

6th May 2013

PRESS RELEASE



Half of UK local authorities now offer kerbside recycling of beverage cartons

Opportunities to recycle beverage cartons continue to increase, as the proportion of UK local authorities collecting them from the kerbside reaches 50% – reveal latest figures from the Alliance for Beverage Cartons & the Environment (ACE) UK.

This milestone represents a 12-fold increase on 2006 levels and follows sustained, close co-operation between ACE UK and its members – Tetra Pak, Elopak and SIG Combibloc – and local authorities and consumer groups. When ACE UK's own bring-bank system is included, 89% of local authorities collect cartons for recycling.

Ceredigion County Council has become the 203rd local authority, out of 406 nationally, to make it easier for residents to recycle cartons by adding them to its kerbside collection scheme. Councillor Alun Williams, Cabinet member for Transport, Waste and Carbon Management, said:

"Ceredigion County Council is always looking for ways to improve its recycling rate and our efforts are greatly assisted by the active participation of Ceredigion residents. We're delighted that on 1st April we were able to start collecting cartons along with other recyclable material and helped push coverage of kerbside collections by local authorities to over 50% in the UK."

A further boost is expected later this year with the opening of the UK's only beverage carton reprocessing facility at the Sonoco Alcore paper mill near Halifax, West Yorkshire. Capable of recycling 25,000 tonnes of cartons sorted from household and commercial waste streams, the facility will offer a range of benefits to local authorities and their waste management contractors – not least the assurance of a non-export market for this material stream. In fact, cartons collected in 187 local authority areas are already set to come to the new plant for recycling!

"In the year that the UK's only dedicated recycling facility for cartons is scheduled to open, we are extremely pleased that our strategy to increase kerbside collection and make it easier for residents to recycle cartons is also paying dividends", said Richard Hands, Chief Executive of ACE UK.

"In addition to Ceredigion County Council, we would also like to praise the 11 Northern Ireland councils which form the arc21 waste management group. All have now introduced kerbside collection of cartons and plan to send them to the new Sonoco Alcore plant for recycling.."

Linda Crichton, Head of Collections & Quality Programme at WRAP, comments: *"The 50% kerbside collection figure is tribute to the efforts of ACE UK and its members. It marks a real milestone and bodes well for the future of carton recycling in the UK. We will continue to support the carton industry in their strategy to increase the rate even further."*



Each year, approximately 60,000 tonnes of paper-based cartons are used in the UK to package milk, fruit juice and an increasingly wide range of food products, including soup, chopped tomatoes and pulses. This equates to around 2.3kg of cartons per householdⁱⁱ which could be recycled instead of being thrown away as waste.

Beverage cartons are easily recycled using a simple pulping process, where the paperboard and non-fibre layers are separated and turned into new materials. The wood fibres can be used to produce new high-strength paper products, such as cores and tubes for consumer and industrial applications, while the polymer and foil layers can be recycled or used for energy recovery.

ACE UK has a dedicated recycling team which offers advice and support to local authorities and community recycling networks wishing to collect cartons. An interactive map on the ACE UK website (<http://ace-uk.co.uk/recycling/where-can-i-recycle>) also helps residents find out where and how they can recycle beverage cartons in their area.

To find out more about beverage carton recycling, visit: www.ace-uk.co.uk

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About ACE UK

The Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment (ACE) UK provides a platform for the industry to profile and benchmark cartons as a renewable, recyclable and low-carbon packaging choice, and to drive its environmental initiatives. This includes running the industry's carton recycling programme.

ACE UK represents Tetra Pak, Elopak, SIG Combibloc, the leading manufacturers of beverage cartons for the UK market. It is also supported by BillerudKorsnäs and Stora Enso, which produce about 98% of the paperboard used by ACE UK members to manufacture beverage cartons in Europe.

ⁱ From kerbside collecting Local Authorities and through ACE UK's own bring bank scheme.

ⁱⁱ ACE UK estimates that 54 cartons are used per person per annum in the UK, representing over 200 cartons a year for a typical family of four.