

Draft Communications & Behavioural Change Plan

Recycle for Greater Manchester

1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

September 2021

Recycle for Greater Manchester Communications & Engagement Behavioural Change Plan 2022/23

Background

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to have a profound effect on our daily lives including on waste and recycling collection services which have been recently impacted by HGV driver shortages. Consumer behaviour has also changed regarding the way we shop, work and socialise all of which has resulted in changes to the waste that's created.

Carbon

Environmental concerns are increasing, and more and more people are aware of climate change, however, the link between waste, recycling and climate change is not generally understood. Globally, the production of food accounts for up to 37% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and requires significant resources including land, energy, and water. However, up to 40% is wasted.

In the UK, 70% of UK food waste comes from households, equivalent to a value of over £14 billion a year and 20 million tonnes of GHG emissions. Focusing on preventing food waste from households remains a key priority.

In terms of household recycling, we save 18 million tonnes of CO₂ a year by recycling, the same environmental impact as taking 12 million cars off the road. (Source: WRAP Recycle Week 2021). Recycling plays a crucial role in protecting our environment and preserving our finite natural resources such as oil, sand, aluminium, iron ore and trees. Most people now regularly recycle; however evidence suggests that there are still opportunities to increase recycling, just over half of households still dispose of items that could be recycled in their general waste bin, mainly aerosols and foil.

There is also an urgent need to address contamination, 80% of UK households put items in the recycling that are not collected. The impact of this means that once it enters the recycling system, it can potentially contaminate clean recycling thereby reducing the overall recycling rate and increasing the demand on raw materials.

Overall Communication Objectives

- To provide communications, engagement and media expertise to support the delivery of the Waste and Resources contracts;

- To support the 9 local councils with joint communications to educate, promote and encourage residents to minimise their waste and recycle correctly both at home and at the 20 household waste recycling centres; and
- To deliver joint communications with SUEZ on the social value plan, construction work at waste management treatment facilities and regular stakeholder engagement.

Specific objectives and KPI's will be set for each individual campaign based on available data.

How do we get there?

Our communications strategy is based on:

- Using insight, market research, focus groups and surveys as well as results from previous campaigns to develop a targeted approach;
- Working closely with the local councils to understand their service needs and develop the campaigns in partnership;
- Continuing to use consistent language when referring to recycling, ensuring that this is used across all communication channels;
- Adopting flexibility to react to changes; for example, changes to council services due to shortages in HGV drivers, changes caused by COVID restrictions which may prevent events from going ahead for example etc changes to collection services; and
- Incorporating key messages into the education centre visits to ensure they are aligned to the campaigns. A sustained change in behaviour occurs over time as new habits are formed. It is essential that education and engagement is a key part of the campaigns.

Priority Themes

Key themes have been identified that will form the focus of the behavioural change communications and engagement plan for the next financial year; these are:

- Food waste;
- Paper and card contamination;
- Fly tipping and providing advice on the correct disposal of bulky waste;
- Home composting; and
- SUEZ Social value plan.

In addition, the team will continue to support national campaigns such as Recycle Week and work with external organisations including Keep Britain Tidy, Alupro, and WRAP etc on campaigns that help to promote general messaging around reduce, reuse and recycle.

Food Waste

According to a recent survey carried out in June 2021 by WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme), two key trends have emerged with significant implications for food waste. Firstly, as restrictions have eased and more people return to work, there has been a significant increase in meals out and takeaways and time pressures are returning meaning we have less time to plan, batch cook, use up leftovers etc. Levels of food waste have returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The Government are also consulting on the National Waste and Resources strategy which includes the introduction of separate weekly food waste collections. A recent waste compositional analysis study showed that 28.4% of the general waste bin contains food. Removing food waste from the general waste will create more capacity in resident's bins and may also help to improve contamination rates in the recycling bins where food has been left in packaging and placed in the recycling bin.

During 2021, a new food waste campaign launched called Buy, Keep, Eat, Repeat which focusses on both preventing food waste and the correct use of the food waste recycling service.



Buy – messaging is centred around only buying what you need, encouraging residents to plan meals, write a shopping list etc;

Keep – this is about storing food correctly to reduce food waste, making sure the fridge is at the correct temperature and freezing leftovers;

Eat - this part of the campaign focusses on portion sizing to reduce food waste and checking best before dates; and

Repeat – is a reminder about using the food waste recycling service to recycle any unavoidable food waste.

As part of the campaign a trial is being carried out in Oldham to re-introduce the food waste collection service in an area of low participation. Residents will be provided with a kitchen caddy, and information on how to use the service. Participation will be monitored and the learnings incorporated into the campaign so that it can be rolled out in other districts.

The Buy, Eat, Keep, Repeat campaign will continue into 2022/23 using a mix of communication channels and direct engagement via events to raise awareness of the problem of food waste.

Budget £75,000

Paper and card contamination

Paper and card contamination has improved over recent months with fewer loads being rejected at the transfer loading stations. However, some councils have proactively been tackling the issue at the kerbside by leafleting residents and rejecting bins that are contaminated with the wrong items. Resourcing this type of on the ground direct engagement is prohibitive so the Recycle for Greater Manchester team has been exploring ways to recruit officers to carry out intense periods of monitoring and door knocking to engage with residents who are contaminating the paper and card bin.

This work will continue into 2022 as recruitment has so far not been possible.

Budget £100,000

Home Composting

The home composting campaign encourages residents to compost their own garden waste to help reduce demand on the garden waste collection service.

An offer has been secured with Get Composting; a website operated by Straights who supply home composting bins and water butts across Greater Manchester. Residents can buy either a Bokashi bin, 220 litre or 330 litre compost bins for 10% less than the standard price and will receive further saving through free postage and packaging.

The discounted bin offer is accessed directly from the [Get Composting website](#) and residents will have their purchase delivered within 2 weeks.

The offer is being promoted through 2021 and the number of bins sold will be monitored so we can evaluate whether to continue the offer into the next financial year.

In addition, a partnership with Sow the City is helping to provide trusted advice to residents on home composting.

Budget £20,000

Bulky Waste and Fly Tipping

The councils have recently set up a SOG (strategic officers' group) sub group to discuss tactics around tackling fly-tipping and the collection of bulky waste from households. It is proposed that a budget is allocated to communications to support the outcomes of this group.

Budget £100,000

Supporting the Delivery of the Waste and Resources Contracts

The Recycle for Greater Manchester team will continue to work with the Communications Manager at SUEZ to deliver joint communications related to construction works at the waste treatment facilities and operational changes at the Household waste recycling centres, (HWRCs).

Next year, the household waste recycling centre at Reliance Street will be redeveloped so a public consultation and communications will be required.

Increasing recycling at HWRCs also remains a priority. In February 2020, the trade waste access restriction policy was introduced to deter traders from illegally using the HWRCs to dispose of trade waste. As part of this policy, a van and trailer permit is being introduced to act as a further deterrent to stop traders from accessing the HWRCs.

In addition, top tips and helpful advice is regularly shared to help residents recycle as much as possible at the HWRCs as well as donate items for reuse that can be sold in the 3 Renew shops.

Budget £10,000

Social Value Plan

SUEZ is committed to delivering an extensive social value plan to create value from Greater Manchester's waste. As part of this vision, three Renew Shops have opened at HWRCs in Oldham, Trafford and Salford. A Renew Hub in Trafford Park is also being developed. This will be used to repair and upcycle items working with likeminded business and charities. The hub will also allow the introduction of electrical and white goods and will lead to the Hub becoming more of a community space.

The layout will include a number of work pods, each containing equipment for repairing, upcycling or repurposing items, for example cycle repair, white goods checking and repair, upholstery, and painting.

The Hub will create training and employment opportunities for the local community and as it develops will create partnerships with businesses, charities and other organisations.

Communications will initially focus on continuing to develop the Renew brand, promoting the opportunities for training and employment and on raising awareness of the social, economic and environmental benefits of the social value plan.

The Recycle for Greater Team will also work with SUEZ on developing a visitor centre and community events space at the HUB.

Budget £40,000

Education Centre Running Costs

The education team plan to start offering face to face tours around the Materials Recovery Facility at Longley Lane, South Manchester from September 2021. They also offer tours at the solar farm in Bolton and are exploring opportunities for a visitor centre at the Renew Hub in Trafford Park.

Budget for running costs (including cleaning PPE, maintenance of headsets and ICT equipment) £20,000

General

Other day to day expenses include:

- website maintenance;
- subscriptions; and
- photography.

Budget £20,000

Budget Summary

	Allocated budget 2022/23 £
Food waste	£75,000
Paper and card	£100,000
Fly-tipping	£100,000
Home composting	£20,000
SUEZ social value plan	£40,000
Operational comms	£10,000
Education centre costs	£20,000
General day to day costs	£20,000
Contingency	£20,000
Total	£405,000