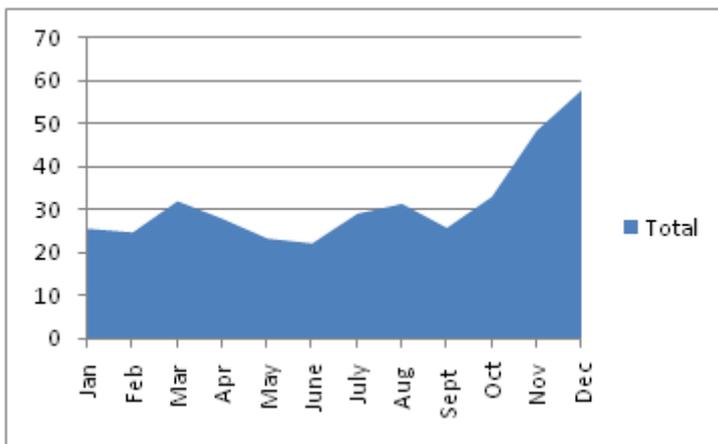


**Birkbeck Environmental Management Case Study – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

**Waste Management**

Within Birkbeck, there is an ongoing initiative to reduce total waste volumes and increase the percentage of this waste which is recycled.

In order to monitor this in more detail, the Estates team have initiated weighing of the waste disposed in each waste stream to determine the impact of projects to improve.



This data clearly shows that the percentage of waste that has been recycled has gone up. This has allowed the college to change from 3 general waste and 2 recycling collections to 2 general waste and 3 recycling, showing that there is an associated decline in general waste.

This means that, although total waste volumes have remained consistent, the impact this waste

has on the environment, and the associated cost to the college, is far lower.

This year, the college has signed a new waste contract which means that 0% of waste goes to landfill. The waste that is not recycled is incinerated and used as energy for Heathrow Terminal 5.

***Waste contract info***

Part of the initiative to promote recycling has been the introduction of new bins and new signs. The new bins are clearly colour coded to reflect the waste stream and this is mirrored in the signs.

<b>Blue bins</b>	Paper and cardboard
<b>Yellow bins</b>	Drinks cans; Plastic bottles and lids; Drinks cups and lids
<b>Grey bins</b>	General non-recyclable waste



These bins can be found in the public areas of the college: Catering outlets; Meeting and Classrooms. Within the catering areas there are also bins provided where liquid can be poured out of drinks containers, allowing them to be recycled.

Within offices, blue bins are provided to dispose of paper and cardboard waste. It is important that these bins are used for the purposes provided. Putting food waste such as teabags into the blue bin means that none of the paper it contains can be recycled, so it is essential that the correct bin is used for the correct waste type.

Education of issues such as this has been a big part of the initiative to improve recycling rates over the past year. Initially, there were problems with the wrong bins being used or the grey bins being used for everything but these are becoming less of an issue each day.

**“It’s taken time, but as people get used to using the right bins for the right waste type, we are now seeing real success”**

Anne McKeown –  
Waste contract manager

In some areas, individual desk bins have been voluntarily given up in favour of the more streamlined shared waste and recycling banks. The Estates team would like to move towards these banks where possible as they support the need for recycling in the office areas.



Where buildings or floors have been refurbished, these new waste hubs have been put in place as standard and have proved popular with staff.

One member of staff told us “it was hard at first to get used to my main bin not being under my desk, but now, I just keep things on the edge of my desk and throw them away in the hub when I go to make a cup of tea”.

Staff in existing buildings can also follow this example and move to a shared bin arrangement for their area.

For any questions on waste and recycling, or to arrange a shared waste and recycling hub for your area, contact [recycling@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:recycling@bbk.ac.uk)