# 1.0 Campaign Activities

## Develop individual activities

Your communication methods cover a wide range of individual activities and once you have decided on your overall strategy and selected the mix of communication methods to use, you need to look in detail at the communications activities you need to deliver your strategy’s objectives.

You should begin by looking at which communication activities to use as part of the mix of communication methods you have selected – a list of potential activities is outlined below. Next, you need to set individual aims and objectives for each activity and decide how to monitor and evaluate them. This will enable you to identify which activities perform well, which perform less well and to report on your successes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication methods</th>
<th>Communication activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advertising</strong></td>
<td>External advertising – billboards, adshels, bus, train and tube&lt;br&gt;Internal advertising – bus, tube&lt;br&gt;TV and radio advertising&lt;br&gt;Online advertising&lt;br&gt;Press advertising&lt;br&gt;Free poster sites&lt;br&gt;Branding of collection receptacles&lt;br&gt;Information stickers for collection receptacles&lt;br&gt;Livery of collection vehicles&lt;br&gt;Signage at ‘drop off’ sites&lt;br&gt;Signage on bring banks&lt;br&gt;Signage on recycling and waste collection containers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PR</strong></td>
<td>Briefing local media (TV, radio, press and online media)&lt;br&gt;Launch event(s)&lt;br&gt;Press packs and press briefings&lt;br&gt;Council newsletters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct marketing techniques</strong></td>
<td>Leaflets and service calendars (collection information)&lt;br&gt;Contamination cards&lt;br&gt;Door-to-door canvassing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community engagement</strong></td>
<td>Building on-going permanent relationships with local communities and community groups&lt;br&gt;Events, roadshows and drop-in days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online</strong></td>
<td>Council website&lt;br&gt;Email and E-zines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Media</strong></td>
<td>Twitter, Facebook, Blogs &amp; You Tube</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobile phones</strong></td>
<td>Mobile phone text alerts and information services e.g. reminders to put recycling bins out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal communications</strong></td>
<td>Intranet&lt;br&gt;Staff magazine&lt;br&gt;Briefings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Like your communication methods, your activities need to be selected using the following criteria:

- Appropriate to your strategy and your chosen communication methods
- Support the achievement of your overall aim and objectives
- Appropriate for the services you are promoting
- Best fit for the type of message and audience
- Can be managed successfully with your available resources
- Can be delivered within your anticipated budget – e.g. using a mix of ‘high cost’ and ‘low cost’ activities and ‘free’ media (such as posters in council/public buildings) wherever possible

Again, you should use a number of activities for each communications method because no single method will be effective on its own and each activity (like their corresponding methods) has its advantages and disadvantages in different situations. Also, you should develop an integrated strategy with a range of communication activities and methods which overlap with each other. This will maximise the chances of hitting your target audiences by delivering your messages via a number of different methods over a period of time and increase the overall impact of your communications. Use the communications matrix from **Becoming an Expert No14** to cross-reference and integrate your communication activities with your overall methods and target audiences.

**CASE STUDY: Campaign activities**

**London Borough of Barnet undertook a campaign to boost participation in recycling by people living in flats.**

The main campaign activity was **door-to-door canvassing** with the Council commissioning teams of recycling promoters to visit all 15,000 flats with communal recycling bins. Return visits were carried out to achieve a 50% face-to-face contact rate. The promoters offered residents free, reusable bags to store recyclable items and handed out an information leaflet on recycling.

Other communication activities included:

- **Media releases** to achieve instant and sustained awareness and to launch the Flats Recycling publicity campaign
- **Newsletters** – including features in local newsletters and community magazines
- **Website** – the pages dealing with recycling on the council’s website ([www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk)) were updated with a separate section for flats
- **Service leaflets** were produced for distribution as part of the door-stepping campaign
- **Direct mail** – a letter to provide information about the service was posted to residents who were not in when the door-steppers called
- **Posters** featuring details of the campaign were produced for communal areas of flats
- **Reusable bags for storing and transporting recycling** printed with service information were distributed to all residents visited
- **Signage on recycling containers** – new clear, easy-to-follow information stickers conforming to national ‘Recycle Now’ branded signage were introduced
- **Show cards** were produced illustrating the materials collected for recycling for use by residents who do not speak English as a first language

For more information about communication activities – see **Becoming an Expert No19 and No20**.

For more information on communications on a budget – see **Becoming an Expert No22**.
1.1 Individual aims & objectives

For each communication activity you need to identify an individual set of aims and objectives against which progress and achievements can be monitored and evaluated. Your aims and objectives for each activity need to link back to and support your overall aim and objectives. If they do not, you should question the value of a particular activity. This approach will help you to be clear about the purpose of each activity and see how it fits into your overall plan. Remember to make sure your objectives are SMART and include inputs, outputs and impacts where relevant (NB you do not need to include input, output and impact objectives for every activity – use them sensibly). Setting input and output objectives is relatively straightforward as they are easier to measure. Objectives based on impacts should be approached with more care as it as be more difficult to apportion impacts to specific communication activities. Be sensible with the measures you chose – make sure they are appropriate, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posters in public buildings and shops</td>
<td>Print 500 A4 colour posters</td>
<td>450 posters distributed</td>
<td>No objective set (too difficult to apportion impacts (ie increased tonnage of recyclate collected) directly to posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and shops throughout local authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>400 displayed to the public</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door-to-door canvassing in LPA</td>
<td>3,000 houses called at</td>
<td>1,000 people spoken to</td>
<td>5% increase in recyclate collected from the round covering the LPA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To know more about setting aims and objectives and SMART targets – See Section 3: Aims and Objectives and Becoming an Expert No6 and No7.

1.2 Communication tactics

Next, you need to look in detail at the individual tactics (or tasks) that make up each activity. You should list all your communication activities and break down the individual tactics each one needs in order to be developed and delivered successfully.

For an example of an activity breakdown, see the outline plan in Becoming an Expert No23.

For more information about planning your communications see Section 8: Planning your activities.

1.3 Agree Monitoring & Evaluation mechanisms

Each activity should have its own monitoring and evaluation system so you know whether it has succeeded in meeting its aims and objectives. You need to measure the inputs, outcomes and impacts (as appropriate) of each activity and determine whether they have met their aim and objectives. For example, the monitoring and evaluation for an event could comprise:

- The number of events organised (input)
- The number of people attending the event (outcome)
- The number of people spoken to (outcome)
- The amount of information taken away (outcome)
- A survey of attendees (all or a sample) to obtain information on attitudes towards, understanding of and opinions about the event and recycling locally (impact)

For an introduction and overview of monitoring and evaluation - see Section 9.
For detailed information about target setting and monitoring and evaluating your communications see *Improving the Performance of Waste Diversion Schemes – A Good Practice Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation*. This comprehensive guidance document gives detailed step-by-step guidance on a range of monitoring techniques for waste operations and communications and can be accessed here:

[www.wrap.org.uk/monitoringandevaluation](http://www.wrap.org.uk/monitoringandevaluation)

### 1.4 Planning your Communications

The following section shows an extract from a typical communication plan to show how the communications activities could be developed and written.

#### 7.0 Communications Activities

##### 7.1 Recycling Guide and Collection Calendar

A recycling guide will be developed to inform householders of the materials they can recycle using the blue and brown bin kerbside services and the HWRC and recycling bring sites. This will be mailed out in an envelope with council branding to all households with the collection calendar.

The design of the leaflet will be eye-catching and integrate the recycle now branding and material stream icons and the text will be kept concise.

**Aims**

- To raise awareness of materials which can be recycled using the MFC kerbside, bring and HWRC recycling services; and
- To inform householders when their collections will be made.

**Objectives**

- To design and deliver a recycling guide to all residents by the end of August 2013;
- To design and deliver a collection calendar to all residents by the end of August 2013;

**Tactics**

- Design and print 18,000 (allowing for spares) A5, 8 page, four colour, recycling guide;
- Design and print 18,000 52 types A5 2 page, four colour, collection calendars;
- Design and print 17,000 C5 4 colour overprinted envelopes;
- Mail out calendars and recycling guides to all households;
- Provide copies of promotional material to relevant staff e.g. crews, frontline staff, members;
- Internal promotion to all staff using email;
- Issue press release to local media groups; and
- Update the recycling pages on the council website.

**Monitoring Mechanisms**

- Number of recycling guides and calendars distributed;
- Tonnage of dry recycling and organic waste collected before and after mail out;
- Number of queries and requests received as a result of the mail out; and
- Hits and visits to the recycling pages on the council website.

##### 7.2 Website
The Council’s website has information on the recycling and refuse services which will be updated and improved significantly to provide clear information on what householders can recycle. This will be done in a more visual way and will use the new branding developed for all recycling and waste services.

A new URL will be developed to take householders directly to the recycling pages of the MFC website, this will be www.movingforward.gov.uk/recycling. This address will be used on all communications as it is far easier for residents to access the information rather than going via the Council’s home page. In addition a link from the home page will also be developed to take users directly to the recycling pages.

Aim

- To raise awareness and provide up to date information to householders on the waste and recycling services and waste reduction initiatives provided by the Council on the MFC website.

Objectives

- Make improvements and update the website recycling pages, develop a new URL for use on all promotional material and create a link from the home page by July 2013; and
- To increase the number of visits to the recycling and waste pages by 20% by March 2014.

Tactics

- Develop updated, on-brand pages, new URL and link from home page and arrange upload;
- Add information about new promotional campaigns as and when they are launched;
- Ensure that regular website statistics reports are available for the waste and recycling pages to establish the information readers are accessing – this can help shape and populate new pages.

Monitoring Mechanisms

- Use statistics package to track website traffic to recycling and waste pages – monthly recording/ quarterly reporting.
Becoming an Expert No 19: Campaign Activities

This section looks in detail at the range of communications activities that can be used for local authority recycling campaigns. The communications activities that will work best will vary with each local authority depending on their aims and objectives and their target audiences.

When you start looking in detail at which activities to use you need to apply your knowledge of your local authority area and the people who live in it to make your decisions. For example, in a rural local authority, knowing on which days different towns have their market day will make the difference between a well attended and successful road show and a poorly attended one.

You may also need to think creatively about how to adapt some activities to your particular challenges. For example, as part of a door-to-door canvassing campaign in County Durham targeting low performing areas, the promotions team undertook an on-bus face-to-face campaign whereby they traveled on buses (in the campaign target areas) talking to passengers and giving out leaflets and advice twice a week for eight weeks. They adopted this approach to target local residents in a more unusual and informal way and because the target audience were less likely to have a car (and more likely to travel via bus).

Finally, remember your brand and apply it consistently across all your activities. If your billboard advertising looks completely different to the leaflets being delivered to every home, your communications activities will not integrate properly and will not reinforce the message - people may even wonder why there are two campaigns.

All activities fall under one of the main communication methods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication methods</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>Radio, press, TV, outdoor, mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Media relations via radio, press, TV and online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct marketing techniques</td>
<td>One-to-one communications - leaflet/information distribution (eg door-to-door), door-to-door canvassing, exhibitions and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement</td>
<td>Building on-going permanent relationships with local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Council website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>Twitter, Blogs, Facebook &amp; You tube</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal communications</td>
<td>Intranet, staff newsletter, briefings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advertising

Television

Television advertising is the most expensive of all the communication media and for most local authorities this alone will make its use prohibitive. If that is not enough, broadcasting areas are huge, extending far beyond the boundaries of any single local authority which makes it a highly inefficient activity for any single local authority campaign.

In the past, however, some local authorities have successfully collaborated and pooled their resources to run TV advertising campaigns across whole regions. If you want to target large sections of the population across a large area and can secure the budget and justify the expenditure then this may be a useful medium to explore. Advertising of this sort is, of course, only useful if there is a simple common message to put to people based on reasonably standardized services.
Radio
Local radio advertisements can be an extremely cost-effective way to build strong local awareness of your communications. You can make a radio advertisement responsive by including a telephone number or website address if appropriate. Most radio stations will help with the design and production of your advert. Check the audience profile of your local radio station to check it matches or is similar to your target audience before going ahead. Also check whether the station’s broadcast area is a good fit for your campaign or local authority area. Consider how much additional airtime you might be able to negotiate on your local radio station in support of your message, for example interviews and question and answer slots about recycling. Radio relies on having strong verbal messages therefore your commercial needs to:

- Grab the listeners attention
- Paint a picture in the listener’s mind
- Be simple
- Use a jingle or a sound as a “shorthand” to help the listener identify and remember the message
- Include a telephone number or website address (if you want a response or to direct them to further information)
- Air at various times of the day to hit the widest possible audience and the right audience cost effectively

Local radio can also be targeted by your PR (see PR for more information).

Press advertising
Advertising in local or regional newspapers can be an effective mechanism for getting your message across. Advertorials are a combination of advert and editorial that you pay for and are useful as part of communications where you want extended editorial to accompany your advertising. Press advertising in local newspapers can be used to build a local dimension to any national advertising campaigns, with messages specifically tailored to service provision in your local area. Key elements to developing effective press advertisements are clarity, simplicity and focus - keep the message as simple as possible and ensure that the layout of the advertisement is easy for the reader to follow.

For important issues or a campaign where you want to create maximum impact it might be worth investigating a 'wrap-around' - essentially a four page advert attached to the outside of the newspaper (hence 'wrap-around'). These can have a significant impact as your message will be on display wherever the newspapers are sold and anyone buying and reading one cannot miss it as they have to open (and look at) the 'wrap-around before they can get into the newspaper. Of course, this approach will be considerably more expensive than smaller adverts (even full page ones) inside the newspaper and this should be borne in mind in your planning and budgeting.

Media partnerships
Partly advertising and partly PR, media partnerships may be a useful and cost effective way of working with your local media (press and radio) to develop a range of activities to promote recycling. Media partnerships can enable you to tap into the broadcasters/publishers expertise and resources. They can range from providing sponsorship to in-kind support to provide material, instead of having to buy expensive airtime. However, beware of your partnership actually being another means for the newspaper/radio station to drum up extra advertising revenue. Genuine partnerships will focus on generating useful and meaningful material (on air and in print) designed to communicate the issues to readers/listeners.

Cinema advertising
There are two types of cinema adverts: single static slides or TV style advertising ‘shorts’. Cinema adverts are a relatively expensive medium (especially for TV style adverts) targeting a relatively small number of people mainly in the younger age range (under 30). Cinemas also tend to draw people in from a very wide area and the numbers from your local authority area could be relatively small. The adverts need to be well-designed and very simple in order to appeal to this audience and on balance probably are not that cost effective.
Outdoor advertising
This includes static outdoor posters and mobile advertising on vehicles:

- Posters can be quite effective at getting short, simple messages across to people. They should have a striking design to grab people's attention. There are various types:
  - Billboards (48 sheets and smaller), bus shelters (adshels) and other types of outdoor poster sites - outdoor advertising (especially billboards) can be expensive. It is important to select sites or areas which stand out from others, have lots of passing traffic (pedestrians/cars) and will be seen by your target audience.
  - Signs or large poster sites at HWRCs are particularly good for giving visitors feedback on recycling performance at that site, thanking them for their support and reminding them what can be recycled there.
  - Public poster sites such as shopping centres, libraries, arts and community centres, health or sports centres - posters in public spaces can be a useful way to advertise your message. Many of these public spaces are owned or provided free by councils. Posters for use in council buildings and offices, at events, in schools, in public buildings etc should generally be A3 or A4 size as they are the most versatile although bigger ones can be useful for some locations.
  - Mobile advertising includes bus exteriors and interiors, mobile billboards, advans, adbikes and taxis. As with any advertising they can be relatively expensive and difficult to assess their effectiveness. They require striking design and are only good for simple messages. Mobile advertising also requires a very good understanding of the audience you wish to target, for example:
    - Buses – exteriors (sides and rears) target car drivers and pedestrians along bus routes. Many people from outside your local authority will see your message, especially if the bus company has long bus routes to neighbouring towns or outlying areas. Bus exteriors should be used for short, simple messages whilst interiors can have slightly more detailed information. Bus passengers will see interior bus adverts and you should try to find out more about this audience before using this medium. Audience profiles may vary on different routes depending on the areas through which they run.
    - Mobile - advans and bikes, which are dedicated vehicles carrying your adverts. Advans are good for covering large areas (e.g. rural areas) whilst bikes are good for town centres. As well as driving around they can be used in a static role in particular areas e.g. remote locations at events such as football matches or in an LPA. The advantage of this medium is you can control exactly where they go which improves their targeting.
    - Taxis are similar to buses in that many people, depending on where the taxi goes, will see the message. Used well, taxis can be a very unusual and striking medium.

Online advertising
The latest advertising medium, these include banner and other animated or 'flash' adverts on local community or news sites. Depending on the website they are probably better for targeting younger or more affluent audiences which are more likely to use the internet regularly. Adverts need to be simple, engaging and have an accompanying website (for people to go via a click-through).

Advertising on council infrastructure
Local councils and will have a huge range of resources and waste management and recycling infrastructure at their immediate disposal which can be used for communications:

- Site signage at bring sites and HWRCs can have instructional, motivational and feedback messages.
- Collection containers can have stickers with instructions and collection information.
- Recycling banks can carry instructional messages. Good for areas with low performance.
- Directional signage to recycling sites.
- Council/contractor collection vehicle livery – trucks and other vehicles can be branded or carry communications posters/messages.

Tips for advertising
- Save time and money by using the downloadable artwork and guidance at www.reyclenowpartners.org.uk. These professionally designed communication tools tie in with the national recycling campaign brand and will generate greater recognition and response from your target audiences.
All advertisements must comply with the regulations as set down in the Advertising Code (obtainable from the Advertising Standards Authority) - http://www.asa.org.uk/asa/

Advertising can only communicate/promote headline or simple messages

Adverts should be carefully designed and tested

Allow plenty of time to find out about advertising locally and to become familiar with it. Remember, it's a buyer's market and you may be able to negotiate reductions on standard prices (rate cards).

PR (Public Relations)

PR can be used to help achieve a number of different aims or objectives, for example:

- Increase awareness of a campaign in an area or within a particular audience
- Explain complicated messages or issues in layman's terms
- Act as a call to action to any given audience
- Attract and promote a perceived third party endorsement (i.e. from the media)
- Help a campaign stand out in a crowded market through creative events and activities
- Support other communications activities

If planned and executed properly, a PR campaign can help achieve all of this in a very cost effective way. Whilst advertising is clearly paid for, any item that appears as editorial carries with it the perceived endorsement of the title and editor of the publication – it has been deemed as newsworthy and as such is worth more than an advert. Of course, it can never be guaranteed that a news release will be featured; neither can you control how the media may edit your press release, which is why the best campaigns successfully use a combination of PR and other activity such as advertising together. Linking your communications to the national Recycle Now campaign, especially around national events like Recycle Now Week, will make your stories more attractive to local and regional titles looking for a local angle on a national news story. Establishing good relationships with key local journalists is vital – find out their interests, copy deadlines and what they look for in a good photo opportunity. Brief them well and keep them ‘in the loop’ - even the most well written and best-intentioned press releases can be turned into negative stories if desired.

Handled well, your local media may like your campaign so much that they ‘adopt’ it and become a partner, supporting it through extra coverage and regular features on relevant issues. Achieving this position will generate considerable extra coverage for your communications and decrease the chances that the local newspaper may take a negative stance. It pays to approach the local media early to see if you can gain their support.

Local newspapers are useful for reaching local populations with positive stories supporting your campaign. Think visually – newspapers like a good picture (preferably involving local people and/or children). Many regional and local newspapers are online and feature video reporting - for example Scarborough Borough Council developed a good relationship with its local paper resulting in a visit and filming a short piece with the recycling officer explaining new scheme and what happened to materials once they were collected. This went on to the newspaper website, and the council were also able to link through to it from their website. Consider their requirements in your plans.

Council newspaper/magazines can be useful if you have one and it is distributed to every household. Try to ensure there is a regular recycling/waste feature. It is a useful way of getting more detailed messages across to more interested residents. Check whether there are any costs associated with it.

Online is a new and rapidly growing area of PR and online local community, news and social networking sites can be valuable as part of your overall communications. This medium is only worth investigating if there are sites which focus exclusively on local communities, issues and news.

Local radio news or other programmes may be interested in featuring stories about your campaign, issues or activities. Take time to research the programming on local radio stations and developed a few ideas to present to editors and programmers.
TV (terrestrial, satellite and cable) news or other programmes will only feature stories about your campaign, issue or activities if they are really unusual, regionally or nationally significant. TV coverage is the hardest to secure but reaches the most people and carries the most prestige. If you've got a really significant regional or a touching 'human interest' story it might be worth telling your regional TV newsroom.

While PR should be an integral part of any communications plan, it is not a solution to all problems. Remember:

- PR will not provide an instant fix but will produce results to build on
- PR should not be turned on and off like a tap – it's a rolling programme of activity
- You can never guarantee that your communications will make the news – other events such as catastrophes, high profile celebrity news, crime or major accidents can change the priorities of a news teams in an instant
- All publicity is not necessarily good publicity

Tips for PR

- **PR Communications Plan** - Develop a PR plan to tie in with your communications activities and support them by generating media coverage to promote them. Ensure you have a regular programme of press releases throughout the year to maintain interest and awareness
- **Develop a press release protocol** - Decide who is responsible for drafting press releases and who will provide approval and sign off. Establish responsibility and mechanics for the distribution of press releases, including circulation lists for local, regional and national print and broadcast media and trade publications as appropriate. Develop FAQs (frequently asked questions) and ensure everyone dealing with the media adheres to them
- **Appoint a spokesperson** - Every campaign needs a spokesperson, a voice of informed authority that understands the subject, can be quoted in all material and is media friendly. Try and identify a spokesperson that is lively, friendly and not afraid of journalists! Having one appointed spokesperson lends consistency to press material, and the regular quoting of one individual reinforces the reader’s perception of the spokesperson being an expert in the field. Ideally they should receive some media interview training, even if from your internal press team
- **Celebrity endorsement** - Using a celebrity as a campaign supporter can be invaluable in securing media coverage. It can boost the success of the campaign, as the public is more likely to listen to a message presented by a celebrity that the target audience recognise and aspire to. With this in mind, a celebrity should be used only if they buy-in to your campaign and are able to speak knowledgeably about the subject. It is important to choose a celebrity who reflects the best aspects of your campaign and who will be of interest to your target audience (include the relevant media). Celebrities can be costly, so see if you can persuade them to help you for free or ensure that there is adequate provision in your budget
- **Competitions or incentives** via the press or radio, at events, or through schools can be an excellent way of generating awareness and interest in your communications. Make sure that your competition is in keeping with your message and that prizes are appealing (and ideally incorporate recycled materials or promote the conservation of resources). Be aware of the legislation surrounding competition and incentive terms and conditions and liaise with your legal department to ensure you comply
- **Defra carried out a pilot study of local authority household reward only schemes in England in 2005/06. The aim was to evaluate the effectiveness of a comprehensive range of reward schemes in encouraging households to reduce, recycle and compost their waste. Information about the study can be found by following this link:** [http://www.defra.gov.uk/ENVIRONMENT/waste/localauth/encourage.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/ENVIRONMENT/waste/localauth/encourage.htm)
As part of your on-going PR programme, take groups of people (the media, local stakeholders etc) to, or organise **open days at waste and recycling facilities** so the public can see waste management at first hand. Visits to landfill sites can often leave a lasting impression.

- **Good photography, design and imagery** are vitally important. Good design is essential in all your communications to add clarity to your communications and to make them interesting and engaging.

- **Crisis plan for emergencies** – as part of your PR planning you should develop a comprehensive crisis PR plan to: deal with any unforeseen or emergency situations; and manage the media covering the emergency. Check with your press and media department to see if they already have one and familiarise yourself with it.

**Direct marketing techniques**
Direct marketing covers a range of techniques designed to communicate with people on a one-to-one basis. Communications literature is also covered in this section.

**Communications literature**
This includes a wide range of material that forms the foundations of every campaign including:

- Recycling information leaflets
- Communications leaflets, recycling scheme information/instructions
- Collection calendars

If you can do nothing else, you must give all householders a leaflet with information about their collections on an annual basis. For more information about distribution methods see Becoming an Expert No 15. WRAP has produced three guides to help you design and produce your communications materials:

**Design of Communication material**
This document gives basic and practical suggestions on the design of effective communications. These principles can be applied to collection calendars, leaflets, adverts and other marketing communications.

http://www.wrap.org.uk/localAuthorities/research_guidance/communications/

**Guidance on Developing Collection Calendars**
Kerbside collection calendars are an essential communication tool for most authorities, enabling them to provide essential information to householders about their waste and recycling services with instructions on how to participate. This document guides you through all the elements of putting together a clear and easy to understand calendar.

http://www.wrap.org.uk/localAuthorities/research_guidance/communications/

**Printing Processes Explained**
The aim of this guide is to explain the design and development process that you will go through in commissioning promotional material for waste management services, whether you use an outside design agency or your own internal design team. It takes you through each stage of the design and development process from the initial concept for a promotional item through to the delivery of the final product.

http://www.wrap.org.uk/localAuthorities/research_guidance/communications/

**Door-to-door canvassing/ household visits**
These are dedicated techniques that aim to talk to people at their home about recycling and waste to improve performance (e.g. increase recycling, reduce contamination etc). Research shows that this face-to-face contact with householders is highly effective in increasing participation in recycling services because it helps to overcome
key barriers to recycling particularly lack of knowledge about how the system works. Door-to-door canvassing, unlike leaflets or media advertising, enables the message to be tailored to individuals through one-to-one contact. The doorstepper/canvasser can deal with the barriers that the individual householder perceives as preventing them from recycling. Door-to-door canvassing can reach individuals who do not usually read leaflets or engage with traditional council communications. April – October is the best time to run door-to-door canvassing campaigns.

Door-to-door canvassing is different from conducting a door-to-door survey and the two should not be confused. Canvassers have a conversation with people on their doorstep about recycling and the subject and content will vary from person to person according to their interests, issues or barriers. A survey focuses on asking every person the same set of pre-determined questions in order to gather quantifiable data.

Sometimes it pays to be imaginative with canvassing or other community engagement teams – in one campaign they travelled on selected buses speaking to local residents and commuters from low performing areas. For more detailed information about canvassing see WRAP’s Door-to-door canvassing guidance. This guide is primarily designed for councils who are planning to organise and carry out door-to-door canvassing (also referred to as doorstepping or doorknocking) to promote their recycling services and encourage residents to recycle. It is also valuable for local authorities that are contracting another organisation to run a campaign on their behalf, as it is important to have an understanding of the whole process and what is involved. http://www.wrap.org.uk/localAuthorities/research_guidance/communications/guide_to.html

Community or recycling outreach officers
These are small teams or individuals that respond to specific enquiries from the public or issues reported by crews by visiting householders. This face-to-face contact with householders can be effective in addressing individual householder barriers and increasing participation in recycling services.

Community engagement
This covers a number of techniques to engage local communities over the long-term to improve recycling including:

- **Long-term engagement programmes** with local communities, talking to them, getting to know them and working with them, through local groups and organisations, to address local recycling and other waste related issues

- **Face-to-face meetings with key local community groups** (religious, cultural, charitable and voluntary, youth and environmental), tenants groups and other local housing groups. These groups can be an audience in themselves or they may help you to get your message across to the wider community

- **Local ambassadors and ‘champions’** involve dedicated programmes to work with key local people (based in the community) to develop them into ambassadors for your campaign. To be successful you need to have a clear idea about what you want to achieve and what you want your ambassadors to do. Ideally your ambassadors need to be recruited before the campaign, trained and kept informed/ motivated throughout. Having the ability to deliver face-to-face contact with householders can be highly effective in increasing participation in recycling services. This approach can be effective because people tend to have increased ‘trust’ in information when it is received through someone they know. Whilst effective, this technique probably won’t be able to target lots of people though it can generate useful local media coverage. It can also involve a lot of officer time to run and maintain

For more information about local groups see Section 4 and Becoming an Expert No9 which looks at target audiences and external groups.

**Events or exhibitions**
Holding events or roadshows is a good way to meet face-to-face with your residents. Events can include workshops, seminars, public meetings, roadshows and exhibitions. The keys to holding successful events are
targeting, planning and organisation: know exactly who you want to target and where to go to reach them, allow plenty of time and prepare well in advance. Events can be effective opportunities to:

- Launch your campaign to the public and media
- Reinforce the key message at a local level and talk directly to the public about local recycling issues
- Engage all partners to participate and deliver a unified public face for the campaign
- Give practical demonstrations for a new recycling service – actually “show-n-tell” residents what can go into recycling containers
- Contact hard to reach or engage groups

Types of events include:

- **Displays, exhibitions, shows and events such as roadshows** (in shopping centres, town centres etc) that target local residents and are designed for one-to-one engagement. Selection of a good location and timing is critical – pick busy places/times
- **Public meetings** are events targeting local residents and designed for one-to-one engagement. Good selection of location and time is critical – pick convenient places/times. Take a display panel (which can now be made from recycled materials)
- **Attending popular public events and shows** – such as community fetes, melas, agricultural or village shows etc. The more engaging your display the better as it will encourage more people to come and talk
- You could even **make up your own** events/awareness/activity days – but remember to allow adequate lead time for planning and publicity

Some key factors to take account of when planning any event include:

- Summer is generally better for holding events (especially outdoor ones) when it is warmer and drier
- Identify and timetable key regional events that could be used for communications events, e.g. the Great Yorkshire Show
- Be careful to select events that will actually reach your residents and not visitors from elsewhere
- Remember to publicise your events to the intended target audience

Depending on the type of event you are organising, you may want to include some activities to entertain or draw people to your stand where you can engage them. Useful activities include noisy or colourful ones such as a junk funk band (playing recycled instruments) or simple things like face painting that attract children and families. You should ensure your activities complement your display and do not overshadow it.

You should have some practical giveaways for people that reinforce your communications messages. You should aim to give ‘freebies’ away in return for something e.g. a conversation about recycling, completing a survey questionnaire or making a pledge to recycle more. Ensure your giveaways are branded, made from recycled materials (and promote the fact) and are useful so people don’t just throw them away as soon as they get home. Items that might help people to remember to recycle or reduce waste at the right time (such as reusable bags for shopping or spaghetti portion measurers and food storage boxes for LoveFoodHateWaste) are a good idea. See the examples below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fridge magnet</td>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Useful with good retention value. Tend to be popular with householders for sticking things to their fridge door but can be expensive (especially shaped ones). Not made from recycled materials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reusable shopping bag**

Useful with strong retention value. Again popular with householders for shopping and carry a good re-use message in themselves. Designs need to be simple and bold. Can be made from recycled materials or sustainable sources.

**Novelty items**

Bucket, spade and Frisbee – used by a coastal local authority. Very useful, with high novelty and retention values. Quite visible (on beaches) because of their novelty. Should be made from recycled materials if possible.

**Love Food Hate Waste (LFHW) fridge thermometer and shopping trolley token**

Two useful items with high retention value. The fridge thermometer in particular supports a key campaign message about effective food storage.

**LFHW snack box**

Another useful item which enables people to adopt new habits promoted by the campaign.

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**Schools**

Schools should be considered as part of the wider process to engage local communities and develop a widespread recycling culture. Initiatives could include:

- School recycling initiatives - to reinforce the recycling message, schools should have recycling facilities for their waste and lead children and parents in the local community by example
- Educational activities linking into the national curriculum in classrooms or with special school events or assemblies
- Basic talks about recycling in class and at assemblies

WRAP has produced a guidance document on how to communicate effectively with schools about introducing, changing or promoting dry recycling and food waste collections and to enable this to tie in with the local authorities’ wider objectives on recycling. Check the document here (www.wrap.org.uk/laschools). For more information and resources to help with recycling programmes in schools see also the range of dedicated Recycle Now campaign resources (www.recyclenow.com/schools).

**Online/digital communications**

The rapidly developing field of online and digital communications is opening up new ways of delivering mass and personalised communications to increasing numbers of people. Recycling communications managers should find out more about wider online and digital strategies and initiatives within their council to see whether there are any new ideas they could use for their communications plan. Some ideas already used include:

- **A campaign website** or recycling/waste information pages on your council website. This is an absolute essential – you can give all the information you want in as much depth as you feel necessary (e.g. from the basics of collection information to re-use, waste prevention, the recycling journey of materials from your local authority and even the links between waste, recycling and climate change) and have electronic copies of
important documents or leaflets for download. Good for targeting audiences that use the internet regularly. Some ideas for good websites include:

- A direct link to recycling pages from the council homepage
- Easy navigation with as few pages/click-throughs as possible
- Good design with easy to read/understand information covering everything householders are likely to want to know such as collection information, times and policies, HWRC information, recycling sites etc
- Use plenty of images to illustrate information if your website can support this

**E-mail and e-newsletters** are a useful way of contacting and keeping informed key individuals e.g. stakeholders etc. The public can also sign up to special recycling newsletters via websites. This can be effective but realistically will only be of interest to high recyclers and those people with a special interest in your campaign

**Mobile phone text alerts** and information services e.g. reminders to put recycling bins out. This is very new technology and experience to date has shown very low take-up rates so it is probably not that cost effective yet (circa 2009)

**Internet advertising** – see advertising

**DVDs/CD-ROMs** – can be produced with information about recycling in general and specifically in your local authority for use in a number of ways: distribution to people who request information; sent to schools or used as part of education programmes; sent to householders. Whilst an interesting format and capable of presenting a wealth of information in a creative and interactive way, their usefulness is questionable as people need a computer to run them and only the very interested will be bothered. Their reach can be expanded by playing them on screens in public areas of council offices and making them available on the council website. There are probably more cost effective ways of communicating the information e.g. via the council website where it is accessible to all

**Council office public information screens** (such as those available sometimes in public waiting areas) could carry adverts or other material to promote recycling

**Publically accessible computers in public libraries** could have a campaign screen saver, a shortcut to the recycling pages on the council website or feature the council website as the internet browser’s homepage

**Tips for online**

Whether you have your own campaign website or recycling pages on your main council website, here are some key principles to consider when developing your internet presence:

- Keep the content and layout simple
- Avoid complex graphics that are slow to download for many users
- Make reaching important information as easy as possible – the user should be able to find what they need within two or three clicks of the mouse
- Feature a campaign link or icon on the local authority home page, which links to county, regional or national organizations and campaigns (like Recycle Now)
- Have a contact point available – this could be an email address or telephone number
- Keep the website up to date, there’s nothing worse than outdated content

**Developing recycling and waste websites**

This guidance document and web page review methodology has been developed as a result of requests for waste and recycling web page reviews from a number of London Boroughs to help ensure they provide relevant information about the services, make them easier to use and enhance the user experience.

An evaluation matrix was developed to assist with the review process, which systematically outlines essential information the recycling and waste web pages should contain.
Social media

Social media is the term given to Internet and mobile-based channels and tools that allow users to interact with each other and share opinions, experiences and content. Social media involves the building of communities or networks and encouraging participation and engagement. The most commonly used social media platforms are: Twitter, Facebook, Blogs and YouTube.

Social media is a growing communication channel and can be a useful way to engage with your audience but you need to make sure this fits with your wider communications strategy. Be clear about what you want to achieve through your communications, who you want to communicate with and identify what social media channels they use.

Using social media channels requires planning and on-going interaction with audiences which can be time consuming. However, it can be a useful way of getting information out about services quickly and effectively and should be considered as part of your communications mix. Social media channels allow you to engage in two-way dialogue with residents, spread messages and information, improve customer service and build relationships.

For more information about how to utilise social media channels effectively see Becoming an Expert No 21.

Integrating your communications activities

When you are considering your activities and putting your communications plan together you should consider how the activities you have selected can support and mutually reinforce each other, giving the overall campaign added impact, targeting and influence.

For example, leaflets drops are a very precise means of communicating detailed information to your target audience but may lack impact (householders may simply throw your leaflets away, unread). A leaflet drop could be used to communicate your main campaign message and support a forthcoming series of roadshows by including detail of dates and locations of events.

PR is also a useful technique to support a leafleting campaign by issuing a press release with a strong photo (e.g. the mayor, in full regalia, pushing a leaflet through a letterbox) to the local press, explaining why the forthcoming leaflet is important and urge householders to read it when they receive it. A door-to-door canvassing campaign could be similarly promoted by issuing a press release with an accompanying photograph of a canvasser talking on a doorstep to the mayor in full regalia.

By developing an integrated approach, you will often be able to significantly increase the impact of your campaign at minimal extra cost. The impact of a door-to-door canvassing campaign, for example, can be increased at no cost other than your own time by developing supporting activities and PR.

Example of integrated supporting activities and PR to support a door-to-door canvassing campaign

| Before door-to-door canvassing | Organise competition with local school to design brightly coloured baseball hats for door-to-door canvassing crew.  
Set up photo call for local press with children and the winning design.  
Issue photo to press with press release: ‘watch out for our crew, they’ve got important information for you’. |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| During door-to-door canvassing | Arrange for a local radio reporter to accompany door-to-door canvassers for news piece on ‘attitudes to recycling’.  
Arrange photo call for local paper of door-to-door canvassers in action. |
| After door-to-door canvassing | Issue press release to local press with numbers of people visited, typical responses etc.  
Arrange meeting with press to discuss the results and potential editorial.  
Report to press, after one month, on uptake in recycling among those visited.  
Include report and photo from door-to-door canvassing activity in your local authority’s in- |
house newspaper or magazine.

For some additional communications activities – see Becoming an Expert No20

For lower cost communications activities – see Becoming an Expert No 22
Becoming an Expert No 20: Additional Communications Methods

There are a number of alternative methods of communications available that, depending on your objectives, audience and message, you may wish to consider when engaging with your audience.

Manned opportunities

Manned activities allow staff to interact with members of the public and can take the form of traditional road shows, outdoor advertising, or experiential communications - where instead of telling people about features of a product or service you let them experience the benefits for themselves.”

Look Walkers

Look Walkers are a modern interpretation of sandwich boards. Staff wear promotional boards and engage with passers by to hand out supporting information leaflets. They are located in areas of high footfall where recycling or waste reduction is considered relevant, such as large shopping areas, town centres and outside supermarkets. These can be really useful to target particular areas/streets e.g. low performing areas because there is no on site setting up so they can be completely mobile and walk or be transported to other locations during the same day.

The staff can be chosen by their ability to speak in different languages and relate to the hard to reach communities in the areas selected for the promotion.

Ealing Council – Recycling is Easy!

Ealing Council organised a Look Walker campaign in Southall over a weekend to promote their recycling services. Overall the campaign was very well received, with most people taking a leaflet and many engaging in conversation with the staff. There were lots of questions asked and it was clear people in the area wanted to know more about recycling, as they didn’t fully understand the process.

The languages spoken by the staff were very useful and helped them to engage with residents more easily. The look walkers attracted people’s attention and encouraged interaction.

The staff handed out 1250 leaflets over the weekend and engaged in in-depth conversation with about 50 people, however they explained how to use the recycling service to around 500 people. The staff also encouraged people to pass the message on to family and friends.
Pedal Bike Media consists of a small mobile advertising hoarding towed by hired in staff dressed in fun outfits to attract attention. They can locate themselves in areas of high footfall where that can attract attention and engage passers by in discussion and hand out information leaflets. They are highly visible and like ‘Look Walkers’ have been used effectively, not only in areas of high footfall but also in low performing areas, attracting attention whilst travelling from one site to another.

They can also be used in areas where new services are being introduced to provide more information, answer questions, get feedback and deal with resident’s requests.

Pedal Bike Media Campaign – Southwark

London Borough of Southwark developed a campaign to promote their pilot food waste collection scheme and their existing recycling services to 10,000 households. Part of the campaign consisted of Pedal Bike Media to targeted roads in four of the five collection rounds.

The advertising hoarding and campaigner costumes were designed to attract attention and stimulate interest. The campaign operatives engaged residents in conversation in order to cover more detailed messages about materials that can be recycled and the new food waste service. They also gathered residents’ feedback about services and took enquiries.

Campaigners were able to hold a detailed conversation with an average of 23 residents on each shift but would have been seen by many more. This was dependent on the weather and finding areas of high footfall in which people were willing to stop. Survey results indicated:

- 98% of respondents said they found talking to the campaigners very helpful or helpful; and
- 49% said they would recycle more as a result of information provided via the pedal bike media team as they found out more about the types of materials that could be recycled through the collection services provided.

Key lessons learnt about bike media were:

- The team had significant success with parents and children leaving school for the day, Saturday shoppers and Sunday morning church goers;
- Pedal bike media proved to be a highly effective method of engagement and outdoor advertising. It is very flexible in terms of location and can combine the power of a traditional advertising campaign with an outreach team who can directly engage with the public and address queries relating to recycling services; and
- The method worked well despite challenges presented by the weather and could be even more effective during the summer months.

More information can be obtained from the WRAP Recycle for London case study Communications Campaign to Support Southwark’s Food Waste Recycling Trial.
Unmanned advertising opportunities

There are a number of other types of promotional opportunities available which may be appropriate, such as:

**Information screens**

Many types of council have information screens sited in council offices, area offices, leisure centres, These can be used to good effect when people are waiting to see someone – nothing quite like a captive audience! The information usually takes the form of slides, which can be designed and uploaded easily.

**Litterbin advertising**

Councils have used stickers on litterbins for many years to promote anti-littering messages. Consider using them for a more general recycling message, if for example you are delivering a Recycle on the Go campaign.

More hi-tech advertising on litterbins has been introduced recently in stations, high footfall areas and shopping areas and can provide LED illuminated panels and Bluetooth connectivity with neighbouring smart phones, allowing you to send messages to users within the vicinity of the units.

**Train station advertising gates**

Some of the ticket gates in railway and underground stations can now carry advertising. Consider using this if you are running a generic campaign, such as: Recycling on the Go, Love Food Hate Waste or if you are trying to raise the profile of recycling generally within your area.

**Ad vans and trailers**

Some companies can provide ad vans or trailers, which can be located along streets and in pedestrian areas and will act as small advertising hoardings and perform function of on street recycling banks. Consider using if, for example, you have areas of very high footfall you are promoting Recycling on the Go or recycling single material such as plastic bottles or cans.

The advantage of these is that they can be located in different locations each day.
Clean advertising

Clean advertising is an interesting solution developed in America where your message is imposed on a grubby pavement by pressure washing through a specially cut stencil. This is not permanent and will become grubby over time but it could be effective near recycling banks or if you are raising awareness of recycling or running a Recycle on the Go campaign – consider using it to direct people to the nearest recycling bin in areas of high footfall when they may not be easily seen from above. Do check your council policy on this kind of advertising, it might be classed as graffiti!

Temporary paint

Temporary paint can be used to deliver your message by painting it on pavements near your recycling facilities or event. It will wash off after a while and not affect the surface it is on adversely. As with clean advertising, consider using it to direct people to the nearest recycling bin in areas of high footfall when they may not be easily seen from above. As with Clean Advertising do check your council policy on this kind of advertising, it might be classed as graffiti!
Becoming an Expert No21: Maximising Social Media Channels

Social media is a collective term describing a number of different online communication channels. It can be an effective way of engaging with your audience and should be considered as part of your wider communications strategy.

The informality of social media enables information to be communicated in a much more relaxed manner than most other forms of marketing communication. There are a number of ways you can use social media channels based on your experience and knowledge. This can range from basic information on your Council website to more detailed engagement utilising a number of social media channels.

Summary of key social media channels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Channel</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>Twitter is a free social networking and micro blogging service that allows users to send and read updates (known as Tweets), which are posts of up to 140 characters in length. Twitter can be used to update residents’ quickly about service updates or as a customer service tool to consult residents about planned service changes, respond to residents’ recycling queries e.g. requests for recycling containers, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>Facebook is a free social networking service that allows people to exchange messages and photographs. Facebook offers the option of creating an information page for products and services. Facebook allows users to provide regular updates about what is happening e.g. launching a new service, adding new materials etc. This information can then be shared with other Facebook users. As Facebook is not character-limited in the same way that Twitter is, it is an ideal way to share more detailed information about services and provide regular updates to users. Information will only be shared with users who have clicked that they ‘like’ your page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>YouTube is also free and allows users to share originally created podcasts and video clips. Videos on YouTube can be easily shared through the above channels and embedded into other digital presences, including websites and other social media channels, as well as found via the video results on search engines. YouTube provides local authorities with an opportunity to engage directly with residents through visual ‘how to’ videos and demonstrations about how to participate in waste and recycling services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are just a selection of the most commonly used social media channels. There are a number of other existing and emerging social media channels and the purpose of this expert briefing is to show examples of how local authorities have actively used these to support their communication strategies. If you are considering using social media you need to be clear about your objectives and then decide which channel(s) will be help you achieve these to maximise the impact of your communications.
How you use social media channels will depend on your level of experience and understanding along with the resource you can dedicate to this activity.

**Important:** It is important when deciding whether to use social media channels Local Authority officers need to consider their Council’s social media and digital policies along with any usage and permission requirements. Some authorities may be able to set up individual Twitter and Facebook Pages e.g. for waste and recycling others will only be able to post information via the Council’s corporate Twitter and Facebook accounts. Some local authorities will have social media schedules, which can be input into. You need to liaise with the relevant internal contacts to determine your social media options.

This briefing reviews a number of options.

**The Basics**

In order to use Facebook, Twitter and YouTube you will need to set up user accounts. This can be done easily by following the links below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Link</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td><a href="https://www.facebook.com/FacebookUK">https://www.facebook.com/FacebookUK</a></td>
<td>This will enable you to sign up to Facebook. Once complete you’ll be able to create a Facebook Page for your service <a href="http://www.facebook.com/about/pages">http://www.facebook.com/about/pages</a>. You can have more than one ‘admin’ member who can manage the page so consider if there are other team members who could help share the responsibility. Make use of the cover photo, profile photo and ‘About’ section to help page likers understand more about your page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td><a href="https://twitter.com/signup">https://twitter.com/signup</a></td>
<td>This will enable you to sign up to Twitter. Set a meaningful ‘biography’ to help other users understand what your Twitter feed is for. Once complete go to <a href="https://twitter.com">https://twitter.com</a> this will enable you to search for people you would like to follow (be mindful that this is a business account not a personal account!) and also start to Tweet immediately!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td><a href="https://accounts.google.com">https://accounts.google.com</a></td>
<td>This will enable you to create a YouTube account. Once you’ve created an account you will be able to simply upload video content <a href="http://www.youtube.com">http://www.youtube.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of this is very straightforward. Simply follow the online instructions. Each social media platform provides help and advice pages.
Examples of social media channels

**Brighton and Hove City Council** has a Facebook Page dedicated to recycling and refuse.

![Facebook Page](image)

The **London Borough of Camden** utilises the Council’s corporate Twitter account to listen and respond to resident’s queries, consult them about planned service changes, broadcast informative messages and generally improve customer service. Tweets are tailored to the waste and recycling services where relevant.

![Twitter Account](image)
**Castlepont Council** has created a series of ‘How to Recycle’ videos, uploaded them to YouTube and embedded them on their own website. This is a really effective way of making instructional videos easily accessible.

The videos are also easily accessed by going directly to the YouTube [http://www.youtube.com/user/Recycle4CastlePoint](http://www.youtube.com/user/Recycle4CastlePoint)
East London Waste Authority (ELWA)

ELWA provide a blog on their partnership recycling website.

Interacting with your audiences

Social media is a two-way channel so engaging and responding to your audience is essential. Consider why they want to engage with you and make your content interesting and relevant to your audience.

Some authorities only post messages and information out one-way as they have limited resources and respond infrequently whereas others actively engage, listen and respond with their audiences on a regular basis. If you don’t have time to respond or enter into a dialogue make sure you direct residents to your website or helpline. Think about the messages, themes and topics you want to cover. Understand what will motivate your customer to share. Plan out the content and work out what you will discuss each month, week or even day. Then think about the type of content. Don’t always rely on text. If you’re launching a new service, photograph or film it, talk about what it does and then ask for comment.

Consider the tone of your communications on social media sites: be polite, helpful, understanding and (if appropriate) colloquial without being overly informal. Never be negative, remember that it is a public space and what you post should reflect the positive aspects of your organisation.

You need to be careful about the information you put out through social media channels i.e. when you make a mistake offline, a few will know but when you make a mistake in front of hundreds or thousands of your online audience, most of them will know!

WRAP provides some generic videos through Recycle Now on collection services and how materials are recycled that can be integrated into your website. These videos can be found on http://www.recyclenow.com/how_is_it_recycled/index.html
Here are some examples of Tweets Brighton and Hove City Council has sent out to keep their residents up to date about the recycling services.

**Top five tips when considering content and Social Media**

1. Keep it informative and relevant - you want people to share your information.
2. Use social media platforms together to maximize impact e.g. add a video to YouTube about how to use the new recycling, Tweet about the video and signpost people to your website to find out more.
3. Use social media sharing icons across on your webpages, emails and where relevant publications – make your information and content sharable.
4. Where possible, associate with other relevant content. Sharing and pointing to excellent content produced by others builds trust among your audience, establishing you as a useful and authentic source.
5. Don’t forget opportunities to amplify this content offline too in other communications activities!
Listening, responding and managing feedback

In order for social media to be effective you need to ensure that you listen, respond and manage feedback effectively and promptly. The example below shows how the London Borough of Camden has used Twitter to respond to a resident’s query.

Retweets

- A retweet is a re-posting of someone else’s Tweet. Twitter’s retweet feature helps you and others quickly share that Tweet with all of your followers.
- Retweeting is a quick way of sharing content and showing your support for others.
Sometimes you will see ‘RT’ at the beginning of a Tweet to indicate that they are re-posting someone else's content. This isn't an official Twitter command or feature, but signifies that they are quoting another user’s Tweet.

The examples below show retweets issued by Oxford City Council to promote their ‘Pass it on’ textile recycling campaign.

Hashtags

A hashtag is a searchable link created by adding a # symbol before a word or expression (ensuring there are no spaces or characters). These can be useful for tracking a dedicated campaign or burst of activity on Twitter. By creating an ‘original’ hashtag, you may be able to follow how widely discussed your activity is.
## Likes, following and followers!

Encouraging residents to engage with your social media channels is critical. The following summary outlines the way users can interact with the information you provide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Platform</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facebook</strong></td>
<td>Facebook allows users to like information as well as being able to comment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- When you click <strong>like</strong> on a Facebook Page, in an advertisement, or on content from Facebook, you are making a connection. You may see updates in your feeds and the feeds from Pages you like. You may also receive messages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- You can <strong>unlike</strong> a Page on Facebook by simply clicking the unlike link on the page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facebook also provides a metrics tool for Pages called ‘insights’ which displays aggregated anonymous insights about people's activity on your page. This can be useful to determine the total number of likes, reach and even how 'viral' your posts have been.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Twitter</strong></td>
<td><strong>Following</strong> someone on Twitter means:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- You are subscribing to receive their Tweets.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Their Tweets will appear in your timeline.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- That user is able to send you direct messages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Followers</strong> are users who follow you. If someone follows you:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- They'll show up in your followers list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- They'll see your Tweets in their timeline whenever they log in to Twitter.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- You can send them direct messages.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Although Twitter does not have any detailed analytical tools there are a large number of third party applications that can help you understand more about the potential reach of your posts, how much your content is being shared and by whom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YouTube</strong></td>
<td>- YouTube analytics is a feature that generates a set of interactive reports. Through YouTube Analytics you can monitor the performance of your channel and your videos with up to date metrics. The data is presented in a useful and interactive way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The <strong>Likes and Dislikes report</strong> summarizes how many users liked and disliked your videos, including a per-video view. The report shows the net change of likes and dislikes in your videos, so it adds up the number of likes/dislikes added, minus the number of likes/dislikes removed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The <strong>Comments report</strong> summarizes how many users are commenting on your video, and it also includes on a per-video view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- If resources are limited, consider turning comments off when uploading content.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### More advanced

Once you've mastered the basics you can start to think about tools that can help you maximise the impact of social media channels.

**Banners/covers opportunities to make your Page stand out**
You can create a Facebook banner/cover that sits at the top of your Page, right above your Page’s profile picture. Like your profile picture, cover images are public which means anyone visiting your Page will be able to see them. These banners can integrate graphics, photos and calls to action. To find out more go to the help section, managing your page.

This will provide step-by-step instructions on how to customize your Facebook Page. Check Facebook’s guidance on using cover photos, which must not include calls-to-action or web addresses within them.

**Using tools to help schedule information across media channels**

To make social media management and monitoring easier for users, some helpful applications have been developed to organise multiple platforms and information sharing across selected networks. **Hootsuite** and **Digsby** are current popular tools and allow users to schedule, manage and maintain the release of information across several social media channels such as Twitter and Facebook.

The features, layouts and levels of user-friendliness are different for each application, but they all get the job done when it comes to organising and maintaining several social media accounts. These tools can also be useful if you have multiple team members managing your accounts, but note that some operate a monthly charge for accessing ‘team’ type functionality. Consider how much use you might get out of a paid-for application.

**Promote your social media channels**

- Social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter can be included on promotional material and in turn should signpost users to the Council’s waste and recycling pages to find out more information.
- Remember to review the layout of web pages to ensure they are also mobile friendly. A growing number of people access social media from smart phones so the information needs to be presented in a clear and easy to read format. Liaise with your IT department about ensuring information is displayed in the relevant formats.
- Ensure frontline staff, crews and call-centre staff fully briefed about planned social media campaigns so they are aware of the communications methods being used to target audiences.
- Don’t rely only social media channels as the only communications method. They are useful but should be used as part of an integrated communications plan as cross-promoting will increase the opportunities to see your messages and for your users to share them.

**Do’s and Don’ts of Social Media**

There are some do’s and don’ts you need to consider when progressing social media channels, for example:

**Do’s**

- **Where possible, engage in conversation** - Interacting with your audience through social media is a good way to raise awareness of your services. Regularly contributing to social media channels can help build a strong dialogue with target audiences.
- **Make sure you use your brand consistently across networks and platforms** - Keeping the style and tone of voice consistent will help your audience recognise, identify and engage with your brand.
- **Outline content approval process from the offset** – establish who needs to be involved in the approval process. What permissions, if any, are needed to update Twitter account /Facebook Page / YouTube channel on a regular basis and individual Tweets / status updates / comments which do not need to be approved.
- **Correct errors openly and in a timely manner** - always admit errors and openly ‘put them right’. It is advisable to tackle an online crisis as soon as possible to stop it escalating out of control.
• Be respectful - always seek permission when updating information and uploading images and videos featuring colleagues or clients to social media platforms.

Don’ts

• Forget that a social media presence becomes part of a brand legacy. Posts, pictures, images, Tweets, status updates (content in general) can stay online forever. Think about what message to share via social media channels.

• Make an audience feel uncomfortable – its good to be authentic and provide a hint of personality but continuously being grumpy or openly criticising people can put an audience off and deter them from engaging with an individual or organisation.

• Saturate your social media following – Be careful not to post lots of repeat messages in short periods of time. Instead, try experimenting to find out what your following respond most positively to and if this is linked to users being most active at a certain time of day. Then maximise on this opportunity to ensure posts are relevant, interesting and timely.

• Bring a company into disrepute – find out if your organisation has social media guidelines or policies to understand the online boundaries for your organisation.
Expert Briefing No22: Communicating for less

There are a number of ways you can save money on your communication activities and maximise the impact of the money that you do spend. This expert briefing reviews a number of options.

Saving money on design and print costs

There are a number of ways you can make savings on design and print costs.

Design

Like many services, design tends to be charged or estimated on a time basis; if you keep this in mind when you are asking for a quote or providing information for a piece of promotional material, you will save money. For example:

- If you are developing a campaign, try and get the designer, whether from an external agency or an internal designer, to quote for and do all the designs at one time. It is much more effective from everyone's point of view to have all the resources on screen at the same time rather than going back to previously developed artwork at a later date;
- Make sure you give the designer a clear brief what needs to be done and put the items you want them to design into context, what it is for the audience and what you are trying to achieve;
- Provide a layout and copy for the promotional item to show what you have in mind; this makes it a lot easier for the designer than having to start from a clean sheet of paper. Look at WRAP Design Guidance for Local Authorities to help you develop an effective layout; and
- Provide the designer with design guidelines for your local authority and any material you have previously had designed. This will help give a visual cue to the way you want the finished design to look and save design time.

Also, consider producing similar designs with partner or neighbouring authorities, especially if you have the same collection services or if you are promoting recycling of a single material stream. There are significant savings to be made by using the same designs and buying the print together.

Print

Savings can be made on print in a number of ways:

- If you are printing different but the same size of leaflet at the same time, let the printer have all the press ready artwork at the same time. They will arrange it on the printing plates to minimise the costs; and
- If you can print similar material with a neighbouring or partner authority, economies of scale can play a significant part in the final price you each have to pay.

Have a look at the WRAP Print Guidance for Local Authorities for an explanation of the most common printing processes and what you should consider when commissioning print.
PR vs. Advertising

Positive coverage in the local media can help local authority campaigns significantly, not only in maximising the campaign reach but also in providing an independent endorsement of the campaign. Local authorities should issue regular press releases on campaign activities to the local media. If possible, officers should meet representatives from the local media to establish a rapport and provide them with up to date information on services and any planned service changes.

Activities to include in your PR plan could include:
- Arrange meetings with local media groups and involve relevant partners and a member of the Council’s PR team
- Develop press packs with the Council’s communications team to inform briefings
- Develop a list of interesting and unusual facts about recycling (see Recycle Now partners’ site & Recycle Now consumer site) – use these to make press releases more interesting
- Develop a list of key waste and recycling statistics
- Develop a series of frequently asked questions to address any questions the media have about recycling
- Develop feature articles on recycling (such as the life cycle of a can, what happens to materials after collection, seasonal recycling activities)
- Draw up a list of Parish Council and social landlord publications and prepare regular articles in accordance with the frequency and distribution of these publications

Similarly with radio, instead of running radio adverts, you may be able to persuade your local radio station to let you do an interview or a call-in session on recycling instead.

Staff time vs. marketing spend

Try and make the most of the assets you have. If you have communications display materials such as pull-up banners or stands, that would normally only be used occasionally at roadshows, use them for local displays in libraries, leisure centres, etc. You could also accompany these with displays on each of the various materials and what happens to them after collection. A different material can be featured every couple of months. In this way you are getting the maximum value out of your assets.

If you send out an annual calendar showing collection dates for your service for the coming year, it is worthwhile putting a service reminder on the reverse, showing what materials can be accepted in which container. This provides a useful reminder for residents will help to maintain good levels of participation and

Scarborough

Scarborough Borough Council held meetings with their local press and radio representatives. They felt that the key to the good relationship with the press is to have a human face to the project and also to give them absolutely everything they want! As a result, the local media have been balanced but supportive, and have also had staff profiles alongside our standard releases.

During one year SBC secured free publicity amounting to £140,130.00. They have also raised the profile of SBC nationally with a number of features in National and Regional media these have included:
- Yorkshire Post – Full page photo when we installed a 35ft WRAP swoosh on the South Bay beach
- A series of online videos have also been created and posted by local media outlets covering school recycling, recycling infomercials and also collection rounds.

Staffordshire Moorlands DVD

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council produced a promotional DVD to help promote the introduction of its new service. The DVD is now available for download from the council website. A copy was also provided to all Parish Councils and District Councillors prior to the service change. The DVD was used widely in training sessions for all staff including collection operatives, customer services staff and elected members at dedicated training sessions. It was also played on a continuous loop in all Council offices from July to September to enable visitors to watch the DVD whilst waiting to be served. The DVD was also played at all the promotional Roadshows undertaken during July and August.
reduce contamination and will not add to your printing and distribution costs.

Many councils have a magazine or newspaper, which is delivered several times a year to all householders; it is one of the most popular ways for householders to get information about their council services. If your council produces one this is an excellent way of getting your recycling messages across.

The delivery charge to households is covered through someone else’s budget and generally it is free to you to get an article published. Even if there is a charge, the cost will be much less than a separate delivery for your promotion on its own where you have to pay the delivery costs. Ask if you can pay for additional pages so you are not competing with other departments for editorial space; the cost of printing additional pages will be very small compared to the overall cost of the print and delivery.

Make your messages seasonal if the publication goes out several times a year. See if you can have a leaflet inserted in the newspaper, if that would suit your communication better.

**Lower cost versions**

Posters are an excellent method of generating interest and prompting further enquiry. Rather than using outdoor advertising, which can be costly, a low-budget option is to print out A3 and A4 posters to display in areas of high local footfall, such as leisure centres, libraries, local shops and post offices. Kent County Council ran a campaign to promote WEEE recycling and got local shops to display posters in their windows during the promotion.

Think creatively to look at cheaper options for your communications events and materials. For instance, if you are promoting your Love Food Hate Waste Campaign, can you get your local catering college to help you with some demonstrations or cookery classes? This is likely to cost less than hiring a celebrity chef to promote your project.

If you are thinking of producing a DVD to illustrate an aspect of recycling to your residents, there may be students at a local college or arts course who may be willing to produce this for you as part of their coursework. Again, this will cost less than hiring a media company.

Many people now have smart phones with the ability to access the Internet. According to ‘newmediatrendwatch’ in 2012 there were 19.2 million (30.5% of population) users in the UK. Make sure you put QR codes on all your promotional material; especially posters and advertising so people can easily access your recycling web pages for more information.

Suggest that people programme their smart phones to remind them of their collection days for recycling and waste collections. There is no need to develop an expensive application – the technology in most of these phones allows repeating fortnightly events to be set. If possible, provide guidance on your website how to set these reminders.

**Integrated campaigns to maximise OTS**

Ensuring that your communications are integrated increases their cost-effectiveness. At its most basic level, a consistent message has more impact than a disjointed mix of messages. In a busy world, a consistent, clear message has a better chance of cutting through the ‘noise’ of over five hundred commercial messages, which bombard customers each and every day.

Research suggests that images shared in advertising and direct mail boost both advertising awareness and mail shot responses. So using a consistent brand and message across all of your communications will increase awareness and using a mix of communications methods will increase the reach of your communications.

**Using Recycle Now**

The recycle now logo is being used more and more by a huge range of organisations; including major brands, retailers, local authorities and community groups; our research shows that 65% of people in England
now recognise the recycle now logo. Using the recycle now logo on your communications materials can offer many benefits:

- **Consistent message for householders** – by using the logo householders will identify your communication as recycling information;
- **Save money.** No need to pay designers to develop a new campaign. Recycle Now is tried and tested and available to download free of charge;
- **Well recognised** - Used widely, so will be familiar to householders;
- **Tried and tested** – consumers like the logo, identify with it and it is known to engage people with recycling; and
- **Compliment local campaigns** – The iconography can be used to compliment local messaging.

Both the Love Food Hate Waste and Recycle Now campaigns have a calendar, which provides ideas for themes, and topics to use with the public about recycling and food waste prevention, the supporting resources available and some simple ways you can get involved. Simply visit www.recyclenowpartners.org.uk each quarter – in January, April, July and October – to download the latest updated version.

**Link to national events**

Identify key national dates or events that you can use to base activities around or generate positive local PR, for example the dates national recycling or environmental statistics are released. Key international, national awareness days and events include:

- Compost Awareness Week
- Earth Day
- World Environment Day
- Recycle Week
- The Clean Up the World Weekend

The national Recycle Now website www.recyclenowpartners.org.uk provides a campaign calendar which includes information about upcoming events, advertising or special topics which can be incorporated into local plans. National events can be used effectively by local campaigns and have a number of benefits:

- There will be general public awareness about the national event as a result of national media coverage;
- Any event you organise locally in support is likely to attract more interest from the public; and
- If you organise an event, it may attract the interest of your local media looking for a local angle or story about the national event.

**Cost efficiencies from partnership working**

Partnership working can enable efficiencies to be gained through economies of scale and reducing staff time spent on activities for individual partners. To gain agreement for working in partnership, generic communications activities, which benefit all partners, are required, for example:

- All local authorities use the same campaign identity and communicate consistent messages;

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**Yorkshire and Humber Waste Prevention partnership Love Food Hate Waste project**

A regional co-ordinator has been employed to manage the regional Love Food Hate Waste programme. Significant efficiencies have been realised by having a single person developing materials, instead of officer time from 22 local authorities.

Training on promoting LFHW to residents has been given by WRAP waste reduction advisors and the regional co-ordinator along with a training pack to help Waste and Recycling officers engage with the public when doing talks, presentations, or delivering their own training.

To develop the training course and information pack has taken the regional coordinator an estimated 8.5 days. If each of the 11 local authorities attending the training spent this time sourcing and developing the information it would all amount to 13.5 working weeks collectively.

Bulk purchasing of communications materials such as banner stands, pledge cards and promotional items has saved over £11,500.
The public sees one campaign rather than many separate ones as they move around the region or county to work, shop and travel etc;

- Existing partnerships and working relationships are built upon;
- Partnership working is favoured and encouraged by central government;
- Commitment to meet targets can be stronger, due to peer pressure;

- Staff can be employed specifically for campaign work;
- Campaigns become more integrated for example by including schools and community groups;
- Knowledge, resources, expertise and networking experience can be shared;
- Promotional and PR opportunities are increased;
- Financial economies of scale can be achieved and costs reduced;
- Joint operational contracts can be set up, with better bargaining power; and
- Opportunities can be created to link with regional media, particularly TV and radio.

Website

According to the Office for National Statistics, in 2012 80% of households had Internet access and 67% of adults in Great Britain used a computer every day. According to the WRAP annual tracker survey, the Internet is the most popular place to find information about recycling. This demonstrates the importance of your website as a means of getting your information to householders.

Your website should be up to date and easy to use, with the minimum number of clicks for people to be able to find out what recycling and waste services they receive, what materials they can recycle and frequently asked questions. Make sure there is easy access from the home page of your council website and keep a track of the usage of each of the pages within your area – this will show you what information people are looking for and you can ensure the information on these pages is presented in the best possible way.

Publicise your website everywhere you can and make sure there is an easily remembered URL such as www.yourcouncil.gov.uk/recycling so people can access your web pages directly.

Review the content and structure of your website by using the Recycling and Waste Webpage Guidance developed by WRAP, which also contains a methodology for assessing the usability of your site.

Social networking

Consider setting up pages for social media, such as Twitter and Facebook - these are additional channels for communicating your services. Promote your Twitter and Facebook links everywhere, especially your website. Have a look at Becoming an Expert No 21 on how to set up and use social media.