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BLUEPRINT
to a Circular Economy

BLUEPRINT Project Kent Flat Recycling Survey Flats results – 29/09/2022



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About BLUEPRINT

- **BLUEPRINT to a circular economy** is an Interreg EU funded project with a budget of 5.6 million euro lasting from April 2020 to March 2023.
- Led by **Essex County Council**, the project seeks to enable local authorities to accelerate towards a circular economy.
- The **Kent Flat Recycling Survey** was developed and carried out by EcoWise, Kent County Council and the Kent Resource Partnership and its member councils in Kent.



BLUEPRINT Kent Flat Recycling Survey

The **BLUEPRINT** Kent Flat Recycling survey was developed to support councils across **Kent to improve recycling in flats**, with responses collected for **two months between May and July 2022**.

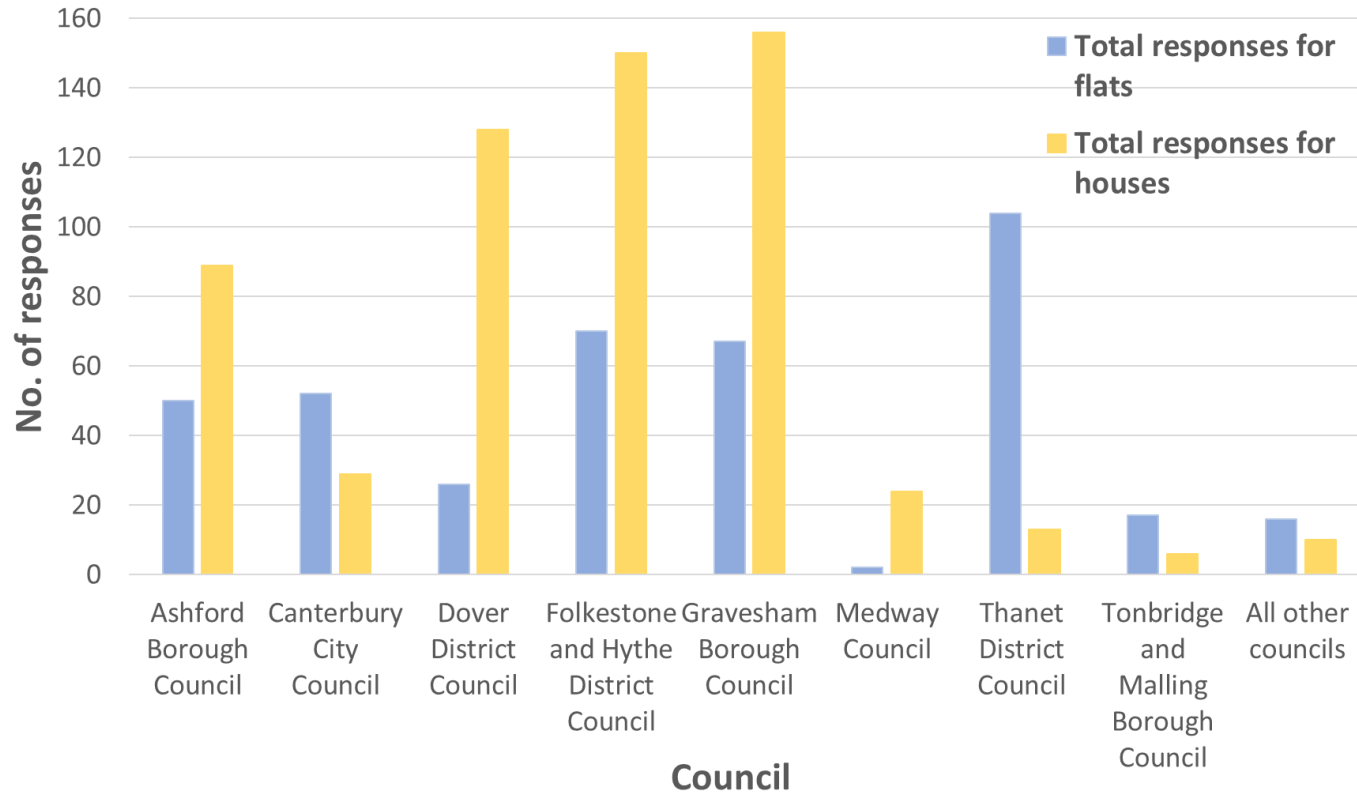
Why a flats recycling survey?

- To collect information on the recycling experience of Kent residents in flats and housing.
- To evaluate improvements to flats communal bin stores and their bin signage.

The survey was open and developed for all residents in Kent, including in flats and houses, as it was not possible to only filter out flat residents. The housing results are available in a separate report.



Overview of responses per council from flats and houses



Total survey responses

- 404 from flats
- 605 from houses

Note: the others six Kent councils had less than 10 respondents living in houses or flats and are not considered in the survey due to too few responses

Key insights from Kent flat residents #1

- On average, 50% of residents in Kent who live in flats across all councils use only the general waste bins, 31% use general waste and dry recycling bins and 19% use general waste, dry recycling and food waste bins.
- The main reason residents in flats do not recycle or use a food waste bin is that they do not receive a recycling or food waste collection service at their address.
- When asked if they would recycle if a recycling collection communal bin and service would be provided 98% of respondents said 'Yes', and 86% said 'Yes' to using a food waste bin if a food waste collection is provided.

Kent flat respondents recycling setup across councils in %

Of all Kent flat respondents half separate their dry recycling using a bin, bag or box and the other half only collect their waste in a general waste bin at home. One in five respondents use a food waste bin at home.

Council	No. of respondents per council	Share of respondents per recycling setup (%)		
		General waste only	General waste + dry recycling	General waste + dry recycling + food waste
Ashford Borough Council	50	48%	30%	22%
Canterbury City Council	52	46%	54%	0%
Dover District Council	26	23%	35%	42%
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	70	36%	13%	51%
Gravesham Borough Council	67	52%	30%	18%
Thanet District Council	104	70%	25%	5%
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	17	47%	53%	0%
All other councils	18	39%	50%	11%

Note: Out of 404 respondents, a share of 202 respondents only have a general waste bin, 125 respondents also have a dry recycling bin setup and another 77 respondents have a dry recycling and a food waste bin at home.



Q. If you do not recycle, what are the main reasons?

The main stated reason why people in flats do not recycle is because they do not receive a recycling collection.

Council	No. of respondents	Share of responses (%)*						
		I don't receive a recycling collection service at my address	I never really thought about recycling	I don't have space in my home for recycling bins or bags	It takes too much time to sort my rubbish	I don't know where to start	I have a disability that makes it hard for me to recycle	Other (open responses)
Ashford Borough Council	25	80%	0%	12%	0%	0%	0%	8%
Canterbury City Council	25	56%	0%	36%	0%	4%	8%	24%
Dover District Council	7	Less than 10 responses for this question						
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	25	48%	0%	28%	0%	0%	4%	36%
Gravesham Borough Council	38	82%	0%	16%	0%	11%	3%	8%
Thanet District Council	77	81%	0%	14%	3%	5%	4%	13%
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	8	Less than 10 responses for this question						
All other councils	7	Less than 10 responses per council for this question						

*Each respondent could give more than one answer for this question. Note: Out of a share of 404 respondents, 212 answered the question and 190 respondents are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Q. If you don't use a food waste bin, what are the main reasons?

The main stated reason why people in flats do not use a food waste bin is because they do not receive a food waste collection service.

		Share of responses (%)*								
Council	No. of respondents	I don't receive a food waste collection service at my address	I never really thought about having one	I don't have space	I don't like touching the communal food waste bin	It takes too much time to sort food waste	Food waste caddies look quite ugly	I'm concerned it will smell and be unhygienic	I would like to try but I need some help to get me going	Other (open response)
Ashford Borough Council	42	74%	0%	7%	14%	0%	0%	10%	0%	5%
Canterbury City Council	0	No food waste service is offered								
Dover District Council	18	39%	0%	6%	17%	0%	0%	17%	11%	11%
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	39	41%	0%	8%	3%	3%	0%	10%	5%	44%
Gravesham Borough Council	56	80%	2%	18%	0%	2%	0%	5%	0%	5%
Thanet District Council	99	82%	2%	9%	4%	1%	0%	13%	1%	7%
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	0	Less than 10 responses for this question								
All other councils	5	Less than 10 responses per council for this question								

*Each respondent could give more than one answer for this question. Note: Out of a share of 404 respondents, 259 answered the question and 254 respondents are considered as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Q. Would you use a recycling collection service and a communal recycling bin if it was provided?

A share of 98% respondents said 'Yes' to using a communal recycling bin and recycling collection service if it was provided and 2% said 'No'.

Council	No. of respondents	No. of responses		Share of responses (%)	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Ashford Borough Council	20	20	0	100%	0%
Canterbury City Council	14	14	0	100%	0%
Dover District Council	1	Less than 10 responses for this question			
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	12	12	0	100%	0%
Gravesham Borough Council	31	30	1	97%	3%
Thanet District Council	62	60	2	97%	3%
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	5	Less than 10 responses for this question			
All other councils	4	Less than 10 responses per council for this question			

Note: Out of a share of 212 respondents who only have a general waste bin a total of 149 who stated they are not offered a recycling service as of yet were asked this question and 139 respondents are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Q. If you were offered a food waste collection service and a food waste bin would you use it?

A share of 86% respondents said 'Yes' to using a food waste bin and collection service if it was available and 14% said 'No'

Council	No. of respondents	No. of responses		Share of responses (%)	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Ashford Borough Council	31	27	4	87%	13%
Canterbury City Council	0	Less than 10 responses for this question			
Dover District Council	7	Less than 10 responses for this question			
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	16	14	2	88%	13%
Gravesham Borough Council	45	37	8	82%	18%
Thanet District Council	81	70	11	86%	14%
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	0	Less than 10 responses for this question			
All other councils	2	Less than 10 responses per council for this question			

*Note: Out of a share of 259 respondents, 182 answered the question and 173 respondents are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Q. What would you do if you are not sure if an item is recyclable?

The main action taken when residents are not sure if an item is recyclable is to check the product label and the second most common action are to check the council's website.

Council	No. of respondents	Responses (%)*						
		I go with my gut feeling of what's best	I check the product label	I check the signage in my communal bin area	I look at a checklist in my home next to my bag or bin	I check my council's website	I ask someone else at home	Other (open response)
Ashford Borough Council	25	24%	56%	24%	0%	52%	16%	4%
Canterbury City Council	27	22%	67%	7%	30%	30%	11%	11%
Dover District Council	19	16%	42%	5%	26%	32%	5%	0%
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	45	18%	53%	4%	18%	33%	7%	11%
Gravesham Borough Council	29	28%	59%	3%	7%	24%	0%	3%
Thanet District Council	27	19%	41%	19%	15%	19%	15%	11%
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	9	Less than 10 responses for this question						
All other councils	11	Less than 10 responses per council for this question						

*Each respondent could give more than one answer for this question. Note: Out of a share of 192 respondents who actively use their recycling bin answered the question and 172 respondents are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Key insights from Kent flat residents #2

- A share of 62% of Kent Flat residents wished the communal bin areas were taken care of better and 59% stated they do not agree with the statement that the bins rarely overflow
- A share of 63% of residents said that they did **not** notice any improvements to their communal bin areas by their local Kent council, whilst 9% said they **did** notice improvements, and 28% said **not sure**.
- Of the Kent flat respondents a share of 54% said that they really liked the communal bin stickers and that the information is clear and will help them recycle. As the main feedback given 48% said that the information could include more recycling examples.

Q. Did you notice any improvements to the communal bin area?

A share of 9% of respondents said 'Yes' when asked if they noticed any improvement to their communal bin area, 63% said 'No' and 28% said 'not sure'.

Council	No. of respondents	Share of responses (%)		
		Yes	No	Not Sure
Ashford Borough Council	25	4%	64%	32%
Canterbury City Council	27	4%	81%	15%
Dover District Council	19	16%	58%	26%
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	45	9%	67%	24%
Gravesham Borough Council	29	10%	48%	41%
Thanet District Council	27	11%	56%	33%
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	9	Less than 10 responses for this question		
All the other councils	11	Less than 10 responses per council for this question		

Note: Out of a share of 202 respondents, 192 who answered the question and 172 respondents are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Q. What is your opinion about the communal bin area?

A share of 62% of Kent Flat residents wished the communal bin areas were taken care of better and 59% stated they do not agree with the statement that the bins rarely overflow.

Statement	No. of responses			Share of responses (%)		
	Yes	No	Not sure	Yes	No	Not sure
I have used the communal bin area	341	29	16	88%	8%	4%
I think the bin area looks good	132	194	60	34%	50%	16%
I feel that it is a safe area	201	130	55	52%	34%	14%
The bins rarely overflow	126	229	31	33%	59%	8%
I wish it was taken care of better	241	94	51	62%	24%	13%

*Note: Out of 404 respondents who answered the questions, 386 are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.

Q. How do you feel about the new bin signage in your communal area?

The signage pictures shown below were the ones used for this question in the survey



Q. How do you feel about the new bin signage in your communal area?

A share of 72% of Kent Flat residents agreed stated that they have not see the new bin signage in their bin area, 55% agreed that they really like the signage and bin stickers and 54% agreed that the information is clear.

Statement	No. of responses			Share of responses (%)		
	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
I have not seen these in our bin area	126	32	14	72%	21%	7%
The information is clear and helps me recycle	88	48	36	54%	26%	20%
The information could include more examples	81	47	44	48%	28%	24%
I really like the signage and bin stickers	90	35	47	55%	19%	26%
The information could be more professional	31	87	54	18%	52%	30%
The information is too basic to be helpful	29	99	44	16%	59%	25%

*Note: Out of a share of 202 respondents, 192 answered this question of which 172 respondents are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Key insights from Kent flat residents #3

- A share of 50% of respondents who currently do **not** recycle said that **bins designed to fit their flat** would definitely help them start recycling, and **45% of respondents** said they need a simple list of what is recyclable.
- A share of **76% of respondents** who **already** recycle said that they **need a simple list of what is recyclable** to help them recycle more, and **66% of respondents** said they need better examples of what is recyclable.
- A share of **24%** from the respondents who are 'best-in-class' recyclers based on the survey said '**Yes**' to the idea of **discussing their ideas on improving recycling locally**, **11%** that they would be happy to run a recycling class, and **8%** that they would do door-stepping.

Statements about what motivates flat residents to recycle

The majority of respondents state they are motivated to recycle to **reduce pollution**, because they have chosen to make recycling part of their daily activities or because they feel it is their duty.

Statement	No. of responses			Share of responses (%)		
	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
I am motivated to recycle to reduce pollution	154	7	11	90%	4%	6%
I have chosen to make recycling a part of my daily activities	154	13	5	90%	8%	3%
I feel supported by my council to recycle as much as possible	65	74	33	38%	43%	19%
I don't really know if it helps but I feel that it's my duty to recycle	128	36	8	74%	21%	5%
I feel motivated by the people who collect my recycling	50	83	39	29%	48%	23%
I feel motivated by others around me that recycle	74	71	27	43%	41%	16%

*Note: Out of a share of 202 respondents, 192 answered the question of which 172 respondents are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Ideas that will help flat residents to start recycling

Flat residents **who do not recycle** and only use a general waste bin were asked about four ideas if these can help them to start recycling. The two ideas residents responded positively to are **bins designed to fit their flat** and to **be given a simple list of recyclable items** that can be hung up in their flats.

Statements	No. of responses			Share of responses (%)		
	This might help	This will definitely help	This doesn't work for me	This might help	This will definitely help	This doesn't work for me
I need bins designed to fit my flat	59	95	36	31%	50%	19%
I need a simple list of what is recyclable	67	86	37	35%	45%	19%
I would like a coach to help me recycle	33	6	151	17%	3%	79%
I would like a training to help me recycle	32	8	150	17%	4%	79%

*Note: Out of a share of 404 respondents, 212 who do not recycle answered this question, and 190 respondents are taken into account, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Ideas to help flat residents who already recycle to recycle more

We asked flat residents who recycle in the groups of 'Doing my bit recyclers' and 'Wish recyclers' about seven ideas to help them recycle better. The main ideas respondents think will help is to be given a simple list of recyclable items, better examples and an easier way to get recycling bags for carrying the items to communal bins.

Statements	No. of responses			Share of responses (%)		
	This would help	I already do/have this	This doesn't work for me	This would help	I already do/have this	This doesn't work for me
I need bins designed to fit my flat	17	14	7	45%	37%	18%
I need a simple list of what is recyclable	29	9	0	76%	24%	0%
I would like a coach to help me recycle	5	3	30	13%	8%	79%
I would like a workshop about recycling	7	2	29	18%	5%	76%
I need an easier way to get recycling bags for my bins	20	4	14	53%	11%	37%
I need better examples on what is recyclable	25	2	11	66%	5%	29%
I want feedback from the bin collection crew	14	4	20	37%	11%	53%

*Note: Of a share of 404 respondents, 60 answered this question of which 38 respondents are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



Responses to involvement in efforts to improve recycling in your flat or area

We asked flat residents who are 'best-in-class' recyclers if they would be keen to be more involved locally to support neighbours to recycle. A share of 24% said 'Yes' to discussing their ideas on improving recycling locally, 11% that they would be happy to run a recycling class, and 8% that they would do door-stepping.

Statements	No. of responses			Share of responses (%)		
	Yes	No	Not sure	Yes	No	Not sure
I would be happy to run a recycling class with people in my flat or area	13	83	19	11%	72%	17%
I would do door-stepping to talk with my neighbours	9	95	11	8%	83%	10%
I would like to discuss my ideas on improving recycling	28	68	19	24%	59%	17%

Note: Out of a share of 404 respondents, 132 answered this question of which 115 respondents are considered, as questions with less than 10 responses per individual council are a too small sample to be included.



About EcoWise

- EcoWise – www.eco-wise.co.uk is a digital solutions provider active in BLUEPRINT in creating new approaches to plan and measure progress towards a circular economy.
- Correspondence about the survey can be addressed to: Rembrandt.Koppelaar@eco-wise.co.uk

