

3.12 Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding recycling levels: [OQ. 90/2018]

Will the Minister provide the latest figures for recycling rates for glass and plastics on, and off, Island? Will he advise what he is doing to bolster recycling levels?

Deputy K.C. Lewis (The Minister for Infrastructure):

Last year we received 5,938 tonnes of glass for recycling; this represents 79 per cent of the Island's waste glass and there is a small increase on the amount of glass received the year before. While this is good, it is of concern that approximately a fifth of the Island's glass is being processed, as general waste, at our Energy from Waste facility. Glass causes severe mechanical problems for us, as during the incineration process it melts then sets and so has to be manually removed. We will very soon be launching a public engagement campaign that focuses on glass recycling. The main purpose of the campaign is to reduce the contamination of glass being received for recycling. But, we shall also be raising awareness about the importance of separating all glass. In regard to plastics, my department exports plastic bottles for recycling; last year we exported 103 tonnes. This may sound a lot, but we estimate that is less than 10 per cent of all plastics thrown away in Jersey. For this figure to increase significantly, recycling has to become more accessible for everyone. This means every Parish providing household recycling collections and businesses, who sell these single-use plastics, taking responsibility for their part in generating the waste. We are also working alongside colleagues and the community to achieve plastic-free Jersey status. This programme aims to reduce single-use plastics, such as plastic bottles and our public education and communications team is emphasising this message.

3.12.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

I am, once again, concerned to hear the very high rate of glass that ends up in the incinerator when we are told time and time again how much damage it does to the incinerator / Energy from Waste. Why is it that there are no glass bins in public places, by and large? If you go to the beach, do you leave your glass bottle on the beach, or do you put it in the bin, which takes it to the Energy from Waste? If you are in town, do you leave your glass on the street, or do you put in the bin, which, again, goes to the Energy from Waste? As a States, we seem to be encouraging people to put glass in the bin for general use and dispose of it, but not providing any ways for them to recycle. Is this something the Minister could give urgent attention to?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I would agree with the Deputy, but most glass waste comes from household waste, which is not separated, so that is something to be done. My own Parish of St. Saviour has a glass collection. I believe 6 or 7 Parishes do, but not every Parish and that is a problem. One can go to the Energy from Waste plant and watch the rubbish trucks tipping their waste and you can hear the clink, clink, clink of the glass as it comes out, which is from domestic waste. That is something we need to get over to people: to separate their glass and use the glass recycling bins, which are definitely in St. Helier and surrounding Parishes and several glass recycling centres throughout the Island.

3.12.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

How does the Minister get the statistics on the fact that most glass going into general waste comes from domestic, rather than public facilities? Is there some kind of separation that they do to count and weigh the glass, or is it just a guesstimation?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

As I have just mentioned, I have been next to the domestic refuse as it is being tipped into the hoppers and you can hear the clinking of glass as it comes out, so we know that not all household glass is being separated out. We urge people to do that. There are a number of glass recycling points around the Island, recycling

centres for plastic bottles and glass, and we urge people to use these. But, obviously, we need to do more regarding separation.

3.12.3 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Can the Minister confirm that his department knows exactly where all our recycling products go? For instance, can he confirm that none of our plastics are sent to the Far East?

[10:45]

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Yes, I can confirm that. What we have got in the U.K. - especially China has ceased to import waste plastics at the moment, so we are sending stuff for various recycling centres - we do a lot of separation. We are quite fortunate, inasmuch as we rely on food shipments from the U.K., so we are getting lots of lorries coming in from the U.K., on a daily basis, delivering food and going back empty. We are taking advantage of those empty trucks to fill them full of old televisions, plastics, and whatever recyclables we can, to send them away to the U.K. I do have a list of a number of people here, who do recycle. Quite a bit goes to the U.K., paper received by Abbey Waste, the central paper mill in the U.K. Plastic bottles, received by Abbey Waste, are sent to a plastics recycler in England. Batteries exported to a specialist recycler outside of Birmingham. Light bulbs are exported to a specialist recycler in Belgium. That is just a snapshot of what we do; there is always room for improvement and we strive to do that.

3.12.4 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Has anybody from the Minister's department gone with any of these loads to see where they went to and what happens to them? It is all very well to accept that 'we do this, we do that', with your product that comes to us. Has anybody checked?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I believe they have. These are major companies in the U.K. and abroad; they do this on a commercial basis for several countries, so I have no doubt they do it professionally.

3.12.5 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I remember some time ago, 2008, the Senatorial hustings, where a T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) worker asked about whether States Members knew about what happened to recycled glass and asserted that all that happened in Jersey was that it was crushed and used for landfill, which was not necessarily the recycling that most of the public would understand recycling to mean. I wonder if the Minister could update us what is meant by how glass is recycled in Jersey. If he does not have that information to hand, would he be prepared to send that around to Members?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

It is sent to La Collette, it is sorted, crushed and used as a liner for land reclamation, which has been going on for a number of years. There are experiments in other uses for the glass, possibly used for fine-grain sandblasting, *et cetera*. But that is the only use we have for it at the moment, crushing it and using it as a lining material, which does save importing aggregates for the same purpose.

3.12.6 Deputy R.J. Rondel:

Would the Minister confirm that there is a publicised list of all recycling glass collection points and how that is sort of publicised to the public and whether it is in Parish Halls, *et cetera*?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

It is freely available on the internet. If any of the Members have been to La Collette they could see the level of recycling and reuse that we do do. I am more than happy to take Members on a guided tour, at some

point, of the La Collette facility. It is doing a wonderful job. As I say, all these details are freely available on the internet, should a Member wish to look it up.

3.12.7 Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

My supplementary questions were picked off by other Members, but I think the message is clear. Would the Minister agree what we are hearing from the public, which is why I brought this question in the first place, is the reassurance that the recycling is happening and the glass, which seems to be a big issue, is being used proactively; that maybe there is a way we can go to the public and find plans that can really help the Island further, that encourage people to separate and reassure that we can do this together?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Absolutely. If anyone was listening to Radio Jersey this morning, getting ready to come to the States, they would have heard our recycling manager explaining exactly what has happened to all the materials. We do have several programmes in train to encourage people with more separation, utilising all the recycling points around the Island. Again, that should be available in Parish Halls. It is certainly on the internet; a quick Google search, or go to the gov.je site will locate that; all the facilities, where the recycling points are and I urge people to use them whenever possible. There is always more work to be done and we are heading in that direction.