

Seirbhísí Bainistíochá Dramhaíola  
An Roinn Comhshaoil agus Iompair  
68/70 Lana Mhuire Mhaith, Baile Átha Cliath 8

Waste Management Services  
Environment and Transportation Department  
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### Re: Textile Recycling Service

Dear Councillor,

Waste Management Services recently undertook a review of the textile recycling service currently provided. The purpose of the review was twofold:

- 1. Identify problematic locations and suggest how the problem might be addressed.**
- 2. Develop a more effective and efficient collection service.**

Dublin City Council's network of textile banks currently consists of 105 individual banks located at 49 on-street locations, 8 Bring Centres and 2 Civic Amenity Sites. The service is provided by Textile Recycling Ltd (TRL) T/A Clothes Pod.

#### Problems

Illegal dumping continues to be problematic at on-street recycling facilities citywide. Where textile banks are present - particularly in and around parks, green spaces and residential areas - items are regularly removed from the banks, illegally dumped bags ripped open and clothes littered around the vicinity. Well-meaning people also contribute by leaving items and bags at more likely than not full textile banks in the belief that they will be recycled, when in fact items removed by DCC staff are, for the most part, processed as general waste. The ongoing poor condition of these sites reflects badly on the good work being carried out by Waste Management Services in dealing with this problem.



St. Vincent Street



Whitehall Car Park

In relation to servicing of clothes banks, service provider TRL reported staffing issues at the beginning of COVID restrictions and were unable to provide a service for the first 4-6 weeks of the initial lockdown. Their staffing levels returned to normal in April/May 2020 but reduced again during Level 5 restrictions in October/November and in January 2021.

### **Solutions**

There are frequent requests for the removal of textile banks, but they are an integral part of the City Council's recycling infrastructure and this option can only be considered when the level of illegal dumping at that location is very significant and all other measures to address the problem have resulted in no improvement. Furthermore, the removal of a textile bank can only be considered when sufficient capacity for textile recycling can be ensured within a reasonably close proximity enabling continued opportunity for citizens to recycle responsibly.

Ideally, textile banks should be located within or close to Council premises (Bring Centres, depots, offices) and monitored by CCTV wherever possible. Multi bank combo units should be introduced to larger bring centres where feasible. Additional capacity should be introduced at locations where demand exists and no alternative site is available. Consideration should be given to consolidation of textile banks in close proximity. Removal of banks from the most problematic locations should be considered as a last resort.

In order to deal with the issues identified a phased approach has been adopted. Phase one is the introduction of additional capacity to Bring Centres. TRL have recently taken a number of steps to address their service levels. The first improvement was introducing twelve-bank combo units to their fleet, with six receptacles on each side of the container. These units are capable of holding up to one tonne of textiles, and each of the twelve banks hosts an individual wheeled storage bin enabling vastly reduced service times while also reducing the frequency of collections needed. One such unit was installed on a trial basis at Oscar Traynor Road (OTR) Bring Centre in October 2020, reducing service levels there from approximately three hours to 20 minutes. Staff at OTR report less disruption to patrons and to other services as a result. Combo units have also been installed at Windmill Road and Collins Avenue Bring Centres, another is on order for Gullistan Terrace and will be delivered this month. Grangegorman does not have sufficient space for a combo unit, however two additional clothing banks have recently been installed here.

TRL have also begun to replace single unit on-street textile banks with new receptacles capable of hosting wheeled storage bins, subject to finances and availability. This will enable them to deliver a more effective service as wheeled clothes bins can be removed and replaced in a matter of minutes and sorting of items will no longer take place while emptying the banks. Containers of this nature have to date been installed at Crumlin Shopping Centre, Terenure Car Park and Marrowbone Lane.



Combo unit, Collins Avenue BC



Double Units (x2), Marrowbone Lane

Phase 2 will begin this month and will see the removal of a number of clothing banks from around the city, coupled with the introduction of additional capacity at alternative sites where feasible and required. A further removal phase will take place once alternative locations have been identified and agreed with the relevant Area Office.

#### North West Area

**Ballymun Library** is a problematic location. Locals are very happy with the animation of bottle banks here, but illegal dumping of textiles is extraordinary. Collins Avenue BC is within walking distance of Ballymun Library. The recent introduction of a multi-bank combo unit at Collins Avenue can easily facilitate the volume of textiles retrieved from the library site.

High volumes of illegal dumping occur at all on-street recycling facilities throughout Finglas. This will be addressed in Phase 3, subject to agreement with the NW Area Office.

#### North Central Area

The recycling facilities at **Whitehall Car Park** are a constant source of complaints. In addition to an alarming level of textile dumping, this site also attracts dumping of all manner of household appliances and furniture. Additionally, the recently reintroduced height barriers prevent TRL from gaining access to the site. The newly installed combo unit at Collins Avenue Bring Centre can easily facilitate the volume of textiles retrieved from Whitehall Car Park. While not technically in the North Central Area, Collins Avenue BC is closer to Whitehall Car Park than Oscar Traynor Road. Oscar Traynor Road BC is the Council's highest volume textile recycling location but can also facilitate any additional textiles that may be deposited there as a result of the removal of banks from Whitehall.

The **Alfie Byrne Road** site is very problematic. Clontarf All-Weather pitches car park is close by and produces a medium yield. These sites will be consolidated and the banks removed from Alfie Byrne Road. A textile recycling service is also available close to Alfie Byrne Road at Shamrock Terrace Civic Amenity Site.

#### South East Area

Recycling facilities at **Sundrive Road** have been the source of resident complaints and representations from local councillors for a number of years. The surrounding area contains a relatively high number of other DCC textile recycling facilities – Eamonn Ceannt and Windmill Road BCs and Dolphins Barn Fire Station as well as several facilities located at nearby shopping

centres. Textile recycling was removed from Sundrive Road in December 2020 and an alternative site was sourced at **Crumlin Shopping Centre**, where two prototype wheeled single units have now been installed.

The textile bank at **St. Vincent Street** is one of the most abused recycling facilities in the city. Sufficient capacity exists close by at Eamonn Ceannt Park Bring Centre and Marrowbone Lane. Additional capacity can also be introduced at Dolphin's Barn Fire Station if necessary.

**Milltown Car Park** is another highly problematic site and is the source of regular complaints from local councillors, residents and community groups. While the closest textile recycling facility at Herzog Park is approximately 3km away, there are also a number of other larger recycling facilities in the South East Area at Gullistan Terrace and Pigeon House Road.

### **South Central Area**

**Marrowbone Lane** textile bank is well used and well serviced, however demand exceeds capacity here and the bank tends to fill within hours of servicing resulting in regular illegal dumping. Additional capacity has now been introduced here, which will also facilitate the removal of the problematic textile banks at **Newmarket Square** and **Vincent St.**

The textile bank at **Grattan Crescent** overflows on a regular basis. However, we are obliged to remove the recycling facilities at nearby **St. Michael's Parish Centre** to facilitate the development of Emmet Road. Despite several attempts to source a suitable alternative location, none has become apparent as yet. This will be addressed in Phase 3, subject to agreement with the Area Office.

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