



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Waste Prevention Programme for England

Household waste prevention in
action – examples from across
England

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Electrical



- In 2012/13 the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority WEEE reuse schemes (run in partnership with local civil society organisations) collected 813 items, weighing 43 tonnes. Of these items 582 were deemed reusable or repaired, meaning 30.7 tonnes of WEEE was diverted and made available for reuse back into the community. The remaining 28% was recycled.
- A total of 67% of the reusable (as opposed to new) WEEE items were sold and found a new home in 2012-2013. Delivering cost savings (based on landfill tax alone) of £1,965.
- The reuse schemes also deliver social benefits ;
 - Directly assisting low income households
 - Providing training, volunteering and employment opportunities
 - Generating revenue in support of the civil society groups' work.

Students

- At the end of each academic year a large quantity of surplus furniture, household items etc. are produced by students as they vacate their halls of residence and rented accommodation.

A local student union initiative, Green Streets, has been supported by Leeds City Council and partnered with a local reuse organisation to ensure that as many items as possible are diverted from landfill for reuse.

In 2009 over 21 tonnes of reusable goods were collected, sorted and redistributed by students volunteers (who gave over 1,200 hrs of their time) to homeless charities, hostels and community free-shops.



Furniture & Bulky Waste

- Wandsworth Council's household bulky waste reuse service, is provided in partnership with local civil society organisations and run in parallel with the bulky waste collection service.

As a result the Council diverts around 6 tonnes each month, saving approximately £870 per month in avoided disposal fees and adding around 0.08% to the Council's recycling rate and providing affordable white goods and furniture etc. to needy households.

Collection charges can be avoided by delivering to the reuse bay at the local household waste and recycling centre.



Community

- The Community Action Group (CAG) Project is a voluntary network consisting of over 50 groups across Oxfordshire at the forefront of community led climate change action, organising events and projects to take action on issues including waste, transport, food, energy and biodiversity. The network is the largest of its kind in the UK and runs over 365 events per year, attended by more than 60,000 local residents.

Community Action Groups in Oxfordshire held 85 swap shops (2012/13), enabling 11,000 people to swap and divert over 38 tonnes of items from landfill. This included over 1,500 electrical items tested by a network of over 50 trained Portable Appliance Testers in the community.



Household Waste

- Gloucestershire Zero Waste Challenge Week a high profile campaign focussed on the reduction of waste sent to landfill over one week in 2009. 1,300 residents, schools and communities signed up to participate in the challenge.

During the challenge week residents reduced their waste to landfill by an average of 3.8kg per household, with most residents achieving a 50% drop in the amount of waste they sent to landfill. This was achieved with a campaign budget of around £25,000.



If this performance could have been replicated by all households in the county it would have the equivalent effect of Gloucestershire meeting their 2020, 60% recycling target.

Paint

- Since establishing a paint reuse scheme at four HWRCs (cost £28,000), Nottinghamshire County Council has collected and diverted 17,000 litres of paint from householders from (specialist) disposal, saving the council £17,000 to date and saving local community groups £69,700 on the cost of new paint.
- The contracting of a civil society organisation by Leeds City Council to collect waste paint from all HWRCs in the city facilitated the reuse of over 80 tonnes of paint (approx. 66,640 litres) in just one year (2010/11).



Nappies

- Use of reusable nappies as opposed to disposables prevents 1 tonne of waste per child, saving councils over £100 and parents up to £600.
- Nappy waste cost is estimated to cost local authorities £77 million annually (2011).
- Several councils in the UK incentivise the use of reusable nappies through various schemes e.g. vouchers, free samples.
- For example, Derbyshire County Council £25 cash-back incentive has avoided 1,509 tonnes of nappy waste since 2004.
- Nappy laundry services offer even greater resource efficiency and convenience, with nappies being hired out and used at least 100 times each.



Transport



- The refurbishment of hundreds of bicycles collected from HWRCs in Oxfordshire by civil society organisations has reduced waste, created training and employment opportunities and provided sustainable transport to members of the local community at an affordable price.
- Provision of tailored travel information has been shown to result in increases in walking of up to 21%, cycling 31% and a 25% increase in public transport use, whilst reducing car use by 11%.
- Every car club vehicle takes at least 8 personally-owned cars off the road, and a further 12 are not purchased. Furthermore, car club members save in the region of £3,000 per year vs. owning their own vehicle.

Food

- Costing £120,000, Leicestershire Waste Partnership's Love Food Hate Waste campaign has increased the number of committed food waste reducers from 12% to 21% equating to 1,875 tonnes of food waste reduced. Cost savings estimated at £133,000.
- Households participating in the three week, North London Food Waste Challenge (run by the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) reduced their food waste on average by 38% and saved 30% on their weekly food bills, with one household reducing their food waste by 75% and cutting their weekly food bill by 33%.



Textiles

- Oxford's annual ReFashion event was attended by over 900 people in 2013, who brought along more than two thirds of a tonne of clothing and swapped over 1,000 items.
- Swishing events in Oxfordshire have allowed over a tonne of clothing and fabric to change hands and avoid being thrown away.
- Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority organised 9 'learn to sew' sessions to help residents reduce clothing waste by enabling them to take care of their clothes. As a result 98% of participants felt they had the necessary skills and 83% were inspired to buy second-hand and upcycle.



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