

**Wiltshire Municipal Waste Contract
Annual Service review 2007/8**



Services for everyday life

Contents



Hills Waste Solutions Limited
 Wiltshire House
 County Park Business Centre
 Shrivenham Road
 Swindon SN1 2NR

Tel: 01793 714450
 Fax: 01793 714475
 www.hills-group.co.uk

Published annually by Hills Waste Solutions Limited for Wiltshire County Council and the Wiltshire Waste Partnership

Executive Summary

> Introduction

Performance data

> Numbers that add up...
 > Sponsored sites
 > School paper scheme
 > Charity/group collections

Performance overview

> Household Recycling Centres...
 > Kerbside recycling
 > Mini Recycling Sites

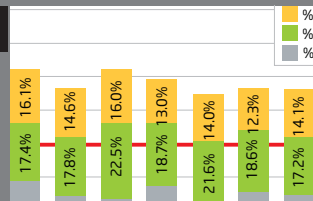
Developments through 2007/8

> WEEE did it
 > New vehicles, new challenges
 > MRF picks new equipment
 > Recycled wood works wonders
 > One step at a time
 > Environmental compliance...
 > Health & Safety
 > Energy from Waste (EfW) projects
 > Review of our reprocessors
 > Commercial collections

1-2



3-4



5-7



8-18



Executive Summary

Mike Webster
 Divisional Managing Director
 T: 01793 714450
 E: mwebster@hills-group.co.uk



“The 11th year of the Wiltshire Municipal Waste Contract has seen a consolidation of our landfill diversion rate with a healthy 38.26% being diverted from landfill compared to a national average of less than 30%. During the past twelve months excellent progress has been made towards the establishment of our planned MBT facility in Westbury and the diversion of waste to the Lakeside EfW facility, both these operations will increase diversion rates significantly in the coming years as Hills and Wiltshire County Council move away from landfill into a new era of waste treatment.”

Introduction

Welcome to the 6th annual review produced by Hills Waste Solutions Limited, which relates to the contract year April 2007 to March 2008. It reviews the waste management and recycling service provided by the company, highlighting particular challenges and successes during the year.

Recycling Rate

Hills is pleased to report that 38.26% (108,471 tonnes) of municipal waste was diverted from landfill in the 2007/8 contract year. Whilst this is a slight fall from the 39.67% reported in 2006/7 it is wholly attributed to the change in Defra's policy on wood recycling and its use as cover on the landfill. Full details on this topic appear on page 11 of this review.

Despite the affect the change of policy had on the recycling rate, Wiltshire County Council maintains its position as one of the top performing local authorities in the country and its recycling rate compares favourably with an average household recycling rate in England of 32% (May 2008 wastedata flow Defra Office).

Landfill Diversion

Hills continue to strive towards Wiltshire County Council's landfill diversion target of 40% by 2010 and remain committed to reducing dependency on landfill and seeking alternative waste solutions.

Analysis of recycle

A breakdown of the 108,471 tonnes processed during the year has revealed some interesting outcomes. Dry recycle such as paper/card, glass, wood/timber and tins totalled about 46,000 tonnes, almost 80% more than 6 years ago. Composted green waste also experienced a 54% growth since 2006 due to the expansion of the alternate weekly collections (AWC) scheme that resulted in 27,000 tonnes being collected. The remaining tonnage consisted of recycled soil and rubble which is not included as part of the Wiltshire County Council Best Value (BV) performance indicator. The indicator is a measure of recycling achieved on household waste only.

Household Recycling Centres (HRCs)

Improved separation facilities at the 10 HRCs included further separation of material such as electrical items under the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive 2002/96/EC – 2003/108/EC, treated wood and clean wood for biofuel and engineering application on the landfill.

Kerbside Black Box Recycling

Additional funding by Wiltshire County Council as part of the contract and contributions from the District Councils through the Wiltshire Waste Partnership (WWP) has resulted in 98% of homes in Wiltshire being covered by the kerbside recycling service.

Mini Recycling Sites

Overall tonnage collected at these sites continues to fall as residents make more use of kerbside collections. The mini recycling sites continue to be monitored by Wiltshire County Council and Hills to ensure a proper and effective use by the local residents; details are included on page 7.

Steve Burns

Waste Operations Manager

T: 01793 714467

E: sburns@hills-group.co.uk



Alex Marland

Development Manager

T: 01793 714452

E: amarland@hills-group.co.uk



Pete Moore

Transport Operations Manager

T: 01793 714454

E: pmoore@hills-group.co.uk



Cliff Carter

Recycling Promotions Manager

T: 01793 714469

E: ccarter@hills-group.co.uk



Martyn Parfitt

Recycling Team Manager

T: 01793 714468

E: mparfitt@hills-group.co.uk



Ed Dodd

Disposal Team Manager

T: 01793 714463

E: edodd@hills-group.co.uk

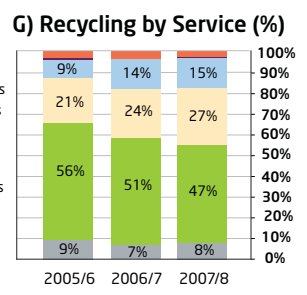
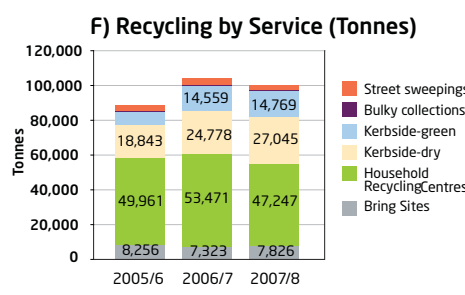
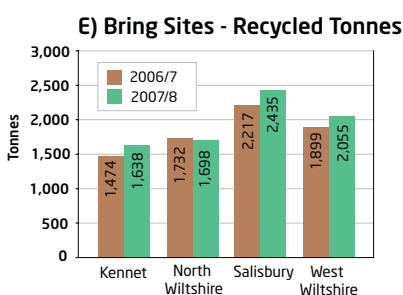
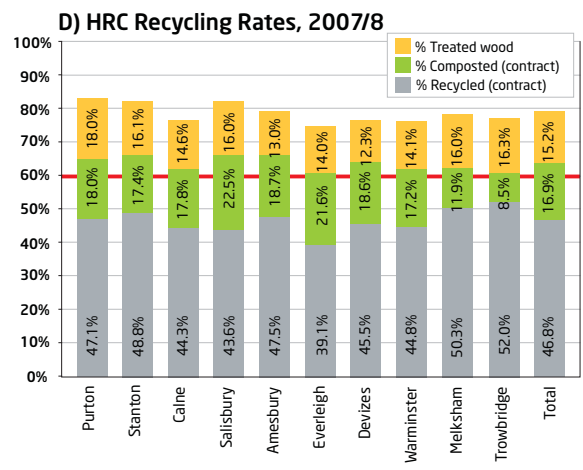


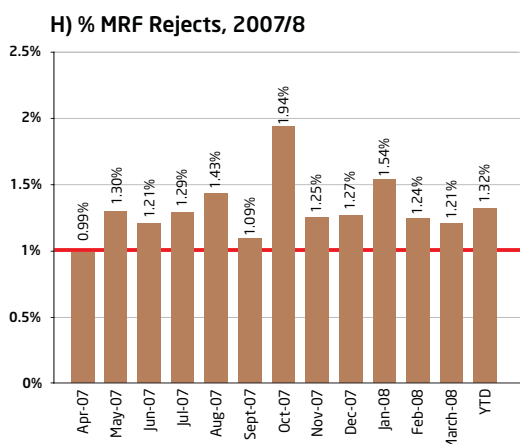
Performance data

Numbers that add up to a quality service & overall performance for the year (to 31.03.08)

A) 2007/8 Non-Landfill Achievements					
Recycling Initiative	N Wilts Tonnes	Kennet Tonnes	Salisbury Tonnes	W Wilts Tonnes	Wiltshire Tonnes
Mini Recycling Sites	1,698	1,638	2,435	2,055	7,826
Kerbside Mixed Paper	0	0	3,109	0	3,109
Multi-Material Kerbside	6,568	6,078	3,765	7,526	23,936
Kerbside Green waste	1,944	3,348	1,315	9,458	16,065
Bulky collections	76	176	164	11	427
Street Sweepings	867	583	946	128	2,524
DC Depot Tyres	0	0	3	0	3
Everleigh HRC	0	2,730	0	0	2,730
Devizes HRC	0	4,710	0	0	4,710
Stanton HRC	7,092	0	0	0	7,092
Purton HRC	5,881	0	0	0	5,881
Honeyball HRC	3,519	0	0	0	3,519
Melksham HRC	0	0	0	5,171	5,171
Warminster HRC	0	0	0	6,204	6,204
Trowbridge HRC	0	0	0	7,422	7,422
Salisbury HRC	0	0	8,920	0	8,920
Amesbury HRC	0	0	4,794	0	4,794
Green Waste rejects	0	0	0	0	-1,152
MRF rejects	0	0	0	0	-438
Non-Landfill Achieved	27,644	19,263	25,450	37,975	108,741

B) 2007/8 Non-Landfill by Material	
Material	Wiltshire (tonnes)
Paper	23,228
Yellow Pages	35
Cardboard	4,467
Glass	10,167
Cans	2,610
Plastic Bottles	1,273
Scrap Metals	3,836
Garden waste	28,731
Timber	590
Chipboard/MDF	8,756
Rubble	13,510
Soil	3,895
Gully Sweeping	2,524
Car Batteries	194
Oil	87
Textiles	1,472
Carpet	439
Furniture	125
Tyres	200
Gas Bottles	47
Bicycles	0
WEEE (A) - Large Household Appliances	1,245
WEEE (B) - Fridges/Freezers	1,119
WEEE (C) - TVs/PC monitors	1,151
WEEE (D) - Gas Discharge Lamps	4
WEEE (E) - Small Domestic Appliances	625
Green waste REJECTS	-1,152
Residual tonnage ex MRF	-438
Total	108,741





Hills' kerbside collection is sorted at the roadside ensuring quality of the material which reduces the amount of contamination. Wiltshire has one of the lowest reject tonnages nationally.



Materials Recycling Facility, Lower Compton

Sponsored sites

Hills continue to support the 36 sponsored sites in West Wiltshire where organisations raise funds on behalf of local charities and fund raising groups (Full listing available from Hills). £10 per tonne in excess of 5 tonnes per year is paid.

School paper scheme

The purpose of the scheme is to support and inspire young people to reduce waste at school, at home and in the community, and to demonstrate the links between actions in these three areas.

The Hills Group, via the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF)* continue to support the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's work on waste education with schools. Hills organise the logistics for the scheme by providing participating schools with paper recycling bins and organising for their collection. Tonnage for the year came in at 597 tonnes for which the company presented funds to the value of £10 per tonne to the participating schools. The paper collected by Wiltshire schools is taken to the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) for recycling into newspaper.

As well as providing containers and a collection service, Hills also host a number of visits to the MRF at Lower Compton as part of the scheme and in 2007/8 over 2,000 students visited the waste management facility. Tours of the MRF and waste management facility are also offered to local community groups to help raise awareness on ways to manage their waste.

Charity/group collections

There are 5 charitable groups in West Wiltshire who receive payments at £10 per tonne for paper and textiles collected. In 2007/8 the payments to these organisations were:

- Salvation Army - £399
- British Heart Foundation - £679
- SCOPE - £264
- Southwick and North Bradley Scouts - £457
- Save the Children - £1,259

* This innovative tax credit scheme enables operators of landfill sites to contribute money to enrolled Environmental Bodies (EBs) to carry out projects that meet environmental objectives contained in the Landfill Tax Regulations. The government saw the LCF as a way for Landfill Operators (LOs) and EBs to work in partnership, to create significant environmental benefits and jobs, and to undertake projects, which improve the lives of communities living near landfill sites.

Performance overview



Household Recycling Centres are up to the challenge

Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) remain high on the public's means of recycling with a 47% share of the overall tonnage recycled in Wiltshire being generated through this service.

Funding through Wiltshire County Council enabled Hills to provide more lorries and additional staff to cope with the increase in demand for the service by the public.

The provision of additional lorries resulted in changes being made to driver working hours to comply with the EU Drivers' Hours Rules & Regulations (EC561/2006). The new regulations state that drivers must have at least 45 hours rest per week, although it can be reduced to 36 hours as long as this is made up the following weekend. This had a huge impact on the operation as most drivers worked every Saturday morning servicing the HRC sites. In order to overcome this issue all regular drivers were put on a fortnightly rota system with the shortfall being covered by agency staff. These changes resulted in an increase in the operational cost of delivering the service.

Regular operations meeting are held with transport and management teams to ensure that efficiency is maintained and safety and operational issues are dealt with effectively.

To help ease congestion over busy periods opening hours have been extended on Wednesdays and Thursdays at HRCs with the exception of Warminster and Salisbury HRCs which remain open until 8pm every day. Press releases and information leaflets were provided to keep site users informed of these changes. Despite these measures, demand remains high over weekends and bank holidays and options for improvement remain under review.

Preparations are underway to submit planning approval for an additional HRC in Marlborough (Salisbury Road Business Park). This site will manage up to 4,500 tonnes of household waste with 75 - 80% of the material being processed for recycling. (3,375 tonnes). The Westbury HRC is due to go through the committee stage at the end of July and hopefully both sites can benefit the local community during the later part of 2009.

Demand from the public to provide food and drink carton recycling facilities resulted in an arrangement being reached with Tetrapak and the Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment (ACE) to provide funding for this service. Special containers were placed in all ten HRCs during July 2008.

Warminster HRC is on land which formally housed gas works. West Wiltshire District Council, as enforcing authority for contaminated land, has identified the site and adjacent land owned by National Grid as 'contaminated' land due to its historic use. Wiltshire County Council, as current owner, is responsible for dealing with the contamination.

The Environment Agency has undertaken limited site investigations and Wiltshire County Council will undertake additional site investigations this summer.

When the results have been analysed an assessment will determine any necessary works to be carried out and, if so, the proposals and the timescale for works will be drawn up.

If contaminated material has to be removed then Wiltshire County Council will consider the future of the site. It is unclear as to the extent of contamination, if any, on the existing site and as a result the length of any closure is not known at this stage. Alternative arrangements will be made for the public when a decision is made.



Kerbside recycling

Recycling - together we are making a difference

Nearly 40% of all household rubbish in Wiltshire was recycled in 2007/8 - and this looks set to rise even more in the coming year with the introduction of kerbside collections of plastic and cardboard from the residents in Salisbury.

With the completion of the black box roll out to 25,000 properties in Salisbury City and surrounding rural areas in February 2008, Hills now collect from 98% of households in Wiltshire using black boxes and wheeled bins for composted material.

Funded by Wiltshire County Council, five additional kerbside collection vehicles (including two small vehicles for areas with limited access) joined the fleet at Lower Compton. An additional supervisor joined the existing management team delivering the kerbside service. Hills now have a dedicated supervisor for each of the three districts of North Wiltshire, Salisbury and West Wiltshire. To maintain and improve the quality of service to the community, staff undergo regular training including NVQ's in waste management, service related training on Health & Safety practices and associated systems. The helpline deals with an average of 350 calls per day providing advice and dealing with issues such as complaints, missed collections and requests for additional black boxes.

Prior to kerbside collection, the average rubbish bin contained 36% paper, 19% green waste, 9% plastics, 8% glass, 7% cans, 3% textiles and 18% other material. 70% of rubbish generated by households can now be recycled instead of being sent to landfill. All material collected by the kerbside recycling service is taken to the MRF at Lower Compton for processing.

Paul Hill
Kerbside Recycling Manager
T: 01249 818065
E: phill@hills-group.co.uk



Mini Recycling Sites

Tonnage at the 250 mini recycling sites in Wiltshire increased to 7,826 tonnes during the 2007/8 period, showing a 6.9% increase on the previous year.

Hills worked with Wiltshire County Council and West Wiltshire District Council to review and update the range of materials collected at 34 sites in the district. The change required Hills to supply over 180 containers throughout West Wiltshire, with an additional 4 new sites being agreed at North Bradley, West Wiltshire District Council offices, Longbridge Deverill Esso Garage and Chapmanslade (yet to be installed - awaiting planning consent).

The need for paper, glass and can recycling at mini recycling sites had reduced due to 98% of residents receiving an alternate weekly kerbside collection service, and these containers were replaced by those for plastic bottles and cardboard which the public had requested.

The new facilities have proved extremely popular with over 330 tonnes of cardboard and 190 tonnes of plastic bottles being recycled via the new sites during the year. This contributed to an overall increase of 156 tonnes (8.2%) on the total material recycled through mini recycling sites in West Wiltshire (see table below).

Although popular, the new sites have presented the West Wiltshire District Council and Hills with some operational issues, in particular with sites in the town centres becoming full in a very short space of time. This is an ongoing issue and was of particular concern over the Christmas period. The bulky nature of plastic bottles and cardboard requires that the new bins are emptied more frequently than for paper, glass and cans. Consequently materials are collected from these sites 6 days a week, each material on alternate days. Over Christmas and New Year the combination of bank holidays and even greater volumes of material being taken to the sites resulted in complaints about over-flowing containers and materials left on the ground. Extra resources and staff were made available to deal with these issues which included additional hours being worked at the MRF to process the material.

A small number of sites in West Wiltshire and Salisbury are being exploited by fly tippers and a number of traders have been spoken to regarding the illegal use of the household mini recycling sites for the disposal of card. The West Wiltshire District Council are actively monitoring these sites for evidence to bring enforcement action against those responsible for the ongoing fly tipping.



A recent fly tipping incident at Westbury Leigh mini recycling site

Mini Recycling Sites by District	2006/7	2007/8	Year on Year Change	
	Tonnes	Tonnes	Tonnes	%
Kennet	1,474	1,638	164	11.1%
North Wiltshire	1,732	1,698	-34	-1.9%
Salisbury	2,217	2,435	217	9.8%
West Wiltshire	1,899	2,055	156	8.2%
Total	7,323	7,826	503	6.9%

Developments through 2007/8

WEEE did it

Hills and Wiltshire County Council were part of only 25% of Local Authorities and their contractors in the UK that were fully compliant with the Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) Directive 2002/96/EC and 2003/108/EC on the 1st July 2007.

The WEEE Directive demands a minimum recycling target of 65% for CRT* products thereby forcing recycling of CRT glass (equivalent to at least 50% of product mass). The directive further demands separate treatment of the CRT glass and phosphor layer and the UK Hazardous Waste Regulations of June 05 classified CRT waste as hazardous. Evidence also needs to be provided for the amount of electrical items recycled, which necessitates that electrical items are collected and recycled separately.

In order to obtain funding from the Distributor Take Back Scheme (DTS), local authorities had to register sites to which bulky waste is taken, such as the HRCs, as Designated Collection Facilities (DCFs). Funding of £60,000 was secured to enable Wiltshire to be ready for the launch in July 2007 and Hills carried out a number of improvements on the 10 HRCs to accommodate additional containers and signage.

To ensure that compliance was met, Hills and Wiltshire County Council joined forces to consult with a number of Producer Compliance Schemes (PCS) and an agreement was signed with Electrolink, an Accredited Approved Treatment Facility (AATF), to ensure that all WEEE collected at the HRCs is recycled correctly and tonnages counted towards the recycling targets set by the Government and Europe.

In 2007/8 tonnages collected totalled:

- TVs/PC monitors 1,151 tonnes
- Fluorescent tubes 4 tonnes
- Fridges/Freezers 1,119 tonnes

Although the scheme has been successful in Wiltshire there was some complexity around the financial impact and a structured approach taken jointly by Wiltshire County Council and Hills minimised this impact to ensure an improved situation for the coming year.

Note

There are over 65 million units of CRT products in circulation in the UK at present with another 6 million units of CRT waste entering UK waste streams each year. Our processors, Centillion Environment & Recycling UK Ltd, specialise in CRT treatment and processing of television and computer monitors and have the experience and technology to efficiently extract and refine CRT components in full compliance with the WEEE directive. A recent visit to the plant enabled Hills and Wiltshire County Council to film the entire process. This can be viewed at www.recycleforwiltshire.com

* **Cathode Ray Tube (CRT).** The most common television display technology, the CRT is a sealed glass envelope in which the inside front surface is coated by phosphors. The phosphors glow when excited by an electron beam—the “cathode ray.” CRTs are used for both direct-view and projection television.





New vehicles, new challenges

Hills have a five year fleet replacement programme for all vehicles servicing the contract. The latest vehicle to join the fleet was an 18 tonne MAN skiploader and future purchases will include three Scania 32 tonne Boughton equipped hooklift vehicles. These will all service the HRCs.

In addition Hills operate three 44 tonne articulated units coupled to United Ejector trailers; these transfer Wiltshire's waste from the southern part of the county at Thorney Down and Everleigh transfer stations to Hills' disposal facilities.

Two Volvo units were replaced in July 2007 with double drive 440hp FM12 vehicles fitted with the new shift semi-automatic gearbox and Euro 4 spec engine using the AD Blue system. This specification not only gives more power but also provides an economic and environmentally friendly driveline which is vitally important to Hills as a recycling contractor. A third vehicle to replace the DAF unit is due for delivery this autumn.

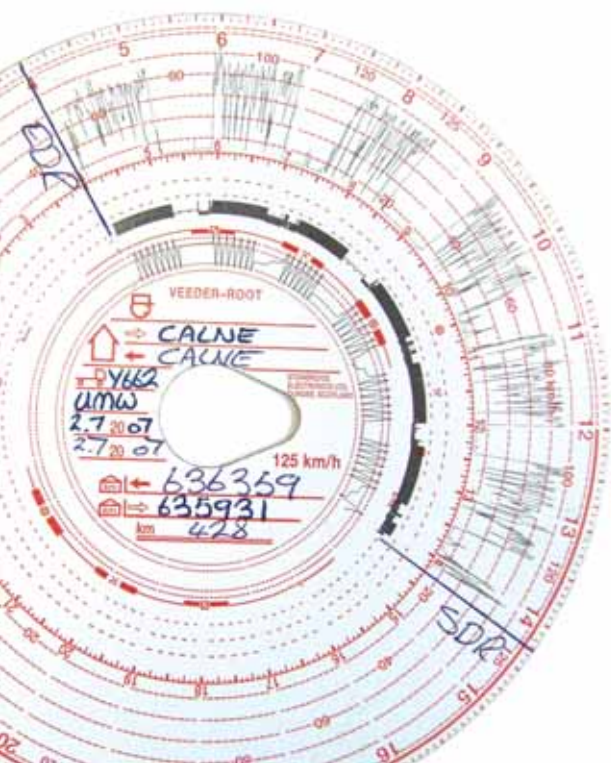
In order to maintain service levels during the busy summer period Hills hire two 32 tonne hooklift vehicles on a long term basis. These vehicles were supplied prior to the Easter bank holiday weekend and will remain in service until mid November 2008.

Challenges

Vehicle Overloading

An ongoing, national problem with rear end loaders, where it has been virtually impossible to load one without overloading the rear axle, appears to have been solved.

Previously, heavy packing equipment situated at the rear of the vehicle added to the axle weight limits and restricted the amount of waste that could be loaded. In most cases a roadside Vehicle and Operating Services Agency (VOSA) check would have resulted in an immediate prohibition notice being issued against the overweight vehicle.



The new Mercedes Benz Econic 8 x 4/2CTT conversion with the odd axle configuration has been Hills' answer to the problem. During the early stages of loading when the axle weights are most critical the availability of an extra axle at the rear end spreads the load more evenly. The vehicle still operates as 32 tonnes gross, but would be difficult to overload even when compacting to its maximum capacity. It has certainly generated interest within the waste industry.

Fuel

Hills own a fuel storage facility at the Lower Compton waste management facility which is computer linked and continually monitored. This Fueltek system ensures that all fuel drawn can be traced and has the flexibility to provide reports on fuel usage and vehicle performance. In light of the recent fuel price increases Hills have installed CCTV cameras to provide 24 hour surveillance of the site and fuel storage tank.

The volatility of the oil market has seen an increase in fuel costs of at least £1,800 per day and drivers are given regular training on methods to conserve fuel when driving in an effort to reduce these costs.

MRF picks new equipment

Salisbury District Council's decision to start a co-mingled kerbside collection of plastic and cardboard would have resulted in extra cardboard and plastic being delivered to the MRF each year. In anticipation of this increase in materials Hills made modifications to existing equipment and installed a new 'Badger' baler.

The commencement of the service in Salisbury has been delayed (due to Salisbury District Council's review of its service) however this enabled Hills to utilise the new baling line to improve the existing throughput and quality of plastic delivered to the MRF. The new baling equipment produces higher specification bales and reduces the number of road miles by 11,520 per year.

A further development with this new line is the provision of bales of aluminium to new outlets in the West Midlands, again reducing haulage by 15,960 miles per year.

Bales ~ Some facts & figures

20,000 plastic bottles = 1 tonne

32,000 aluminium cans = 1 tonne



The new 'Badger' baler installed at the MRF



Aluminium can bales being loaded for transport to the reprocessor

Recycled wood works wonders



The UK generates around 9 million tonnes of waste wood each year, of which less than 20% is currently recycled. Two new initiatives have been introduced by Hills to help redress this balance by capitalising on the growing demand for recycled products.

75 litre bags of garden mulch manufactured from recycled packaging wood are now offered for sale at selected HRCs. The trial, designed to assess consumer reaction and demand has proven reasonably successful with sales increasing month on month. This easy to apply and low maintenance mulch offers the benefits of both moisture retention and weed suppression, whilst also remaining environmentally friendly.

The second development was the signing of a two-year agreement to supply recycled woodchip to Welsh Biofuels Ltd for the manufacture of pelletised wood fuel. Welsh Biofuels Ltd delivers biomass solutions that are transforming the heating sector throughout the UK and offer a viable and sustainable alternative to the rapidly diminishing supply of fossil fuels.

Wiltshire County Council and Hills liaised with representatives from Biofuels to meet the exacting new feedstock specification and ensure that deliveries were able to commence on schedule in September 07. Sourcing additional biofuel outlets for treated wood are under discussion with a view to supplying Waste to Energy plants in Europe; this will ensure wood processing recycling rates in Wiltshire will be included in the future.

The one negative issue for wood processing last year was when Defra decided that 8,756 tonnes of treated wood collected at HRCs could not be counted as recycled material, as it was chipped and re-used as an engineering cover* for the landfill site at Lower Compton. Normally other material (such as 40,000 tonnes of soil) would have been used for this function. However, Defra's change of decision ruled that the wood had gone to landfill and therefore could not be included in recycling figures for Wiltshire in 2007/8.

If the wood had, as in previous years, been included then Wiltshire would have achieved a household recycling rate of 40.56% and the total amount of household waste sent to landfill would have dropped below 150,000 tonnes. In the meantime, Hills has been actively seeking alternative markets to ensure this material can be included in future performance figures whilst working with the Environment Agency to comply with The Transfrontier Shipment of Waste regulations 2007 (EC 1013/2006).



Woodchip which is converted into pellets to be used as fuel

Footnote * Waste used in landfill restoration (recovery) is defined # as 'waste which serves a useful purpose in replacing other materials which would have had to be used for that purpose, thereby conserving natural resources.'

by the European Court of Justice in the Adfall case (c-6/00)



One step at a time

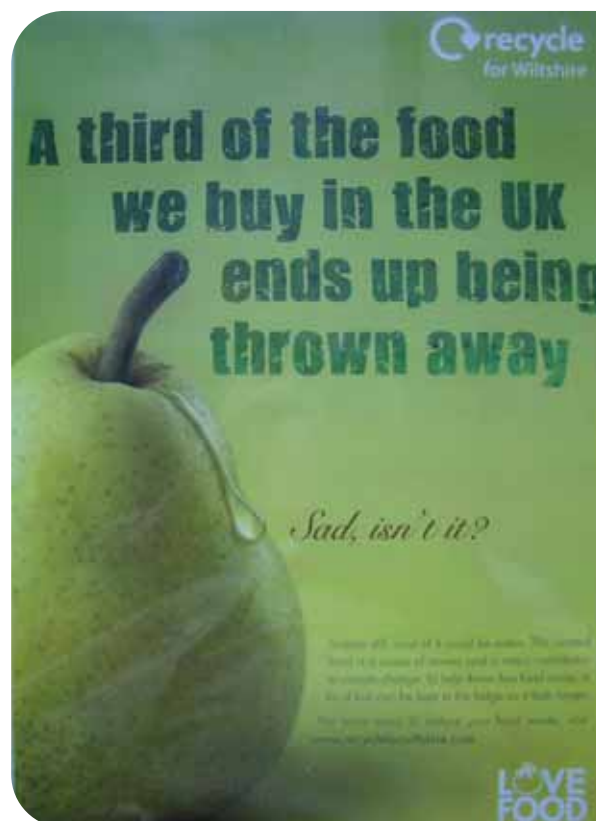
Communications in our industry are vital, especially when trying to encourage the public to assist in reaching targets set by third parties.

To tackle this demanding task a number of events took place around the county in 2007/8 with Hills, Wiltshire County Council, District Councils and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust all working together on issues ranging from promoting compost and recycling to reducing the amount of food that is thrown away each year.

The Wiltshire Waste Partnership (WWP) supported the 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign in a bid to reduce the 30,000 tonnes of food waste that currently end up in landfill in Wiltshire each year, making up more than a third of rubbish in Wiltshire's bins. Led by Wiltshire County Council, static displays were placed in public buildings and road shows held in town centres to provide information to the public and advise on ways in which people are able to cut back on food waste. Nationally, 90% of people do not realise how much food they throw out and dispose of 6.7 million tonnes of food per year.

Improved kerbside recycling service calendars explaining the service arrangements over the Christmas period were delivered to households during November and December. This minimised the number of calls to the helpline. The leaflet also included concise information on what goes into the black box and how people could reduce the amount of waste they generate. A separate leaflet was provided for Salisbury District to advise residents of the changes to materials being collected in their area.

Future communications are likely to improve with the Unitary Council taking a more consistent and cohesive approach to the waste messages going out into the community. Discussions are underway through the Local Government Reorganisation process, and Hills look forward to the new approach.





Environmental compliance agenda for the future

Professionals involved with waste management are no strangers to legislative change and the government has set binding targets on county councils for the reduction in biodegradable waste being sent to landfill.

Historically, the waste management industry and particularly landfill, has not enjoyed a good reputation with the public. With the award of the original contract in 1996, both Hills and the Wiltshire County Council recognised that it was important to introduce a robust Environment Management System (EMS) to assess and limit where practicable any negative effects of the company's operations and ensure legislative compliance.

This environment compliance system demonstrates the operation of the Hills' EMS to Wiltshire County Council and covers the period to October 2007.

The following activities take place:

- Review of forthcoming and evolving legislation
- Hills audit / inspection programme, internal and external, compliance with legislation and good practice
- Review of regulatory authorities inspections / audits
- Regulator liaison meetings
- Prosecutions
- Public liaison meetings / complaints
- Environmental Performance Monitoring

The assessment of impacts under the above criteria and the measures taken to mitigate them is summarised below.

Waste professionals will be aware of the raft of legislation rolling in from the European Union, most notably the Landfill and IPPC Directives. In addition, the government has its own programme of national legislation to drive forward its political agenda.



Daryl Taylor
Environmental Manager
T: 01793 714477
E: dtaylor@hills-group.co.uk

For county councils it is the Waste and Emissions Trading Bill, which sets targets for the diversion of biodegradable municipal waste from landfill, which has most influenced policy in recent years. Hills are working with Wiltshire County Council to provide the means of achieving these targets.

For Hills, the introduction of the PPC Regulations 2000 has had a significant effect on the business, mainly the landfill sites, where a root and branch change in regulation has occurred. A completely new set of permits, assessments and procedures have been agreed with the Environment Agency.

As from 31st October 2007, all non-hazardous (including inert) waste destined for landfill must be pre-treated* to comply with the EU Landfill Directive. The objective is to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and reduce potentially polluting emissions. Hills have advised its customers of the changes, provided additional recycling capacity and revised its IT and Waste Acceptance Procedures to remain compliant.

Hills have successfully introduced procedures to comply with the WEEE regulations.

Hills have a risk-based approach to the auditing of its facilities. The frequency and specification of the audits and inspections are particular to each site, and are determined by environmental factors, emerging legislation and management performance. For example, a landfill accepting a wide range of waste will be subject to more frequent, wider ranging inspections than a straightforward HRC.

Hills' facilities are inspected by the regulators. Audits and inspection reports, OPRA scores etc, and written communications from the Environment Agency, Planning Departments, District Councils and Water Utilities are reviewed, actioned as appropriate and stored by the relevant Unit Manager. Copies are sent to Head Office for review. If issues are not resolved immediately, then the Non-Compliance Procedure is invoked. These reports are kept for reference at Head Office and at the relevant unit.

The performance of the major landfills – Chapel Farm (non-hazardous), Lower Compton (non-hazardous), and Purton (hazardous) - has been reviewed, paying due attention to areas of concern.

At Lower Compton landfill the main areas of concern identified by the regulator are leachate management, reporting of monitoring data and schedule 6 notifications, groundwater quality, odour, bird control and cover. Very significant efforts to reach compliance standards with additional resources implemented including an improvement programme to ensure compliance and demonstrate 'good practice' with future operations.



Footnote * Local authorities are responsible for managing MSW. There are statutory targets for diverting this waste from landfill and in England there are also statutory recycling and composting targets. Local authorities face heavy penalties and government action if these targets are not met. The ways of meeting these targets mean that the MSW stream is already being pre-treated and we regard any residual wastes going to landfill as treated waste.



A substantial effort has been made by Hills over the review period to rise to the challenges presented as the landfill sites in particular, have moved into the PPC regime.

The facility is close to the villages of Compton Bassett and of Lower Compton. During 2007/8 Hills received a number of complaints alleging odour from the site. Hills are committed to investigating the cause of the odours and taking appropriate action should it be responsible. A thorough review of site activities is underway to establish if the company can make improvements. The EA carried out a follow-up inspection and could not find an odour source.

Landfilling activities will extend into Low Lane Farm now that planning approval has been granted. As part of the planning application process, an exhibition was held in Compton Bassett village hall to explain the development.

As part of Hills education programme, visitors are taken around the MRF. Annual visitor numbers exceed 2,000 from students to community groups and local politicians.

Regulator Liaison Meetings

Hills have moved forward to meet the challenge of the compliance scheme and have adopted a self-regulation approach with the Environment Agency. This means ensuring that all systems and procedures are in place and working whilst actively engaged with the regulators to clarify any queries or anomalies and demonstrate that our systems are working.

Hills recognise the need for regular liaison meetings (six in 2007/8) with the public so that contentious issues can be discussed and misconceptions addressed. These are forums for frank discussion and all stakeholders are welcome. The Environment Agency, Planners and Parish Councillors are all invited. The minutes of the meetings are published on www.hills-group.co.uk Site visits form part of this programme.

Environmental Performance Monitoring

Where required by licensing or permitting, each operational activity on a site has an individually designed monitoring programme to provide a scientific approach to the assessment and control of environmental impacts. The monitoring plan, scheme and schedule for Lower Compton landfill is given as an example. A database is used to assess the data to take account of trends and highlight potential problem areas. The schemes and monitoring location plans are kept at Head Office and at the individual units and are reviewed and updated at least annually. The results are assessed and communicated to key personnel and the Environment Agency as stipulated in the site authorisation. Non-compliances are entered into the environment register for attention.

A thorough annual review of the performance data of the PPC regulated landfill sites is carried out by consultants and submitted to the Environment Agency for their comments. This provides a longer review period to check that there are no trends developing. An annual return of environmental performance information is submitted to Wiltshire County Council and the Environmental Services Association, a trade body of which Hills is a member.



Health & Safety

Hills' employees have a platform for addressing health and safety issues by way of the Health & Safety Committee which meets once a month.

Chaired by Paul Elling, Compliance Manager, and attended by operational volunteers from each of the sections within the division, the meetings provide a forum for involvement, communication and guidance which supplements the existing arrangements for communicating health and safety information.

The volunteers act as representatives for their operational colleagues, bringing forward their comments and concerns. Minutes from these meetings are then displayed on staff notice boards at and made available to our waste colleagues in Wiltshire County Council.

With health and safety a key activity for the company members of the operational kerbside collection service have joined forces with colleagues across the Wiltshire Waste Partnership including representatives from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to form the Swindon and Wiltshire Initiative on Safety and Health (SWISH).

Future H&S plans

One of the areas for the forum to consider and provide support for is the LGR group dealing with transition (Health and Safety) and practical information that can be used in the harmonising of services throughout Wiltshire. Other areas of work will be to specifically look at individual Risk Assessments and Method Statements for the provision of frontline services regarding refuse collection and recycling. These will include: induction training programmes, working practices, vehicles, plant and uniform, identifying existing health and safety standards, collating operational risk assessments and information on training.

Whilst Hills enjoys a better than average safety performance a review indicated that a full audit of health and safety management systems be carried out. The result of the audit recommends we adopt a simplified system which reflects the needs of the business while ensuring that group and divisional managing directors within Hills are able to comply and demonstrate compliance with UK health and safety legislation.

Paul Elling
Compliance Manager

T: 01793 714466

E: pellingl@hills-group.co.uk





Energy from Waste (EfW) projects



Construction on the £160 million energy from waste plant at Colnbrook near Slough has been delayed by a year.

Lakeside Energy from Waste - the joint venture between Grundon Waste Management and Viridor - announced in June 2008 that work on the 410,000 tonne capacity plant was on schedule.

The plant is designed to produce 32MW of electricity a year for the national grid using advanced twin stream moving grate technology and was set to open this year. However, some defects have been identified in the plant during testing which has put back the opening date to July 2009.

The problems relate to the economiser units, which recover heat from the combustion gases and help to make the plant more energy efficient. The economiser remediation programme will not affect other areas of the remaining development programme.

Lakeside confirm that the delay would not cause big problems for the councils who had contracts to send waste to the plant because they have alternative ways to treat their waste and that both Grundon and Viridor had other facilities which could be used instead. The existing contracts with councils are flexible enough that the delay will not make any fundamental difference to the gate fee price.

Wiltshire was due to start sending 50,000 tonnes of residual waste from Salisbury and south Wiltshire to the Colnbrook facility, since signing a 25 year contract in April 2007. Both Wiltshire County Council and Hills are reviewing the delay and considering options to address this delay.

A planning application for an MBT facility and HRC at Westbury remains under consideration.

Review of our reprocessors

Over the last year Hills reviewed its progress on securing long term contracts with many of the outlets already receiving Wiltshire's recycle material.

The exercise, undertaken as part of the 'Duty of Care'* when dealing with waste material, also enables Hills and Wiltshire County Council to produce a concise listing of all the material collected and its journey through the waste management process. These details cover all the legislative information for auditing purposes and accountability to the regulatory bodies overseeing the movement and reprocessing in the journey of Wiltshire's recycling material. A list is available through www.recycleforwiltshire.com/recycling/your-waste.html for public information.

* Businesses have a duty to ensure that any waste produced is handled safely and within the law. This is a 'duty of care'. It applies to anyone who produces, imports, transports, stores, treats or disposes of controlled waste from business or industry. Commercial, industrial and household wastes (including hazardous/special wastes) are classified as 'controlled waste'. The duty of care also applies to anyone acting as a waste broker.



Commercial collections

With ever increasing pressure from the commercial sector, Hills introduced a mixed recycling service to help businesses increase the amount of waste they recycle in the workplace. This is an area identified as a priority through the Wiltshire County Council's waste strategy to help businesses to reduce and recycle their waste.

The service proved extremely popular and in April 2008 it was rebranded to become the Red Top Recycler, aimed at improving waste recycling in the workplace.

The combination of a wheeled bin for residual waste and a Red Top Recycler meant businesses in Wiltshire can recycle and reduce their waste disposal costs. The various sized wheeled bins are used to collect paper, cardboard, plastic and tins and suit even the smallest of businesses. Hills are also looking at the feasibility of introducing a bagged version of the service.



THE BUSINESS RECYCLING BIN

YES PLEASE
Paper & Magazines Plastic Bottles
Clean Cans Cardboard

NO THANKS
No Glass No Black Sacks

0845 603 2081







The Hills Group

Ailesbury Court, High Street,
Marlborough SN8 1AA

Tel: 01672 516999

Email: info@hills-group.co.uk

www.hills-group.co.uk