

**PRESS RELEASE FROM re3**

**For Immediate Release**

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## **CHANGES TO RE3 RECYCLING CENTRES**

re3 are introducing further changes to the Bracknell and Reading recycling centres in a drive to improve efficiency and make essential savings. These will follow on from changes - a new visitor permit scheme and recycling centre access for re3 residents only - that are being implemented in July.

From early September 2016, residents who visit the sites in a commercial or commercial type vehicle will need a permit. Small charges for some non-household waste are also being introduced.

The first change forms part of a crackdown on trade waste being dumped at the recycling centres for free.

re3 has calculated that if even just 1% of what is deposited at the recycling centres came from traders, then it would still cost council tax payers £68,000 a year to process it.

re3 area residents who wish to drive to the recycling centres in any vehicle other than a car - or a car with a single axel trailer – will now be asked to apply for a permit before each visit.

Only re3 residents will be able to apply for a commercial vehicle permit. Commercial vehicles including flat-backs, tipper and long wheel base vans may not be eligible for the permit scheme and sign-written vehicles may not be allowed to deposit waste relating to that business.

The current system of allowing commercial vehicles access to the recycling centres during specific hours is open to abuse from traders passing off their van loads as household waste. The current system, where larger vehicles can gain access between 2pm and 4pm, can also worsen queuing during those times.

Existing height restriction bars will be replaced by raisable barriers at both sites and over-height time restrictions will come to an end. These measures will distribute visitor numbers more evenly over the course of the day and minimise queuing, and will allow residents with over-height vehicles to visit the recycling centres more conveniently.

It is unfair to ask council tax payers and trade waste compliant businesses to foot the bill for unscrupulous firms who use the current system as a way to get rid of their commercial waste for free, and the new permit scheme is bringing re3 in line with

what is happening at recycling centres elsewhere. Similar van permit schemes are already running in neighbouring council areas including Hampshire and Oxfordshire.

The second change is the introduction of small charges for some non-household waste at the recycling centres. Councils are entitled to charge for the disposal of this type of waste and in order to produce much-needed savings, re3 has taken the decision to do so. Residents can still dispose of all other household waste free of charge at the recycling centres.

By introducing small charges for items like soil, rubble, plasterboard and asbestos we can cover the cost of managing those types of waste. The savings made can help mitigate some of the cuts in council funding and help protect other frontline services. It would also act as a deterrent to those firms who try to dump trade waste for free at the recycling centres.

Facing the same financial conditions, a number of other councils have already, or are in the process of, introducing charges.

**Bracknell Forest's Executive Member for Environment and Chair of the Joint Waste Disposal Board, Cllr Mrs Dorothy Hayes MBE said:** "We know that the re3 recycling centres in Bracknell and Reading are well-used and valued facilities, but we must constantly work to ensure they are offering the best value for money to all re3 area residents."

**Reading Borough Council's Lead Councillor for Neighbourhoods, Cllr Liz Terry said:** These changes to the recycling centres have been difficult decisions to make, but come at a time of rising demand for council services and severe cuts in funding. We have taken a close look at how we can make essential savings and improve efficiency at our recycling centres, and these new measures are being adopted to ensure that we continue to provide a fair, effective and value for money waste processing service."

**Wokingham Borough Council's Executive Member for Environment Cllr Angus Ross said:** "We've thought long and hard about this and we want to make sure it's fair for our residents. We've carried out research at other authorities around the country and similar changes appear to have worked well."

Further details of how to apply for a trade permit – as well as the amount that will be charged for non-household waste – will become available nearer to the implementation date, currently scheduled for early September 2016.

For more information on the re3 recycling centres, please visit <http://www.re3.org.uk> or follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @re3recycling.

**ENDS**