

Supplement for

Scrutiny Committee

On **Tuesday 10 March 2026** At **6.15 pm**

Item 9 Fly-tipping and Litter Management

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At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 1 July 2025, the Committee requested an update on the Council's work to mitigate fly-tipping and the work on litter management.

Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies, Helen Bishop, Director of Communities and Citizens Services and Tina Mould, Environment Sustainability Business Lead will be in attendance to present the report and answer questions.

The Committee is asked to consider the report and agree any recommendations.

The report will be published in a supplement ahead of the meeting.

The agenda, reports and any additional supplements can be found together with this supplement on the committee meeting webpage.

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Scrutiny Briefing Paper (Part 1) – March 2026

Part 1 - An overview of Waste and Recycling collections for Residents, new legislation and the Council's programme to improve W&R services for residents

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This paper covers:

1. Introduction to Waste and Recycling Services
2. Oxford's current recycling and waste performance, challenges and targets.
3. The upcoming legislative changes under the Environment Act and Simpler Recycling requirements
4. The approach to Simpler Recycling, including timelines and investment required.
5. Funding available through pEPR and other sources.
6. Governance
7. Improvement Programme for household waste collections.

1. Introduction to Waste & Recycling Services

Oxford City Council is currently the waste collection authority. It has the statutory responsibility for household domestic waste collections from all properties in Oxford City.

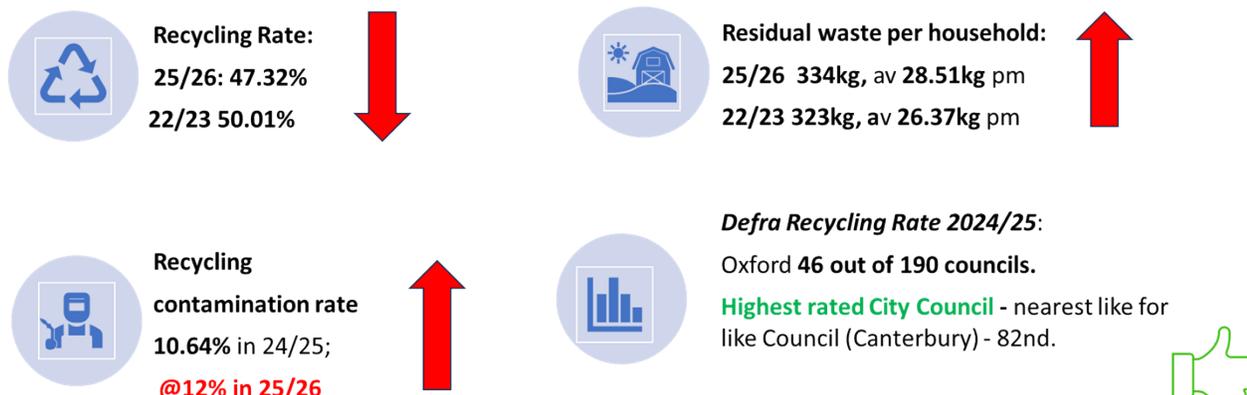
It collects waste from almost 64,000 households of the following types:

- Dry Mixed Recycling (paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastic)
- Garden waste
- Food waste
- Residual Waste
- Bulky waste
- Other (batteries, small electrical items (including IT), vapes, clinical waste, etc)

It is also responsible for the disposal of recycling and receives a recycling credit from the County Council. Oxfordshire County Council as the disposal authority is responsible for the disposal of all other waste streams. The design and delivery of the recycling and waste collection service is set to recognise differences, whilst providing a consistent service for all demographics of Oxford, supported by targeted education and other support services required to successfully deliver the service. ODS acts on behalf of the Council to fulfill its obligations as the Waste Collection Authority.

2. Oxford's Current W&R Performance & Targets - Performance

Oxford ranks 46th of 190 councils nationally for 2024/25 - the highest ranked **city council**.



- Overall Oxford's recycling rate has declined; mainly card & garden waste, residual waste levels are increasing slightly.
- 40% of residual waste comprises food waste (28%) or materials that could be recycled (12%).
- Increasing contamination: 10.64% (24/25) to approx. 12% (25/26).
- Operational pressures: agency workforce reliance = up to 10% for loaders and 30% for drivers - this is an area of focus for ODS.
- Fleet age, congestion and LTNs impact collection efficiency, replacing fleet, early starts & route planning support good collection efficiency.

b. Targets

Oxfordshire modelling suggests Oxford should reach 63.40% recycling by 2029/30. DEFRA's national target is 55% by 2025/26 and 65% by 2035

Recycling Rate

Recycling rate as a % NI192	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	2030	2035
Ox City's actuals and predicted rates %	52.8	51.7	50.0	49.5	47.4	47.2			
DEFRA: Target Municipal recycling rate %						55%			65%

Focus for Improvement

- Increasing food waste recycling
- Reducing contamination rates of recyclates
- Increasing mixed other recycling rates

3. Legislative & Regulatory Changes

Simpler Recycling – Mandatory from 31 March 2026

All local authorities must collect a consistent set of recyclable materials, including glass, metals, plastics, cartons, paper and card. Weekly food waste collections will be required for all households, and garden waste services must be offered. Paper and card should be collected separately where possible.

Legislation and Regulatory update

Simpler Recycling - from 31 March 2026

- All local authorities in England must collect a **consistent set of recyclables**, including:
 - Glass bottles and jars - **yes**
 - Metal tins, cans, foil, trays and aerosols - **yes**
 - Plastic bottles, pots, tubs, trays and tubes - **yes**
 - Cartons for food and drink - **yes**
 - Paper and card - **yes**
- **Weekly food waste collection** for all households, including flats - **95% currently**
- **Garden waste**, collection service must be provided to households that request it; charges may be applied - **yes**
- Under the **Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2025**, glass, metals and plastics (with cartons) can be co-collected. **Paper and card** should preferably be collected **separately** - **currently co-mingled**
- To maintain mixed recycling, councils must complete a written assessment - **TEEP assessment March '26**
- From **March 2027 - plastic film and bags** must also be collected for recycling - **not yet**
- **Deposit Return Scheme - Oct 2027-** drinks containers - **waiting further info**

4. Preparing for Simpler Recycling

Under Simpler Recycling legislation – Oxford is expected to move from co-mingled dry mixed recycling to separate paper and cardboard collections. Options on how to do this are being evaluated via the Oxfordshire Waste and Resources Partnership (all Oxon Councils), to ensure that any changes made align with LGR.

Remaining @2,500 properties without a food waste collection are now all being offered the service.

Estimated minimum capital cost of separating paper and cardboard = £1.5-2M.

We already collect, plastic and film, but intend to collect these in a separate bag as part of dry mixed recycling collections from March 2027.

A TEEP assessment can justify delay to implementation until 2027. This has been completed for 2026.

5. Funding

Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) is providing funding for local authorities to support Simpler Recycling measures. Known pEPR funding for OCC to support the collection and recycling of packaging is as shown below:

- 2025/26 - Guaranteed £1.98m
- 2026/27 - Notification of a provisional further £2.18m
- 2027/28 - Unknown (better recycling performance = more certainty of future funding)

- A further £50k received in 25/26 to roll out food waste to all remaining communal properties that do not currently have a collection.

Note - funding must be spent on household packaging waste management, with potential claw-back by DEFRA if non-compliant. Detail on spend related to this is shown in section 6.

6. Governance of all W&R Workstreams

There are three significant waste and recycling Workstreams that the Council and ODS are working on, as outlined below:

1. **The statutory and legislative requirements of Oxford City Council as Oxford's Waste Collection Authority (with ODS for its delivery).**
 - a. Improving the service to Oxford's residents and meeting the needs of changing legislation, including use of pEPR.
2. **County wide Partnership work & Joint LA collaboration and efficiency workstreams**
 - a. Oxfordshire Resources Waste Partnership (ORWP)
 - b. Waste and Environmental Services Partnership (WESP), feeding into LGR
3. **ODS Commercial Opportunities**
 - a. Commercial Waste, Expansion of Services, Infrastructure opportunities, etc

A W&R Steering Board, compiled of key OCC & ODS staff and chaired by Tom Bridgman has been created. The Board, via a collective W&R programme, will ensure cohesive approach for strategic direction, interdependencies, scope and any resource prioritisation. This also includes full governance of Workstream 1 & associated spend (pEPR for 25/26 & 26/27 = @£4M).

Workstreams 2. OWRP & WESP & 3. ODS Commercial work, have established own governance processes, their inclusion in the wider programme is to support strategic information sharing and identify inter-related dependencies, opportunities and risks etc.

7. Improvement Programme for Oxford Residents Household Waste Collections.

"An action plan has been drafted to ensure that the pEPR funding received, supports key workstreams that deliver efficient, effective and improved household waste management and recycling, fully aligning with the spend conditions".

4 x OCC/ODS Working Groups have been created to drive improvements to the household waste and recycling services for Oxford's residents, whilst aligning with changing legislative and LGR requirements.

4 x OCC/ODS Working Groups:

1. WG 1: Client & ODS - General Service & Strategic Review.
 - Process map all waste origin to end location
 - Partner working across service areas (Streets, enforcement)
 - Engagement Programme
 - Strategic governance, simpler recycling business case, TEEP assessment, composition analysis

- Using data to prioritise & focus
2. WG 2: ODS led – Operational Delivery, including implementing Simpler Recycling Collection Changes.
 - Waste contracts
 - Staffing
 - Waste systems, permits, innovation (cameras)
 3. WG 3: OCC led - Communal Dwelling Improvement Programme
 - Food Programme – almost completed
 - HRA
 - Private Rented Sector

Audit of all communal dwelling sites, to assess issues and interventions (physical, engagement etc)– working with Property, Housing & Enforcement

4. WG 4: OCC led - Policy & Strategy functions
 - Review of funding options for W&R in line with increasing households
 - Private Rented Sector – focus on landlords/agents/HMOS
 - Planning – TAN/Local Plan
 - Strategy updates/opportunities

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Part 2 - An overview of public litter and fly-tipping

1. Introduction

This paper aims to set out the approach taken to litter and fly-tipping taken by OCC. ODS Streetscene are responsible, on behalf of OCC for cleaning all public spaces under the Council's control, this includes:

- All adopted streets within the city boundary
- All Council owned open spaces
- Verges
- Parks
- Play Areas
- Footpaths and cycle paths
- Countryside sites

Included within this are numerous areas that are OCC HRA owned, primarily within the larger estates of Blackbird Leys, Rose Hill, Wood Farm and Northway.

The overarching objective is to keep an area 'safe, clean and looking good'.

2. Litter Bin Management

Litter and street cleaning are dealt with in a variety of ways depending on the nature of the location and allowing for seasonal variation. The primary desire is that residents and visitors would self-regulate and dispose of litter at home.

However, it is recognised that this is not always practicable and there are therefore a network of over 995 litter bins and 278 dog waste bins across the city. The placement of these has evolved and will continue to do so as society and usage changes. For instance, with a significant reduction in print media, bins at every bus stop are not necessarily required. We will keep locations under review and trial both additional bins, or the removal of bins to ensure a demonstrable benefit.

Bins around the city are checked daily and emptied if half full. Frequency can be much greater in some locations such as the city centre where collections can be up to 8 times a day, or busy parks on sunny weekends. The service therefore has to remain highly flexible to combinations of weather, holidays, events etc. Altogether ODS pick-up, collect and dispose of around 1,500 tonnes of litter each year.

As a second-tier authority, the disposal of litter, including fly tipping materials, is directed by the County Council. The majority of litter disposal is directed towards Redbridge HWRC, however there are significant exceptions:

- Street sweepings from large sweepers are directed to Oakley Wood (Grundon)
- Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), such as soft furnishings, are directed to Sutton Courtenay (FCC). This was a legislative change in 2023.

Redbridge Litter	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	Total
23/24	116.00	130.22	141.90	130.20	124.70	132.26	127.39	130.16	109.92	121.12	117.00	116.31	1497.18
24/25	121.58	114.92	104.14	119.50	123.58	114.89	97.00	124.94	127.74	114.40	110.88	137.86	1411.43
25/26	137.48	136.28	136.18	136.68	126.96	94.23	86.48	137.45	142.37	144.45			1278.56

3. Street Sweeping and Litter Picking

All areas of the city are cleaned regularly with frequencies based on needs. These can be summarised as follows:

- High litter areas such as shopping parades are swept daily including all of Cowley Rd, Summertown, Headington and other smaller parades. These are attended early mornings to avoid periods of high footfall. This work begins at 5 am 364 days per year.
- Parks are litter picked on varying frequencies depending on usage, but litter bins are checked at least daily.
- Suburban areas are visited monthly as a minimum, but some areas, due to demand are visited more frequently.

As can be seen from the table below, around 1,900 tonnes of road sweepings are due to be collected and disposed of in 25/26 year across the two disposal sites.

Redbridge Sweepings	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	
23/24	97.00	80.48	66.80	53.58	52.58	71.18	109.46	109.06	84.80	87.90	84.60	52.04	949.48
24/25	76.10	75.35	70.00	79.48	84.62	74.70	96.25	57.36	106.20	65.18	48.10	53.90	887.24
25/26	73.91	82.27	76.72	75.76	59.60	67.79	116.18	123.14	109.62	92.58			877.57
Grundon Sweepings	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	
23/24	86.13	39.28	33.73	37.58	30.08	59.26	94.13	120.35	106.97	57.91	76.12	69.78	811.32
24/25	90.90	67.78	38.32	67.58	58.84	76.62	67.56	24.84	47.18	66.28	45.12	39.54	690.56
25/26	44.92	35.80	60.34	63.32	70.76	76.74	73.84	88.74	93.08	82.26			689.80

4. City Centre

City centre cleaning starts at 4.30am focusing initially on the main shopping areas and working outwards to ensure cleaning is completed prior to peak shop delivery periods, the appearance of other service vehicles and shop façade cleaning. Known hotspots for detritus arising from the Nighttime Economy (NTE) and rough sleeping is dealt with prior to normal business hours. The NTE continues through to 3 am 6 days per week presenting considerable challenges the next morning.

After the initial sweep, litter picking continues throughout the day until 7.30pm including outer areas of the City centre such as Jericho.

The team routinely deal with issues arising from trade waste presentation, such as spread of waste by people or animals, spillages etc.

Routine high-pressure street washing takes place across the city centre, in particular to tackle prevalent staining of the porous York stone paving. This paving is very easily stained by spillages as well as tyre marks and requires intense cleaning to maintain the appearance.

5. Fly-tipping

The team handle circa 5,000 individual fly-tips a year. The total number of fly tipping incidents cleared in 2024/25 was 5,179. These occur in all areas of the city but are more prevalent in East Oxford. Of this fly-tipping, around 14% are items that might be classed as 'bulky household waste' although they may also be from commercial premises. On occasions fly-tipping will include hazardous waste such as Asbestos, but the overwhelming majority consists of mixed household waste or DIY waste.

The crews receive these reports through 'Fix My Street', via the contact centre, or through observations made by the team themselves. The staff have been trained by the Safer Oxford team in the gathering of appropriate evidence, and in all instances will examine for possible evidence before disturbing or removing the items. Any evidence gathered is passed to the Community Response Team (CRT) for potential investigation and issue of Final Penalty Notices (FPNs) or prosecution.

Due to the requirement to dispose of different waste streams at different locations it can be necessary to make several separate visits to the same fly-tip occurrence to facilitate disposal for example, a fridge, a cooker and a sofa. The introduction of the POPs legislation required ODS to dedicate a caged collection vehicle and 2 staff, 2 days each week for the additional tasks of separate collection and disposal.

Each year approximately 900 tonnes of fly-tipping are collected and disposed of with an additional 50 tonnes of POPs anticipated in 25/26.

Redbridge Fly-Tip/Butky	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	
23/24	64.72	81.04	58.30	59.92	76.10	75.74	80.14	56.04	60.52	57.66	61.90	59.04	791.12
24/25	82.29	94.02	88.97	110.35	105.44	109.54	130.15	55.84	31.68	67.28	52.40	71.11	999.07
25/26	75.78	64.52	71.82	101.90	102.48	115.40	125.13	45.58	39.96	25.92			768.49

FCC POPs	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	
23/24	5.74	4.36	2.60	4.90	5.82	4.98	5.40	7.48	5.88	6.94	5.82	4.32	64.24
24/25	13.76	4.84	3.70	5.62	6.16	5.24	9.42	4.16	6.00	5.34	4.90	5.46	74.60
25/26	4.84	3.94	5.68	6.72	3.34	4.70	5.26	2.86	2.94	1.82			42.10

6. Enforcement

ODS do not have any enforcement responsibility in relation to littering but will provide evidence to the CRT. In addition, ODS will be involved in any targeted initiatives in partnership with CRT.

7. Overview of the Streetscene Service

In summary the Streetscene service is responsible for:

- Recycling around 800 tonnes of waste annually.
- Dealing with 5,000+ public reports for things like fly tipping and other Streetscene service-related requests per year. This is on top of the standard planned cleansing schedules for the Urban and Suburban areas of the city.
- Cleaning and maintaining 21 public conveniences on behalf of OCC.
- Emptying over 995 public litter bins per day, seven days per week.
- Cleaning and maintaining Oxford's historic Covered Market.
- Looking after all of the City's parks and green spaces, including pavilions.
- Supporting many of Oxford's large-scale events such as St Giles Fair, The Oxford Half Marathon and the Cowley Road Carnival.
- Responding to circa 1,000 queries per year relating to abandoned vehicles and abandoned bikes.
- Removing over 600 abandoned bikes (24/25 figure) to free up space in the most heavily used bike racks, over 400 of which were donated to various charities.
- Removing around 10,000 instances of graffiti from the city last year.

Other service provided by the Streetscene team but not covered in this paper include:

- Graffiti Removal
- Chewing gum removal
- Fly-posting removal
- Dog Warden Service
- Abandoned Vehicles service (including bikes)
- Public toilet cleaning
- HRA communal area cleaning including bin store clearance and cleaning

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