



Site to boost recycle rates

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RECYCLING rates in Cambridgeshire could shoot up from the current 50 per cent of household waste to 85 per cent when a new plant comes on stream in two years time.

On the basis of the most recent figures, Huntingdonshire residents already recycle more than half their waste, closely followed by South Cambridgeshire.

But, under a £730million, 28-year PFI contract that was formally signed yesterday (Tuesday), after three-and-a-half years in the planning, Cambridgeshire County Council expects to recover 70 per cent of the waste that now goes to landfill.

The first element of the contract – a new £2million-plus waste transfer station for Huntingdonshire – has just opened at Alconbury Hill as an undercover tipping point for HDC's familiar yellow refuse trucks.

In the short-term, the refuse will be bulk-hauled to landfill. But, once a major mechanical biological treatment plant is built by Donarbon Waste Management Limited at Waterbeach and opened in April 2010, "black bag waste" will be sorted to remove anything that can be recycled or composted.

The little that is left is all that will go to landfill, compared with 90 per cent in Huntingdonshire just a few years ago.

"Glass, cans and some plastics can be

NEW FOR OLD: HDC driver Eddie Woodfine is pictured at the entrance to the new Alconbury Waste Transfer Station with, left to right, Steven Howell, health and safety coordinator for HDC, Paul Smith, supervising inspector at HDC, Bernard Warr, head of waste at Cambridgeshire County Council, cutting the ribbon, Sarah Clover, business development manager for Donarbon Limited, Dave Wagland, Donarbon's operations manager for the site, and Jason Starling, site manager for Farrans, the construction company.



sorted and removed for recycling, along with clean cardboard and paper, Donarbon's waste promotions manager Mark Shelton told *The Hunts Post*.

"Some material can be used as a refuse-derived fuel to produce power. Other paper and cardboard and some light plastics can be made into a kind of compost. Although it cannot be used in agriculture or horticulture, it can be used for restoring contaminated land or production of crops for fuel."

Increasing the proportion of recycled waste will substantially reduce the county council's – and Council Tax payers' – exposure to being hit with millionsof pounds of landfill tax after 2011.

But all the councils are stressing that

householders will need to continue their recycling efforts for kerbside collections after the new facility is open to avoid its being swamped.

The Donarbon scheme will also include a visitor centre where people, including local children, will be able to learn more about recycling and find out about the MBT plant, which uses environmentally friendly methods to treat waste. Additional facilities for the composting of kerbside collected kitchen and garden waste will also be provided under the new contract.

Cambridgeshire has topped national league tables for recycling and composting since 2003-2004 and is on track to exceed its target of 50 per cent for 2007.

"We are pleased to have laid the foundations for managing Cambridgeshire's waste over the next 28 years."

Coverage makes the Commons

WHILE regular readers of *The Hunts Post* already know all about their award-winning newspaper, the word spread a little further than usual last week.

This newspaper's coverage of Pridley-born Charlotte Edwards' successful defence of the Ashes as England women's cricket captain was highlighted in Parliament.

In a Commons debate on Thursday, MP for North West Cambridgeshire Shailesh Vara spoke in response to a fellow member's call for a greater emphasis on women's sport.

Mr Vara told the house: "We need more role models, such as Charlotte Edwards, the captain of the England ladies' cricket team. It is my privilege to have her as a resident in my constituency."

"As my local newspaper *The Hunts Post* said, she is 'one of the most influential female England cricketers of all time'."

"Long may she continue to be successful."

Charlotte captained the England ladies' cricket side to Ashes victory in 2006 and retained the trophy with the first victory in Australia by an England women's side in more than 70 years.

She spoke to *The Hunts Post* from Australia and New Zealand each week during the tour, documenting the trip.