

London Borough of Merton Participation Monitoring project 2013 Final report

Prepared by Waste Watch (part of Keep Britain Tidy) for London Borough of Merton

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Executive Summary

- In early 2013, London Borough of Merton commissioned Waste Watch (part of Keep Britain Tidy) to monitor household participation in the kerbside dry recycling and food waste collection services provided by the Council. In total, 20 rounds across the borough were selected for each service.
- In total, 26,301 households were monitored over three collection opportunities for the food waste collection. In total, 13,880 (52.8%) residents placed their food waste bins for collection at least one in the three collections. The highest participation rate of 67.3% was recorded for West Barnes (Tuesday Round C) with 1,466 properties monitored. Ravensbury (Wednesday Round A) recorded the lowest participation rate of 43.3% with 1,307 properties monitored across three collection opportunities.
- Participation in the dry recycling service was monitored for 27,486 properties over three collection opportunities. The majority (21,872; 79.6%) of the residents were recorded as participating in the service. Wimbledon Park (Monday Round C) recorded the highest participation rate of 91.6% with 1,436 properties monitored. The lowest participation rate (66.8%; 968 properties) was recorded for Longthornton (Friday Round D) with 1,449 properties monitored across three collection opportunities.
- Given the findings from this project, a resident engagement exercise is recommended not only for rounds with lower participation rates in both the services, but also specifically focused on the food waste collection service. This will help identify and address barriers to participation in the service.

The following sections present the findings from the participation monitoring project.

Section 1: Introduction

In 2013, London Borough of Merton (LBM) commissioned Waste Watch (part of Keep Britain Tidy) to monitor household participation in the kerbside recycling services in selected rounds across the borough.

The LBM provides residents in kerbside properties with the following recycling services on a weekly basis:

- Collection of dry recyclables: the materials collected include paper, card, glass bottles and jars, food and drinks cans, plastic bottles and food and drink cartons which are collected co-mingled in a green or purple 55 litre box
- Collection of food waste: the residents are provided with a kitchen caddy and an outside food bin which is emptied weekly.

As part of the project, participation in both these services was monitored. Both dry recycling and food waste are collected on the same day as the refuse.

1.1 Aims and objectives

The aim of the monitoring exercise was:

- To find out the participation rate with respect to the kerbside recycling services: dry recycling and food waste collection service provided by the Council.

The objective of the project was to monitor 20 rounds per service on the day of collection.

Section 2: Methodology

Participation monitoring with respect to both the services was conducted over three collection opportunities for 40 rounds: 20 rounds per service. While the food waste collection service was monitored from 10 to 28 June 2013, the dry recycling service was monitored from 1 to 22 July 2013. An additional day of monitoring was included (22 July) to allow monitoring of a new round over three collection opportunities.

Nine Recycling Monitors were recruited for the project which included one spare member of staff to cover any absence due to sickness. A one day training programme was provided by Waste Watch at the start of the project (5 June 2013), which covered household waste management in the UK, the nature of recycling services provided by LBM, the theory and practice of participation monitoring, and health and safety. All Recycling Monitors wore a high visibility vest and an identification badge when monitoring. They also carried a letter of authorisation from LBM explaining the reasons behind the monitoring in case of queries from residents.

Participation monitoring was undertaken in accordance with the guidelines developed by WRAP. As such, households were defined as participating in the recycling service if they put out the respective receptacle for collection at least once in the defined period of three collection opportunities.

The Recycling Monitors met the collection crews around 6.45 a.m. They sent a sign-in text to both Waste Watch and the LBM with details of time, street name and the driver's name. Recycling Monitors recorded whether or not households were putting the dry recycling or food waste receptacle out for collection. For all multiple occupancy residences, recycling receptacles were allocated to the first residence of each property, except where the property numbers were specified on the receptacle.

All data was inputted into a Microsoft Excel database by the Recycling Monitors before being quality checked and analysed by the Waste Watch Project Manager.

2.1 Terminology

Set out rate

Set out rate is the proportion of households that put out recycling on one collection opportunity as a percentage of the total number of households eligible to use the service.

Participation rate

Participation rate is the proportion of households that put out recycling at least once in the defined period of three consecutive collection opportunities as a percentage of the total number of households eligible to use the service.

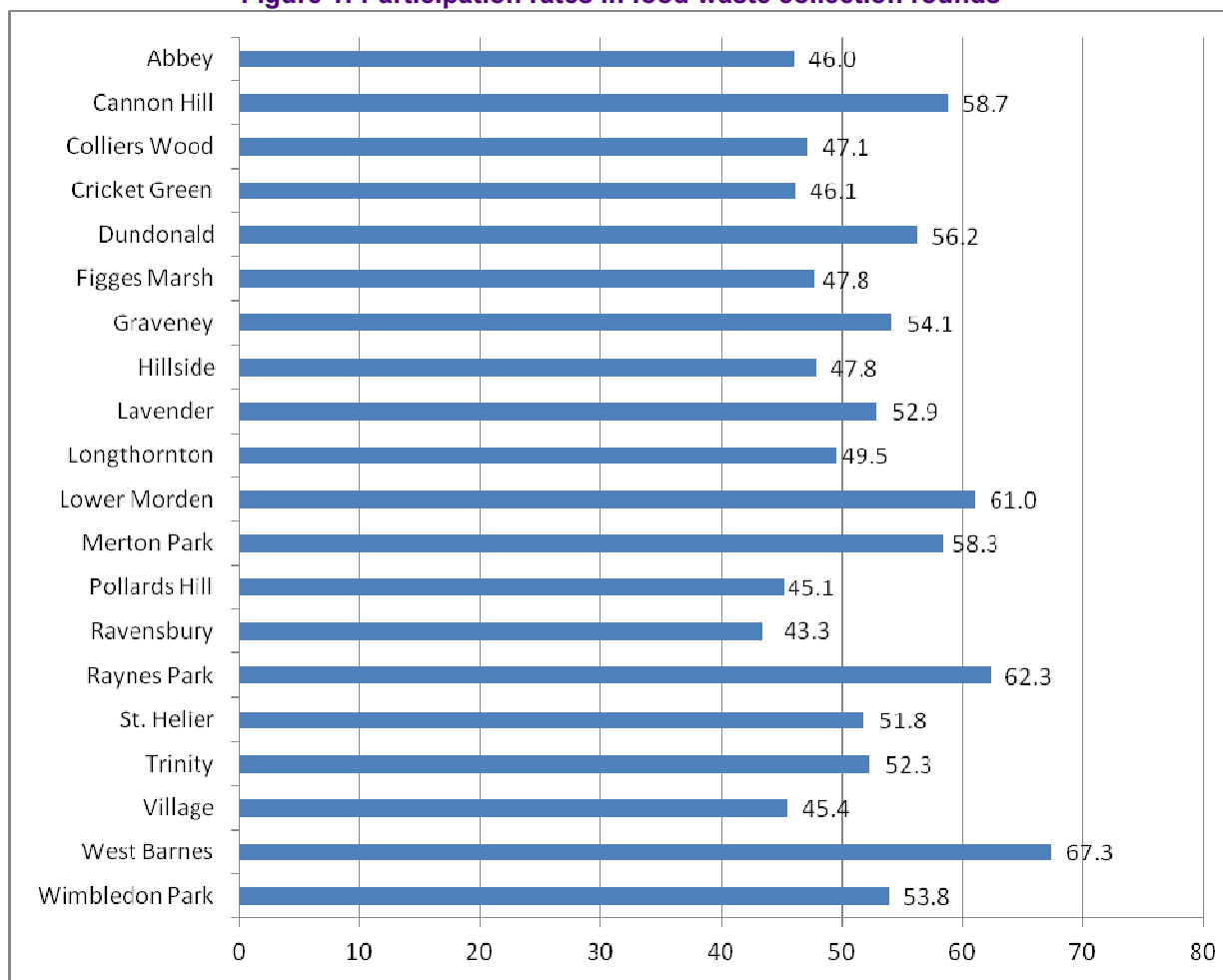
Section 3: Results

3.1 Food waste collection service: participation rates by rounds

In total, 26,301 households were monitored over three collection opportunities for the food waste collection. In total, 13,880 (52.8%) residents placed the food waste bins for collection at least once in the three week period.

Figure 1 presents the participation rate in the twenty food waste collection service rounds monitored as part of the project.

Figure 1: Participation rates in food waste collection rounds



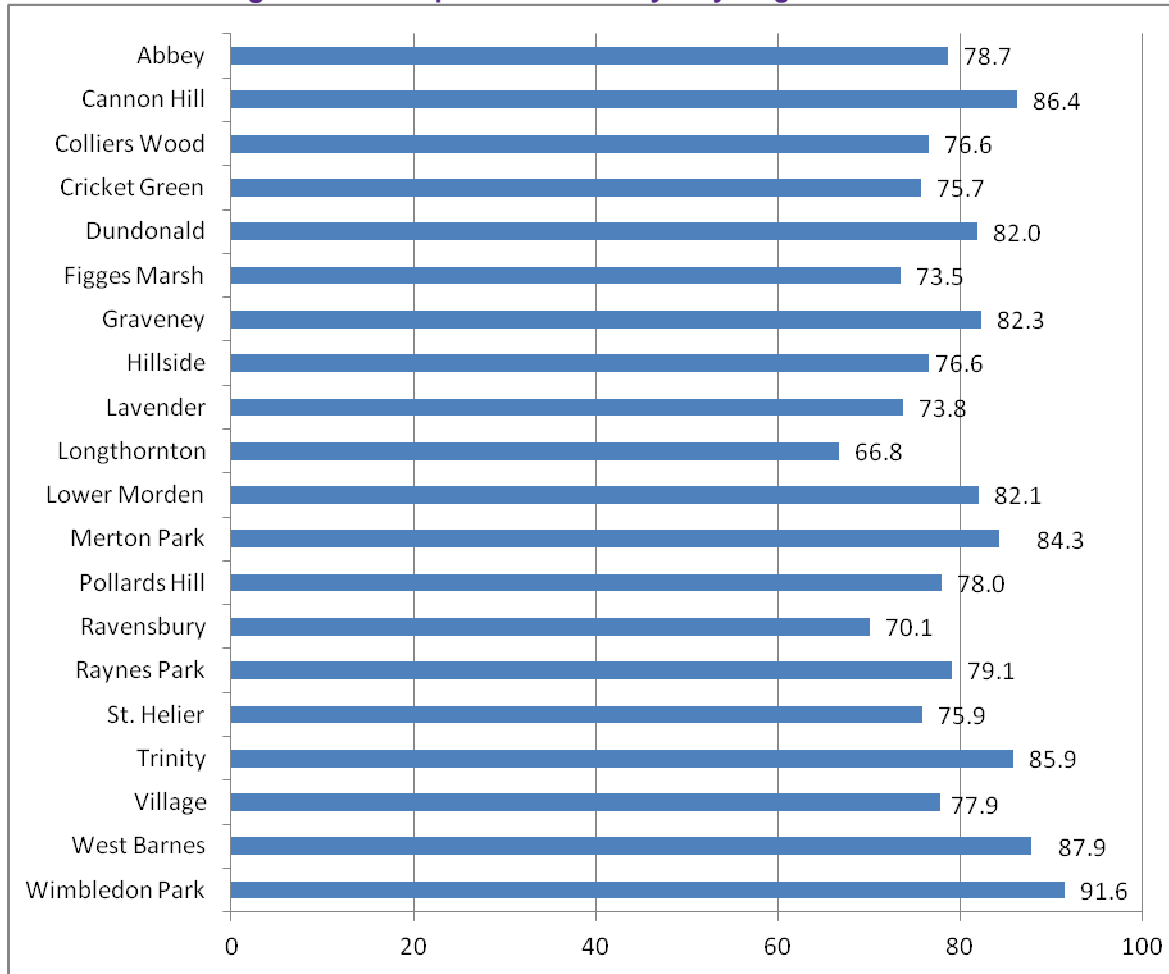
The highest participation rate of 67.3% (987 residents) was recorded for West Barnes (Tuesday Round C) with 1,466 properties monitored. Ravensbury (Wednesday Round A) recorded the lowest participation rate of 43.3% (566 residents) with 1,307 properties monitored across three collection opportunities. Appendix 6.1 presents the table with the set out and participation rate per round.

3.2 Dry recycling service: participation rates by rounds

Participation in the dry recycling service was monitored for 27,486 properties over three collection opportunities. The majority (21,872; 79.6%) of the residents were recorded as participating in the service.

Figure 2 presents the participation rates in the dry recycling service.

Figure 2: Participation rates in dry recycling collection rounds



Wimbledon Park (Monday Round C) recorded the highest participation rate of 91.6% (1,315 residents) with 1,436 properties monitored. The lowest participation rate (66.8%; 968 properties) was recorded for Longthornton (Friday Round D) with 1,449 properties monitored across three collection opportunities.

Appendix 6.2 presents the table with the findings per round and the set out for each collection opportunity.

Section 4: Limitations

The participation monitoring project progressed well. However, there was one main limitation: Monitoring of one of the food waste collection rounds (Monday Round E) on the first day of the project was problematic. The Monitors had difficulty finding some streets which were new to the round. One street (Lampton House Road) did not have any properties (expected to have 6 properties). Of the 1,030 properties, data was therefore collected for only 757 properties across three collections. The set out data for the second and third collections was captured for all 1,030 properties (see Appendix 6.1).

Section 5: Conclusions

Overall, the participation monitoring exercise progressed very well, and has provided robust set out and participation rates in the two kerbside recycling services (food waste and dry recycling) in selected rounds across the borough. Overall, the participation in the dry recycling (79.6%) was higher than that recorded for food waste collections (52.8%). A resident engagement exercise is therefore recommended not only for the rounds with lower participation in both the services but also with a focus on ascertaining and addressing the barriers to participation in the food waste collection service specifically.

Section 6: Appendix

6.1 Food waste collection service: set out and participation rates

Food waste rounds	Collection 1			Collection 2			Collection 3			Participation rate			
	Properties monitored	Number of properties participating	Set out rate (%)	Properties monitored	Number of properties participating	Set out rate (%)	Properties monitored	Number of properties participating	Set out rate (%)	Properties monitored across 3 collections	Number of properties participating	Participation rate (%)	
Abbey	1270	455	35.8	1281	445	34.7	1282	439	34.2	1265	582	46.0	
Cannon Hill	1447	601	41.5	1451	590	40.7	1474	673	45.7	1447	850	58.7	
Colliers Wood	1036	290	28.0	1052	382	36.3	1056	367	34.8	1023	482	47.1	
Cricket Green	1316	408	31.0	1429	420	29.4	1431	466	32.6	1293	596	46.1	
Dundonald	1221	527	43.2	1221	533	43.7	1221	540	44.2	1221	686	56.2	
Figges Marsh	1097	366	33.4	1099	375	34.1	1169	456	39.0	1082	517	47.8	
Graveney	1446	576	39.8	1444	597	41.3	1446	600	41.5	1438	778	54.1	
Hillside	1255	391	31.2	1308	410	31.3	1350	421	31.2	1253	599	47.8	
Lavender	1178	416	35.3	1210	388	32.1	1210	332	27.4	1169	618	52.9	
Longthornton	1444	587	40.7	1449	607	41.9	1449	579	40.0	1444	715	49.5	
Lower Morden	1399	522	37.3	1551	602	38.8	1551	512	33.0	1399	853	61.0	
Merton Park	1425	487	34.2	1495	543	36.3	1495	523	35.0	1425	831	58.3	
Pollards Hill	1353	356	26.3	1361	337	24.8	1361	319	23.4	1351	610	45.2	
Ravensbury	1307	455	34.8	1322	457	34.6	1322	433	32.8	1307	566	43.3	
Raynes Park	1341	713	53.2	1354	643	47.5	1354	612	45.2	1341	835	62.3	
St. Helier	1478	517	35.0	1483	557	37.6	1487	592	39.8	1468	760	51.8	
Trinity	1764	644	36.5	1828	688	37.6	1830	661	36.1	1735	908	52.3	
Village	758	192	25.3	1030	293	28.4	1030	274	26.6	757	344	45.4	
West Barnes	1466	861	58.7	1472	842	57.2	1472	816	55.4	1466	987	67.3	
Wimbledon Park	1424	562	39.5	1430	616	43.1	1430	611	42.7	1417	763	53.8	
										Total	26301	13880	52.8

6.1 Dry recycling service: set out and participation rates

Dry recycling rounds	Collection 1			Collection 2			Collection 3			Participation rate		
	Properties monitored	Number of properties participating	Set out rate (%)	Properties monitored	Number of properties participating	Set out rate (%)	Properties monitored	Number of properties participating	Set out rate (%)	Properties monitored across 3 collections	Number of properties participating	Participation rate (%)
Abbey	1284	825	64.3	1284	797	62.1	1284	778	60.6	1284	1011	78.7
Cannon Hill	1478	1084	73.3	1478	1114	75.4	1478	1100	74.4	1473	1272	86.4
Colliers Wood	1073	643	59.9	1073	666	62.1	1075	696	64.7	1064	815	76.6
Cricket Green	1454	867	59.6	1454	932	64.1	1454	893	61.4	1364	1033	75.7
Dundonald	1221	891	73.0	1221	869	71.2	1221	856	70.1	1221	1001	82.0
Figges Marsh	1177	675	57.3	1177	711	60.4	1177	719	61.1	1164	855	73.5
Graveney	1455	1083	74.4	1455	1084	74.5	1456	1089	74.8	1455	1198	82.3
Hillside	1399	745	53.3	1399	842	60.2	1416	880	62.1	1369	1048	76.6
Lavender	1288	675	52.4	1288	680	52.8	1288	708	55.0	1288	950	73.8
Longthornton	1449	881	60.8	1449	867	59.8	1449	838	57.8	1449	968	66.8
Lower Morden	1680	1039	61.8	1680	1010	60.1	1680	854	50.8	1680	1380	82.1
Merton Park	1530	849	55.5	1530	1068	69.8	1530	1015	66.3	1527	1288	84.3
Pollards Hill	1453	819	56.4	1453	900	61.9	1453	840	57.8	1440	1123	78.0
Ravensbury	1322	864	65.4	1322	834	63.1	1322	833	63.0	1322	927	70.1
Raynes Park	1076	787	73.1	1076	772	71.7	1076	751	69.8	1076	851	79.1
St. Helier	1506	951	63.1	1511	937	62.0	1514	990	65.4	1471	1117	75.9
Trinity	1844	1263	68.5	1863	1317	70.7	1878	1375	73.2	1782	1531	85.9
Village	1209	594	49.1	1209	622	51.4	1209	577	47.7	1149	895	77.9
West Barnes	1472	1180	80.2	1475	1190	80.7	1475	1171	79.4	1472	1294	87.9
Wimbledon Park	1444	1111	76.9	1444	1157	80.1	1444	1176	81.4	1436	1315	91.6
Total										27486	21872	79.6

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