

How can you get residents to reduce their waste effectively?

Introduction

Local authorities across England have made fantastic advances in encouraging residents to recycle to achieve an average 33% recycling rate. The next challenge is to capitalise on this success by bringing about a reduction in the amount of waste produced. This is achieved by moving up the waste hierarchy, to address reuse and reduce.

Reducing waste has a far larger impact in reducing climate change emissions and making human activities more sustainable than recycling has alone. With reduction and reuse more and more in the public eye through hot topics such as food waste and going plastic bag free, today is the perfect time to be talking to residents about waste reduction.

Getting residents on board

Successful waste reduction relies on finding the best methods to engage and motivate your residents to participate in local schemes, such as reducing packaging at the supermarket or promoting home composting.

How do you explain waste prevention to residents in a meaningful way?

How do you explain, in layman's terms, why recycling is only part of the answer?

How can you clearly explain what can be done at an individual level?

How do you monitor and evaluate waste prevention strategies?

Waste Watch and waste reduction

Waste Watch is a registered charity with 20 years' experience of running recycling campaigns and education programmes. Our

expertise can help you target your communication effectively to residents.

We are experts in identifying barriers to waste reduction and using effective communication to overcome them. We motivate people to think about waste reduction in their everyday lives and to opt in to waste reduction schemes. We use a range of targeted approaches from face-to-face visits to communications and PR to maximise your campaign's reach and impact.

We have helped our clients raise awareness and increase participation; communicate reduction services to residents and waste operatives; and measure the success of schemes to improve them and prove they work well.

Our experience

We have worked with over 100 local authorities to promote local recycling and reduction schemes. We have doorknocked over 1.5 million properties and delivered successful, targeted projects which have met objectives.

Reclaim your doorstep, Recycle Western Riverside, 2007

This communications campaign aimed to reduce unwanted junk mail across four London boroughs.

'No junk mail packs' were developed to show residents how to reduce their junk mail. 2,000 packs were distributed, which led to 700 people registering with the Mailing Preference Service. Road shows and events helped us communicate with residents face-to-face and supported a PR campaign, leading to 150,000 requests for 'no junk mail' stickers.

How we can help you

These are some of the methods Waste Watch use to reduce waste in local authorities.

- **Communications campaigns** – we produce clear, simple, compelling and positive communications to encourage residents to reduce their waste. We have helped councils communicate using leaflets, letters, posters, stickers, web copy, vehicle livery, PR activity, and advertising.

Food waste education in Kent schools, 2008

We ran a theatre programme featuring Gordon Le Rotter, an eccentric French chef who went into 61 primary schools in Kent to teach 13,000 young people about food waste, as part of the national Love Food Hate Waste campaign.

- **Doorstepping campaigns** – we educate people face to face about how to take part in local recycling schemes; giving out information, answering questions and removing barriers to participation.
- **Recycling Support Officers** – we have a pool of experienced staff that can be placed within a local authority to provide on the ground assistance and support. They can get involved in a wide range of activities to solve complaints and issues, monitor crews, tackle problem areas, and conduct outreach activities.

Reducing waste arisings in Barking and Dagenham, 2008

Waste Watch is assisting Barking and Dagenham to reduce waste arisings in part of the borough. Waste Watch has provided a Project Manager, Recycling Support Officers and Doorsteppers to help implement service changes and advice to reduce waste.

- **Education activities** – our programmes encourage young people to learn about food waste reduction and composting, and to take those messages home.
- **Community outreach** – we run events in your local community to share information and encourage residents to participate in reduction schemes. Community outreach can also target specific groups directly: faith, ethnic and linguistic groups; people of specific age groups and residents' associations.

Recycling Support Officers – tackling waste reduction in Southall, 2007- present

Recycling Support Officers (RSOs) provide immediate, on the ground support for residents. The London Borough of Ealing recently introduced a no side-waste policy to increase recycling and decrease waste arisings in Southall (a low performing area).

We recruited RSOs who were fluent in the languages spoken locally. They supported the policy change through visits, doorstepping, community events and monitoring. One example of their success was that over 50% of residents cancelled their request for an additional wheeled bin after a visit from an RSO offering recycling advice.

- **Monitoring and evaluation** – we use WRAP guidelines and develop our own monitoring tools to measure waste reduction. We then use our findings to improve awareness and participation even further.

Tap Water Challenge, 2007

This waste prevention campaign raised public awareness about the benefits of drinking tap, not bottled water. 60% of residents reported that they switched to tap water after visiting the roadshow and taking a blind taste test challenge.