

Communications & Engagement Behaviour Change Plan

Recycle for Greater Manchester

1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

September 2023

Recycle for Greater Manchester Communications & Engagement Behaviour Change Plan 2024/25

Introduction

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)'s Communications and Engagement Strategy sets out its organisational mission, which is to build people's trust and confidence in our organisation; empowering them to participate in and benefit from Greater Manchester's ambitions and priorities.

The audience focussed strategy has people at its heart, aligned with the Greater Manchester Strategy's mission of "good lives for all". Our actions are tailored and targeted according to backgrounds and life stages, informed by insight into experiences, opportunities and challenges of different people living and working here.

Trust and confidence are key to securing our future – helping us to maintain our legitimacy and secure further opportunities, investments, contributions, and collaborations. They provide our mandate for delivering our plans and build reputational capital to protect us through challenges.

Each of the GMCA's Communications and Engagement team's functional areas is **committed to excellent and professional service, in line with the GMCA's values** – collaborating, empowering, delivering. In addition to following our service's key principles, they work towards delivering agreed functional aims, as well as the objectives of their portfolio teams.

Each portfolio team works with programme leads to **develop year-round plans** which enable delivery of their Business Plan objectives and Greater Manchester Strategy commitments.

This plan outlines the Recycle for Greater Manchester communication and engagement behaviour change plan which supports the Waste and Resources team function, their Business Plan and the Waste contracts with SUEZ.

R4GM Communications & Engagement Behaviour Change Plan

The Recycle for Greater Manchester communications and engagement behaviour change plan aims to;

- Inspire and encourage the residents of Greater Manchester to manage their waste responsibly.

- Help residents to see the value of waste and the real benefits that can be achieved by wasting less and recycling right.

Communication Objectives

The Recycle for Greater Manchester annual communications plan is designed to meet the following objectives:

1. To align with the National Resources and Waste Strategy for England which provides the direction of travel. Once the policies have been consulted on and introduced by Defra, this will provide the basis for the Greater Manchester waste strategy.
2. To provide communications, engagement and media expertise to support the delivery of the Waste contracts. This involves working in partnership with the SUEZ Communications Manager on communicating about the household waste recycling centres, Renew Hub and shops, SUEZ social value plan and construction work at waste treatment facilities.
3. To support the Greater Manchester district councils (excluding Wigan) with joint communications to educate, promote and encourage residents to minimise their waste and recycle correctly. This leads to the development of specific campaigns to improve the quality and quantity of recycling collected by the district councils.
4. To support the GMCA Waste and Resources Team business plan
5. To develop communications in support of new emerging issues; for example, e-cigarette or vapes which are the largest growing waste stream in the UK.

Specific objectives and KPIs are set for each individual campaign based on available data. This is used in a Plan, Do, Review cycle to monitor and evaluate the communications and engagement plan, and adjust the communications tactics and channels accordingly.

How do we get there?

We will build trust by **being clear with people** about our activities, purpose and behaviours, and **creating genuine and meaningful opportunities for residents and partners to participate** in them, beyond a simply transactional relationship.

And we will build confidence by fulfilling our commitment to **form meaningful connections with individuals and organisations** across our city region, and regularly demonstrating how, by doing so, we are **delivering on the promises** of the Greater Manchester Strategy and the associated plans including the Greater Manchester waste and resources contracts in partnership with SUEZ.

Insight and evaluation are vital. Gaining information and ideas from residents and stakeholders based on their personal experience and expertise will help us create better priorities, policies and actions. And knowledge of our own performance,

reputation and environment will equip and inform a continuously improving response to people's ideas and expectations.

Our journey so far

- The recycling rate for Greater Manchester reached over 50% for the first time in 2021/22 (50.9% verified by DEFRA), making it one of the best performing urban city regions in the UK.
- The recycling rate at the 20 recycling centres has also been increasing year on year forecast to reach 57% for the 23/24 year"
- The three Renew shops opened in July 2021, with the online eBay shop open for a year selling some of the more expensive or larger items that are available to click and collect from the Hub at Trafford Park. A fourth shop is planned on the Reliance St HWRC site once redevelopment has been completed and SUEZ are currently exploring the option of temporary pop-up shops at suitable sites. The money raised from sales goes into two funds; £100,000 a year is donated to the Greater Manchester Mayors charity and £220,000 to the R4GM Community fund.
- The R4GM Community fund is in its third year. Over the three years, 67 groups have been funded to deliver a range of projects including food redistribution, bicycle repair and maintenance to redistributing baby clothes to those in need.
- Our education service is promoting the Renew hub tours and visitor pod as well as increasing the number of outreach sessions delivered, particularly in areas where we have low engagement.
- A new campaign called In the Loop was launched, which is designed to encourage more careful recycling by educating the public on the circular economy. Keeping goods in circulation for longer by reuse, repair and recycling helps to reduce the waste of natural resources. The second phase of the campaign will run during national recycle week (16-22 October), with advertising on the Metrolink service and a new suite of videos explaining the journey of typical household items as they're recycled and turned into new products.
- We have recently developed a new battery safety campaign with the Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service (GMFRS) which aims to educate the public on the dangers on putting batteries in any of the household waste and recycling bins. Batteries can combust and lead to fires once crushed by the compactor in bin wagons or during the mechanical sorting process.
- An ethnographic study was carried out earlier this year to help us understand resident behaviour at the recycling centres. This information is being used to develop a campaign to encourage better recycling and reuse at the recycling centres. The research highlighted that there are certain times in our lives

when we're more likely to visit the recycling centres, these are moving house, dealing with bereavement, and doing DIY at home. This provides us with opportunities to provide bespoke information to make it easier for people to do the right thing.

- The R4GM website has been refreshed with a new updated design to improve the user experience.
- The team also regularly communicate the household waste recycling centre access policy including the van and twin axle permit and any operational changes such as changes to materials collected at the sites, changes in opening times etc. They work with the SUEZ Communications Manager to ensure consistent messages are delivered to the SUEZ operatives as well as to the public via the R4GM website, leaflets, social media etc.

In the second half of this year, two more campaigns will be launched, the first around **textiles** which will educate residents on what to do with damaged clothing which often end up in the general waste bin. These items can be recycled and do have a value. The second focusses on **contamination in the food and garden waste bin**. The campaign aims to encourage residents to remove plastic packaging before recycling their food waste otherwise the resulting compost can contain unacceptable levels of plastic.

These campaigns will continue to be delivered into next year, reviewing and updating them as necessary. They will also be tailored and targeted to specific audience groups to allow us to tailor the content, language and visuals.

We are working in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy on exploring how to communicate waste prevention message to the public. The research will build on their first report 'Shifting the Public Focus from Recycling to Waste Prevention'. The findings will enable us to start to shift the public up the waste hierarchy beyond recycling and repair to show how our consumption habits must change if we are to meet global climate change targets. This research may lead us to develop additional communications regarding waste prevention in the next financial year.

Social Value

In addition to the development of the Renew hub and shops, SUEZ are delivering an extensive social value plan with 54 individual commitments all designed to achieve value from Greater Manchester's waste. These include offering at least 65 apprenticeships over the course of the contract, 92 traineeships, 88 work experience placements and support local schools with career days.

SUEZ pay their staff the Real Living Wage and are now members of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter. The team works jointly with the SUEZ Communications Manager to communicate the range of ways that SUEZ are generating value from waste and giving back to the local community. A joint

communications plan is being developed in support of the Renew Hub, Renew shops and these additional social value commitments.

GMCA Waste and Resources business plan

In addition to the campaigns summarised above, the GMCA waste and resources business plan includes the following objectives which requires bespoke communications and engagement support.

- Develop plans to decarbonise the service, assets and infrastructure. This provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the range of waste treatment sites and the way in which the sites are being retrofitted to reduce the carbon emissions.
- Redevelopment of the Reliance St household waste recycling centre which will close in Spring 2024 for 9-12 months. We will work with Manchester City Council and SUEZ on a joint communications and engagement plan to communicate the closure and to provide regular updates for the local community.
- Carry out waste compositional analysis to inform a GM waste strategy. The waste compositional analysis data will be used to inform and adapt the campaigns and communications.

Tactics

In support of the delivery of the communications and engagement plan, the following tactics will be implemented;

- Maintain a clear narrative throughout our communications and campaigns so that R4GM is seen as the trusted voice on recycling, reuse and repair, signposting residents to clear and honest information, without jargon.
- Engage with resident face to face at relevant events such as the Sustainability Show which was held in July in Manchester.
- Engage and educate residents at our three visitor centres which provide education and advice on recycling, reuse, repair and wider environmental issues to deliver specific learning outcomes.
- Keep the Recycle for Greater Manchester website updated with the latest recycling guidance and information on the 20 household waste recycling centres.
- Use images where possible to assist communities where English is not their first language.
- Use photographs depicting local residents carrying out recycling, reuse and repair in local places.

- Take a multi-channel approach making the most of on and offline channels to reach a wide audience.
- Identify and work across portfolio teams where appropriate; e.g. Fire Service, Digital, Homelessness etc.
- Produce campaign materials for the local councils and other partners to share on their own channels.
- Work with influencers to deliver the recycling messages, e.g. Cloud Gardener is a well-known small space gardener helping to raise awareness of our home composting offers.
- Update the GMCA waste and resources page regularly with case studies, annual reports, newsletters etc to demonstrate our progress on delivering high quality waste management services in GM.
- Use GMCA LinkedIn, Twitter/X and Facebook channels to champion our success in delivering the largest waste disposal contract in the country.
- Enter awards to raise awareness of our success in delivering successful campaigns and communications.
- Submit regular articles in the trade press to further raise awareness of the work of the GMCA among industry professionals.
- Network and horizon scan for opportunities to work in partnership with key leading national organisations such as Keep Britain Tidy, WRAP, Alupro, Recycle your electricals etc.

Behavioural Change principles

Behavioural change principles are used to develop the campaigns. Unconscious behaviour is tied to everyday routines and linked with specific spaces. The more we repeat a behaviour, the more automatic and habitual it becomes. People prefer to behave as we always have done and tend to go with the default option.

Large scale social change is driven by social interdependencies – it is crucial to observe that others are acting to change your own behaviour. A popular behaviour change model is the COM-B model, to do a behaviour an individual must have the **Capability** to do it, the **Motivation** to do it, and external factors must provide the individual with an **Opportunity** to do it.

When designing behavioural change campaigns, we identify our audience, identify the specific behaviour that we want them to take; e.g. recycle plastic bottles only in their mixed recycling bin. We then identify the possible motivations and barriers to carrying out the behaviours such as confusing product labelling, or they don't have the right bin. We then identify when and how we want them to carry out the behaviour. It is important to focus on one audience and one behaviour at a time.

Appropriate behaviour change interventions then can be applied and communicated.

Activity Plan 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

Communications Activity	Timescales	Objective
R4GM Community Fund – promote the fund in April-May to encourage applications.	April – May 2024 Sep – Oct 2024	2.
Renew Shops, Hub, social value commitments	Ongoing	2
Discounted compost bin offer through Get Composting.com website	Ongoing	3
Compost donation scheme – free compost for community groups and schools	Ongoing	3
Education service – provide learning outcomes via 3 visitor centres, outreach and online sessions	Ongoing	3
Reliance St, Manchester HWRC closure (Spring 2024, TBC)	January 2024 to January 2025	2, 4
Maintain and update R4GM website	Ongoing	2,3,4,5
In the Loop recycling campaign – continue to develop campaign for different audiences and for different materials	Ongoing	2,3
Battery safety joint campaign with GMFRS – continue to develop this in support of battery fire hotspots.	Ongoing	2,3,5
Recycle your electricals – continue to support this national campaign aimed to increase the recycling of batteries and electricals	Ongoing	2,3,5
Textiles campaign – focussed on keeping textiles out of the general waste bin	Ongoing from Nov 2023	2,3
Food waste contamination campaign – focussed on reducing plastic contamination	Ongoing from Jan 2024	2,3
HWRC recycling campaign – use ethnographic study results to develop and run a recycling campaign aimed at better segregation, recycling and reuse	Ongoing from Nov 2023	2,3
Support Keep Britain Tidy on waste prevention research project - incorporate results into R4GM Communications Plan	Sep 2023 to Jan 2024	2,3,4,5

Support national awareness weeks including Buy Nothing New month (Jan), GM Repair Week (March), Compost Awareness Week (March), Food Waste Awareness Week (March), Recycle Week (Oct)		2,3
Attend the GM Sustainability Show (date TBC)	TBC	2,3
Develop communications to raise awareness of the decarbonisation of the waste treatment sites.	TBC once programme of work has been finalised	4
Deliver seasonal communications e.g., at Christmas, Eid, Hannukah etc. ensuring messaging is relevant to the audience.	Ongoing	

Next Steps

Following feedback from the Greater Manchester district councils (excluding Wigan) and the Waste and Recycling committee, the plan will be developed with the R4GM team and timescales, and budget will be confirmed in January 2024.