



Fettes College

# Raising Recycling Standards Across Campus

## Overview

Fettes College, one of Scotland's most prestigious independent schools, has been working closely with Hamilton Waste & Recycling to improve its waste management processes, reduce general waste volumes, and engage students in sustainability initiatives. With more than 700 students, 260 staff, and 11 boarding houses, the college operates on a large scale — producing high volumes of catering, classroom, and residential waste daily.

## The Challenge

Managing waste effectively across such a large and diverse site presents a number of challenges. Fettes College's Facilities and Housekeeping teams needed to ensure that students and staff were disposing of waste responsibly, while also maintaining a clean and safe environment across campus.

Initially, the college relied on open skips where waste streams were often mixed. This made recycling difficult and left the site open to contamination and access issues. Encouraging students to separate waste properly and ensuring that bins and skips were used correctly became an ongoing challenge.

"Our biggest issue was segregation — getting students to put the right waste in the right bin and keeping skips secure," explains Mr. Smolarek, Head of Housekeeping at Fettes College. "Before Hamilton, everything went into open skips and there was no control."

## The Solution

Working closely with Account Manager Kevin from Hamilton Waste, Fettes College transitioned to a structured and secure waste management setup.

Hamilton introduced enclosed, lockable skips to prevent contamination and improve security, alongside clearly labelled bins for each waste type.

**The college now operates a comprehensive system that includes:**

- General Waste
- Dry Mixed Recycling
- Cardboard Recycling
- Wood and Metal Recycling
- Food Waste

Regular monthly reports from Hamilton Waste give the team clear visibility into their recycling performance, helping track progress and identify opportunities for improvement.

“We’ve reduced our general waste from 13 tonnes per month to 8 tonnes,” says Mr. Smolarek.

“Having that data each month really helps us educate students and show them the difference their efforts make.”

## Education and Engagement

Sustainability education is a key part of life at Fettes College. The college uses the recycling data provided by Hamilton Waste in its student sustainability meetings, held every three months. These sessions highlight year-on-year improvements and reinforce the importance of recycling and waste reduction.

***“We share Hamilton’s reports with students so they can see the real impact. It helps them understand why recycling properly matters.”***



## Service and Reliability

For a busy school campus, timing and reliability are crucial. Hamilton Waste's flexibility and responsive service have proven invaluable — particularly during early morning collection windows that minimise disruption and ensure student safety.

***"Hamilton are incredibly flexible and reliable. They always arrive between 6 and 8 a.m., before students are on campus. If there's ever an issue, they respond in five minutes. Their drivers are brilliant – polite, professional, incredibly conscious of the safety of the students and they always double-check everything."***

Consistency has built trust between the college and Hamilton's drivers, ensuring smooth collections and dependable service.

***"They save me time and stress. I don't have to chase anyone or check the skips — I know it's being done properly."***

## The Results

**38% reduction in general waste volumes**

(13 tonnes down to 8 tonnes per month)

**Improved recycling accuracy and participation**

across 16 waste collection points

**Enhanced site security**

through enclosed skips and clear labelling

**Reliable, flexible collections**

that fit around the college's busy schedule

## Conclusion

Through close collaboration with Hamilton Waste, Fettes College has transformed its approach to waste management — improving recycling rates, reducing environmental impact, and fostering a culture of sustainability within its student community.

**Lukasz Smolarek**

Head of Housekeeping,  
Fettes College

***"Hamilton do an amazing job. They're reliable, responsive and professional — and they've made a real difference to how we manage waste at Fettes"***

## Get in touch

Contact Hamilton Waste to learn more about how we can help your organization with your waste management needs.

**Contact**



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