guidelines have been simplified and there are now two categories that local authorities can bid under.

Local authorities could then now bid under the single 'general projects' fund, that is intended to support the best local authority projects whether they come from lower or higher performers, or under the 'partnership proposals', this is specifically focused at supporting those authorities who are tackling large volumes of waste.

South Hams District Council along with Devon County Council, Teignbridge District Council and Mid Devon District Council (under the title of the Devon Composting Partnership) submitted a bid, under the 'partnership proposal' category, to DEFRA in November 2003, for £5 million to purchase two in-vessel composting plants and the relevant equipment and support required for the three District Councils to set-up organic waste collections within their Districts.

The fund is designed to help recycling infrastructure and not to subsidise contractor's costs in achieving their contractual obligations. As the fund can only be accessed via bidding rounds that have strict application deadlines it was decided that the Partnership would submit the bid, with no guarantee that it would be successful.

The bid was however successful and the Partnership won the requested £5 million for the project. Devon County Council has also provided an additional £400,000 to assist in funding one of the in-vessel composting plants (IVC's). This funding was issued with strict guidelines, one being that the funding must be spent within the spending plan submitted and that any under spend would be surrendered back to DEFRA. The spending plan requires that 57% of the fund is spent in financial year 2004-05 and 43% of the fund has to be spent in 2005-06.

##### **2) The Devon Composting Partnership Project**

There is a great need to recycle/compost organic waste, in order to meet not only the DEFRA targets for recycling and compost, but also to meet the landfill directive targets of reducing the tonnage of biodegradable waste sent to landfill.

The aim of the bid was to meet these targets through the collection and composting of biodegradable municipal waste (BMW). In order to do this the material needs to be collected from householders properties and then delivered to a composting facility where the material can be turned into a resource, namely compost.

The County Council, as the Waste Disposal Authority, are responsible for providing facilities where District Councils can dispose of their waste. Therefore, the County (as part of the Partnership) bid for two in-vessel composting plants.

It was proposed that two in-vessel composting facilities were provided at two landfill sites in Devon. The sites proposed are as follows:-

- Heathfield landfill site, Teignbridge
- Broadpath landfill site, Mid Devon

Heathfield and Broadpath are owned and operated by Viridor Waste Management Limited. The sites are conveniently located in the south and centre of the County, thereby providing composting infrastructure within reasonable haulage distances for the District Councils within the Devon Composting Partnership.

The in-vessel composting plants will be supplied and fitted by CRS Ltd. who have experience of in-vessel composting in this country and who will ensure the plant meets all relevant criteria with respect to the licensing, the Animal By-Products Order (ABPO) and planning regulations. The new plants will subsequently be operated by the relevant landfill site personnel. In addition to the composting vessels, there will also be covered reception areas, concrete slabs and associated infrastructure for the receipt of clean organic waste material for processing.

### **3) The Process**

The collected kitchen and garden waste will be delivered to a reception hall and will be prepared by removing contaminants and by reducing it to a uniform size. It will then be loaded into a clamped composting bay where it is retained until 150 tonnes have accumulated. It will then undergo intensive composting for 10 days. It will then be removed to a second composting bay where it remains for another 10 days. During these periods air is blown through the waste to ensure an aerobic process. The waste is then matured under cover. Finally, the product is screened to separate out the various fractions depending on their proposed use.

The advantages of this system are:

- Small footprint
- Low capital costs
- Highly space efficient odour control
- Comprehensive remote monitoring and recording of temperatures throughout the process
- Low energy requirements
- The product can then be used in landfill restoration, mineral void restoration, agriculture, horticulture and landscaping applications.

The plants will have an initial capacity of up to 10,000 tonne at Broadpath and up to 20,000 tonnes at Heathfield. Being modular, additional capacity can be added up to a

maximum of 50,000 tonne at each site should the need arise. Their modular nature brings flexibility in respect of location and future developments in technology. Please see photographs of similar composting plants in Appendix 1 and 2.

There are significant benefits in the plant being located at the existing landfill sites.

- The waste is currently delivered to these sites (as MSW) so there will be no extra vehicle movements.
- There are weighbridges and ancillary facilities in place.
- The infrastructure for leachate treatment is in place.
- Landfill gas is currently collected for energy production could be used to supply heat to the composting process.
- If, in the future, anaerobic composting was proved to be an efficient way of dealing with this type of waste the landfill sites already have the gas collection infrastructure in place.
- Labour force can be allocated tasks on landfill and at compost plant as required.
- The end product can be used to restore areas of the landfill sites thereby minimising transport implications if no higher quality markets are obtained.
- Using current contractors enables the operation to proceed with contractual modifications, without re-tendering.

#### **4) Markets**

The partnership is confident that markets for the end product exist and these are likely to be as follows:-

- Mineral void restoration in localities close to the sites. There is a need to restore large areas of land in the Bovey Basin adjacent to Heathfield landfill site in particular.
- Agriculture in locations close to the sites.
- Landfill restoration on site.

Further research may highlight higher quality markets in horticulture.

#### **5) Project Steering Group and Management Board**

The Devon Composting Partnership has set up a Steering Group which meets monthly and comprises of officers and one Member from each of the three local authorities. The Partnership also meets monthly with the Management Board which is assigned to each project by DEFRA. This comprises of a representative from each partner, and representatives from DEFRA, Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP), the 4P's, Somerset County Council (another partnership project) and the Government Office South West.

No expenditure can be made from the fund without prior agreement from the project management board.

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**Briefing Note 2**

**Devon Composting Partnership – Communication Plan**

It was highlighted at a very early stage that there would be a strong need for a Communications Plan linked to new schemes being funded by DEFRA. To achieve this, DEFRA has provided the WRAP organisation with a funding stream to allocate, under a bidding process, funding for waste promotional projects in support of its 'Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund'.

The Devon Composting Partnership submitted a bid for £319,362 and were allocated £239,800 for communications relating to the Composting Partnership activities. Aside from the Partnership's Communications Plan, South Hams' Waste Management Services along with the Press Officer, Claire Madron, have developed a specific South Hams' Communication Plan relating directly to our customers and staff and their needs. This is detailed below.

Between the two plans, which complement each other, officers believe that they have a robust plan to assist in correctly communicating these detailed messages throughout the District.

**Aims of the Communications Campaign**

The local authorities have identified the following aims for the communication campaign: -

- 1) To exceeding the 2005/06 statutory recycling/composting targets.
- 2) Raise public awareness and understanding of the need for the collection scheme and the in vessel composting facilities.
- 3) Encourage a high level of public acceptance and take up of the new scheme.
- 4) Ensure ongoing and regular participation.
- 5) Minimise contamination of the organic collection.

The Partnership will integrate these aims with waste minimisation and in particular home composting and community composting alongside all of its promotions.

**Objectives of the Communications Campaign**

- 1) To achieve recycling/composting tonnage targets as detailed below:-

| <b>District</b> | <b>2005/06</b> |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Mid Devon       | 5,000          |
| South Hams      | 10,500         |
| Teignbridge     | 13,300         |
| Total           | 28,800         |

- 2) To raise public awareness of recycling/composting schemes to 90%.
- 3) To achieve a high level of public acceptance, established via pre and post research, of 80% for such schemes.

- 4) To achieve 80% participation in schemes.
- 5) To achieve a low level of contamination. This will be measured by the percentage of material rejected by weight at the in-vessel composting plant. A SMART target will be set once the plant specification and design are finalised.

### **Expected Outcomes**

In addition to achieving the objectives stated above, similar trial schemes (E.g. North Devon District Council's Green Sweep project) have found that the introduction of organic waste collections leads to an increases in tonnage of dry recyclables collected on the kerbside.

The Partnership has commissioned Eunomia Research and Consulting to undertake a study of current practice in the collection of organic wastes in the UK. This report will assist the Partnership in establishing the likely impact of the organic collection on the varying waste collection routes.

### **Total number of Households and Targeted Audiences**

The scheme will directly affect the service provision to **119,900 households** in the three district areas. All households will be targeted however special consideration will be given to the impact of the scheme on the following groups: -

- Elderly and infirm - promotion of assist collection and clinical collections as appropriate.
- Disabled - Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- Families with children in nappies - promotion of reusable nappies.
- Flats/areas with communal bin systems.
- Households with access problems for wheeled bins.

The tables below provide the ACORN profiles for each of the district areas.

| Mid Devon         |           | Data for area | Data as % for area |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|
| CATEGORIES:       |           |               |                    |
| A                 | Thriving  | 10,126        | 34.2               |
| B                 | Expanding | 2,825         | 9.5                |
| C                 | Rising    | 433           | 1.5                |
| D                 | Settling  | 9,292         | 31.4               |
| E                 | Aspiring  | 3,536         | 11.9               |
| F                 | Striving  | 3,364         | 11.4               |
| Unclassified      |           | 55            | 0.2                |
| Total Households: |           | <b>29,631</b> | <b>100.0</b>       |

| South Hams  |           | Data for area | Data as % for area |
|-------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|
| CATEGORIES: |           |               |                    |
| A           | Thriving  | 18,130        | 51.5               |
| B           | Expanding | 4,172         | 11.8               |
| C           | Rising    | 59            | 0.2                |

|                   |          |               |              |
|-------------------|----------|---------------|--------------|
| D                 | Settling | 7,378         | 21.0         |
| E                 | Aspiring | 4,226         | 12.0         |
| F                 | Striving | 1,211         | 3.4          |
| Unclassified      |          | 33            | 0.1          |
| Total Households: |          | <b>35,209</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

| Teignbridge       |           | Data for area | Data as % for area |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|
| CATEGORIES:       |           |               |                    |
| A                 | Thriving  | 20,005        | 37.8               |
| B                 | Expanding | 5,243         | 9.9                |
| C                 | Rising    | 683           | 1.3                |
| D                 | Settling  | 14,774        | 27.9               |
| E                 | Aspiring  | 8,671         | 16.4               |
| F                 | Striving  | 3,418         | 6.5                |
| Unclassified      |           | 72            | 0.1                |
| Total Households: |           | <b>52,866</b> | <b>100.0</b>       |

Further work will be done with focus groups and through doorstep research to identify any particular issues related to certain ACORN groups. Work carried out by MEL Research on waste analysis for Devon in 2003 will be drawn upon as appropriate.

In addition to the external target audiences it is essential to identify and target the Council's internal audiences. These include the: -

- All Members
- Collection Crews
- Councillors
- Council staff

### **Crisis Planning**

The introduction of both a new composting service and alternate weekly collections may result in potentially negative responses from some elements of the public and media. The level of threat increases through lack of education and miss-information and the Communication Plan covers a series of measures on education and awareness to counter this potential threat.

| <b>Risk</b>             | <b>Response</b>  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Negative press coverage | <p>Prepared list of Councillors and Officers who will take interviews with the media. Relevant people provided with media training and suitable information.</p> <p>Develop a PR schedule with regular features.</p> <p>Develop relationships with key journalists</p> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Direct negative public reaction to new service.                        | Focused and localised one-to-one communication campaign as detailed in this communication plan, prior, during and after the rollout.  |
| Element of residents do not accept new waste collection arrangements.  | Ensure reliable service provision and efficient and fair responses to problems and enforcement.<br><br>Provide high profile and responsive communication and customer care arrangements.  |
| Contamination of waste put out in recycling and composting containers. | All districts operate a rejection policy for contaminants of their recycling collections. Heavy contamination and side waste will be rejected by collection crews and backed up with special inspections and enforcement. The waste collection authorities already have a good understanding of areas likely to contaminate.<br><br>Motivational and instructional information will be produced as part of the campaign. These will be used to target problem areas. Where necessary this will be supported by face to face advice. |

### **Setting a Baseline**

#### **Tonnage**

Baseline data for tonnage collected for waste, recycling and composting are already collected on a monthly basis and will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

#### **Getting the message right**

A series of three focus groups will be held in each district to develop campaign messages and communications methods.

#### **Establishing public awareness**

Survey work will be carried out before, during and after the campaign to establish the public's level of awareness and acceptance of the scheme. The pre-survey work (1500 doorstep survey across the three districts) will be carried out to establish the baseline data.

#### **Participation data**

The DLDGTW campaign established baseline data for participation in existing kerbside collection of dry recyclables. However data on participation for the new organic collection scheme will come from two sources: -

1. Data gathered and monitored once the scheme is in place.
2. The Study of Current practice in the collection of organic waste being carried out by Eunomia Research and consulting. This will provide comparable data.

Once established the districts will use the baseline data on participation along with their own local knowledge and experience to ensure that appropriate communications are targeted at areas of low participation and/or high contamination.

## **Integrated Communication Activities**

The roll out of organic waste collections and resulting alterations to the collection of refuse and recycling is a major change in the three districts and requires a large scale education and awareness campaign with a strong emphasis on one-to-one communication.

The Devon Authorities will use the 'Don't Let Devon Go To Waste' campaign branding (DLDGTW) has already raised awareness of general waste issues across Devon. The doorstepping survey carried out established that the 95% surveyed are aware of local recycling services.

The DLDGTW campaign utilised TV to great affect however this is not considered to be appropriate to the composting partnership's campaign, as it requires a much more targeted and focused approach.

The communications plan will be two-fold to promote both the changes to the kerbside recycling scheme and to promote the in-vessel composting plants.

## **Key Messages**

The local authorities need to communicate the following key messages: -

- Why the new facilities (in-vessel composting plants) are required
- Where the new facilities will be – planning implications
- Impact of the new facilities on the local residents
- Why we are changing the refuse collection system (environmental and legislative issues)
- What the council will be doing
- How the system will work
- When and where it will be implemented
- What it means to/for the householder

This will be communicated through the following:

- Launches/open days
- Official notification of the changes to their refuse collection
- Motivational information – why we need to change
- Instructional information e.g.: Collection dates, bin sizes, what goes in the bin etc.

The focus groups and door stepping exercises will be used to help to refine specific messages.

## **Plan for External Communications**

The following provides details on the different elements of the campaign that will be used to target the various audiences.

### **Launch**

The local press and key stakeholders will be invited to a launch in May to provide them with information on the scheme. This will provide an opportunity to encourage positive relations with the press and ensure key people are fully informed of the forthcoming changes and campaign.

### **Direct Mailing**

Districts are planning to send three direct mailings to all householders in the 6 month run up to implementation. A number of timely leaflets and newsletters will be developed to convey the motivational and instructional information.

### **Council Publications/ Parish and Church magazines**

The Local Authorities will utilise their own council publications e.g. newsletters to promote the scheme as appropriate. In addition to this, feedback from local officers has shown that local parish and church magazine are read by key members in the community and can be a highly effective way of raising awareness at a local level. A comprehensive list of contacts has been made and these are to be included in the information circuit

### **Advertorials/Feature Articles**

The DLDGTW campaign found that advertorials in particular proved to be an extremely effective method of getting difficult or complicated information across to the public. Three advertorials will be placed in local papers during the course of the campaign.

### **Livery on collection vehicles**

The new scheme will be advertised on the side of refuse and recycling collection vehicles and will include the helpline number and website for the local council. This is particularly useful in rural areas and acts as a good visual reminder to the local community.

### **Roadshows**

Roadshows are an invaluable method of communicating complex issues and instructional information on a one-to-one basis with the public. It also enables local authorities to understand the needs of the public better. A series of 21 roadshows will be held across the three districts before the roll out of the kerbside scheme. A trailer will be used to display both, motivational and instructional information for the public. Staff will provide expert help and advice on changes to the collection schemes and sample bins/boxes will be available for the public to see. The number of visitors to the roadshow will be monitored.

### **Mobile Display Materials**

Mobile display material will be used by council officers for small scale roadshows and displays in village communities at town halls, supermarkets, libraries etc.

### **Community Engagement**

The council officers will provide talks to their local parish councils and community organisations e.g. W.I, Rotary clubs, U3A etc.. Such communications will help local communities to debate and air their views on the changes to their collection scheme. It will also provide valuable feedback for the local authorities and can create positive links with key members of the local community.

The Partnership is keen to manage the planning applications for the in vessel composting as proactively as possible. The building of three in vessel composting plants will generate local concern with regard to planning issues and will require careful handling with regard to PR. Existing liaison groups between the landfill site operators and the local public are already set up and will be used where appropriate.

A series of local meetings outlining the plans will be held for local residents near the proposed locations for the composting plants. In addition to this a number of open days will be held at the composting facilities for members of the public.

## **Radio**

Radio will be used as part of the management of public relations in a positive proactive manner through news coverage, radio phone in etc. It will be used to provide information and involve the public in discussion

## **Website**

Websites are an excellent way of communicating both motivational and instructional information to residents. Each of the partner local authorities will add information to their own websites utilising in-house staff. The DLDGTW website, which receives an average of 1000 hits per month, will also require updating.

## **Helpline & Home Visits/Inspections**

The helpline is an important component of the campaign providing a first port of call for practical information on the details of the new scheme.

This work will be supported by the Don't Let Devon Go To Waste Helpline which will be equipped to handle some additional calls. The staff for this helpline will be provided with some additional training to bring them up to speed generally about the new scheme but they will not be best placed to provide the technical or operational information. This will be provided by the Districts. Therefore, all technical feedback regarding the scheme will be redirected to the appropriate district.

Past experience of officers has shown that direct one to one communications with residents in the home is required when significant changes occur to refuse/recycling collections. Whilst the majority of enquiries will be resolved by the helpline, it is essential that provision is made to allow site inspections/visits to resolve practical issues.

Each District will require additional staff (1 FTE/district) to handle increased calls to the helpline and to carry out site visits.

## **Infrastructure Links and Internal Communications**

It is essential that all staff understand the changes to the infrastructure and how the communications campaign and infrastructure interlink.

A steering group is responsible for the delivery of the Devon Composting Partnership project and comprises representatives from all of the local authorities. A sub group of the steering group has been set up to oversee the delivery of the communications plan. Members of the group are detailed below along with the name of the lead councillor for each local authority.

| <b>Partner</b>             | <b>Spokesperson</b>         | <b>PR Officer for Media Queries</b>             | <b>Lead Member</b>  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Devon County Council       | Bobby Hughes (Lead Officer) | PR team to assist the lead officer as required. | Cllr. David Morrish<br>Executive member for the environment |
| Mid Devon District Council | Simon Hill                  | Jane Nichols                                    | Cllr. Jane Campbell   |

|   |              |                                    |   |
|---|--------------|------------------------------------|---|
| South Hams District Council                               | Verity Palk  | Claire Madron<br>(Lead PR officer) | Cllr B Carson Executive Member for the Environment.                                     |
| Teignbridge District Council                              | Iain Stevens | Michelle Kenney                    | Cllr Gordon Hook, Executive Portfolio-Holder for the Environment & Environmental Health |
| Viridor Waste Management Ltd./ Devon Waste Management Ltd | Dan Cooke    | N/A                                | N/A   |

Each of the Local Authorities will promote the new collection scheme through internal staff newsletters and through a series of briefing meetings for councilors and council staff/crews. It is particularly important that all operational staff are well prepared to respond to public enquiries (see South Hams Communications)

RH advertising won the bid for the DLDGTW campaign and will be working with the Devon Composting Partnership to deliver a number of the campaign elements. A key lesson learnt as part of the DLDGTW campaign was the importance of utilising a professional marketing company. This is particularly important in ensuring events and roadshows operate smoothly and provision of some PR support.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The partnership has already undertaken substantial work as part of the Don't Let Devon Go To Waste Campaign including doorstepping, waste analysis, monitoring of tonnage data. Much of this data and information will be drawn on to assist the campaign.

The partnership will monitor tonnage collected in all waste streams on a month-by-month basis. This will enable the partnership to monitor the progress towards targets and gain a clear picture of the impact of the scheme on all parts of the waste collection service. Each load coming into the plant will be monitored to establish where potential contamination is coming from and to help target communication work.

The district authorities will monitor participation/put out rate in the scheme and the issue of contamination will be monitored both through inspections and at the composting plants.

In addition to tonnage, participation and contamination the campaign will also monitor the following:-

- Opportunities to see (OTS)
- Advertising value equivalents (AVE's) for media coverage from press releases and advertorials.
- Number of Leaflets distributed and requested
- Number of events and estimated number of visitors to such events
- Number of calls to helpline and hits on websites

Pre and post campaign research will also be carried out by to gauge the public's acceptance and awareness of the scheme.

A review of the original baseline data will be undertaken at regular intervals in order to monitor progress towards the targets. Such monitoring will be feedback through both internal and external communications as appropriate to ensure continuous improvement of the campaign and service delivery.

In addition to key performance indicators listed below, the local authorities will monitor the number of compost bins sold within areas covered by the new scheme.

| <b>Marketing Objective</b>   | <b>Method/Activity</b>                  | <b>Key Performance Indicator</b>   | <b>Best Value Performance Indicator</b> |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Objective 1</b><br>Achieve diversion targets and recycling targets.<br><br>Total Tonnage composted in 2005/06 is 28,800 | Monitoring of tonnage data              | Number of tonnes composted (To include a break down of kerbside, civic amenity sites and community composting)                                   | BVPI 82 b                               |
|  |   | Number of tonnes recycled  | BVPI 82 a                               |
|  |   | Amount of waste sent to landfill   | BVPI 82 d                               |
|  |   | Number of kilograms of household waste collected per head.   | BVPI 84                                 |
| <b>Objective 2 &amp; 3</b><br>Raise public awareness (90%) & encourage a high level of public acceptance (80%)             | Press releases and advertorials         | Opportunities to see (OTS) Advertising value equivalents (AVE's)   | N/A                                     |
|  | Production and distribution of leaflets | Number of Leaflets distributed and requested   | N/A                                     |
|  | Roadshows, talks, displays              | Number of events and estimated number of visitors to such events   | N/A                                     |
|  | Pre and post research                   | % of householders aware of new infrastructure.<br>% of householders that support in-vessel composting<br>% of householders agreeing to take part | N/A                                     |
|  | Provision of helpline and website       | Number of calls to helpline and hits on websites   | N/A                                     |
| <b>Objective 4</b><br>Ensure ongoing and regular participation of 80%  | participation monitoring                | % of households participating  | N/A                                     |
|  | Pre and post campaign research          | To be established once pre campaign research has established base line   | N/A                                     |
|  | Provision of instructional information  | Number of direct mailing to households<br>Number of roadshows, talks, displays etc.<br>Number of calls to helpline and hits on websites          | N/A                                     |

|  |   |   |     |
|--|---|---|-----|
| <b>Objective 5</b><br>Minimise contamination<br>(To be set once plant specification finalised) | Monitoring of loads delivered to invessel compost plant | % of material rejected by weight from the invessel composting plant   | N/A |
|  | Provision of instructional information                  | Number of direct mailing to households<br>Number of roadshows, talks, displays etc.<br>Number of calls to helpline and hits on websites | N/A |

## **South Hams – Communication Plans**

### **Green Waste Communications Plan**

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- 5 Communication tactics
- 6 Action plan with officer responsibilities

#### **Appendices**

- Printed flip chart stakeholder list
- Press release following June Executive

South Hams District Council

## 1 Campaign aims:

What changes do we want to effect? Awareness? Understanding? Support? Acceptance? Ownership?

- Encourage public **SUPPORT** for the changes, ensure they are seen as a service improvement and maximise participation.
- Generate **UNDERSTANDING** of how the scheme will work to minimise the failure rate and contamination.
- Generate wider **AWARENESS** about waste issues and the reasons why managing it is important.
- Create **ACCEPTANCE** of the scheme amongst the staff who will have to implement it and members.

## 2 Where we're at now:

### Strengths

- Waste management has high public satisfaction
- Team experienced at successfully implementing change ( Sort it Out scheme)
- Lots of local demand for kerbside recycling in areas that don't already have it
- Some evidence of local support for a green waste collection service
- We can expect some limited PR support through the compost partnership for general messages

### Weaknesses/ Threats

- We're preparing for a scheme we don't yet know the final details of
- Scale of change – need to re-educate all households plus staff not only in organic waste but refuse and recycling issues as well.
- Change fatigue amongst 62% of residents on Sort it Out scheme - this is second major change in 18 months
- Increase in containers v. likely to provoke hostility, ditto alternate weekly collections, ditto green waste charges
- Hard to reach residents (eg elderly, low income) also likely to be the ones who have practical difficulties with scheme
- Issue of green waste charging was raised last year and provoked lots of angry letter writing
- Virtually no extra staff to help on project or its comms needs; responsibility for different aspects falls between different groups
- Some key factors, eg installation of in vessel composter, beyond our control – significantly affecting timescale
- Partnership scheme – each press release could have a detrimental effect on the other.
- One of a number of major projects ongoing eg leisure transfer, Totnes SA, which have already upset some stakeholders

### 3 Key stakeholders:

Whether stakeholders are hostile or not will depend on the specifics of the scheme. I'm assuming a worst case scenario (charging and alternate weekly collection) to assess risk.

|                            | <b>Low Impact</b>   | <b>High Impact/ influence</b>  |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Potentially Hostile</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who opposed 'sort it out'</li> <li>• People with large gardens</li> <li>• People with issues making it hard to take part</li> <li>• Green waste businesses</li> <li>• Community compost groups</li> <li>• Commercial gardeners</li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ops team staff</li> <li>• Trade Unions</li> <li>• Planning and Enviro Health teams</li> <li>• Town and parish councils</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Business Board and PDG members</li> <li>• Other members (esp in trial area)</li> <li>• Highway authority</li> <li>• Local MPs</li> </ul> |
| <b>Probably Friendly</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Safety</li> <li>• Agenda 21</li> <li>• Anti seagull forum</li> <li>• All staff</li> <li>• Environment Agency, water boards etc</li> <li>• Tourism Forum</li> <li>• Tor Homes</li> <li>• Garden centres</li> <li>• Civic amenity sites</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMT</li> <li>• Devon County Council</li> <li>• Compost partners and neighbouring districts</li> <li>• Exec members</li> <li>• Viridor</li> <li>•</li> </ul>   |

#### **4 Key Messages**

- We are trying to improve the service – one integrated waste service, new green waste collection and extension of household recycling scheme
- We have anticipated where there might be problems and are working them out.
- It has major health and safety benefits for staff

#### **5 Communications tactics:**

- INVOLVE priority stakeholders - especially Ops team staff - as a priority well before each development hits the media
- CONTROL how the project is portrayed in the press by briefing journalists in advance of any meeting/ development,
- CREATE a sense of urgency about the need to address landfill waste by raising its profile in the media, so the scheme is seen as proactive, with a blitz during the summer silly season.
- Ensure residents comfortable with the issues by DRIP FEEDING good news stories re green waste and recycling throughout, with a blitz during the run up to the scheme.
- MINIMISE uncertainty and potential anger by directly contacting those most affected, and keeping them regularly informed.
- NEGATE criticism by providing alternative outlets to answer public queries, responding to every letter in the paper and promoting solutions for the problems are raised.

#### **6 Evaluation**

SMART targets TBA

## 7 Action Plan for priority stakeholders.

| Stakeholder                               | What they think now (and their status - passive, aware, active)  | What we need them to think/ do   | Comms tactics *  | D/line  | Key officer                        |
|---|--|--|--|---|------------------------------------|
| Ops team                                  | Aware – have seen media report and are already sceptical   | 'This scheme will make my life miles easier'   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full ops staff face to face briefing before each development made public</li> <li>- Monthly updates even when 'no news'</li> </ul>  | Mid July – then ongoing   | Tony W                             |
| Trade Unions                              | Passive  | 'This isn't an issue to get angry about and it will improve staff conditions'  | - Contact union immediately to discuss options and their implications.   | Early June 04   | Tony W                             |
| Town and parish councils + cluster groups | Aware – "We are important and should be consulted!"  | "SHDC respects us and has fully informed us of the changes and we can see the value of it"                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- write to all re IWS <u>before</u> it hits the media</li> <li>- Meet dart cllrs</li> <li>- speak at meetings</li> <li>- Update/ news to parish councils monthly</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- End June</li> <li>- June</li> <li>- Sept</li> <li>- Aug</li> </ul> | Verity                             |
| Media                                     | Aware – 'the most newsworthy angle will be anger over new wheelie bins and a perceived fortnightly collection' | Recycling is sexy and we want to explore the issues.<br>This is an expansion of the collection service that most support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full media briefings prior to each development</li> <li>- Follow up PR immediately after decisions made</li> <li>- Avoid stakeholders using media as outlet by talking to them regularly</li> </ul> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>   | <p>Claire M</p> <p>V, T, CL, P</p> |

|                                   |   |  |   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| Planning and Enviro Health teams  | ? (have they been informed?)  |  |   |   | Paula (flipchart) or Chris?  |
| Other members (esp in trial area) | Aware – ‘I don’t want to get flack from my constituents. I will object if I think I might.’   | ‘This is a solid plan that will benefit my community’  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meet Dart members to explain why good</li> <li>- Exec reports</li> <li>- ID other key members and meet face to face</li> <li>- regular updates through bulletin</li> <li>- regularly brief PDG and Business Board</li> </ul> | <p>June</p> <p>July</p> <p>July</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Paula?</p> <p>Chris</p> <p>Paula?</p> <p>Paula?</p> <p>Tony</p> |
| Highway authority                 | Passive – I am important and shouldn’t be ignored on issues that may affect me.   | ‘I have been consulted and I am comfortable with the proposals.’   | - Contact highways asap to discuss implications   | End June  | Chris + Verity   |
| Local MPs                         | Passive – I am important and should be informed of these things. If residents complain, I will join in.   | ‘The district council is taking a sensible approach that people can accept’  | - Write to MPs explaining advantages to changes   | July  | Chris L  |
| Staff in general                  | Passive – ‘I’m getting grief on the phone, what should I say?’  | ‘I fully understand the issues and can explain them.’  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intranet updates</li> <li>- Team brief notes</li> <li>- briefing meetins</li> </ul>  | Jul+Sep   | Verity<br>Claire   |
| Residents                         | PASSIVE<br>‘ I like things the way they are’<br>I don’t seen the value of this scheme and I won’t join in’<br>‘It’s far too difficult for me to | ‘I feel fully informed about how this scheme will affect me’<br>‘I have confidence SHDC understands my issues and is working | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- regular recycling column in gazette</li> <li>- updates in SHM</li> <li>-</li> <li>- good news blitz</li> <li>- Positive reports in media</li> </ul>  | <p>Agreed with gzt Dec, Jul, april</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>“</p>    | <p>Claire/<br/>Verity<br/>-CM<br/>-CM<br/>-CM +V</p>               |

|  |  |   |   |                                  |                                    |
|--|--|---|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|  | take part'<br>'Why should we pay?'<br>'I don't have space' | to resolve them'<br>'I have a responsibility<br>re my waste that<br>SHDC is helping me<br>fulfil. ' | re council meetings via<br>advance briefings<br>- well publicised roadshows<br>and PC meetings<br>- efficient helpline ( that's<br>not engaged)<br>- 2x leaflet to residents<br>- parish mags | March<br>March<br>March<br>March | V +CM<br>V + CL<br>C<br>V+ CM<br>V |
|--|--|---|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|

**Let the desired outcome dictate communication methods**

**Desired outcome:**

- Awareness only
- Understanding
- Implementation/ Support
- Acceptance
- Ownership

**= Minimum required communication**

- = press releases/ noticeboards etc
- = (as above +)opportunity to question and clarify
- = (as above +)staff training
- = (as above +)stakeholder involvement – eg regular updates, opportunity to influence process.
- = (as above +)stakeholder involved from the onset