

Policy paper on recycling bins

Executive summary

Keep Wales Tidy has examined the issues surrounding street recycling bins and has concluded that, as one of Wales' foremost environmental stakeholders on local environmental quality and waste issues, the organisation should adopt a coherent policy around the issue. In our view, a paper on street recycling bins is timely, in that it coincides with two concurrent policy developments. First, the anticipated review of the Welsh Assembly Government Waste Strategy for Wales. Second, a Keep Wales Tidy project on the relationship between design and local environmental quality¹. More indirectly, some of the recommendations in this paper resonate with the current agenda on co-operation across county boundaries in Wales².

It is a welcome fact that domestic recycling rates in Wales have increased in recent years. However, Wales still lags behind the rates achieved by some EU states and regions, particularly in northern continental Europe. Moreover, it is our view that street, or 'on the go' recycling has yet to become a mainstream part of Welsh culture. This view is reflected in the fact that there is no national strategy, as such, for the provision of street recycling bins. Whilst there have been a number of laudable individual initiatives, the sharing of good practise across agencies has been limited. One aim of this paper is to highlight existing initiatives in a report that will be accessible to stakeholders in all parts of Wales.

A recent initiative by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in England is "Recycle on the Go". This is a voluntary scheme which provides guidance, a voluntary code of practice and a national system of brand recognition to local authorities in England who wish to roll out street recycling facilities. Our research indicates there is no comparable national initiative towards the provision of street litter bins on an all-Wales basis.

Nevertheless, some local authorities in Wales have been able to roll out a scheme for street litter recycling. Furthermore, the Wales Event Recycling Project, which we highlight below, has demonstrated success in managing waste in the context of short-term public events. We believe that these structures offer options towards future policy developments. We are also mindful of the "producer responsibility" principle, and invite the private sector in Wales to consider mutually beneficial initiatives such as the sponsorship of recycling bins.

Recycling bins: a cultural context

In October 2008, the Welsh Assembly Government released figures which indicate that the amount of household waste currently recycled in Wales is 32.2%³. This figure represents an increase of 4.5% on the 2007 figures, and it appears that Wales is on course to meet the European Union target figure of 40% (a target which has also been adopted by the Welsh Assembly Government for Local Authorities to achieve by 2010). Recently, the Welsh Assembly Government announced a "dramatic" new target for local authorities to recycle 70% of municipal waste by 2025⁴. This was developed further by WAG in the "One Wales: One Planet" Consultation on a new Sustainable Development Scheme for Wales, published in October 2008⁵. Furthermore, the WAG has also a stated its

aspiration for Wales to move towards a “zero waste” society⁶, a vision that would in theory eliminate all forms of litter, including street waste. Already, Powys, Conwy and Ceredigion have attained the former, 40% target⁷. It remains the case that Wales has some way to go before it can meet recent percentages of recycled household waste attained by some EU states and regions. For example: the Netherlands (59%), Austria (58%), Germany (53%)⁸, let alone the outstanding example of Flanders, which recycles between 65% (urban areas) and 72% (rural areas) of household waste⁹.

We believe that street recycling has an important role to play in Wales’ waste management structures. In quantitative terms, household waste will remain central. However, we believe that the provision of street recycling bins could be vital in establishing a widespread culture of recycling in the everyday life of the citizens of Wales. It would also further the Welsh Assembly Government’s recent commitment to a zero waste society. Qualitative sources testify to a long-standing culture of street recycling in northern continental Europe. the “Midnight Monkey Monitor” is a prominent environmental blog based in Singapore. It is written by November Tan, an activist who writes under the pseudonym “Leafmonkey”. In 2007, November Tan, visited Germany and commented on her experience of using day-to-day recycling facilities in public places which attracted her greatest attention:

“The waste sorting here is so meticulous that it would not allow you to even mix your organic waste with your other papers or packaging waste. Of course the others beside it includes plastic, glass, paper and sometimes packaging waste is even distinguished from your usual plastics. In fact, in all waste bins at the airports and train stations in Germany, rubbish bins don't just come in one but they come in a connected threesome everywhere you go.”¹⁰



Compartmentalised recycling bins at Fredersdorf railway station in the state of Brandenburg, Germany (Photo: Peter Spaczynski).

The words of November Tan, and picture (above) that was cited in “Midnight Monkey Monitor”, is type of scenario which Keep Wales Tidy would envisage for street recycling in Wales. In May 2008, an article by the *Guardian* directly addressed this cultural difference between Germany and the UK:

“... the fact is “mülltrennung” or rubbish separation is not nearly as bad as it sounds. People don't think twice about doing it in Germany. In fact it's almost a national pastime... And far from being threatening some bins even speak to say “thank you” when you drop your waste in.”¹¹

This *Guardian* extract was written in response to the reactionary stance taken by the *Daily Mail* against a government street recycling bin initiative in England (which also forms an important part of this paper)¹². Incidentally, The *Mail* article is just one of a growing number of tabloid press attacks on waste management initiatives during 2008. The same paper also talked of the “Dustbin Stasi”, comparing UK local authorities to the secret police of the former East German state¹³. *The Sun* went a step further, describing UK local authority waste employees as “Talibin”, thereby inviting an absurd comparison with the Taliban movement in Afghanistan¹⁴. Meanwhile, The *Telegraph* responded to the Vatican's pronouncement that environmental pollution was a “mortal sin” by warning its readers: “Recycle or go to hell”¹⁵. In this climate of tabloid hysteria, it is important for Keep Wales Tidy to respond by stating the facts about the provision (or otherwise) of street recycling bins in Wales.

Recycling bins in Wales: a policy overview

The management of waste in Wales is governed by the Welsh Assembly Government's National Waste Strategy, which was published in 2002¹⁶. There is no specific mention of street recycling bins in the strategy, although the provision of street recycling bins by public, private or voluntary sectors would resonate with several of the objectives in the National Waste strategy:

“A ‘producer responsibility’ approach is intended to require producers who put goods or materials onto the market to be more responsible for these products or materials when they become waste.” (section 2.16)

“Recycling is the preferred way to manage unavoidable waste.” (section 3.12)

“Business should grasp opportunities to take the lead in innovative approaches to sustainable waste management to put Wales at the forefront in the provision of technologies and services.” (section 3.21)

“The Assembly Government will facilitate the sharing of good practice, both within Wales and from outside.” (National Waste Strategy, section 3.29)

“The Assembly Government recognises the need to address short to medium term investment in new ways of managing waste in Wales in order to deliver the Assembly Government's strategic policies and meet legislative commitments.” (National Waste Strategy, section 3.31)

*“Fast food outlets are often blamed as sources of litter...It is essential that local authorities work closely with retailers to tackle the problems of littering with discarded food packaging.”
(Section 4.25)*

Correspondence between Keep Wales Tidy and other stakeholders, during the preparation of this paper, further underlines an absence of action on the provision of street litter bins. Waste Awareness Wales was formed in 2002 to ‘...provide official information to the public about managing materials and resources more sustainably, and reducing waste.’¹⁷ However, during the preparation of this paper, Waste Awareness Wales stated that they were not aware of any research conducted in relation to street recycling bins¹⁸. It is also indicative that less than a third of Wales’ 22 local authorities volunteered a response on the issue of street recycling schemes when contacted by Keep Wales Tidy¹⁹. One response, from the Vale of Glamorgan, seems to illustrate the difficulties that service providers in Wales face on this issue. It also demonstrates the real impact of recent pressures on public spending, and their impact on front-line services in Wales:

“Unless WAG consider implementing a Welsh initiative similar to “Recycle on the Go” it is unlikely that we will look at litter/recycling bins within our public access areas (Town Centres etc). However, We will be siting a bank of recycling bins in addition to litter bins at our Barry Island Resort in accordance with the Whitmore Bay Blue flag status.

Should this be successful and WAG change their mind on allowing grant monies for such recycling facilities we may look to expand the provision to other locations within the Vale of Glamorgan.”²⁰

At present, there is no intention on the part of the Welsh Assembly Government to roll out an initiative such as “Recycle on the Go” in Wales²¹. It is conceivable that the issue could be addressed in sector delivery plans after the completion of the ongoing review of the Waste Strategy for Wales.²² However, for the time being, the lack of an all-Wales policy means that there is no consistent ‘on-the-go’ recycling provision in Wales, and it therefore remains extremely difficult for individuals to recycle their waste on the high streets of Wales. However, our research has brought together a number of individual Welsh initiatives, administered either by local authorities or by third-sector organisations. Furthermore, recent developments in England and Scotland indicate that ‘on the go’ recycling has become a matter of direct interest for central government in those territories. We would suggest that now is an opportune time for all-Wales bodies, such as the Welsh Assembly Government, Waste Awareness Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association, along with individual local authorities, to observe the following case-studies from Wales; to examine the implementation of “Recycle on the Go” across local authorities in England and the recent legislative proposals in Scotland. We feel that each of these developments warrants careful consideration both for their advantages and potential disadvantages.

Recent ‘on the go’ recycling developments in Wales

Case-study 1: fixed street recycling units (local authority-led)

At the time of writing, Caerphilly County Borough Council had installed 25 compartmentalised street recycling units in public areas²³. The scheme was partially funded by the Welsh Assembly Government²⁴. Locations of the units included the county Civic Centre; Park & Ride facilities and egress points from Rail and main bus station terminals; “strategic town centre locations”; local authority visitor attractions and countryside parks; outlying Villages where kerbside recycling was unavailable; also at a local skateboard park²⁵.



Compartmentalised recycling bin near Caerphilly Castle (Photo: Caerphilly County Borough Council)

Further units are due to be installed in the park and ride areas of Risca and Newbridge stations on the new Ebbw Valley railway line²⁶. It is also clear that Caerphilly County Borough Council has paid attention to the details of such issues as manufacture and design; location; efficiency and even local procurement:

*“...bins are made locally and have proved to be very robust and impacting. We have procured a range of colours and finishes on the products and a variety of messages and material types depending on the location...**site assessment is crucial** and to date all sites have proved successful with contamination being only an occasional issue. We have carefully considered all aspects and implications before placement. Factors include good capture rates, easy access for emptying, high profile and visible locations where we can promote the positive message of managing Litter as a resource...”²⁷*

Some counties have launched recycling bin initiatives, funded in part by the Welsh Assembly Government. We highlight two such schemes below. Our evidence is somewhat limited, as only a limited number of local authorities responded to correspondence from Keep Wales Tidy requesting information on this issue. The unclear pattern of policy development is further evidenced by piecemeal funding from various Welsh Assembly Government funding sources to the counties. There is, as such, no county-by-county breakdown of WAG funding for recycling bins across the local

authorities of Wales²⁸. Nevertheless, Keep Wales Tidy has sighted street recycling bins during the drafting of this paper, such as the following unit in the town centre of Llanelli, Carmarthenshire:

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Compartmentalised recycling bin in Llanelli, Carmarthenshire (Photo: Keep Wales Tidy)

Several other initiatives have been reported to Keep Wales Tidy. In summer 2008, Pembrokeshire County Council conducted a street and beach pilot recycling scheme in a “popular tourist town” in the county. Two different types of bins were purchased (from county budgets) and two further types were loaned from well known bin and street furniture manufacturers. The pilot scheme has now ended, but Pembrokeshire is hoping to “roll out” an extension to the scheme, with the intention of securing EU funds for the project²⁹. Cardiff has a long record of street recycling in certain areas, with some bins provided to sort waste on the city’s Queens Street for over 5 years. More recently, ten recycling bins have been installed along the principle city centre shopping street. It is claimed that these “Thanks Banks” have assisted public awareness of recycling, but that the success of the project may be compromised somewhat by the design of the bins³⁰. One further initiative highlights the problem of contamination in street recycling bins. Gwynedd County Council recently installed street recycling bins in the towns of Dolgellau, Bangor, Caernarfon, Porthmadog and Pwllheli. The scheme was funded by the Sustainable Waste Management Grant from the Welsh Assembly Government. The bins were intended to collect paper, cans and glass. However, the local authority reported that the bins were being misused and contaminated to such an extent that the contents of the bins had to be emptied into regular waste disposal lorries. However, the bins in Pwllheli and Caernarfon are reported as being more successful, and have remained in place. The local authority have reported that they are hoping to reinstate bins in Bangor, Dolgellau and Bala, possibly with support from the forthcoming Tidy Towns grants³¹.



Street recycling bins in Caernarfon, Gwynedd (Photo: Gwynedd County Council)

Elsewhere in the north, Conwy County Council have reported the existence of two street recycling bins in their county: one at Rhos Point, Rhos on Sea; and one in North Western Gardens, Llandudno³².

Meanwhile, Powys County Council have confirmed that despite having no street recycling bins in the past, the local authority is examining the possibility of introducing six recycling bins on a trial basis across the county in the near future. Funding for such an initiative may come from the Welsh Assembly Government Tidy Towns fund. However the authority is likely to place recycling bins in parkland areas rather than urban street settings. Current, perceived impediments to recycling bins in the county are that town centre streets are too narrow, or otherwise occupied by street markets³³. Of further interest to us is an indication that recycling bins are being considered as part of the “Transition Towns” initiative in the county³⁴. Further to this development, we would envisage that visible recycling schemes should be a standard component of an unspecified number of “strategic regeneration areas” that have been announced by the Welsh Assembly (Rhyl and Colwyn Bay had been confirmed at the time of writing)³⁵.

Case-study 2: temporary recycling units at major public events

The Wales Event Recycling Project is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and was launched in July 2006. The main objective of the project is to:

“...support and advise event organisers, local authorities and community sector partners in implementing ‘best practice’ systems in event recycling systems in Wales.”³⁶

At first glance, the project appears to be a straightforward partnership between central government and the third sector in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government is responding by funding the Project. The operation of the Project, and the post of Project Officer, are hosted by Cylch (the Wales Community Recycling Network)³⁷. The key Project partner is Waste Awareness Wales, who are

responsible for producing promotional branded items for the Project. One of the main outputs of the project has been the *Wales Event Recycling Guide*, which provides practical advice and case-studies on recycling for event organisers in Wales³⁸.

The Wales Event Recycling Project was active at the Royal Welsh Show in 2006. In 2007, the Project enlisted the support of an academic research centre, the National Centre for Product Design and Development Research (PDR), based at University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC)³⁹. PDR designed a range of durable, high-visibility bin covers for use at the Royal Welsh Show:

“The new bins, which can best be described as dynamic, engaging and bright, were designed to address the lack of event recycling in Wales. In a very tight timescale, PDR took the project from design to production using their in-house expertise and facilities, and successfully exceeded all objectives set out by their clients - Waste Awareness Wales and Cylch.

Clearly segregated through colour coded bin covers and eye-catching graphics, PDR designed bins to accommodate cans, plastics, compostables and residuals – leaving no excuse for event-goers to ignore recycling!”⁴⁰

In 2008, the recycling services available at the Royal Welsh Show included schemes at the three caravan sites; and collections from trade and catering stands.



Event recycling at the Royal Welsh Show (Photo: Cylch)

More specific to this policy paper was the provision of recycling bins at ten locations on the showground, “including the catering and picnic areas as well as individual sets of bins around the show rings”⁴¹. There are further significant points to make about this case study. First, all of the bins and promotional items used by the Wales Event Recycling Project display the National “Recycle for Wales” branding, as seen on the Waste Awareness Wales website⁴². As Cylch make clear, national

branding “...delivers a consistent recycling message across Wales, regardless of where the event is held.⁴³” A single, national branding approach is identical to the strategy adopted by the “Recycle on the Go” initiative in England. The second point to make is that the Wales Event Recycling Project has assisted over forty public events since 2006. The Project has assumed the formidable task of advising the National, Urdd and Llangollen *Eisteddfodau* – two of the largest events of their kind in Europe. The evidence from the Wales Event Recycling Project suggests that an infrastructure to deliver a series of short-term street recycling bin initiatives is already in place.

Case-study

3: a city centre recycling initiative

Between 2003 and 2006, Keep Wales Tidy administered a pilot project to encourage public separation of waste materials in street recycling units (funded predominantly by Cardiff City Council)⁴⁴. Ten 120 galvanised units, each with a capacity of 120 litres, were located on the River Walk, adjacent to the Millennium Stadium and River Taff in Cardiff. It is estimated that usage of the River Walk varies from 100 people on a normal working day, to 20,000 people on a major stadium.

The units were separated into four sections to allow for the collection of plastic bottles, glass bottles, cans and litter. Prominent, bilingual, signage indicated that the units were for recycling. Apertures for the recyclable materials were designed to allow for minimum contamination from other materials. The litter aperture was designed to take larger items and its labelling colour was red instead of green.

Material	Tonnage 03/04	Tonnage 04/05	Tonnage 05/06
Landfill	N/A	4.37	18.72
Plastic recycled	1.1	2.75	5.47
Cans recycled	0.73	1.85	4.80
Glass	0.28	6.67	15.37
Total Recycled	2.10	11.27	25.64
% Recycled	N/A	72%	58%

The location of the units raised issues of design: recycling units had to be designed to fit the width of the stanchions which support the walkway above the River Taff. Another issue emerged in the early stages of the initiative. On busy match days at the stadium, the units would become full, and would have to be shut down. This issue is possibly relevant for future initiatives in town and city centres. Nevertheless, the increased year-on-year tonnage collected by the units is remarkable, and this data provides a useful indication of the rough amounts of waste that might be involved in possible future initiatives. By way of a postscript, the City and County of Cardiff has recently reported to Keep Wales Tidy that two new bins are due to be installed at either end of the Millennium walk by the end of 2008, and more indefinite plans to extend street recycling across Wales' capital city⁴⁵.

Developments in other parts of the UK

“Recycle on the Go” (non-legislative central government guidelines in England)

The issue of street recycling bins was recognised in the *Waste Strategy for England 2007*, published by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)⁴⁶. Chapter Seven of the document was entitled “A shared responsibility”, and argued that more active participation in waste management would be required from a wide range of sectors, ranging from “...businesses, including retailers, from public sector producers of waste, from the third sector, and from members of the public.”⁴⁷ Eight policies and actions were listed in order to meet this objective, including the following:

*“Providing more **recycling bins in public places** through cooperation with owners and managers of relevant land and premises used by the public to make it easier to recycle away from home; development of guidance and a voluntary code of practice for such owners and managers.”⁴⁸(bold text in original document).*

This policy is developed further in sections 22 and 23 of Chapter 7 of the Waste Strategy. It is interesting that the document refers to developing a “recycling culture”:

“The Government wishes to extend the recycling ‘culture’ from the home to places where people work and which they visit. Organisations are increasingly providing facilities to recycle a range of materials – both those used as part of their work (e.g. office paper) and by individuals, such as cans, bottles, newspapers and batteries.”

*“To extend these developments further, Government has been informally consulting with a range of **owners and managers** of relevant land and premises used by the public to encourage them to promote recycling in the street and in public places by, for example, **providing recycling bins** alongside or as part of any existing bins provision (in appropriate locations), or by harvesting recyclable materials collected in public litter bins. To support this, the Government will develop with key stakeholders **guidance and a voluntary code of practice** to be published by the end of 2007, with the intention of stimulating a new wave of public recycling from 2008.”⁴⁹*

“Recycle on the Go” was eventually launched in 2008. The scheme consists of two further documents. The first document is a voluntary code of practice, which sets out four key principles for landowners and businesses seeking to develop recycling facilities in public places⁵⁰:

1. Provide recycling opportunities along with provisions for the correct disposal of non-recyclable waste
2. Adopt standard signage on all recycling receptacles
3. Maintain and upkeep the infrastructure
4. Re-use, recycle and/or compost the materials collected

The principles of the voluntary code of practice are fleshed out in a “good practice guide”, which contains detailed, practical advice to users on the management of recycling schemes, ranging from issues such as planning and consultation, to matters of detail including the location, design and iconography of recycling bins in public places⁵¹.

It is interesting to note that legislative change in this policy area was not considered necessary by DEFRA. The debate between legislation and a voluntary / market-led approach was outlined in the consultation document on the proposed “Recycle on the Go” scheme, published in August 2007⁵²:

“Research to date suggests that there is not an inherent market failure that presents a permanent barrier to organisations providing recycling opportunities for public use. Furthermore, organisations that have been consulted in preparing for the publication of this consultation paper have suggested that market failures can be overcome if Government provides guidance on public place recycling. Organisations that already provide recycle bins are not necessarily taking a consistent approach. Whether or not they already offer recycling bins for public use, organisations do not appear to fully understand the cost of sending waste to landfill and the relative benefits of recycling, nor how best to go about setting up a recycling scheme. Guidance is needed to broker consistency and to set out the case for public place recycling...”

“...Government does not have any plans to legislate while voluntary measures are given the chance to bed in. The development of the voluntary code of practice and good practice guide is viewed as the mechanism to help voluntary measures establish themselves. Legislation is therefore not included...as an option. If Government were to decide that legislation is necessary to overcome inherent future market failure then a separate Impact Assessment and consultation exercise would be carried out.”

In general, the voluntary / market-led approach was accepted by representatives of local government in England – i.e. the sector which is most intimately involved with domestic waste collection. However, in their response to the consultation, the Local Government Association argued that “Recycle on the go” was deficient in that there was no mention of “producer responsibility” measures to pressurise the initial source of waste:

“Taxpayers foot the clean-up bill for items such as free newspapers, cans, bottles etc. which end up in the litter bin: but the LGA believe that, under Producer Responsibility measures, the companies that benefit from, for example, the estimated £1.3 million clean-up bill for the estimated 180 tonnes of waste created each day created by free newspapers in London, should pay or make a contribution...The waste produced on trains could also be easily separated and train operators should be required to collect waste separately for recycling... Organisations outside of the public service realm must also be encouraged to set up their own recycling systems in places such as private shopping centres.”⁵³

A second concern expressed by the LGA was funding. “Recycle on the Go” does not include any funding or other direct financial incentive from DEFRA to local government in England⁵⁴. We can infer that a voluntary scheme in Wales without accompanying financial resources for local government would raise a similar issue. As one local authority in Wales has reported concisely to Keep Wales Tidy:

“The only problem that we experience each year is a smaller budget for the purchasing of litterbins.”⁵⁵

In the context of “Recycle on the Go”, the LGA argued that in the absence of significant resources from central government (in partnership with the private sector), then the impact of an advisory scheme such as “Recycle on the Go” would necessarily be limited:

“Unless properly resourced, it is likely that the schemes set out in the consultation for ‘recycling-on-the-go’ [sic] will have high costs for very little return in diversion of waste / increase in recycling rates...Local councils have already been cut to the bone in terms of local finances, and the LGA feels Government may miss the opportunity to work with producers of ‘street litter’ to establish funding for well-resourced schemes. This would be a range of producers – from producers of free papers to items such as drinks bottles (both plastics and glass) and cans. If government is really serious about linking behaviour change on the street with increased recycling, funding must be part of this scheme, via a robust producer responsibility scheme. This system will only work if there is buy-in from all sectors, public and private.”⁵⁶

At the time of writing, “Recycle on the Go” is still in its infancy. It is too early to tell whether the initiative has created a “new wave of public place recycling” across England, as DEFRA had originally hoped⁵⁷. Further complications may arise in the form of an international scheme to colour-code waste and recycling containers across the UK and EU⁵⁸. Consider is the prospect of an international scheme of colour coding here is Nevertheless, a review of the press releases that have come to light indicates that some local authorities have taken the opportunity to launch some eye-catching initiatives in the early stages of the scheme. Camden council has installed, on a six-month trial basis, dual litter / newspaper recycling bins in order to target used copies of newspapers such as *London Lite*⁵⁹, *thelondonpaper*⁶⁰ and *Metro*⁶¹ which are distributed widely to commuters, and have been a notable source of waste⁶².



Producer responsibility: the recycling message is clear on this dispensing unit provided by a free newspaper company at St. Pancras railway station, London (Photo: Keep Wales Tidy)

In July 2008, Peterborough City council replaced some of its traditional litter bins with facilities for recycling cans and plastics⁶³. Hinckley and Bosworth's "Recycle on the Go" initiative allows for bottles, cans and paper to be recycled in shopping areas and visitor sites. Interestingly, some bins include a separate compartment for smoking-related litter⁶⁴. Havering Council launched their "Recycling on the go" initiative with a public information roadshow⁶⁵

Legislative proposals (Scotland)

Mandatory provision of recycling bins in certain public establishments was one option being considered by the Scottish Government when this policy paper was being drafted⁶⁶. Interestingly, the provision of recycling bins in public places was the first option presented by the consultation paper. Moreover, the possible range of regulations and sanctions outlined in the consultation paper suggests that the prospect of legislation in this area is at a relatively advanced stage in Scotland compared with other parts of the UK. "Proposal 1", as it is named in the consultation paper, would work along the following lines:

- require businesses and public sector bodies with units over a certain size to provide recycling facilities (a rolling implementation period would allow time for recycling contractors to respond to the demand);
- set out the types of businesses and the types of sites covered by the duty (e.g. retailers, shopping centres, airports, beaches, car parks, cinemas, entertainment sites, parks, road lay-bys, sports stadia, visitor attraction and Government buildings);

- make provisions for any exemptions relating to certain categories of business (eg there might need to be an exemption for railway stations, given security concerns about recycling bins in stations);
- specify which materials should be collected and whether facilities should be made available including, for example, any facilities that might be required to remove excess packaging in larger stores;
- require the owners and occupiers of the premises covered by the duty to make arrangements for the materials in the recycling facilities to be collected and transported for recycling or re-use;
- require the owners and occupiers to keep records on the facilities provided, the amounts collected and where material to be recycled was sent;
- lay down appropriate penalties or civil sanctions for non-compliance. The regulations would need to be enforced, probably by local authorities. We might also need to consider if it is necessary to amend existing powers for local authorities to collect commercial waste to ensure that they can act as collector of last resort and have the power to charge for this, if private or community sector recycling firms should be unavailable; and
- in addition, give local authorities powers to require recycling facilities to be provided in certain locations in private ownership in their areas which regularly attract large numbers of the public, for example, at sports, recreational or entertainment facilities.

This would go earlier under what is happening in Wales

Conclusion

Overall, it is our impression that recycling policy in Wales over recent years has (rightly) concentrated on domestic recycling. However, we would also contend that the lack of a co-ordinated strategy on street recycling is a missed opportunity. It is evident that large proportions of the people of Wales have been happy to use curbside recycling facilities. It is reasonable to expect that widespread use would be made of on-street facilities, if such facilities were made available on a wider scale. Local authorities therefore need to find all avenues of recycling waste, and street recycling seems to offer an obvious and under-developed opportunity. Street recycling can only serve to raise awareness and help develop a culture of recycling; this will in turn have a knock-on for individual household recycling habits. We have demonstrated that examples of good practice exist in Wales. However, initiatives have developed piecemeal.

In the paper, we have cited the existence of a national strategy in England. We do not believe that it is the role of authorities in Wales to “ape” policy developments in England. However, the forthcoming review of the Waste Strategy for Wales appears to offer an ideal opportunity for the consideration of some form of national street recycling scheme for Wales. Keep Wales Tidy is

mindful that responsibility for recycling is shared across society. By extension, we believe that increasing the provision of recycling bins in Wales' high streets is also a shared responsibility. Starting from the bottom up, we need a cultural shift in the mindsets of individuals. However, individuals can only reasonably be expected to recycle where the opportunity exists. It is therefore incumbent on government, business and the third sector to provide a wider range of recycling provisions in the high street. We believe that the following recommendations are realistic, based on our understanding of current strategies in Wales. Moreover, our recommendations reflect a responsibility on all sectors to develop effective street recycling facilities.

Recommendations

1. **An all-Wales strategy on Street Recycling.** Such a strategy should be built on existing good practice, with the aim of making street recycling the norm in Wales. In our view, the review of the Waste Strategy for Wales provides an opportune time to develop this strategy. Section 3.29 of the *National Waste Strategy for Wales* promises that WAG will facilitate the sharing of good practice. In line with this commitment, we call on WAG to monitor and evaluate the impact of the "Recycle on the Go" initiative in England, and consider if a similar scheme (in whole or part) would be beneficial to Wales. We also envisage a role for the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) in facilitating a seminar or other such event (s) on the role of street recycling bins in Wales' local authorities, and as a means of sharing good practice.
2. **Dialogue with business.** We view private sponsorship of new recycling bins as an possible short-term action to improve recycling rates in the high streets of Wales. We envisage that such a scheme would bring benefits in kind to business. Keep Wales Tidy is enthusiastic to meet representatives of the private sector and local government in order to gauge opinion on this option. As part of this recommendation, we would envisage dialogue with producers of free newspapers. Local authorities in London have co-operated with distributors of free newspapers on the issue of recycling. A strong symbolic initiative might be the provision of recycling bins in Cardiff City Centre, sponsored by the *Metro*⁶⁷ newspaper which is particularly prevalent in Wales' capital city. We would envisage that Keep Cardiff Tidy might be interested in furthering this objective.
3. **Wales Event Recycling Project** - detailed consideration should be given to evidence emanating from the Wales Event Recycling Project. The Project is already the result of a fairly sophisticated partnership which involves (either directly or indirectly) the Welsh Assembly Government, the Welsh Local Government Association, Waste Awareness Wales and Cylch. The Project has already staffed significant recycling initiatives at some of Wales' key public events. Keep Wales Tidy believes that the Wales Event Recycling Project could be used by local authorities on a short-term, "pilot study" approach, as a first step towards determine possible locations for permanent recycling bins. Keep Wales Tidy urges all Project partners to consider this option, and will be willing to facilitate dialogue towards such a pilot scheme.

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- ¹ Keep Wales Tidy: “Tackling litter through design”, *Tidy Talk*, Spring 2008.
- ² Review of Local Service Delivery: Report to the Welsh Assembly Government: *Beyond Boundaries: Citizen-Centred Local Services for Wales* (Beecham Report), June 2006;
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- ³ Welsh Assembly Government: “Recycling hits new high in Wales”, 3 October 2008.
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