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«Flat»  
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Wirral «Postcode»

your ref  
my ref RJ/ES/1  
service Recycling  
tel direct **(0151) 606 2004**  
fax (0151) 606 2188  
email streetscene@wirral.gov.uk

**Streetscene Contact Centre**

Dear Resident

I am writing with regard to the Wirral Globe's petition concerning the grey and green bin collections.

As you have signed the petition, I would like to provide you with some information about the service, and also ask you some questions regarding your thoughts on the service.

✉ Firstly, I would like to apologise for any inconveniences caused to you by the changeover to the grey and green bin collection service. I hope that any issues you may have had with the service have been rectified, and if not, I again apologise and ask you to use the feedback form attached to report the issues.

The bin collection service is a vital service, that affects every Wirral household and it is one that Wirral Council aim to continue to improve. Recycling is also an issue that affects everybody, as we must all play our part in protecting our environment.

The way waste is collected and managed is changing nationwide, not just in Wirral. The changes aim to conserve natural resources, reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, protect the environment and save energy.

The decision to change the bin collection service to the grey and green alternate weekly collection that we are currently running was not taken lightly. As I am sure that you are aware, the Government and therefore Wirral Council as a Local Authority, have recycling and composting targets to meet.

By 2010 the UK has to recycle 40% of its household waste, by 2015, 45% and by 2020 50%. Fines will be imposed on us as a Council if we fail to meet certain targets, which in theory would cause all residents' Council Tax to rise.

Prior to the implementation of the grey and green bin alternate weekly collections, Wirral had one of the poorest recycling rates in the country. The Local Government Association (LGA) and the Waste Resources and Action Programme (WRAP) support and advise the introduction of an alternate weekly collection system, and over half of the Councils operating such a system and have been doing so for up to four years. The change was agreed by full Council and carefully measured in terms of cost of all options.

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Admittedly, the transition to the alternate weekly collection, and the roll out of grey bins suffered substantial teething problems, as all major changes do. However I am now confident that the service has settled down and that the system should be working well for residents.

Our latest recycling figures show that the system is working well and that we are now recycling 32% of our waste. That is a 20% increase on this time last year, and is a remarkable achievement in such a short time scale.

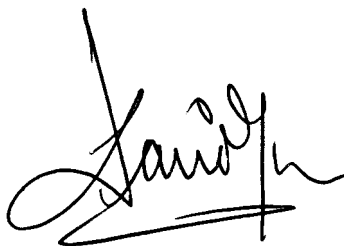
Setting aside operational issues such as missed bin collections, some key concerns that were raised by residents over the change on to the alternate weekly collections included health and hygiene issues of their green bins not being emptied every week and only being emptied on alternate weeks. DEFRA (Department of Food and Rural Affairs) commissioned a report this year concluding that there are no health risks of storing waste in your green bin for up to two weeks. Also, Wirral Council Officers have been advising people who had reported problems with flies over the summer months, that if all waste that could potentially rot or smell is bagged properly and the bin lid is closed then the problems should cease.

Another key concern was residents' fear of being fined for accidentally putting the wrong items in the wrong bin, or someone else contaminating their bin. Council officers have been assured that this is not the case and that every effort will be put in place to help residents understand which items go in which bins. Fines will not be issued for accidental contamination.

I appreciate that you may have other concerns or issues with the bin collection service, and I would appreciate it if you could take a moment of your time to fill in the enclosed feedback form. All opinions are extremely important, as we strive to continue to improve the service.

Thank you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Green', with a stylized flourish at the end.

DAVID GREEN, DIRECTOR  
TECHNICAL SERVICES