

FUTURE DOMESTIC REFUSE COLLECTION PUBLIC CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** On Monday 6th June 2016, Cabinet agreed an Outline Business Case (OBC) to proposing potential changes to domestic refuse collection arrangements to enable the Council to achieve 50% recycling by 2020.
- 1.2** The options for future domestic refuse collections set out in the OBC include proposals for food recycling collections to be introduced along with restricted capacity residual waste collection by either:
- Retaining the current size bin (240ltrs) but reducing the frequency of collection from fortnightly to every three weeks
OR
 - Retaining the fortnightly collection frequency but exchanging the current 240ltr wheelie bins for 140ltr wheelie bins.
- 1.3** Cabinet instructed officers to conduct a public consultation, to ask residents for their comments on options for future domestic refuse collection arrangements.
- 1.4** This report presents a summary of the feedback from the consultation exercise about future domestic refuse collection.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1** The Council's five year 'Managing our Waste' Strategy was approved in December 2015, to provide the vision and direction for improving the Council's approach to managing household waste and to set a route to achieving 50% recycling by of all household waste by 2020, which is a national target.
- 2.2** On Monday 6th June 2016, Cabinet agreed the Outline Business Case (OBC) proposing the change domestic refuse collection systems. Cabinet instructed officers to complete a full business case and carry out a consultation exercise in order to identify a preferred solution for future domestic refuse collection. The consultation ended on 9th September 2016, the feedback from which is contained within this report.
- 2.3** The consultation exercise took place over 6 weeks from 1st August 2016 to 9th September 2016. The exercise consisted of an online survey and series of roadshows. The exercise resulted in 9055 individual responses to the survey, together with a series of submitted letters, emails and petitions. This is the second highest response to a Wirral Council consultation exercise.

3.0 CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Two waste collection options were proposed, following a detailed options appraisal, to enable the Council to meet and potentially exceed the national 50% recycling target by 2020. Residents were not asked to 'vote for' or 'choose' either option; rather they were asked for their comments on each of the proposals:

- **Option 1**

- Weekly kerbside food recycling collection via a 23ltr container.
- Fortnightly kerbside dry recycling collection via a 240ltr grey bin.
- Three-weekly kerbside residual waste collection via a 240ltr green bin.
- Fortnightly kerbside garden waste collection via the Garden Waste Club.

- **Option 2**

- Weekly kerbside food recycling collection via a 23ltr container.
- Fortnightly kerbside dry recycling collection via a 240ltr grey bin.
- Fortnightly kerbside residual waste collection via a 140ltr green bin.
- Fortnightly kerbside garden waste collection via the Garden Waste Club.

3.2 The consultation was made available online via an external platform and was also delivered in paper format to residents currently receiving an assisted refuse collection (approximately 3300 residents). Paper surveys and all other correspondence received via email and letter regarding the proposed options were inputted manually into the online consultation.

3.3 A detailed set of frequently asked questions (FAQ) was posted online and was supplied in a printed format to those residents receiving the paper consultation form. The FAQs included photos of the food containers and the smaller 140ltr green wheelie bin, as well as information on: why change is required; how the proposed systems would be delivered; what items are collected by the kerbside food recycling service; what happens to the food once collected; options for residents requiring more residual waste capacity due to medical waste, large families or children using disposable nappies; why Wirral isn't currently increasing the range of materials accepted in the grey bins for recycling; why Wirral Council will not remove the charge for garden waste collection; and how will the Council respond to potential increases in flytipping and contamination.

3.4 The Council has built up an extensive database of email addresses from residents, partners and other stakeholders who have opted to provide their details to receive information about Council services and consultations. This database received an email about the proposed waste collection options and consultation process.

3.5 The Council's website was also used extensively throughout the consultation, with a home page presence promoting the consultation and providing access to it. The consultation was highlighted on the Council's internal intranet page

for Council employees. The Council's various social networking profiles (Facebook and Twitter) were also used to promote the consultation.

3.6 Adverts were placed in the local media and regional media also featured the proposals regularly throughout the consultation period.

3.7 Public roadshow events were arranged to take place during the consultation period. Eight events were arranged for public attendance and two locations were arranged at Council buildings for Council employees to attend. Examples of the food containers and the smaller 140ltr green bin were brought to the roadshows, to enable residents to see the containers and ask questions. Some paper consultations were available for residents that attended the roadshows and who did not have internet access.

Table 1 details the consultation roadshow event locations:

Table 1

DATE	VENUE	TIMES
02 August 2016	Tesco, Heswall	11am to 2pm
03 August 2016	Cherry Tree Centre, Liscard	10am to 1pm
04 August 2016	Birkenhead Town Centre - o/s ASDA	11am to 2pm
08 August 2016	West Kirby Library	3pm to 6pm
11 August 2016	Bromborough Civic Centre	10am to 1pm
13 August 2016	Birkenhead Park, Visitor Centre	10am to 4pm
14 August 2016	Birkenhead Park, Visitor Centre	10am to 4pm
16 August 2016	Wallasey Town Hall	10am to 1pm
17 August 2016	Floral Pavilion, New Brighton	3pm to 6pm
18 August 2016	Cheshire Lines Building (staff)	11am to 2pm
19 August 2016	Older People's Parliament	11am to 1pm

3.8 The consultation ran from Monday 1st August 2016 until Friday 9th September 2016.

4.0 PETITIONS RECEIVED

4.1 The following petitions related to the proposed waste collection systems have been received (as of July 2017):

- Wirral Council Bin Collection Proposed Changes:
 - Online 3,403 signatures
- Wirral Council Bin Collection – Petition against Proposed Changes
 - Paper 1,111 signatures
- Proposed Wheelie Bin Changes in Wallasey
 - Paper 880 signatures

4.2 The numbers of signatures quoted are correct at the time of writing this report.

4.3 All petitions were against the introduction of reduced residual waste capacity.

4.4 The Wirral Council Bin Collection Proposed Changes Petition received over 3,000 signatures and as per the Council's petition scheme, it is therefore eligible to be heard by Council.

5.0 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

5.1 The Council used online software to capture all responses and provide analysis of the quantitative aspect of the consultation questions. Responses which are completed online go directly into the system and any hand written responses received are manually inputted into the same system, using clear protocols.

5.2 All responses to the individual questions posed were analysed regardless of whether questionnaires were fully or partially completed.

5.3 The two proposed options were presented in a 'free text' response format, requesting the respondent's comments on each of the two proposals. There then followed a number of questions relating to the number of people in the property, property type, how the resident learned of the consultation, postcode and an option to advise how the respondent would prefer to be kept informed by the Council in the future.

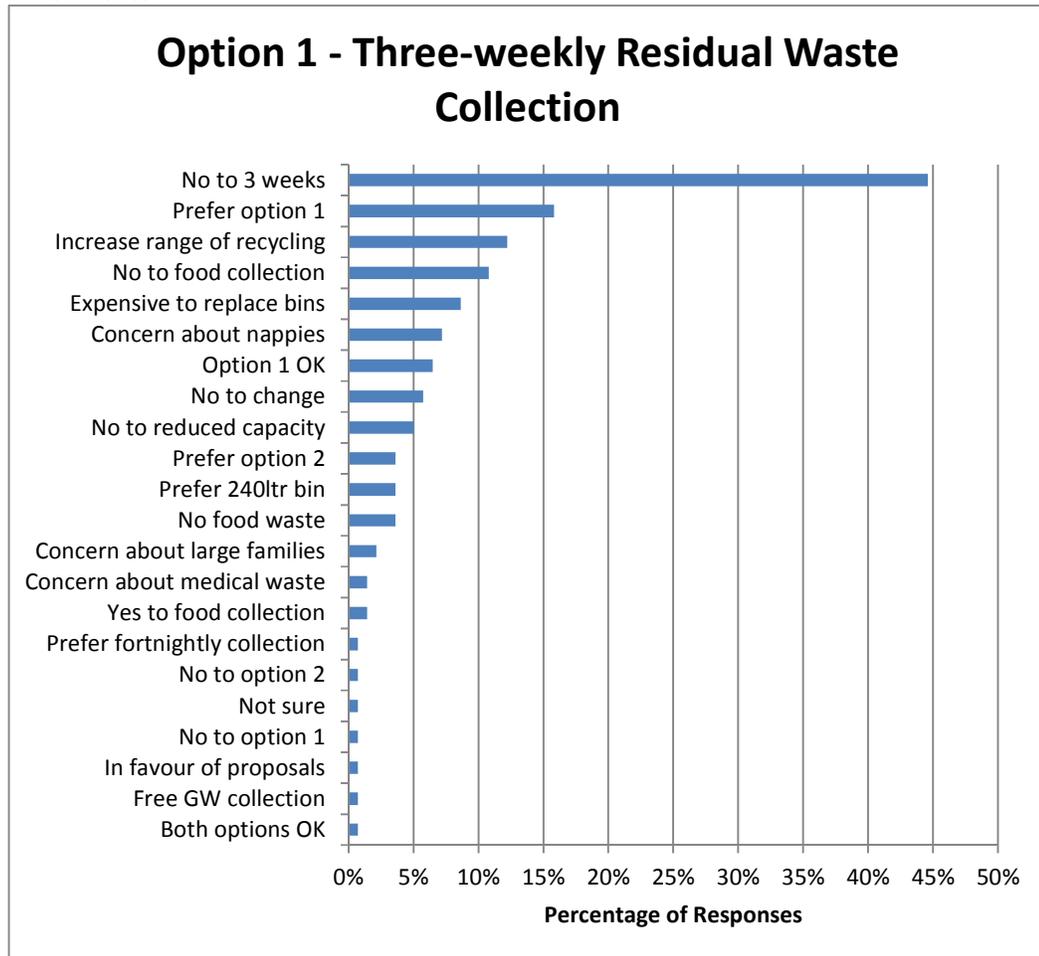
5.4 The comments for each option have been reviewed and analysed by the project team to identify common themes and suggestions. All of these comments are also available in full online at the Council website at www.wirral.gov.uk/food.

5.5 A total of 9055 responses to the consultation were received. This is the second largest response to a consultation undertaken by Wirral Council.

5.6 Response to Question 1 (Three-weekly residual waste collection, 240ltr bin)

5.6.1 A total of 6,920 comments were received regarding Option 1. Residents were not asked to 'vote for' or 'choose' either option; they were asked for their comments on each of the two proposals. All comments have been reviewed and a random sample analysed in depth. The results have been summarised in the table below.

Table 2 – Common comments regarding a three-weekly residual waste collection



5.6.2 Over 40% of respondents commented that they were not in favour of a three weekly residual waste collection frequency.

5.6.3 Where a reason for this was given, it was usually due to the respondent expressing concern over the health and hygiene issues of having nappies, medical waste or pet waste sitting in the bins for that length of time. Another concern raised was the confusion around a three weekly collection dates or if there was a missed collection the wait would be six weeks until the next scheduled collection.

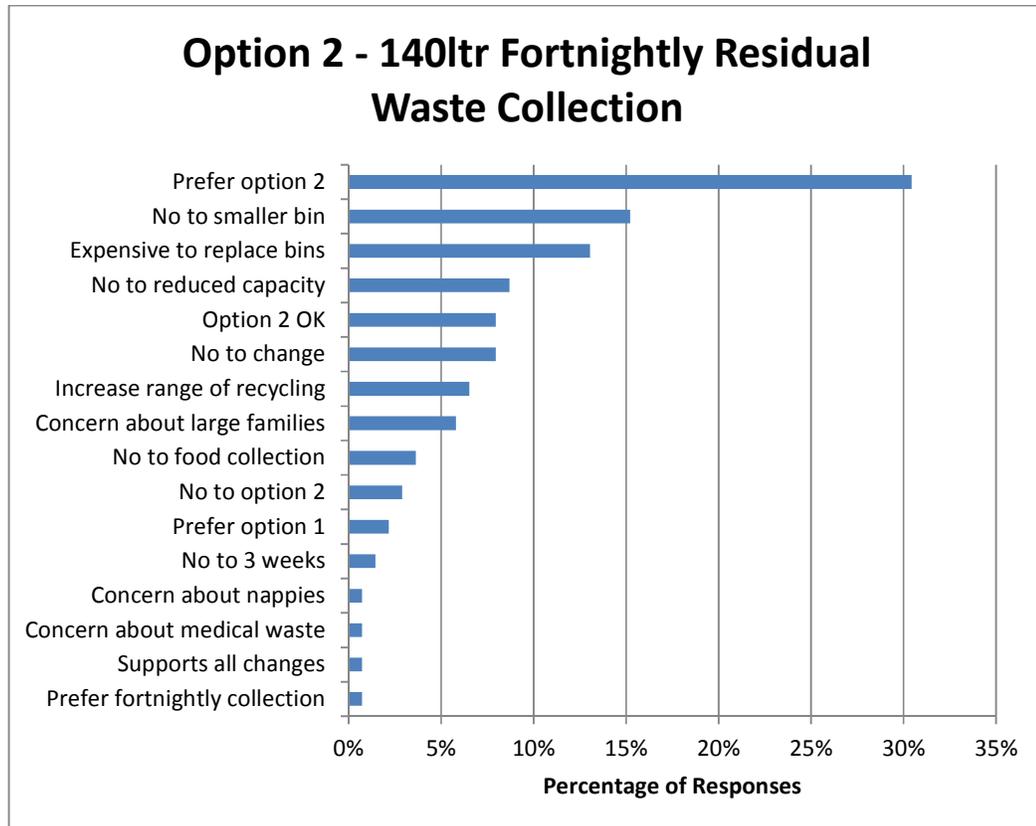
5.6.4 16% of respondents stated a preference for Option 1 – to retain the current green residual waste bin, but have it emptied every three weeks.

5.6.5 Over 10% of respondents expressed a dislike for the proposed food waste collection and 12% suggested an increase in the range of recyclables from the kerbside.

5.7 Response to Question 2 (Fortnightly residual waste collection, 140ltr bin)

5.7.1 A total of 6,876 comments were received regarding Option 2. Residents were not asked to 'vote for' or 'choose' either option; they were asked for their comments on each of the two proposals. All comments have been reviewed and a random sample analysed in depth. The results have been summarised in the table below.

Table 3 – Common themes regarding a 140ltr fortnightly residual waste collection



5.7.2 Approximately 30% of respondents stated a preference for Option 2 – to exchange the current green residual waste bin for a 140ltr green bin and keep the fortnightly collection.

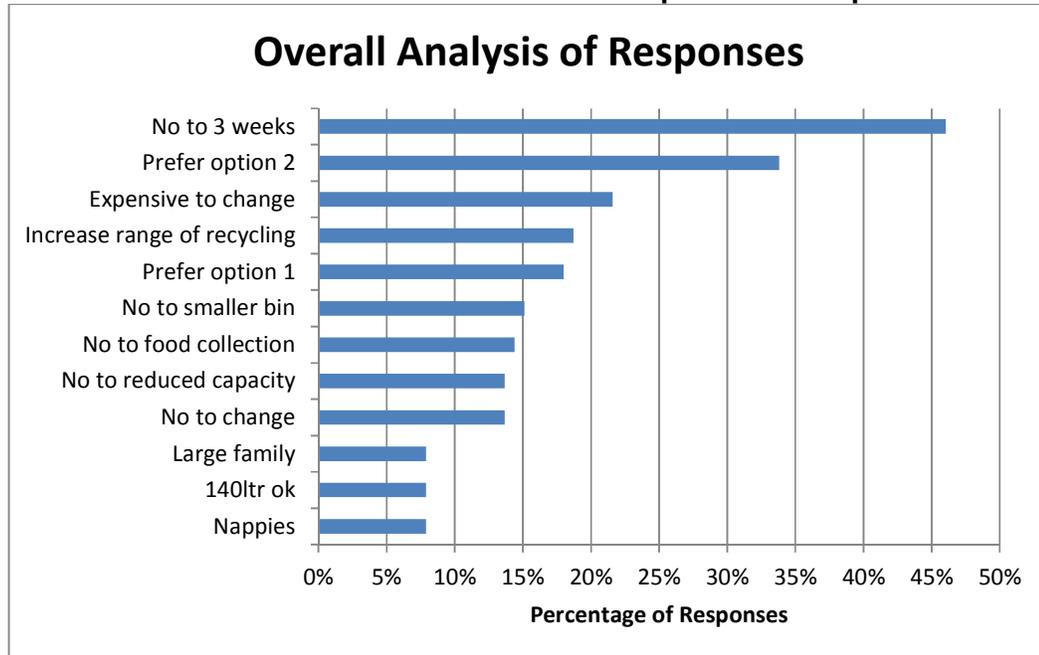
5.7.3 15% of respondents did not want a smaller bin, with many (13%) concerned about the cost to replace the bins and where the funding would come from for such a venture. Other concerns raised included provision for large families and those with medical waste or nappies and how they would be able to cope with the reduced capacity.

5.7.4 Approximately 8% of respondents did not want to change the current waste management system.

5.8 Combined comments

5.8.1 The graph below has combined the responses from both question 1 and question 2, to give an overall view from respondents:

Table 4 – Combined comments received for Option 1 and Option 2

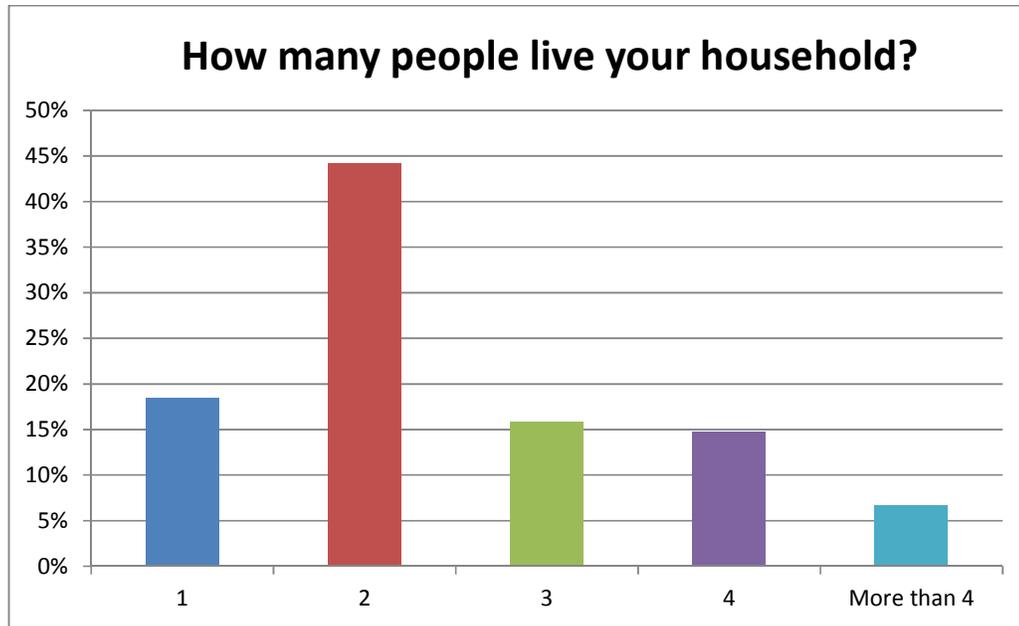


5.9 Response to Question 3 – How many people live in your household?

5.9.1 The number of people in the household of the respondents is detailed in the table and graph below.

Table 5 – Number of people in the household

How many people live your household?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1	18.5%	1650
2	44.2%	3941
3	15.9%	1422
4	14.7%	1312
More than 4	6.7%	594
<i>answered question</i>		8919
<i>skipped question</i>		136



5.9.2 Wirral's household size composition is on average:

- 33.7% One-person household
- 30.4% Two-person household
- 32.7% 3+ person household

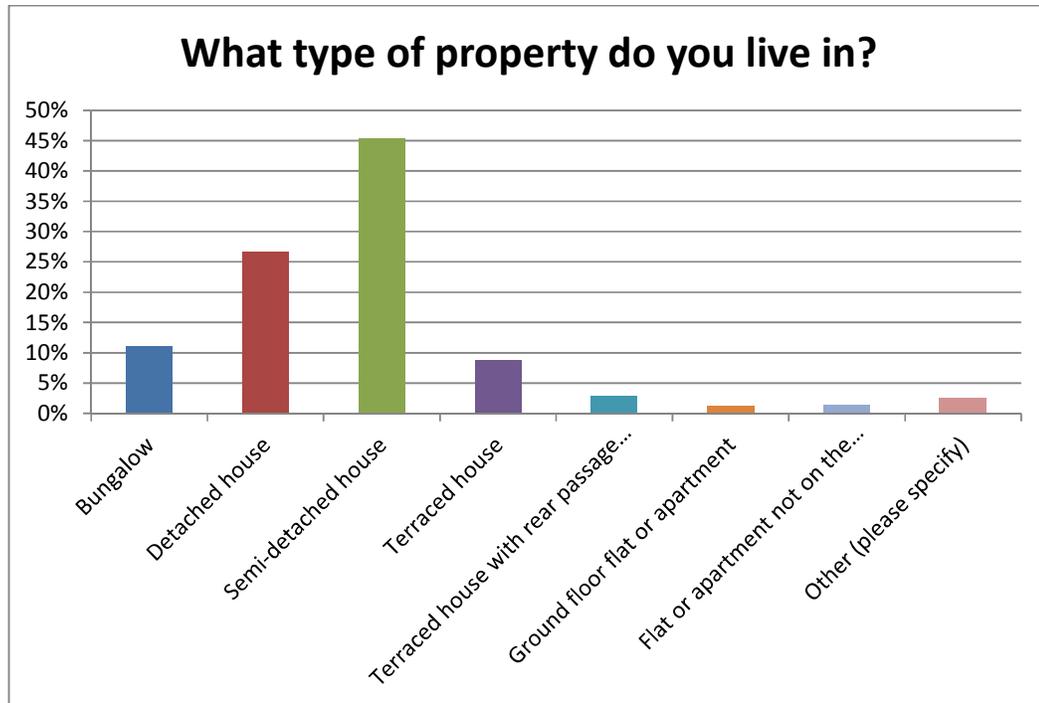
The consultation survey therefore provides a representative sample from the 3+ households, larger representation from households with only 2 inhabitants and a lower representation from those with only one resident. This is possibly due to the lower residual waste capacity requirements from a one-person household.

5.10 Response to Question 4 – What type of property do you live in?

5.10.1 The table and chart below details the property type of the respondents.

Table 6 – Property type

What type of property do you live in?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Bungalow	11.0%	979
Detached house	26.7%	2387
Semi-detached house	45.4%	4058
Terraced house	8.8%	786
Terraced house with rear passage way	3.0%	264
Ground floor flat or apartment	1.3%	114
Flat or apartment not on the ground floor	1.5%	131
Other (please specify)	2.5%	220
	answered question	8939
	skipped question	116



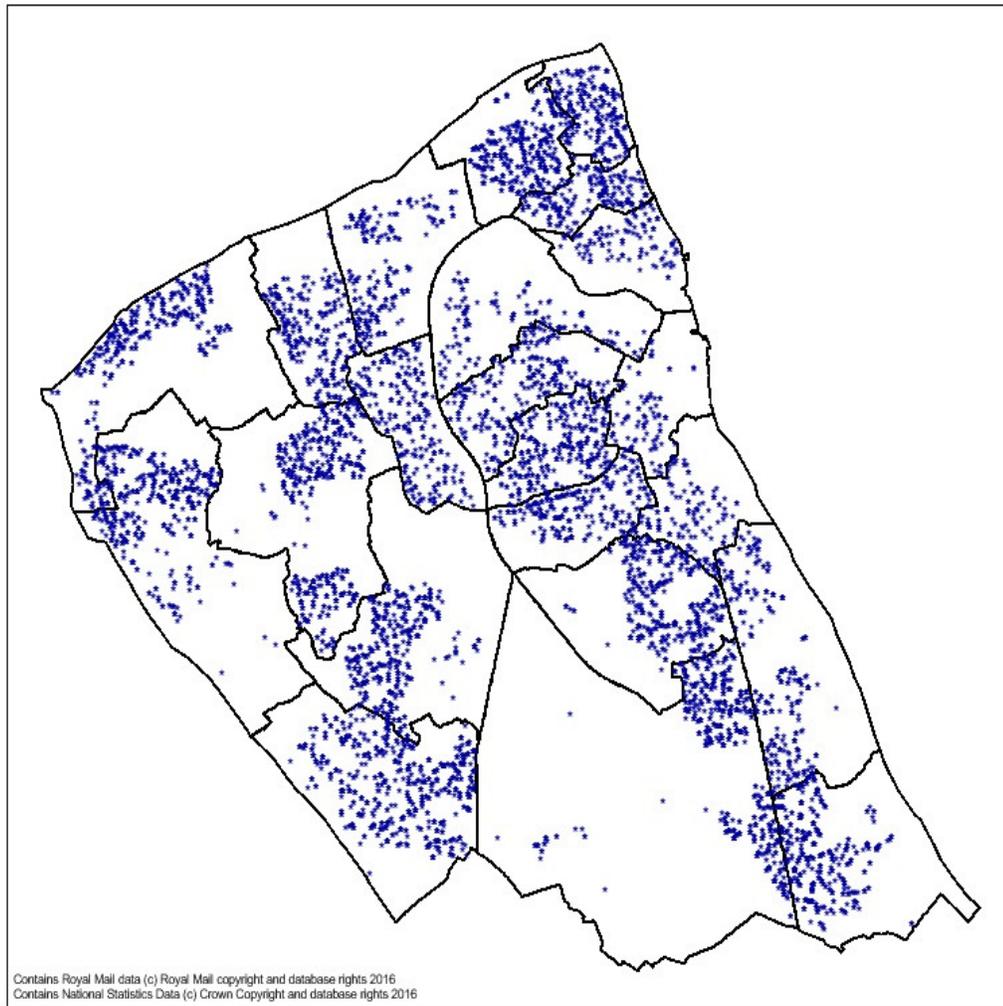
5.10.2 The profile of Wirral's ACORN classification of properties is 15% detached properties, 47% semi-detached properties and 30% terraced properties. This consultation received a proportionate number of responses from semi-detached properties, but a higher number of responses from detached properties and a lower proportion from residents living in terraced properties.

5.11 Question 5 – What is your postcode?

5.11.1 This information is used to demonstrate that we have received the views of a cross section of areas from Wirral. Respondents cannot be identified in any way from this information.

5.11.2 8,653 respondents provided a postcode, with 402 respondents not doing so. Of the postcodes supplied, 623 were unable to be mapped due to respondent typing error. These were checked using the Royal Mail postcode finder.

5.11.3 The diagram below shows the postcodes mapped for analysis.



5.11.4 The above diagram shows that a representation from all areas was received as part of the consultation.

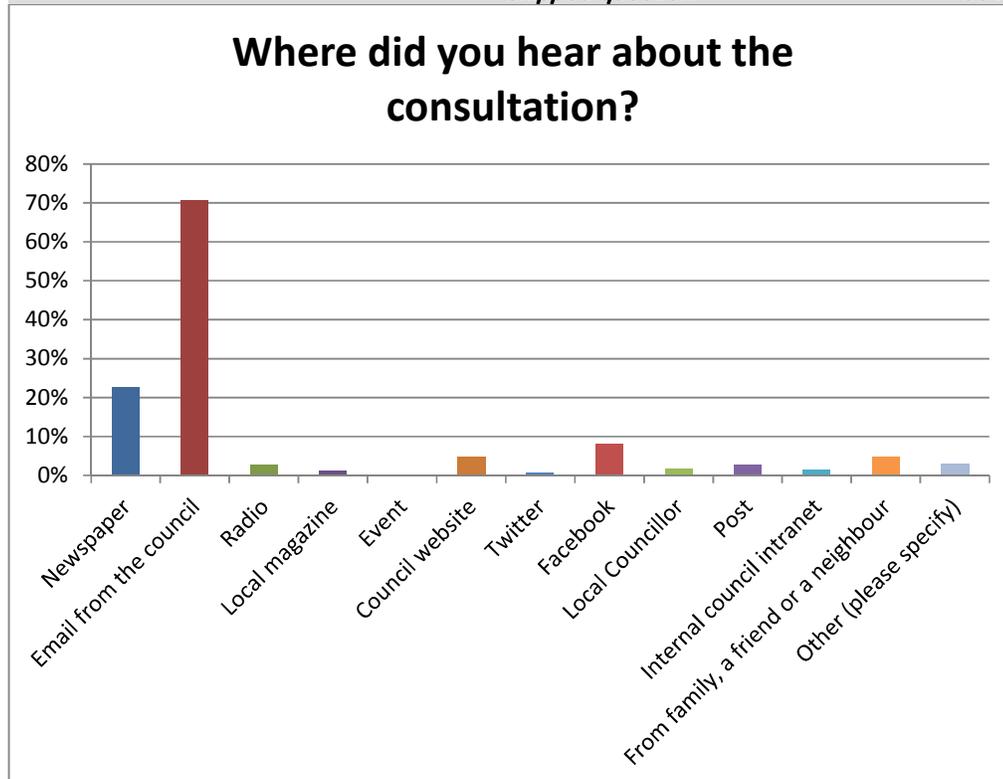
5.12 Question 6 - Where did you hear about the consultation?

5.12.1 Table 7 below shows that the majority of residents received information about the consultation via the email from the Council.

Table 7 – How respondents heard about the consultation

Where did you hear about the consultation? (tick all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Newspaper	22.6%	1968
Email from the council	70.8%	6160
Radio	2.8%	242
Local magazine	1.2%	105
Event	0.2%	15

Council website	4.6%	398
Twitter	0.7%	62
Facebook	8.0%	692
Local Councillor	1.8%	156
Post	2.8%	246
Internal council intranet	1.4%	121
From family, a friend or a neighbour	4.7%	410
Other (please specify)	3.05%	265
<i>answered question</i>		8701
<i>skipped question</i>		354

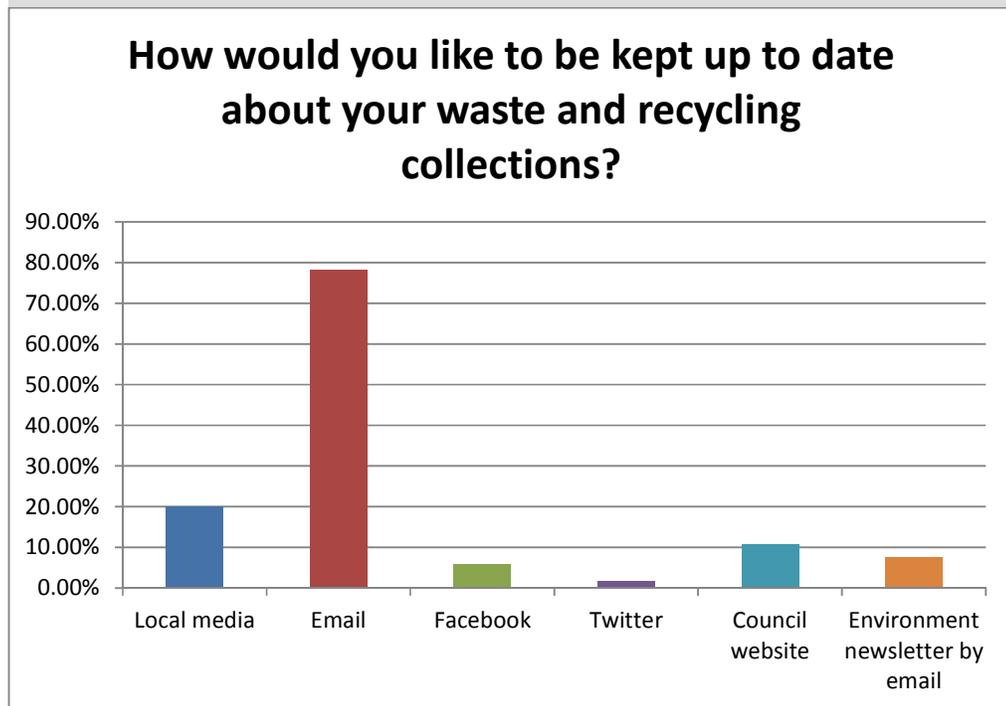


5.13 Question 7 - How would you like to be kept up to date about your waste and recycling collections?

5.13.1 Table 8 below shows that the majority of residents who replied to the consultation would like to be kept up to date regarding waste and recycling collection via email.

Table 8 – How respondents would like to be kept in touch with

How would you like to be kept up to date about your waste and recycling collections?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Local media	19.9%	1692
Email	78.2%	6653
Facebook	5.9%	499
Twitter	1.6%	139
Council website	10.8%	922
Environment newsletter by email	7.6%	643
<i>answered question</i>		8503
<i>skipped question</i>		552



5.13.2 4,557 respondents supplied their email address for future contact. 4,498 did not respond to this question.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The consultation exercise has shown that, although some residents did not want to change existing domestic refuse collection systems, many expressed a willingness to engage with the proposals.

6.2 The overall nature of the comments has shown that residents would prefer to reduce capacity whilst retaining the collection frequency (i.e. exchange the current 240ltr bin for a smaller 140ltr bin). However, there is concern regarding the cost of exchanging the bins.

- 6.3** Concerns raised by residents through the consultation regarding the three-weekly residual waste collections include: the health and hygiene issues of nappies, medical and pet waste not getting collected for three weeks; a missed collection results in no collection for six weeks; and the potentially confusing collection date sequences.

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