

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30TH JANUARY 2012

SUBJECT:	CORPORATE GOAL PROGRESS REPORT- “MINIMISING WASTE BY ENCOURAGING WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING”
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR BRIAN KENNY, ENVIRONMENT
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report updates Members on the Technical Services Delivery Plan (TS1) that supports the Corporate Goal “Minimise waste by encouraging waste reduction and recycling”. The report covers two key areas of activity revolving around:

- Educating and raising awareness to reduce the amount of household waste being sent to landfill and improving recycling rates
- Maintaining high levels of participation in the kerbside recycling scheme through the delivery of a reliable waste collection service.

The Delivery Plan is attached as **Appendix A** of this report.

1.2 At the Council meeting of 12th December, Motion 90, “Increasing Recycling” was passed. A full response to the Motion will be presented to this Committee on 28th March 2012. However, this report does cover some of the areas that Members requested the Director of Technical Services to report on. The Motion is included as **Appendix B** of this report.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are requested to:

- (1) Note the progress of the 2011/12 TS1 Delivery Plan;
- (2) Note and endorse the inclusion of the future projects proposed in section 8 in the draft 2012/13 TS1 Delivery Plan.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

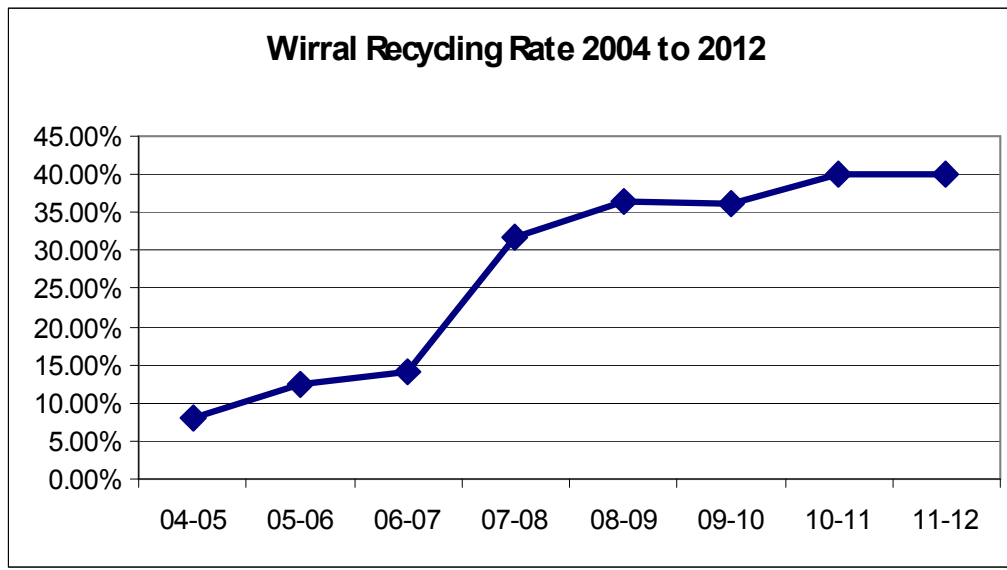
- 3.1 The reasons for the above recommendations are to highlight to Members that Wirral Council and the Merseyside Waste Partnership are committed to achieving a 50% recycling and composting rate by 2020, subject to the ongoing Councils ratification process of the JRWMS. Over the next eight years, the Council will need to develop a pro-active approach to waste prevention through active campaigns and practical projects building on the work that has already been started this year.
- 3.2 The Council already manage an established kerbside collection scheme offering householders the ability to divert a significant amount of waste from landfill. We need to build upon this and with the support of the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA), formerly the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority, investigate opportunities to introduce new materials to the kerbside collection making it easy for householders to recycle more materials efficiently.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Members will be aware that the Merseyside Waste Partnership (MWP) has developed a new Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy (JRWMS) for Merseyside. The Strategy and associated Wirral District Council Action Plan (DCAP) are currently going through the Council ratification process. Members have previously had reports presented at this committee on the 11th March 2011 and the 26th September 2011.
- 4.2 The Council, subject to the ratification process, will ultimately have two revised Strategic documents that will guide the Council in meeting both waste reduction targets and recycling targets.

5.0 PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST SEVEN YEARS

Chart 5.1: Wirral Household Waste Recycling Performance



- 5.1 Since 2005/6 the Council has experienced an increase in performance.
- 5.2 In 2010/11, Wirral's recycling rate reflected the National Average of 40%.
- 5.3 However Wirral sits towards the bottom of the 3rd Quartile, nationally, in terms of the amount of waste sent to landfill per head of the population.
- 5.4 At the present time the Council has reached a plateau of around 40% performance and the Council will only see minor increments in performance for the years 2011/12 onwards without further investment.
- 5.5 The Council's strategic approach for the next eight years will be to:
 - Focus on waste reduction through waste reduction campaigns and practical guidance, with particular focus on reducing food waste in line with emerging National and EU requirements.
 - Work with partners to introduce new materials to the kerbside collection scheme.
 - Work with partners to explore increasing the number of on street recycling bins within the borough.
 - To meet the national and Merseyside recycling target of 50% by 2020.

- Improve the quality of kerbside collected recycling, through reducing both deliberate and accidental contamination through the continued deployment of the five assistant recycling project officers and enhanced monitoring of material quality by the waste collection contractor.

6.0 PROGRESS ON RECYCLING INITIATIVES

6.1 Every action contained within the TS1 Delivery Plan is given a target status of red, amber or green. Definitions below:

- Red – Project has overrun its given target time
- Amber – Project has experienced some delays but is still on schedule
- Green – Project is continuing as targeted

There are currently 35 projects at green, zero at red and one at amber due to being unavoidably re scheduled from Spring 2011 to Spring 2012.

Section 6.2 to 6.7 updates Members on actions contained within the Delivery Plan.

6.2 Garden Waste

There have been a significant number of complaints this year regarding the coverage of the garden waste collection service. This has resulted in a review of the service and the further expansion to 3300 properties that will receive brown bins in Spring 2012.

The composting of garden waste makes up approximately 15% of the 40% of all household waste that is recycled or composted.

6.3 Kerbside Recycling Service

6.3.1 Improving the quality of recycling collected

Officers estimate that this current financial year will result in 23-25% of household waste being recycled through the grey bin dry recycling service.

Officers are working with Biffa and MRWA to manage reducing contamination in the waste stream to ensure that the quality of recycling is optimised for the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) and subsequently the reprocessors who receive the material.

Ongoing Work areas include:

- Revised crew check procedure to ensure all crews are checking contents of bins before emptying recycling bins and rejecting contaminated bins.

- Assistant Recycling Project Officers deployed in areas identified by Biffa as having high numbers of contaminated grey bins to work directly with the public to enhance awareness.
- Review of operational methods deployed by similar Councils in similar areas identified as having high numbers of contaminated bins.

This year has seen a significant focus on improving the quality of recycling collected. A combination of campaign material and practical action on the ground by collection crews and the Council's Assistant Project Recycling Officers has seen a general reduction in contamination of 30% from quarter 1 to quarter 2, officers expect a similar reduction to show in quarter 3.

In just nine months, the five Assistant Recycling Officers have:

- Proactively checked over 22,000 households bins as part of targeted education work.
- Visited over 750 households that have more than one green bin to make sure that they are still required and that the households are still entitled to them and are using their recycling bins.
- Promoted the Love Food Hate Waste campaign at key events.

This approach will continue and two targeted pro-active door-knocking campaigns will take place in summer 2012 to engage with residents about recycling in general as well as food waste reduction.

6.3.2 Opportunities to introduce new materials to the grey bin scheme

The MRWA are exploring the businesses case for introducing additional materials to the kerbside recycling stream. This project is in its infancy but the MRWA are expected to report back further details in February 2012. Introducing new materials will have to be based on the following conditions:

- The materials can be separated effectively using the Materials Reprocessing Facility (MRF).
- The inclusion of new materials does not adversely affect the quality of other waste streams.
- Markets exist for the separated materials.
- A business case exists to support the adaptations required to facilitate the introduction of new materials. Materials currently being considered are textiles and rigid plastics.

6.4 On Street Recycling (on-the-go) bins

There are currently 50 on street recycling bins located throughout Townships in Wirral. The locations of these bins are mainly around retail areas. The bins enable the public to recycle when out and about and avoid approximately quarter of a tonne of material going to landfill per week.

The bins are popular and a number of area forum requests are received each year for new locations. Officers have recently had the waste analysed for quality with a view to introducing greater flexibility and efficiencies within the Council's Environmental Streetscene Services Contract by changing the emptying of these containers from a kerbside collection function to a street cleansing function.

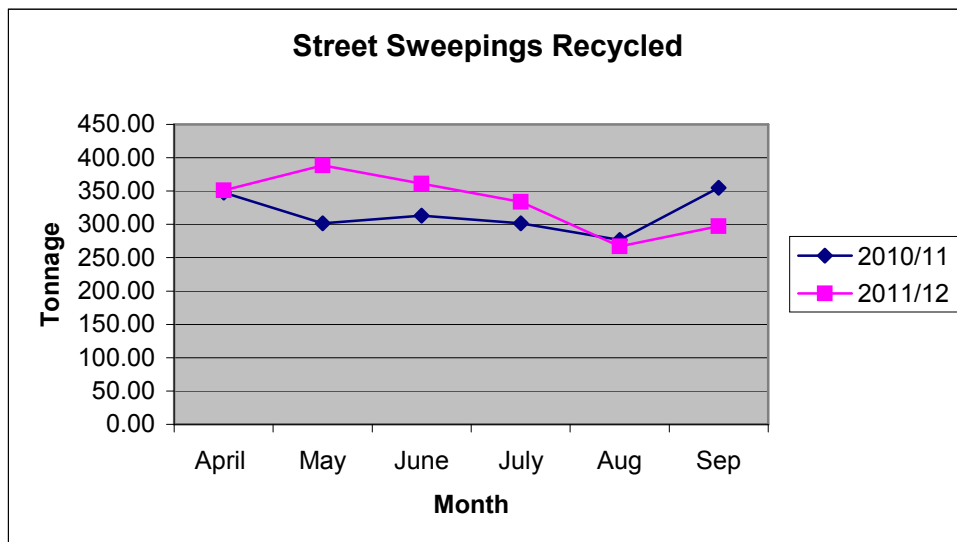
Working with the MRWA, the Council are seeking to significantly increase the amount of these containers within the borough, potentially meaning that most new litterbins that are installed will be a double bin unit with the opportunity for the passer by to recycle. This will be predicated on the MRWA agreeing for Wirral to deliver "on-the-go" recycling bagged to the MRF alongside bagged litterbin waste. Officers expect a decision from the MRWA in February 2012.

6.5 Street Cleansing Recycling

The waste from the mechanical street cleansing vehicles that sweep the roads and pavements within the Borough has been recycled since late 2009. Table 6.5.1 shows the first six months comparison for the current and last financial year. At the time of writing this report, verified data from October 2011 onwards had not been released by the MRWA.

As Biffa have recently increased the resource to target annual leaf fall, more street cleansing waste will be recycled in future years (an increase will also show from October this year).

Table 6.5.1: Comparison of Street Sweepings (tonnages)



6.6 Bring Site Review

A full Bring Site review is currently in progress. The study has looked at a number of options as to the future of Wirral's Bring Sites and has so far concluded that:

- The Bring Site collection service is costly and inefficient.
- Supermarkets are now taking ownership of sites on their land.
- Residents can widely recycle household waste using the kerbside collection service and tonnages at Bring Sites have fallen by 95% since the introduction of the grey bin recycling service.
- There may be significant opportunities to introduce new materials to the kerbside collection service and launching Bring Sites with new materials at this time may be premature.
- Bring Sites can be located at community outlets as a partnership approach providing income to the community. This approach is currently being piloted by the Waste and Environment Team with selected schools and community organisations.

As part of the Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) Environmental Streetscene Services Contract review, the future strategic direction of Council Bring Sites is being considered. It is proposed that further recommendations will be presented to Cabinet in April 2012 and officers in Technical Services intend to carry out a consultation exercise targeting current Bring Sites users that will inform any future decisions. It is important to note that savings circa £100,000 could be made through the planned withdrawal of Council led servicing of Bring Sites.

6.7 Council Complex Recycling

All Council buildings that have employees and members of the public based within them have been provided with a recycling service as part of the Council's Environmental Streetscene Services Contract. A Recycling Policy has recently been distributed to building managers to place at strategic points within their buildings. Staff have been informed of the policy. A target of 40% recycling by March 2012 has been set (a copy of the Council's internal Recycling Policy is included within **Appendix C**). The performance of individual complexes is being monitored will be fed back to complex managers to ensure staff and managers working in those buildings take appropriate ownership over maximising recycling opportunities.

6.8 Textile Recycling

On September 26th 2011, Technical Services launched a new way of collecting textiles involving reaching out into the hearts of communities. This involves eight primary schools, two secondary schools and two-day centres as a trial project. The income received from the sale of the collected textiles will be re-invested back into the community via the community organisations that host the textile containers.

6.9 Eco Schools

6.9.1 The Eco Schools campaign is now firmly embedded into the Council enabling schools and the wider community to benefit from the things it has to offer. A working group made up of different departments within the Council has been established to work under the umbrella of Eco Schools. A shared database has been established for school based activities and partnership projects.

6.9.2 A grant system for schools to support eco activities has been used to help develop practical action and allow schools to take ownership of problems. Twelve schools have received start up grants and 9 schools have received Going for Green Flag grants.

6.9.3 A number of events have taken place including:

- A rubbish fun day at the Oval
 - An environment week at Heswall Primary School with 4 visiting schools, that enabled the Council to test and trial activities for key campaign areas.
 - Biodiversity in the park with rangers and a poet working with 6 schools, several new to eco work,
 - Eco Christmas activities which have been in 10 locations and included crafts from recycled items, a sustainable Christmas show that explored food miles and the impact of Christmas on climate change, an eco pantomime that linked Cinderella to the world of recycling, oh no it didn't, oh yes it did! And a family recycled craft activity that enabled thoughtful discussion on waste. In total about 5000 children were involved.

6.9.4 A number of key campaigns have taken place this year:

- Eco / healthy lunches working in partnership with Wirral Community NHS Trust that aims to reduce waste in children's pack lunches and promote alternatives that are good for the children and also good for the planet.
- Switch off fortnight working with the energy team; we visited 20 schools to see their energy saving work. Prizes were given to children.
- Meadow project to create a meadow area in New Brighton. The project includes the 3 primary schools in the New Brighton ward being involved in all stages of project planning, planting, cultivating seeds and generating educational resources for other schools to use. The project will be rolled out as a mini meadow project to all schools on Wirral. The work begins in January.
- All work will be showcased at an eco convention in July

6.9.5 There are now 18 schools in Wirral that have the full Eco Schools Green Flag Award. Many schools have been helped along by the Councils Eco Schools Officer to register / re-register or to move up from Bronze or Silver Awards. The

ultimate aim is for all schools in Wirral to become more environmentally aware and sustainable, building on the work that already has been undertaken both independently by the schools and with the support of the Councils Eco Schools Officer.

6.10 Community Enviro-Champs Network

6.10.1 The latest phase of the Waste and Environment community engagement strategy is the Enviro-Champs Network. This approach has been recognised a best practice model by the Tidy Britain Group and revolves around the Council facilitating groups to network, therefore increasing opportunities to launch environmental projects.

6.10.2 There are 140 individual members of the Enviro-Champs Network, including many of the community groups within Wirral. The Council has already facilitated two quarterly newsletters and two conferences. The network will really help to deliver key messages about future Wirral campaigns and encourage the spread of more grass roots action. At this current time, through the onward transmission of electronic messages, the 140 key members can reach some 15,000 residents via their network lists.

7.0 PROGRESS ON WASTE REDUCTION AND PREVENTION INITIATIVES

7.1 For the last three years, Wirral have promoted the national Love Food Hate Waste Campaign with additional support from the MWP. There have been a number of strategic events that have been attended by the team, such as the Wirral Food and Drink Festival.

7.2 Questionnaires conducted at the Wirral Food and Drink Festival revealed that the Love Food Hate Waste logo was widely recognised by the general public. Many residents highlighted that they threw mainly bread and fruit away due it going off and they also threw left overs away. People were surprised at the amount of money wasted (circa £680) by an average family per annum due to throwing away food.

7.3 Officers have seen a decrease in overall household waste arisings so far this year compared to 2010/11, mainly due to changes in the nature of waste such as the light weighting of packaging and also the impact of the recession and awareness of the Love Food Hate Waste campaign amongst Wirral residents. Our performance indicator NI 191, Residual Household Waste landfilled per household from April - November of this year is currently down by 5.79kg per household compared to the same time frame last year. This represents 843 tonnes less waste being landfilled.

7.4 The garden waste, recycling and general refuse wagons have recently had a revised set of vehicle banners fitted to them to promote waste reduction and prevention promoting the following:

- Unwanted mail reduction

- Textile recycling / Re use
- Food waste reduction
- Increased capture of materials during the festive season
- Donating, swapping and selling Items

An example of the banners has been included in **Appendix D**.

Where applicable, the banners direct residents to the Council website where there is active promotion of waste reduction and reuse. Between September 2011 and December 2011 there have been 88 unique “hits” on the reduce page, 49 “hits” on the reuse page and 182 “hits” on the LFHW page, this is being monitored on a quarterly basis.

- 7.5 In summer 2012, officers plan to undertake two targeted pro-active door knocking exercises covering approximately 1500 properties. The aim of the exercise will be to ask residents if they need clarification on any issues relating to recycling and also promote waste reduction with particular emphasis on food waste reduction. There will also be targeted work promoting the use of home compost bins, previously scheduled for March 2011.

8.0 FUTURE PROJECTS

8.1 Fly Tipping of Household Waste in Alleyways

Officers intend to review the Council’s methodology for dealing with waste deposited in entries as areas that have high volumes of illegal dumping also have low recycling rates, indicating that some households in terraced areas are not using the Waste Collection Service efficiently. This will include a comprehensive report presented to Committee at a future meeting detailing the key issues, impact on the local environment, the performance of the service and the recommended way forward for any improvements suggested. As part of the report, the Council’s current policy on Household Waste and Recycling Enforcement, as agreed by Cabinet in November 2008 will be reviewed.

8.2 Small Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Recycling

Biffa are conducting three trials with other local authorities where they have collection contracts. The trials that commenced in December 2011, involve collecting small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) on the kerbside collection. Depending on the results on the trials, it may be the case that Wirral and Biffa could offer a similar service to residents. This will be detailed to Members as part of the contract review report due to go to Cabinet in April 2012. The relevant capital funding to support the introduction of such a scheme has been identified. It is also anticipated that any ongoing revenue requirements will be offset by the income generated from the sale of the electrical items. Alternative collection methods, such as the provision of

WEEE recycling points across the borough will also be investigated as part of this work, should the kerbside collection option be found to be unviable.

8.3 Bring Site Review

A continuation of the work detailed in Section 6.6 is proposed and will be driven through the findings of the proposed consultation exercise to be carried out in February/March 2012 and any resulting decision made by Cabinet in April 2012.

8.4 Kerbside Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE)

Depending on the outcome of three trials currently being conducted by Biffa with other clients and the Environmental Streetscene Services Contract Review, it may be the case that Wirral introduce cages to bin wagons to allow the Council to separately collect small electrical items for recycling.

8.5 Improving Recycling through Incentive Schemes

Officers will work closely with the other interested Merseyside Local Authorities and the MRWA to develop a funding proposal ahead of the announcement of the anticipated second round of the Government's Reward and Recognition Funding Scheme. Early indications are that this will be based around a form of Community Card Recycling Incentives Scheme. Wirral Officers have already submitted an Expression of interest to the lead partners and have indicated that incentives should be based around households presenting good quality recycling, as opposed to volume or weight of recycling.

8.6 Government Funding to increase collection frequency of residual waste

Wirral Officers are awaiting further announcement over the "Weekly Bin Fund" first reported by Eric Pickles in 2011. The criteria for fund allocation has been subject to considerable debate and criticism nationally so officers are hopeful that some of the initial constraints of the fund will be amended before the launch anticipated in April this year. Officers will review the funding criteria to ascertain its suitability for potential projects within Wirral and the wider Merseyside Partnership. In particular, Wirral has a number of terraced housing areas where the existing waste collection scheme experiences many challenges that adversely affect local environmental quality. This funding scheme could potentially fund operational changes to these "pockets" of high density housing, such as waste receptacle design and collection frequency.

8.7 Christmas Tree Recycling

In order to help residents that do not have a kerbside collection service for green waste to recycle their Christmas trees and associated greenery, temporary reception points will be strategically placed and promoted in high density housing areas. This project will be implemented at no additional cost to the Council by maximising community and private sector involvement.

8.8 Door Knocking to Promote the Love Food Hate Waste Campaign

There will be a number of proactive projects on the ground, including door knocking in targeted areas promoting food waste prevention. This project will be delivered with existing staffing resources.

8.9 Food Waste Digester Project (Floral Pavillion)

Officers within Technical Services intend to investigate the benefits of installing a food waste digester at the Floral Pavilion Site to reduce waste sent to landfill, reduced the centre's waste disposal costs to the Council and reduce smells that are emitted from stored food waste. An "Invest-to-Save" business case will be developed for further consideration.

9.10 Commercial Waste Recycling

Building on the MRWA's launch of a trade waste recycling centre at the Bidston Waste Transfer Station, Wirral's Trade Waste Officer will determine the viability and benefits of introducing a commercial waste recycling service, specifically targeting small businesses that are found not to be complying to waste legislation. It is anticipated that the launch of this service will result in reduced commercial fly tipping and unauthorised use by businesses of the Household Waste Recycling Centres, as well as generating additional revenue for the Council.

9.0 RELEVANT RISKS

9.1 The Technical Services Department Management Team and the Environmental Portfolio Holder monitor the Delivery Plan on a regular basis in order to identify and manage any potential risks. There are currently no identified risks to the 2011/12 Delivery Plan.

10.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

10.1 Options regarding the bring site review have been considered and officers have recommended the preferred option within this report for members to consider.

10.2 Committee are invited to suggest further projects for inclusion in the 2012/13 Delivery Plan, in addition to those proposed in Section 8.

11.0 CONSULTATION

12.1 Services and waste and recycling issues have been subject to public consultation in 2011 as part of the Merseyside Waste Partnerships Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy.

12.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

12.1 There are no direct implications for the above groups as part of this report.

13.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

13.1 There are no implications directly resulting from this report. All proposed projects in Section 8 would be delivered through existing resources.

14.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no implications directly resulting from this report.

15.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

15.1 There are no direct implications. Services have previously been assessed for the equality impact. Equality Impact Assessments will be reviewed subject to any service changes that may arise from the future projects listed in Section 8 of this report.

16.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

16.1 There are significant positive impacts to carbon reduction and improving the environment, due to the reduction in waste being sent to landfill as a direct result of projects detailed within the current and future Delivery Plan.

17.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

17.1 There are no implications as part of this report.

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APPENDICES

Contained as separate documents with this report.

- A) Minimising Waste by Encouraging Waste Reduction and Recycling Delivery Plan
- B) Motion 90: Increasing Recycling
- C) Internal Recycling Policy
- D) Vehicle Banner Example

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Sustainable Communities O &S Committee	20 th January 2011