Visit to Envirosort 1/6/23

18 places were booked for the trip but some people dropped out meaning that 13 of us met in the Envirosort car park near J7 of the M5.

Envirosort processes co-mingled recyclables for all of Worcesterhire and Herefordshire.

Waste from the more local area is delivered directly to site by the Council lorries. Collections from further away are collected together at other sites before being shipped in bulk to Envirosort.

The plant operates as follows:

- Hand pick obvious pollutants.
- Remove the glass by breaking it over a rotating disc table so the glass falls through.
- A ballistic separator which separates paper and cardboard from metals and plastics.
- The paper and cardboard stream is then hand picked again.
- The other stream firstly has steel products removed magnetically.
- Then aluminium items removed by eddy current separation
- Finally the plastics are separated into types by optical separation.
- Each product stream is then compressed and baled for re-use except for the glass which is shipped out in bulk.

Plastic bags from our more remote properties are slit open by the operatives and handled in the same way.
The plant is on a two shift pattern and employs 40 people on each shift.

15% of the recyclable waste is rejected due to contamination and goes to landfill. None of the recyclables from the plant go overseas.

The visit lasted for two hours including an interesting talk, a plant visit and drone footage taken from inside the plant.

A number of useful points were noted as guidance to help us recycle better:

- Recycling must be clean and dry, stuff left in bottles and jars can contaminate other items and cause them to be rejected.
- Items which have to be hand picked out are disposable nappies, and plastic bags including dog poo bags.
- Do not squash cans, this can cause the ballistic separator to put them in the paper stream.
- Lids can be put back on plastic bottles.
- Cardboard boxes, egg boxes and toilet tubes should be squashed. Remove sticky tape as far as practical. Large pieces of cardboard should be reduced down to a size less than A2. No greasy takeaway boxes.
- No coated paper, kitchen roll, toilet paper, paper towels, supermarket receipts, greaseproof paper and foil.
- No polystyrene.

- Shredded paper is OK if put in an envelope or similar, otherwise it goes straight through the glass roller table and into the cullet.
- Don't put bags of stuff into recycling. The operatives cannot open them and they will be rejected.
- No black plastics.

For more detail see the attached guidance. Or visit
https://www.severnwaste.com/envirosort/

Other interesting observations:

- 7 million disposable coffee cups are used in the UK per day. They cannot be recycled in the normal recycling plants but may be recycled by specialists if returned to the supplier in some cases. Use your own container!
- 7.7 million plastic water bottles are used per day. They can be recycled but why? Generally nobody needs to have their water supplied in a plastic bottle.

A useful and thought-provoking visit which we enjoyed.

DL/LI R1 4/6/23