

## Improving Waste Management in the Domestic Rented Sector in London – Project Summary

### 1. Project Objective

The objective of this project is to investigate the opportunities for improving waste management practices within the domestic rented sector. To achieve this objective, the project will focus on the mechanisms available to:

- London waste authorities to enact and enforce greater landlord/managing agent responsibility;
- London waste authorities to enact and enforce greater compliance directly with tenants; and
- Landlords/managing agents to enact and enforce greater compliance directly with tenants.

### 2. Context and Background

Amongst other barriers to service performance, waste authorities have cited poor waste management practices in the domestic rented sector (private rented sector in particular) as a key service issue, affecting recycling performance and causing significant street scene issues. From meetings held with Resource London and a number of waste authorities, this London-wide project was developed, to examine the opportunities available to London waste authorities (with and without selective licensing) and landlords/managing agents for improving waste management practices within the domestic rented sector.

#### 2.1 Private rented sector

Within London, c.26% (860,000) of all households are in the private rented sector, 7% higher than the rest of England and Wales – of these 'Homes in Multiple Occupation' (HMO)<sup>1</sup> comprise c.7% (or c.195,000 HMOs<sup>2</sup>). Importantly the number of households in this sector has doubled in the past 10 years and it is predicted that this will continue to rise. These households are highly mobile, with 1 in 3 private renters having lived in their current home for less than a year and 70% for 2 years or less. Communications with transient populations, to ensure they are aware of waste storage and presentation requirements is therefore critical. It is acknowledged that a wealth of communication already occurs with the public, but it is not known how much of this reaches short-stay members of the public.

#### 2.2 Social rented sector

Within London, c.24% of all households are in the social housing sector. This number has fallen from 35% in 1981, due in part to high levels of new supply of other tenures and in part to Right to Buy sales. Social housing is the most spatially concentrated of the tenures, comprising a high proportion of housing in many Inner London neighbourhoods. These households move less frequently than in the private sector with 7% moving in the last year.

### 3. Key waste management issues

The key waste management issues in the domestic rented (especially private) sector cited by London waste authorities are:

- overproduction and excess waste (partly due to overcrowding in rental properties);

<sup>1</sup> ONS, 2011

<sup>2</sup> Communities and Local Government. Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix. Data returns for 2013/14. CLG, 2014

- lack of sufficient waste storage and separation areas;
- difficulty in containing waste;
- contamination of recycling - mostly reject but also non-target;
- poor recycling rates;
- misuse of bulky waste services;
- fly-tipping (including placing waste out for collection on the wrong day);
- high bin replacement and
- high household churn in the private sector making it challenging to communicate with residents on waste.

All of these issues have significant cost and resourcing implications for the local authorities and a significant impact on street scene and recycling performance. Furthermore boroughs found these issues to be more prevalent from HMOs.

#### 4. Resource London & London Environment Directors Network

This project has been commissioned by Resource London and the London Environment Director Network (LEDNET) and will be managed by Resource London. The project is being led by a Project Board chaired by a LEDNET representative, Sue Harris (Interim Executive Director at Kensington and Chelsea and Director at Hammersmith and Fulham).

Resource London is the new, jointly funded support programme for London waste authorities delivered in partnership by the London Waste and Recycling Board and WRAP, the UK's resource efficiency body. Its primary goal is to help local authorities across London achieve 50% recycling by 2020. The London Environment Directors' Network is the membership association for London's Environment Directors which provides a forum for Environment Directors to share learning and best practice and develop thinking on emerging policy.

#### 5. Project Board

The delivery of this project will be responsible to a Project Board who will provide a strategic oversight to the project and also ongoing input into the development of project outputs. It is the intention that the Project Board is formed of senior officers/staff members from organisations who represent, as a minimum, landlords, letting agents, tenants, London borough waste services and enforcement teams. The board will also be supported by a legal representative. It is hoped that by bringing together a number of stakeholders, the project can generate the most effective and useful outputs possible.

#### 6. Project Structure

The project will potentially have two phases. Phase 2 will only be commissioned if the Project Board feel that the work will have a tangible effect on the waste management issues listed in Section 3 above.

**Phase 1** – Phase 1 consists of a facilitated meeting of the project board to discuss potential ideas for action. This meeting will also begin to form ideas on possible tools and mechanisms to improve waste management in the domestic rented sector. Recommendations for the work required as part of Phase 2 will be made to the Project Board as a result of the Phase 1 meeting. It is anticipated that this phase will be delivered by the end of June.

**Phase 2** - Phase 2 would be the main phase of the work and the exact specification for Phase 2 will reflect the outputs of the Phase 1.