

# Waste

## Winner: Leeds Metropolitan University - Ambitious Targets Cut Waste and Save Money

### Key Points

- Leeds Met has an ambitious target of diverting 40% of its landfilled waste by end 2005
- Most IT equipment is reused, reconditioned or recycled
- Environmental Rules for Contractors are being developed

In 2001 Leeds Met set a target of recycling 25% of the waste it was then sending to landfill by 2006. This was achieved by 2003, and the university set a new one of 40% diversion by end 2005. Successful measures include:

- Many more recycling bins, with a policy of three recycling bins for every waste bin in large offices, and a recycling bin near every vending machine.
- Collection of all redundant IT equipment. Any which can be reused internally is separated, with the remainder - 12 tonnes of monitors, 12 tonnes of base units and 1 tonne of printers in 2004 - being sent to a local community recycler, Roseville Enterprises for reconditioning or disassembly. Roseville's income from this supports its social aims of providing every child in care in Leeds with a reconditioned computer, and maximising employment of people with disabilities. In 2004 the scheme created net benefits of over £1,500 for the university. Allowing staff to take computers home saved a further £508.
- Glass recycling also produces net benefits of over £1000 per annum. All glass from the student union bars is collected weekly resulting in an average 30 tonnes being recycled at a cost of £250 per year.

Other recycling schemes include wooden pallets (sent to a steam train museum), CD-ROMs, mobile phones and toner cartridges. Proceeds from phones and cartridges are donated to charity.

These initiatives have been underpinned by a new 'pay by weight' waste disposal contract. This was introduced to the sector by the University of Derby (the subject of a HEEPI case study), and involves the contractor measuring the amount of material in all collected bins and containers and billing accordingly. This enables cost savings through optimisation of collection patterns, and highlights target areas for minimisation initiatives. To maximise incentives for recycling, Leeds Met's contractor (Onyx) keeps all income from selling recycled material.

Recycling is publicised through e-mail updates, articles in newsletters, short 'Tool Box Talks' for staff and contributes to several undergraduate courses. The latter includes a module for second year design students who are asked to develop solutions to recycling problems faced by the University. A cash prize is given as an incentive.

One remaining challenge is to reduce waste from refurbishments, capital projects and maintenance. As a result Environmental Rules for Contractors are being developed to ensure that they are supporting the university's recycling objectives, as well as being in compliance with relevant environmental regulations.

### Mark Warner, Environmental Manager, Leeds Metropolitan University

*"Getting cleaners and porters on board is especially crucial – they will make or break a scheme as they talk to staff, report on what's actually happening and ensure initiatives such as flat packing actually take place."*

