

## Warwickshire Waste Partnership - 30 September 2008

### Home Composting Scheme

#### Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy on behalf of the Officers Group

##### Summary

This report updates Members on the progress made regarding the countywide Home Composting scheme.

##### Recommendation

Members note the contents of this report.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 At the last Partnership meeting, members received a report on Warwickshire's home composting scheme, partnered with Wrap over the past four years. At that meeting members asked for a further update of the scheme, due to the price increases being introduced and less subsidy being given by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), this could affect achieving the waste minimisation target.
- 1.2 To remind members, from 1 April 2008, Wrap increased their prices from £10, for a 330, litre bin to £20 and from £8 to £17 for a 220 litre bin. During 2007/8, 5,275 bins were sold, bringing the total number of sales, up to April 2008, to 19,874. The total percentage of households using the Wrap campaign composters was 8.13%.

## 2. Campaign 2008/09

- 2.1 Up to the end of August 2009, only 830 bins have been sold. To try and enhance these sales during the autumn, a bin sale is planned, offering a £4 discount to the first 1000 residents purchasing their first composter. An increased amount of promotional work will also be done to highlight the benefits of composting at home.

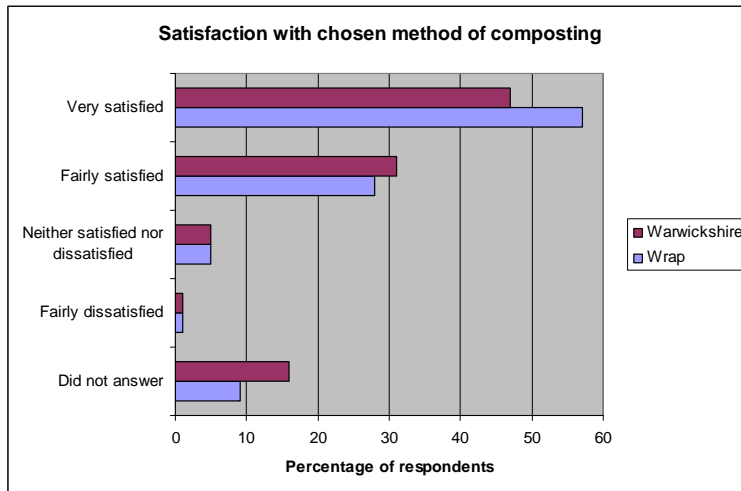
### **3. Market Research**

- 3.1 Two further pieces of research have been carried out over the last few months, one by Wrap, covering research on a national scale and another by the Warwickshire Waste Partnership who have also been conducting some further research, not just on those residents who have purchased Wrap composters, but on the number of other residents within the county who are composting.
- 3.2 With regard to Wrap research, they have estimated that Warwickshire has 184,000 houses with gardens out of a household total of 222,000 . They have used a very small sample of households across Warwickshire, 71 in all, to come to the conclusion that we have 29% of households doing their own composting, plus a further 5.6% of new households composting using Wrap composters (the remaining 2.8% of the Wrap sales are existing composter users), which gives an estimate of 34.6% of households carrying out home composting.
- 3.3 The Warwickshire Observatory do not feel the Wrap figure is a true representation of the composting activities conducted by Warwickshire residents as the sample of 71 households is rather small.
- 3.4 The Waste Partnership conducted a survey, in the form of a competition, during August 2008 (**Appendix A**). The survey was open to all Warwickshire residents who either completed the survey on-line or by surveys distributed at local events in Nuneaton, Leamington and Stratford. It was also published in the Rugby Choice magazine, and press articles went out across the county.

### **4. Warwickshire's Own Key Findings**

- 4.1 353 completed responses were received, this is considered a robust sample.
- 4.2 A staggering 78.5% of respondents stated that they compost at home.
- 4.3 Of those composting at home, 52% either purchased their compost bin at a garden centre, made their own, use a compost heap or other means. This leaves 48% who purchased through the Wrap scheme.
- 4.4 If the 48% of residents, composting through Wraps subsidised scheme, is equal to 8.13% ( reported in our last report ), then the 52% of residents composting by other means is equal to 8.8%, giving us an overall Warwickshire composting rate of 16.93%. Warwickshire's target within the Waste Minimisation Strategy is for 15% of householders to be treating compostable waste at home by 2010/11 and 20% by 2012/13.
- 4.5 When comparing the satisfaction element of the chosen method of composting, the level of very satisfied residents is higher with residents who purchased through the Wrap scheme. The level of fairly satisfied residents is, however, higher with those who did not purchase through an the Wrap Scheme.

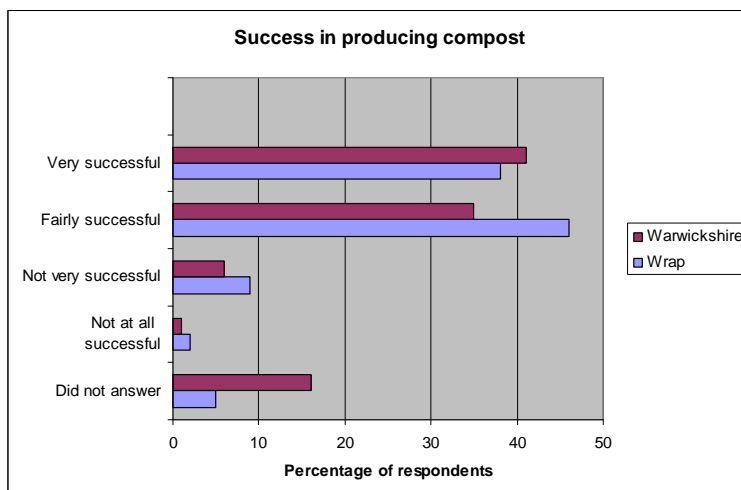
**Figure 1: Satisfaction with Chosen Method of Composting**



4.6 Of those respondents composting, 41% said they were ‘very successful’ in producing compost, 42% said that they were ‘fairly successful’, 7% said that they were ‘not very successful’ whilst 1% said that they were ‘not at all successful’. Of the remainder, 9% did not state how successful they were at producing compost.

4.7 When comparing the success in producing compost, the level of very successful residents is higher with those who purchased through the Wrap scheme ( Wrap provide extra support to those purchasers). The level of fairly satisfied residents is, however, higher with those who did not purchase through an the Wrap Scheme.

**Figure 2: Success in Producing Compost**



4.8 Respondents were asked whether they thought that additional encouragement or support was necessary, 22% of respondents did not think that there was a need for any further encouragement or support. Of the respondents who did want further support, 44% thought that literature was necessary, 44% thought that a web page was necessary.

- 4.9 90% of respondents would recommend composting to others.
- 4.10 To support those who have indicated problems encountered with compost bins, a follow up advice sheet will be drawn up and sent to them. They will also be made aware of other information services such as the Warwickshire County Council Home Composting web page.

**Enquiries:** about this report should be made to Caroline Faulkner, 01926 412458, email [carolinefaulkner@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:carolinefaulkner@warwickshire.gov.uk)

**Background Papers**

Home Composting file held within Waste Minimisation Group.

PAUL GALLAND  
Strategic Director for Environment and Economy  
Shire Hall  
Warwick

19 September 2008



# Warwickshire Residents Home Compost Survey 2008

**For your chance to £100 of Garden Centre Vouchers, please complete the survey below.**

## **Terms and Conditions**

1. One entry per household. 2. Open to Warwickshire residents, aged 18 and over. 3. Completed questionnaires will be entered into a free prize draw and winners will be picked at random. 4. The personal details you supply will not be used for any other purpose, and will not be passed to any third parties. 5. Prize winners will be notified by post no later than 30 September 2008. 6. Garden Centre Vouchers will be awarded as follows - 1st Prize £100, 2nd Prize £50, 3rd Prize £25, no cash alternative will be offered. 7. Completed questionnaires should be returned to: Sustainability Unit, Warwickshire County Council, FREEPOST LG111, PO Box 43, Warwick, CV34 4BR. 8. Closing date 31st August 2008.

**Q1**

**Do you compost at home?**

277 Yes

76 No

**Q2**

**Where did you purchase your compost bin?**

- 133 Through the Council's subsidised scheme
- 23 A garden centre
- 33 I made my own
- 22 I use a compost heap
- 34 Other (please specify)
- 49

**Q3**

**When did you purchase your compost bin?**

- 37 Purchased within the last year
- 101 Purchased between 1 and 4 years ago
- 63 Purchased more than 4 years ago
- 48 Have not purchased one

**Q4**

**Overall, how satisfied are you with your chosen method of composting?**

- 147 Very satisfied
- 89 Fairly satisfied
- 11 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 6 Fairly dissatisfied
- 0 Very dissatisfied

**Q5**

**How successful have you been in producing compost?**

- 114 Very successful
- 116 Fairly successful
- 20 Not very successful
- 3 Not at all successful

**Q6** **Have you encountered any problems when using your compost bin?**

84 Yes

165 No

**Q7** **Could you explain what they have been in the space below:**

85

**Free help and advice is available to Warwickshire residents experiencing problems with composting, from a committed group of volunteers called 'Master Composters'. If you would like to receive help or advice please complete your daytime telephone number at Question 18 of this questionnaire. Please tick the box at Question 16 if you would be interested in becoming a 'Master Composter'.**



**Q8 Why do you compost?**

209	Good garden practice	176	Environmental reasons
	Other (please specify)	22	

**Q9 What encouragement / support would you consider necessary?**

22	Telephone help-line	120	Literature	57	None of the these
21	Seminars	122	Web page		
	Other (please specify)	12			

**Q10 Would you recommend home composting to others?**

249	Yes	2	No
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**Q11 Have you, or would you consider, obtaining a second compost bin?**

119	Already have	79	Would consider	54	Would not consider
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**Q12**

**Please tell us your reason(s) for not currently composting at home?  
(Please select all that apply)**

- 5 No garden
- 9 Garden is too small
- 2 No interest in composting
- 18 Haven't got round to it
- 1 Haven't thought about it before
- 3 Don't produce enough waste
- 40 Use green waste wheelie bin instead
- 13 Compost bins are too expensive
- Other reason (please specify) 16

**Q13**

**What, if anything, would encourage you to start composting?  
(Please select all that apply)**

- 18 Cheaper compost bins
- 24 Help and advice in the form of a leaflet
- 3 Help and advice in the form of a telephone line
- 10 A home visit from an advisor
- 51 Free compost bin
- 7 Nothing would encourage me
- Other reason (please specify) 12

**Q14**

**Are you aware of any community compost schemes?**  
(This is where a group of people run a composting scheme, e.g. in the grounds of a block of flats or on an allotment)

10 Yes

329 No

If Yes, please specify: 7

**Q15**

**Please indicate in which Borough or District you live?**  
(This will be the Council to whom you pay your Council Tax)

19 North Warwickshire Borough

43 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough

66 Rugby Borough

82 Stratford District

139 Warwick District

If you don't know, please enter your 6  
postcode:

**Q16**

**If you live in Warwickshire and would like to receive further information about different types of composting, please indicate your interest below and fill in your contact details in the space provided:**

- 131 Yes, I am interested in home composting
- 68 Yes, I am interested in Green Cone composting
- 76 Yes, I am interested in Bokashi composting
- 86 Yes, I am interested in wormeries
- 44 Yes, I am interested in receiving help and advice from a Master Composter
- 125 No, I am not interested
- 6 I am interested in becoming a 'Master Composter'

**'Master Composters' are a committed group of volunteers who offer free help and advice to Warwickshire residents experiencing problems with composting.**

**Q17**

**If you would like to be entered into the prize draw, please select the box below and complete your contact details in Question 18:**

- 321 Yes, I would like to be entered into the prize draw to win £100 garden centre vouchers

**Q18**

**In order to be entered into the prize draw to win £100 garden centre vouchers, or to receive further information about composting, please ensure you complete your contact details below:**

Name	322
Address	322
Postcode	321
Telephone Number	262
E-mail address	264

**Thank you for completing this questionnaire, please press the 'Submit' button to send us your views.**