

2.0 Raising public awareness of recycling and reuse



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Audience: The primary audience for this section of the guidance are waste disposal and collection authorities, waste management companies and producer compliance schemes. It will however be of interest to all those involved in the collection of WEEE.

Benefits: The local authorities will benefit from an increase in the tonnage of WEEE collected thereby improving their recycling rates and more WEEE collected will help compliance schemes to meet the obligations of their members.

Summary: This chapter recommends that to raise awareness of what and where to recycle and reuse?, a communication campaign should be used. One option based on research and pilot development is the Recycle Now “Don’t Bin It, Bring It!” campaign. Retailers can also make use of the WRAP toolkit to strengthen the message.

Awareness of recycling and reuse avenues should be promoted to householders and end user businesses at every opportunity; this can be achieved by a number of different methods such as a local communication campaign, call centre staff dealing with initial enquiries from the public and at HWRCs through layout/signage and the training of site operatives. By addressing issues using all these avenues the greatest impact can be achieved.

Greater public awareness of reuse and recycling avenues can be achieved through a number of good practice measures such as provision of marketing materials, developing public engagement and using front line staff to deliver the message.

Increasing visibility of WEEE recycling and reuse will raise awareness amongst the general public. PCS, all retailers (member of the DTS and non members) and local authorities, all have a part to play.

WEEE recycling campaign materials and recycling advice are available from the **Recycle Now Partners** website, **Recycle More** website and the **Scottish Waste Awareness Group (SWAG)**.



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2.1 Raising awareness of what and where to recycle and reuse WEEE

It will be easier to provide a consistent message if all local authority DCFs in the area collect the same WEEE groups.

Where this is not possible, campaigns should focus on a WEEE group that isn't well recognised, this could be identified by reviewing the type of WEEE that is collected.

Independent DCFs should also raise awareness of their services in order to maximise recycling at their sites.

Options available to raise awareness and maximise reuse and recycling include:

- marketing materials, e.g. posters and radio adverts;
- promotion of the service online, in leaflets and brochures and in the local authority magazine;
- public engagement e.g. roadshows or door-stepping. The PCS may be interested in (part) funding public engagement activities to encourage greater capture of WEEE in the area; and
- collection methods e.g. front line staff (call centres and HWRC), bring banks, ad hoc collections.

Where space is limited on site, all five groups of WEEE can be collected mixed, however the hazardous WEEE must be segregated, this consistency will help with communicating a clear message.

2.1.1 Communications throughout the UK

England: Recycle Now has developed the “**Don't Bin it, Bring it!**” campaign for use within local authorities in England. A case study of this campaign is provided **on the next page**. The key messages can of course be used elsewhere within local campaigns.

Wales: **Waste Aware Wales** has developed a seasonal WEEE press release and the Recycle Now materials have been adapted for use by Welsh local authorities.

Scotland: In Scotland, **Zero Waste Scotland** is also promoting WEEE recycling on their website. Any campaign should be developed with the Waste Aware Partners materials that are available **here**. Or visit www.wasteawarepartners.org.uk

Northern Ireland: Local authorities in Northern Ireland should check with their waste management group for WEEE communication activity in their area. Visit **Arc21, Southern Waste Management Partnership** (SWaMP) or the **North West Region Waste Management Group** for further information.

UK wide: Both **Recycle Now** and **Recycle More** provide advice and a postcode locator for recycling throughout the UK.

Further information on planning an effective communications campaign is available from WRAP – Improving recycling through effective communications.



EXAMPLE: Buntingford HWRC

At Buntingford HWRC in Hertfordshire which is a very small site with restricted opening hours. Cooling appliances, fluorescent tubes, televisions and monitors are separately collected. Large and small domestic appliances are collected with scrap metal as per an arrangement with the PCS. This means that communication materials can be the same for all sites regarding the materials collected, but site staff interaction to ensure correct segregation is applied.

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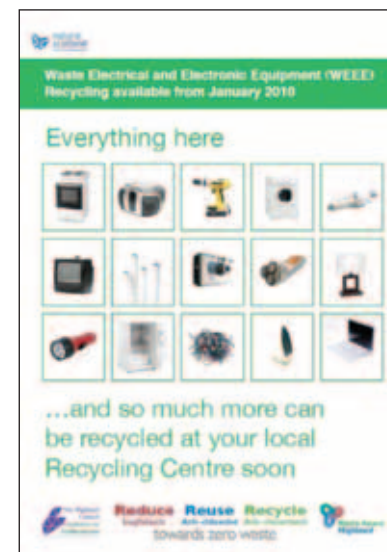
2.2 Retailer in-store communication (signage and public communications)

In-store communication must be made available (in writing upon request) to householders on how they can dispose of WEEE and the environmental benefits of doing so, as per Part 5 of the WEEE Regulations 2006.

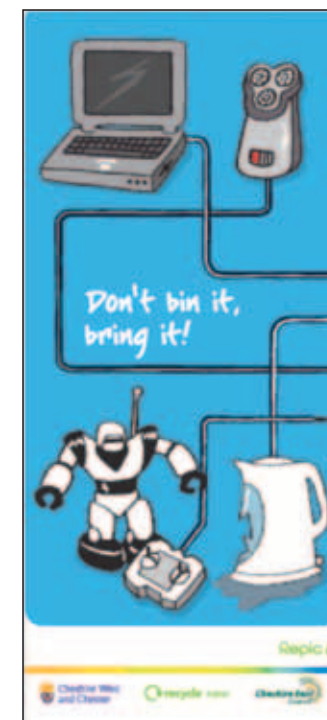
The **VCA (Vehicle Certification Agency)** is responsible for enforcing the consumer-facing obligations of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2006. The VCA uses mystery shopping and enforcement visits to test the extent to which Distributors fulfill their obligation to provide customers with the take back of WEEE.

The DTS has developed a window sticker for its members to display in store and some non-members have also developed their own. It is recommended that additional and appropriate marketing materials are also displayed by DTS members and non-members alike.

For retailers that require support with their WEEE communications, WRAP has developed a **retailer toolkit**. There are materials specifically for retailers that are members of the DTS and for those that are not. These materials ensure there is a consistent message available to all customers through all retailers and it builds on the recognition of the WRAP consumer awareness campaign materials.



Highlands Council WEEE Recycling leaflet



EXAMPLE:

Recycle Now “Don’t bin it, bring it!” campaign in England

Recycle Now has developed a specific communications campaign to raise awareness amongst householders of the need to dispose of small items of household WEEE correctly and where they can do so.

Research has shown that most households have at least three items of old, unwanted or broken electronic or electrical equipment at any one time, and that the public is often unsure of how to dispose of it. The relatively small size of some WEEE increases the temptation to simply throw them in the household bin. Types of small WEEE this campaign focuses on are:

- high-tech electronic devices;
- electrical appliances;
- electrical personal care; and
- DIY & garden electricals.

The ‘Don’t Bin It, Bring It!’ campaign asks householders to take items of small WEEE to the local recycling centre, rather than disposing of them in their residual waste. Householders are encouraged to visit the Recycle Now website to find out more about recycling electrical goods and for information about some of the other options available, including:

- bring banks;
- retailers offering in-store take-back; and
- community reuse projects.

This was developed for local authorities but can be adapted to include large WEEE, for use by producer compliance schemes and waste management companies.

Go to www.recyclenowpartners.co.uk for further information.

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2.3 Awareness of reuse avenues and requirements

From the waste hierarchy, the preferred option is to maximise the number of electrical items diverted for reuse - if a suitable organisation or project is available in the area. The benefits of reuse are environmental, social and economic.

Early intervention is key to maximising reuse, therefore communicating this to the public is key.

The public should be encouraged to reuse within their own family and friends, advertise on Freecycle/ Freecycle or other exchange website or donate their functional items of WEEE to local projects, where possible.

End-User Businesses are a good source of potentially reusable items, however businesses need to be made more aware of waste management to ensure they make decisions that result in appropriate treatment of WEEE.

Intervention by call centre staff at initial enquiry stage will help to increase the amount of WEEE donated for reuse, and an identification checklist is provided [here](#).

HWRC operatives should be required to and trained to identify items of WEEE brought to site that are suitable for reuse and how to handle them correctly in order to ensure they remain so.



English and Welsh language sign

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2.4 On-site awareness

At DCFs, the training and education of site staff will be particularly important in raising awareness so that they are able to clearly direct the public.

Signage can increase the recycling rate of the site but it is important to strike a balance between too little and too much information on each sign and the site as a whole. Signage good practice includes:

- make signs legible;
- elevate above vehicle height, and/ or angle the signs so they can be seen by incoming traffic;
- in England and Wales use WRAP icons and suggested material stream colour (i.e. Magenta C) to increase legibility. In Scotland use SWAG logos and in Northern Ireland use the waste management group logos (ARC21, SWAMP and North West Region Waste Management Group);
- include instructions on correct disposal to reduce contamination and increase operational efficiency;
- use recognisable icons or pictures to help those with reading difficulties or users whose first language is not English, Recycle Now has a set of well recognised material stream icons ([LINK](#));
- businesses need to be aware that many HWRCs are for the use of householders only; and
- sites that accept both B2C and B2B WEEE need to raise awareness of the different classification and controls and therefore the different payment regimes.

For more information on site signage see Collections at Designated Collection Facilities, **section 4**.

- If the authority is involved in a communication campaign, appropriate marketing materials, such as leaflets and posters, could be displayed and/or available onsite to increase awareness and recognition of the campaign. Standard information on the opportunities to recycle electricals should also be available at all times.

Further advice on appropriate site signage can be found in the National Assessment of Civic Amenity Sites report. Local authorities may benefit from additional WRAP support from the Local Government Services team.



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2.5 Data security of IT

Data eradication is important. This should be communicated to householders and businesses to help protect against identity theft and other misuse of data.

Computer equipment (and other electronic equipment that has data storage capabilities e.g. standard mobile phones, smart phones, PDA and handheld computers) will need to have the data removed and the public should be made aware of this.

The type of information that it is suggested is made available to end users includes:

- ensuring all copyrighted non-transferable software, protected and confidential data has been wiped or the hard drive removed before bringing the item to a DCF or to a reuse organisation to be recycled or reused;
- the public can do this themselves (free software can be downloaded online) or by using an approved recycling facility (this will be at the cost to the user).
- eradication tools that are approved by the CESG (the government's National Technical Authority for Information Assurance) are available; and
- if carried out by an organisation, proof of data eradication should be provided for each item.



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