

Statement re: plastics recycling in Wiltshire.

In 2018/19 Wiltshire Council collected over 5,600 tonnes of plastics. This included just over 4,000 tonnes of plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays collected through the kerbside blue-lidded bin service.

The plastic bottles and pots, tubs and trays collected at the kerbside are delivered to a facility operated by Hills Waste Solutions in Calne where two plastic grades are produced: a mixed bottle grade consisting of PET and HDPE bottles and a separate pots, tubs and trays grade. These materials are then baled and sent for further reprocessing in the UK, where the plastics are further separated by polymer type and by colour before being granulated or “flaked” at licensed facilities permitted by the Environment Agency. At this point the plastics collected for recycling are no longer deemed to be waste, and the product is then sold for use in manufacturing either in the UK or abroad. Between April and November 2018, a proportion of sorted mixed bottles from Wiltshire were exported by a UK-based sorting and processing facility to a licensed facility in Changua, Taiwan where these were further processed and washed to produce extruded pellets for use in manufacturing. Since December 2018, no plastic from Wiltshire’s kerbside recycling collection has been exported beyond the EU that hasn’t first achieved “end of waste” status. The majority of the plastics now collected at the kerbside in Wiltshire are reprocessed into a product within the UK.

Wiltshire Council’s ten household recycling centres (HRCs) are managed under two different contracts; the eight council-owned HRCs are operated on behalf of the council by FCC Environment, and the HRCs located at Lower Compton and Purton are owned and operated on behalf of the council by Hills Waste Solutions.

Mixed rigid plastics collected by FCC are sorted and granulated at a facility in Wiltshire, and then sent to a facility in Corby for further reprocessing. This material is used in manufacturing in the EU and the UK.

Mixed rigid plastics collected by Hills Waste Solutions are sorted and baled at their facility in Calne before being sent for further reprocessing, currently in the EU. Prior to February 2019, this material was sent to a reprocessing facility in Andover where it was further sorted and granulated before being exported to Hong Kong.

Wiltshire Council is a signatory of the Resource Associations’ End Use of Recycling Charter, which aims to provide residents with transparent information relating to the destinations of the materials they put out for recycling: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/what-happens-to-recycling>. We are currently finalising information for inclusion in the 2018/19 register, but in the meantime our return for 2017/18 is viewable here: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/downloads/15071>