



St Helena
Government

WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



Environmental Management Division

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St Helena Government

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HPLS – Horse Point Landfill Site

MRF – Materials Recycling Facility

Executive Summary

St Helena Government (SHG) is faced with an opportunity and a threat. Volumes of waste needing to be landfilled on island are increasing and the available landfill space is rapidly reducing. This has significance for SHG as the need to replace and restore Horse Point Landfill Site (HPLS) will need to take place within a reduced timeframe.

There is an opportunity to delay the replacement of this asset through introducing a recycling programme to the island, reducing volumes of waste being landfilled and increasing the life of the landfill closer to its design life. This would bring the following benefits:

- Reduce short to medium term capital expenditure by increasing the life of HPLS;
- Provide cost efficiencies to SHG and private sector through substitution of recycled wastes for imported new raw materials; and
- Enables the Waste Management Service to be more financially self-supporting.

Recycling contributes towards achievement of St Helena's National Goal; *Altogether Greener* and ENRD'S Strategic Priority 4; *protecting the natural environment by conserving biodiversity, preventing, minimising or mitigating against pollution, waste, littering, harmful materials and organisms and conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Island*. This priority is currently reported through the Sustainable Development Plan Key Performance Indicator as; *a 5% increase in domestic waste cells life year on year*. Achievement of this KPI is impossible, during a time when the quantities of waste generated, without active intervention, are likely to increase.

The key aim of the Waste Management Strategy is to develop medium to long term goals to deal with the waste that is produced on the Island in a manner that is more efficient and sustainable and that will ultimately bring benefit to the environment of St. Helena.

If not properly managed waste is a problem because it:

- Creates greenhouse gases and contributes towards climate change;
- Takes up limited landfill space (loss of land multi-functionality);
- Can cause pollution and other negative social impacts;
- Uses up natural resources that could be used again;
- Creates reputational impacts on eco-tourism; and
- Creates a lasting problem for future generations.

But there are things that can be done such as:

- **Reducing** the amount of waste that is produced;
- **Re-using** items such as; plastic bags, clothes and furniture that might otherwise be thrown away;
- **Recycling** items like glass, cans, plastics and cardboard so they can be made into new products;
- **Treating** organic waste such as; food and green waste to convert biodegradable waste into energy and create a compost, which can be beneficially used to enhance local soil conditions; and
- **Controlled landfilling** of remaining wastes after reducing, re-using, recycling and treating as much as possible.

Waste recycling and treatment also offers opportunities for the establishment of commercially viable private sector businesses on the Island.

What is the Strategy?

The Strategy is focused on waste produced on the Island and how it is to be managed now and into the future, with the wider remit of:

- **Sustainability;** achieving more sustainable management of all wastes arising on St. Helena in line with the waste hierarchy;
- **Partnership Approach;** developing effective co-operation and joint working between SHG, businesses and residents to maximize the benefits of waste reduction and increased recycling opportunities;
- **Environmental Protection;** protecting and preserving the environment for future generations, in line with the Environmental Protection Ordinance (2016).

The Strategy seeks to plan for the future, but should be regularly reviewed and updated where appropriate, to ensure that set goals continue to reflect current aspirations and needs of the Island.

What is the current position?

At present, almost all household and commercial waste is disposed at HPLS. Clinical, pharmaceutical and quarantined bio-security wastes are thermally treated by incineration at Rupert's Valley (this is due to change to HPLS in December 2017).

Reuse initiatives are limited in number and scope, although the Charity; *Making Ends Meet* and the *Salvation Army* focus on redistribution of clothes, furniture and household goods.

A small number of recycling initiatives have recently developed on the Island, primarily focussing on glass, aluminium cans and paper/cardboard.

Why is there a need for change?

With the creation of domestic netted cells it has become clear that the quantity of waste generated has risen and the lifespan of the waste cells has fallen from an estimated 20 years to 12 years. This design life will drop further as waste generation rises with the development of the tourist industry, improved quality of life and the anticipated rise in returning St Helenians, following air access. Current estimates suggest that by continuing to rely on landfill as the principal disposal route for waste, the design life of HPLS could be reduced to only 8 years, without active intervention (calculated in 2015).

HPLS has seen a £1.5million investment in the last four years in order to bring it up to required airport safeguarding standards. With ingenuity this has created a step change in the way waste is managed on island. Due to the small size of the island, investment would be required for any new landfill on island to ensure it operated within airport safeguarding parameters. An estimate of capital investment for a new landfill is £2.7 million based on 2013 redevelopment costs. This excludes additional HPLS restoration costs (estimated to be £300,000).

Reducing, reusing and recycling more waste will help to reduce potentially negative impacts on the local environment by reducing reliance on landfill. Reducing, reusing and recycling also uses up fewer natural resources from the use of virgin materials and contributes towards climate change mitigation.

What is the overall strategy to meet these challenges?

- Development of a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) at HPLS, with appropriate collection services, initially focussing on high volume / value wastes e.g.; glass, cans, plastics and paper/cardboard;
- An economic evaluation of the development of a new landfill site, to gain appreciation of the benefits for extending the lifespan of HPLS;
- A feasibility study to develop organic waste reduction opportunities; and
- Remediate landscapes previously impacted by bulky wastes or other environmental pollution.

Strategy Goals

The Strategy contains a series of goals, which are summarised in the following table;

Strategy Goals

| Goal No. | Goal Description |
|----------|--|
| 1 | To move the management of waste up the waste hierarchy in a manner which is SMART and meets the needs of the Island |
| 2 | To ensure the management of waste contributes to the delivery of National Goal; <i>Altogether Greener</i> |
| 3 | To embed the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle in all aspects of decision making throughout the Island population |
| 4 | To promote existing reduce, reuse and recycle activities and encourage and support the development of new initiatives |
| 5 | To ensure that unavoidable landfilling is managed in a manner which does not significantly impact on public health or the natural environment |
| 6 | Design and deliver environmentally benefitting waste management projects |
| 7 | Develop and evaluate a range of potential charging models to identify a charging structure which provides an equitable and appropriate level of funding for the waste management service in future years |
| 8 | To proactively engage with stakeholders to ensure that improvements in waste management is embedded in all activities on the Island |

Table 1 – Strategy Goals

Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|----------------------|--|
| Biodegradable | Describes materials which are able to decompose naturally (e.g. vegetables, certain types of paper) |
| Kerbside Collections | Waste which is collected from domestic and commercial properties via the service provided by SHG |
| Recycling | Processing of waste items or products into a different item or product (e.g. a glass bottle recycled into aggregate) |
| Reuse | Repeated use of an item or product before recycling or disposing of it (e.g. plastic shopping bags) |

| Term | Definition |
|-----------------|---|
| Waste | In the context of this Strategy, waste describes the waste materials arising from domestic and commercial properties, but does not include wastewater and sewerage |
| Stakeholder | Any individual or group with an interest in the outcome of an activity, process or service. This can include government departments, non-government organisations, businesses and members of the public |
| Sustainable | Describes activities carried out in a manner which does not adversely impact on future generations. In environmental terms this can mean conserving an ecological balance by avoiding depletion of natural resources |
| Waste Hierarchy | A tool which defines the various options for waste management ranging from reduction in waste or avoidance of waste production (the most favoured option) through reuse, recycling (including composting), energy recovery and disposal (the least favoured option) |

Table of Contents

| | | |
|----------|---|----------|
| 1 | Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 | National Goals | 1 |
| 1.2 | Purpose of the Strategy | 1 |
| 1.3 | Aim of the Strategy..... | 1 |
| 1.4 | Development of the Waste Management Strategy | 2 |
| 1.5 | Key SHG Documents | 2 |
| 2 | Waste Management Data | 2 |
| 2.1 | Roles and Responsibilities | 2 |
| 2.2 | Waste Management – Headline Summary | 3 |
| 3 | Optimum Waste Management Solution | 4 |
| 3.1 | Proposed Programme | 4 |
| 3.2 | Partnership Approach | 4 |
| 4 | Mainstreaming Waste Management Culture | 5 |
| 4.1 | Horse Point Landfill Site | 5 |
| 4.2 | Public Recycling..... | 6 |
| 4.3 | Area for Improvement | 6 |
| 4.4 | Waste Management Projects | 7 |
| 5 | Charging for Waste | 8 |
| 5.1 | Social Justice | 8 |
| 5.2 | Charging Models | 8 |
| 6 | Stakeholder Engagement | 9 |

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 National Goals

Altogether Greener is one of St. Helena's National Goals in its 10 Year Plan (see Figure 1).



Figure 1 – 10 Year Plan; National Goals

To implement this goal, a National Environmental Management Plan (NEMP) was developed. The NEMP provides an umbrella approach to environmental management across the whole of the Island. One of the objectives of the NEMP (mirroring that of the 10 Year Plan) is that

environmental conditions are improved and maintained through better management of waste.

1.2 Purpose of the Strategy

This document provides a framework for strategic decisions to be taken for the management of waste on St. Helena. It adopts a focused short term approach and sets out recommendations for future development of the strategy in a manner that is flexible and can accommodate further changes in legislative requirements and funding availability.

SHG's commitment to adopting a more sustainable waste management policy also recognises that any strategy adopted both now and into the future has to be affordable and reflect value for money.

1.3 Aim of the Strategy

The aim of the strategy is to deliver the National Goals and NEMP objectives by making the management of waste more sustainable, by moving the management of waste up the waste hierarchy (see Figure 2).

An additional driver for the creation of the strategy is the requirement for better management of waste as a means of minimizing bird strike risk at the St Helena Airport.

To move the management of waste away from the more traditional disposal methods, a number of changes to current waste management practices across the Island will be required. This will include:

- Changes to the collection and disposal of waste produced on the Island; and
- Management of waste produced in accordance with the waste hierarchy (i.e. most favoured option first) where practicable.

With this in mind, increasing awareness of the importance of preventing waste where possible, and minimising waste where unavoidable, will be a key part of this strategy.

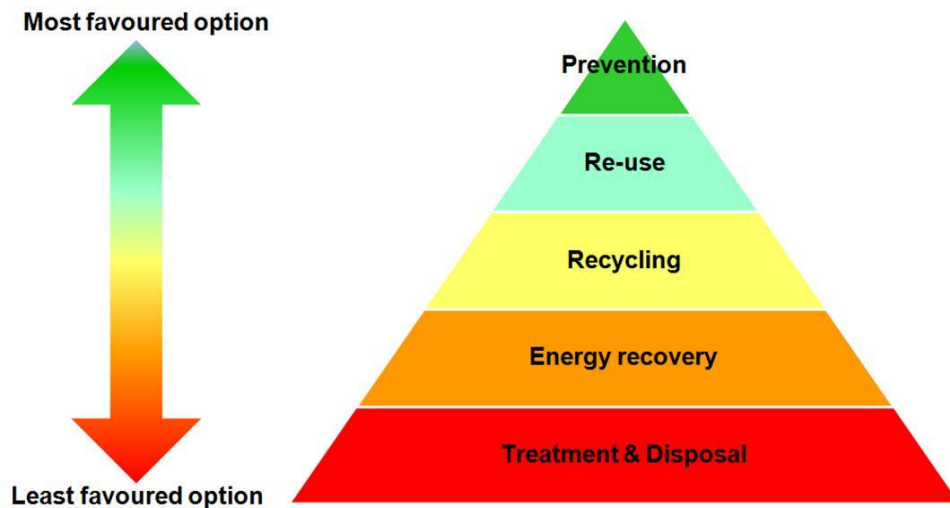


Figure 2 – Waste Management Hierarchy

Strategy Goal 1: To move the management of waste up the waste hierarchy in a manner which is SMART and meets the needs of the Island

1.4 Development of the Waste Management Strategy

This Waste Management Strategy has been structured in such a way as to provide an easy reference point and understanding of St. Helena’s overarching strategic direction of travel with regard to the management of waste. This Strategy provides a clear and succinct statement of the key goals.

1.5 Key SHG Documents

In order to preserve and manage the environment of the Island, whilst also ensuring economic, social and environmental sustainability, there are a number of key documents. A summary of these key documents is presented in Table 2.

| Document Name | Brief Description and Implications for Future Waste Management |
|---|--|
| St Helena Island 10 Year Plan – 2017 to 2027 | National Goal; <i>Altogether Greener</i> . Altogether Greener not only focuses on the preservation of our land, wildlife, marine and built heritage, but also how we can advance in terms of renewable power and utilising technology to deliver better green social economic outcomes. |
| National Environmental Management Plan (NEMP) | Creation and implementation of this waste strategy is a NEMP target. |
| Waste Management and Recycling Options Assessment | This report outlines options for the next step in the island’s waste management capability - reducing waste disposal through recycling. It is based on real island data collected from the waste wheel surveys combined with the best practice approach to waste management. |

Table 2 – St. Helena Key Documents

Strategy Goal 2: To ensure the management of waste contributes to the delivery of National Goal; *Altogether Greener*

Strategic Priorities and Targets with respect to waste management will be incorporated into the Environment and Natural Resources Directorate Strategic Plan.

2 WASTE MANAGEMENT DATA

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

SHG currently has responsibility for the management of household and commercial waste arising on the Island. The strategic direction and operational services for waste management falls under the remit of the Environment and Natural Resources Directorate’s Environmental Management Division (EMD).

Strategy Goal 3: To embed the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle in all aspects of decision making throughout the Island population

2.2 Waste Management – Headline Summary

A generic risk assessment has identified that to do nothing and continue generating and disposing of waste as usual would not be advantageous. Doing nothing would carry a range of substantial negative impacts:

- A KPI would not be achieved;
- New product opportunities missed;
- A major SHG capital expenditure (new landfill development) brought unnecessarily forward;
- Increased imports of goods;
- Loss of land multi-functionality;
- A range of negative social impacts including depreciation of house values; and
- An appreciable reputational impact on the new eco-tourism offering.

Recycling, although requiring some initial capital investment, will allow all of these negative impacts to be mitigated or removed.

2.2.1 Recycling Activities

The amount of waste which is managed by recycling activities is not currently quantified, but is understood to represent a very small percentage of the total waste arising's. There is considerable scope to develop and expand the scale of these activities, based on the composition of waste on St. Helena as described below.

2.2.2 Waste Composition

A baseline waste compositional analysis was created in 2013 and has been maintained annually. The latest composition of residual waste is summarised in Figure 3. In the absence of significant developments or changes in society between 2013 and the present time, this waste

composition analysis is considered to be reasonably representative of mixed waste currently collected on St Helena.

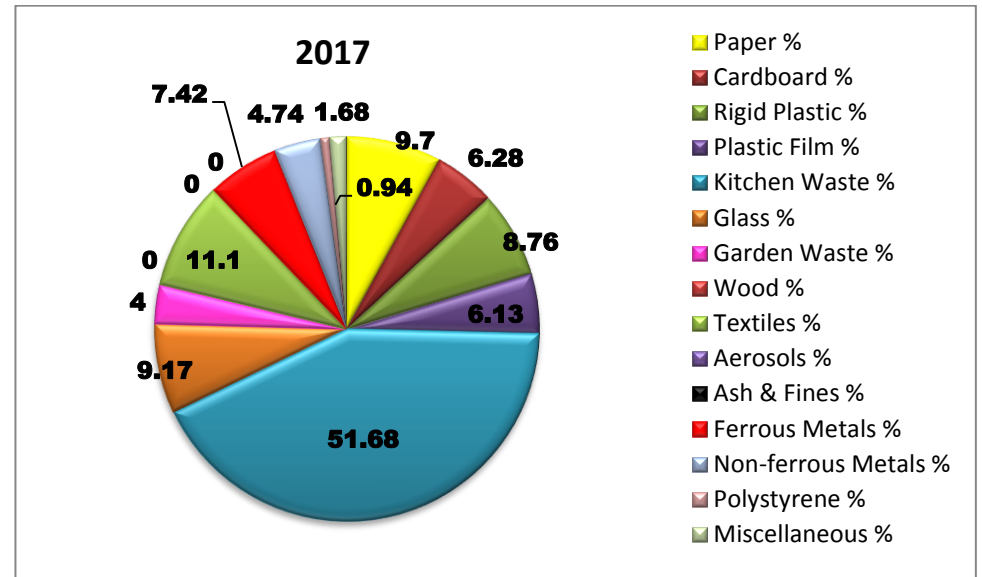


Figure 3 – Waste Composition Analysis 2017

The weights of different waste streams are estimated so plans can be made to support effective decision making. The last complete 'waste wheel' was performed in May 2017 and represents the waste streams disposed in the domestic cell. It identified the three heaviest waste fractions as: compostable kitchen wastes, paper and cardboard (combined) and textiles. Other waste streams that provide significant contributions to volume, but contribute smaller fractions of the waste wheel, due to their lighter weight, include: rigid plastics, garden waste and polystyrene. Bulky waste is an additional waste stream and although unmeasured, includes appreciable quantities of scrap metal, wood, electrical and electronic equipment, tyres and end of life vehicles. The waste wheel is updated annually to evaluate changes in waste volumes disposed at HPLS.

Strategy Goal 4: To promote existing reduce, reuse and recycle activities and encourage and support the development of new initiatives

3 OPTIMUM WASTE MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

Several options for recycling have been identified. As recycling in the private sector is still in its infancy, it is proposed that the waste reception building at HPLS is upgraded for use as a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) to process waste for re-use on St Helena or export as a raw material for sale. This will require small investment to upgrade the building, which could be achieved throughout the current 2017 to 2020 Capital Programme. The opportunity would be to centralize the processing of recyclables on St Helena and through a partnership approach, allow the private sector to operate within the confines of HPLS and recycle various waste streams when a mature business model has been developed. This will enable Government to kick start the recycling sector, but hand over responsibilities to the private sector where economic over time.

3.1 Proposed Programme

Immediate actions and year 1

In the first instance simple 'clean' waste streams that the public can actively engage with would initiate a culture of recycling on St Helena. These waste streams would also provide a raw material for re-use on island. It is recommended that the following waste streams are recycled as soon as possible:

- Glass;
- Garden and green waste; and
- Textiles.

Additionally:

- Paper and cardboard if a suitable compactor and baler is procured, or capital resources are otherwise obtainable; and

- Polystyrene: continue to use economic and educational measures to direct use to less environmentally damaging packaging.

Other tasks include the costing of an upgrade to the waste reception building at HPLS, identification of overseas recycling partners and continuation of the waste wheel programme.

Medium term actions (years 2 to 4)

Recycling of further waste streams can be instituted in year's two to four. This has the benefit of staggering the resources needed to start them up. Also before they can be clearly addressed the following will be required;

- Top down education and cultural change.

The second tier of waste streams to be recycled is:

- Kitchen waste;
- Cans and tins; and
- Rigid plastics.

Long term actions (from year 5)

Implementation of a full Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) to enable the maximum value to be achieved from waste streams.

The last tier of waste streams to be recycled:

- End of life vehicles (vehicle dismantling) and other viable wastes not recycled in years 1 to 4.

3.2 Partnership Approach

A private sector business has engaged in glass waste recycling at HPLS, crushing glass for use in construction materials. SHG have supported this initiative through provision of red wheelie bins across the island for the disposal of glass which is collected by SHG and the business (alternate weeks). Furthermore street litter bins known as 'Olympic Bins' have been

procured and located throughout Jamestown and at other key locations. These bins accept street litter, cigarette butts and glass waste.



Picture 1 – Olympic Bin in Jamestown and on Longwood Avenue

Alternatively, depending upon the implementation of recycling measures, it may be necessary to initiate the start of an options appraisal to select the next landfill site and identify sources of capital for its costly construction.

4 MAINSTREAMING WASTE MANAGEMENT CULTURE

Waste prevention and minimisation represent the highest levels of the waste hierarchy and therefore all such initiatives are to be actively encouraged and promoted.

Strategy Goal 5: To ensure that unavoidable landfilling is managed in a manner which does not significantly impact on public health or the natural environment

4.1 Horse Point Landfill Site

HPLS provides St Helena's waste management facility. Given the remote nature of the island, its limited economy and lack of international hazardous waste agreements the site comprises historical uncontained landfilling of all

materials. Preparations for airport operations have enabled the redevelopment of the landfill so that a degree of waste segregation is possible, notably separation of:

- Domestic waste disposal into a netted, un-engineered, waste cell;
- Bulky waste disposal into an un-engineered waste cell;
- Green waste disposal into a separate stockpile;
- Hazardous waste disposal into an engineered hazardous waste cell;
- Asbestos waste disposal in deep un-engineered cells;
- Thermal treatment of select biosecurity, clinical and hazardous wastes in Rupert's Valley (due to change to HPLS in December 2017)

In addition, the Public Recycling Facility was created, resulting in a reduction in the need for public access to the wider landfill site.

The management of bulky waste is a recurring problem for small island communities. The potential to export waste streams such as scrap metal should be kept under review as transport links and access to mainland outlets improve.

There is also an area of the landfill that is being used for the disposal of septic tank waste, until the islands sewage treatment upgrade has been completed, where-after septic tank waste will be disposed and treated at the relevant sewage treatment works.

Operational improvements at HPLS have been designed to ensure that public health and environmental risks are minimised as far as is practicable.

4.2 Public Recycling

The Public Recycling Facility (PRF) provides the public and commercial entities with an opportunity to deposit waste at Horse Point Landfill Site in person. The PRF enables the segregation of recyclable waste and some hazardous waste (motor and cooking oil, paint, batteries, waste electrical equipment etc.) for appropriate disposal. The separated waste within the PRF is available for the public to retrieve for reuse or spare parts.

Acceptable waste at the PRF includes:

- Glass;
- Cans;
- Scrap Metal;
- Wood;
- Paint;
- Motor and Cooking Oil;
- Tyres;
- Vehicle and Domestic Batteries;
- White Goods and Small Electrical Appliances
- Textiles and Clothing;
- Furniture; and
- Paper and Cardboard



Picture 2 – Public Recycling Facility at Horse Point Landfill Site

4.3 Area for Improvement

A key area where improvements can be realised is in the context of the procurement process, within which increased consideration should be given to the prevention and minimisation of waste, in addition to the sustainable management of waste which is considered unavoidable. Waste management and environmental impacts should be embedded in the decision making process applied to all major SHG procurement activities.

All future significant development projects on the Island will be required, as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment planning process, to develop and submit Waste Management Plans (WMPs) which must describe how waste management issues have been considered and will be effectively managed in the context of the development.

Strategy Goal 6: Design and deliver environmentally benefitting waste management projects

4.4 Waste Management Projects

EMD will continue to design, deliver and support environmentally benefitting waste management projects (where funding permits) as they are fundamental to delivery of National Goal; *Altogether Greener* and ENRD's Strategic Priority; *Protecting the natural environment by conserving biodiversity, preventing, minimising or mitigating against pollution, waste, littering, harmful materials and organisms and conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Island.*

These projects could support the economic development of the island.

4.4.1 Organic Waste

Composting on the Island is currently limited to activities undertaken by individual property owners and some composting of green waste carried out by the St Helena National Trust for use at Millennium Forest.

A cornerstone of an option for improved waste management is the provision of separate collection and treatment for organic waste arising's including kitchen (food) waste and green waste.

A project to develop anaerobic digestion, as a means to convert biodegradable waste into energy will fit with the waste management strategy and other strategies e.g. SHG Energy Strategy. The project will consist of two main activities; a feasibility study and environmental impact assessment.

Feasibility study – prior to any procurement related activity, a feasibility study will be undertaken utilising expert professional support. The study will aim to address questions regarding the long-term sustainability of the project, including the most appropriate plant for the island given local capacity constraints, climatic conditions and on-going maintenance needs.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) – during the feasibility study an EIA will be undertaken in order to ensure that the implementation of such a facility on the island will not impact negatively, for example; that the sewage

input required to operate the Bio-digester and converted food waste into fertiliser does not generate by-products that are harmful to local ecosystems.

The Bio-digester will take biodegradable domestic waste, agricultural waste and sewage converting it to biogas and digestate and avoiding the need for landfill of these wastes. This will also contribute towards biosecurity and environmental protection agendas and reduce the need for the importation of fossil fuels and fertilisers.

Utilising waste to produce biogas to run the Bio-digester and organic waste collection vehicles is a sustainable use of local resources and will reduce the costs of waste management.

4.4.2 Landscape Remediating Projects

A Landscape Impacting Bulky Wastes Collection Project was undertaken by Waste Management Services (WMS) during FY16/17, funded through the recurrent WMS budget, following implemented efficiency savings that were used to fund the project.

In total 14 end-of-life vehicles and some other bulky wastes along the Haul Road were removed from landscapes in the Longwood area under the project, which was implemented in advance of the original airport opening date. Also several vehicles from Horse Pasture were removed as part of this project, to assist residents of Blue Hill with their efforts during the District Clean-up Competition.

A similar project for FY17/18 has been designed to benefit the Donkey Plain and Ladder Hill areas. Several historical bulky waste items have been identified blighting landscapes, some of which are hidden from obvious view. This project will be subject to budget, as there is no dedicated fund available for this purpose.

Then in FY18/19 Jamestown and HTH areas will be targeted for a similar project, as funding permits, and so on annually until all areas of the island have been remediated of landscape impacting bulky wastes.



Picture 3 – end of life bus from Deadwood being disposed at HPLS during Landscape Impacting Bulky Waste Collection Project

Remediation of landscapes blighted by bulky waste is important in order to reinforce an ‘effectively managed environment’ tourism product that will underpin the tourist offering on St Helena. No visible effort to re-beautify landscapes will cause adverse publicity amongst visiting tourists with particular sensitivities to ‘waste management’. It would therefore have a damaging impact on the islands green tourist reputation.

Strategy Goal 7: Develop and evaluate a range of potential charging models to identify a charging structure which provides an equitable and appropriate level of funding for the waste management service in future years

5 CHARGING FOR WASTE

Waste is an expensive business and becoming increasingly so. SHG needs to look for new, long-term solutions for collection and disposal if the costs are not to be felt hard by island residents in the next few years. The current waste management service is provided free of charge to all users, including commercial premises and individual households. This is not considered to be a sustainable approach in the medium and long term and reflects the fact that this service is an untargeted subsidy, where every resident receives as much of the service as they desire at no cost to them and without taking into account the affordability of the service.

One of the most controversial and emotive solutions for reducing waste would be that of charging for the collection and disposal of commercial and household waste.

The most common argument for introducing charging is that it will increase levels of recycling in businesses and homes.

The introduction of waste charging may require changes to methods, frequencies, technologies and the overall level of waste collected.

5.1 Social Justice

There are concerns that a charging scheme may be too regressive, placing an unfair burden on those least able to afford it and less able to reduce the level of waste they create. Obviously this will depend on any system put in place but it is possible that low income households and those with young children or large families will be affected more than single person households. That is not to say a system could not be designed that ameliorated these concerns, but further work is needed if pricing is to be used as an effective and fair policy instrument.

5.2 Charging Models

Few would question that action is needed to encourage a different approach to waste management. However any charging model requires a locally tailored solution and public support if it is to gain traction. Flexibility

is vital to create innovative solutions and momentum for change within the community.

Without a full explanation and grasp of the reasoning and expected outcomes of any charging model introduced, public reaction and attitudes are likely to remain negative, undermining the success of the charging process

Development and evaluation of potential models, to identify a charging structure which provides an equitable and appropriate level of funding for the waste management service in future years, is therefore one of the highest priorities of the Waste Management Strategy.

- Development of projects and initiatives related to raising awareness and understanding of specific waste management issues.

6 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Strategy Goal 8: To proactively engage with stakeholders to ensure that improvements in waste management is embedded in all activities on the Island

Effective engagement with the Island community and all users of waste management services will be crucial in delivering improved services and environmental sustainability in future years.

This Waste Management Strategy provides a mechanism by which the strategic direction of waste management can be addressed. The development and implementation of stakeholder engagement is seen as a key element of the strategy. Communications will include the following;

- Effective and planned use of local media to communicate with, and receive feedback from, the public and service users;
- Provision of education and publicity regarding on-Island activities related to waste reduction, reuse and recycling;
- Liaison with schools and community groups;
- Interface with the private sector regarding potential business opportunities related to waste management; and