

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

REPORT TITLE: WASTE PREVENTION PLAN UPDATE

REPORT OF: HEAD OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

FOR SUBMISSION TO: AUTHORITY MEETING

DATE: 24 APRIL 2025

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This paper is an update on the delivery of the North London Waste Prevention Plan, which was published in January 2023. It gives an update on the projects which have launched or are in development. Projects are steered by the Members' Recycling Working Group and delivered with borough officers.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Authority is recommended to comment on and note the update.

SIGNED:  Head of Strategic Communications

DATE: 10 April 2025

1. ABOUT THE WASTE PREVENTION PLAN

- 1.1. NLWA complements borough efforts to reduce waste through a programme of behaviour change campaigns, policy campaigning and community outreach. By covering a larger geographical area, these initiatives gain greater visibility and recognition and provide an overall better value to boroughs through economies of scale.
- 1.2. In 2022 Members tasked officers to create a more ambitious waste prevention programme. The Waste Prevention Plan was developed with input from borough officers and community stakeholders. The goal is to harness the collective expertise of NLWA and the boroughs, apply behaviour change strategies, conduct research, and test and evaluate approaches as the work progresses. The plan was approved by Members and published in January 2023.
- 1.3. The Plan is designed to succeed through collaboration. The plan does not duplicate the work of boroughs, whose communications are focused on encouraging residents to use their comprehensive kerbside recycling services. Instead, it focuses on the areas that benefit the most from cross-borough messaging and behaviours that can apply to all residents. There is also a focus on representing the interests of the boroughs to regional and national government to influence policy. The priority areas of delivery, as approved by Members, are to:
 - 1.3.1 Enable communities to deliver change on the ground
 - 1.3.2 Campaign for change
 - 1.3.3 Work in partnership
 - 1.3.4 Educate and inform residents
 - 1.3.5 Support the boroughs
 - 1.3.6 Work with businesses
- 1.4. Progress on projects is reported to and discussed by the Members Recycling Working Group and a group of borough officers which meets bi-monthly. An update paper was presented at the Authority meeting in September 2024.

2. UPDATE ON PROGRESS

- 2.1. The Waste Prevention Plan was designed so NLWA officers can work more closely with boroughs to complement and build on their work and get the best value. Historically, the waste prevention programme was largely delivered by third parties through contracts. The approach now is to deliver in house and in partnerships to get better value. This has been achieved by building an officer team with behaviour change, education, communications and public affairs expertise. The update below gives recent progress since September 2024. Further information is reported publicly at nlwa.gov.uk/wastepreventionplan

North London Community Fund

- 2.2. The North London Community Fund provides non-profit-making organisations with financial support to deliver waste prevention activities across north London, offering small (<£5,000), medium (<£15,000), and large (<£100,000) awards.
- 2.3. The 14 awarded small and medium projects for 2024/25 are now in the final stages of delivery with officers gathering information to prepare final reports. Most organisations have achieved or exceeded their aims both in terms of waste prevention and resident engagement. For example, [increasing memberships at a community led tool lending library](#); [improving a weekly clothing swap with new equipment](#); and [supporting the establishment of a bi-weekly electrical repair club](#). Officers will develop an Impact Report with the full outcomes to be published later this year.
- 2.4. For the 2025/26 small and medium awards, NLWA officers worked closely with boroughs and community and voluntary sector organisations to ensure the fund reached new audiences. This led to 56 of 60 applicants coming from organisations without previous connections to NLWA, proposing projects to reach and reflect diverse communities. A large proportion of the projects will deliver activity across more than one borough and 20 projects will be awarded – the highest number so far. The funded projects include workshops on food waste reduction and textiles repair, as well as repair sessions. The full list of recipients, and boroughs their projects are based is:
- [Calthorpe Community Garden \(Camden\)](#)
 - [Clapton Support and Advice \(Hackney & Haringey\)](#)
 - [Cooking Champions \(Enfield\)](#)
 - [Edible London CIC \(Barnet, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington\)](#)
 - [Footprint for Good \(Haringey\)](#)
 - [Forest Recycling Project \(FRP\) and REACT \(Enfield & Waltham Forest\)](#)
 - [Friern Barnet Community Library \(Barnet\)](#)
 - [GB Carnival CIC \(Waltham Forest\)](#)
 - [Green & Silver Enterprises \(Haringey\)](#)
 - [Hackney Foodbank \(Hackney\)](#)
 - [Living Way Ministries \(Barnet\)](#)
 - [New Tribe CIC \(Enfield, Hackney, Haringey & Waltham Forest\)](#)
 - [Play it Again Toys CIC \(Hackney & Waltham Forest\)](#)
 - [Refugee Workers' Cultural Association \(Haringey\)](#)
 - [Screen Share UK \(Camden & Islington\)](#)
 - [South Hampstead and Kilburn Community Partnership \(Camden\)](#)
 - [The Enfield Alevi Centre \(Enfield\)](#)
 - [Waste Not London \(Haringey\)](#)
 - [Woodshop of Recycled Delights \(WoRD\) \(Hackney\)](#)
 - [Yad Voezer Day Centre \(Hackney\)](#)
- 2.5. After an extensive evaluation and interview process, two projects have been awarded £100,000 for the large awards:

The Restart Project and ReLondon have launched an electrical repair voucher which offers residents access to 50% discounts on electrical repairs at businesses in Hackney, Haringey and Waltham Forest. Officers are working with Restart and ReLondon to establish effective data collection and evaluation methods and understand how it could be expanded to cover the whole north London area.



The launch of the repair voucher scheme

Octopus Community Network (Octopus) and Mildmay are setting up a composting project which will be delivered on two estates in Islington. Officers are supporting with data collection to ensure the project evaluation method is robust from the start. The organisations have been proactively liaising with Islington colleagues. Octopus have carried out some light touch resident engagement since the start of the new year, with more intensive resident engagement by both organisations due to commence in April 2025.

- 2.6. On Saturday 29 March, officers held the first community event at EcoPark House. The event sought to facilitate networking between community organisations in the morning, followed by a repair event in the afternoon open to north London residents. Both sessions were well attended, with almost 15 representatives from community groups in the networking session and over 20 residents from across the boroughs attending in the afternoon.

Education

- 2.7. EcoPark House has welcomed almost 200 pupils from 12 schools since January 2025. The programme has generated keen interest among schools, with most summer term sessions now booked. Initial feedback indicates that the sessions are effective in raising students' awareness of waste and circular economy behaviours.
- 2.8. The 'In the Know' primary schools outreach programme began in September 2024. Seven schools have received termly visits and multiple meetings with staff. Term one included a whole school assembly and pupil-led waste audit, engaging nearly 2,500 pupils. Term two featured stakeholder workshops with school management, teachers, support staff, site and business managers, and parent teach associations (PTAs). Over 100 staff members participated across all schools.
- 2.9. Applications for 2025/26 are about to close. 14 schools will be selected and will attend a programme introduction in late May. Revisions to the second year of the programme reflect lessons learned in the pilot year, including the addition of a continuing professional development (CPD) away-day for subject leaders at EcoPark House.
- 2.10. The Education Hub, NLWA's online bank of teaching resources, has been improved, introducing resources and opportunities for secondary schools to complement those

available to primary. The site is directly promoted to schools, with around 500 visits in the last six months.

- 2.11. NLWA's secondary school photography competition has concluded, with the winners being announced publicly in March. The winners will attend an event at Ecopark House to see their work displayed in June.



The winning entries from the photography competition

From left to right: 1st place Lucien in year 7, Leytonstone School (Waltham Forest). 2nd place Emily in year 7, Highlands School (Enfield). 3rd place Leilani in year 9, Friern Barnet School (Barnet)

Reusable nappy subsidy

- 2.12. From 1 April 2024 to 18 March 2025, 869 reusable nappy vouchers have been issued and 503 have been redeemed. Officers are gathering data to evaluate the scheme's effectiveness, to understand whether the vouchers motivate parents and carers to switch to reusable nappies. The results and recommendations will be discussed with borough officers and Members later this year.

Reusable period products

- 2.13. NLWA's contract with Women's Environmental Network (Wen) concluded on 31 October. Wen delivered 41 engagement activities across all boroughs, engaging with 1,809 people. Analysis shows strong positive changes in understanding and attitudes towards reusable period products.
- 2.14. A second phase of communications ran for 12 weeks from early September 2024, consisting of paid Meta advertising, organic social media and digital newsletters. This made 2.3 million impressions and resulted in over 18,000 click-throughs to the campaign website.

Policy communications and lobbying

- 2.15. Since September NLWA officers have sought to establish NLWA as a thought leader both among decision makers and across the sector. Policy position statements are in development and officers are working on an NLWA call to action. NLWA acts as a voice for the constituent boroughs, ensuring their needs are represented to government. As part of this, officers have continued to respond to government consultations including:
- [The spending review](#), advocating for government support and funding to implement decarbonisation technologies and address the responsibility for waste carbon emissions.
 - [Industrial strategy](#), emphasising its commitment to waste reduction, circular economy, and tackling climate change, while also advocating for government support for local authorities in meeting waste targets and reforms.

- [National curriculum](#), emphasising the need to embed sustainability and prepare students for a circular economy.

- 2.16. Officers have also sought to raise the profile of the NLWA's policy asks by securing speaking opportunities for Members. This has included Councillor Hakata chairing a fringe event at Labour Party Conference, and Cllr Loakes speaking at the LetsRecycle WEEE conference. NLWA has been approached to speak at several events over the remainder of the year – including the LetsRecycle London Conference and Recycling Expo.
- 2.17. Officers have proactively engaged with decision makers on the growing issue of fires caused by lithium-ion batteries. Further to the activities listed above, an NLWA representative attended roundtable with Lord Redesdale and waste sector representatives to discuss his proposed amendment to the Product Regulation and Metrology Bill, which would introduce a responsibility for online retailers to collect batteries at the doorstep. Officers are also working with the charity Electrical Safety First to organise a parliamentary roundtable to discuss the issue of improper battery disposal and fires in the waste stream.
- 2.18. Officers are proactively seeking means to feed into the work of the Circular Economy Taskforce, through the Authority's relationship with ReLondon (who are members) and by applying to join the Circular Economy Network. Councillor Loakes wrote to Mary Creagh MP, Minister for Nature, to voice concerns about the lack of local authority representation on the Taskforce, an issue which was also raised at a recent meeting between the Minister and waste disposal authorities.

Communications campaigns

- 2.19. The next phase of the [Together We Recycle campaign](#), focusing on food waste recycling, is on track to launch in April. Short engaging videos have been produced with real food waste recycling crew members to demonstrate their commitment of crew, 'personalising' and building trust in the service and encouraging residents to 'do their bit'. The films will be advertised to reach a large audience of north Londoners on social media platforms, with further information available on a dedicated webpage.
- 2.20. NLWA is running a digital communications campaign to raise awareness of reclaimed paint, demonstrating its quality and normalising it as an alternative to new paint. NLWA partnered with two north London organisations to show real examples of reclaimed paint being used. The first of these was The Dugdale Arts Centre in Enfield, who commissioned several artists to use reclaimed paint in murals on their theatre wall and tables; the other is a residents' group in Tottenham, who will be using reclaimed paint to paint their back fences along the public-access Carbuncle Passage. Organic and paid digital communications began in February, with the installation at Dugdale launching on 5 March and the Tottenham painting taking place in April.

Bring It... reuse behaviour change project

- 2.21. Following the success of 'Bring it, Barnet', the campaign was rolled out across Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest. The campaign was localised for each borough, using borough specific reuse statistics and featuring local individuals and businesses who champion reuse to demonstrate social norms and remove the barriers around asking for refills.

- 2.22. Out-of-home advertising launched along one high street in each borough running for 12 weeks. Officers engaged with high street cafes, takeaways and shops with nearly 350 signed up to the campaign. The social media campaign generated over 9.3 million impressions, reaching over 4.1 million residents, resulting in over 53,500 web page views.
- 2.23. Evaluation of the campaign revealed that 1 in 4 north London residents recalled seeing the campaign. Following seeing the campaign residents reported that they were either likely or very likely to engage in reuse behaviour, including making sure they have a reusable bag each day (81 percent), getting a refill of water in a reusable water bottle (72 percent) and getting refill of a hot drink in a reusable cup or flask (65 percent).



Assets from the Bring It... campaign

Food waste

- 2.24. The Pan-London Eat Like a Londoner (ELAL) campaign aimed at encouraging Londoners to reduce their household food waste and switch to a more plant-based diet continued this year with two media bursts. The social media campaign in north London generated over 3.1 million impressions, approximately 90,000 video views, a reach of nearly 30,000, resulting in 9,254 clicks to the ELAL website.
- 2.25. Evaluation of the campaign demonstrated that 3 in 20 Londoners between the age of 21 and 44 and 1 in 10 parents of children under 12 (the target audience for the campaign) saw the campaign. Of those who recalled seeing the campaign, approximately 60 percent reported to have taken action, by wasting less food, eating more plant-based foods, and eating less meat and dairy.
- 2.26. To complement the London-wide campaign, NLWA officers delivered locally the “Bin Less Save More” behaviour change workshop designed to educate residents about the consequences of food waste, help identify how much food they waste, introduce the behaviours that can lead to a reduction in food waste and set goals to help them to adopt new positive behaviours. 11 workshops have been delivered across all seven boroughs.

- 2.27. The workshop evaluation showed that it successfully increased participants' knowledge about the environmental impacts of food waste and the impact they can have by reducing their household food waste. It also increased participants' knowledge of how to reduce their food waste and the skills required, making it reportedly easier for them to reduce their household food waste. 94 percent of participants said they were either likely or very likely to reduce their household food waste following the workshop. Analysis of the data gathered by participants who weighed their food waste before and after the workshop, showed a significant difference in food waste weights following the workshop, with the intervention successfully reducing household food waste.

3. AUDIENCE REACH – PRESS AND ONLINE

- 3.1. Throughout 2024/25, NLWA's media engagement generated 89 pieces of positive press coverage, with a combined reach of 253 million people. This included coverage of NLWA's campaigns, such as the 'In The Know' education programme, 'Reduce Reuse Your Cycle' reusable period products initiative and the North London Community Fund. NLWA also gained frequent trade press coverage including comment on, or response to, government announcements and plans.
- 3.2. The following reach was achieved through social media and the NLWA website:
- 17 million impressions generated on social media (this means that posts appeared on people's feeds this many times).
 - 2,821 residents received NLWA email newsletters, which cover themes of waste prevention, RRCs, schools, Reduce Reuse Your Cycle and North London Community Fund.
 - 566,418 visits to the NLWA website. NLWA's A-Z search function, along with reuse and recycling centres, remain the posts popular pages.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1. Work will be carried out this year to produce a future workplan to align with the objectives of the Joint Waste Strategy, in collaboration with borough officers and Members. This will enable officers to communicate on areas of work more effectively and help demonstrate progress towards aims and objectives.
- 4.2. Since the Community Fund was established in 2017, the funding available has increased from £40,000 to £250,000 and 81 projects have been funded. Officers have worked closely with boroughs and community and voluntary sector organisations to reach diverse communities and organisations but more can be done to ensure the opportunity is equitable and inclusive. Officers will therefore deliver a co-design strategy to reshape the funding offer, gain a better understanding of the waste prevention needs of north London residents, assess the effectiveness of the fund and work collaboratively to improve what financial support is offered.
- 4.3. Following a research project carried out in 2023/24, it was found that having a connection to nature can increase pro-environmental behaviours. To build on this, NLWA have contracted Hubbub to deliver activities that connect north London residents to nature in 2025/26. Activities are likely to include composting and reusing and repairing to planters, bird boxes and insect houses. Evaluation will facilitate further understanding of whether increasing residents' nature connection increases their level of engagement in waste prevention behaviours.

- 4.4. Reduce Reuse Your Cycle will be refreshed from April. A toolkit has been developed to be made available to other local authorities to adopt the campaign, which will be promoted by NLWA for use. East London Waste Authority will be the first to run their own Reduce Reuse Your Cycle campaign from April 2025.
- 4.5. The final term of the 2024/25 In the Know programme will see NLWA and borough officers return to the participating schools to conduct another waste audit with the pupils and run a staff survey, to compare results term one and evaluate the programme. A ceremony will be held at EcoPark House on 10 July, where Members are invited to see the work done by the schools throughout the programme.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. NLWA will seek to engage with communities from across north London. NLWA will work with the constituent boroughs and Members to ensure that underrepresented groups are approached and encouraged to participate in projects.
- 5.2. In preparing communications, consideration is given to accessibility of the information provided and the appropriate format.

6. COMMENTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

- 6.1. The Legal Adviser has been consulted in the preparation of this report and comments have been incorporated.

7. COMMENTS OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISER

- 7.1. The Financial Adviser has been consulted in the preparation of this report and comments have been incorporated.

Contact officer:

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