
WASTE

Introduction

The handling and disposal of waste pose major problems in Hertfordshire as they do all over the United Kingdom.

In 1998/99, the total amount of waste produced in Hertfordshire was approximately 1.79 million tonnes of which approximately 476,000 tonnes was household waste. This equates to a 4.5% rise in household waste from the 1997/98 figure of 455,000 tonnes. Waste per person was an average of almost 465 kg or more than 1135 kg per household. More than 400,000 tonnes of Hertfordshire's household waste was disposed of outside the county, in Bedfordshire, Essex and North London. Household waste is made up of 'dustbin' waste collected by the district councils, waste received at the Household Waste Sites, litter, street sweepings and waste that has been recovered for recycling.

Household waste in 1998/99 accounted for approximately 20% of the total waste stream, which also includes construction and demolition wastes, commercial and industrial wastes, and special wastes such as acids, alkalis, asbestos, heavy metals and pharmaceuticals.

In 1998/99, 324,337 tonnes of waste was put into domestic dustbins, an increase of 3.4% on 1997/98. 118,502 tonnes was disposed of through the Household Waste Sites, representing 3% growth on the previous year. Over the same period recycling and composting in the county increased by more than 30% to 54,383 tonnes.

The overall increase of 4.5% is clearly an improvement on the 7% increase that was experienced in 1997/98, but it is still higher than would seem reasonable. The reasons for continued higher than average growth in household waste site arisings will almost certainly include economic growth and changes in producer behaviour as a result of the Landfill tax.

The County Council provides 19 Household Waste Sites in Hertfordshire where residents can dispose of their household waste free of charge, as well as the Waterdale Transfer Station which helps meet the disposal needs of the Western side of the county. A survey, carried out in 1996, showed that around 43,000 visits are made every week to the county's Household Waste Sites, equating to something like five visits from each household every year, delivering on average 42 kg of waste each time. Almost everybody in Hertfordshire lives within five miles of their local Household Waste Site.

Landfill

Around 82% of the waste produced in Hertfordshire in 1998/99 was disposed of in landfill sites but those sites are running out of space and fewer are being created. In fact, the latest calculations show that Hertfordshire will run out of landfill space by 2007.

The table below illustrates the type of waste handled at Hertfordshire's landfill sites. This table is different to last year as the Environment Agency are using a new site database which includes the UK Waste Classification System.

Hertfordshire's licensed landfill sites 1999

Active Landfill Site	Type of Waste	
Anstey Chalk Quarry, Buntingford	21	
Bedwell Park Quarry, Essendon	21	
Birchall Sand Pit, Cole Green	21	KEY
Bowmansgreen Farm, London Colney	21	
Brookfield Nursery, Nr Broxbourne	21	21 Inert Materials
Cheshunt Park Farm Quarry, Cheshunt	21	
Croxley Tip, Rickmansworth	21	22 General and Biodegradable
Harper Lane Quarry, Radlett	21	
Moor Mill Landfill, St Albans	21	
Plashes Farm, Colliers End	21	24 Any contaminated general waste
Pole Hole Farm, Nr Harlow	21	
Presdales Pit, Ware	21	
Waterford Quarry, Nr Hertford	21	26 Asbestos Waste
Woodcock Hill Farm, Elstree	21	
Cock Lane Landfill Site, Hoddesdon	21, 22	27 Mineral Waste and Residues
Hatfield Quarry, St Albans	21, 22	
Norton Green Landfill, Stevenage	21, 22	
Westmill Quarry, Ware	21, 22	29 Organic Chemical Waste
Pets Meadow, St Albans	22	
Willow Haven, Watford	22	
Waterhall Quarry, Hertford	21, 22, 24, 26, 27	
Ware Quarry, Ware	21, 22, 24, 27, 29	

Source: Environment Agency

There is evidence that the introduction of Landfill Tax in October 1996 (£10 per tonne for general waste, £2 per tonne for inert waste) continues to stimulate growth in household waste generation in both the collected and Household Waste Site streams. This is due to a number of related factors but the increased cost of private skip hire is likely to be one of the more significant.

Indicator 1 - Household Waste per Capita

We measure the amount of household waste produced per capita by adding together:

- what is collected by the 10 district and borough councils
- what is received at the 19 Household Waste Sites
- what is taken out of the stream for recycling by the County Council and the district/borough councils,

and dividing the resulting total by the population of Hertfordshire.

Household waste production per capita

Local Authority	Waste per Capita	Waste per Capita
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	(kg) 1997/98	(kg) 1998/99
Broxbourne	507	538
Dacorum	461	492
East Herts	437	467
Hertsmere	457	456
North Herts	481	495
St Albans	417	432
Stevenage	466	504
Three Rivers	399	410
Watford	426	442
Welwyn Hatfield	415	417

The 1998 figures for household waste per capita show an overall increase of 4.2% compared to 1997.

Indicator 2 - Waste Produced per Household

Another and possibly more reliable approach to quantifying household waste production is to divide the total amount of waste generated by each district by the number of households in Hertfordshire, and in doing so, calculate how much waste is produced per household.

Local Authority	Waste per household (kg) 1997/98	Waste per household (kg) 1998/99
Broxbourne	1220	1283
Dacorum	1114	1185
East Herts	1068	1122
Hertsmere	1171	1173
North Herts	1155	1190
St Albans	1047	1079
Stevenage	1120	1188
Three Rivers	1042	1058
Watford	1042	1075
Welwyn Hatfield	987	1007

The figures for 1998/99 have shown an overall increase in relation to those for 1997/98 of 3.7%.

Indicator 3 - Percentage of Waste Recycled

Recycling is an important element of any successful waste management strategy in that it has the benefit of reducing the amount of waste requiring disposal.

In 1998/99, more than 11% of the total household waste produced was recycled. The total amount recycled exceeded 54,000 tonnes and there is substantial evidence that the percentage of waste being recycled in Hertfordshire will continue to increase. The graph below shows the individual recycling performance percentages for the Hertfordshire district/borough councils.

Local Authority	Recycling Performance	Recycling Performance
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	1997/98 (%)	1998/99 (%)
Broxbourne	4.3	7.3
Dacorum	6.3	7.4
East Herts	4.3	6.0
Hertsmere	6.1	7.1
North Herts	4.9	7.4
St Albans	13.6	14.3
Stevenage	7.4	9.7
Three Rivers	11.0	11.4
Watford	11.1	11.1
Welwyn Hatfield	12.1	13.1

	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
District Councils	9,908	12,637	14,820	17,370	23,992	26,564	32,899
Household Waste Sites	8,859	8,620	8,800	8,368	8,981	14,663	19,174
Third Parties	249	721	567	505	515	553	2,330
Total	19,016	21,978	24,187	26,242	33,488	41,780	54,383

Figures in tonnes

The table shown above gives a year-on-year breakdown of household waste recycling in Hertfordshire, and includes figures for the household waste collected for recycling by the 10 Hertfordshire district/borough councils and various voluntary groups **for which the County Council has paid recycling credits**. Included in the tonnages is the material that is collected at bottle banks, can banks and paper banks etc. Not included is the trade waste recycling by businesses and charity shops. The figures for 1998/99 reveal a 30% increase in total recycling from the previous year, which demonstrates the growing effectiveness of local authority recycling activity in Hertfordshire.

The County Council's recycling rate at the Household Waste Sites rose by more than 30%, largely as a result of the further development of the separate collection of green waste for composting.

The effect of waste minimisation initiatives, such as home composting, are not shown as there is no reliable way of accurately measuring their effect. They are, however, extremely beneficial in reducing the amount of waste needing to be disposed of. The County Council's Home Composting Sponsorship Scheme has encouraged many of the district and borough councils to promote the sale of home composting units to their residents at reduced prices, with the result that now **more than 8%** of the households in Hertfordshire have purchased units.

WasteAware

The third year of the Hertfordshire WasteAware campaign saw further activity aimed at raising awareness of current waste issues and changing the general public's attitudes towards waste management, with a view to changing behaviour. Hertfordshire County Council and the 10 district/borough councils continued to work in partnership to enhance the public's understanding of specific waste issues whilst promoting the waste hierarchy to reduce, reuse, recycle and recover.

The campaign activities included a wide range of promotional events aimed at

- Reducing how much waste is produced
- making the best use of the waste that is produced
- choosing waste management practices which minimise the risks of immediate and future environmental pollution and harm to health.

Future Strategy

The continued growth in household waste arisings and the gradual decline in the availability of landfill facilities in Hertfordshire has highlighted the need for a strategy to deal with Hertfordshire's municipal waste in the medium to long term. Linked to their joint working on the WasteAware campaign, the County Council and the ten Hertfordshire district and borough councils signed a Memorandum of Understanding in October 1998, committing each and every one of them to combining their efforts and resources to devise and implement an integrated strategy aimed at achieving sustainable waste management for the county.

In April 1999, a leading waste consultant, Envirospine & Co., were commissioned to carry out a study of the current situation and to recommend a strategy on the basis of their findings. An information seminar, to which all the county, district and borough councillors were invited, was staged in July 1999 to raise the level of understanding of all the issues and a further seminar is planned for February 2000, at which the consultant will present their recommended strategy. A consultation process will follow leading to the adoption of a final strategy and its implementation.

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