

Partnership branding helps to promote recycling to residents across the Greater Manchester area

Introduction

The main aims of the Greater Manchester Waste Partnership are to reduce waste and increase reuse and recycling by residents of the different communities of the Greater Manchester region of north-west England. The campaign to create a unified branding for the Partnership was co-ordinated by the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority. The organisations making up the Greater Manchester Waste Partnership are:

- Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority (GMWDA)
- Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council
- Bury Metropolitan Borough Council
- Manchester City Council
- Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
- Salford Metropolitan Borough Council
- Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.

Key Facts

- GMWDA's overall recycling rate increased from 22.1% to 29.2% during the campaign.
- All partners now use consistent branding based on 'Recycle Now' iconography.
- Campaign lasted from August 2006 to March 2008.
- Campaign funding was £721,400.
- Cost per household was £0.75.

About Greater Manchester

- The area covered by the GMWDA and the Greater Manchester Waste Partnership is made up of the city of Manchester and the boroughs of Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside and Trafford.
- The GMWDA serves over 958,000 households and a resident population of over 2.18 million.
- The region is predominantly urban/suburban in nature with some rural areas in Bolton, Oldham and Stockport.
- Parts of the Greater Manchester region suffer from high deprivation and there is a significant Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population.

Background to campaign

Apart from Rochdale MBC, all the local authorities making up the Greater Manchester Waste Partnership offer weekly collection of refuse from households. However, they offer a variety of collection services for recyclables with differences in the type of materials collected commingled, collection frequency, type of containers, provision for high rise flats, extent of kerbside services and numbers of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

GMWDA, Bury MBC, Manchester City Council and Stockport MBC had a target audience of all residents; the other partners focussed on social landlords and BME residents. Manchester City Council was particularly keen to expand its 'kerbit' box scheme and Salford MBC also targeted its Jewish community.

Communication objectives

The campaign's objectives included:

- promote the recycling schemes available through face-to-face contact with householders;
- increase participation and capture rates in low performing areas;
- identify issues preventing householders from recycling;
- improve knowledge and understanding of the region's HWRCs; and
- increase recycling levels throughout the region by March 2008.

Approach

The national 'Recycle Now' iconography was integrated into all communications by the partners and the previous partnership branding was discarded in favour of 'Recycle for Greater Manchester'.

The partnership approach provided economies of scale on campaigns such as bus advertising and a new website (www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com). In addition, the partners each adopted a range of campaign options from doorstep canvassing, service information leaflets, focus groups, roadshows, newsletters, posters, press adverts, promotional items, collection calendars, bin stickers and bring site signage. Some of the highlights of the campaign are summarised below.

- **GMWDA.** The new website provided a major success with 30 times the number of hits per month compared with the previous 'Sort-it' website. GMWDA also ran bus and press adverts, and produced site-specific service leaflets for 26 HWRCs.
- **Bolton.** Rebranded service information leaflets and doorstep canvassing contributed to an impressive increase in participation in recycling in the borough's social landlord and BME areas. As part of doorstep canvassing, residents were asked if they wanted a recycling container; 43 green bins and 111 green boxes were delivered to the social landlord target area.

- **Bury.** This was the first time Bury MBC had used face-to-face contact with residents to promote recycling. A particular success was the number of redundant/contaminated bins brought back into service with residents now using the scheme correctly.
- **Manchester City.** Leaflets, stickers, posters and vehicle livery were used to support campaigns to expand the council's 'kerbit' green box scheme and to launch a high-rise kerbit campaign. To boost recycling among the city's BME communities, presentations were made easy to understand by using pictures and day-to-day items to identify what could and could not be recycled. A translator was present at all community events and care was taken to adhere to local customs. Feedback was sought and the presentation was made meaningful to communities by using photos of waste problems in their area. The success of the campaign is demonstrated by the 11% increase in the number of committed recyclers in the target group. Awareness of recycling among all residents was raised through the production of the 'Little Green Bag' – a reusable bag designed by students from Manchester Metropolitan University and distributed exclusively by the Harvey Nichols store in the city centre.
- **Oldham.** Delivering new boxes (for glass, cans and plastic bottles) and sacks (for paper) while carrying out doorstep canvassing proved a great success as householders could start recycling while it was fresh in their minds. Not undertaking a survey during the canvassing meant more people were willing to have a doorstep 'chat' and be more open about discussing their barriers to recycling. The focus groups were so successful the sessions have been replicated across Oldham.
- **Rochdale.** When targeting BME communities, the council recognised the importance of engaging with community groups and the value of contacting spiritual leaders with their knowledge of the community and their influence on people's behaviour. The council also employed an Asian waste awareness consultant.

recycle
for Stockport

your local neighbourhood
recycling site

you can recycle here:

- glass bottles & jars only**
No pyrex or sheet glass
- food & drink cans**
No aluminium foil
- shoes**
Clean and in bags please
- cardboard**

for more information on recycling or reducing your waste please call on 0161 474 4747 or go to the website www.stockport.gov.uk/waste, or e-mail us at recycle@stockport.gov.uk

RECYCLE MORE
www.stockport.gov.uk/waste

■ **Salford.** The development and distribution of a recycling guide was a major element of the campaign. Discussions with residents through focus groups and roadshows enabled the council to learn about residents' worries/concerns and to discuss its objectives with the public. Another key part of the campaign was a leaflet targeting the Jewish community.

- **Stockport.** Standardisation of the signage across all recycling sites and at flats proved a great success.
- **Tameside.** A particular success was the increased participation and tonnages collected as a result of residents within the doorstep canvassing area (6,000 households) requesting 1,362 new containers. A training day for doorstep canvassing staff included showing them what happens to the collected materials in Tameside and a presentation on canvassing from the point of view of the householder. To overcome any language barriers, canvassers were given visual props showing bins and materials.
- **Trafford.** The council found focus groups particularly helpful in understanding residents' needs and realised the value of monitoring participation to help plan communications. The council plans to use Recycle Now iconography to rebrand refuse and recycling vehicles, and for signage at local recycling centres.

food & drink cans

mixed glass

mixed paper & card

mixed textiles & clothes

plastic bags

electrical

It's your future -
don't throw it away

Reduce. Reuse. Recycle.

recycle for Salford

Results/Conclusion

The number of committed recyclers recorded by the GMWDA went up by 14% while Bolton, Bury, Manchester City, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford and Tameside all reported increased participation by their target groups. Table 1 shows recycling rates before and after the campaign.

Authority	2005-06	2007-08
Bolton MBC	24.9%	30.6%
Bury MBC	23.2%	26.3%
Manchester City Council	19.0%	22.0%
Oldham MBC	16.0%	20.0%
Rochdale MBC	16.2%	24.8%
Salford MBC	18.0%	23.1%
Stockport MBC	31.6%	35.4%
Tameside MBC	20.8%	27.1%
Trafford MBC	21.8%	28.0%
GMWDA – HWRCs only	28.8%	47.0%
GMWDA – overall	22.1%	29.2%

Table 1: Recycling rates before and after the campaign

Key Learning Points

- A close working relationship between councils' recycling departments and internal communications teams is vital to ensure consistent use of Recycle Now branding.
- Working with the local press is a priority to ensure GMWDA is the first port of call when there is a news story about waste matters.
- Use of sub-groups made up of 2–3 partners authorised to take decisions helped to keep the momentum going.
- Greater leadership from GMWDA officers helped improve communications between the partners.
- A robust system to measure performance accurately (e.g. tonnages at a ward level) is needed.

'Working together on activities means we can take advantage of things such as economies of scale to allow the funding to go further to spread the message. Having an external facilitator has also been really useful and brought a fresh approach to the group.'

David Langley, GMWDA

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