



# Essex Recycling Partnership Monitoring Report



Essex Recycling Partnership

Quarter 1 – 2016-17

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## Essex Recycling Partnership- Q1 2016/17 report

### Summary

This report outlines the progress made by the Essex Recycling Partnership to achieve the project objectives and commitments made within the project bid submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government in November 2014.

Contained herein is an evaluation of the outputs delivered following the fifth reporting quarter (Q1 2016-17) of the scheme's implementation between April and June 2016. This report seeks to provide a comparative analysis of the Partnership's performance implementing the Essex Recycling Rewards Scheme, evaluating the data reported by the partnership against performance commitments made within the bid.

During this period, the Partnership aimed to continue to build upon previous reported successes, and alleviate the existing issues that were blocking progress.

### Background to the scheme

In March 2015 a partnership of four Essex District Council's secured £896,468 of funding from the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) to develop and implement "Recycling Reward Schemes" in the districts of Braintree, Epping Forest, Harlow and Tendring. The four District Councils are working together as part of the coordinated scheme which will reward residents for reducing and recycling their waste.

The outcome for this partnership is to maximise participation, increase capture rates of recycled materials and enhance customer satisfaction. Over the lifetime of the project the scheme will be delivered to 114,500 properties and 97 schools through targeted education initiatives and an incentivised rewards scheme.

## Quarter Objectives and Progress

The key priorities of this quarter (April – June 2016) for the four districts were to ensure the continued rollout of the recycling rewards scheme to the selected stakeholders.

Due to the challenges faced by Epping Forest and Harlow during the first year of the scheme, the original project Gantt chart no longer applies, and will need to be reviewed and amended to reflect the various stages each partner finds themselves at. The below objectives were amended for this reporting quarter:

<b>Objective</b>	<b>District</b>
Roll-out of the scheme to the next flat sites	BDC//TDC
Roll-out of the scheme to the next school sites	BDC / TDC
Harlow to explore new plan for their allocation	HDC
Epping Forest to appoint Waste Awareness Officers to vacant post	EFDC

Below is a breakdown of activities undertaken by Partners against the objectives set this quarter:

### **Braintree District Council**

Braintree has continued progress with the rollout of the scheme to flats, with an additional 80 blocks signing up and receiving new recycling bins. Feedback from participating residents has been positive with many beginning to utilise the service.

In terms of communication, it was decided to not organise generic recycling roadshows, instead Braintree have opted to target residents living in the participating flats directly with specific information and advice. From previous experience, this has proven to be a far more effective method. All flats participating therefore were canvassed shortly after the delivery and installation of their new bins, and residents, caretakers and managing agents' feedback collected and taken on board.

Six more schools joined the scheme too in this period, and as per the others, all were contacted to gauge feedback, provide support, and arrange visits and educational sessions during assemblies. Positively, shortly after joining the scheme, one school asked for an additional donation of a compost bin, as children were so engaged with recycling that they wanted to explore more possibilities as to how they could implement further environmentally friendly initiatives at their school. As hoped, without the challenges presented by poor existing recycling habits, pupils at participating schools are quickly adopting new recycling behaviours that hopefully will begin to translate to a recycling legacy within the district in years to come.

### **Epping Forest District Council**

The significant local issues experienced by Epping Forest District Council since Q1 2015/16, have continued to alleviate slightly, however, the capacity to implement the scheme is still greatly reduced under these circumstances.

Activity in this quarter was at a minimum; but Epping have now been successful in finding two suitable candidates to fill their vacant Waste Awareness Officer posts.

With dedicated staff due to commence their roles shortly, they are optimistic that they can deliver the scheme moving forward and the rollout of the scheme will resume in earnest.

At the most recent Partnership meeting (August 2016), Braintree, whose scheme shares the most similarities with Epping's, has agreed to share their learning so far in order to help bring Epping up to speed quickly.

### **Harlow District Council**

Upon the completion of Q1 2016-17, Harlow still only have one kiosk in place, which is situated at Passmores Academy. As reported in previous quarters, the kiosk has been plagued by a number of operational problems and this has, unfortunately led to reduced usage. Issues have arisen around the account QR codes, the system has been prone to crashing and a number of barcodes for items were missing from the database. This has resulted in difficulties recording the number and type of items being recycled.

The staff have been very patient and despite the issues continue to remain interested in the scheme, committing their time to ensure that the kiosk works properly.

Despite these issues though, the kiosk is currently working as it should. In order to stimulate usage, Passmores plan to run a recycling event at the start of the new term in September, with the benefits of the kiosk being highlighted to students once again.

As reported in previous quarters, Harlow is currently considering alternative options of how they can spend their remaining allocation, due to the difficulty finding sites for the remaining kiosks.

### **Tendring District Council**

Tendring has experienced a slight delay to their progress of the scheme in this quarter, owing largely to the vacant Recycling Officer posts they currently have. This has resulted in a temporary halt on flat recycling installations and food waste installations at schools.

Positively though, the sale of food caddy liners has commenced from four outlets with over 500 rolls (26,000 bags) sold already. Essex County Council will be assisting with this process too, allowing the sale of caddy liners at all their libraries in the Tendring area.

Food waste tonnage is still outperforming last year's data but is diminishing as householders run out of liners. In order to stimulate this, some of Tendring's remaining communications fund may be allocated to advertise the availability of these caddy liners at libraries within the district.

In addition, approximately 100 rolls equalling 5200 bags were also sold at the Tendring show in July 2016. The income generated will help with the sustainability of Tendring's scheme, and additionally, residents are able to benefit from buying liners at subsidised prices.

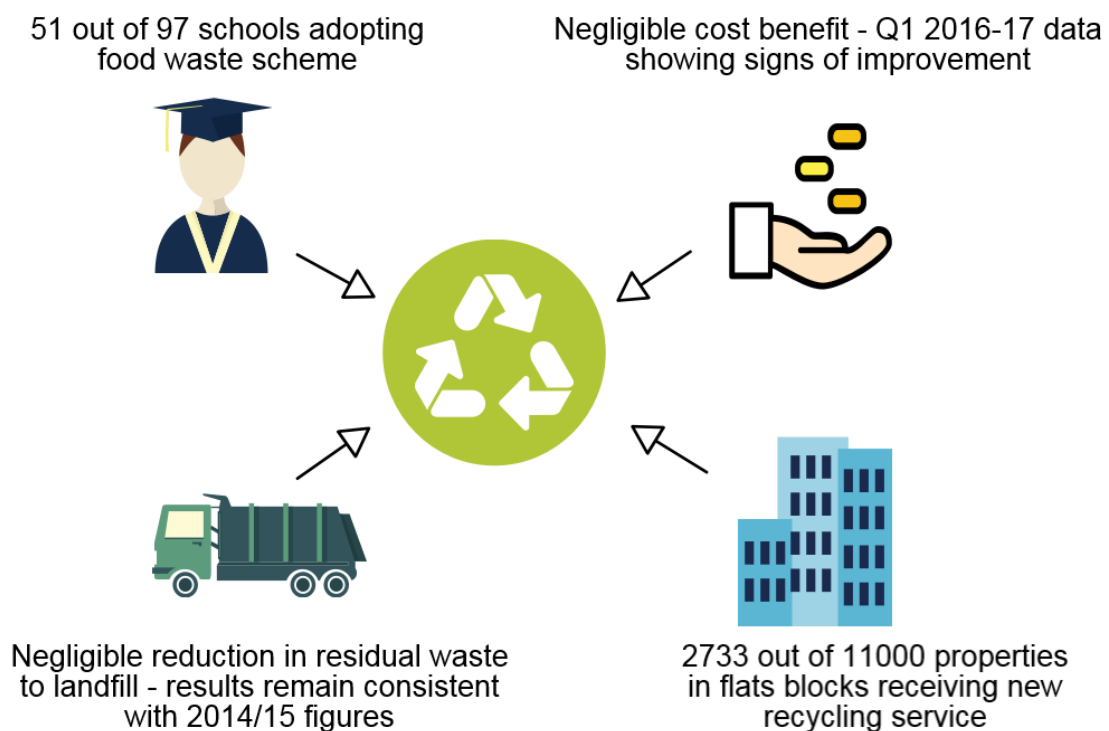
Tendring can also report that flat contamination rates have improved as a result of the new style bins rolled out during the scheme. This performance has encouraged Tendring to earmark the units they are using to install as a standard in any new builds.

## Progress towards meeting our key commitments

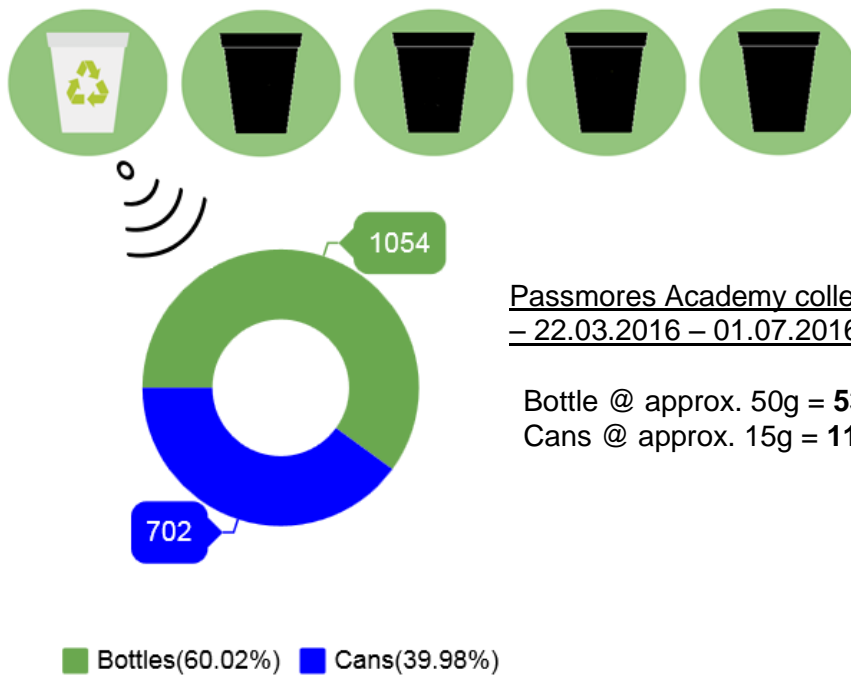
The bid set out a number of key commitments the partnership would aim to achieve with this scheme. These are:

- 97 schools adopting weekly food recycling.
- 11,000 properties in flat blocks receiving a new recycling service.
- Total projected financial benefits of £396,757 over the course of the scheme.
- A projected total reduction in landfill waste of 9154 tonnes.

The below graphics highlights the key achievements of the partnership against these commitments to date:

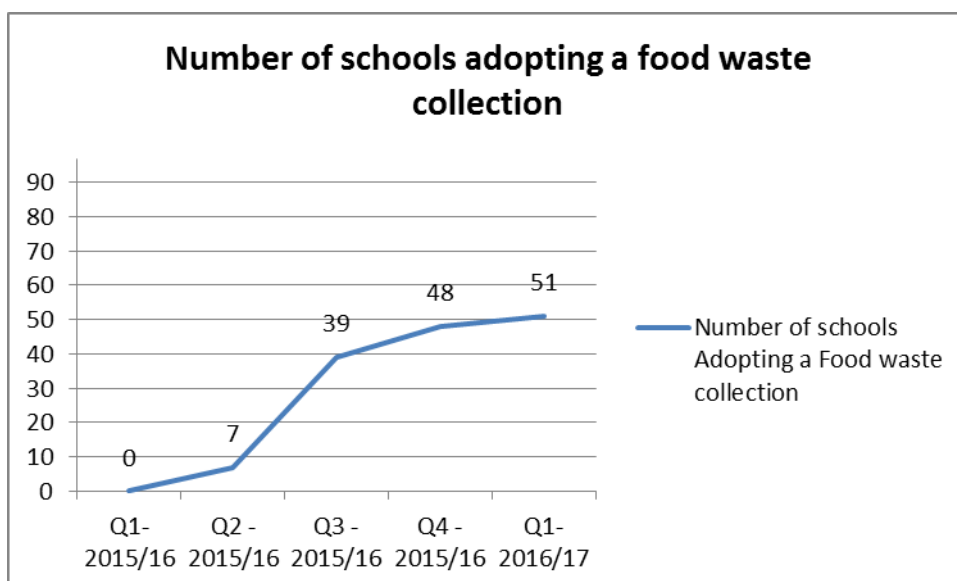


**Harlow's progress to meeting five Greenredeem sites:**



From the data provided by partners we are able to make the following conclusions on the progress being made to meeting the key commitments as set out in the Recycling Rewards Scheme bid. For a more detailed view of the Partnership's performance, please see 'Table 1' in the Appendix at the end of this report.

**97 schools adopting weekly food recycling**



As of June 2016, the partnership is at 52% of their target of 97 schools adopting a new food waste initiative. The partnership has reported continued progress with this aspect of the scheme. Braintree now has a total of 32 schools participating in the food waste initiative (with no additional schools currently planned to join) and Tendring have maintained their total of 19 schools taking part.

The schools aspect of the scheme is presently the most successful element for the partnership, with the majority of the schools actively engaging with both Braintree and Tendring, helping tailor the scheme in the direction that benefits them most.

The rewards element is currently being investigated by Braintree, and will likely be implemented in Q2. It is planned that all schools that have joined the food waste scheme in Braintree will be entered into a competition which aims to find the best performing school. The winning school will be rewarded with a prize to recognize their efforts.

In order to measure a school's efforts, the food recycling performance of each school will be measured for the month of September 2016 in order to establish a baseline figure for the amount of food waste and refuse the school is producing. On a monthly basis, recycling officers will then undertake monitoring activities at participating schools. The schools that show the most improvements against their baseline figures will be rewarded with a prize.

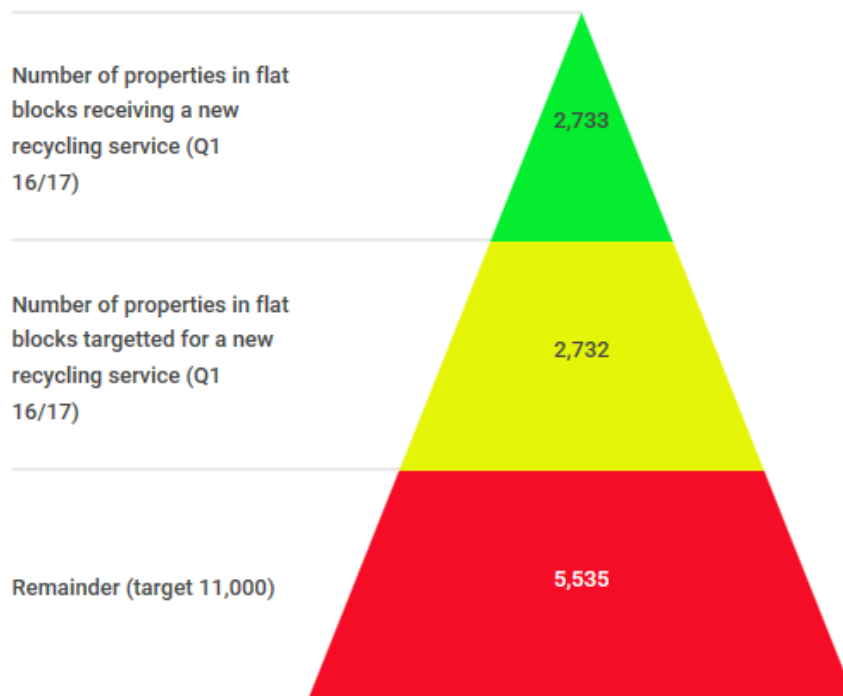
In line with the recycling and environmentally friendly legacy the scheme is aiming to set in motion, winners will be given the opportunity to choose from prizes ranging from trips to recycling plants, environmentally friendly outdoor play equipment, cooking books and classes and plants and seeds to grow their own food.

Feedback from participating schools has been wholly positive, and as and when planned waste education assemblies take place, it is hoped that the pupil's new learned behaviour will extend to the home environment. Though this effect will be difficult to quantify, actions like these will contribute towards the lasting legacy through to 2020 as set out in the original bid.

### **11,000 properties in flat blocks receiving a new recycling service**

The graphic below represents the rollout to flats to date. Currently a new recycling service have been rolled out to 2733 flats, and an additional 2732 flats have been deemed suitable sites for further roll outs.





Building upon their continued rollout, the rewards element for Braintree's scheme is now in the process of being introduced. Between November 2015 and July 2016, suitable blocks of flats in Braintree district had been identified and many have now signed up for the rewards initiative. These sites have since been provided with bulk bins for recycling only. The best performing flat blocks will be rewarded with a prize, as well as an opportunity to vote for a local charity of their choice (from a pre-selected list), to also receive a donation.

For the purposes of logistics, the district has been divided into eight manageable areas, and each month, the areas will be assessed for an increase in their rates of recycling. This will then be compared to the baseline month of September 2016 to find the percentage change in dry recycling against this value. This is a slight amendment from the weekly awards stipulated in the original bid as this would have been time consuming and an inefficient use of Braintree's resources.

In order to promote the scheme to all residents in the participating areas, households will receive an initial communication pack, delivered by recycling officers. Each pack will contain information about the scheme, a pledge form and a list of charities. In addition to this, the scheme will feature on the council website, and residents will be made aware of it via posters and leaflets left on flat notice boards and through window stickers.

By completing the pledge form in the information pack, residents will become eligible to participate in the scheme. This form can be completed online, via postal form from the pledge packs outlined above, or by contacting the recycling team directly. Those that pledge to the scheme will then be eligible to vote for their chosen charity and be eligible to win an individual prize.

The winning area will be chosen on a monthly basis, and will be determined by those that record the highest percentage increase of recycling improvement compared to the baseline month. Within the winning block, all households who have pledged to the scheme will be eligible to receive individual rewards (shopping vouchers).

In addition to rewards for residents, 10 organisations local to Braintree district have been chosen as eligible to receive a charity prize based on residents' votes from the winning areas. The organisation that receives the most votes will be awarded the £100 community prize.

**Total financial benefits of £396,757 over the course of the scheme-**

The financial benefits are proving difficult to quantify, owing largely to the various setbacks for Epping Forest and Harlow. Braintree and Tendring are delivering against their milestones and it is hoped that once the scheme is fully implemented by all partners, the financial benefits of increased recycle will increase exponentially.

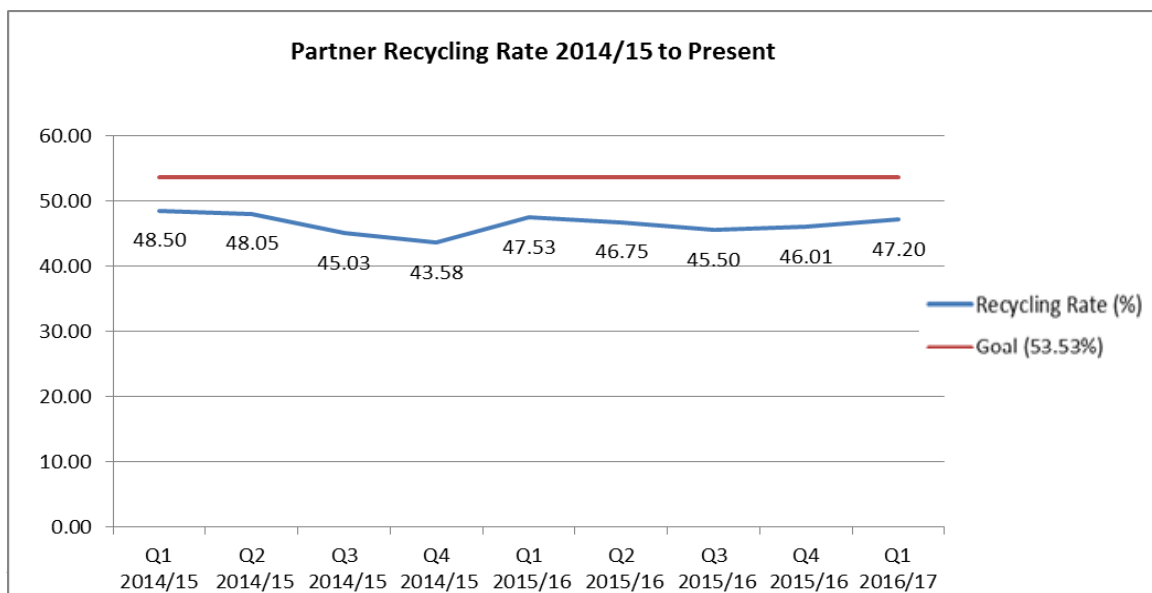
**A total reduction in landfill waste of 9154 tonnes-**

The amount of residual waste to landfill has remained largely consistent with historic reporting by the partnership.

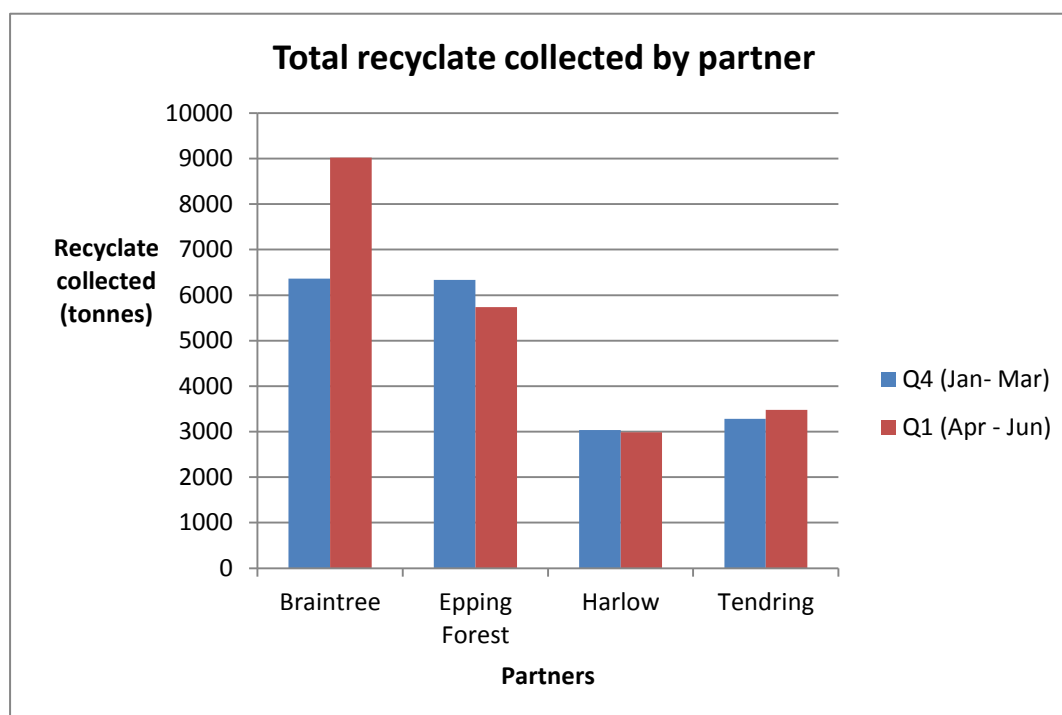
It is anticipated that once more robust methods of collecting recycling from flats, schools and private dwellings are fully in place and adopted by stakeholders, the total tonnage diverted from landfill will begin to increase.

**An increase in recycling rate by 5%**

One of the core outcomes of the project is to increase the rates of recycling in flats and schools by up to 5%. Based on the Q1 figure for 14/15 the goal target would be a Partner recycling rate of 53.53%. Below are the recycling rates for the Partnership since Q1 14/15:



## Change in volume of recyclate collected:



In Braintree and Tendring where the scheme is fully underway, both districts have reported an increase in recyclate collected since the previous reporting quarter. Braintree has experienced a significant increase of approximately 2650 tonnes and Tendring have reported a modest increase of approximately 200 tonnes.

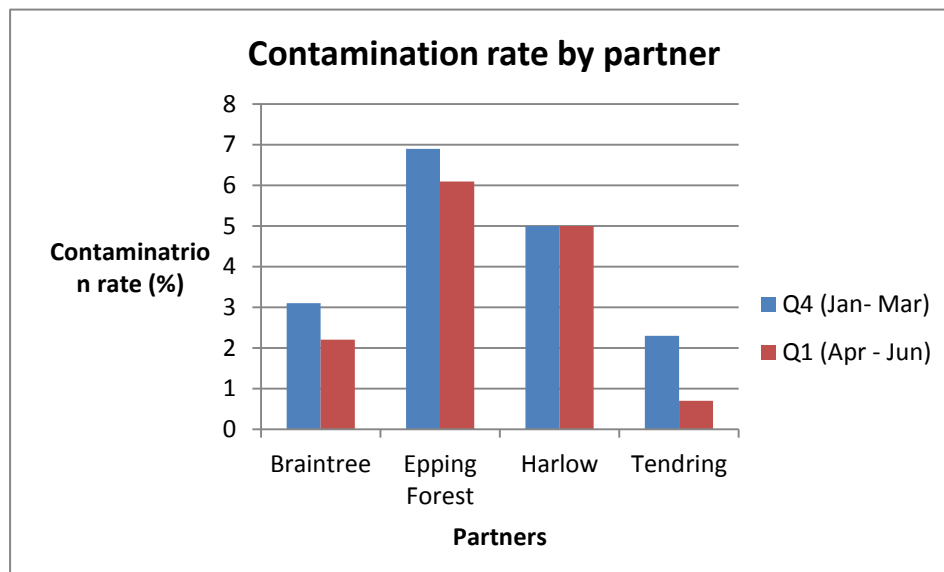
In Epping Forest and Harlow where the schemes are yet to be fully implemented, they have both have reported results consistent with the previous quarter. It is yet to be seen how this may change once the schemes overcome their current challenges.

## Total households benefitting from the scheme:

- The total households benefitting from the scheme is open to interpretation. Officially, 2733 flats are receiving a new recycling service, and an additional 2732 flats have been deemed suitable sites for future rollout.
- The bid outlined a potential for 114,398 households to benefit from the scheme, and the partnership have identified how this is perceived. It is deemed that the pupils attending schools with the new food waste scheme and educational programmes will be able to bring their learning home and adopt recycling habits to carry with them in the future. As such, Braintree's food waste initiatives in school affects around 8000 households so far, and whilst Tendring have been unable to provide an exact total, a conservative estimate of approximately 2000 has been provided.

- Greenredeem kiosks would also have the scope to reach significant numbers of people depending upon their placement (Harlow's difficulties may affect further sites). However, based on Passmores's Academy, approximately 1000 households will have been influenced by the scheme so far.
- Flatted developments that have been deemed unsuitable for bulk receptacles will be targeted with a canvassing campaign to encourage them to use their current recycling systems, and thus contribute to the positive impacts the partnership hope to achieve.

### Reduction of contamination rate to 3.42%:



- The partnership's contamination rate as of Q1 2016/17 is currently at 3.5%. This is a marked improvement from 4.3% reported in the previous quarter. Again, both Braintree and Tendring have reported a significant reduction in their contamination rates, with Braintree's dropping from 3.1% in the previous reporting quarter to 2.2% and Tendring from 2.3% to 0.7%. Both partners have attributed this to the new recycling bins installed at the participating flat blocks. It is predicted that once Braintree introduce their rewards scheme from September 2016, this rate will begin to drop further.
- In Epping Forest and Harlow where the schemes are yet to be fully implemented, they have reported results that are still consistent with the previous quarter.

## Lessons Learnt

Upon the completion of year one of the scheme, the partnership compiled a list of factors that have impacted the scheme both positively and negatively. This was shared in the Q4 report. In order to bring Epping Forest up to speed as they now begin to implement their part of the scheme, Braintree and Tendring will share their experiences and provide advice and recommendations.

One area that the partnership identified as a concern moving forward is the challenges around changing stakeholder behaviours. This is where the rewards element of the scheme will be pivotal. Having engaged with the views of stakeholders and undertaken information sharing with other similar schemes, Braintree will be rolling out the rewards element of their scheme in Q2. It is hoped that this tailored approach based on the intelligence they have received so far will incentivise and increase participation in their scheme.

## Issues Log

- The partnership is currently limited by Greenredeem's reporting from the kiosk at Passmores Academy therefore a new reporting schedule will need to be planned in order to regularly capture feedback from Greenredeem.
- Braintree's in-cab technology acquired to help manage recycle tonnages in schools and flats is currently experiencing issues, and the practicalities of using the device to log this information is proving more inefficient than first anticipated. To reduce collection times, the use of this technology will be paused until a resolution is sought. This will have an initial impact in collection accuracies as this process will now have to be completed manually, and this will be a consideration in future data collection.

## Appendix

Table 1

	Q4 2015/16 actual	Q1 2016/17 actual	change from previous quarter	%Change
Households benefitting from the scheme*	N/A	13857	N/A	N/A
Number of flats benefitting from the scheme	1744	2733	989	56.71
Number of flats identified for future rollout **	3721	2732	-989	-26.58
Number of flat blocks receiving a new dry recyclate collection	163	233	70	42.94
Number of schools taking part in the food waste scheme	48	51	3	6.25
Number of pupils benefitting from waste scheme in schools **	N/A	11124	N/A	N/A
Number of schools earmarked for future rollout **	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
Recyclate collected the partnership (t)	19010	20329	1319	6.94
Partnership recycling rate (%)	46.01	47.2	1.19	2.59
Food waste collected (t)	6879	7669	790	11.48
Dry recyclate collected (t)	11673	10941	-732	-6.27
Value of recyclate collected in district (£/t) (Dry only)	708434	664009	-44425	-6.27
Number of Green redeem Kiosks placed	1	1	0	N/A
Total number of quarterly users	Unavailable	Unavailable	N/A	N/A
Total Tonnage collected	0.067	0.063	-0.004	-5.97

\* This figure is the sum of the total number of households influenced by the scheme. This includes the individual flats, pupils from the schools participating and Greenredeem users

\*\* Denotes new reporting criteria introduced in this quarter