

Waste survey 2016

Appendix 1

Introduction

Since 2013/14 the amount of funding that Luton Borough Council receives from the Government has reduced by 55 per cent, and the Council is expecting its Revenue Support Grant to be reduced by a further £28 million over the next four years. Luton currently spends over £12million each year on waste management (including collection and disposal) and this needs to reduce significantly.

The Council want feedback on proposed changes to Luton's household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) and also measures to stop residents recycling incorrectly. Based on the feedback to this consultation the Council aim to reshape, as far as possible, services for Luton residents.

Methodology

A borough wide survey was conducted called 'Have your say on proposed changes to Luton's household waste recycling centres and a recycle right scheme' between 16 May and 27 June 2016.

The consultation document explained a number of proposals as to how the savings could be achieved with regards to the town's household waste recycling centres (HWRC) and Recycle Right Scheme, such as:

- More enforcement to stop people living outside of Luton using Luton centres
- Reducing the number of days the HWRCs are open
- Reducing site opening times
- Reducing the amount of non-household waste the centres accept
- Clamp down on the residents that continuously recycle incorrectly

The survey was widely promoted across the town with the opportunity to provide feedback online as well as by completing a paper survey.

Over 1,000 consultation leaflets were distributed during the consultation period, mainly at the household waste recycling centres. Residents were notified of the consultation via the Council's consultation portal and website, the Council's newspaper 'Lutonline', social media and local newspapers. In addition, in excess of 1,500 residents received an email to notify them of the opportunity to feedback their views.

Overall 465 respondents completed this questionnaire.

A sample of 465 responses yields a standard margin of error of +/- 4.54% (at the 95% confidence level). This means that if all Luton residents had responded to this survey, the true results would lie somewhere +/-4.54% of the findings in this report.

This report contains graphs and a written summary of the survey questions and a summary of the key points made by the respondents.

Executive summary

The majority of respondents live in Luton and had used the household waste recycling centres at Progress Way and/or Eaton Green in the last year.

Residents told us that their preferred options were:

1. not allowing non-Luton residents to use the household waste recycling sites in Luton
2. closing each household waste recycling centre for at least one day per week
3. reducing the number of hours the centres are open
4. introduction of the Compulsory Recycling Scheme

The least popular options were:

1. Closing one household waste recycling site altogether
2. Stop accepting non-household waste at the centre i.e. soil, rubble, renovation work

The main concern raised by residents when considering the options was the potential increase in fly-tipping.

Residents asked that the Council would be mindful to keep some late night closing times to ensure that residents have the opportunity to visit the household recycling centre after office hours.

Many residents support an educational and supportive approach that encourages people to start or increase recycling.

It was apparent from the feedback that many residents already recycle their waste and wish to continue doing so. Some residents said that they would benefit from larger recycling bins and a number also commented that an increased glass collection services was required and for this to be consistent across the town.

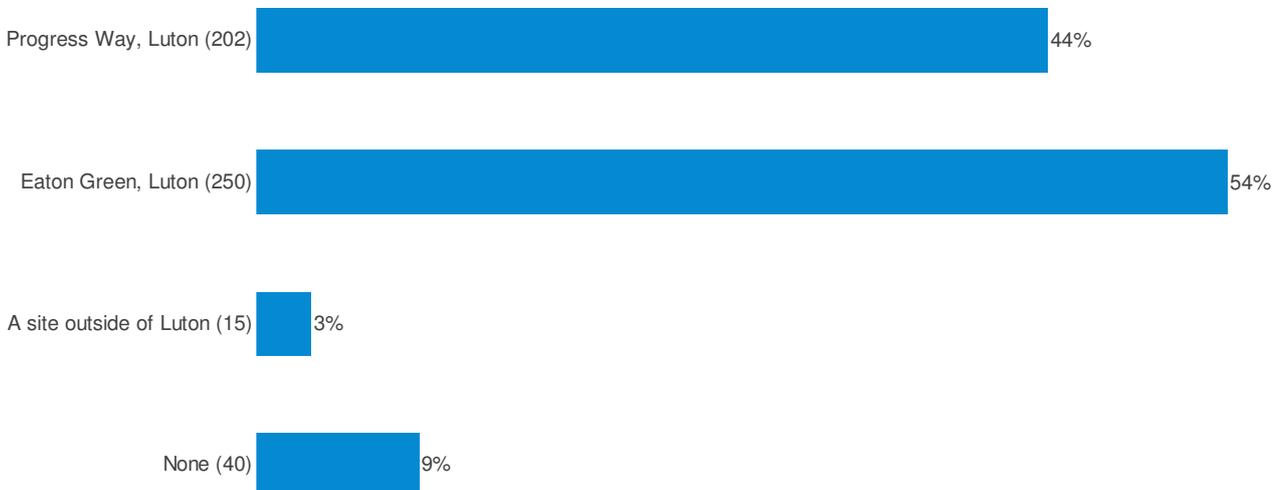
A high percentage of respondents felt well informed about how to recycle in the right way. However there was confusion about some materials such as plastics and the recycling symbols used. This is an area residents felt could be improved, as suggested by using images which is widely understood.

Survey findings

In what capacity are you responding to this survey? Tick one box only

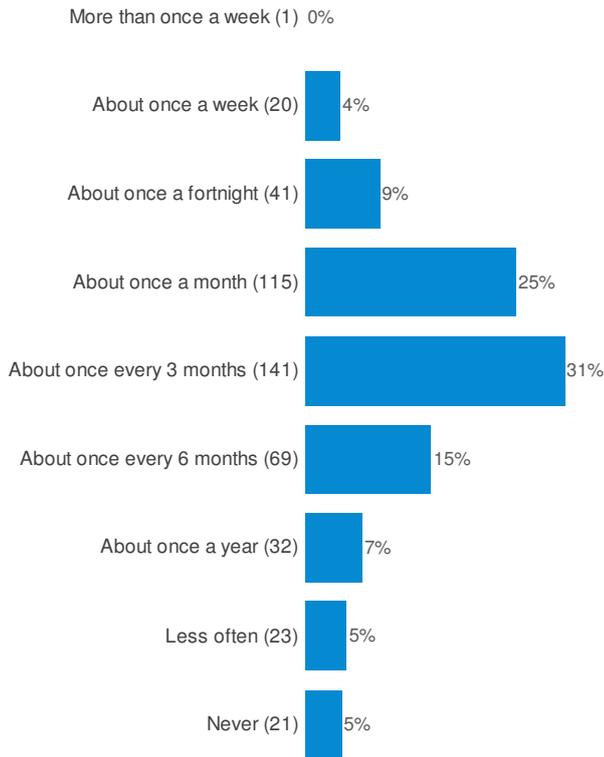


Which household waste recycling centres have you used in the last year? Tick all that apply



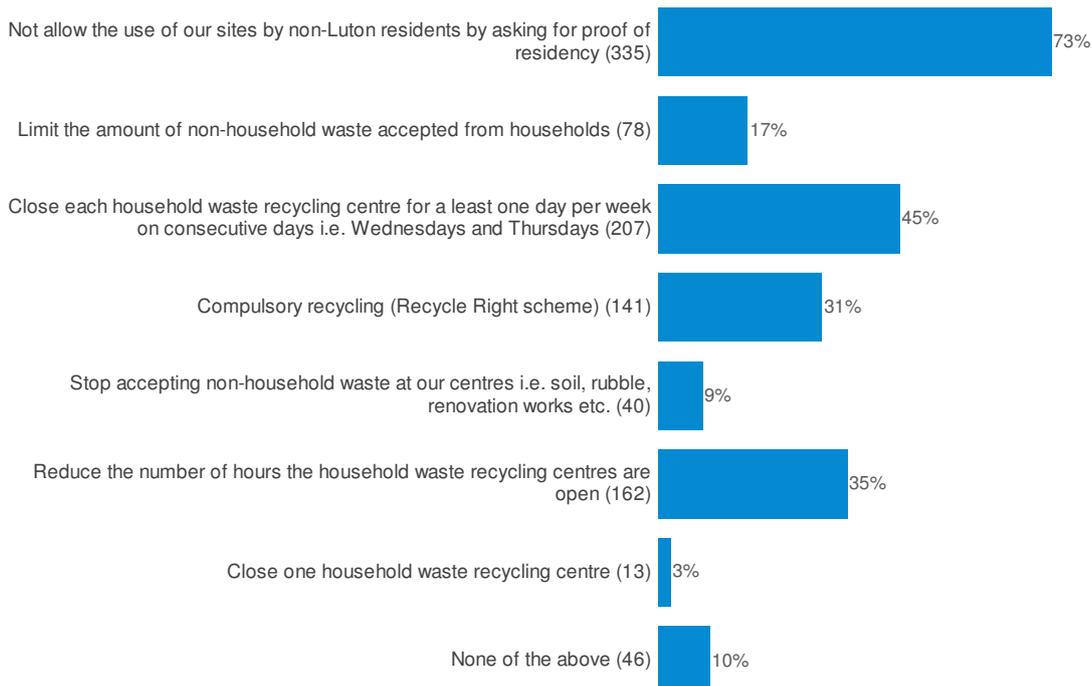
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On average, how often do you use one of the Luton's household waste recycling centres? Tick one box only



The majority of respondents use one of Luton's household waste recycling centres at least once every three months (69%).

Which options do you think the Council should consider when deciding how to find the savings required? Tick all that apply



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The Council presented seven proposals as to how the savings could be achieved with regards to the town's household waste recycling centres and Recycle Right scheme.

Almost three quarters of residents (73%) said that the Council should not allow non-Luton residents to use the said recycling sites. This was by far the most popular option residents wanted the Council to consider.

A little under half of the residents (45%) said that the Council should consider closing waste recycling centres for at least one day per week with a further third (35%) opting to reduce the number of hours the centres are open.

Around a third of residents (31%) said the Council should consider the Recycle Right Scheme.

The least favourable options were limiting the amount of non-household waste accepted from households (17%), stop accepting non-household waste at our centres (9%) and closing one household waste recycling centre (3%).

Suggestions for alternative options

Residents were asked whether they could think of any alternative options the Council should consider. A wide range of responses were received covering the following main themes.

Collections

- Larger recycling bins are required.
- Increase frequency of glass recycling collections.
- Extend glass collection to all Luton areas.

Charging

- Introduce small charge for permits to Luton households
- Charge households who do not recycle

Household Waste Recycling Centres

- Allow people to take items from the centres. What one person considers rubbish could be somebody else's up cycle.
- Have late opening evenings.
- Use number plate recognition technology

Flytipping

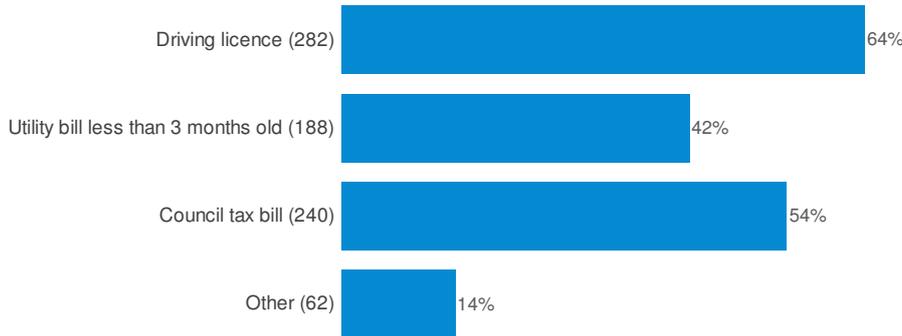
- Concern that flytipping will increase if restrictions or charging is introduced.
- Use mobile camera equipment to combat flytipping.

Incentives

- Start/continue educating young and old - flytipping is not acceptable.
- Incentives to encourage residents to keep their streets clean and tidy

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To stop the use of the Luton household waste recycling centres by non-Luton residents, what proof of residency should the Council ask for if checks are approved? Tick all that apply



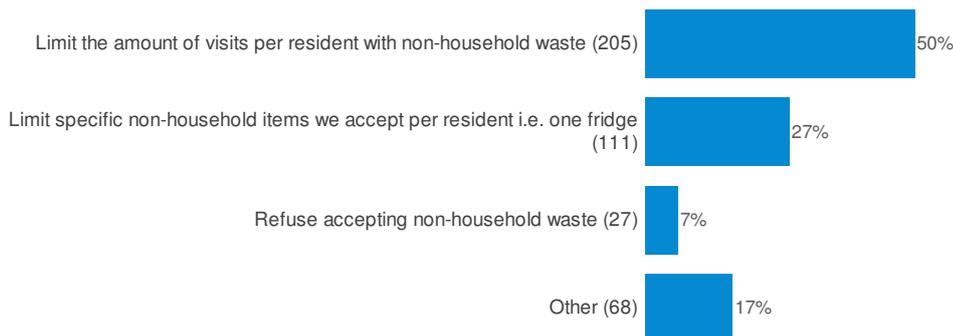
The preferred way of proving where you live is a driving licence (64%) and council tax bill (54%).

People commented that people may have difficulty producing a paper bill due to e-billing whilst others felt that it would be easy to 'borrow' someone else's paperwork.

When asked what other proof of residency the Council should ask for if checks are approved, residents' most common suggestions were:

- Any form of identification with photograph
- A Luton bus pass
- Permits provided by LBC
- Passport

If we were to limit the amount of non-household waste we accept i.e. rubble, soil, renovation work waste, how should we do this? Tick one box only

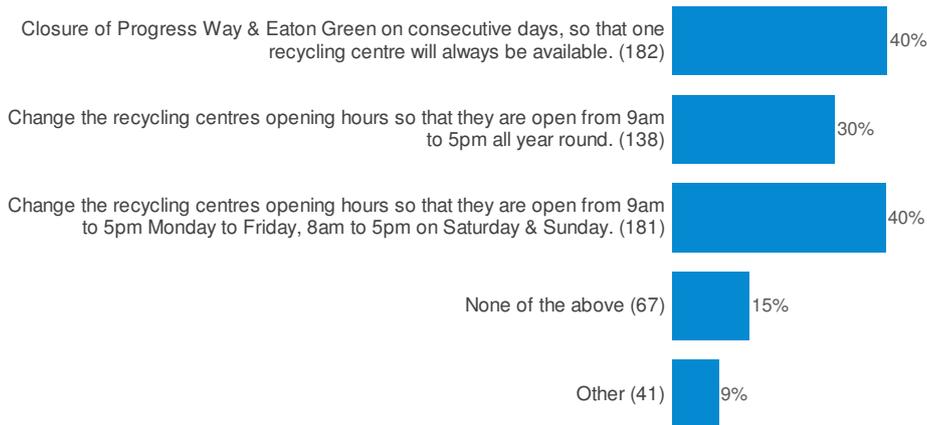


It was clear from the comments that the majority of respondents disagreed with limiting the amount of non-household waste due to an expectation that fly-tipping would increase and the perceived lack of suitable alternatives for residents who carry out DIY projects to their property.

However, if the Council were to limit the amount of non-household waste accepted by the recycling centres, half of the residents (50%) would favour limiting the number of visits per resident with non-household waste with a further 27% opting for limiting specific non-household items. Refusing non-household waste was clearly the least favourable option (7%).

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Considering a reduction in opening hours, what is your preferred option? Tick all that apply



The Council put three options forward when considering a reduction in opening hours and asked residents for their preferred option. There was no clear favourite.

However, the respondents commented that a 5pm closure would not be suitable and may lead to an increase in fly-tipping. If the decision to reduce opening hours was taken, residents would welcome a later closing time during the week and at the weekends, possibly with a later opening time, as 9am-5pm would not suit standard office hours.

It was put to the Council to ensure good communication accompanies any potential changes in opening times.

Considering the full closure of one of the Luton sites, which site would you close? Tick one box only



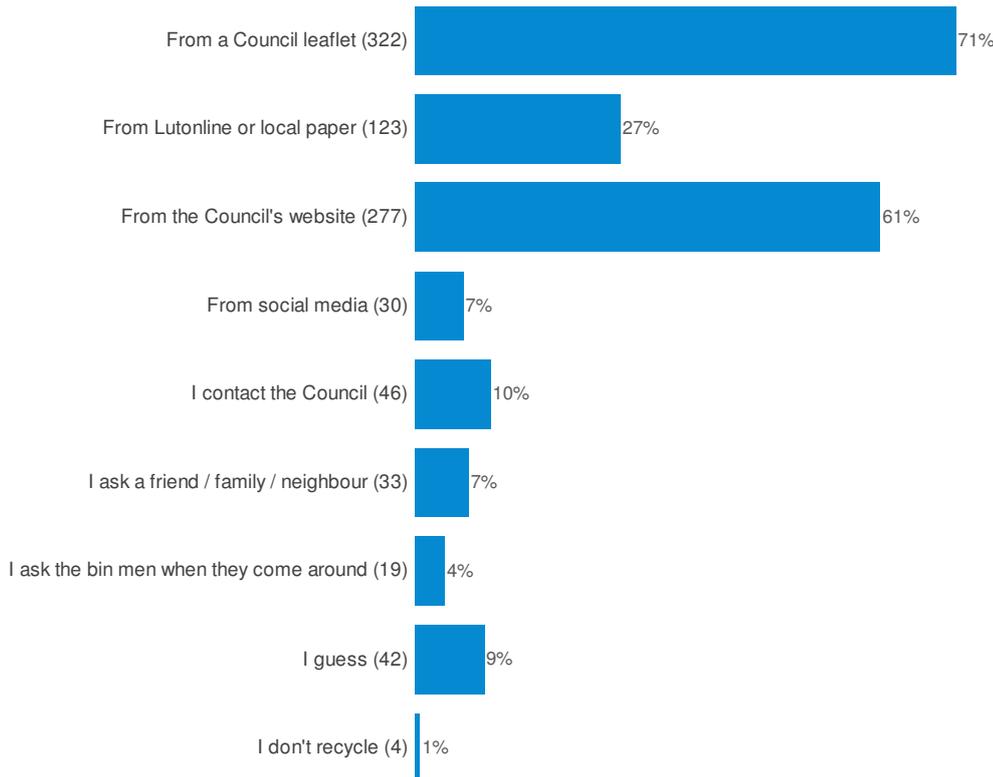
The results show the residents' clear support (88%) to keep both Progress Way and Eaton Green household waste recycling centres open.

Do you have sufficient information about how to recycle in the right way? Tick one box only



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How do you find out about what you can and cannot recycle? Tick all that apply



The results show that residents (81%) generally feel well informed about recycling. Most residents find out about what can and cannot be recycled from a Council leaflet (71%) and from the Council's website (61%). Just over a quarter (27%) also get this information from Lutonline or the local paper.

When asked what other ways, if any, residents would prefer to get information about recycling and what you can recycle, a number of suggestions were made.

The most popular ideas were:

- stickers on the outside of the bin
- stickers on the inside of the bins lids
- provide the information in picture format. This would suit Luton's diverse community
- printed materials such as leaflets and booklets

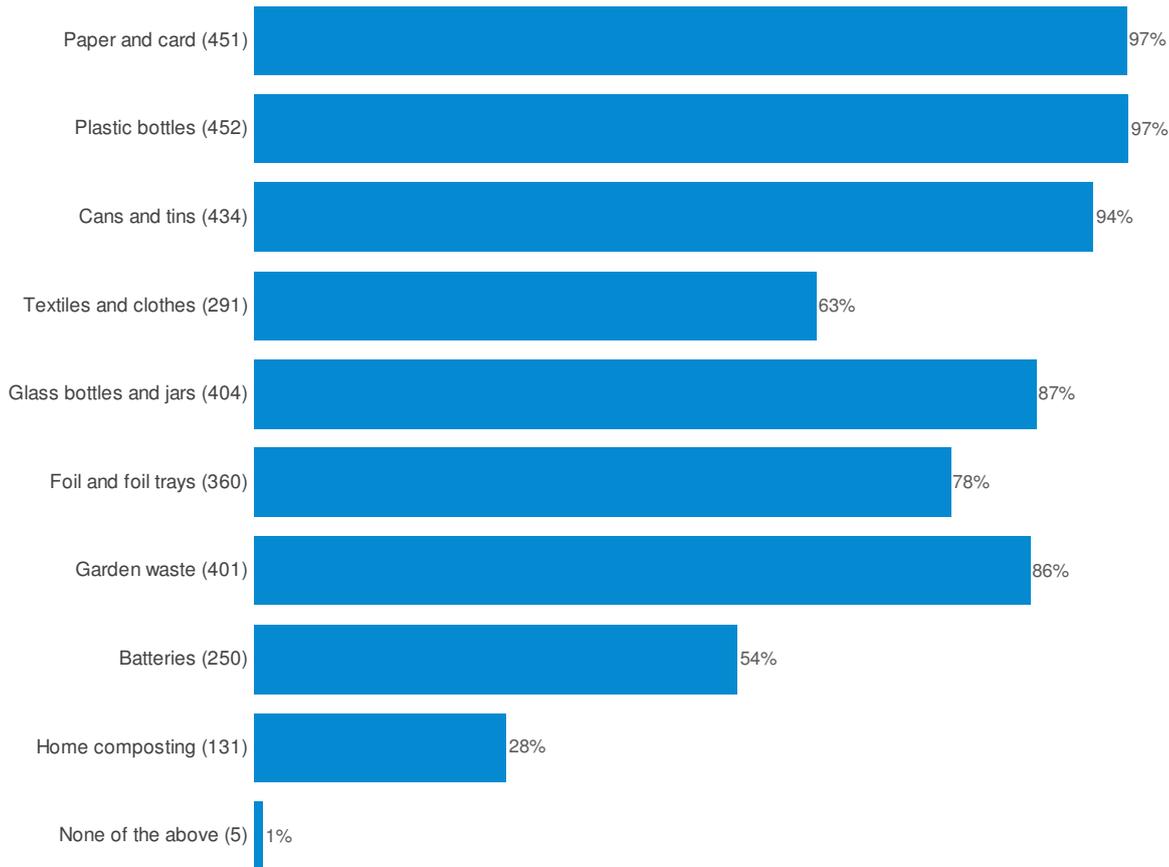
Other suggestions made were website, emails, social media, advertising on council vehicle, billboards and local papers etc.

Residents added that the information about what can and cannot be recycled must be made very clear. Examples where the information could be made clearer are:

- Can bottle tops now be recycled?
The information is not available on the website but the pictures suggest that you can recycle bottle tops
- Which numbers in the recycling triangles can be recycled in Luton?

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What do you currently recycle? Tick all that apply



Most listed items are currently being recycled by the respondents.

Over nine out of ten of the respondents recycle paper, card and plastic bottles (97%) and can and tins. Around eight out of ten respondents recycle glass bottles and jars (87%), garden waste (86%) and foil (78%). Over half of the respondents also recycle textiles and clothes (63%) and batteries (54%). Just over one quarter recycle home composting (28%).

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Residents were asked to tell us about any barriers to being able to recycle more.

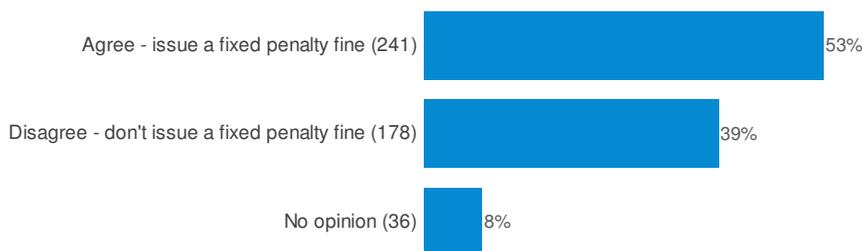
The main theme coming through was that recycling bins fill up too quickly. When this happened some residents end up throwing recyclable materials in the waste bin. It was felt that larger recycling bins were needed or to increase the collection for recyclable waste and possibly decreasing the general waste collection.

Residents seemed to struggle with understanding which materials could or could not be recycled. This was especially true for the different plastics but also for shredded paper, window envelopes, batteries, clothes and electrical items. Residents were unsure how to dispose of such items.

Some residents felt that the Council should accept more plastics and other materials but overall residents would like to receive better information about which items are recyclable and how/where to dispose of them.

Several residents reported that there was no glass collection in their area and often glass would therefore be thrown in the general waste bin. Some residents also would like to see the recycling of food waste re-instated.

The 'recycle right' scheme will give the Council the option to issue a fixed penalty fine if general waste is repeatedly disposed of in the recycling bin. What do you think about this? Tick one box only



The majority of residents felt that it would be acceptable to impose a charge if residents repeatedly recycled incorrectly, however many residents were sceptical that such a scheme could be successfully implemented or that the scheme would be costly to administrate.

Areas of concern which would need to be addressed if such a scheme was implemented are:

- how would this scheme work for a block of flats?
- how would residents prevent neighbours and passers-by putting wrong items into their bins
- what if genuine mistakes are made?
- what considerations would be made for people being cared for, elderly and disabled people?

Not all residents felt that charging was the right way to tackle recycling issues but would rather see more positive measures taken to encourage recycling such as educating people, giving out better information and use incentives.

Waste survey 2016

When asked how else the Council could enforce the 'recycle right' scheme, the majority of people suggested:

- education of residents, young people and children
- reinforcing the benefits of recycling
- clear communication and information about what can and cannot be recycled
- rewards for accurate recycling
- not collecting the bins if the wrong items were placed in them
- providing larger recycling bins
- collecting recycling weekly and general waste fortnightly

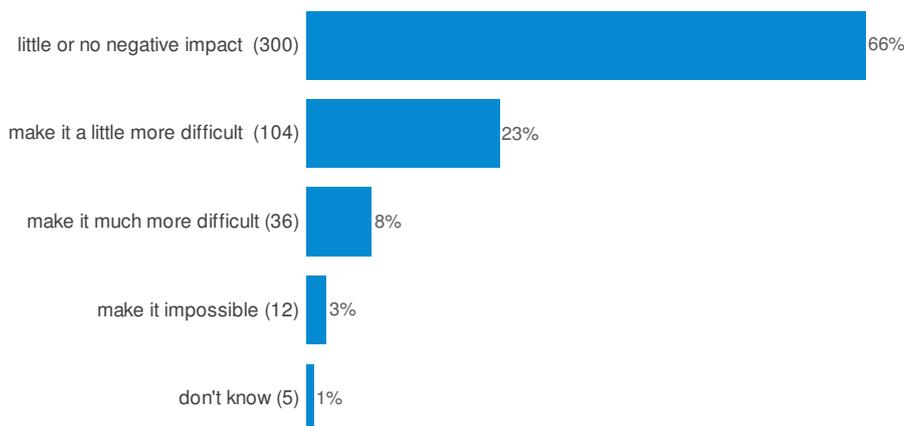
Some respondents re-iterated that a charge would be appropriate for persistently putting the wrong items in the bin as a last measure after warnings had been issued and the Council had gained an understanding why the individuals in question are not recycling correctly.

Residents were asked what else the Council could do to increase recycling in Luton.

Suggestions were:

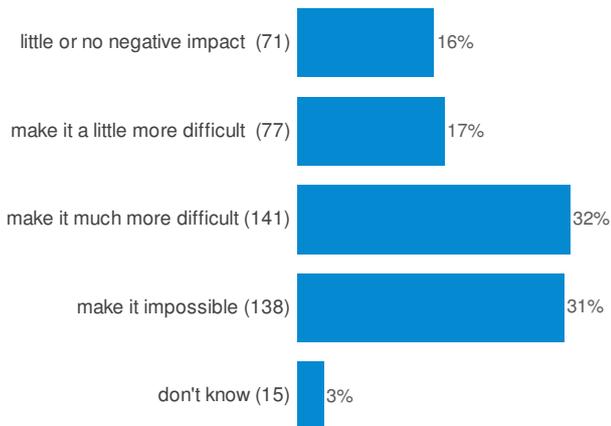
- regularly publish in local newspapers how much is being recycled and how much is sent to landfill and the costs.
- get children involved in community garden and wildlife projects to teach about environmental impact of waste on wildlife.
- start a Luton proud scheme and engage with residents.
- promote the use of items that have been recycled e.g. park benches.
- provide additional recycling points e.g. petrol stations, leisure centres
- provide more recycling bins across the town. Stopsley Village have none
- ensure businesses recycle responsibly
- make use of modern technology e.g. an app that tells you what can and cannot be recycled in Luton.

What impact would each of the proposed options have on your ability to dispose of waste? Tick one box per row (Asking for proof of residency on entry at the household waste recycling centres)

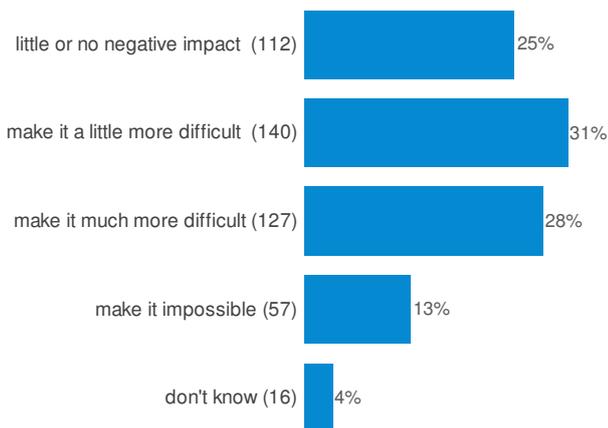


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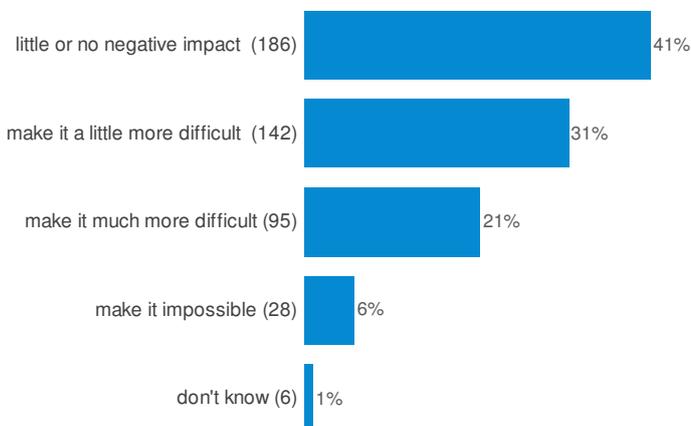
What impact would each of the proposed options have on your ability to dispose of waste? Tick one box per row (Stop accepting DIY waste at the Luton's household waste recycling centres)



What impact would each of the proposed options have on your ability to dispose of waste? Tick one box per row (Limit the amount of DIY waste accepted from households)

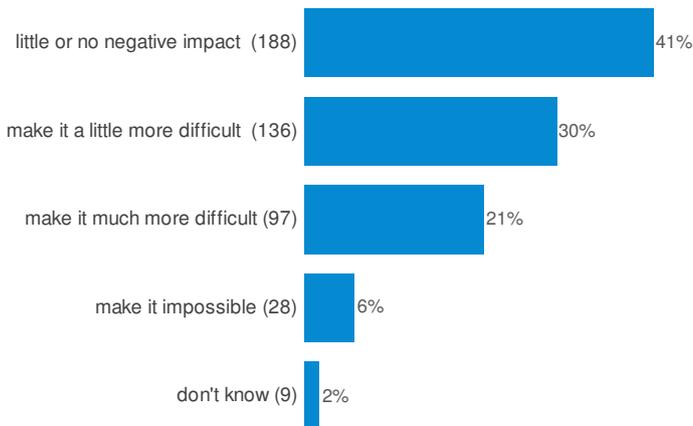


What impact would each of the proposed options have on your ability to dispose of waste? Tick one box per row (Reduce the number of hours the household waste recycling centres are open)

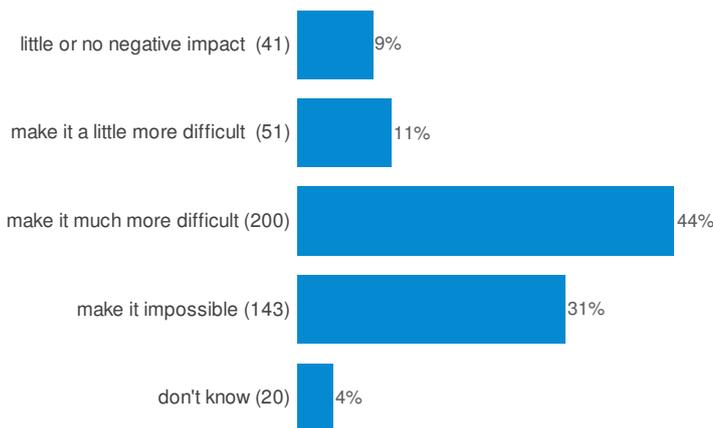


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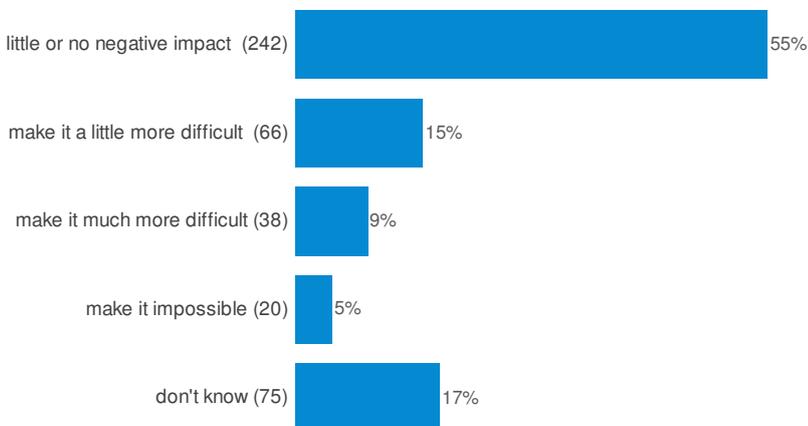
What impact would each of the proposed options have on your ability to dispose of waste? Tick one box per row (Close each household waste recycling centre for at least one day per week on consecutive days i.e. Wednesdays and Thursdays)



What impact would each of the proposed options have on your ability to dispose of waste? Tick one box per row (Close one household waste recycling centre all together)



What impact would each of the proposed options have on your ability to dispose of waste? Tick one box per row (The Recycle Right scheme)



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The options with the least negative impact, in order of least to most negative impact were *:

- Asking for proof of residency on entry a the household waste recycling centre (89%)
- Reduce the number of hours the household waste recycling centres are open (72%)
- Close each household waste recycling centre for at least one day per week on consecutive days (71%)
- The Recycle Right scheme (70%)
- Limit the amount of DIY waste accepted from households (56%)
- Stop accepting DIY waste at the Luton's household waste recycling centres (33%)
- Close one household waste recycling centre all together (20%)

(*) 'Little or no negative impact' and 'make it a little more difficult' added together

How could any adverse impact be minimised?

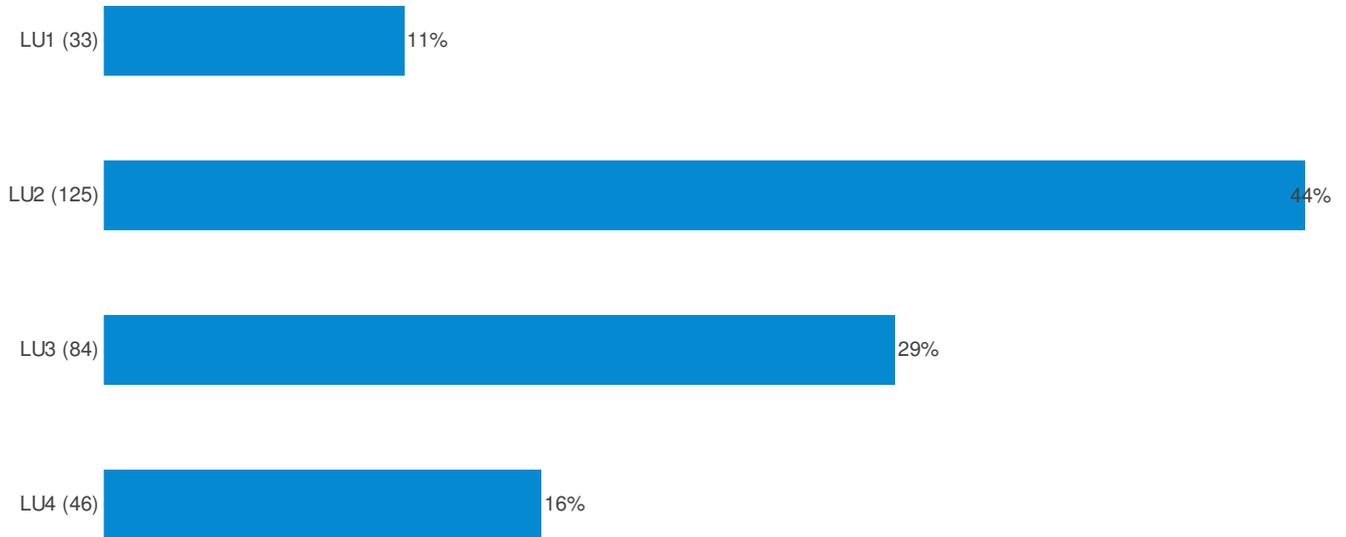
A number of suggestions were made:

- Provide bigger recycling bins
- Reduce general waste collection and increase collections for recycable materials
- Ensure that any measures taken are reviewed for effectiveness
- Offer a service for residents to book and pay for collections. This will help those who cannot go to the HRWCs

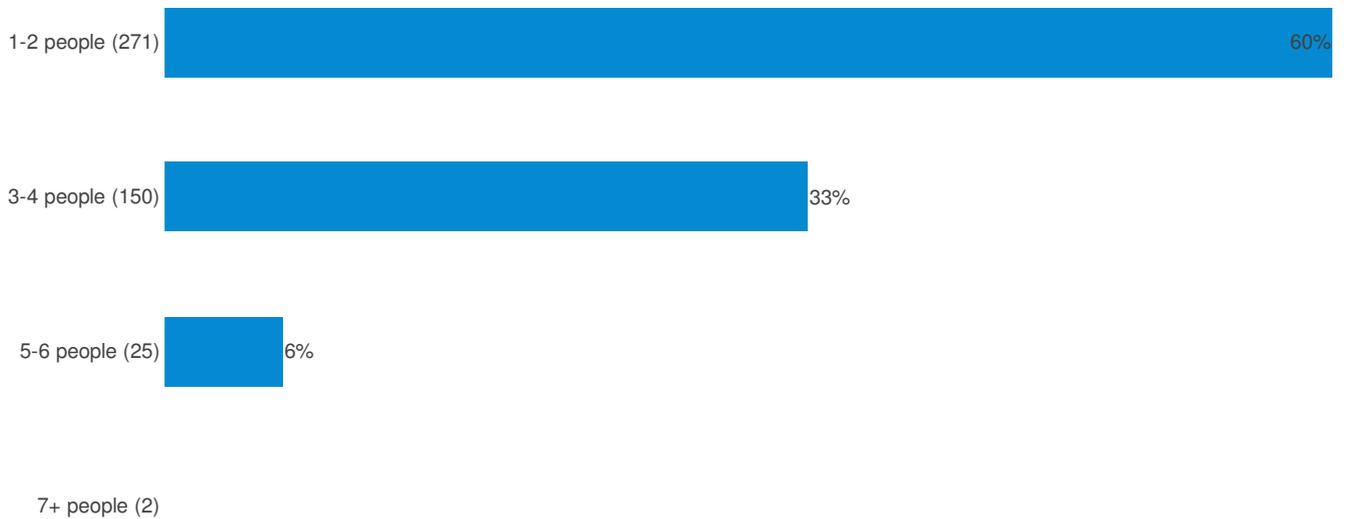
Respondent's profile

The following questions were voluntary. The answers give a demographic profile of the residents that responded to this survey.

Post code of the respondents

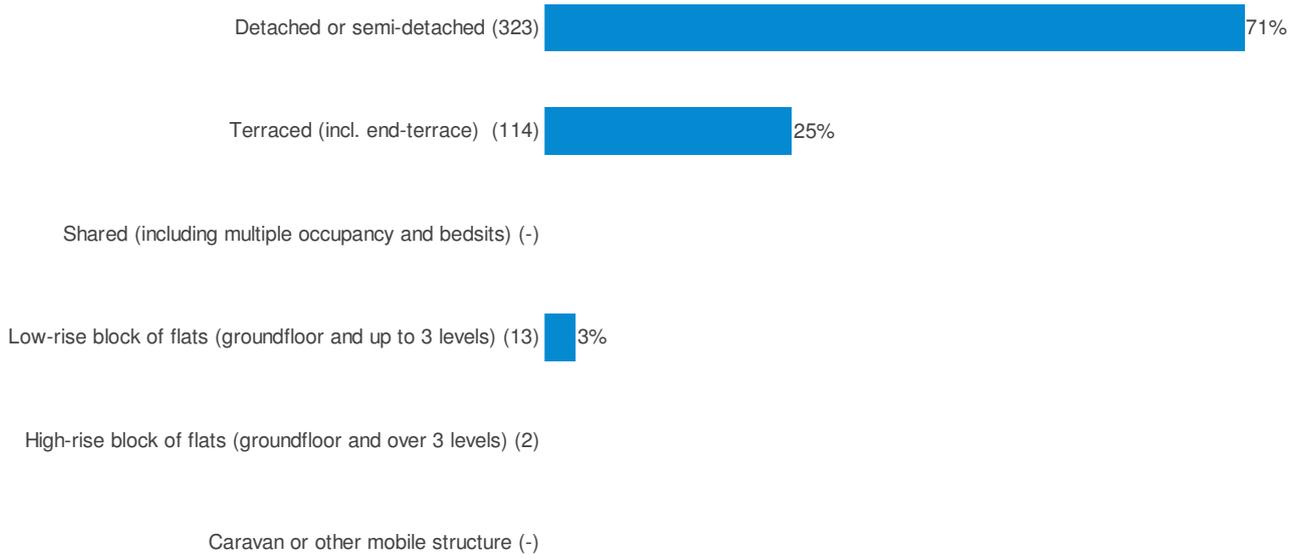


Number of people who live in the responding household



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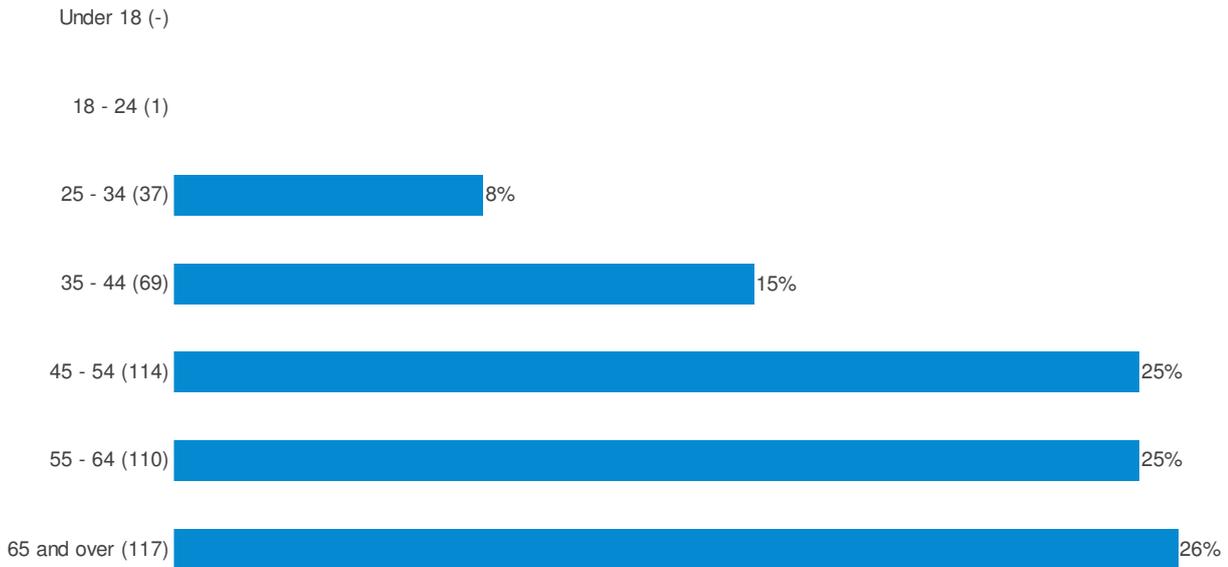
Type of accommodation



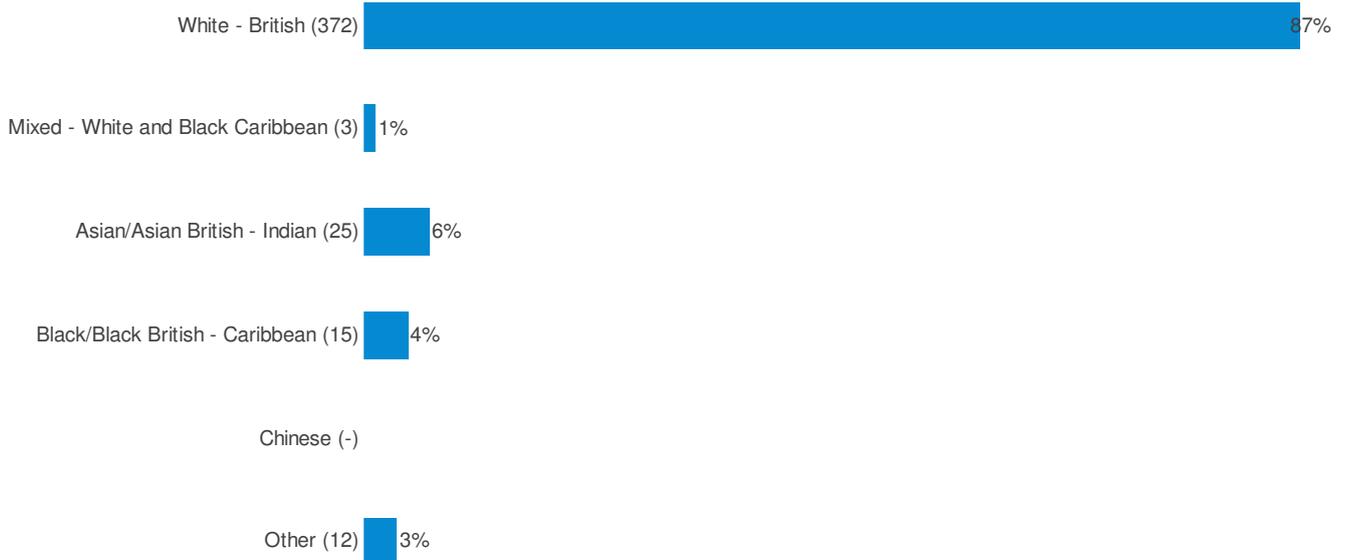
Gender of the respondent



Age group of the respondent



Ethnicity of the respondents



Does the respondent have a disability?

