

UPDATE, SEPTEMBER 2017

HEATON GREENS



Andrew Gray



Next back lanes litterpick: meet 1pm, TSB, Chillingham Road, Sunday 24th September

WHO'S TALKING RUBBISH?

Rubbish and litter is all around us in Heaton — literally for those of us living with back lanes. Andrew Gray promoted a 5-point action plan to tackle back lane litter in 2014. He continues to support monthly litterpicks and joined-up action to reduce the problem.

This newsletter looks at the bigger challenges: how to **reduce** waste, **re-use** unwanted goods (see over for a local directory) and **recycle** better in Newcastle.

Meanwhile, Newcastle Green Party has challenged the Newcastle Waste Commission to be open and transparent, and has made available the reports of the BAN Waste Inquiry on our website.

Thank you to all the local residents who spoke with us in August about how to reduce plastic waste. Your top five suggestions are overleaf.

IDEAS TO REDUCE WASTE

HERE ARE SOME OF THE IDEAS THAT WE HAVE FED TO THE NEWCASTLE WASTE COMMISSION

Reducing is even more important than Recycling if we're serious about tackling our growing waste problem. Green economic policies focus on reducing consumption and supporting a local economy, both of which would reduce waste. But here are a few specific ideas that could help reduce waste in our city.

- Tackling food waste. This would also improve quality of recycling in Newcastle. Household food waste collections and anaerobic digestion, combined with extensive public engagement, have been proved to work elsewhere.
- Household goods and tools that we only need occasionally can be shared. We could promote a 'Library of Things' in each community to achieve this.

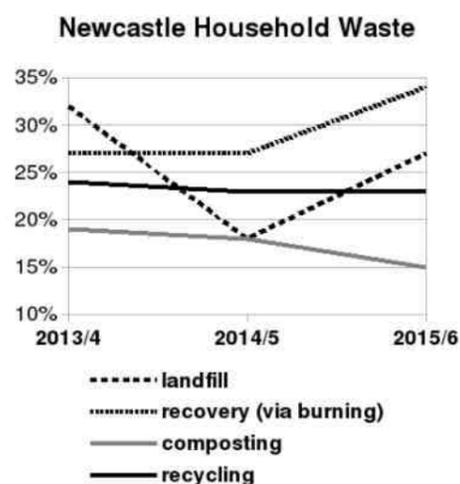
- Shops selling furniture or electrical goods could be required (or incentivised) to take back old goods when selling new ones.
- A network of public water fountains could cut plastic bottle use on key routes to the city centre or to the universities.

Visit the Waste Strategy page at the Newcastle Green Party website for our response to the Newcastle Waste Commission, and for reports from the award-winning Byker And Newcastle Waste group.

As BAN Waste reported in 2003, the key to success is people. Putting community engagement first is at the heart of Green Party proposals for waste reduction.



Almost 99% of blue bin contents were recycled in 2015/6, but they accounted for only 23% of all household bin collections. This could be doubled.



figures from wastedataflow.org

WE NEED TO IMPROVE RECYCLING RATES

Official figures show that the recycling rate is falling in Newcastle. Council staff report that quality is in decline too. Over the 3 years shown, residual household waste increased by 8%, from 499kg to 537kg per household.

Based on metal extraction rates from the green bin collections, officers estimate that recycling rates for glass, plastic, paper and cardboard could be doubled.

Here are 3 things to boost recycling locally:

- Correct information. Envirocall gave out wrong information on glass recycling to residents earlier

this year, before having to correct their advice. (Please don't put glass in the main part of your blue bin, but order a caddy from envirocall).

- Getting the basics right. Andrew has had to deliver information to residents receiving new bins + caddies, because the Council no longer tells new residents how the system works.
- More materials. The Council's waste contractor can recycle plastic trays and yoghurt pots for other clients. So why aren't these included in the Council's contract?

ANDREW GRAY WORKING FOR HEATON ALL YEAR ROUND

THE NEWCASTLE WASTE COMMISSION

The Council set up a Waste Commission in March, to help devise a new Waste Strategy for the city. Greens have attended all its public events and contributed ideas, but have criticised it for holding meetings in private and for not publicising which 'experts' it has consulted.

If any new waste strategy is going to succeed, it needs public support and the widest possible engagement. There is no magic technical solution for reducing our waste or increasing recycling. This is why the Byker And Newcastle Waste group published all the evidence it received online 15 years ago. Andrew Gray has challenged the Council on its failure to require the Waste Commission to do so this year.

In response to Andrew, the Council has promised that the first report of the Commission will be a draft, open to further consultation, and that it will publish all its evidence at that time.

WHY MASS-BURN IS NOT THE SOLUTION

17 years ago, protests against pollution from Byker incinerator (pictured) kick-started a citizen-led inquiry into a sustainable waste strategy for the whole city. Incineration may soon be back on the agenda, but disguised as 'Energy Recovery'.

Don't be fooled. Even if an incinerator or 'energy from waste' plant produces no pollution, it recovers only a fraction of the energy that can be saved by recycling materials. And because incinerators are operated commercially with high up-front costs, any contracts would commit the city to producing a specific tonnage of waste for years ahead. The contracts would be a disincentive to Reducing waste or increased Recycling. As a Parliamentary Environment Committee put it in 2001:



"sustainable waste management has as its cornerstone the minimisation of waste, and the explicit maintenance of waste streams for the purposes of incineration is in complete contradiction of this principal."

CONTACT DETAILS

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For news from Newcastle Green Party, to deliver leaflets in your street or to view copies of previous updates from Heaton Greens, see the website or contact Andrew.

<http://newcastleupontyne.greenparty.org.uk>

 [facebook.com/NewcastleGreenParty](https://www.facebook.com/NewcastleGreenParty)

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YOUR TOP TIPS FOR PLASTICS

We asked local residents for ideas to reduce plastic waste. You proved that Heaton is way ahead of both the Council and local supermarkets on the need to reduce single-use plastics. Here are your top five responses.

1. A deposit scheme for plastic bottles (the most popular single idea). See www.sas.org.uk/messageinabottle/ for a campaign and petition.
2. Make supermarkets responsible for taking back their own packaging. Lobby your own supermarket to install recycling facilities in their car park if they don't have them, or leave excess packaging at the till.
3. Education and information about what can be recycled or re-used, and where. See local directory below, please pass on details of other local re-use schemes to include in our future newsletters.
4. Make the Council bin and recycling systems work better. We agree: better information and more focus needn't cost more and would deliver systems that work better.
5. Powers to reduce takeaway rubbish. Planning conditions can already be used to regulate rubbish collections. They could be extended to reduce single-use plastic cups and trays.

RE-USE — LOCAL DIRECTORY

- Wood: www.welovewood.org, 0191 265 4845
- Food: newcastleeast.foodbank.org.uk, 0191 224 2422
- Furniture: Community Furniture, www.ctfurniture.org/newcastle, 0800 917 4397; Shields Road furniture stores – St Oswald's Hospice 0191 246 8123, British Heart Foundation 0191 283 5370
- Cycles: www.recyke-y-bike.org, 0191 265 4197
- Clothing: local charity shops or clothes banks
- Any free items: search facebook for group Back Lane Finds Heaton