



NEWS RELEASE – 20 April 2012

Hills gets it sorted

New, state-of-the-art sorting equipment that processes the 40 tonnes of recycled plastic bottles and cardboard collected from households across Wiltshire each day has been demonstrated for the first time.

The equipment, which has been installed at Hills Waste Solutions' temporary recyclables management facility at Units 3-5, Porte Marsh Industrial Estate, Calne SN11 9BW, was shown to Wiltshire and Calne Town Councillors, staff and other stakeholders on Friday 20 April at 10.00am.

Mike Webster, group director Hills Waste Solutions said: "Hills worked with Turmec Engineering to design a system which processes recycling materials with maximum efficiency. We anticipate achieving a 95 per cent recycling rate and have already been able to significantly reduce the amount of waste being sent to landfill."

The technology uses a series of conveyor belts fitted with specialist sorting systems to remove cardboard and optical separators that separate plastic bottles into their various polymer types.

Andy Conn, head of waste management Wiltshire Council, said: "Since the introduction of the new service more than 3,000 tonnes of plastic bottles and cardboard have been collected for recycling. This is tremendous and will help ensure Wiltshire meets its targets of reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill to below 25 percent and increasing recycling to 50 percent by 2014."

Brian Thornton, sales manager Turmec Engineering, said: "We were delighted to work with Hills on this project. The plant has been optimised to have a very high recovery rate and we are happy with the results being achieved." **ENDS**

Notes for editors:

- Wiltshire's current recycling rate is 41% and in August 2011 the county celebrated the diversion of 1 million tonnes of waste from landfill
- 40 tonnes of material is received at Porte Marsh each day for processing
- The cardboard and plastic bottles being sorted have been collected from households across Wiltshire
- Hills Waste Solutions gained temporary planning permission in 2011 to operate a recyclables management facility at Porte Marsh for a period of three years

How does the new technology work?

- The mixed materials are loaded onto the first conveyor where they pass over a series of rollers which separates the larger pieces of cardboard.
- Remaining material falls onto a conveyor below and continues along the line where operatives are able to manually extract materials which cannot be recycled.
- From there the conveyor heads towards the optical separator which works on Near Infra Red (NIR) technology.
- This super-fast, computerised technology has the ability to scan any plastic material and determine its molecular structure.
- Within a millisecond it identifies the specific type of plastic bottle, such as HDPE or PET, and sends a signal to tiny air jets which 'shoot' the material off the conveyor into separate collection bays.
- From the collection bays the materials are first baled and then sent off site to reprocessing companies to be remade into everyday products.

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