

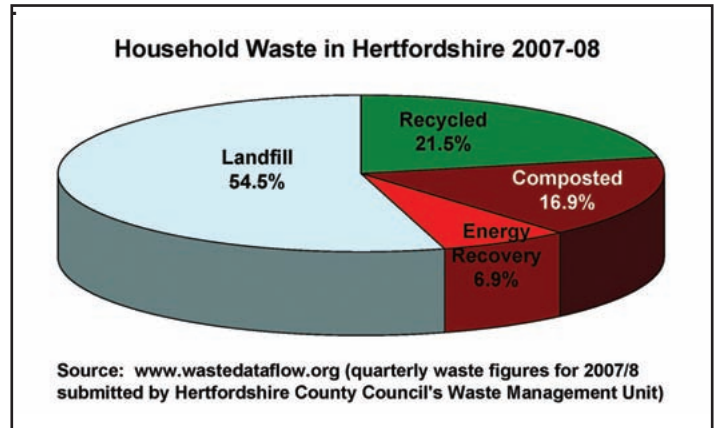
waste



County sees a welcome reduction in waste

Whether it's due to greater concern about the environment, the need to keep a tighter grip on expenditure or down to the success of waste campaigns in Hertfordshire, the urgency to cut waste disposal at landfill appeared to have hit home in 2007/8 as the amount of waste produced by its residents fell during the year.

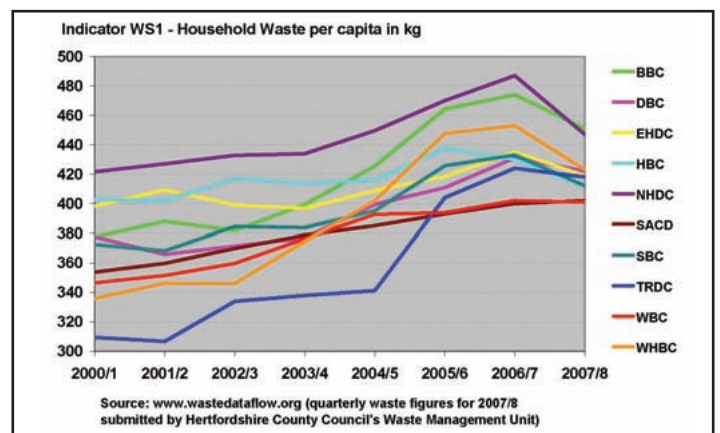
The total amount of waste produced in Hertfordshire during 2007/8 was estimated to be around 2 million tonnes. Of this, household waste¹ accounted for around 534,000 tonnes but the county's residents managed to reduce waste production by 4% over the previous year. Given the growth in residents' waste in recent years this is welcome progress. Each resident created around 504 kg of waste and households around 1.17 tonnes each. Compared to 2006/7 about 27 kg less waste was sent for disposal with 5 kg more of their waste recycled per year.



Almost all of Hertfordshire produced less waste in 2007/8 especially where waste was not recycled, signalling an increased awareness of the need to reduce, re-use and recycle as much as possible.

Indicator WS1 - Household Waste Per Capita²

Household Waste per capita fell in all districts during 2007-8 except for St Albans which rose by 2kg.



In 2007/08, 284,470 tonnes of municipal waste was disposed of outside Hertfordshire in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex and North London. Trade waste made up around 24,000 tonnes of this total.

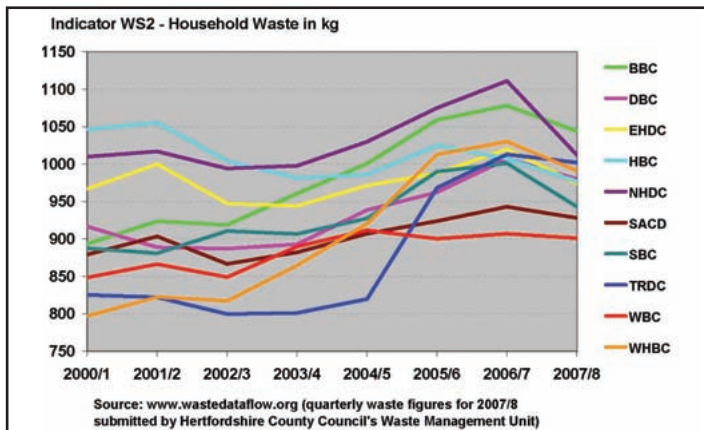
- Approximately 206,000 tonnes were diverted from disposal through recycling and composting. This raised the county's household recycling rate to 38.6%. 115,000 tonnes of this was sent for recycling and 91,000 tonnes was composted.
- Around 328,000 tonnes of household waste were not recycled or composted, including about 291,000 tonnes sent to landfill and 37,000 tonnes sent to an 'energy from waste' facility.
- Compared to the year before, residents put 7.3% less waste into their domestic dustbins and around 9.3% less into HWRCs¹.

Indicator WS2 - Waste Produced Per Household

The effects of waste minimisation initiatives, such as home composting, are not evident in the statistics, as there is no reliable way of accurately measuring their effect. They are, however, extremely beneficial in reducing the amount of waste requiring disposal.

The County Council's Home Composting Sponsorship Scheme, in association with the Waste & Resources Action Programme, (WRAP), promotes the sale of home composting units to residents at significantly reduced prices. In 2007 10,000 were sold to Hertfordshire residents and WRAP estimates that this may have diverted over 1,800 tonnes of waste from the waste stream, making a significant impact on disposal both environmentally and economically.

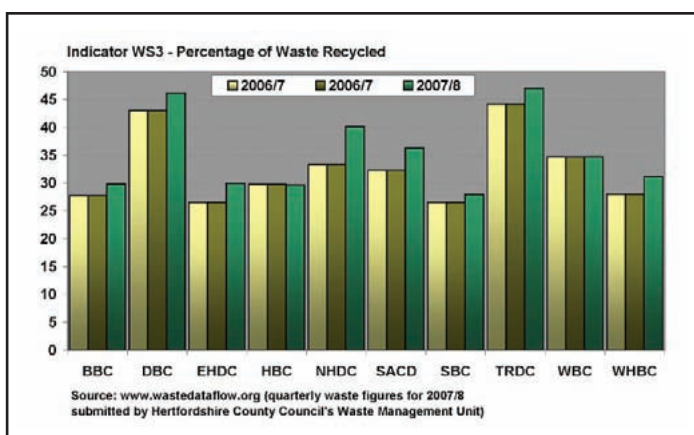
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In 2007/8 household waste recycled or composted rose to 38.6%, up 2.8% on 2006/7, making further progress towards the county's target of reaching 50% by 2012/13. During the year each authority also reconfirmed their commitment to achieving this target by signing a revised Hertfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Indicator WS3 - Percentage of Waste Recycled

Hertfordshire recycled 52% of waste received at its 19 HWRCs in 2007/8 showing more improvements with new materials being separated for recycling. In July 2007, the County Council began to separate all domestic electrical appliances at HWRCs for recycling, resulting in over 2,800 tonnes being recycled within just nine months.



Disposal of Hertfordshire's waste in the future

There is both an environmental and economic need to depart from landfill disposal of waste that cannot be recycled or composted. Biodegradable waste produces methane when buried, contributing to climate change so the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership is working hard to divert as much of this as possible and to develop alternative forms of treatment.

2007/08 was the third year the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) operated. Aimed at reducing biodegradable municipal waste disposed of at landfill, the County Council has complied every year and in 2007/8 it sent just 78% of its allocated tonnage of biodegradable municipal waste to landfill.

Economic pressure comes in the form of sharply rising fuel prices and landfill tax paid on each tonne of waste sent to landfill, the latter of which will continue to rise by £8 each year until at least 2011. This puts additional pressure on councils to achieve better recycling and composting rates and to cut the amount of residual waste sent to landfill.

In addition to the steps Hertfordshire County Council has already taken to increase recycling rates, a new scheme to reprocess waste wood was introduced. Together with recycling clean timber, a scheme in operation for some years, it is hoped this will divert thousands of tonnes of biodegradable waste from landfill each year. The County Council also intends to facilitate food and cardboard waste composting services to those households not yet in receipt of this type of collection. This will make a significant impact on composting amounts of waste disposed each year.

WasteAware

Changes in waste management will continue to be accompanied by strong communication efforts through Hertfordshire's WasteAware campaign. Now in its eleventh year, the campaign effectively raises awareness of the significant waste and recycling issues that the county faces.

Activities carried out during the year include:

- Promotion of waste reduction schemes, such as cotton nappies and home composting
- Computer take-back events for residents to donate IT equipment to local charities for reuse
- Encouraging residents to participate in local waste recycling schemes and opportunities.

1 Household waste is made up of 'dustbin' waste collected by the District and Borough Councils, litter, street sweepings, waste that is received at the County Council's 19 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and waste that is recycled and composted from the domestic waste stream. Non-household waste is made up of commercial, industrial, and construction and demolition wastes.

2 Figures incorporate all waste residents placed out in their refuse bins, recycling bring banks, their recycling boxes and green waste bins. The amount of waste deposited at the household waste recycling centres is included separately.