



MERSEYSIDE WASTE DISPOSAL AUTHORITY

**'SORTED'**

## RESULTS OF THE INITIAL CONSULTATION PROCESS 2000

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# **S O R T E D**

**A modern approach to waste disposal on Merseyside**

**We need your help to get something sorted..**

**What needs sorting?**

**670,000 tonnes of household waste every year.**

**Who sorts it now?**

Local Authorities currently collect about 80% of household waste from residents' bins; the other 20% is taken by residents themselves to waste reception centres. Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA) then takes responsibility for disposing of it. MWDA is also responsible for the development of a future waste strategy for Merseyside and promoting and recycling in partnership with the five local authorities.

**How is it sorted now?**

95% of all household waste is currently tipped and buried at landfill sites, with the remaining 5% recycled.

**Where does it get sorted?**

Currently most of the waste produced in Merseyside is disposed of to landfill sites outside the Merseyside Region. This is because there is not enough available land in Merseyside to create new landfill sites.

**Why sort it any differently then?**

The landfill sites used to dispose of Merseyside's waste are filling up. Landfill is now seen as one of society's dirty habits. It is criticised for being smelly, unsightly, possibly polluting, and it wastes resources that could be recycled or recovered. Proposed new national and European laws will soon mean that more and more waste will be treated to make it safe before it can be buried; this will make landfill operations even more expensive in the future, so we need to find other ways of getting rid of our waste.

**When do we have to get it sorted?**

Current landfill sites will be full by 2007. We need to plan and act now.

**Action**

We invited a large number of people from all parts of Merseyside to take part in a short survey to test general attitudes and preferences about ways of dealing with waste. The survey was in two parts.

## **FIRST STAGE OF CONSULTATION**

First, we sent out almost 2,400 questionnaires, making sure that an equal number went to random addresses in every one of the 119 Wards throughout Merseyside.

## **QUESTIONNAIRE**

Second, we sent out more than 15,000 questionnaires to libraries and similar locations to be made available to the general public.

A team of researchers statistically analysed results from both sets of replies. The findings from both sets of questionnaires were the same, with only minor differences in some questions. Overall, we received an incredible 1,200 completed questionnaires from all areas of Merseyside.

The main methods for disposing of waste are summarised here: **Future Options for Waste Disposal**

The information was provided to all those who took part in the survey, so they were able to tell us their views based on some knowledge of the options facing us.

So what did we learn from the survey? What did you tell us about your attitudes to household waste management? What were your priorities when thinking about disposal, and what were your preferences around disposal options?

## **FUTURE OPTIONS FOR WASTE DISPOSAL**

Each of the following methods could play a large part in getting rid of waste for the next 25 years. Each has its advantages and disadvantages.

### **'Clean' Recycling**

This means recovering materials at recycling centres from waste separated at home by the householder.

<b>FOR:</b>	<b>AGAINST:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most people prefer this method.</li><li>• Systems are already established and costs understood.</li><li>• Can create significant employment opportunities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The recovery rates are limited by the participation of the public.</li><li>• Relies on available markets for recycled materials.</li><li>• Needs more transport from the household to the 'clean' recycling centre, and from there to the market place.</li></ul>

### **'Dirty' Recycling**

This is recovering materials from mixed waste at disposal centres and recycling facilities from waste separated at home by the householder.

<b>FOR:</b>	<b>AGAINST:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We can recover materials without changing existing collection practices.</li><li>• It can create significant employment opportunities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Very high levels of contamination.</li><li>• Limits composting.</li><li>• Low status and working conditions of staff.</li></ul>

## **Energy From Waste Plant**

This creates energy through burning waste.

FOR:	AGAINST:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It significantly reduces our dependency on landfill.</li><li>• Creates useful by-products (electricity, steam for local heating).</li><li>• It can support other recycling systems.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The public are concerned about pollution and health effects.</li><li>• It costs a lot at the commissioning stage.</li><li>• Needs long-term contractual commitment.</li></ul>

### Biological Treatment

This is composting and other biological treatments.

FOR:	AGAINST:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It reduces the possibility of pollution.</li><li>• It reduces the volume of waste which needs getting rid of.</li><li>• A potentially beneficial product after processing.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This product quality depends upon the purity of the waste put in.</li><li>• Uncertain markets for the end product.</li><li>• Treats only a small percentage of the waste stream.</li></ul>

### Landfill

This is the traditional way of treating and burying waste.

FOR:	AGAINST:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This deals with the bulk of the waste stream.</li><li>• Improved technology and operation.</li><li>• There is the possibility of</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Possible long or short-term environmental problems.</li><li>• Uncertain and rising future costs.</li></ul>

separation of recyclables  
before tipping.

- Future restrictions on  
what we can get rid of  
in this way.

## THE FINDINGS: COLLECTION AND SEPARATION

### Attitudes

People in the survey were asked if "they themselves" were willing to separate waste at home, transport it to a collection centre, and take part in home composting schemes. They were then asked if they thought that "most people" would be willing to do the same.

Feedback - the right attitude?	
98% willing to separate recyclable material from general household waste	92% think most people would be willing to separate recyclable material
61% willing to take recyclable material to a local collection point	29% think most people would be willing to take material to a collection point
89% willing to separate food or garden waste from general household waste	71% think most people would be willing to separate food or garden waste
50% willing to take separate garden waste and take it to a civic amenity site	77% think most people would be willing to separate garden waste/take it to a site
64% willing to take part in a composting scheme	41% think most people would be willing to take part in a home composting scheme
97% willing to separate dangerous waste (paint, chemicals) from general waste	86% think most people would be willing to separate dangerous waste

Most people were clearly willing to separate waste (even "dangerous" waste like paint, chemicals, etc.) in the home before it was collected. However, they were a little less willing when it involved garden waste, and there was far less enthusiasm for actually transporting waste (particularly garden waste) to collection points. Nearly two-thirds of people in the survey said they would be interested in home composting, but even more were interested in recycling.

Obviously not all of the people in the survey have a garden, so this indicates a high level of interest. People generally seemed less likely to believe that others would have the same or similar attitude as themselves. For example, while 61% of those in the survey said that they would be willing to take recyclable material to a collection centre, only 29% believed that most people would be willing to do the same.



The questionnaire asked for your views on 'how you would sort it' around three issues. Here are some of the responses...

<b>Utilise waste: RE-THINK - RECYCLE</b>	<b>Awareness raising and education: TEACH THEM YOUNG</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use buried organic waste to run small local power stations just like Otterspool.</li> <li>• Pursue markets for recyclable waste.</li> <li>• Convert garden waste at central sites into compost and sell at site to generate revenue for recycling costs.</li> <li>• Promote re-use of servicable goods: community bookshops, toy nurseries, tool and furniture resource centres, Oxfam clothers, etc.</li> <li>• Have "waste to energy" power plants.</li> <li>• Sell on all recyclable produces.</li> <li>• Burn as much as possible in factory furnaces.</li> <li>• By burning waste the heat can be used for energy and the hot water piped to hospitals and hold peoples homes.</li> <li>• Invest in waste separation facilities at disposal centres and in biological/incineration processes which get rid of waste and release useful by-products</li> <li>• Use waste if possible in construction or to create e.g. ski slopes!</li> <li>• Use waste as fuel in factories.</li> <li>• Use it as they do abroad to heat premises</li> <li>• In Holland people put any unwanted furniture/household objects on the pavement the day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide higher profile recycling points.</li> <li>• Get waste management into the school curriculum.</li> <li>• Introduce sustainable development into the national curriculum.</li> <li>• Recycling needs more publicity again - children at school need to be more informed and involved in recycling.</li> <li>• Put collection points close to schools.</li> <li>• Continue with a pro-active communication programme.</li> <li>• Have a major education campaign (schools, adult centres etc).</li> <li>• Conduct a public information programme (leaflets, local paper and radio) on correct use of separation system.</li> <li>• Better labelling.</li> <li>• Change Waste Management to Surplus Resources Control.</li> <li>• I feel much more information on long-term pollution is required.</li> <li>• Massive education campaign to turn around Merseyside's</li> </ul>

<p>before collection by the Council. Could we try this once a month, anyone can take the furniture away if they would like to. Also the likes of Oxfam and other charities could pick up household items in a similar way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise old quarries/derelict land areas.</li> <li>• Use old mines for landfill.</li> <li>• Build caissons on sandbanks in the Mersey and along some shorelines then infill to create more land in the future - to narrow the river or create islands so the river can be bridged to improve transport links and economic activity in the region.</li> <li>• Fill in the marshes on the Dee and Mersey and create attractive shores, as at Otterspool.</li> </ul>	<p>attitude to waste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce size of wheelie bins - make people aware of how much waste they produce.</li> <li>• More local collection points.</li> <li>• Localised rubbish dumps.</li> <li>• Compulsory for councils to provide minimum number of waste collection points - pro rata to size of population.</li> <li>• Increase weekly collections as follows.</li> <li>• Collection points for waste for Bonfire Night.</li> <li>• Collect waste weekly - alternative weeks is too confusing.</li> <li>• Two collections per week.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research and Development: RESOURCES</b></p>	<p><b>Other comments: EXTREMELY HELPFUL</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research on how to break down plastic funded.&gt;</li> <li>• By looking at the way different countries manage waste (separation and disposal).</li> <li>• Review best practice in Europe.</li> <li>• A more thorough survey is needed to find out the most realistic choices.</li> <li>• Poll tax for LA's to clear up rubbish dumps within the area.</li> <li>• Seek private sponsorship from organisations whose products and methods cause excessive waste. This money would be used on education,</li> </ul>	<p>Thankfully it's one headache that I haven't got. Good luck to those whose problem it is to solve.</p>

schools, communities, etc.

- Increase waste and salvage staff. Have an army of workers.
- US Method - employing staff for household waste disposal and sorting.



## A LOAD OF RUBBISH - HOW WOULD YOU SORT IT?

### Overview

Overall then people seemed to support:

- Encouraging greater separation of waste in the household.
- Emphasis on waste management techniques which minimise environmental impact.
- Recycling as much waste as possible.
- Treating organic waste biologically rather than burning or burying it.
- If waste cannot be recycled or treated biologically, burning waste, rather than burying it.
- Only burying waste if it cannot be recycled, or treated in any other way.
- Treating waste locally whilst clearly demonstrating the cost savings and environmental benefits.
- Investing now in appropriate treatments but demonstrating the long-term savings and environmental benefits.
- Putting safety, health and quality of the environment over job creation and cost savings.
- Putting cost savings over job-creation in the waste management industry.

In particular, those responsible for formulating and implementing the future waste strategy are concerned that the public has the opportunity to express their opinions over the waste disposal option for Merseyside.

The feedback gained from this was obtained with a limited amount of information being available on the options. MWDA now want to progress with the next stage of consultation, developing more informed feedback on the mix of possible waste disposal options for Merseyside.

**In this next stage some community members from Merseyside will be invited to look at the options available and to develop the possible mix of waste disposal options. They will also look at the costs and benefits of each of the main elements identified above.**

## A LOAD OF RUBBISH - HOW WOULD YOU SORT IT?

<p><b>Tackling the source of the problem:</b> <b>PENALTIES AND INCENTIVES</b></p>	<p><b>Community Involvement:</b> <b>KEEPING IT LOCAL</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce packaging.</li> <li>• Persuade suppliers to phase out unnecessary packaging, plastic bags etc.</li> <li>• Penalties are an easy way to stop unwanted junk mail which is getting more all the time.</li> <li>• Encourage more attic sales and use of charity shops which relieves pressure on the tip.</li> <li>• Deal with the source of the problem, rather than the problem.</li> <li>• Reduce waste at the "sharp end", i.e., shops and supermarkets, etc.</li> <li>• Encourage home composting.</li> <li>• Reduce packaging - like in Scandanavia (can remove packaging at supermarkets.</li> <li>• Make supermarkets provide bins by checkouts for all unnecessary packaging so that you do not have to take it home.</li> <li>• Planning decisions to encourage local shops as supermarkets produce more packaging.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve people in their own community decisions and actions.</li> <li>• Reduce the public's involvement to a minimum to ensure "maximum participation".</li> <li>• Take it in "turn" to burn scheme and recycle combustibles to those with solid fuel fires.</li> <li>• Involve existing community groups in pilot schemes.</li> <li>• Set up community-based schemes for composting, collections etc.</li> <li>• Come on, it's nearly the year 2000! The initial costs will soon be outweighed by the benefits. Get the community involved in clean up projects.</li> <li>• Keep waste local.</li> <li>• A screened off recycling area for skips should be a feature of every new development.</li> <li>• Create small landfill sites near industry who could use the methane for energy and see the completed site landscaped.</li> <li>• Set up recycle shop in town centres.</li> <li>• Keep waste management local - avoid NIMBY syndrome.</li> </ul> <p><b>Waste separation by residents:</b> <b>YOUR INVOLVEMENT</b></p>

- Ban supermarkets from giving out free carrier bags.
- Increase collection charges for households not prepared to co-operate in household recycling.
- Charging per unit of non-separated waste by only collecting non-separated waste in bags bought from MWDA/Liverpool Council.
- Compel householders to recycle as much as possible by levying additional council taxes for those that don't.
- Vehicles caught fly-tipping should be impounded.
- Make tenants and builders who dump waste rubbish bags in entries pay for their removal.
- Tax plastic, paper and packaging.
- Put collection points close to schools.
- Re-introduction of deposit on return packaging - glass receptacles although this would necessitate persuasion of suppliers again.
- A rebate in council tax (5%) would be a good incentive for home sorting, with policing by the waste removal contractors.

- Different coloured wheelie bins for different waste.
- A bin with four separate compartments, one each for bottles, paper, tin and plastics.
- Provide receptacles for home segregation.
- More bottle banks.
- Supply suitable containers to allow separation of waste type at source, containers should be chosen to suit flats, different house types, commercial premises etc.
- Communal bins in flats make it hard for you to introduce these schemes.
- Make people more responsible for their own waste.
- Encourage more "ownership" of our environment - individuals in schools; groups gathering waste from beauty spots etc.
- Give each house a mini crusher to crush their plastic bottles.
- The size of the wheelie bins discourages people from sorting their waste as it is tempting to throw everything in them.
- Make it compulsory for householders to separate their waste (as in Germany).
- Wheeled bins are not popular with some households as they advertise absence to burglars if no one is at home to take them back in. The option of putting bags out instead should be retained if wheeled bins are introduced.

## **PLANS FOR THE FUTURE - WHERE ARE WE GOING FROM HERE?**

**Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA) has considered the most appropriate way to continue the programme of Public Consultation with the aim of formulating a Future Waste Strategy for Merseyside.**

The first stages of the public consultation exercise has been completed, MWDA now needs to take forward the positive responses produced by you into a structured programme of discussion.

436 individuals indicated on the questionnaire that they would be interested in becoming further involved in the consultation process.

This is an extremely encouraging figure, as MWDA now needs your help in taking things onto the next level.

MWDA now needs to highlight the reasons why the consultation exercise needs to be expanded.

The next stages of public consultation aims to work with members of the local communities to try to achieve regional consensus on the direction of the future waste strategy for Merseyside.

MWDA will be using specialist consultants to use the process of 'Citizens Juries' and 'Consensus Meeting'. Members of the juries will be identified to represent local communities. The role of 'Jury Member' is to highlight the variety of local perspectives and local needs that exist across Merseyside.

The process they will go through in order to arrive at some conclusions for how to deal with Merseyside's Waste includes:

- Information packs on waste management
- Hearing expert witnesses on waste options
- Site visits
- Dialogue and feedback from the wider community
- Public consensus meeting.

The importance of the development of a future waste strategy for Merseyside, in terms of its scale, both economically and environmentally is extremely significant. The input from the general public, at this stage, will play a key role in contributing to the decision making process of the draft waste strategy.