

Taunton Deane Disability Discussion Group
10TH June 2008

Group Facilitated by Mandy Seaman – Compass Disability Services, SAIN Project Coordinator.

Representatives present;

Les Birnie, Senior Operations Officer, Somerset Waste Partnership.

Lainie Smythe – Taunton Deane Borough Council, Customer Service

Waste and Recycling Services

Les Birnie gave an overview of the Somerset Waste Partnership which has been working since 1992 following the Environmental Protection Act. In Oct 2007, Somerset became the first countywide area to combine waste service functions under a single joint committee of Councillors from all Somerset authorities. Previously, the District and Borough Councils collected household waste, whilst Somerset County Council managed waste disposal and the Household Waste Recycling Centres. The Partnership now manages waste collection, recycling and disposal services for all Somerset homes.

Les explained that ECT have the contract for the collection of recycling and refuse and Viridor have the contract for disposal. There are currently some differences between the collection services in the County, for example Sedgemoor are still on black bags. Domestic collections are still each week with recycled taking place every other week. The current recycling rate exceeds 50% which they are continually working to grow. They currently collect from 49,000 properties per week with 150,000 collections dealing with approx. 10 Tonnes per day.

Trials for plastic and cardboard have been in place from May this year and will continue until March 2009, in 5 areas of Taunton Deane, an assessment will be made at the end of the trial. The Partnership are paid by the government on the weight, so costs and environmental impact have to be assessed to decide if they continue to collect this. Anything outside

the house (for example rubble, bricks) must go to the waste disposal sites. There are currently no chips in the bins in the area.

Other issues were then raised by the group as follows;

Food Waste – Bin liners left in the bottom of food bins by people collecting waste which causes food to congregate in the bottom. Les advised that bins should be tapped on the base to remove as much as possible. The remainder being the responsibility of the householder to remove. Others commented that their bins have been cracked by operatives. These should be replaced by reporting it to Taunton Deane Borough Council (Contact Details below).

Food can be either loose in the bin, wrapped in newspaper or kitchen roll, or in recommended liners. The Cleanliness of the bin is up to the householder. They must use the correct liners or the waste may be refused – liner stockists are available on the website under 'Where to buy caddy liners'. If other liners are used they must be 'compostable' and NOT 'biodegradable', as biodegradable means they need sunlight to decay and compostable means they decay when buried or in darkness – which is needed for their processes.

Recycling Boxes – Plastic bags and tin lids left in boxes – all should be put on the vehicle.

Car Batteries – will take, but cannot take household batteries due to hazards present, these have to be taken to a waste disposal site. If a householder cannot take them to a site you can put them in your general waste.

Cooking Oil – will be taken if householders place the container in their black sacks or grey wheeled bin.

Sheltered Accommodation – responsibilities for recycling rest with the manager of the accommodation.

Broken glass present at the recycling bins opposite Kilkenny Court, some bins are also not at a level suitable for wheelchair users.

At the moment fines are not in place if you have not segregated your recycling suitably however the issue of this difficulties this presents for people with conditions such as Alzheimer's was raised.

Clinical Collections – are for authorised people with medical waste, which is illegal to be placed in ordinary refuse. There is a facility for sack collections and sharps box collections.

Assisted Collections

This service is available for people who have difficulty in taking their refuse to the usual collection point and have no one else to do it. To go on to the register you need to contact Customer Services at the Borough Council on 01823 356356. Confirmation from a specialist such as a GP is usually required. Assisted collections can be given for all services of refuse and recycling, including garden waste (and for either bins or sacks). All boxes/bins should be returned to the point of collection. If this does not happen it would be helpful if you have the vehicle registration details or other details to report to Customer Services at the Council, if it's the same day some team leaders will insist that operatives return to resolve the problem. If an ongoing problem occurs customer service will put an urgent request for the Waste Partnership to resolve this, in this instance Lainie Smythe can be contacted on **01823 356356** in Customer Services or you write to the following;

Customer Services,
Taunton Deane Borough Council,
The Deane House
Belvedere Road,
TAUNTON,
TA1 1HE.

Missed collections (assisted or otherwise) will be resolved either the same day or within 2 working days – this is the official guideline for returning. Please also contact Customer Service in this instance.

Minutes compiled by Mandy Seaman

Somerset Access and Inclusion Network

Managed by Compass Disability Services

11-12 Belvedere Trading Estate, Taunton, TA1 1BH

Tel: 0844 9842828 Fax: 01823 351790 Email: mandy@compassdisability.org.uk.