

Waste and Recycling communications and engagement strategy

Updated: 1 September 2021

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1. Starting position

Since the introduction of single stream recycling in the district, recycling rates have improved from 28.48% in 2017/18 to 37% in 2019/20, with 2020/21 heading for 41.9%, and our contamination rates have been the lowest by some margin across East Sussex.

Satisfaction rates with our waste and recycling services have traditionally been high and over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic the newly branded Environment First waste service was able to maintain almost all services, helping us benefit from a further boost in positive sentiment amongst residents. During this time the council took the opportunity to introduce the Environment First brand gradually and at minimal additional cost to the organisation which contributed to a successful initial introduction of the brand.

2. Strategic communications and engagement objectives

The quality of the environment is of the utmost importance to our residents and has several dimensions, from reducing our carbon footprint, how places look and deterring anti-social behaviour, to receiving a quality waste collection service. This communications strategy will support the council in its commitment to the environment and in meeting its operational objectives and targets through a clear, strategic and coordinated programme of communications activity throughout the year.

We will work with our partners to:

- Address an increase in littering as Covid-19 restrictions are eased, including roadside littering, beaches, parks, skateparks and other open spaces.
- Address instances of fly-tipping in the district, particularly an increase in tyres being fly-tipped as identified by the Environment Agency.
- Encourage reporting of environmental crime through the Report-It app and other channels and ensure there is feedback to customers reporting about the resolution of the issue reported.
- Support and positively engaging with local volunteer litter pick groups and linking with climate change and sustainability interest groups as appropriate.
- Support local, national and international waste and recycling campaigns.
- Raise awareness of the benefits of home composting.
- Firmly establish the reduce, reuse, recycle messaging.
- Incorporating the Open Space services requirements, linking with tree wildflower planting, links with the outcomes of the pollinator strategies – making a judgement on which vehicle to use when sharing these stories (RRR or Climate Change and Sustainability newsletter).
- Ensure residents are informed, engaged and educated around these service areas to encourage the desirable behaviour.

We will work with Open Spaces, Neighbourhood First and Environment First to:

- Reduce our carbon footprint and the council's commitment to its 2030 target
- Achieve a recycling rate of 50% (55% by 2025, 65% by 2035).
- Maintain fresh messaging to encourage waste reduction, increased recycling and particularly food waste recycling.
- Maintain and share positive sentiment towards the wase service through the use of good news stories.
- Ensure customers continue to be well informed of when to put their bins out, particularly when collection days change to bank holidays or service disruption.
- Ensure maximum uptake of the Garden Waste service.

3. Tone of voice

All communications about these services will use a consistent 'tone of voice', taking care to be:

- With customers use a clear, easily understandable and written in Plain English (avoiding jargon, operational language, acronyms etc). With littering / fly-tipping perpetrators take a no nonsense, bold approach to messaging.
- Friendly, conversational and written with the customer in mind, giving particular consideration to those who are vulnerable or who have a low level of literacy.
- Drafted to communicate the key information as succinctly as possible.
- Accompanied by bright, positive images, using LDC, Customer First,
 Neighbourhood First or Environment First branding where appropriate.

- Acknowledge the great work of operational teams and volunteers.
- Wherever possible, tested in advance with internal stakeholders such as staff (particularly operational colleagues and customer advisors), elected members, and staff who are residents.

4. Protocol for comms and engagement agreed with Lead Member for Recycling, Waste and Open Spaces

- Officers to send planned social media releases to Lead Member for comment with a reasonable deadline (SMS is acceptable if urgent).
- Lead Member to have the opportunity to add a quote if appropriate.
- Items 'for immediate release' will be marked as such and Lead Member cc'd for information such items are likely to be about current operational issues.
- Press/media releases from Cobb PR will always be sent to Lead Member for approval.
- Any communications to LDC Cllrs relating to this portfolio must be approved by the Lead Member first.
- When retweeting / re-posting messages alert Lead Member to enable engagement with these posts.

5. Communications and engagement priorities 2021/22

- Recycling collection calendars and accompanying letter to all residents (November each year).
- Bank holiday collection variations (flyers, social media, email, website).
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle bulletins (monthly to 12k+ subscribers).
- Reduction and recycling messages specific for housing tenants three times a year via Open Voice newsletter.
- Support for litter pick groups including loan of equipment, promotion of events, positive coverage after sessions.
- Roadside litter clearance work with volunteer groups, Highways England etc.
- Awareness days e.g. Global Recycling Day, Great British Spring Clean.
- Fly-tipping prevention and reporting including promotion o Report It app.
- Garden waste collections.
- Food waste collection and reduction / home composting.
- Litter action target schools, skateparks, visitors to the area to encourage litter reduction and taking litter home for recycling.
- Support for local events e.g. branded recycling bins at Gin and Fizz, Brewhaven, Seahaven Pride etc.
- Recycle Week 21 27 September.

- Seasonal social media campaigns e.g. Christmas recycling, Easter food waste recycling, Garden Waste subscriptions for mother's day, pumpkin recycling and composting.
- Clothes / textiles donations, buying second hand, mending over replacing.
- Food waste handling video of operatives at work.
- Promotion of additional recycling bins.
- Promote Shop Local campaign to reduce waste and carbon associated with buying online.
- Good news stories to celebrate staff in the waste service externally and internally.

6. Examples of waste and recycling comms and engagement in 2021



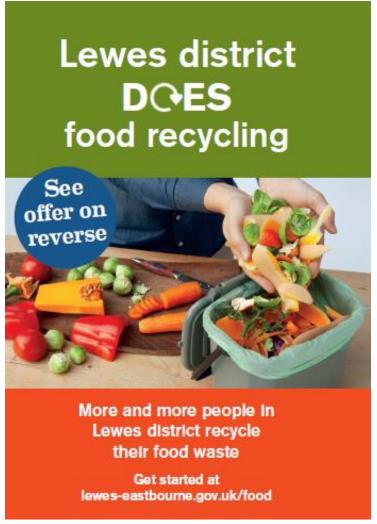


















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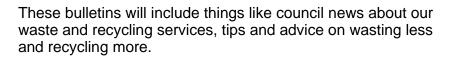
Waste & Recycling



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Bulletin | 18 March 2021

A message from Cllr Julie Car, Lead Cabinet Member for Recycling, Waste and Open Spaces

Hello and welcome to this first edition of our new fortnightly 'Reduce, Reuse and Recyle Bulletin' which we are launching today to mark Global Recycling Day 2021.





We will also use these to remind you of changes to bin collections around bank holidays, give updates on our work to tackle littering, fly-tipping and other environmental crime, and share news about initiatives in our parks and opens spaces such as tree and wildflower planing.

We hope you enjoy this first bulletin but if you decide it's not for you, you can unsubscribe using the link at the bottom of this email.

Today's top tips

- Ever need to recycle unopened glass, plastic or metal food packaging?
 Remember to open and empty the contents before recycling. As with all food packaging, please wash and squash before popping in your recycling bin!
- Have you tried our Report It app? It's the quickest way to report environmental issues when you're out and about such as littering, fly-tipping, a public bin that needs to be emptied, graffiti and much more. Download at lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/Report-It
- 3. Considering **home composting** for your food and garden waste? Lewes district residents can get a discounted price on compost bins, food waste

Check your next bin collection day



Unsure of when your next bin collection will be?

You can find out via our website any time at:

<u>lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling/when-is-my-bin-collection-day</u>

Global Recycling Day 2021

Every year, the Earth yields billions of tons of natural resources and at some point, in the not too distant future, it will run out.

That's why we must think again about what we throw away – seeing not waste, but opportunity.

The last decade has been the hottest on record, and we are now facing a climate emergency of unparalleled proportions. If we don't make significant and rapid changes, we will see continued rising global temperatures, the melting of icecaps, continents on fire and rapid deforestation.

Recycling is a key part of the circular economy, helping to protect our natural resources. Each year the 'Seventh Resource' (recyclables) saves over 700 million tonnes in CO2 emissions and this is projected to increase to 1 billion tons by 2030.

There is no doubt recycling is on the front line in the war to save the future of our planet and humanity.

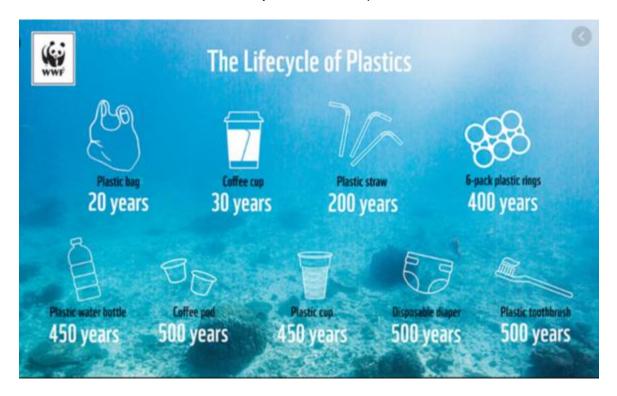
Learn more about Global Recycling Day at www.globalrecyclingday.com

How long does plastic take to decompose?

The World Wildlife Fund has shared this infographic showing how long certain plastics take to decompose.

This illustrates just how important it is to reduce the amount of plastic packaging we buy and to recycle as much as possible.

For example, recycling one plastic bottle saves enough energy to power a 60W light bulb for six hours while it takes 450 years to decompose.



And finally...

A council review of waste and recycling facilities at every block of flats in Lewes district has led to over 100,000 litres of additional recycling capacity being created.

The Lewes District Council team audited 356 blocks of flats to analyse the number of waste and recycling bins at each location and how effectively and efficiently they were being used.

As a result of the review, redundant refuse bins were removed from various blocks, while the number of recycling bins was increased.

Councillor Julie Carr, Cabinet Member for Recycling and Waste, said: "What a fantastic outcome for the district and a really welcome boost for local recycling. The audit identified council owned and private sector blocks of flats where we could reconfigure the use of bins to maximise recycling and reduce waste.

"In total 154 blocks of flats benefited from additional recycling bins, creating a massive 100,810 litres of additional recycling capacity, the equivalent of 420 wheelie bins!"

Get the full story here: www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/lewes-district-council-news/huge-boost-for-district-recycling



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