



**SOUTH LONDON
WASTE PARTNERSHIP**

Communications and Engagement Plan 2023/24 - 2024/25

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Working
together
to tackle
waste

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This document sets out the high-level communications and engagement priorities for the SLWP over a two-year period (2023/24 -2024/25); supporting the boroughs through a period of significant change as they prepare to deliver waste collection and street cleaning services as individual authorities once again, having done so in partnership since 2017.

A plan based on evidence and feedback

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Communications and engagement priorities for this two-year plan have been identified using evidence and intelligence gathered through the following sources:

2022 SLWP Triennial Resident Survey (DJS Research)

Survey conducted with a representative sample of 1,377 residents. Comparative historical data going back to 2010, providing a rich and robust insight into the views of residents on a wide range of environmental services issues.

2022 Waste composition analysis (Resource Futures)

35 tonnes of waste and recycling analysed from a representative sample of 1,469 properties across the SLWP region.

2022/2023 Co-design Resident Engagement (Enventure Research)

Open-to-all online surveys, representative telephone surveys and focus groups with 6,000+ residents across the SLWP region exploring their priorities for the future.



Front cover: a 'Recycling Rockstars' school roadshow in Croydon



Pupils at Singleton Primary School in Merton become Recycling Rockstars



Information stand at the Chessington Fun Day, Kingston



Food waste reduction stickers being applied to containers on targeted rounds

Our communication and engagement priorities: 2023/24 - 2024/25

1. Food

2. Flats

3. Faith

4. Funding

5. Future

All supported by solid Foundations

1. Food

Food waste offers the boroughs significant environmental and financial opportunities:

- Around 30% (by weight) of the contents of an average rubbish bin in the SLWP region is food waste
- The boroughs can achieve a net saving of over £100 per tonne of food waste that is diverted away from energy recovery and towards anaerobic digestion
- Around one-third of residents say they don't recycle all of their food waste (one in five say they don't recycle any of it)
- The most common reasons for not participating in food waste recycling are:

'I don't have the containers required.'

'Animals break into containers and create a mess.'

'It's dirty - I don't want containers in the home.'

'The cost of liners.'



Leaflet delivered to properties as part of the 2022 food waste recycling participation campaign

We will...

Continue to work with Veolia on extending the roll-out of the proven food waste recycling participation campaign which:

- Delivers (on collection day) a roll of 12 free liners, information leaflet on the benefits of food waste recycling and places a 'No Food Waste' sticker on the lid of the rubbish bin to properties on the kerbside collection service (houses)
- Increases participation in target areas by c.10% and food waste tonnages in target areas by c.35 kg per property per annum
- Follow-up properties that have been included in previous years' campaigns with:

* 'Nudge communications' that reports back on the success of the campaign and promotes powerful normative messages ('your neighbours are recycling their food waste; are you?')

* Food waste minimisation stickers on the external caddies with tips on how to reduce food waste and directing people to the Love Food Hate Waste website

- Develop eye-catching, engaging and informative content for borough communication channels (including social media) that encourage food waste recycling and minimisation.

2. Flats

Properties on the communal collection service (flats) make up a significant (and growing) proportion of the SLWP total (c.26%) but they present some specific challenges:

- Satisfaction with the recycling and waste collection service is significantly lower amongst people who live in flats compared to those who live in houses, with as much as 29 percentage point difference
- People who live in flats are significantly less likely than people who live in houses to say they recycle all they can

- Between one-third and one-half of residents who live in flats don't recycle any of their food waste (compared to just 10% of residents who live in houses) - not having the containers they need is the biggest barrier

- It is more challenging to identify misuse of the

collection service (e.g. recycling contamination) and educate offenders; the contamination and excess waste procedure that has been designed for houses does not work with communal shared bins

- The average communal rubbish bin contains significantly more recyclable materials than the average kerbside rubbish bin.



Example of the sort of improvements that can be delivered by working in partnership with social landlords. These improvements to bin stores on an estate in Sutton were delivered in partnership with Metropolitan Thames Valley in 2020.

We will...

- Work with Veolia to deliver a scalable but resource-efficient campaign that encourages and supports managing agents and social landlords to play their part and invest in infrastructure and communications with residents to improve recycling participation and collection service satisfaction

- Create pressure on managing agents and social landlords from the bottom up by encouraging residents to speak to them and ask questions about recycling infrastructure improvements
- Support borough-led efforts to implement recycling improvements in targeted blocks of flats and estates
- Explore opportunities to deliver a waste minimisation campaign aimed specifically at residents who live in flats (e.g. Southwark's 'One Bag a Week Challenge').



The 'One Bag a Week Challenge' campaign delivered by Veolia in Southwark.

3. Faith (complete trust and confidence in the recycling and waste management system)

It is of paramount importance that our residents have complete trust and confidence in two key parts of the waste management system:

- **Confidence that the recycling they sort out is handled diligently and is actually recycled whenever possible** - this will ensure people's commitment to make the effort to recycle remains.

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However:

The proportion of residents who have concerns that not everything they sort out is being recycled has increased from 38% in 2016 to 43% in 2022

- * Trust that local councils play their part in ensuring we recycle as much as we can has fallen from 60% in 2016 to 48% in 2022
- * Commitment to recycle dropped slightly from

75% in 2019 to 71% in 2022

- * 78% of residents say they would like to know more about where recycling is taken and what it's turned into
- **Trust that anything that cannot be recycled or has not been sorted for recycling is disposed of in the best way possible** - around three-quarters of residents feel that energy from waste (EfW) facilities are a good way to dispose of rubbish and are preferable to landfill.

However:

- * Four in ten residents do have concerns (unprompted) about emissions from EfWs and the potential impact on the environment and on human health.

We will...

- Update, improve and promote relevant content on the SLWP website ('Destination Recycling'), being as specific, open and transparent as possible about where recycling and rubbish is taken and what it's turned in to (including the possible publication of an Annual Report of Offtakers)
- Work with our commercial partners to increase the availability and awareness of visits and tours of our recycling and waste treatment facilities - whilst most residents won't

take up the offer, it will nonetheless be reassuring to know that the offer is there

- Adopt a more proactive approach to Beddington ERF communications. Work with Viridor to plan and deliver a targeted social media advertising campaign that raises awareness of the Beddington ERF virtual visitor centre (beddingtonerf.info) and provides reassurance that it is a safe and environmentally sustainable alternative to landfill
- Include detailed and specific information about where waste is taken in our resident-facing communications wherever possible (e.g. the food waste recycling participation campaign materials), directing residents to the new and improved SLWP website for more information.



The Beddington ERF website (beddingtonerf.info)

4. Funding

We have lots we want to do; our ambitions have never been higher. But borough finances are under severe pressure and costs associated with delivering large-scale behaviour change campaigns are rising rapidly. To tackle this,

We will...

- Double down our efforts to explore, apply for and secure external funding to support our behaviour change campaigns. We will explore funding opportunities with:
 - * Our commercial partners
 - * Industry associations and bodies (e.g. ReLondon, from whom we were successful in 22/23 in securing £25,000 of funding towards our waste composition analysis project)
 - * Large companies that have a significant presence in the SLWP region and who may feel

they have a corporate social responsibility to help fund our campaigns in return for joint branding opportunities

- * Maximise new funding stream opportunities (e.g. Extended Producer Responsibility, EPR).

5. Future

The next two years will be a period of significant change for the Partnership, as the boroughs prepare to deliver waste collection and street cleansing services as individual authorities once again, having done so in partnership since 2017. To support that transition,

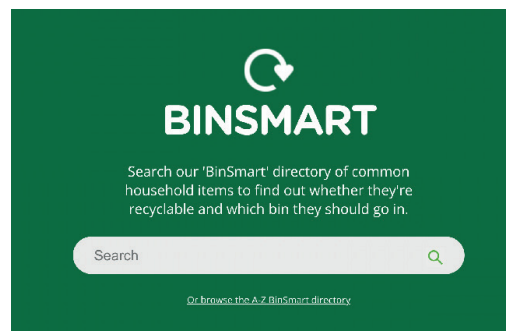
We will...

- Work closely with Veolia to ensure their communications team continues to deliver high quality work that meets the needs of the boroughs over the final two years of the contract
- Support the boroughs in ensuring a smooth handover of communications and engagement responsibilities in 2025
- Work with the boroughs to ensure communications and engagement activities are appropriately resourced, budgeted and planned for in any new service arrangements

- Identify and develop opportunities for the boroughs to continue to work in partnership post-2025 where this delivers tangible benefits. For example:
 - * Sub-regional waste minimisation campaigns where the messaging is high level and it may be easier to attract external funding
 - * Development, maintenance and promotion of an encyclopedia of recycling ('BinSmart') where residents can go to get comprehensive information on what they can and can't recycle and how to dispose of items responsibly - one version of the truth which is resource-efficient to maintain
 - * Waste strategy, policy and lobbying activities - where four voices have more impact than one.

Work on these five priority areas (Food, Flats, Faith, Funding and Future) will be supported and underpinned by solid Foundations:

- A new and improved SLWP website that tells a more effective story about the waste challenge and the work the boroughs are doing to tackle it - along with the increasing importance of carbon reduction



- Continued management of our key commercial partners (Veolia, Viridor and Suez) to ensure they are meeting and exceeding their contractual commitments with regards to communications and stakeholder engagement.

Priorities will include:

- * **Veolia** - approval and successful delivery of the Communications Action Plans for Years 7 and 8 of the contract covering:
 - * Contamination and excess waste education process (crew training, tagging, letters and door knocking)

- * Garden waste collection service subscription renewals and promotion
- * Production and distribution of the annual service newsletter and collection calendars

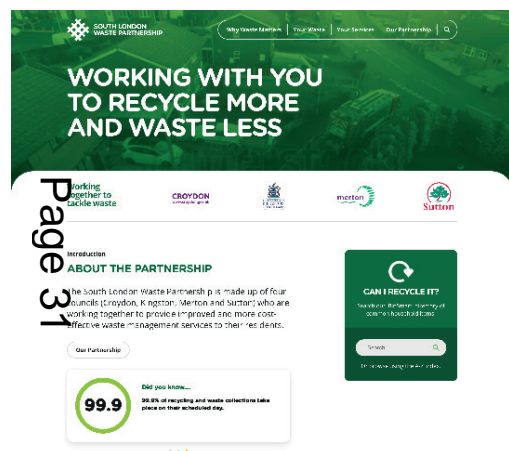
- * Delivery of key regional projects including the food waste recycling participation and minimisation project, street scene improvement project and flats recycling package for managing agents and landlords

- * Delivery of borough-specific projects including promotion of Kingston's electric collection fleet and Sutton Spring Clean

- * Community events and school visits
- * Reactive and proactive PR and social media support

* **Viridor:**

- * Continued development and promotion of the Beddington ERF virtual visitor centre (including a targeted social media advertising campaign)
- * Visits and tours to the Beddington ERF
- Continued liaison with nominated Communication Leads in each of the four boroughs to ensure communications activities are carefully planned, coordinated and support the wider service and corporate priorities of the Authorities.



- A new 'BinSmart' searchable directory of household items and detailed information on how to recycle or dispose of them (along with tips on how to reduce waste where appropriate). This directory will feature prominently on the new SLWP website and could replace the boroughs' A-Z directories of recycling

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