

# Countrystyle Group champions local green initiatives in Kent

Kent environmental charity, KM Charity Team, has announced that it has appointed the chairman of Countrystyle Group as an Honorary Patron.



Trevor Heathcote, chairman of Countrystyle Group, takes on the ambassadorial role for the KM Charity Team which runs green travel schemes. The charity works in partnership with

Kent County Council and Medway Council to support 200 primary schools with green travel schemes including the Walking Bus, Walk on Wednesday (WOW) and Active Bug. Last academic year, the initiative removed

218,000 school run car journeys from Kent roads and earned the charity and county a national Green Apple environment award.

Mr Heathcote said: "At Countrystyle, we strive to support local initiatives and we are thrilled to be able to support the great work that the KM Charity Team is doing in Kent. I personally am very pleased to be invited to become an Honorary Patron of such a well-respected charity. The KM Charity Team does such a good job and is making a tremendous impact environmentally that this seems a natural fit for our two organisations to work together."

Simon Dolby, Chief executive of the KM Charity Team, said: "We are absolutely delighted that Countrystyle has agreed to support our work. Trevor and his company play a big part in diverting waste from landfill in Kent and in driving initiative to increase recycling. This is excellent news for our charity and its work in the county."

Mr Heathcote joins botanist Prof David Bellamy, actor Shaun Williamson and Jean Noel Darniche, managing director of Bel UK, as Honorary Patrons.

To find out more view [www.kmwalktoschool.co.uk](http://www.kmwalktoschool.co.uk)

## "Biggest ever UK waste contract" collapses

What could have been the largest waste contract ever has collapsed after North London Waste Authority (NLWA) decided to scrap the procurement process after a council meeting.

The two companies in the running, FCC and Skanska, expressed their disappointment with the unexpected turn of events.

The initial plans were to modify the Edmonton EcoPark as a venue to treat north London's waste.

There were also talks of a proposed 'fuel use' contract to burn 250,000-300,000 tonnes-a-year of SRF produced from

residual waste.

New plans could see an energy-from-waste development being built instead.

NLWA said that the reason for not awarding the contracts – which were set to run for around 27 years and were together worth more than £3 billion – was because councillors believe an alternative strategy will provide a 'significantly cheaper solution for managing north London's waste in the context of extreme pressures on local authority finances'.

The Authority believes that it can make savings of up to £900 million over 27 years by pursuing 'an alternative strategy' based on

energy recovery in the Upper Lee Valley, which would allow it 'greater flexibility' in developing plans to manage North London's waste.

The two contracts were together expected to involve investment of £500-600m in new facilities, which would have handled around 3% of the national municipal waste tonnage by 2045.

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believe that this was an affordable and deliverable project. As a result, this late U-turn was unexpected.'

A spokesman for the FCC Skanska consortium said: "Despite the delays in the procurement process, the NLWA had consistently led us to believe that this was an affordable and deliverable project. As a result, this late U-turn was unexpected."

Councillor Clyde Loakes, chair of NLWA, said: "What is particularly important is that by pursuing this alternative approach at a time when there is immense pressure on north London boroughs' finances, the Authority will avoid the need to substantially increase its costs in the short to medium term. This in turn will help limit the impact of waste management costs on council tax, and by doing so help make money available to be spent on front line services in this time of extreme pressure on local authority finances.

"Over the last year, a number of changes have taken place that have necessitated this decision. The adoption of two key planning policies this summer – Enfield's Edmonton EcoPark planning brief in May and the Mayor's opportunity area planning framework for the Upper Lee Valley in July – have confirmed that the planning environment is now much more favourably disposed towards an energy recovery solution for residual (non-recyclable) waste than at the outset of the procurement process in 2010."

