

Westminster and Veolia demonstrate excellence in partnership working with innovative food waste roll out

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Westminster City Council (WCC) and [Veolia](#) won *Best Public/Private Partnership Working Initiative* at the annual Association for Public Service Excellence awards. The award recognises a long standing and successful partnership which has ensured the successful delivery of a complex food waste service introduction across the City of Westminster.

To deliver service excellence in an ultra-urban environment, the approach was tailored by Westminster City Council and Veolia to make food waste collections suitable for all property types in the City. After an initial roll-out to properties with enough space for food waste bins, two new innovative services were designed: a 'neighbourhood' service of communal on-street bins, and an on-demand doorstep service delivered by electric collection bikes.

Their shared vision to reach all residents could not have been achieved without the Council's deep understanding of Westminster communities. With around 90% flats and limited space for bins, many properties in the borough are unsuitable for standard services. Veolia enabled the introduction of unique collection models, vehicles and technology, with these innovative solutions facilitating access for all households. In partnership, an extensive behaviour change programme was delivered with bespoke engagement provided to adapt to unique resident and household needs.

As of August 2024, the food waste recycling service has been successfully introduced to approximately 88% of all residential households (over 113,000 households) with almost 3,700 tonnes of food waste collected. Westminster's recycling rate increased by an impressive 3.7 percentage points this year despite

the country's average rate decreasing by 0.8; this was in large part due to the food waste service which accounts for 10% of all recycling across the borough.

Councillor Paul Dimoldenberg, Cabinet Member for City Management and Air Quality, said:

"This is fantastic news and reward for the hard work we provide for our residents every day. Lots of households in Westminster have limited space to recycle food waste so we had to think creatively about providing an efficient and user-friendly service that matched our Fairer Environment and Fairer Communities commitment.

We are under no illusion that our target to make the city net zero by 2040 is an ambitious one. But, improving recycling rates, including food waste recycling, and decarbonising waste collection vehicles is a step toward achieving our net zero goal. "

Helder Branco, General Manager for Veolia said:

"At the heart of every successful partnership is a common goal, and for Veolia and Westminster it is a passion for delivering services to meet the needs of residents in a very complex and challenging urban area. This has led us to think beyond traditional service models and collaborate to deliver our latest innovations in the neighbourhood and on-demand services. We are so proud to deliver on our wider Net Zero and Ecological transformation ambitions through this project, and this award win is a well-deserved recognition of the ongoing dedication and commitment of the recycling and waste collection heroes that work hard to deliver service excellence every day."