

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

REPORT TITLE:

WASTE PREVENTION UPDATE

REPORT OF:

HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

FOR SUBMISSION TO:

AUTHORITY MEETING

DATE:

22 June 2017

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report provides an update on the final quarter's waste prevention activities for 2016/17, the first year of the North London Waste Prevention Plan 2016-2018. The report also provides details of the impact of the year's activities contained in Appendix 1. The estimated tonnage diverted is 10,244 tonnes. In addition, the report provides an overview of some research to assess the impact of the Authority's waste education work which shows that waste arisings in participating schools remained low after the NLWA waste education project had finished and that levels of pupils' knowledge of waste reduction was sustained. The Authority's Annual Report, contained elsewhere on this meeting agenda provides a high level summary of the full year's activity.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Authority is recommended to note the progress in delivering the first year, 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 of the two-year North London Waste Prevention Plan 2016 to 2018.

SIGNED: Head of Legal and Governance

DATE: 12 June 2017

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The North London Waste Prevention Plan 2016-18 (the Plan) was approved at the February 2016 Authority meeting. The aim of the Plan is to reduce local authority collected waste arisings in north London, encourage resources to be used more efficiently e.g. by reusing products rather than buying new, and improve the local environment through a comprehensive and sustainable programme of waste prevention activities. The Plan focuses on reducing the amount of waste in three priority waste streams, namely food, furniture and textiles. Work on reducing other waste streams such as paper, nappies and plastic bags is undertaken on a smaller scale.
- 1.2 Waste prevention is at the top of the waste hierarchy, the most preferable action in tackling waste, followed by preparation for re-use, recycling, recovery and disposal as the least preferable option. The target is to divert 20,000 tonnes of waste from recycling and disposal as a result of the two year programme of work. The diverted tonnage is measured by a combination of using average weights and estimates.
- 1.2 Members were provided with an update about the implementation of the Plan at the February 2017 Authority meeting. Now that the first full year's activity has been delivered, the results are available for the year 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017.
- 1.3 The report highlights the following elements of the year's activity:
 - Outreach activities to promote food waste reduction and recycling through face-to-face conversations with residents;
 - Community exchange events entitled 'Give and Take' days which have been completed since the last report in February;
 - Seven clothing repair and upcycling events which were delivered in the last two months of the year;
 - The annual Waste Prevention Exchange which took place on 16 February; and
 - Evaluation work including some research undertaken with schools that have participated in the intensive waste education programme over the past three years.

2 OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Food waste prevention

- 2.1 During 2016/17 a programme of face-to face outreach activity was delivered across north London to encourage residents to reduce the amount of food waste they throw away. The activity included information stands in a range of settings such as at festivals and fairs, in libraries, community centres, offices, universities and leisure centres. Based upon national research and guidance and previous officer experience five key messages and actions were encouraged:
 - Plan meals in advance to avoid buying food that will go to waste;
 - Write a shopping list to avoid buying more than you need;
 - Understand the meaning of 'best before' and 'use by' dates so that food is not thrown away before it should be;
 - Measure the portions of food that are being cooked so that the amount is correct for the number of people eating;

- Store food well to avoid food spoiling and therefore going to waste.
- 2.2 A key message to residents is that they can save up to £60 per month just by cutting down on food waste.
- 2.3 An updated leaflet was produced in the year which provides practical tips about reducing food waste. The leaflet, together with free tools to help with food storage and correct measurement of portions, is available from the Authority's information stands. Information is also available online at <http://wiseuptowaste.org.uk/waste-less/food-waste/how-to-reduce-your-food-waste>
- 2.4 Table 1 in Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the activity by borough. The figures include all the information stands listed above as well as stands that formed part of specific projects e.g. stands at the Pumpkin Rescue festival (to reduce pumpkin waste at Halloween) and the New Leaf project (aimed at reducing salad wastage in the summer). The target for the North London Waste Prevention Plan is to hold 20,000 conversations about food waste prevention during the two year period of the Plan (2016-18). With 13,077 face-to-face conversations held within the first year (2016-17), performance is above target to date.

Recycling

- 2.5 The outreach programme additionally includes activity to support borough programmes aimed at encouraging residents to recycle more. Table 2 in Appendix 1 sets out the number of recycling stands and conversations held during the year. Fifty nine events were held in total of which 33 focussed solely on mixed dry recycling and 26 on food waste recycling.
- 2.6 The 59 Authority events detailed in Table 2 supported 52 borough outreach events (Barnet (5), Camden (2), Hackney (16), Haringey (5), Islington (2) and Waltham Forest (22)).

3 GIVE AND TAKE DAYS

- 3.1 Give and Take Days are free community exchange events which provide residents with an opportunity to donate unwanted but reusable items that they no longer want for free and take some items they need for free – hence 'give' and 'take'.
- 3.2 Fourteen Give and Take Days were delivered by NLWA staff with agency support during January and February. The events were attended by 696 people who brought 13.9 tonnes of items and took away 13.8 tonnes for reuse. Although NLWA has delivered Give and Take Days for several years, the tonnage of material diverted on average per event has increased in the past two years since the introduction of a free collection service for bulky items that residents want taken to the events and free delivery of bulky items from the events too. Any electrical items are also PAT (Portable Appliance Test) tested on arrival which increases the scope of material that can be accepted.
- 3.3 Previously NLWA has contracted a third party to deliver the Give and Take Days. The type of organisations who have previously bid for and won the work frequently had access to second-hand shops and were therefore able to provide additional material for the Give and Take Days from the shops if required. Because NLWA was delivering the events in-house in 2016/17, LondonWaste Ltd was approached to provide some 'start-up' items for the first Give and Take event from the Second Time Around reuse shop at the Kings Road reuse and recycling centre to ensure that there was a sufficient number of items for taking at the start. LondonWaste provided 300kg of items that they had had difficulty selling in the shop, which is not a high tonnage of items, but it was helpful to

have access to some start-up items to ensure that the first event in the series was a success. At the end of the series of 14 Give and Take Days any items remaining were taken back to Second Time Around and where possible they were put on display in the shop for sale. Table 3 in Appendix 1 provides the details of each event. The number of items taken at each event is not recorded because any untaken items at an event are retained and passed on to the next event. Therefore the total number of items and tonnage taken is available for the series of Give and Take Days but is not available on an event by event basis.

4 SWISH AND STYLE – CLOTHING REUSE AND UPCYCLING EVENTS

- 4.1 Keep Britain Tidy was contracted in early 2017 to deliver seven ‘Swish and Style’ events in March, one event in each north London borough. The events aimed to encourage clothing reuse through clothes swapping, which is also known as “swishing”. The other aspect of the events was clothing repair and upcycling - altering old items of clothing to make them more attractive and desirable to wear, or “styling”; hence the term “swish and style”.
- 4.2 The “swishing” part of each event was delivered by Keep Britain Tidy in the same way as a Give and Take Day with attendees being given the time to donate clothes they no longer wanted and then a separate time to take items donated by others. However, a key difference between a Give and Take Day and a swishing event is that attendees have to bring clothes in order to take them and each person’s taking is restricted to an equivalent number of items to the number they have brought.
- 4.3 The “styling” part of each event was delivered by a number of Keep Britain Tidy’s sub-contractors . Styling activities took place whilst attendees who had brought along items for swishing were waiting for the ‘taking’ part of the event to start Significant Seams, a Waltham Forest based sewing shop ran courses on sewing and repairs, and a series of upcycling workshops, and Upcycle Fashion, who deliver upcycling workshops, ran mini-practical workshops teaching attendees to use sewing machines. TRAIID a textile recycling charity, attended each event and encouraged attendees sign their #secondhandfirst pledge which asks participants to let TRAIID know what percentage of their wardrobe they commit to sourcing second-hand. Participants were then asked to use social media to update TRAIID about their progress after signing up. Leaflets and information about local sewing courses and NLWA textiles guides were also available. Table 4 in Appendix 1 provides details of the delivered events.

5 WASTE PREVENTION EXCHANGE

- 5.1 On 16 February NLWA held its third North London Waste Prevention Exchange focusing on ‘The circular economy in a post-Brexit environment: the role of local government and business’. A summary of the event is available on the Authority’s website at <http://wiseuptowaste.org.uk/waste-less/north-london-waste-prevention-exchange>.

6 EVALUATION OF IMPACT

- 6.1 The Waste Prevention Plan 2016-18 includes a range of approaches to encourage waste prevention. These approaches are grouped in the Plan as follows:

Technical measures: reduce waste by delivering an activity; so that by participating in the activity residents reduce the amount of waste that is thrown away e.g. the reduction of food waste via public engagement events which use food that would have otherwise been thrown away).

Economic measures: provide subsidies to encourage waste reduction behaviours (e.g. real nappy subsidies).

Educational measures: change the behaviour of all actors involved by providing information about the environmental impact of waste and the benefits of waste prevention (e.g. intensive work with schools, conferences, exhibitions).

Organisational measures: coordinate with various stakeholders and institutions involved in waste prevention (e.g. responses to consultations, being members of professional organisations such as the Association of Cities and Regions for Sustainable Resource Management).

6.2 Appropriate evaluation of the different measures is carried out using the best information available, whilst recognising that measuring the absence of waste is not as easy or reliable as measuring tonnages going to recycling or disposal for example. Depending upon the activity, officers therefore use a range of metrics to assess performance against the Plan objectives. Appendix 2 outlines the estimated diversion of waste resulting from 2016/17's waste prevention activities. The column of 'planned activity' outlines the proposed activities at the start of the year, which in some cases were replaced with alternative actions. (Members have separately been provided with full details of all actions for the year in the North London Waste Prevention Plan 2016-18 Summary of Activity in 2016/17.) A summary of the year's activity is also available in the Annual Report presented for the Authority's AGM at the same meeting as this report.

6.3 It is estimated that 10,244 tonnes of waste were diverted as a result of the waste prevention activity in the last year – the details of which are included in Appendix 2 to this report. In addition, research is carried out with event participants and residents who visit waste prevention stands for example so that for each activity there is an additional assessment of whether participants feel that they have learnt something about waste prevention and will be able to put it into practice. For the clothing reuse events for example, based upon a sample of 103 attendees, (29.3% of the total) the following feedback was received.

- 88 (85.4%) rated the overall events as excellent.
- 103 respondents (100%) of those who provided feedback stated their desire for more events.
- 101 of respondents (98%) believed that they were now more interested in reuse, repair and/or upcycling.
- 95 out of the 103 respondents who provided feedback, (92.2%) said they felt they had saved money because of attending the event.

The results of all the evaluation work are being taken into account in planning activities for 2017/18 .

Education evaluation project

6.4 One additional piece of evaluation work was conducted in 2016/17 namely an assessment of the impact of the schools' waste education programme which is delivered as part of the waste prevention programme.

6.5 A Hackney based charity, ecoActive, was contracted to deliver research to assess the impact of NLWA's two intensive education projects which had been delivered by themselves across 28 schools in north London between 2014 and 2016.

6.6 The aim of the evaluation was to revisit schools that had previously taken part in the programme and to assess how waste prevention and recycling behaviour had changed since the intensive education project had taken place. 21 of the 28 schools which had taken part in the intensive waste education project also participated in the research. The assessment included:

- A waste audit to assess how the school was dealing with their waste;
- An in-depth interview with key school staff to assess the impact;
- A workshop with pupils to assess levels of knowledge of waste prevention and establish if behaviour change had taken place.
- A tour of the school to look for evidence that waste prevention measures that had been implemented during the project were still having an impact.
- Discussions with parents to find out if and how information has been cascaded beyond the classrooms.

6.7 ecoActive engaged with:

- 437 primary school aged children
- 231 parents and carers and
- 25 members of school staff

in carrying out the research. In addition waste audit data from nine schools was examined and the findings from audits carried out in 2015/16 were compared to audits carried out at the end of the follow up visit.

6.8 Results from the waste audits demonstrated that waste prevention behaviours at participating schools were retained. At the start of the Intensive Education Project in 2014/15, the average amount of waste produced in classrooms was 2.5 kg/day. At the end of the project the average classroom was throwing away 0.7 kg/day on average, which represented a 72% reduction. A year later, further reduction was achieved with the average amount of waste produced in classrooms identified as 0.15 kg/day, which represented a 94% reduction compared to the amount produced in 2014/15.

6.9 However, based upon the research, the excellent improvement in reducing classroom waste was not reflected in the staffroom. Waste produced at staffrooms had increased by 20% on average in comparison to the amount produced at the end of the Intensive Waste Education project, although the amount of waste produced was still 57% lower in comparison to the baseline data in 2014/15.

6.10 The research also showed that pupil knowledge of the waste hierarchy was not only retained, but was increased by an average of 17.5% between the end of the Intensive Education Project and the follow-up research. Additionally, pupils' knowledge of recycling increased by 31% in comparison to the levels of knowledge reported at the end of the Intensive Education Project in 2016.

6.11 Feedback from staff was positive with 90% of teachers interviewed reporting that there had been positive behaviour change at schools, whilst 75% claimed that more changes were made to schools after the end of the project, e.g. introduction of food waste collections. However, teachers also reported a number of challenges faced upon completion of the Intensive Education Project, such as lack of support from fellow teachers and lack of time to implement further changes.

6.12 Overall, the evaluation of the Intensive Education Project identified long term benefits of the engagement between 2014 and 2016. Waste arisings in participating schools

remained low and levels of pupils' knowledge of waste reduction was sustained. There was also evidence that waste prevention measures that schools implemented continued to have impact.

7 COMMENTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

- 7.1 The Legal Adviser has been consulted in the drafting of this report and has no comments to add.

8 COMMENTS OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISER

- 8.1 The budget for 2016/17 was set at £461k and the outturn was slightly lower at £459k. This includes an allocation of costs included in the 'Corporate & Other Support Services Costs' line of the 2016/17 outturn reported elsewhere on the agenda. The average cost per tonne of waste diverted referred to in paragraph 6.3 is the outturn figure above divided by the number of tonnes diverted.
- 8.2 The approved Waste Prevention Plan 2016-18 estimates an average cost of £52.51 per tonne of waste diverted as result of the Plan's activities.

Local Government Act 1972 - Access to Information

DOCUMENTS USED: North London Waste Prevention Plan 2016-18 Summary of Activity in 2016/17

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REPORT ENDS

APPENDIX 1

TABLES

Table 1 – Food waste prevention outreach activity delivered during 2016/17

Borough	Number of food waste prevention information stands in the year	Number of conversations about food waste prevention held at the stands
Barnet	25	1,675
Camden	28	1,793
Enfield	24	1,235
Hackney	20	1,891
Haringey	22	1,405
Islington	32	2,909
Waltham Forest	29	2,169
Total	180	13,077

Table 2 – Recycling outreach activity delivered during 2016/17

Borough	Number of events delivered	Number of conversations about recycling held at the stands
Barnet	7	392
Camden	10	343
Enfield	10	425
Hackney	7	380
Haringey	8	410
Islington	10	487
Waltham Forest	7	323
Total	59	2,760

Table 3 – Give and Take Days delivered during 2016/17

Borough	Date of Give and Take Day	Attendance (number of people):	Donations – via household collection service (tonnes)	Donations at event (tonnes)	Donations total (tonnes)
Enfield	14/01/2017	30	0.8	0.4	1.2
Haringey	15/01/2017	29	0.6	0.3	0.9
Camden	21/01/2017	44	0.9	0.4	1.3
Barnet	22/01/2017	40	0.4	0.7	1.1
Islington	28/01/2017	40	0.5	0.5	1.0
Waltham Forest	29/01/2016	59	0.2	0.6	0.8
Camden	04/02/2017	63	0.4	0.5	0.9
Hackney	05/02/2017	59	0.4	0.8	1.2
Enfield	11/02/2017	64	0.4	0.2	0.6
Haringey	12/02/2017	35	0.2	0.5	0.7
Barnet	18/02/2017	50	0.3	0.6	0.9
Islington	19/02/2017	61	0.3	0.4	0.7
Hackney	25/02/2017	66	0.2	0.8	1.0
Waltham Forest	26/02/2017	56	0.1	1.5	1.6
Total		696	5.7	8.2	13.9
Average per event		50	0.4	0.6	1.0

Table 4 – Swish and Style events delivered during 2016/17

Boroughs	Date	Attendees	Items donated	Weight of items donated (kg)	Items taken	Weight of items taken (kg)	Number of Workshops	Items fixed
Barnet	05/03/2017	37	244	69.2	165	146.0	14	4
Camden	26/02/2017	40	239	71.9	122	37.4	12	8
Enfield	25/02/2017	14	171	54.1	43	13.6	4	2
Hackney	25/03/2017	71	531	156.7	424	129.2	18	8
Haringey	26/03/2017	61	365	108.4	270	89.5	21	5
Islington	12/03/2017	77	506	154.4	425	130.1	25	5
Waltham Forest	11/03/2017	52	246	72.1	215	72.0	6	5
Total		352	2,302	687.2	1,664	617.7	100	37

APPENDIX 2

Planned Activity		Evaluation method			Annual Diversion target (tonnes)	Estimated diversion in 2016-17 (tonnes)	
			Survey methods				
Priority waste streams (food, furniture, textiles)		Physical measurement of waste diverted	Question naire/ feedback	Activity statistics	Proxy measures		
Food waste	<p>Run an intensive, large scale and high profile food waste reduction programme, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - food waste stalls at large festivals and fairs, supermarkets, farmers markets and shopping centres with a target of 10,000 face to face conversations; - intensive work with a minimum of 30 community groups through workshops, presentations and cascade training sessions; - work with educational establishments, halls of residence and student unions; - 14 lunchtime briefings and stalls in offices and council buildings; - 14 food waste demonstrations and cookery sessions providing residents with skills; - 25 displays in libraries, community centres and empty shop windows; food waste challenge helping residents implement changes in their homes; - 7 events where free lunch is offered to the public from food that otherwise could have been wasted along with advice on food waste reduction; - 7 composting sessions, and composting collection points; - sessions bringing together a mix of people involved in the food industry sharing experiences with residents around food; - work with 7 families that will act as ambassadors for promoting the food waste reduction message before Christmas; - waste prevention conference; - advertising, print and social media activity. 		x	x	x	6,969	7,031

Planned Activity		Evaluation method				Annual Diversion target (tonnes)	Estimated diversion in 2016-17 (tonnes)
			Survey methods				
Furniture and other bulky waste	Support furniture reuse and repair activity and deliver a range of activities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14 community exchange events; - community repair and upcycling activity and exhibition; - work with local 3rd sector organisations; - support the King's Road reuse shop; - promote the national web-based postcode locator - promote community exchange systems such as freegle and freecycle, loan and hire libraries; - press and social media activity. 	x	x	x		1,033	1,151
Textiles	Work in partnership with 3 rd sector organisations to promote textile reuse, repair and upcycling, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14 clothing exchange, repair and upcycling events; - Production and promotion of a textiles guide; - Work with colleges and universities for the promotion of swishing events; - support existing clothing exchange networks and promotion of services they offer; - print and social media activity. 	x	x	x	x	425	667
Other waste prevention activity							
Waste Education	Run an extensive education programme incorporating waste prevention and recycling messages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work intensively with 14 schools to raise awareness of waste prevention and recycling amongst pupils and their families; - offer educational visits to Reuse and Recycling Centres. 	x	x	x		506	269
European Week for Waste Reduction	Ensure that the three priority waste streams targeted by the current programme are included in eth Week's activity and have a target of a minimum of 5,000 residents participating in the activities.	x	x	x		195	359
Single use plastic bags	Work with small local retailers and their customers for the promotion of use of reusable bags as opposed to single use plastic carrier bags.		x	x	x	236	217

Planned Activity		Evaluation method				Annual Diversion target (tonnes)	Estimated diversion in 2016-17 (tonnes)
			Survey methods				
Paper (unwanted mail)	Promote paper reduction and offer guidance to north London residents about how to opt out of receiving unwanted marketing material.			x	x	173	182
Reference guides	Produce/update the following reference guides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - guide for businesses to reflect current programme and infrastructures and provide information on how small local businesses can reduce the amount of waste they produce and increase recycling; - guide for households with tips and advice on how to waste less and save money when shopping and at the same time be kinder to the environment; - textiles guide to provide residents with information on how they can extend the life of their textiles and at the same time organise their own swishing events. 					n/a	n/a
Incentive schemes							
Real nappies	Provide and promote a financial incentive to parents using reusable 'real' nappies on their babies; continue to pay £54.15 per child using real nappies and support the Real Nappy for London scheme and the cash back scheme by covering the administration costs.				x	440	368
Grand total						9,980	10,244