



Report to Scrutiny

Item Number:

Contains Confidential Or
Exempt Information

No

- Subject of Report:** Acton Circular Economy Hub Progress Update
- Meeting:** Scrutiny Panel 1 Housing and Environment
7 March 2024
- Service report author:** Catherina Pack, Head of Street Care and Waste Management
- Scrutiny officer:** Anna-Marie Rattray, Overview and Scrutiny Officer
rattraya@ealing.gov.uk
- Cabinet Responsibility:** Councillor Deirdre Costigan, Climate Action
- Director Responsibility:** Nicky Fiedler, Strategic Director Housing and Environment
- Brief:** This report provides an update on the development and delivery of a circular economy hub at the Stirling Road site in Acton W3.
- Recommendations:** That the Panel considers the report and makes recommendations as appropriate. Note the progress and steps being taken to reduce waste and increase reuse and recycling in the borough and moving towards a more circular economy.

Acton Circular Economy Hub Progress Update

- 1.1 Ealing's Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP) details that the Authority is already meeting the Mayor's minimum service level for the collection of the six main dry recyclable materials (glass, paper, card, plastics, tins and cans). Ealing has a separate weekly food waste service for all kerbside properties, and is rolling this service out to blocks of flats. A trial will be carried out to collect food waste from flats above shops.
- 1.2 Ealing is consistently in the top three in London when it comes to rates of recycling. However, we need to avoid waste in the first place and increase opportunities for residents to reuse, repair and recycle.
- 1.3 There is ongoing work to engage with communities in waste reduction and reuse activities, moving towards a circular economy approach – including identification of potential sites and engaging stakeholders to support the community in waste reduction and reuse, social value and decarbonisation, trialling a low-waste/circular neighbourhood, and opening a 'library of things' to help residents reduce waste and save money by renting items such as tools and electronics, rather than buying new.
- 1.4 The circular economy offers an alternative to a linear or recycling economy approach and is based on the principles of designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use. A circular system keeps the materials in use again and again through sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling – reducing waste to a minimum.
- 1.5 Ealing and West London Waste Authority (WLWA) have been working collaboratively to design, develop and deliver a Circular Economy Hub on the site of the previous Household Reuse and Recycling Centre in Stirling Road W3, for a period of at least 3 years. The Acton Hub is designed to focus on waste reduction and consumption reduction through reuse and repair of items.
- 1.6 The Acton Hub will help to deliver on the objectives of the following:
 - Ambition to become a net zero borough by 2030
 - Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy targets (carbon emissions, waste)
 - Reduction and Recycling Plan targets (waste reduction, recycling rate, target resource streams)
 - One World Living consumption emissions
 - Climate Emergency Officers Group – Circular Economy
- 1.7 The targeting of specific material streams such as textiles, e-waste, plastics and food are a critical mitigation in the management of risk arising from upcoming legislative changes such as the Environment Bill, Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and compositional changes. Enabling a circular economy for high fossil carbon materials such as textiles, e-waste and plastics will help to reduce the fossil content in our residual waste for treatment and avoid the associated ETS carbon costs.

- 1.8 A significant benefit of the Hub is the generation of social value. This will be created from community engagement, repair, training, jobs and donations of items. All of these services ensure a significant multiplier effect on the investment within the community.
- 1.9 The team are developing the branding and communications plan for the site, engaging with partners to operate on the site, and beginning engaging with the community in the locality, whilst the site becomes ready.
- 1.10 Enabling works on the site are being commissioned. The tender for the site buildings infrastructure is due to be issued imminently, with contract award scheduled in April and mobilisation during May/June.
- 1.11 From 1 April 2024, we plan to:
- Have storage onsite at the Hub for reuse materials
 - Run pop-up market stalls at Acton Market once a month
 - Work with local organisations for redistribution of usable items such as textiles
 - Promote Repair Week including highlighting for example Ealing Repair Café events
 - Work with ACT for Ealing on a 'waste' exhibition
- 1.12 Provisionally, we plan for the Acton Hub space to be open to residents to repair, reuse and recycle electronics, bicycles, furniture, and clothes from Summer 2024. Note there are dependencies that may impact the timeline such as the finalisation of the lease arrangements, successful procurement of the site infrastructure solution and associated planning permission.

2. Legal Implications

- 2.1 The Mayor is required to prepare and publish a London Environment Strategy by the Greater London Authority Act 1999 ('GLA Act' as amended), under changes made by the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.2 Arising out of the London Environment Strategy is an expectation from the Mayor that Local Authorities develop Reduction and Recycling Plans, which should include local reduction and recycling targets that contribute to the Mayor's London-wide targets.
- 2.3 The Environment Act, which became law in 2021, acts as the UK's new framework of environmental protection. The Bill makes provision about targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment; for statements and reports about environmental protection; for the Office for Environmental Protection; about waste and resource efficiency; about air quality; for the recall of products that fail to meet environmental standards; about water; about nature and biodiversity; for conservation covenants; about the regulation of chemicals; and for connected purposes.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 Existing approved budget will be utilised to deliver the objectives, targets and policies for the effective management of Ealing's waste. Officers will be monitoring the targets during the regular budget monitoring cycle and bid for available external funding where required, e.g. from Resource London and West London Waste Authority.
- 3.2 Alternate weekly collections of dry mixed recycling and residual waste, supported by weekly collections of food waste (including the roll out to flats) has successfully driven up the recycling performance and driven down waste disposal costs. A circular system keeps materials in use again and again through sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling – reducing waste and associated disposal costs.

4. Other Implications

- 4.1 Work around waste reduction, reuse and recycling is proven to reduce the amount of greenhouse gasses produced. The benefits are largely contingent on changing resident behaviour. The actual changes to tonnages and the recycling rate will be closely monitored to track progress.
- 4.2 Reduction of waste, reuse and recycling positively supports the priorities of tackling the climate crisis. The council's administration has three key priorities for Ealing. They are:
 - fighting inequality
 - tackling the climate crisis
 - creating good jobs

Consultation

Pre-publication sign-off

Name	Department	Date sent	Date response received	Comments appear in report paragraph:
Internal				
Earl McKenzie	Assistant Director Street Services	27.02.24	27.02.24	

Report History

Decision type: Non-key decision	a. Urgency item? No
---	-------------------------------

Authorised by Cabinet member:	Date report drafted:	Report deadline:	Date report sent:
Not applicable			
Report no.:			