

Agenda Item No:

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

REPORT TITLE:

WASTE PREVENTION UPDATE

REPORT OF:

HEAD OF WASTE STRATEGY & CONTRACTS

FOR SUBMISSION TO:

AUTHORITY MEETING.

DATE:

10th December 2008

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report outlines actions towards implementing the waste prevention objectives outlined in the North London Joint Waste Strategy and the associated Waste Prevention Plan 2008-10.

RECOMMENDATION

The Authority is recommended to note the contents of this report.

Signed Head of Waste Strategy &
by: Contracts

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Date:.....

1.0 NATIONAL CONTEXT

- 1.1 The Waste Strategy for England 2007 reinforces the position of waste prevention at the 'top' of the waste hierarchy. Within the hierarchy, waste prevention should be carried out in preference to recycling and composting, recovering energy from waste and disposing waste to landfill, the least desirable of actions.
- 1.2 While the Waste Strategy for England 2007 introduced 'reduction' targets for the first time, these were based on residual waste not recycled or composted. As such, these targets do not focus on total waste arising and therefore may provide an incentive to increase recycling and central composting without necessarily promoting actions to reduce the generation of waste in the first place.

2.0 WASTE PREVENTION OBJECTIVES IN THE NORTH LONDON JOINT WASTE STRATEGY

- 2.1 The North London Joint Waste Strategy (NLJWS) sets a target to reduce municipal waste growth down from a predicted 3% growth per annum until 2010 and to a desired 2.5% from then onwards.
- 2.2 Analysis of past tonnages indicates that municipal waste growth varies considerably year on year. Between 2003/04 and 2006/07, growth ranged between 1.90% and -0.54%. This has been a period of much lower growth than shown in earlier years, when 3% growth was more typical.
- 2.3 While these figures indicate that NLWA is currently well within targets for waste growth, predicted population increases in North London mean that total growth in waste could exceed the annual rates set out in the NLJWS in the future, if no action to prevent waste production is taken.
- 2.4 The NLJWS sets out a series of Strategy Implementation Actions which the partners have agreed in order to achieve the waste growth reduction targets.
- 2.5 As these Strategy Implementation Actions are 'high-level' actions, the *North London Waste Prevention Plan 2008-10* (NLWPP) identifies the shorter term, practical actions that are needed to achieve these high-level aims.
- 2.6 It is also anticipated that the NLWPP will play an important role in the procurement process. The cost of new waste management, recycling and disposal facilities post-2014 is likely to be very high, with these costs being primarily passed onto the constituent boroughs. Any reduction in waste arising due to waste prevention activities will help minimise these costs.

2.7 The rest of this report outlines the key actions that have taken place on waste prevention since the last Authority meeting. A summary of the full year's activities (financial year 2008/09) will be provided at the end of the year along with proposals for 2009/10 in line with the two year plan. All proposals for waste prevention work going forward will also be supported by relevant cost benefit analyses.

3.0 WATCH YOUR WASTE WEEK- 4TH – 12TH OCTOBER 2008

3.1 Watch Your Waste Week (WYWW) took place from 4th to 12th October. The aim of the week was to raise awareness of waste prevention and promote measures which can achieve a reduction in waste. During WYWW North London residents were encouraged to think about the amount of waste they produce and were challenged to create less waste.

3.2 A key component of the week was a high profile launch event which took place on 2nd October at The Roundhouse in Camden¹. The Authority Chair Cllr Clyde Loakes gave a welcoming speech and introduced WYWW to a total of 150 North London residents, elected members and officers from NLWA and its seven constituent boroughs. The launch event also featured a fashion show which showcased a unique collection of outfits made from second hand clothes and reused materials, which was organised in conjunction with The Resource Forum. There was also live music from Weapons of Sound whose instruments are made from reused and recycled materials.

3.3 Other Watch Your Waste Week activities included the following:

- **Watch Your Waste Challenge**, which was a challenge to encourage North London residents, businesses and educational establishments to use only goods that can be reused, recycled or composted. 200 residents, 3 businesses and 11 primary schools in North London took part in the Challenge.
- **Seven 'Give and Take' days** took place across Camden, Enfield, Islington and Waltham Forest.
- WYWW also included **12 'Shop Smart' events** where residents from all seven North London boroughs were offered reusable cotton bags and encouraged to 'shop smart' by buying products with less packaging and reuse their carrier bags.
- Parents, carers and families using real or disposables nappies were invited to **Real Nappy events** which took place in Camden, Hackney and Islington.
- **Three composting workshops** organised by Camden, Hackney and Islington in which North London residents were given the opportunity to learn how to compost, share ideas and experiences and make the most of their compost bin or wormery.
- Promotion of **school waste prevention activities** such as 'waste free lunches' in Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Islington and Haringey.

¹ A short DVD of the launch event is available for download from the Authority website at <http://www.nlwa.gov.uk/watchyourwaste.php>

Initial results from the week

- 3.4 Work is well underway on collecting and analysing data for Watch Your Waste Week.

Watch Your Waste Week Challenge

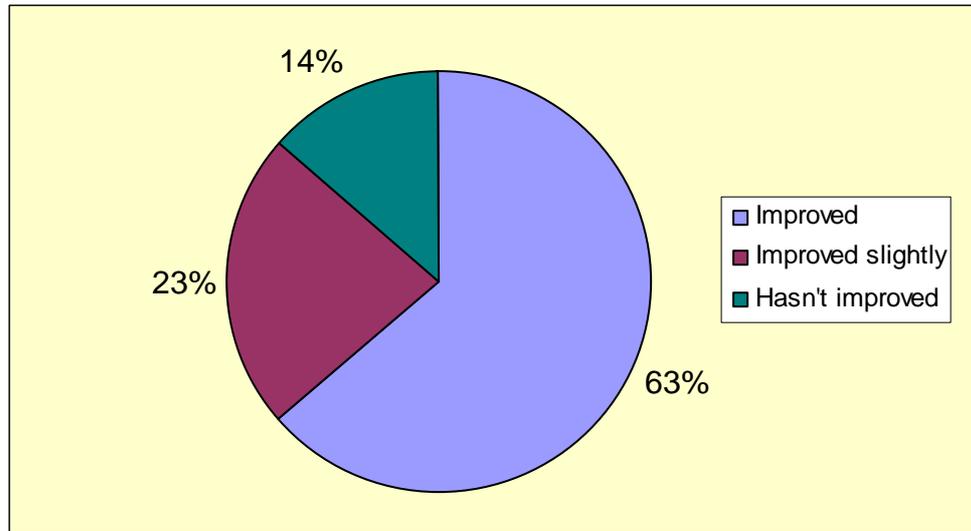
- 3.5 Participation in the Watch Your Waste Week Challenge to reduce waste to disposal was high and participants that signed up for the challenge included 200 North London households (including 4 councillors and 8 journalists) and 6 local businesses and 11 schools.
- 3.6 Results based on returned recording sheets from 125 households that participated in Watch Your Waste Week Challenge show a 51% decrease in the amount of waste thrown away during the week. To date, from analysis conducted so far, the headline results are as follows:

- That residents that took part in the challenge reduced their waste by **51%**. This is based on **125 feedback forms (268 participants)** who on average **reduced their household's waste from 12.05 kg** in the week preceding Watch Your Waste Week, **down to an average of 6.08kg** during the week itself. (The full conversion methodology and analysis is included in Appendix 1 to this report).
- **87%** of participants made lifestyle changes as a result of the Week
- The most common lifestyle change was to start **buying goods in less packaging**
- **95%** of participants would like to take part in the Week again
- **90%** found the information presented in the Challenge Pack about right, 8% too little and 2% too much
- **94%** found the top tips useful and informative
- Three of the schools that took part in the Challenge returned results which are more or less consistent with those from residents. There was an average reduction in waste from these schools of **47%**, with **862** pupils taking part and diverting **0.5 tonnes** of waste each in the week.

Give and Take days and furniture reuse

- 3.7 During Watch Your Waste Week a total of seven Give and Take days were held across five boroughs - Camden, Islington, Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest. The events were well attended with almost 850 residents present and diverted approximately **5.5 tonnes** of waste. The amount of waste diverted was calculated using a weigh-in system or Furniture Recycling Network average weight values (available on www.frn.org.uk).
- 3.8 Where evaluation forms were used at one joint borough event, as an attempt to measure awareness and declared behaviour, participants were asked if their knowledge in waste minimisation issues was improved after the event and the results are illustrated in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Change in awareness of waste minimisation issues after Give and Take days



3.9 The diagram above is based on 38 responses and the vast majority of attendees (63%) believed that their knowledge improved after the event and only 14% thought that the event didn't contribute in them learning more about waste minimisation. However, it should be noted that feedback forms can only give an indication of change in behaviour as respondents may exaggerate their levels of knowledge. All participants said that they would attend a 'Give and Take' day again and would recommend the event to others and there was also a considerable amount of positive verbal feedback at the events themselves. Further evaluation forms are awaited from some other events.

3.10 The London Borough of Hackney promoted furniture reuse during the week and saw furniture reuse tonnage increase by **60%** during October 2008 compared to the previous month.

Freecycle Membership

3.11 We also logged membership of the reuse website 'Freecycle' before and after Watch Your Waste Week as a number of boroughs promoted Freecycle during the week. Whilst it has not been possible to estimate how many tonnes of material might be diverted from immediate disposal by Freecycle members this type of quantification is something that we would hope to develop for future campaigns.

3.12 The results show that the number of Freecycle members increased significantly after Watch Your Waste Week and in October the active Freecycle membership in North London increased by 6,807 an 11% increase compared to membership figures in September this year. A breakdown of the increases by borough can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Changes in Freecycle membership by borough

Freecycle Group	September '08	October '08	Difference	Percentage change
Haringey	7,302	7,717	415	5%
Hackney	10,918	11,643	725	6%
Barnet	5,158	5,922	764	13%
Enfield	3,950	4,404	454	10%
Camden	8,990	10,707	1,717	16%
Islington	16,089	18,620	2,531	14%
Waltham Forest	5,496	5,697	201	4%
Total active members	57,903	64,710	6,807	11%

Mailing Preference Service

- 3.13 Another way for residents to cut down on waste is to register with the Mailing Preference Service (MPS) so that their unwanted mail is reduced. As reducing 'unwanted mail' was one of the messages for the week, we also measured the impact of the week by measuring the change in numbers of registrations with MPS before and after Watch Your Waste Week. In October, 1,908 North London residents registered with MPS, so registrations increased by 1% between September and October this year. The results were consistent across all seven boroughs and details can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Changes in MPS membership by borough

	September '08	October '08	Difference	Percentage change
Islington	27,796	28,136	340	1.2%
Hackney	28,446	28,725	279	1.0%
Camden	41,669	42,131	462	1.1%
Waltham Forest	18,397	18,609	212	1.1%
Haringey	21,035	21,204	169	0.8%
Barnet	42,215	42,484	269	0.6%
Enfield	35,002	35,179	177	0.5%
Total membership	214,560	216,468	1,908	0.9%

Test the Water Challenge

- 3.14 Finally, at the Watch Your Waste Week launch event 52 people took part in a 'Test the Water' challenge to see if they could tell the difference between tap water and bottled. Of those participating, **81%** (43 participants) incorrectly identified tap water and bottled water so could not tell the difference between the two.
- 3.15 A total of 37 people attending the launch event pledged to give up bottled water and turn to the tap, so saving plastic bottle waste as a result.

- 3.16 Further impacts of WYWW are currently being evaluated by the use of conventional quantitative methods and qualitative results in terms of attitudinal change. A cost-benefit analysis for the week will also be included in the final report.
- 3.17 Results so far demonstrate that for a short period of time it is possible to dramatically reduce the amount of waste produced by North London residents. However, at present there is no evidence that this behavioural change is going to be sustained at this high level over time; but it clearly demonstrates that North London residents understand the need to reduce their waste and therefore there is potential to convert residents' awareness into long term action. An email will be sent to Watch Your Waste Week challengers in six months time to see how many of the actions that they undertook during the week have been continued.
- 3.18 The Watch Your Waste Week report including the impact of the week and future recommendations will be presented at a future Authority meeting.

4.0 European Week for Waste Reduction

Waste Reduction Week European pilot edition 22-30 November 2008

- 4.1 The North London Waste Prevention Plan 2008 – 2010 which was approved by the Authority at the meeting on 6th February this year includes an action under the heading of 'public awareness and education campaigns' to provide support for ACR+'s (Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and Sustainable Resource Management) waste reduction campaign. As noted at the last Authority meeting, this support is currently demonstrated by participating in the European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR) which is taking place at the time of writing this report, from 22nd to 30th November 2008.
- 4.2 ACR+ is European network of around 90, mainly local authority, members who share the aim of promoting sustainable resource consumption and waste management through prevention at source, reuse and recycling. London Remade is a member and liaises with London waste authorities to seek views and disseminate information, although they are not actively taking part in the EWWR.
- 4.3 Twelve lead organisations and authorities across Europe are taking part in a pilot edition of EWWR including Agencia de Residus de Catalunya in Spain (the waste authority for Catalonia), LIPOR, the waste management authority for the Grand Porto metropolitan area in Portugal, ADEME the French Environment and Energy Management Agency which is supporting a range of activities across the whole of France and Dublin municipal authority which is promoting an online waste exchange and www.DublinWaste.ie – a web based public forum which gives members of the public a chance to have their say on waste related issues in Dublin. North London is the only region in the UK taking part.

4.4 NLWA officers, in partnership with constituent borough Waste Prevention Officers, identified a range of activities as suitable for the week:

- **Food Waste awareness promotions** across all seven constituent boroughs involving roadshows at supermarkets and shopping centres to encourage residents to reduce food waste. A third of the food we buy in the UK ends up being thrown away, (Source: Waste and Resources Action Programme). A number of these 'Love Food, Hate Waste' roadshows were being supported with an adviser from the national Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). All roadshows included WRAP 'Love Food, Hate Waste' promotional material – display banners and leaflets.
- **Press Release of the findings** and impact of the North London 'Watch Your Waste Week' in October.²

4.5 The schedule of roadshows across all seven boroughs was confirmed on Friday 21st November and the first event took place on Saturday 22nd November. Each roadshow included:

- Mother Hubbard's Cupboard which contains a number of perishable items that need eating. These must be matched with other ingredients in the cupboard to make a meal. Members of the public are challenged to see how they can use up the perishable items by combining them with the other ingredients, rather than throwing them away.
- Wheel of Food – a spinning wheel of with questions about how to reduce, reuse or recycle food. Members of the public spin the wheel to answer a question. All the answers show a 3D item of food e.g. the correct portion of rice for one person, so that participants can see visually how to use and store different food products.
- Food bins – three food dustbins filled with pasta, vegetables and breads to illustrate the amount of these food stuffs that are wasted by households each year.

4.6 Consultancy organisations that had previously submitted bids for a WRAP funded recycling communications campaign across four of the North London boroughs were invited to tender for delivering the above roadshows with the contract being awarded by the Authority's Legal Adviser to Waste Watch. The contract value was within the limit of the authority for delegated decision.

4.7 A verbal update on the outcome of the roadshows will be provided at the Authority meeting.

² Ideally Watch Your Waste Week would have been delivered to coincide with the European Week of Waste Reduction, but because the dates for the European week were not finalised in time for NLWA and borough budgeting and planning for 2008/09, it was not possible to run the two weeks at the same time this year, however, this would be the plan for any promotional weeks in the future.

4.8 The full scope of the work is due for completion by mid December 2008 and the results of the week will be shared with other participating regions across Europe. A full report on EWWR in North London will be provided at the next Authority meeting.

5.0 FINANCIAL EXPENDITURE

5.1 The expenditure on the initiatives outlined above and other related work in 2008/09 is estimated to cost in the region of £65,000 by the end of the financial year, against an original budget provision of £74,000. In view of Members' wish to advance the Authority's work on waste prevention it is intended to report back on an enhanced programme of activities for 2009/10 at the next Authority meeting. This report will be in the form of a second year action plan for the Waste Prevention Plan 2008-10 which was approved at the February 2008 Authority meeting. Any proposals will be supported by a cost benefit analysis.

5.2 In the interim, a budget provision of £102,000 has been made in the 2009/10 budget forecast reported elsewhere on this agenda.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The Authority is recommended to note the contents of this report.

7.0 FINANCIAL ADVISER'S COMMENTS

7.1 The Financial Adviser's comments have been reflected within the body of the report and he has no further comments to add.

8.0 LEGAL ADVISER'S COMMENTS

8.1 The Legal Adviser has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to add.

Local Government Act 1972 – Access to information

Documents and North London Waste Prevention Plan 2008 -10

Websites used:

Manual handling in refuse collection, Health and Safety Executive, 2002

Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and Resource Management, European Waste Reduction Week 2008-Pilot Edition information at:
http://www.acrplus.org/wastereductionweek_pilot2008

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Appendix 1 – Calculations for the tonnage diverted during Watch Your Waste Week by Watch Your Waste Week Challengers

Results for the Watch Your Waste Week (WYWW) challenge are based on returned recording sheets from 125 households that participated in the Watch Your Waste Week Challenge. These show a 50% decrease in the amount of waste thrown away, which is equivalent to a total of 0.7 tonnes of waste diverted from disposal during the week from WYWW Challengers. The methodology used to reach these figures is the following:

Residents were asked to record the amount thrown away the week before WYWW and compare it with the amount they threw away during the Watch Your Waste Challenge itself. They could achieve this by weighing their waste or estimating the proportion they threw away, i.e.:

- Total weight (kg)
- Number of carrier bags
- Number of rubbish sacks
- Fullness of bin (i.e. 1100lt or 240lt wheelie bins)

Where proportions of waste were recorded, these were converted to weights by using typical weights for different methods of collecting refuse. Based on the “Manual handling in refuse collection” study, which was conducted by the Health and Safety Executive in 2002:

- A 1100 litre four wheeled bin weighs 110 kg
- A 240 litre two-wheeled bin weighs 22 kg
- A polythene bag in a city area weighs 7 kg

With regards to carrier bags, according to the Environment Agency web page, a full plastic carrier bag weighs 3.5kg.

Participants decreased the amount of waste thrown away by 103 carrier bags, 29 rubbish sacks and 5 full wheeled bins, which following the above conversions, is equivalent to 0.75tn of waste diverted. Please note that residents that were weighing their waste rather than estimating the proportion recorded 66kg reduction in waste produced, which has also been included in the diversion figure.