

Appendix B

Recycling and Waste Consultation – Interim Findings 3 April 2018

Introduction – Process

In order to fully understand the views of the residents of Central Bedfordshire, the council is undertaking an extensive consultation exercise which launched on 26 February and will close on 20 April. The approach has included:

- Household leaflets delivered across Central Bedfordshire and inviting 211,000 residents to give their views on options around future recycling and waste services
- A written survey, open to all residents, and available on line and through paper copies
- A telephone survey with a sample of 1,200 people who are representative of the whole population
- A series of discussion groups with residents from towns and villages across Central Bedfordshire

The Council has promoted the consultation widely and at the point of report preparation (03/04/18) in the region of 14,000 responses have been submitted via the open survey.

This report includes the interim results of the open survey, the results of the telephone survey and some feedback from discussion groups.

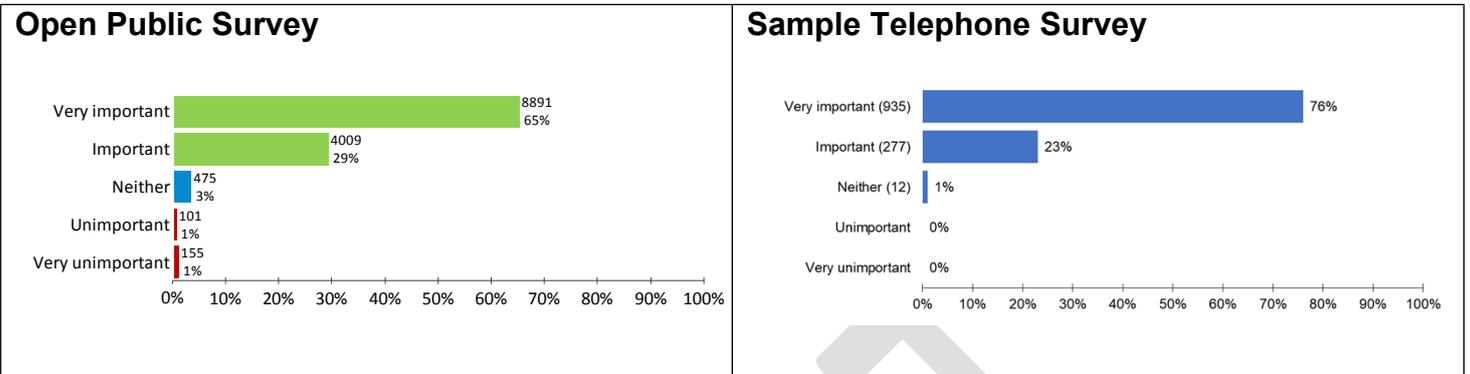
Please note that a further and complete report of the results will be published and presented to the Executive when the consultation is concluded.

Interim headline findings

- There are some consistent themes emerging from all of the consultation methods
- Almost everyone agreed it is important to recycle as much as possible
- The majority agree that savings should be found from these services
- Separating paper and cardboard is the most popular recycling option
- The majority of respondents support food waste collection for every household in Central Bedfordshire
- Whilst the majority do not support three-weekly domestic waste collections, around a third did. Of those who disagreed with this option, retention of free garden waste collection would be the most influential factor in changing their opinion.
- A similar majority do not support the introduction of charges for green waste collection, although around a third did. Of those who disagreed with this option, retention of the fortnightly domestic waste collection would be the most influential factor in changing their opinion.
- Comments in the surveys and focus groups highlight some of the issues and concerns residents raised about with each of the options and some of these could be mitigated.

Priorities

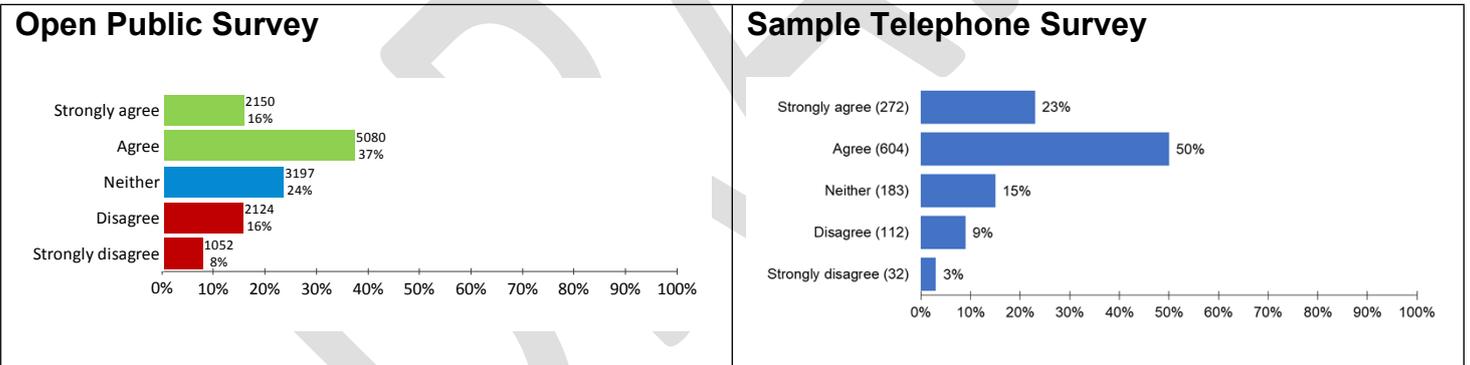
Q1 – Priorities. How important is it that people are helped to recycle as much as possible?



Discussion group feedback

- Participants are generally supportive of efforts to encourage more recycling. They think that more investment should be made in educating residents about what they can and can not recycle. Similarly, they also want to understand the impact of their recycling efforts, for example, by knowing how much Central Bedfordshire recycles and what good comes of the recycling.

Q2 – Priorities. To what extent do you agree or disagree that savings should be found from these services?



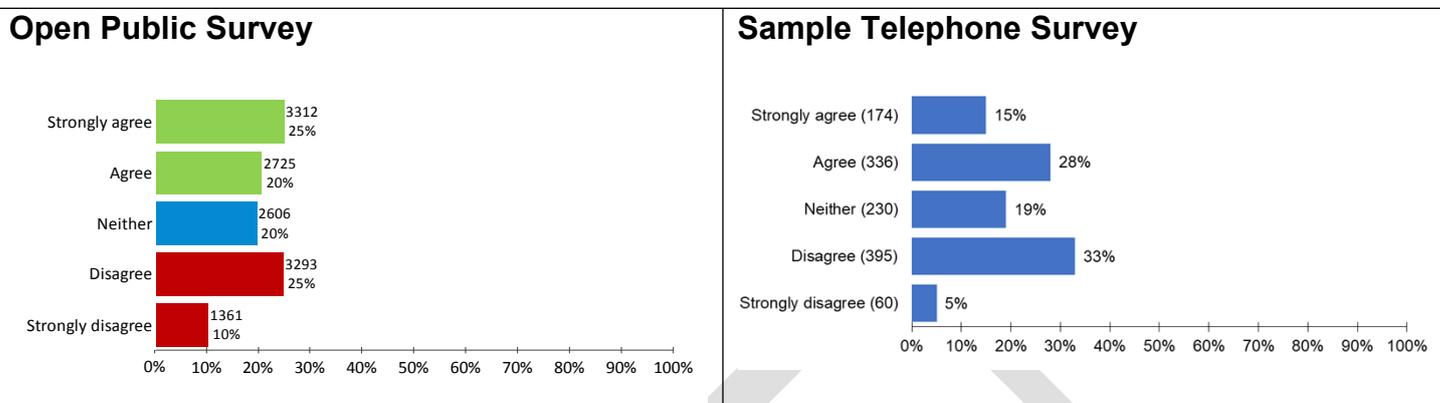
Discussion group feedback

- Most participants appreciate that savings have to continually be made. They also tend to agree that waste and recycling is an area where savings can be made, but not to the detriment of delivering good quality services that meet residents' needs.



Recycling

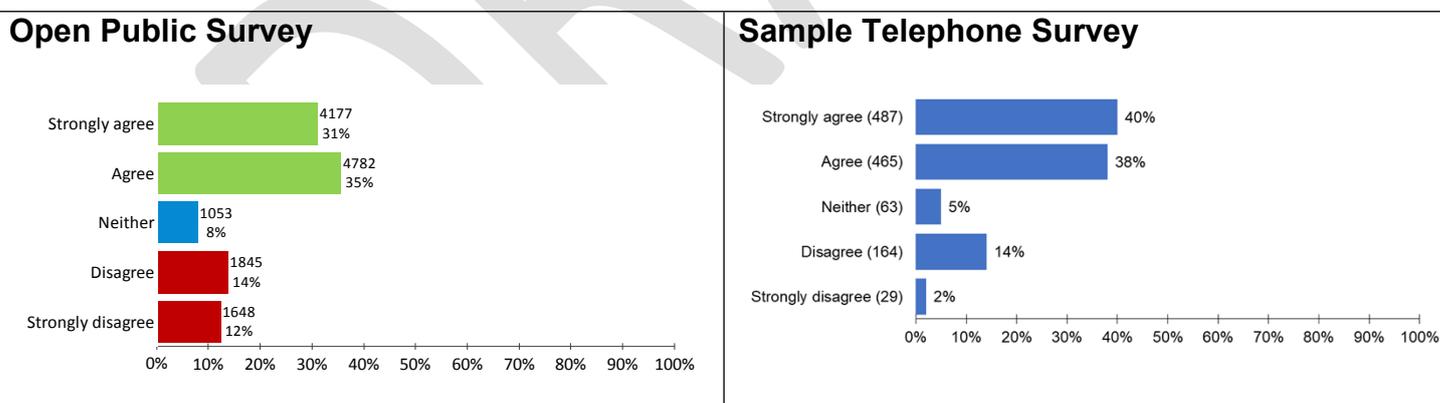
Q3a - Recycling. To what extent do you agree or disagree with option one, which would see current recycling arrangements remaining unchanged (with no financial savings being achieved)?



Discussion group feedback

- Some participants are satisfied with the current approach to recycling and do not want it to change.
- Some are also concerned that the cost of supplying new boxes etc, will outweigh any savings.

Q3b – Recycling. To what extent do you agree or disagree with option two, which would see residents continuing to use a wheelie bin for all their recycling except paper and cardboard, which they would be asked to put in a separate box provided by the council (to achieve financial savings)?

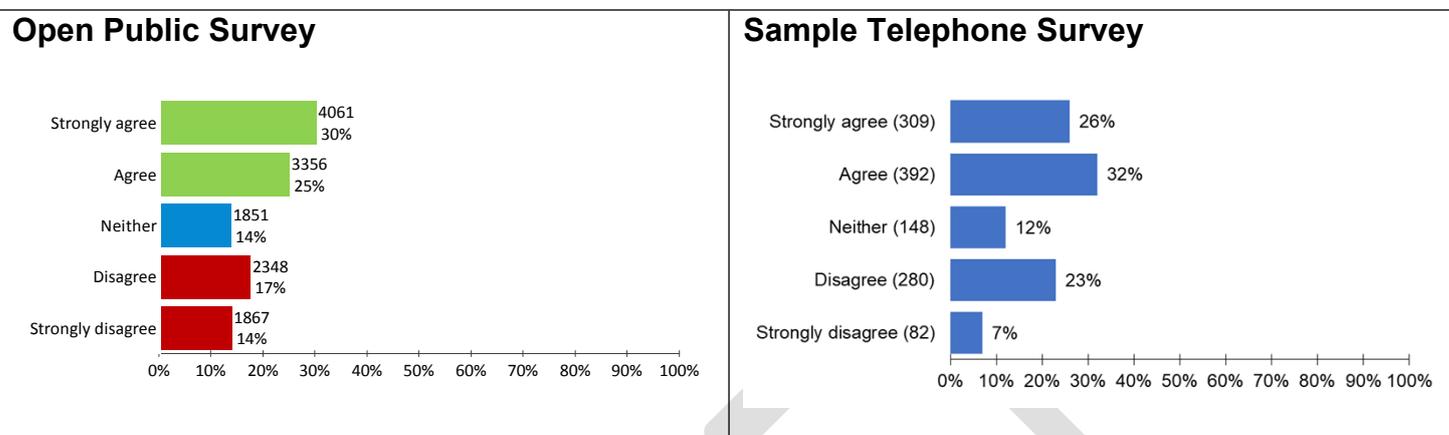


Discussion group feedback

- Those residents that are against this are concerned about a. having additional boxes b. the boxes not having lids and the contents getting wet or blown away c. that the boxes will be too heavy to move (so assisted collections and boxes with lids would help reduce these concerns).
- The residents that support this proposal appreciate that it may lead to savings and some also welcome having an additional box for recycling as their current recycling box is full upon collection.



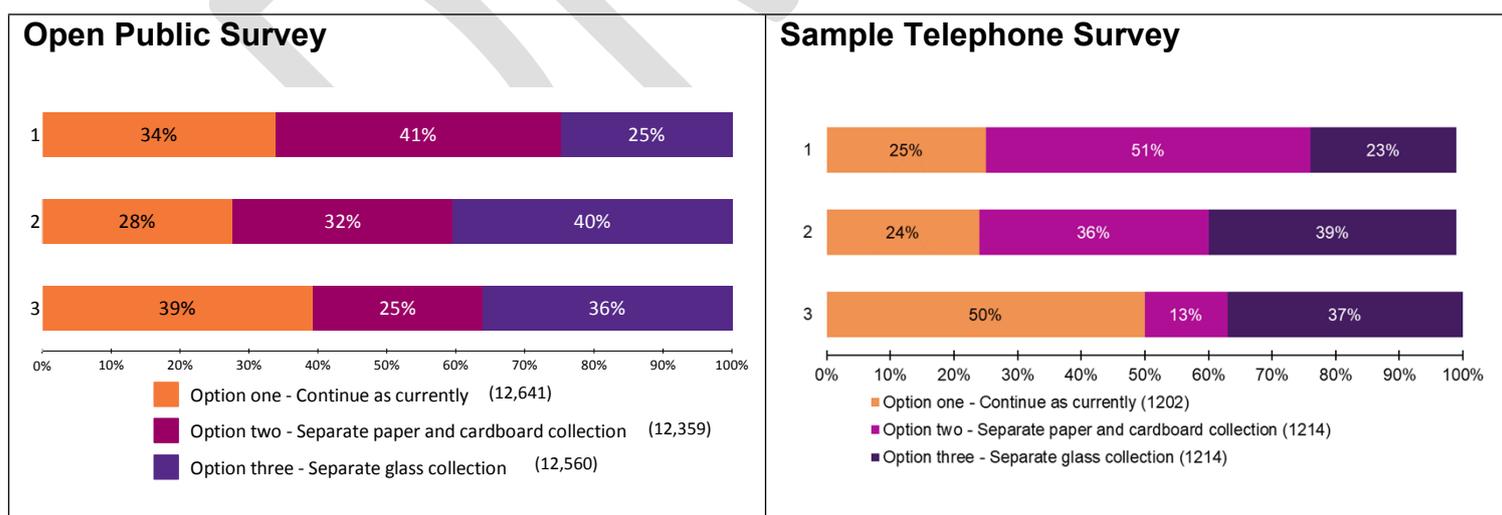
Q3c – Recycling. To what extent do you agree or disagree with option three, which would see the introduction of glass collection for everyone. Residents would continue to use a wheelie bin for all their recycling. Glass would need to be put in a separate box provided by the council (which is unlikely to achieve financial savings)?



Discussion group feedback

- Similar concerns were raised about this option as for those with paper recycling.
- In addition, most participants did not see glass collection as a priority because they are prepared to continue taking their glass to a bottle bank (and there were some requests that facilities at bottle banks be improved, including more frequent collections).
- A minority of participants in the group would welcome glass recycling, but only in addition to paper/card recycling because they believe household glass recycling collection would help them and others recycle more.

Q4a – Recycling. Please rank these options in terms of preference with 1 being your preferred option and 3 being your least preferred



Most respondents, across both survey exercises, indicated that separating card and paper is their first preferred service, with maintaining current services as their least preferred.



Q4b – Recycling. Do you have any comments regarding these proposals?

Open Public Survey

5,331 comments were received for this question, with the most frequent themes found below:

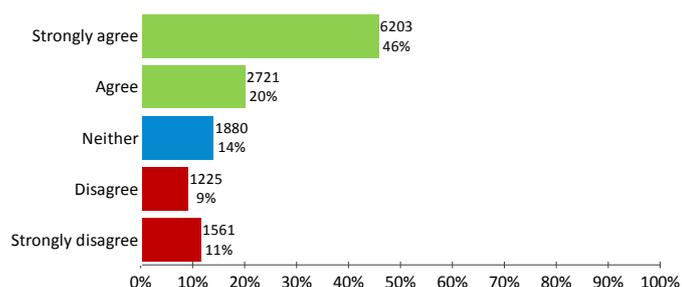
Q4b	Number of comments	% of all respondents	% of people who commented
Bottle banks are widely available / happy to use bottle banks	781	6%	14%
Concerns about storage for additional boxes / don't want extra boxes or bins	738	6%	13%
Introduce both paper and glass collection	547	4%	10%
Support for glass collection	477	4%	9%
Concerns additional containers will not be large enough	295	2%	5%
Containers need to be weather proof (rain and wind) i.e. have lids	293	2%	5%
Support for paper and card option	266	2%	5%
Remain unchanged / system works well	266	2%	5%

Food waste

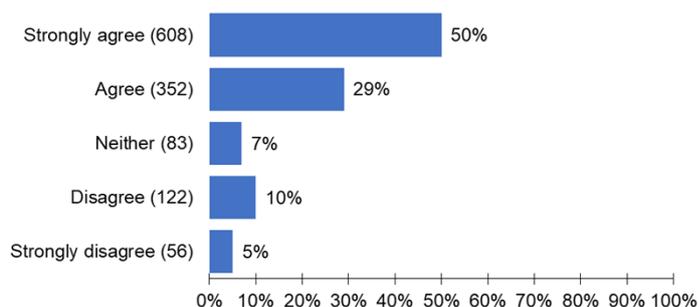


Q5a – Food Waste. To what extent do you agree or disagree with weekly food waste collection for every household in Central Bedfordshire? (This option doesn't offer any additional savings)

Open Public Survey



Sample Telephone Survey



Discussion group feedback

- Those participants that already have a separate food waste collection value them and use them effectively. They said initially it was challenging, but got used to it in the end and it is now habit. All participants that currently have separate food waste collections said they would not want it stopped.
- Those participants that do not currently have a separate food waste collection tend to not be supportive because a. it is 'another' thing to have to do b. they are concerned about hygiene and smells, especially keeping a caddy indoors and c. they are concerned about having more bins in and outside their house.

Q5b – Food waste. Do you have any comments regarding weekly food waste collections?

Open Public Survey

2,613 comments were received for this question, with the most frequent themes found below:

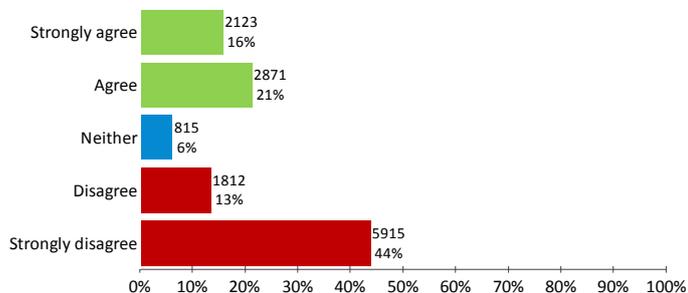
Q5b	Number of comments	% of all respondents	% of people who commented
Support for proposal	447	3%	8%
Collections must be weekly	249	2%	5%
Concerns with smell, mess, hygiene and risk of Infestation	239	2%	4%
Already have this service	233	2%	4%
Service works well currently	210	2%	4%

Domestic waste (black bins)

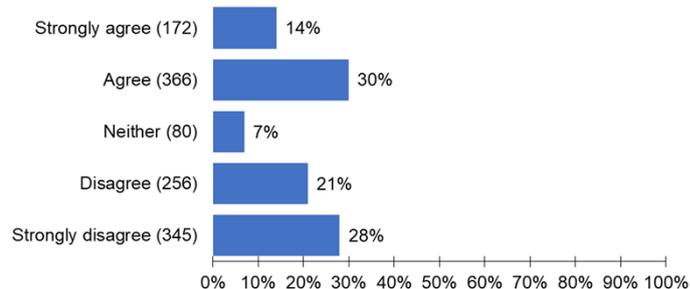
Q6a – Domestic waste (black bin). To what extent do you agree or disagree with collecting domestic waste (black bin) once every three weeks? (this option is likely to deliver very significant savings)



Open Public Survey



Sample Telephone Survey



Discussion group feedback

- This is a sensitive proposal and one that divides opinion in the discussion groups. Participants tend to fall into three groups – the smallest group are residents that actively support the proposals to reduce cost and encourage recycling. They also state that the changes would not affect them because their bin is not full after two weeks.
- The next group would reluctantly go along with the change, in that the proposals would not affect them directly because their bin is not full upon collection. However, they do have some concerns about neighbours' bins over-flowing, smells from bins where households do not recycle food and 'bin wars' whereby people will put excess waste into the bins of their neighbours. They are also concerned that it could lead to fly-tipping. Some participants were also concerned about forgetting the three-weekly collection (i.e. because it will not be on alternate weeks with the recycling collection).
- The third group, which is generally equal in size to the previous group, are strongly against the proposal, partly for some of the reasons stated above but mainly due to practical concerns as their bins tend to be full upon collection. Most of these participants say that they already recycle a lot and that they do not believe they can do much more to reduce the waste in their black bin. These participants tend to come

from larger households (4-5 members) and/or have young families (including nappies). For these households an option for a larger bin could help reduce their concerns as would a special Christmas collection, when more waste is generated.



Q6b - Domestic waste (black bin). If you disagreed with three-weekly collections, would the introduction or retention of any of the following alter your opinion? (Note: Respondents who agreed with the previous question were not asked to complete)

Open Public Survey



Discussion group feedback

- The introduction of food waste collections, and improved recycling options could help reduce the concerns of some residents. Although for other residents, they said there is not anything that would reduce their concerns or reduce their opposition to the proposal.

Q6c - Domestic waste (black bin). Do you have any comments regarding three-weekly black bin collections?

Open Public Survey

7,447 comments were received for this question, with the most frequent themes found below:

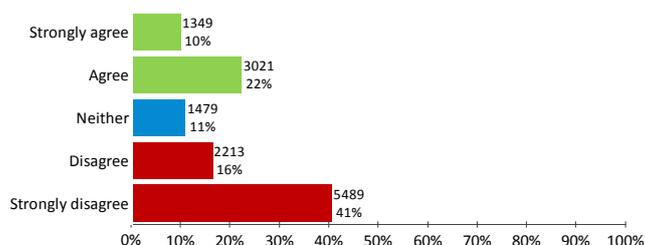
Q6c	Number of comments	% of all respondents	% of people who commented
Concerns with smell, vermin and infestation	1,578	12%	21%
Disagree with proposal	1,085	8%	14%
Will lead to more fly-tipping	825	6%	11%
Concerns about disposable nappies	809	6%	11%
Bins would be overflowing	744	6%	10%
Full black bin - despite recycling as much as possible	698	5%	9%
Black bin is rarely ever full	652	5%	9%
Support proposal	651	5%	9%
Support if food waste collection is introduced	523	4%	7%
Must remain fortnightly	491	4%	7%



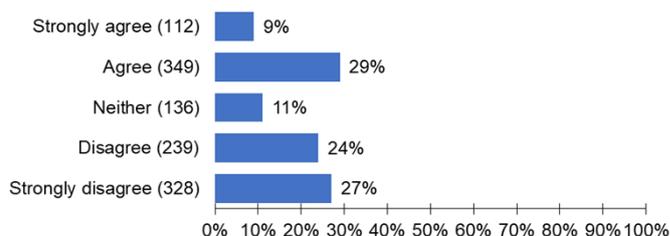
Garden waste

Q7a – Garden waste. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to charge customers who wish to have their garden waste collected? (This option is likely to deliver very significant savings)

Open Public Survey



Sample Telephone Survey



Discussion group feedback

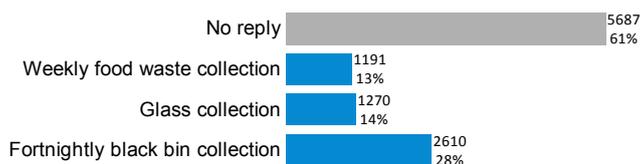
- This is also a sensitive issue that polarises opinion.
- Some participants resent being asked to pay for something which is already free and/or which they feel they already pay for in their Council Tax. These participants would most likely not pay the £40. Instead they would take their garden waste to the tidy tip (or in some cases put it in their black bin).
- Some participants do not currently use the garden waste collection service – they either do not generate much garden waste or they generate so much that they find the current collection service unsuitable, and therefore already take their waste to the tidy tip. These participants are also unlikely to pay for the service, but the change will not have a negative impact on them (although some still resent its introduction).
- A small number of participants support the proposal or at least are not against it, partly because they would find regular collections useful or partly because they would prefer a wheelie bin.
- Some participants, whether for or against the proposal, were concerned it could lead to fly tipping and/or people putting garden waste in their black bin and so have a negative impact on cost and recycling.
- Some participants also said that elderly, disabled people or people without a car would not have an alternative to take their garden waste to the tidy tip and so would have to pay for the collection – they suggested that free garden waste collections should remain free to elderly and disabled residents.

7b – Garden Waste. If you disagreed with charging for garden waste collection, would the introduction or retention of any of the following alter your opinion?

(Note: Respondents who agreed with the previous question were not asked to complete)



Open Public Survey

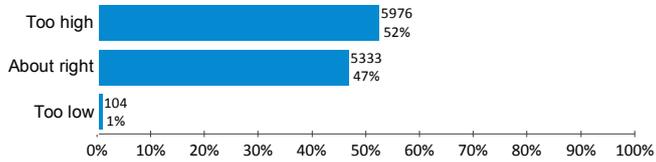


Discussion group feedback

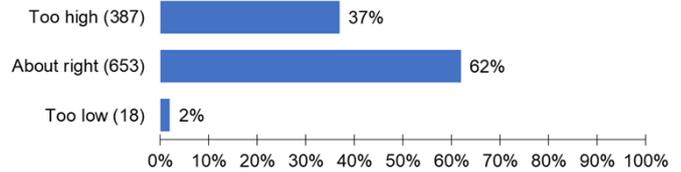
- This proposal is generally seen in isolation by participants in the discussion groups and their views were not influenced by consideration of other options.

7c – Garden waste. Around a third of councils charge for this service, with £40 being the average. What do you think about the cost of the proposed annual charge?

Open Public Survey



Sample Telephone Survey



What should the price be?	Frequency
£0	3304
£1-10	380
£11-20	647
£21-30	586
£31-40	87
£41-50	26
£51-70	27
£70+	27
Grand Total	5084

Discussion group feedback

- The price was not the issue, it is more the principle of it being introduced that some participants challenged.
- The proposal for a £40 charge was generally considered reasonable for those participants that said they would most likely pay it.

7d – Garden waste. Do you have any comments about charging for garden waste collections?



Open Public Survey

7,688 comments were received for this question, with the most frequent themes found below:

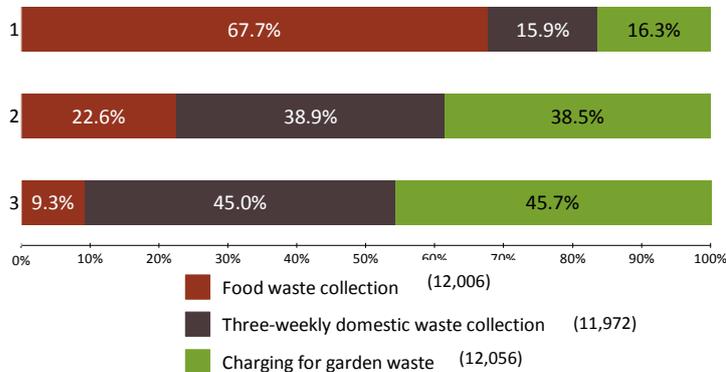
Q7d	Number of comments	% of all respondents	% of people who commented
High Council Tax yet more charges	1,687	13%	22%
Should not be an additional charge	1,459	11%	19%
Will lead to more fly tipping	1,316	10%	17%
Support for proposal	1,012	8%	13%
People will dump garden waste in their black bins	646	5%	8%
Concern for disabled/ elderly/ low income households who cannot afford charge	565	4%	7%
Encourage residents to use tidy tips	542	4%	7%



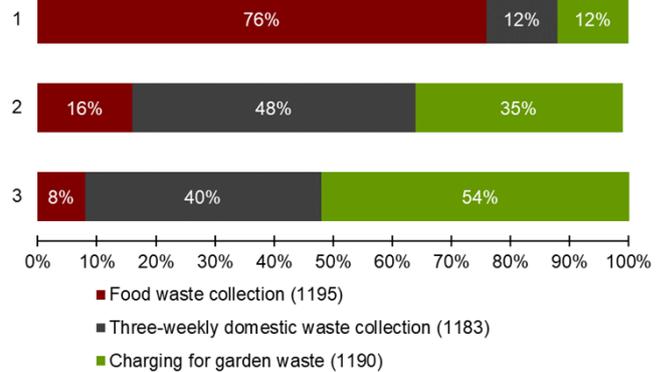
Preferred Options

8. Please rank these options in terms of preference with 1 being your preferred option and 3 being your least preferred.

Open Public Survey



Sample Telephone Survey



Discussion group feedback

- Participants reiterated the need for education and feedback to help encourage recycling. If a significant education and information campaign accompanied the changes to bin collection, it could help reduce some people's concerns and support people to recycle more.
- However, for some people a change to a three-weekly collection and/or removal of free garden waste collection represent lines in the sand that they do not want crossed and there is not much that could reduce their opposition or concerns.

Most respondents, across both survey exercises, indicated that food waste collection is their first preferred option, with charging for garden waste as their least preferred option.

9. Do you have any other comments or suggestions regarding changes to waste services in Central Bedfordshire?

Open Public Survey

4,280 comments were received for this question, with the most frequent themes found below:

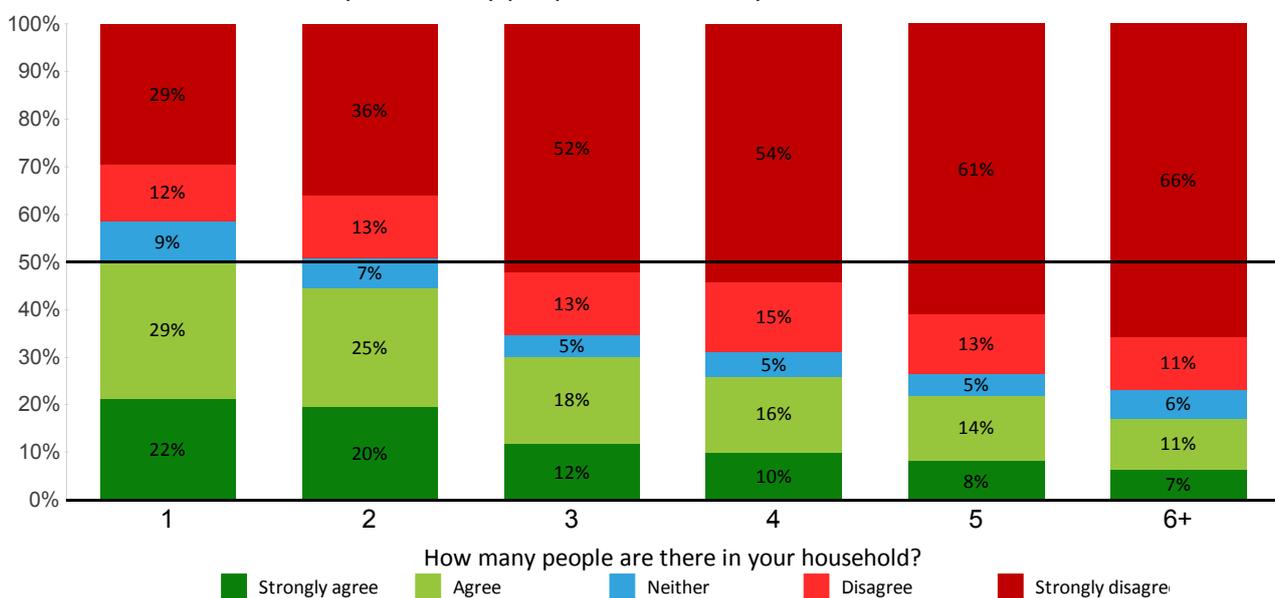
Q9	Number of comments	% of all respondents	% of people who commented
Disagree with three-weekly black bin collections	608	5%	14%
Keep services unchanged	470	4%	11%
Disagree with all proposals	464	4%	11%
Disagree with charging for garden waste	417	3%	10%
Higher council tax - less value for money	385	3%	9%
Proposals will lead to more fly-tipping	352	3%	8%
Find savings elsewhere	300	2%	7%
Educate the public about recycling	262	2%	6%
Support for weekly food waste collection	245	2%	6%
Support for more recycling	243	2%	6%
Support for general ideas proposed	226	2%	5%

Additional information by location, household profile and garden size (Open Public Survey only)

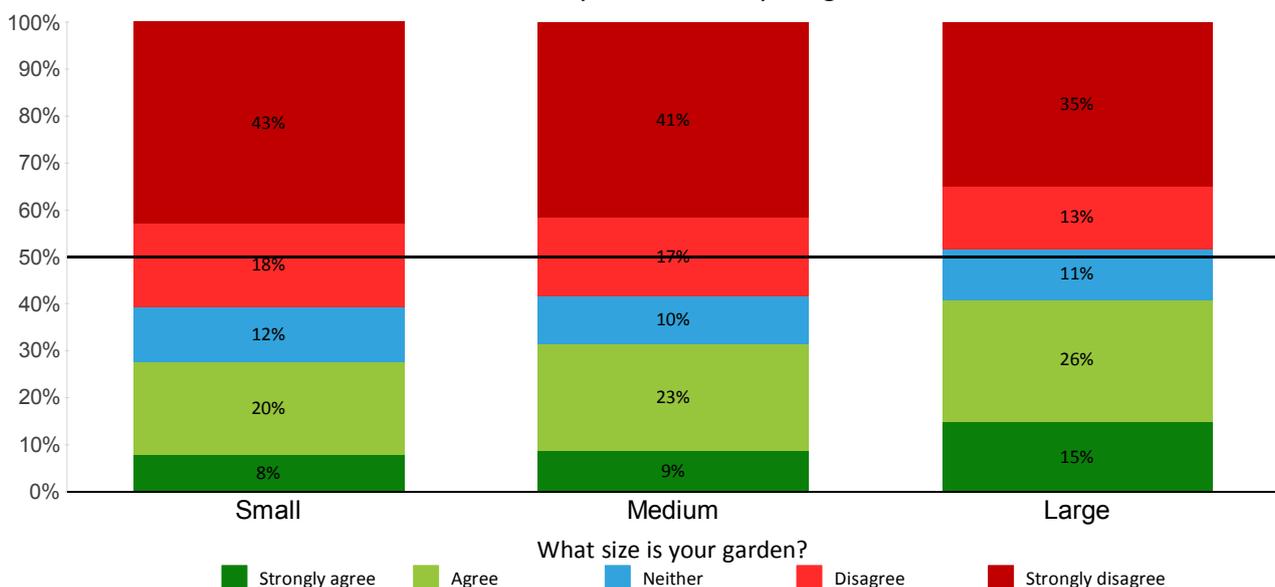
The following results highlight:

- Larger households are more likely to disagree with 3 weekly domestic waste collections
- There is stronger disagreement to the option of charging for garden waste from people with small / medium sized gardens
- Residents in the north tend to be more receptive to changes than those in the south. This may be the result of their previous experience, for example their use of existing food waste collection services in this part of Central Bedfordshire.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with collecting domestic waste once every three weeks...
by How many people are there in your household?

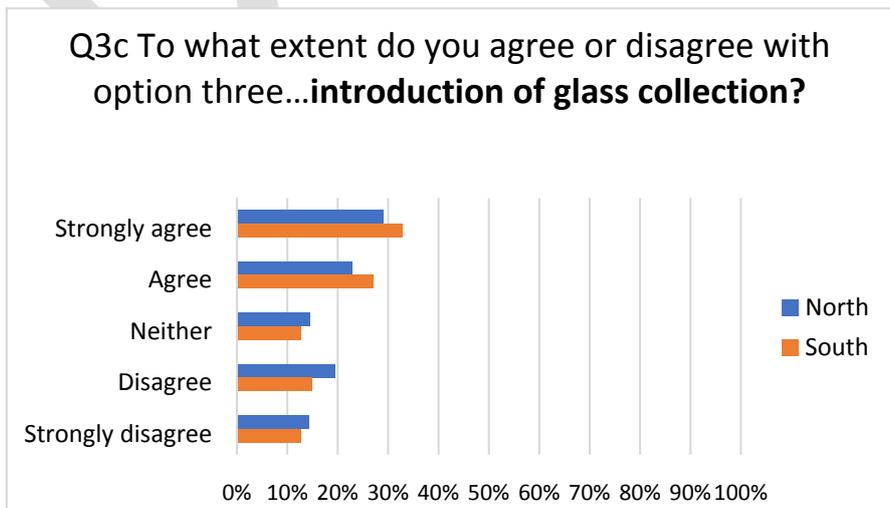
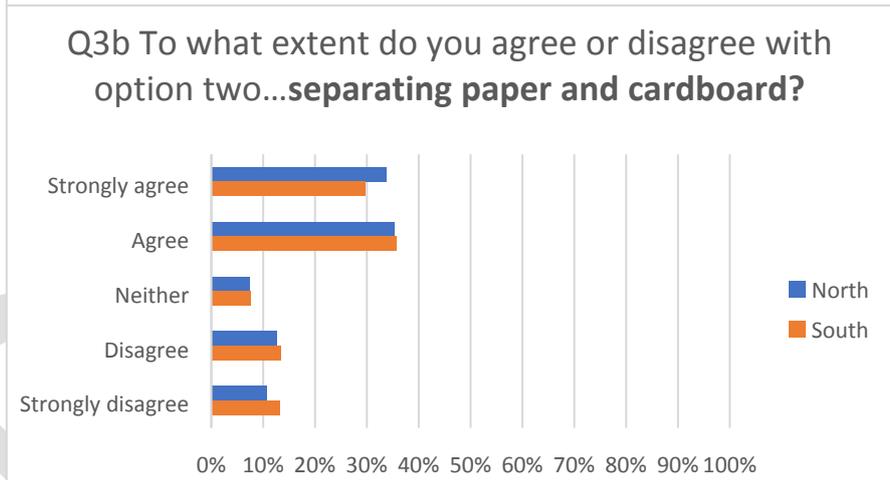
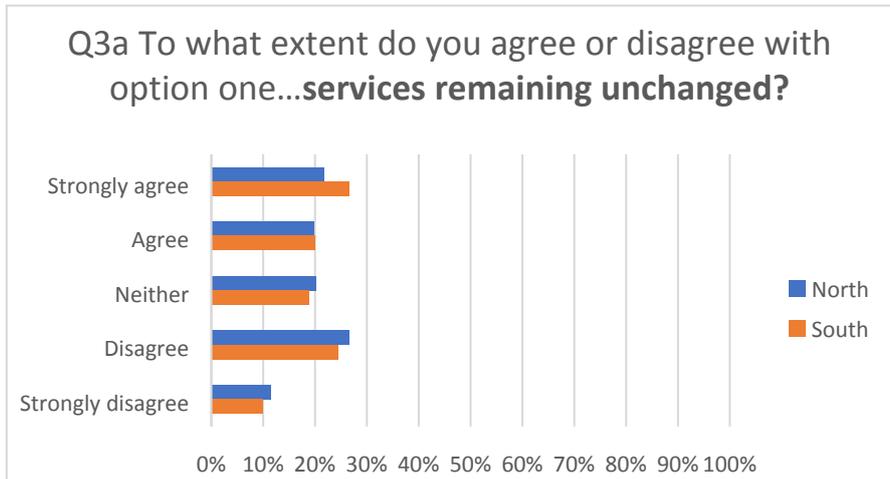


To what extent do you agree or disagree with the option to charge for garden waste collection...
by What size is your garden?

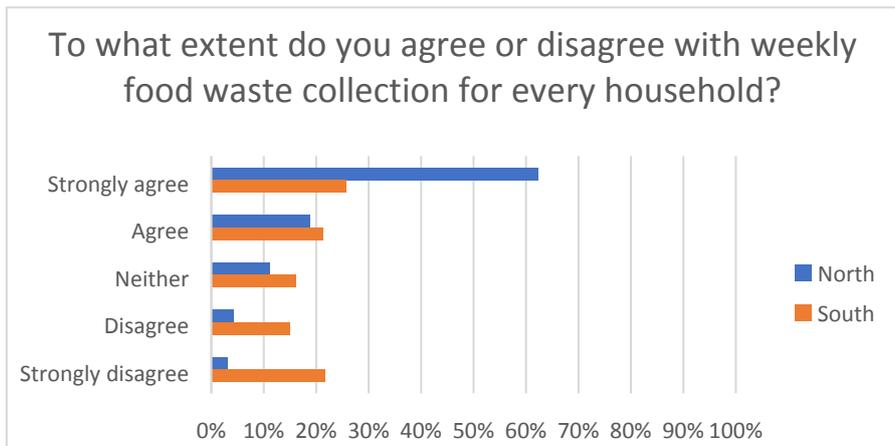


North/South – Postcode data was used to determine the geographical location of respondents, those who did not provide a valid postcode have been excluded from the following analysis

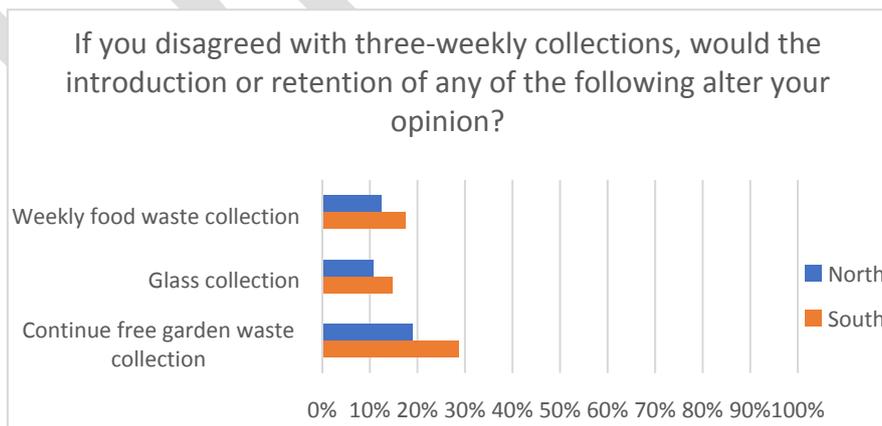
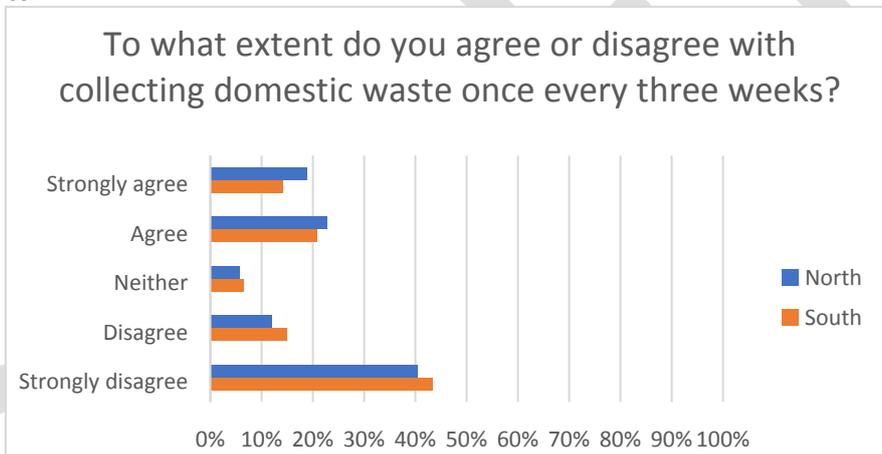
Recycling:



Food waste:



Domestic Waste:



Garden Waste:

