

South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership – Participation monitoring of dry kerbside recycling services

BACKGROUND

Participation monitoring has become an established technique for measuring the performance of kerbside collection schemes. The basic aim is to establish participation and 'set-out rate', using standard defined parameters which are outlined in the WRAP monitoring and evaluation toolkit.

In 2009 M·E·L Research was commissioned to carry out a participation monitoring exercise as part of communications support from WRAP for the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership (STWWMP) which comprises Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland Councils. All three Councils operated a similar dry kerbside recycling collection service where residents could recycle paper, glass and cans in a 55-litre box.



METHODOLOGY

The monitoring operated on a fortnightly basis spanning a five week period. Seven recycling collection rounds were assessed, two rounds for each Council and an additional trial round in South Tyneside. Experienced M·E·L monitors walked ahead of collection crews abiding by WRAP toolkit guidelines. They recorded households which had set-out their recycling box and an overview of the materials in the boxes including any contamination and excess observed.

OUTCOMES

The monitoring assessed baseline participation rates of the 55-litre box system before it was replaced by a new 240-litre wheeled bin recycling service. The baseline data meant that STWWMP could accurately measure the performance of its new scheme, versus its old system. The monitoring also provided useful statistics on levels and types of contamination.



TESTIMONIAL

“Along with our partners, South Tyneside and Sunderland councils, we used M·E·L to carry out some participation monitoring for our black box recycling scheme. We needed some solid data on participation in order to provide us with a benchmark on which to measure the success of a new kerbside recycling scheme. M·E·L's staff were professional and experienced – working alongside our crews without any impact on collections. The way the streets were sampled allowed us to get data from a range of Acorn groups.”

Recycling Manager at Gateshead Council, Heather Tarvit

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