



ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE

Thursday 1 September 2025

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

PART 1

3. OFFICER PRESENTATION - WASTE & RECYCLING FROM RESIDENTIAL COUNCIL FLAT BLOCKS

To receive a presentation from Stevenage Direct Services Officers regarding the collection of waste and recycling from SBC residential blocks.

(Presentation to follow)

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Waste and Recycling Services



Environment & Economy Select Committee – 1st September 2025

- Steve Dupoy – Assistant Director – Stevenage Direct Services
- Kris White – Head of Environmental Operations
- Claire Nicholls – Waste Project Manager



Agenda

1. Flats - Background
2. Flats - Recycling Trial
3. Flats Surveying
4. SBC Designed Wheeled Bin
5. Communications
6. Bring Banks



Background

- Approx 8,000 flatted properties in town (21%).
- Many blocks lack adequate space or access for wheeled bins.
- Frequent issues with contamination and excess waste.
- Recycling rates at flats historically low.
- High rise blocks and refuse chutes pose additional challenges.



Flat Block Examples

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Turpins Rise



Monument Court

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Flat Block Examples

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Townsend Mews



Matalan site

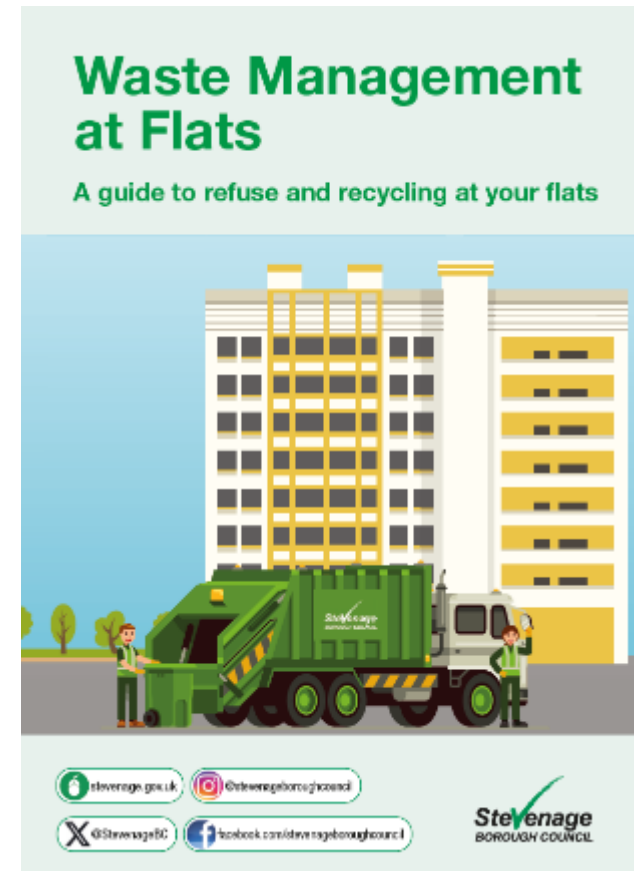
Flats Recycling Trial – Phase One

- Flat block recycling pilot completed in 2023.
- Installation of new infrastructure, signage and bins at 6 sites across Stevenage.
- The aim was to increase participation and therefore recycling.
- Pre-installation monitoring completed to assess bin usage.
- Resident survey identified that a gap in information about recycling was a key barrier.



Flats Recycling - Trial – Phase One

- A range of interventions included – new frames, signage, bins, stickers and a recycling leaflet.
- Post-installation monitoring showed a 185% increase in recycling.
- Based on 2023 prices, this equates to an estimated £3.5K of additional recycling revenue annually at these six sites.
- There are additional recycling income opportunities (subject to the national price fluctuation of recycling materials) once improvements take place town-wide).



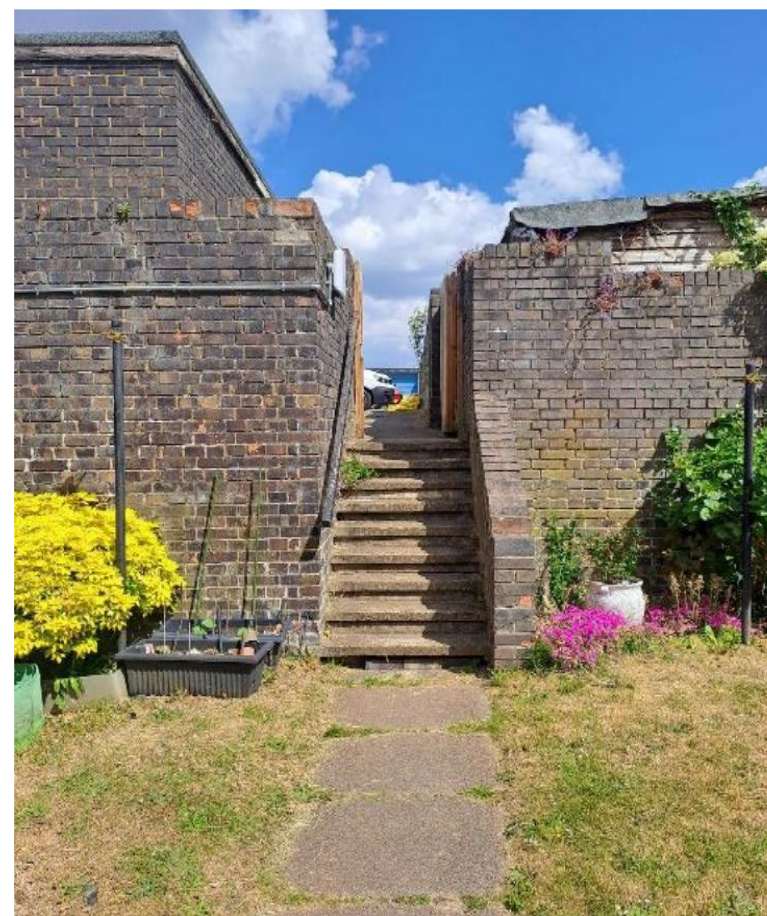
Flats Recycling - Trial – Phase Two

- Further monitoring in Autumn 2024 confirmed sustained improvements at phase one sites, with recycling rates averaging around 85%.
- These results have helped inform a further roll out of recycling to more sites.
- Phase 2 of the flat block recycling pilot is underway and set for completion in Autumn 2025.
- Four new sites have been selected, with initial monitoring suggesting potential for further recycling improvements.



Flats Surveys – May/June 2025

- Simpler Recycling legislates all houses and flats need to be provided with recycling capabilities by 31 March 2026.
- 74 flat blocks identified as currently having no recycling – detailed surveys carried out.
- Principal barrier was access, with steps leading to, or down into, the grounds where current bin provision is located.
- Steps pose a challenge to safely manoeuvre bins for emptying waste and recycling.



Flats Surveys – May/June 2025

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Access ramps to replace steps

Improvements to existing bin stores



Construction of new bin stores

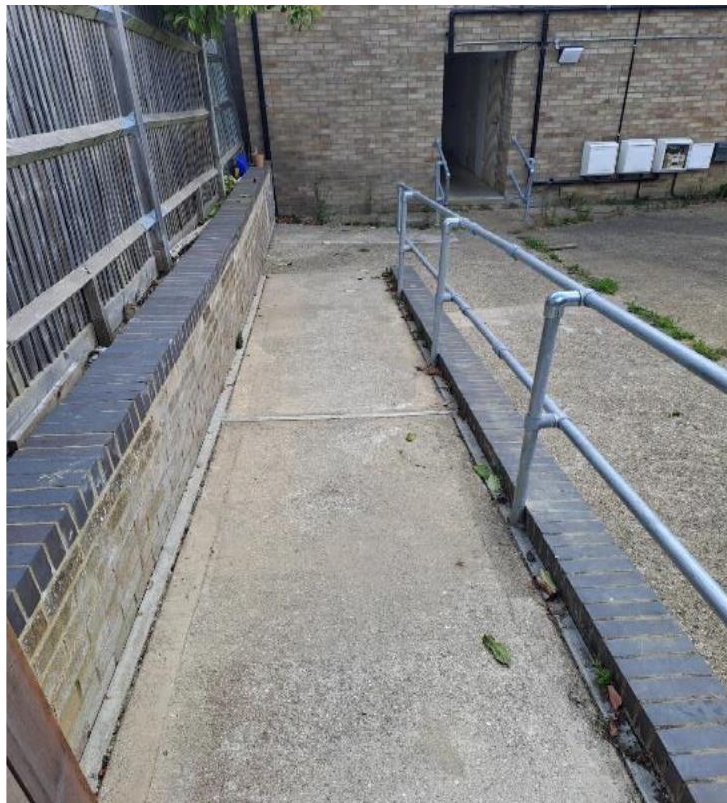
New signage to provide clear guidance on what items go in each bin

Standardised Bins

Flats Surveys – May/June 2025

- Examples of locations that have been previously upgraded.

A ramp replacing steps



A newly installed bin store



Scope of Works and Locations

- Up to 3 options considered for each site.
 - Costs currently being established with our Engineers team.
 - Cost estimated ~£700k.
 - Pre-built stores for flats above shops.
- Almonds Hill – 11
 - Bedwell – 2
 - Longmeadow – 2
 - Martins Wood – 16
 - Roebuck – 8
 - Shephall – 1
 - Woodfield – 1
 - **Total - 41**



Flat Block Improvements - Project Timeline

- September / October 2025 –Commencement of flat block works
- March 2026 – Estimated project completion
- Autumn 2026 – Initial 6-month review of impact

SBC Designed Wheeled Bin

- Trialled at one block
- Feedback gained from collection crews and residents



Interest from local media

Communications

Key factors for recycling at flats are:

- Motivation
- Knowledge
- Ease of use

Our current initiatives:

- Designing updated signage for bin storage areas.
- Introducing consistent, easy-to-read bin stickers.
- Developing tailored service leaflets for flat residents.
- Engaging with residents through surveys and direct communication.
- Creating a dedicated communications plan for flats.



Communications

Waste Management at Flats



A guide to refuse and recycling at your flats

In the paper and card recycling bin you can recycle:

- ✓ Newspaper and paper
- ✓ Magazines and catalogues
- ✓ Junk mail and envelopes
- ✓ Cardboard and card
- ✓ Cartons e.g. Tetra Pak

- ✗ Plastic bags and wrapping
- ✗ General waste



In the glass recycling bin you can recycle:

- ✓ Glass bottles
- ✓ Glass Jars

- ✗ Drinking glasses and pyrex dishes
- ✗ Sheet glass and light bulbs



We cannot empty bins that contain incorrect items.

For a full list of items you can recycle please check our A-Z:
www.stevenage.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/your-a-z-recycling-guide

In the plastics and cans recycling bin you can recycle:

- ✓ Plastic bottles
- ✓ Plastic pots, tubs and trays
- ✓ Food and drink cans
- ✓ Foil and foil trays

- ✗ Black sacks and plastic bags
- ✗ Polystyrene and crisp packets
- ✗ Soft plastics e.g. plastic wrapping, bags and cling film
- ✗ Rigid plastics e.g. toys and furniture

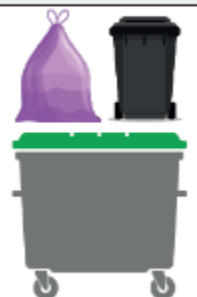


Refuse Collections

Your refuse bin should be used for anything that cannot be recycled.

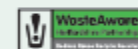
- ✓ Nappies and pet waste
- ✓ Plastic bags, crisp packets and film
- ✓ Wood and polystyrene

- ✗ Electrical items and batteries
- ✗ Hazardous waste
- ✗ DIY waste



Remember to recycle right!

- ✓ Keep in clean – a quick rinse will do
- ✓ Recycling must be loose, do not put items in bags
- ✓ Flatten cardboard
- ✓ If in doubt, leave it out of your recycling



Communications

- Stickers placed on recycling bins at flats.
- Colour coded to match the household (low-rise) scheme.
- Clear communications, supported by service leaflet.

Mixed plastics and can recycling ONLY



food tins & drink cans	plastic packaging
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Aluminium foil ✓ Foil trays ✓ Food tins ✓ Drinks cans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Plastic bottles ✓ Plastic tubs ✓ Plastic pots ✓ Plastic trays

✗ No carrier bags or bin liners please



Glass recycling ONLY



✗ No bin liners, carrier bags or broken glass please



Paper and cardboard recycling ONLY

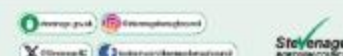


✗ No bin liners or carrier bags
Please break down all cardboard



Waste Management at Flats

A guide to refuse and recycling at your flats

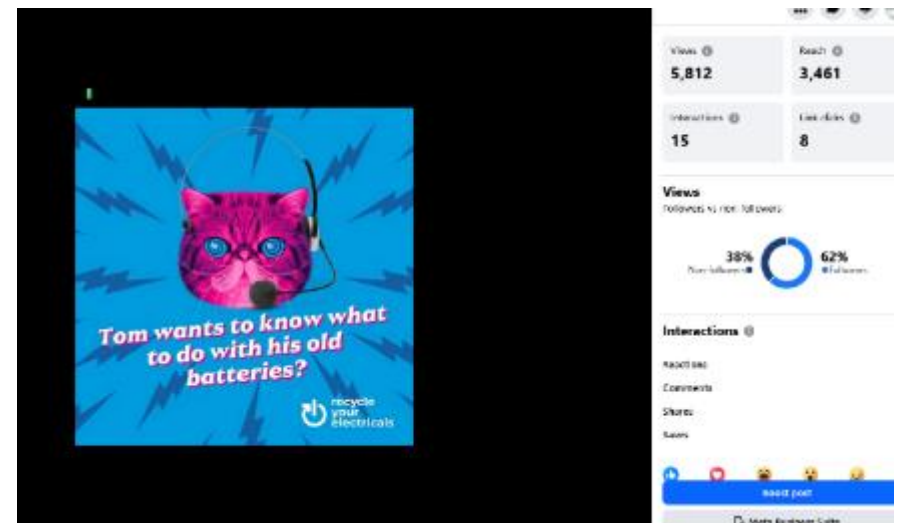
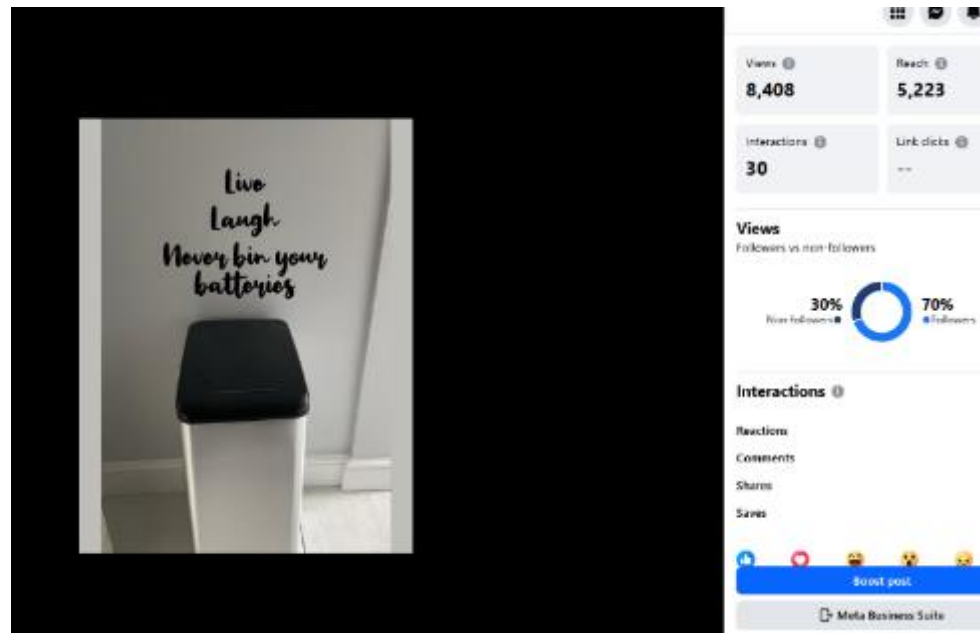
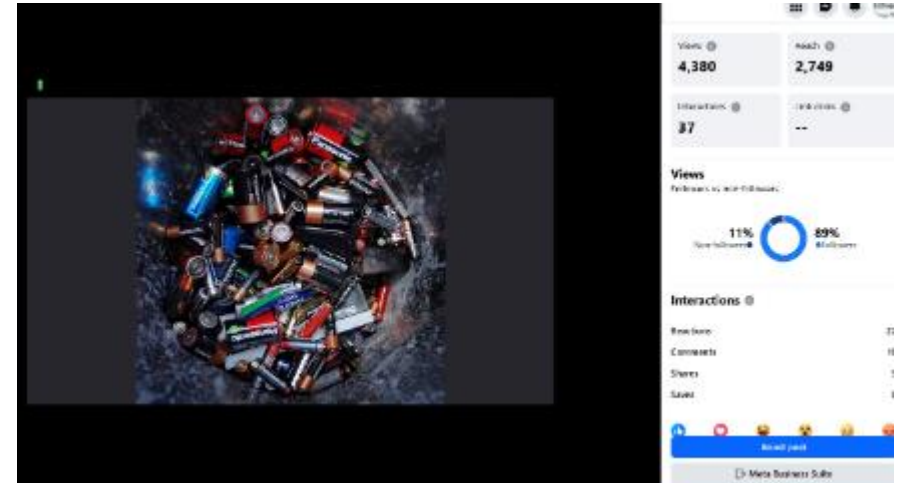


Disposal of Batteries

- Regular social media posts scheduled to remind residents of the danger of binning batteries and electrical equipment in the general rubbish bin.
- Several vehicles have banners currently displayed with key messages and a 'hot off the press' new banner will be replacing several older banners in the Autumn.



Communications

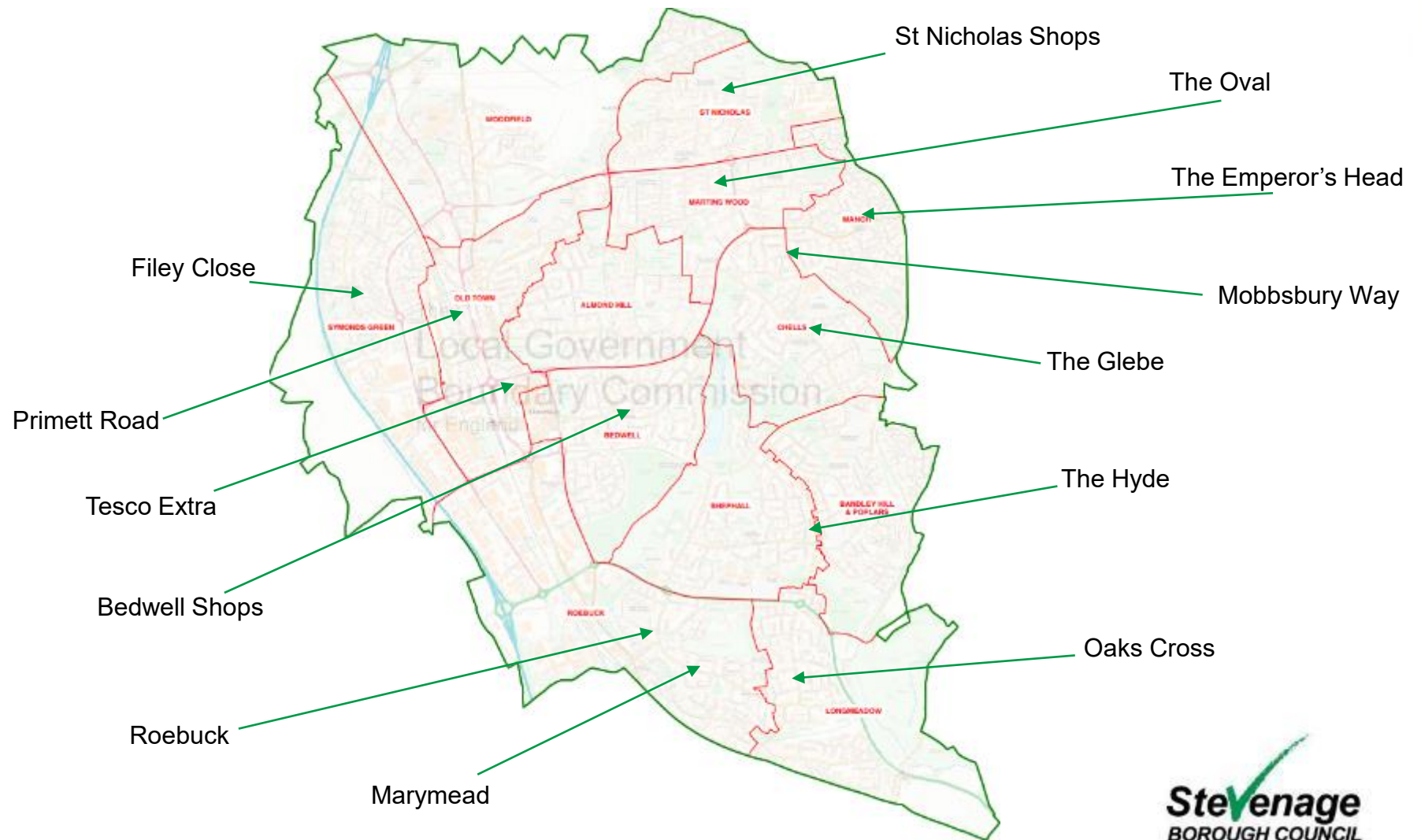


Bring Banks

- Currently 13 Recycling 'Bring Bank' sites across the town.
- Intended for residents with excess recycling and flats without recycling.
- Serviced at least 3 times a week.
- Daily reports of misuse and fly tipping.
- Cleansing team (shops crew) clear fly tipping several days a week.
- Fly tipping at bring banks accounted for 40% of all incidents cleared in 2024/25.



Bring Bank Map



Bring Banks



Bring Banks



Bring Bank Improvements

- Improvements completed across eight sites in June 2025.
- Removal of old frames no longer fit for purpose.
- Installation of new frames, bins, stickers and signage.
- Bins with targeted apertures introduced, to help reduce contamination.
- Unfortunately, problems with fly tipping remain.



Future Opportunities at Bring Sites

- Simpler recycling means all flats will be provided with recycling by March 2026.
- Review the current scope and location of Bring Sites plus associated signage, CCTV etc
- Potential opportunities include:
 1. **Improving Operational Efficiency** - Freeing up the cleansing teams to focus on other duties.
 2. **Environmental Impact** - Reduced vehicle usage and emissions from collection vehicles.
 3. **Improved Service** – A better service at Bring Sites



Summary

- Improving flat block facilities for waste and recycling will improve current levels achieved and meet legislative requirements.
- Communication, information and education will support the structural improvement works.
- Based on the pilot scheme, we could see a 4% increase in our overall recycling rate, if similar results were achieved at all flats.
- Bring banks need to be reviewed to seek to reduce misuse and costs.



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