

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

REPORT TITLE: WASTE PREVENTION UPDATE

REPORT OF: MANAGING DIRECTOR

FOR SUBMISSION TO: AUTHORITY MEETING

DATE: 25 JUNE 2020

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report provides an update on planned work under the Authority's Residual Waste Prevention Plan, and includes steps taken to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the Authority's waste prevention work. The report details the changes to the programme in order that the North London Waste Authority continues to encourage waste reduction, repair and reuse.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Authority is recommended to note this report.

SIGNED:  **Managing Director**

DATE: 15 June 2020

1. PLANNED PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITY IN THE RESIDUAL WASTE REDUCTION PLAN

- 1.1. The Residual Waste Reduction Plan 2020-22 ('the Plan') is North London Waste Authority's (NLWA's) plan of activity for waste prevention work and recycling communications. The Plan also includes details of how the Authority will work in partnership with the constituent borough councils to assist in delivering each borough's Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP). The Plan is based upon a rolling six-month programme of work, with progress updates and next period's plans of activity discussed at Members' Recycling Working Group meetings. The aim of the Plan is to bring about a reduction in residual waste in north London.
- 1.2. As well as providing an outline two-year programme of work, the Plan also includes details of the specific activities planned for the first six months of the programme of work (1 April to 30 September 2020). Proposals for future activities in the remainder of the two-year period are detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the Plan. The Plan was approved at the Authority meeting on 13 February 2020.
- 1.3. Much of the waste prevention activity in the Plan involves officers meeting with residents face-to-face, delivering presentations to community groups for example and attending festivals and other public events to give tips and advice about waste reduction and recycling. In 2019-20 face-to-face conversations about food waste prevention were held with 11,000 people at over 100 events.
- 1.4. At face-to-face events officers can give away free portioning tools such as spaghetti measurers and rice scoops to help residents with getting portions right. Officers can also provide food storage tools such as clips to seal partly-used bags of dry goods and fridge thermometers to ensure that fridge temperatures are correct, to help reduce food wastage.
- 1.5. Other proposals in the Plan include displays in local libraries and working with specialist providers who deliver cookery demonstrations, making recipes with leftovers, to show that leftovers can be made into something nice to eat, rather than thrown away. Repair demonstrations are also provided face-to-face and clothes swap events are also planned.
- 1.6. The activities take action to address four waste stream priorities namely: food, bulky waste, textiles and single-use products, particularly plastics. Activities include:
 - 1.6.1. Ongoing work – outreach work, stalls and presentations to encourage waste prevention, as well as education work with schools and colleges
 - 1.6.2. Enabling others to spread the message through advice and training to community groups - including online resources
 - 1.6.3. New initiatives – including support for innovative and trial projects through the Waste Prevention Community Fund
 - 1.6.4. High profile events and activities – one-off events such as the North London Waste Prevention Exchange.

2. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE FIRST SIX MONTH'S PROGRAMME OF WORK

- 2.1. When the Plan was approved by the Authority in February, the potential impact of COVID-19 was unknown. However, following the imposition of restrictions, NLWA officers cancelled all planned face-to-face waste prevention events. None of the 'ongoing work' outlined in paragraph 1.6 has been delivered since 15 March. The last physical waste prevention event (a clothes swap) took place on Saturday 14 March with a wide range of measures in place to protect the health of staff and attendees.
- 2.2. The development of guidance documents, 'how to' guides and associated training to share best practice and enable the community to take action by delivering events and activities, has also not progressed. This has been due to a lack of capacity resulting from the need to redeploy some of the team to more urgent tasks. The Authority's Waste Prevention Manager, Dimitra Rappou, has taken on a role at London Councils with effect from 1 May, and recruitment of her replacement is only now commencing.

3. CHANGES TO THE WASTE PREVENTION PROGRAMME IN THE LIGHT OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

- 3.1. The bulk of the activity delivered since the commencement of COVID-19 restrictions has been online. There has been a shift in emphasis from face-to-face promotion of waste prevention to online promotion and communication of the changes that people can make to reduce the amount of waste they produce.
- 3.2. Examples of the move to online activity include:
 - 3.2.1. **Waste prevention and recycling webinars** – a trial event was delivered on 7 May with a speaker and person in support to assist with questions. The webinar attracted 11 attendees. A further five events are planned with details available on the new NLWA website at: <https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/events>. These events are delivered live and will in future be hosted on the Teams Live platform.
 - 3.2.2. **Facebook Live recycling question and answer sessions** – a trial event was delivered on 5 June. This attracted two external viewers and eight were questions submitted in advance, one on the day. The second session on 12 June attracted 16 viewers, two questions were submitted in advance, 10 on the day. Further events are planned each Friday until the end of June after which the programme will be reviewed.
 - 3.2.3. **Online presentations** - one of the Waste and Recycling Engagement Officers participated as a guest speaker alongside two other environmental professionals on a live webinar on food waste prevention on 14 May. This was not a public event so was similar to the face-to-face presentations the team would more usually give to an organisation. The Senior Waste Prevention Officer also delivered a pre-recorded presentation for the North London Heat and Project (NLHPP) Community Liaison Group. This presentation is available on the NLHPP website at <http://www.northlondonheatandpower.london/community/>

3.2.4. Increased number of social media communications campaigns

- 3.2.4.1. An increased amount of social media activity was delivered by the communications team in the run up to, and around Earth Day on 22 April. This additional activity reinforced existing recycling and waste prevention messages and ran until 1 May. Appendix A contains a summary of the social media posts on Earth Day. Many of these posts were shared via the NLHPP Twitter account to reinforce the link between the role of recycling and waste prevention and the new energy recovery facility. Thereafter, and in the absence of face-to-face outreach activity we have continued to deliver more social media communications with an increased focus on online campaigns.
- 3.2.4.2. An online communications campaign on repairing called 'In a Fix?' was delivered from 7 to 22 May. The campaign involved promoted posts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The aim was to encourage more people to try repairing something for the first time. The campaign included a new [web-page](#) containing information and links to resources covering tools, skills, guides on [wikihow.com](#) and [youtube.com](#) as well as details of how to buy a missing part, work out a model number or download a user manual. The results of the campaign will be available shortly.
- 3.2.4.3. The next, month-long campaign, entitled 'the Fridge Diaries' is about food waste prevention and is hosted on Instagram TV. The campaign will also include some TikTok videos with short tips about how to waste less food. TikTok is a short-form, video-sharing app that allows users to create and share 15-second videos, on any topic. The first episode of the fridge diaries is about organising your fridge to store food in the best way and is available here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N88bBF4HWos> More information about the Fridge Diaries is available at:
<https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/campaigns-projects/fridge-diaries>
- 3.2.4.4. Additional online campaigns planned for the short-term include one about food waste in lockdown and another on making the most of the clothes that you own – creating a 'capsule wardrobe' of clothes that go together in different combinations.
- 3.3. In addition to the above communications activity, the new NLWA website contains a new section called 'reduce, reuse, recycle' and a sub-section of this entitled 'reduce, reuse, repair'. The recycling question and answer sessions and food waste prevention and recycling webinars are available on the events section of the site at <https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/events>
- 3.4. Some work has also been deferred and planned delivery plan periods extended. The launch of the next round of funding available through the Waste Prevention Community Fund (Fund) has been deferred. The Fund provides grants to

community-based organisations to deliver waste prevention work. The deferral was because officers had been told early on in the COVID-19 lockdown period that several community organisations had temporarily shut down. Officers were concerned that if the Fund was launched according to the more usual timetable that it may not receive many applications and groups may not know whether they could commit to delivering activities later in the year. The 2020-21 Fund will be launched on 16 June approximately nine weeks later than usual and this year applicants have five weeks to respond (deadline 21 July), compared to the usual four.

- 3.5. One activity in the Plan has been brought forward, namely further support for an electrical and electronic repair directory for north London. Two years ago NLWA gave the community organisation 'Restart', funding to produce a directory of reliable electrical repairers in north London. The Residual Waste Reduction Plan includes a note that some budget could be allocated to promote the directory more extensively over the next two years, perhaps including research into people who have used the directory and the repair services included within it. During COVID-19 restrictions the majority of the electrical and electronic repair businesses in the directory have been closed. However, an updated version of the directory, detailing those that remain open, has been available and added to the NLWA website. Officers have also considered the possibility of further promoting the directory at this time as it is online and an initial meeting has been held with Restart who produced the directory to investigate what support would be needed to do this.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1. A revised programme of action on waste prevention for the forthcoming months will be discussed with the Members Recycling Working Group, following discussion with borough officers.
- 4.2. The Residual Waste Reduction Plan notes that emphasis will be given to extending the reach and impact of the high-profile waste prevention activities in the Plan, such as through communications activity, reports and competitions. COVID-19 has made this aim significantly more important so that the reach of the physical activities that are delivered is extended to the maximum effect.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The main equalities implication of the changes to the waste prevention activity that have resulted from COVID-19 is that the impact disproportionately affects those who are digitally disadvantaged.
- 5.2. The replacement activity that has been delivered online uses a range of online platforms. This means that if residents don't have access to a computer for example, they may still be able to see messages about the benefits of waste prevention by other means such as by using a smart phone.
- 5.3. Going forwards, as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be felt, it will be important for us to consider the potential risk of exclusion from the replacement waste prevention activities as more of our work moves online. Local radio and printed publications will need to be considered to spread the messages to those who may not have a route to access the internet. Officers have also considered whether it would be possible to post packs of food waste prevention tools to those

community groups who are still active. As an example, some links to printable recipe cards to use up leftovers were provided to one Enfield group, to include in food parcels sent out to residents.

- 5.4. Equalities considerations will be included in the proposals for a revised programme of work discussed with the Members Recycling Working Group.

6. COMMENTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

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

7. COMMENTS OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISER

The challenges related to COVID-19 outlined in this paper indicate that it is possible that the budget may not all be spent this year. The revised programme that will be discussed at the Members Recycling working group will be costed and included in the budget update at the September Authority meeting.

List of documents used:

NLWA - 2020-22 Residual Waste Reduction Plan – available at
http://www.nlwa.gov.uk/media/2848/2565222-nlwa-residual-waste-reduction-plan-2020_v5.pdf

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APPENDIX A: SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS – 22 APRIL 2020

Social Media Summary



WiseUpToWaste @WiseUpToWaste · 6h

Happy 50th Anniversary of #EarthDay 🌍. The theme for Earth Day 2020 is Climate Action, and we are providing three simple ways to help you do just that. Check out our upcoming #EarthDay posts for more information on how to reduce your impact & remember we're all in this together.



6 5

WiseUpToWaste @WiseUpToWaste · 4h

Recycling is now a mainstream activity, yet lots of people are still confused about what can and can't be recycled. This means that recycling is often contaminated with things that can't be recycled. For more info, check our A-Z recycling list here: wiseuptowaste.org.uk/recycle/



2 2

WiseUpToWaste @WiseUpToWaste · 1h

Thanks to the hard work of all our front line staff, north London continues to provide an effective waste collection and disposal service to residents. Please help them by avoiding a big clear out until services go back to normal #frontlineheroes #care4yourcrews #LondonTogether



6 5

WiseUpToWaste @WiseUpToWaste · 5h

Today is #EarthDay 🌍! Are you planning to take action? One of the easiest changes we can all make at home is to waste less and recycle more.

Find out how here: ow.ly/mJKG50zjX2j

#EarthDay2020 🌍



2

WiseUpToWaste @WiseUpToWaste · 34m

Were you inspired to make a change by #EarthDay? We can all make the most of the resources we have by wasting less and recycling more – we're committed to helping you do just that. Find out what you can do to reduce your waste here: ow.ly/pxtO50zjXYM



6 5

Social Media Summary

RETWEETS



Social Media Summary

FACEBOOK

 **Wise Up To Waste**
Published by Wendy Berol [?] · 1 hr · ⚙️

Thanks to the hard work of all our front line staff, north London continues to provide an effective waste collection and disposal service to residents. Please help them by avoiding a big clear out until services go back to normal.

#frontlineheroes #care4yourcrews #Londontogether



 **Wise Up To Waste**
Published with Hootsuite [?] · 4 hrs · ⚙️

Recycling is now a mainstream activity, yet lots of people are still confused about what can and can't be recycled. This means that recycling is often contaminated with things that can't be recycled.

Making sure your recycling is clean and goes into the right bin means we can reuse precious resources instead of extracting new ones. This simple action can have a big impact, so make sure you know what can and cannot go in your recycling bin, and then spread the word.

For mor... See more



Earth Day 2020
Climate Action 3:
Recycling

 **Wise Up To Waste**
Published by Wendy Berol [?] · 6 hrs · ⚙️

Happy 50th Anniversary of #EarthDay 🌍 . The theme for Earth Day 2020 is Climate Action, and we are providing three simple ways to help you do just that.

Check out our upcoming #EarthDay posts and website for more information on how to reduce your impact, and remember we are all in this together.

#EarthDay2020



Happy 50th Anniversary
Earth Day 2020
Help us take
climate action
22 April
North London Waste Authority

Social Media Summary

INSTAGRAM



Happy 50th Anniversary

Earth Day 2020

Help us take climate action

22 April

North London Waste Authority

wiseuptowaste

wiseuptowaste Happy 50th Anniversary of #EarthDay 🌍. The theme for Earth Day 2020 is Climate Action, and we are providing three simple ways to help you do just that.

Check out our upcoming #EarthDay posts and website for more information on how to reduce your impact, and remember we are all in this together.

#EarthDay2020

6h

7 likes

6 HOURS AGO

Add a comment... [Post](#)



Earth Day 2020

Climate Action 3:

Recycling



wiseuptowaste

wiseuptowaste If your #bananas need rescuing, you can make a delicious dessert out of them. Get them in the freezer and when frozen you can dip them in melted chocolate and decorate with different toppings. Involve all the family for some fun in the kitchen.

#bananalollies #bananarescue

7h

5 likes

7 HOURS AGO

Add a comment... [Post](#)