

## Consumer Views on Recycling Food Waste

Jayne Cox  
Brook Lyndhurst

## “Enhancing Participation in Kitchen Waste Collections”

Defra WREP funded project – Nov 06 to Jan 08  
delivered by multi-partner team

### *Aims:*

- Factors that affect participation in KW collections
- Variations by socio-dems & housing
- Effects of scheme design & comms on participation

### *Research:*

- Background ‘issues’ paper
- Lessons from practice
- 6 case studies:
  - visits & data
  - 12 focus groups
  - 4,400 interviews
  - consumer, not operations, focused

## Interim findings

- Background
  - Coverage of collections in the UK
  - What existing work says about consumers & food waste
- Profile of survey areas
- Survey & qualitative research – topline data
  - Participation
  - Materials hierarchy
  - Attitudes, motivations & barriers

## Current Situation (Mar 07)

- 377 LAs collect organics
- 79 had KW collections
- 11% of UK population covered:
  - o 1/2 garden + cooked & uncooked food
  - o 1/4 garden + uncooked
  - o 1/4 food-only (cooked + uncooked)
- Fortnightly usual; weekly more common where food-only

Key  
■ Kitchen waste collected  
 Kitchen waste not collected



Correct at time of data collection March 2007

## Food waste collections – existing evidence

- 5.5 million tonnes/19% of municipal waste
- 110K tonnes collected; 204K tonnes composted at home (*Eunomia, 2007*)
- Household arisings:
  - 216 kg/hh/yr (*Eunomia*)
  - 260 kg/hh/yr from houses; 195 kg/hh/yr from flats (*AEA Technology*)
- Participation – up to c. 50% but some report higher
- Capture
  - 2–5 kg/hh/wk participating households
  - 0.5 – 1kg/hh/wk averaged across collection area
  - Highest for meat-inclusive in weekly food + AWC residual (*WRAP*)

## Previous research – what affects participation?



## Case study profiles - survey context

## Survey areas - collections

	Type	Residual frequency	Food frequency	Food bin	Caddy
Bexley	Food + GW	Weekly	Weekly	140 L	Yes
Cambridge	Food + GW	Fortnightly	Fortnightly	240 L or 75 L	Yes
Fenland	Food + GW	Fortnightly	Fortnightly	240 L	For purchase
Hackney	Food	Weekly	Weekly	20 L	Yes
Taunton	Food	Fortnightly	Weekly	25 L	Yes
Weymouth	Food	Fortnightly	Weekly	120 L or 25 L	No

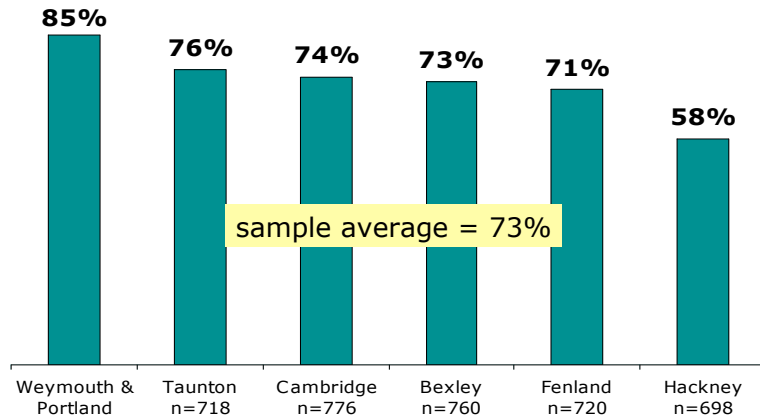
## Survey areas – key population characteristics

<b>Bexley</b>	Urban – 36 pp/ha	Mixed housing - 78% owner occupiers 8% minority ethnic South more affluent than North
<b>Cambridge</b>	Urban – 26 pp/ha	Affluent – high % ABC1 (63%) Town centre housing mainly terraces & flats 89% White
<b>Fenland</b>	Rural– 2 pp/ha	Mainly houses - 75% owner occupiers Less affluent – high % C2DE (58%) High migration – 4% E European in 2007
<b>Hackney</b>	Highly urban – 106 pp/ha	High % flats - one-third owner occupiers Low income (high % DE) & younger Ethnically v. diverse – only 59% White
<b>Taunton</b>	Rural 2 pp/ha	Affluent & slightly older Mainly houses - 71% owner occupiers 98% White British
<b>Weymouth</b>	Urban/rural mix 15 pp/ha	High employment but not affluent Older than average Mixed housing - 73% owner occupiers 97% White British

## Household survey research - initial findings

## Level of Commitment to Recycling

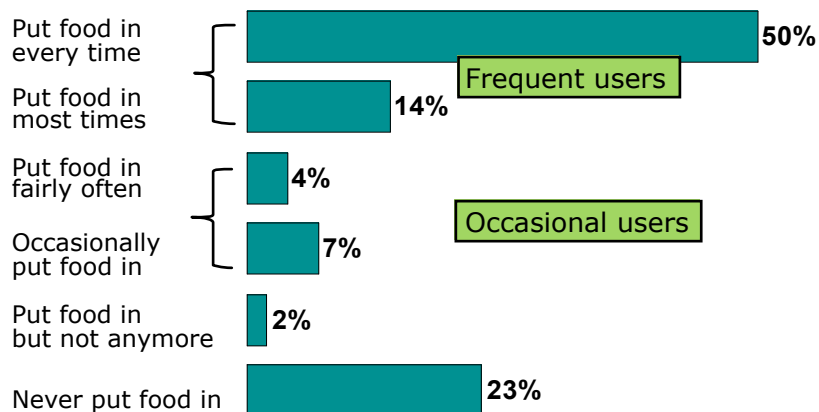
Q2. Which, if any, of the following statements come closest to how you feel about recycling? % 'I recycle as much as I possibly can'



Base: All respondents

## Usage of Kitchen Waste Collections

Q6. Thinking about your [... colour] bin collection, which of the following most accurately applies to your household?



Base: All respondents (4,431)

## Participation by area

	Non users % of sample	'Every time' users % of sample	Actual
<b>Bexley</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>40-50%</b>
<b>Cambridge</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>na</b>
<b>Fenland</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>na</b>
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>na</b>
<b>Taunton</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>60-70%</b>
<b>Weymouth</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>na</b>

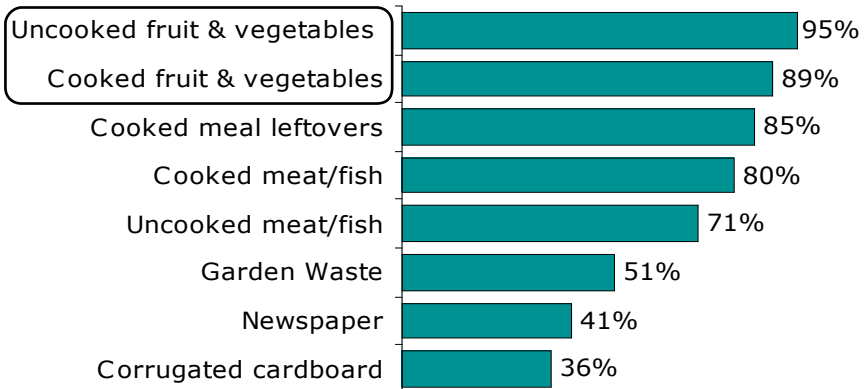
## Usage by population groups

- Highest participants – affluent (57%), older (56%), retired (57%), White British (56%)
  - More low/non users amongst:
    - DE (48%)
    - *Converted flats* (33%) & *private rented* (45%)
    - *Younger* (45%) & *students* (42%)
    - *White non-British* (47%), *Asian* (28%) & *Black* (25%)
- But, at least 1 in 5 are non-users in all social/housing/ethnic groups

*All percentages are 'every time users'*

## Material recognition

**Q5. Can you tell me whether you think these things can be put in the bins here? Top 8 mentions**



Base: All respondents (4,431)

## Materials – hierarchy of preference

- Anything fruit or vegetable
- Cooked/prepared items, not obviously 'meaty'
- Meat, take-away & runny foods

*"I am not quite sure what to do with raw meat, because it is something I wouldn't put in my compost, why would I be putting it in the other [food collection]."*

*"If it is like a sauce then I would flush it down the toilet because I don't want the smell. Where else can you put it?"*

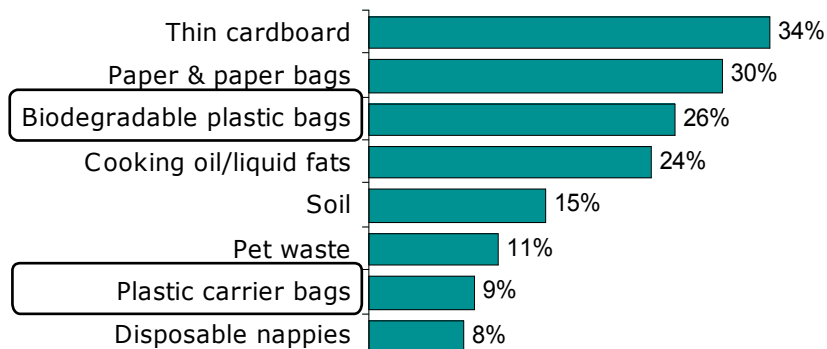
## Material variations between areas

% of users saying they recycle item always/most times

	Fruit & veg		Meat/fish	
	Raw	Cooked	Raw	Cooked
<b>Total sample</b>	74%	76%	49%	58%
<b>Bexley</b>	72%	72%	45%	53%
<b>Cambridge</b>	81%	79%	40%	48%
<b>Fenland</b>	71%	70%	26%	32%
<b>Hackney</b>	70%	68%	23%	44%
<b>Taunton</b>	74%	85%	72%	80%
<b>Weymouth</b>	73%	80%	73%	80%

## Recognition – potential contaminants

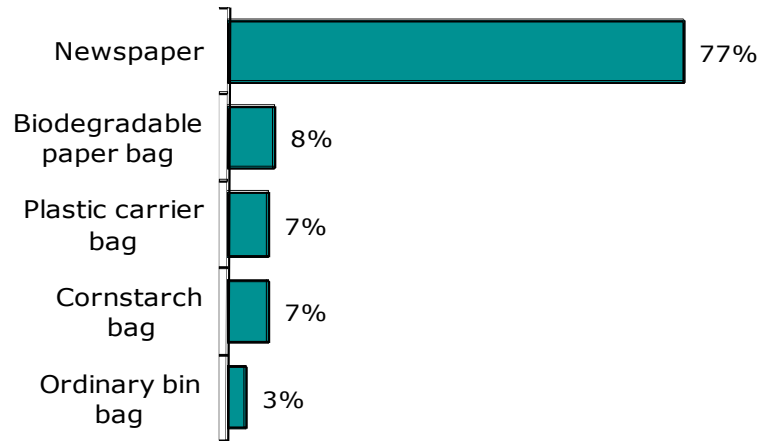
Q5. Can you tell me whether you think these things can be put in the bins here? Bottom 8 mentions



Base: All respondents (4,431)

## What is used to wrap food

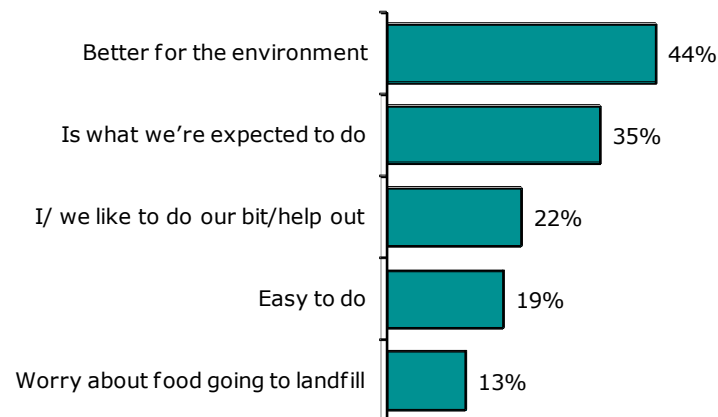
Q14. What do you wrap it in? *Top 5 mentions*



Base: All who put wrapping material in collection (2,045)

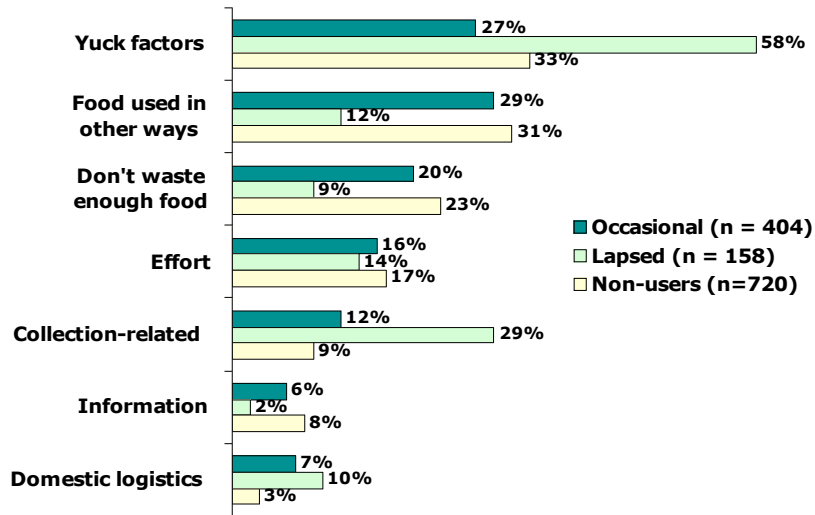
## Reasons for participation amongst frequent service users

Q15. Food is almost always put in the food collection in this household. What's persuaded you to do this? *Top 5 mentions*



Base: All frequent users (3,131)

## Reasons for non-participation (unprompted)



## Big difference in service perception between users & non-users

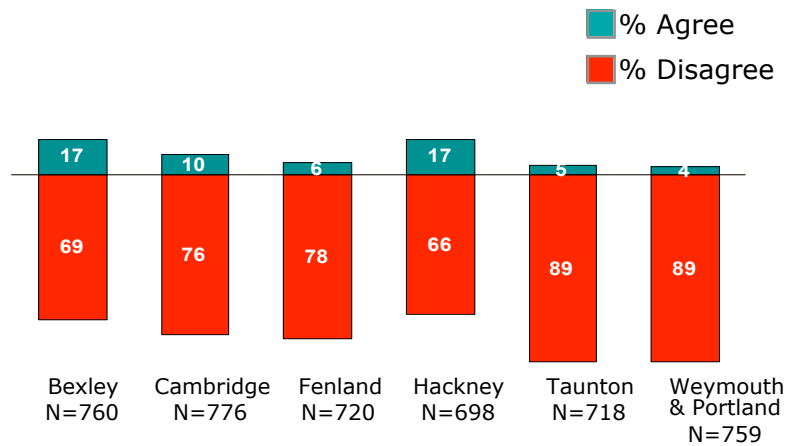
Q25. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? % agree

	Frequent users n=3131	Occ. users n=404	Non-users n=720	Lapsed Users n=158
Separating food waste is unpleasant and smelly	34%	51%	60%	70%
I'm worried that storing food waste in a separate bin will attract maggots and vermin	37%	54%	60%	75%
The Council's food waste collection service easy to use	92%	77%	42%	47%

Base: All respondents (4,431)

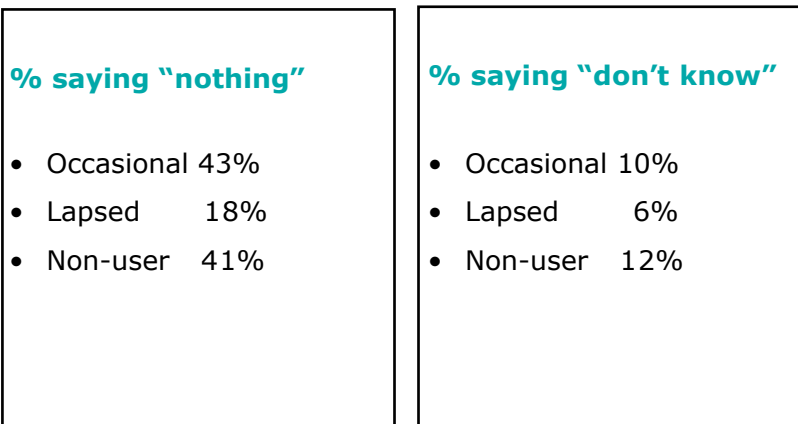
## Strong support for recycling food

Q25. Can you tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree? *I don't see why I should recycle food waste*



## But hard to find means of persuasion

*What, if anything would persuade you to use the collection [for the rest of your food/again/at all]?*



## What would persuade non-users?

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*"educating people about what the actual methane is doing"*

*"the environment and the parks will be much nicer"*

*"soil that is made from the compost that you throw away"...*

*"get them cleaned once a week and empty them once a week"*

*"how it is benefiting me and how I was going to benefit out of it full stop"*

*"delivering those biodegradable bags through the letter box"*

*"why should I do it and nobody else does?"*

*"we think that they should be given an incentive. So basically you give to receive if you recycle"*

## The final phase

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- More analysis (e.g. socio-dems; caddies & liners; LAs own data)
- Final technical & project report to Defra in December
- Dissemination by end of January 2008

***[jayne.cox@brooklyndhurst.co.uk](mailto:jayne.cox@brooklyndhurst.co.uk)***