

Case study: Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

Communications to support the introduction of a new waste and recycling service in two phases



How we can help

- If you need extra recycling boxes or bags we can supply them.
- If you don't have a collection calendar, let us know and we'll send you one.
- If your property doesn't have boxes, bags or bins call us and we'll replace them.
- If you recycle as much as you can but have a large family (six permanent residents or more) and think you need a bigger bin, we may be able to supply one subject to your circumstances.
- If your age or health make it hard for you to put your recycling or rubbish out for collection, we can arrange assisted collections from your property.

There is also a household waste recycling facility at Leycett Lane, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs ST5 6AD – please look on our web site at www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk or call the customer services helpline on 01782 742592 to find out more information.

Just contact us at:

Web address: www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk
E-mail: customerservices@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk
By Post: Operational Services, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, Civic Offices, Merial Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 2AG
Telephone: 01782 742592

Your NEW and improved Recycling Service
Starts July 2009

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL
recycle for Newcastle-under-Lyme

The issue

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council approached WRAP for technical and communications support for a new kerbside service including the addition of plastics and card, extending the garden waste service and introducing a fortnightly waste collection accompanied by separate weekly food waste collections.

The Council had been working with WRAP over a number of years to standardise and improve their communications and devise and implement a new service delivering value for money and resident satisfaction.

Due to the number of changes being planned a two phased approach was chosen. The first phase introduced the addition of card to the kerbside recycling collection. The second phase extended the garden waste service to all households in the Borough, introduced a separate weekly food waste collection and moved to an alternative weekly collection for residual waste.

The key issues were:

- providing clear information to residents about the wide range of service changes including how and when to use the new recycling receptacles
- ensuring consistent messages were communicated across two phases of the roll out
- providing a well-designed and cost effective service.

Key facts

- A **saving** of £500,000 was achieved in 2010/11.
- Additional **tonnage diversion** of 11,650 tonnes from incineration.
- Combined recycling rate was 27% before the introduction of the new service and **increased** to over 50%.
- **53,400** households.
- **Increase** in the range of recyclables.
- Introduction of a weekly food waste collection.
- Change in **frequency** of residual waste collection from weekly to fortnightly
- Savings were the result of the **additional recycling** and the restriction in refuse capacity.
- Cost of the overall communications campaign was **£2.94 per household**.

The approach

Working closely with WRAP's communications adviser, the Council developed and implemented an integrated communications campaign to all households with a phased roll out beginning in April 2010 and ending with a 'thank you' leaflet six months later.

The communications strategy was implemented through:

- Employing two **recycling champions** to work with local residents to explain the new services in detail and address any issues. Their work included meetings with residents and road shows.
- **WRAP crew and helpline training** to enable them to deal effectively with enquiries from local residents. The crew were also given new service **information cards** to give to residents during the roll out.
- The Council's **newsletter** and other community publications to residents were used as effective tools to supplement the information provided via other channels.
- **Media relations** were an important method of disseminating details about the service changes. Press packs were produced to provide a quick reference guide to the improved recycling services in the Borough. Regular press releases were issued detailing how well residents are doing with regards to recycling.
- **Press and radio advertising** were employed during phase one of the roll out to highlight the additional materials being collected at the kerbside. Advertisements on **local buses** were used for phase two to ensure residents knew the changes were coming and what to look out for.

- The Council's **website** was used as a communications tool with detailed information about the changes. It was regularly updated to let residents know about the progress of the new services and provide key messages. It was also used to answer frequently asked questions, one example was a short video showing how to use the cardboard bag.
- **Information leaflets** and **collection calendars** were provided with each change in service so residents knew how and when to use the service, as well as which recyclable materials should be put in the various recycling receptacles.
- **Bin stickers** were produced to remind people what can and can't be recycled and contamination cards were provided to collection crews to help residents as the new service was rolled out.
- **Vehicle livery** and **bill board** advertising was used effectively to communicate the service changes.
- Six months after the new service had been rolled out **feedback** and **'thank you'** communications were produced for residents.

Sorry we missed you...

We called to talk to you about recycling. If you need to order an additional blue box or recycling bags, or if you need a calendar to show when your regular fortnightly collection dates are, please let us know.

Your next fortnightly collection day is



Key lessons

- Using an **integrated communications** approach was essential because of the number of service changes being implemented. By using a joined-up approach to communications, residents understood the link between the two phases and knew that the changes are part of a well-considered waste and recycling strategy for the Borough.
- The recycling champions proved an excellent way of **supporting people in areas of low participation**. In those areas where door-to-door visits were made to help residents, there was a noticeable increase in requests for blue recycling boxes and bags. Visits by the champions were also made to households where contamination was an issue and residents wanted further help.
- Providing **feedback and thanking** residents for their efforts was key to maintaining people's participation and satisfaction with the service.
- **Information** was included in the Council residents' newspaper and website, featuring the changes to the recycling service and providing feedback as the implementation progressed. The information received positive feedback from members of the public and it prompted residents to contact the Council's customer services desk with comment and queries.
- Having the **full support** of councillors and senior officers was essential to promote the service effectively to residents.

The results

- The combined dry and organic recycling rate stood at 27% in 2007/08 before rollout and **increased to over 50%** by the end of the campaign.
- This resulted in an additional tonnage diversion of **11,650 tonnes** from incineration in 2010/11.
- A saving of **£500,000** was achieved in 2010/11. Additional incineration costs have also been achieved.

More information

WRAP

Emma Marsh
emma.marsh@wrap.org.uk

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

Trevor Nicoll
trevor.nicoll@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

Trevor Nicoll, Head of Recycling and Fleet:
"All of this would not have been achievable without the WRAP communications advice and support from our dedicated Local Communications Manager. The recycling rate now stands at 56% a sharp rise from the level at the beginning of March 2010."

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Waste & Resources Action Programme

The Old Academy
21 Horse Fair
Banbury, Oxon
OX16 0AH

Tel: 01295 819 900
Fax: 01295 819 911
E-mail: info@wrap.org.uk

Helpline freephone
0808 100 2040

www.wrap.org.uk

