



Recycling under Austerity – some practical options for Newcastle

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Ref to BAN Waste and its Select Committee...

Frances was the first BAN Waste Project Worker and administrator for its Select Committee inquiry.

Andrew chaired the BAN Waste Select Committee working group & maintained the website.

These notes include both additional points planned or made for the presentation, and additional reports which we can recommend to the Commission after reviewing the Summary of Evidence.

Andrew starts

Last 10 years - quantity over quality

- Reliant on 'bottom end' of the market
- Comingled collections + central materials sorting
- Only 50% of metals being collected via blue bins
- 'Grey' compost, Teesside/Sweden contracts
- Council/contract led, not people based
- Conflicting recycling advice to residents 2016/17



Ref to evidence heard by Commission (50% figure: based on metal extraction rates from the green bins, i.e. at Byker plant, only about 50% of recyclables are making their way into the blue bins).

Residents still confused about glass separation (after incorrect envirocall advice late 2016/early 2017: demonstrates the flip side of 'good engagement', as taking a long time to correct residents' views after this mistake).

Pictures are from City Council website.

Most waste is coming from green not blue bins: for green bins, only metals are extracted for recycling, rest goes to 'grey compost' (for reclamation sites, polluted with shards of glass, plastic etc), RDF/EfW fuel (Teesside and Sweden) and landfill.

Options going forwards

Changing markets, austerity cuts to services

1. Recycling rates flatline, quality falls, dependent on single long-term contract
2. Quality focus:
 - ✓ closely managed short-term contracts
 - ✓ innovative, flexible, ambitious
 - ✓ range of Reduce, Reuse, Recycling initiatives
 - ✓ maximising community engagement

China no longer accepting UK's rubbish for sorting...
Quality problems in Newcastle.

Residents giving up (loss of focus, history of broken bins not replaced, rubbish not cleared up, glass caddies not replaced etc)...

Emerging thinking shows that the Waste Commission wants to be ambitious too, so rest of presentation focuses on (2). Over to Frances

Food Waste + Community Engagement



18,000 tonnes of pumpkin/squash to landfill p.a. (F.O.E. 2017)
Our task is to change mindsets

(WRAP report on food waste trials)
Trial in Newcastle 2007 proved successful: 43% take-up.
Newcastle trial went to in-vessel composting, but Anaerobic Digestion much better, and can be modular and dispersed.

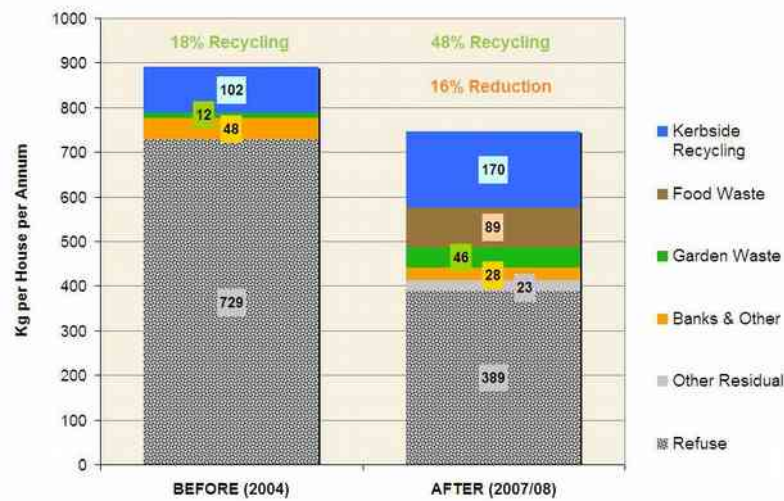


Hallowe'en is scary, especially if you read the latest FOE stat on pumpkin waste. Our task is to change mindsets.

Newcastle trial went to in-vessel composting, but Anaerobic Digestion much better, and can be modular and dispersed.

Our Newcastle: Waste and Recycling Consultation run by Newcastle City Council ten years ago. The bad news is that after this consultation, in which the vast majority of people rejected incineration as a method, a decision was taken to use the Teesside Energy from Waste plant to receive a proportion of Newcastle's rubbish. People have memories, and, ten years on, this leaves a lack of confidence in the process.

Why we need a Food Waste collection



Food Waste collection case studies presentation from dmrecycling.info: effect of 'SORT IT' kerbside + food waste collections in Somerset from 2004

Role of food waste in helping boost kerbside recycling overall, and reducing waste overall. Note also enables less frequent 3/4-weekly bin collections, where significant savings can be made.

Two reports from

<https://dmrecycling.info/reports/2003-17/>:

- Recycle More: 2015 report with assessment of options with costs appraisal by Eunomia.
- Food Waste Collections – 2016 slides at LARAC conference and 2015 WRAP report

(Website by Dave Mansell: he recently retired after career as a recycling and waste manager, mainly for local authorities but for community sector and as a consultant too.)

Making a Food Waste collection work

- ✓ Evidence linking good public engagement with success
- ✓ Participatory Appraisal: community-based approach to consultation that prioritises the views of local people as 'experts', and their direct or indirect involvement and action in deciding what happens in their community



Pictures from BAN Waste community events.

'First birthday' report from founder of Cwm Harry Land Trust (Powys kerbside recycling, food waste collections and composting providers), Richard Northridge, at p.12-13 of Community Composting Network newsletter for Spring 2000, <http://www.communitycompost.org/growingheap/2000%20Spring.pdf>

“From our experience leafleting on its own is not enough... It needs to be followed up with person to person contact, which is slow work, but it pays off in the long term... Running a community kerbside collection requires, above all else, good people skills.”

Even better than Anaerobic Digestion for Food Waste – REUSE it



Magic Hat Café –
upcycling
unwanted food,
provided across
Newcastle on a
'Pay As You Feel'
donations basis

Good example of education too and delicious food, part of the 'junk food project'. Other options to tackle food waste include community composting, wormeries – multiple approaches work best.

Picture from Magic Hat facebook page.

Hand back to Andrew

Reuse - the forgotten 'R'

- Within walking distance of Heaton:
 - Wood: Newcastle Wood Recycling
 - Food: Newcastle East Foodbank
 - Furniture: Community Furniture, Shields Road furniture stores (St Oswald's Hospice, British Heart Foundation)
 - Cycles: Recyke y'Bike
 - Clothing: local charity shops, 3 x clothes banks
 - Any free items: facebook group *Back Lane Finds Heaton*

I live in Heaton and stand as a Green Party candidate here, hence compiling this list of re-use schemes. List is far from complete, but indicative of the wide range of items being re-used, as well as the different bodies (not for profits, community interest companies, charities, individuals on social media) engaged.

How to grow Re-use projects

- Locally based (no 'one size fits all' approach)
- Small financial incentives effective

Surfers Against Sewage campaigns for plastic bag charges and plastic bottle deposits



Nature of re-use schemes: locally-specific, depending on demographics and individuals. Hence cardboard boxes in Heaton, craft materials elsewhere etc.

No city-wide approach easy, but good online directories and guides are good for this work. Cf BAN Waste database. Or the Devon Community Recycling Network site at <http://dcrn.org.uk/projects/>

Financial incentives make a big difference, to individuals or companies. Small but important (funded from savings on gate fees).

Back to Frances after this

Household Waste Recycling Centres

- Need to be open to whole community, not just 60% of households with access to a car
- Manage bring sites:
 - in local communities
 - utilising empty buildings
 - pop-up/temporary services



Had to pass over this slide quickly, but included as a prompt for further work by Commission, to:

- ensure HWRCs are accessible to all (small depots accessible to pedestrians, & in neighbourhood locations);
- fulfil a bigger role (the 'reuse' role highlighted in your emerging thinking);
- and/or combine with more local or temporary schemes (e.g. at university student move-out times, or to aggregate larger reusable goods before taking to a more distant HWRC).

Energy from Waste

- x “For every tonne of waste burned, typically more than one tonne of CO₂ is released into the atmosphere.... By 2050 incinerators could be more than ten times the average carbon intensity of the electricity grid.” (UK Without Incineration Network, ukwin.org.uk)
- x “Some individual Member States are excessively reliant on incineration of municipal waste.... Such high rates of incineration are inconsistent with more ambitious recycling targets.” (European Commission report, January 2017)

Summary information at

<http://ukwin.org.uk/oppose-incineration/>

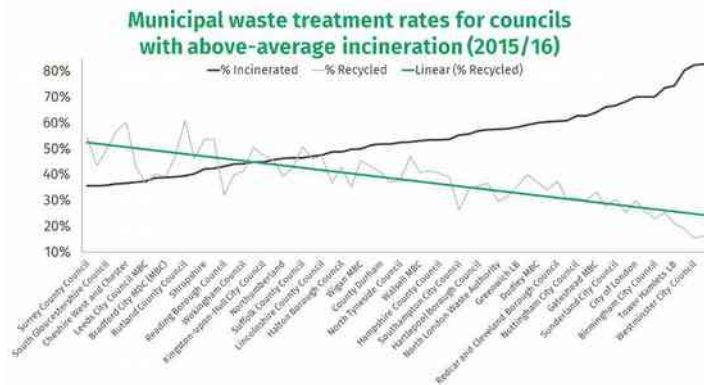
European Commission report, “The role of waste-to-energy in the circular economy,” 26 Jan 2017

<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2017/EN/COM-2017-34-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>
and linked from

<https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/latest-news/eu-commission-urges-caution-over-efw-investment/>
“Energy from Waste”, whether via incineration, gasification or pyrolysis, is a euphemism in most people’s view – we’re suspicious of things that change their name. AD as a benign form of EfW. Over the lifetime of an average incinerator, 6.5 million tonnes of CO₂ is released (UKWIN site).

Incineration vs Recycling

“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.” (Parliamentary Committee, 2001)



From
ukwin.org.uk

‘vs’ is in the title because it is (in practice) a competition between the two...

Graphic from draft report by UKWIN, in connection with an Early Day Motion expected to be submitted to Parliament by Labour Shadow Cabinet member. Report will be online within next two weeks.

See WRAP report (latest comparison of costs of recycling and incineration etc):

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/collections-and-reprocessing/recovered-materials-markets/reports/gate-fee-report-2016>

And see reports from cities in Italy, Spain and Catalonia, Slovenia and France, at

<https://www.zerowasteurope.eu/zw-library/case-studies/> (Parma report of interest for its ‘pay as you throw’ pricing structure, perhaps not possible in the UK? Ljubljana perhaps most useful for us, on engagement, variable collection rounds and bulky waste service.)

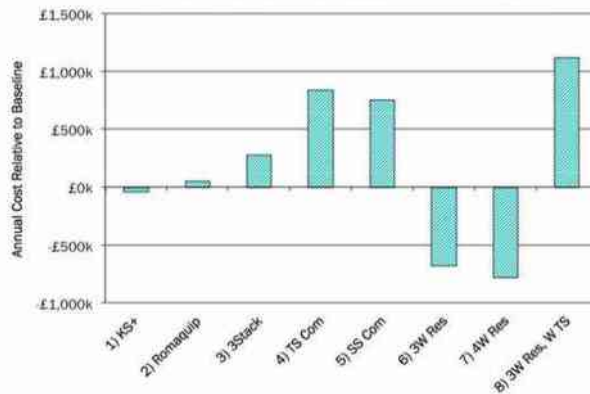
Then back to Andrew

Newcastle: how to move away from comingled collections

- Glass, paper, cardboard: collect separately
- Plastics and metals: comingled and sort

Annual Costs of Collections Options Relative to Baseline of Current Collections for the Taunton Depot (Source: Eunomia)

Eunomia report for Somerset Waste Partnership (2015): from dmrecycling.info



Graphic from 2015 eunomia report referenced under slide 5. Comingled=4,5,8, fewer collections = 6,7, quality kerbside + food waste =1-3. “The analysis confirms that kerbside sort recycling collections had much lower costs than the comingled options. This is due to comingled collections needing to include a separate vehicle pass for food waste and to pay a gate fee for mixed materials to be sorted at a Materials Recovery Facility.”

The two bullets summarise best practice for getting high-quality recycling. See also WRAP report (govt now recommending separating not co-mingling of waste):

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/collections-and-reprocessing/consistency>

Back lanes + Communal bins

- Need for transitional plan
- Get food waste, paper, cardboard out of the bins (bring/reuse schemes)
- Collect less frequently



Given state of back lanes and need to win residents' support, we support communal bins as a transitional measure, even though they perpetuate comingling. Some suggested ways forward to combine kerbside collections (food waste and recyclables) with communal bins for plastics/metals only. Within Heaton for instance: bring schemes for quality-assured paper bundles (on small 'deposit' basis, see reuse slide re financial incentives for individuals) and cardboard re-use schemes, reducing comingled residue and enabling less frequent collections for most of the year.

Image bottom right shows it all: immediate need to clear up mess sees this lot go to Byker and thence Teesside/Sweden, but pen should be re-used, bottle should be recycled and single-use plastic cotton buds shouldn't be produced in the first place.

Green Party policy: short-term

- × Not to enter into long-term contracts or arrangements which require large minimum volumes of waste, and so create an incentive to maintain or increase the size of the overall waste stream.
- ✓ To introduce new priorities for waste management:
 - so that unnecessary waste is avoided
 - so that the efficient reuse, recycling and composting or digestion of waste is maximised
 - to work towards a target of zero waste.

Note this is 'short term' - because we know that it's achievable with current technologies and the right political will.

Need to combine long-term vision with short-term commitment to what we know is achievable.

Zero Waste as first steps towards long-term vision, viz (quoting our policy):

- To minimise the consumption of all natural resources and, in particular, non-renewable resources for which supplies are reaching the limits of availability, whether for environmental, technical, physical or political reasons.
- To phase out the routine use of non-renewable materials for product-uses in which they cannot be easily be recycled for the same purpose.

Finally ...

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

We share your ambitions to radically improve waste management in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Will you share your summary of evidence and emerging thinking more widely?

Frances Hinton + Andrew Gray

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Additional reports and sources supplied by email.

Wiseonwaste website still has page for feedback, but doesn't (yet) include the summary document.

We don't have a monopoly of expertise: should be shared more widely.

Note statement from City Council as at

<http://democracy.newcastle.gov.uk/documents/s1>

[17167/Minutes%2006092017%20City%20Council.pdf](http://democracy.newcastle.gov.uk/documents/s1)

: "a draft report would be pulled together. ... the

Commission intended to consult on the draft

recommendations. All the evidence gathered would

be published at that time." This meeting a helpful

part of that consultation and thank you for sharing

emerging thinking and summary of evidence.