



Surrey Environment Partnership
YOUR COUNCILS WORKING TOGETHER

Creating a greener, cleaner Surrey

SURREY ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP REVIEW
APRIL 2018 – MARCH 2019





Contents

What is the Surrey Environment Partnership?	4
What are we trying to achieve?	5
Activity and achievements	6
Managing Surrey's Waste	6
Reducing waste at its source	7
Nudging residents to recycle more	9
Creating a subliminal recycling reminder	15
Clearing up confusion	16
Improving recycling at flats	18
Harnessing the power of pestering	21
Digital channel development	22
Investigating infrastructure investment	23
Enabling data driven interventions	24
Improving data capture	25
Reducing fly-tipping	26
Changing behaviours	27
Reporting and managing fly-tipping	28
Investigation and enforcement	29
Reducing single-use plastics	30
Tackling the issue in Surrey	31
Progress to date	32
What's next for the Surrey Environment Partnership?	34
A step change in governance	35
Responding to national change	36

What is the Surrey Environment Partnership?

The Surrey Environment Partnership (SEP) consists of the county's 11 district and borough councils and the county council. It was originally formed in 2009 as the Surrey Waste Partnership aiming to overcome the challenges of two-tier service delivery and manage Surrey's waste in the most efficient, effective, economical and sustainable way possible.

In April 2019 the partnership name was changed to reflect a growing remit and desire to tackle wider environmental issues in Surrey.

What are we trying to achieve?

The partnership is currently working towards the aims of three strategies which have been developed over the past 10 years:

Increase recycling and reduce the amount of waste produced, the amount of waste sent to landfill and the cost of **waste management**.

Reduce the amount of **fly-tipping** in Surrey.

Reduce the use of **single-use plastics** (SUP) through our roles as employers, service providers and as advocates across the county.

To deliver the SEP's joint strategies and achieve its challenging aims, action is required both at the individual partner level and collectively via county-wide, centrally funded initiatives.

This report reviews the programme of county-wide initiatives that were coordinated and funded by SEP in 2018/19. This activity was developed in consultation with officers and members from all partner authorities.

It also outlines the work currently underway on agreeing a revised governance and operating model that will further strengthen the partnership by enabling greater flexibility, efficiency and transparency.



Activity and achievements

Managing Surrey's waste

When the partnership was established, Surrey authorities' collective recycling rate was ranked as the 13th highest of England's 31 two-tier authorities (45.7%) according to statistics published by Defra. In the most recent statistics, published in December 2018, Surrey was ranked as joint third highest (54.8%). The Defra report also indicated that Surrey is meeting its target to be in the top quartile of authorities for waste collected per person and that the current amount of waste going to landfill is 4.3%.

The recycling rate has dropped by 2.9% from the previous year, partly due to the market for Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) falling away, as this process included some separation of metals for recycling prior to disposal. There has also been a decrease in dry mixed recycling (DMR) in Surrey, which is in line with the national trend. The markets for these materials, particularly in China, are increasingly challenging, which makes it even more critical for the partnership to continue to work together on initiatives to reduce waste and increase recycling.

Reducing waste at its source

The easiest way to manage waste is to prevent it occurring in the first place. There are currently two partnership schemes underway which are designed to help residents avoid generating waste which then needs to be collected and disposed of.

Encouraging composting at home

The best thing that residents can do with garden and food waste is to compost it at home. Getting started is easy, all they need is a compost bin or a small space in the garden to create a heap.

They can put things like grass cuttings, dried leaves, twigs and vegetable peelings into a compost bin or heap to make a nutrient rich, peat-free compost. Meat, fish, dairy, bones and cooked food waste cannot be added to a normal composter but can be put into a food digester. SEP subsidises the cost of compost bins and food digesters to encourage Surrey residents to use them.

During 2018/19, the partnership subsidised the sale of 906 compost bins and 25 food digesters for Surrey residents. In addition, four compost bins were provided to schools – the subsidy scheme offers Surrey schools the opportunity to get one bin for free.



Getting real about nappies

It's estimated that each baby will use over 4,000 nappies from birth to potty and research from the Environment Agency has shown that weekly rubbish could be halved by using cloth nappies. To encourage Surrey parents to do this we run a cloth nappy trial kit scheme. The scheme allows them to borrow a free kit, which can help them make an informed choice about using cloth nappies and which types are best for them and their baby.

We currently have 11 volunteer hosts of trial kits around the county. They are keen advocates of cloth nappies and most have many years of experience of using a range of nappies themselves. Residents who are interested in trying out cloth nappies can contact us through the partnership website and are matched with their nearest host to collect a kit.

In 2018-19 nappy kits were loaned to 104 Surrey residents.



It's estimated that each baby will use over 4,000 nappies from birth to potty.

Nudging residents to recycle more

The majority of Surrey residents do recycle to some extent, but to be successful at reaching our recycling targets we need them to separate all their waste that can be recycled, rather than continuing to put some of it in their rubbish bin.

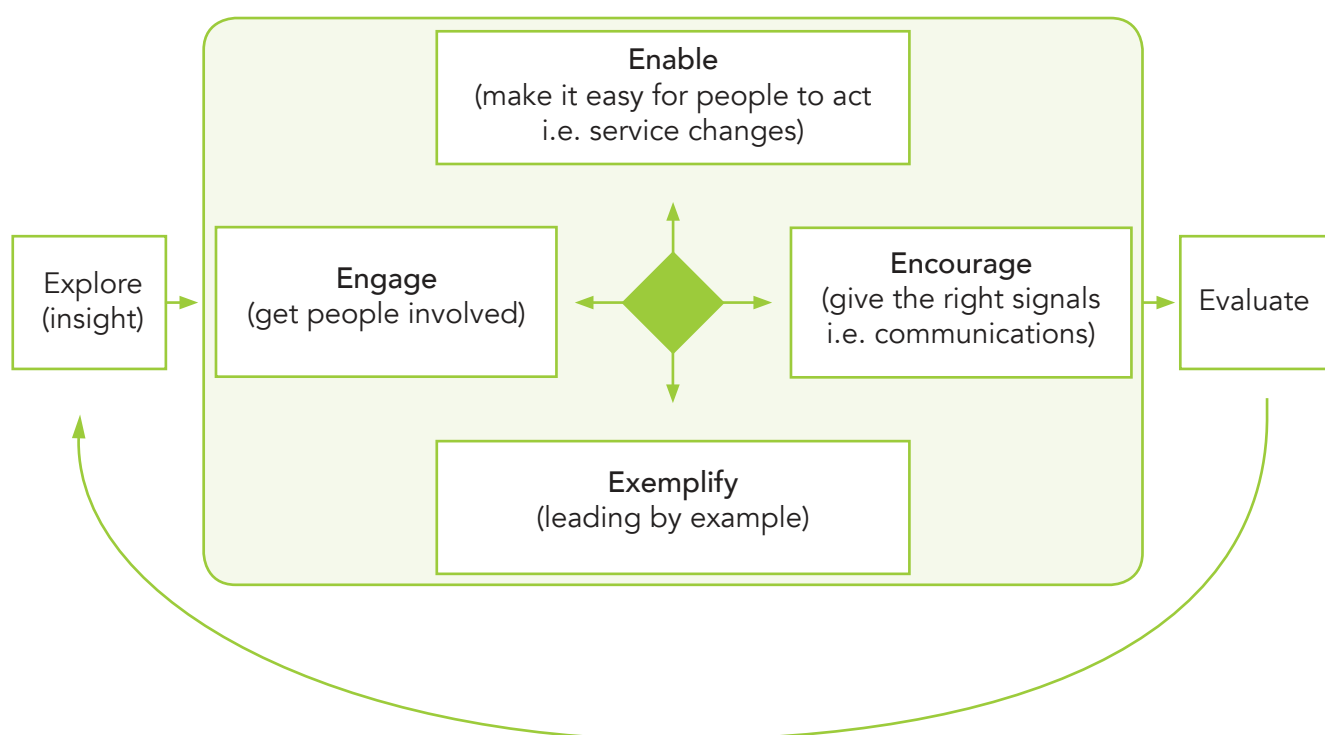
Changing existing behaviours is a complex science which requires time and financial investment. Communications activity needs to include constant reminders, prompts and regularly updated messaging that will resonate and motivate residents to act differently.

To ensure consistency of messages and maximise the time and budget investment a partnership communications team was established in 2015 to develop and deliver

an annual calendar of countywide recycling campaigns. These focus on the materials that composition analyses have indicated will give the greatest return if capture is increased – food waste, textiles, dry mixed recycling and garden waste.

We plan each campaign using the 6Es model of behaviour change which takes into account the different ways to influence behaviour – enabling, encouraging, engaging and exemplifying. The model

builds on Defra's 4Es by including an 'explore' stage to gather insight to inform the actions to be taken and an 'evaluate' stage to measure success and help shape future plans.



Food waste

Some good progress has been made on the amount of food waste that is being captured for recycling in the last few years including a sustained 21% increase following a campaign that included applying 'no food waste' stickers to 255,000 bins. But there is still a significant amount going into rubbish bins instead of food caddies.

Ahead of the 2017-18 campaign it was decided that in addition to reviewing the previous year's evaluation we would commission some additional research to get an updated understanding of residents' current knowledge, behaviours and motivation.

Against a national backdrop of stories about diminishing council funds, the research found that the most motivating message was that it costs less than half to recycle food waste compared to putting it in the rubbish bin. If all food waste in Surrey was recycled, there would be a saving of more than £3 million a year, so it was decided to use that as the campaign's primary message.

The campaign evaluated well with 80% of residents saying the campaign encouraged them to use their food waste caddy and a 3.7% increase in average daily tonnages post campaign resulting in a £200,000 annual saving.



There were also big increases in the numbers of people who said they used the caddy because it is the right thing to do and because it saves them and the council money.

So, for the 2018-19 campaign we decided to nudge residents by giving them positive feedback on what they had achieved, while also highlighting that there was still more to do.

The campaign evaluation showed:

- An 8% increase in residents who say they use the caddy because it saves them/the council money.
- A 5% increase in residents who say they put all their food in their caddies.
- A 6% increase in residents knowing that you can use all types of plastic bags to line your caddy.
- An 18% increase in the monthly average views of the partnership website's food waste pages.

Tonnages also increased, so for the next campaign we can highlight an annual saving of £310,000.



We also ran a second phase of the food waste campaign in 2018-19 which aimed to encourage residents to reduce food waste. It focused on five specific behaviours that would achieve this and encouraged residents to take action by outlining the money saving benefits and the impact on the environment of reducing food waste.

The campaign succeeded in generating more monthly average pageviews of food waste webpages than ever before.

Communications were targeted to residents aged 18-34 as this group were identified as likely to waste the most food. To get their attention the creative approach used humour and was based on a well-known dating app.

The campaign succeeded in generating more monthly average pageviews of food waste webpages than ever before, with users more engaged than is typical. It was well liked, rated highly for its impact and successful in communicating that reducing food waste can save you money and is good for the environment.

However, while it got good interest and engagement the desired behaviours aren't seen as easy to build into daily life. This was borne out by the campaign having lower than usual scores for relevance, persuasiveness and the number of people agreeing that reducing food waste was easy to do. This demonstrates it is a challenging area that will need further time and investment going forward.

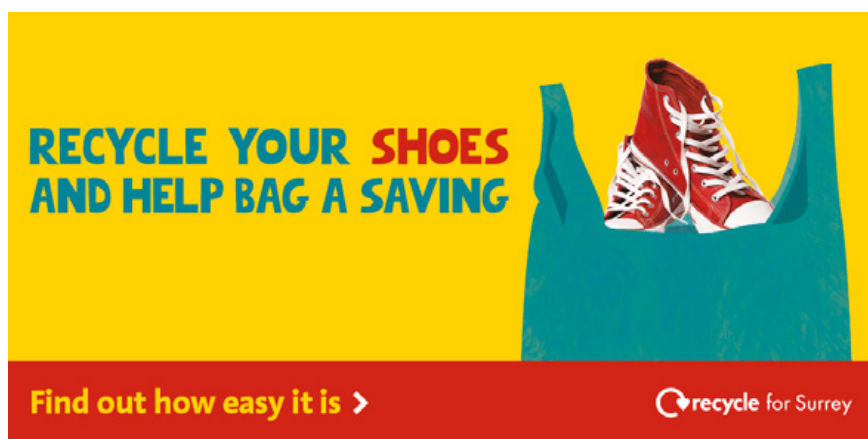


Clothes and home textiles

Clothes and home textiles were the subject of the first partnership campaign following the creation of the joint communications team in 2015. This campaign broke new ground as textiles recycling wasn't being tackled elsewhere in the UK and it resulted in a significant 30% increase in the amount being collected from Surrey homes. The campaign also went on to win awards, including being named Campaign of the Year at the prestigious LGC Awards.

Subsequent clothes and home textiles campaigns have built on this and further increases in tonnages have been achieved each year. In 2018-19 the campaign was split into two phases running in Spring and Autumn as these are times when residents are most likely to be changing their summer and winter wardrobes and undertaking a spring clean or clear out of textiles in their homes.

The campaign aimed to increase awareness of how people can recycle their clothes and home textiles where they live and encourage them to do it by highlighting the savings that can be made. The previous evaluation showed that this was increasing as a motivator for residents.



The campaign evaluation showed:

- Recycling of clothes and home textiles increased by 8.1% in the post-campaign period compared to the pre-campaign period.
- A continued rise in awareness that clothes and home textiles can be recycled, now at 72%.
- A 12% increase in awareness of the kerbside collection service, where available.
- A 246% increase in monthly average views of clothes and home textiles pages on the partnership website.
- The highest score for positive engagement of any clothes and home textiles campaign so far.

Garden waste

As there is less garden waste going into rubbish bins than other recyclable material a smaller budget is allocated to the campaigns and they are primarily delivered through digital channels and tactics. For 2018-19 the campaign approach was to:

- Highlight that garden waste can be turned into compost and encourage residents to compost at home.
- Use their district or borough council's garden waste collection service, which can be shared with a neighbour.
- Or take their garden waste to one of Surrey's community recycling centres (CRCs).

The target audience for the campaign was Surrey residents with small gardens, who are likely to produce low amounts of garden waste and are therefore less likely to recycle. However, more broadly the campaign also targeted all Surrey residents who produce garden waste.



The campaign evaluation showed:

- During the campaign period, there were 31,590 pageviews of the partnership website's garden pages, an impressive 288% increase.
- The average time spent on a garden website page increased by 147%.
- There was a 103% increase in residents using the partnership's recycling search tool to search for garden waste items.

Dry mixed recycling

The 2018-19 DMR campaign focused primarily on festive paper and card during the Christmas period. It aimed to increase awareness of which items of paper and card can and can't be recycled around Christmas and encourage residents to recycle as much of the right material as possible.

It focused on specific festive items of paper and card, such as wrapping paper and Christmas cards. It also encouraged residents to check what they can recycle using the online recycling search tool and app.



The campaign evaluation showed:

- Website visits increased by 140% from the previous year.
- Use of the recycling search tool increased by 36% and downloads of the app by 16%.
- Referrals from district and borough websites to the partnership website were very successful with users highly engaged.
- Producing 12 short animated videos for the campaign worked well. They were widely used on district and borough social media channels and led to an increase in hashtag activity compared to the 2017 campaign.
- An increase in the number of people who visited the website after proactively searching for information suggesting that public interest in recycling paper and card at Christmas is increasing.

Creating a subliminal recycling reminder

Using collection vehicle livery to communicate campaign messages was trialed for two of the joint communications campaigns, but evaluation showed that the return on investment wasn't as high as other media channels and tactics.



So instead of replacing the graphics two or three times a year for different campaigns it was agreed to design long term vehicle livery with generic messages encouraging the recycling of DMR, food and garden waste. The aim was to install consistent, recognisable, eye-catching graphics on as many vehicles countywide as possible. These were offered to partners in either a panel or vinyl wrap format.



A total of 160 vehicles were fitted with the graphics across 10 districts and boroughs – only Spelthorne couldn't take part as they had recently fitted vinyl graphics to their new fleet.



Clearing up confusion

There is consistent feedback that people are confused about what they can and can't recycle and a consequence of that is contamination. That means a recycling bin contains items that can't be recycled and can result in a bin not being emptied or a truck load being rejected – which negatively impacts both recycling figures and finances.

Evidence has indicated that contamination issues tend to be localised, so it is best tackled by each partner authority rather than by a countywide campaign.

This is supported by two projects that aim to tackle this confusion and help residents to learn what can and can't be recycled.

Recycling search tool and app

In 2016 we developed an online recycling search tool and app that allows Surrey residents to put in their postcode and search for an item to find out how to recycle or dispose of it. The tool is embedded on all authorities' websites and on the SEP website.

There is a comprehensive list of items that are included in the tool and updates are made following feedback and suggestions from both residents and partners. Updates are also made when there are any changes to the collection services and at the community recycling centres.

Usage of the search tool has increased significantly in the past year with 214,816 searches in 2018-19 compared with 103,547 searches the previous year. There were 1,800 new app downloads which was about the same as in 2017-18 and

5,000 total app downloads which includes people reinstalling the app when transferring to a new phone. The most popular items searched for in 2018-19 demonstrate the growing awareness and interest in single-use plastics.

Search stats

4,358 – Polystyrene (styrofoam)

5,005 – Clothes and home textiles

7,656 – Plastic straws

Service guides

We produce and distribute an annual service guide for each district and borough with the option to also include a collection calendar. A design template is created which is adapted to reflect any local differences in the service and both the print and distribution is procured in bulk. This approach significantly reduces the time and cost of each authority producing their own guide.

Ahead of producing the guides for 2019 we undertook research with residents to find out what they thought of the 2018 guide and calendar and if/how they used it.

The research showed:

- 56% spontaneous awareness of the guide and 76% awareness on prompting.
- Almost 90% of those who had looked at it felt that the guide was very/quite useful.
- 79% claimed they had found something out from the guide: overwhelmingly their biggest learning is what can and can't be put in each bin.
- One-third of those who recall receiving a calendar had pinned it up.
- 75% of those receiving the calendar thought that it was very/quite useful.
- Almost 70% of those who did not receive a calendar felt it would have been useful to receive one.



We also asked what information they found most useful and would like included going forward. The clear message was to keep the guide as simple as possible and not include too much detailed information. As a result, we refreshed the format and design of the new service guide and then adapted the template to create 11 versions with local branding, contact details and service variations. These were delivered to all Surrey households in autumn 2018.

Improving recycling at flats

The challenge of how to increase recycling rates at blocks of flats is one that continues to pose problems for local authorities. Difficulties include a lack of ownership of recycling due to shared bins; limited space in bin stores for signage; bin stores often being dark, unwelcoming places; and the extra effort needed for residents to take their waste to bin stores.

The partnership decided to tackle the issue head-on with a two-year project that started with creating a central team to reduce officer time and duplication of work. From March 2017 to April 2019, the team has carried out intensive work to improve flats recycling for 6,759 properties.

The team's work involved meeting with each council and agreeing which blocks of flats were to be tackled. They then monitored the blocks to get an understanding of current behaviour and problems to tackle, before developing

targeted interventions to try and solve the problems they'd found. The team put these into place and monitored again, comparing behaviour before and after. Results from work with councils early in the project were then used to inform work with the remaining ones.

The team established working relationships with 30 managing organisations and residents' associations, 13 of which are major social landlords across the county. The best outcomes were in estates where the widest possible group of

stakeholders were involved – property manager, caretakers, cleaners, residents, recycling officers and operational crews.

Typically, the interventions were either changes to waste and recycling infrastructure or communication with residents. Changes to infrastructure included introducing new bins and collection services, replacing old plastic bins that had roll-top or flat lids with new metal bins that had restricted apertures and locks, creating DIY plastic reverse aperture bins and supplying food caddy liners.



Before at The Chantry, Waverley



After at The Chantry, Waverley

Recycling

Items should be clean, dry and loose – not in plastic bags or sacks

mixed paper & card	food tins & drink cans	mixed glass bottles & jars	plastic bottles	plastic pots, tubs & trays

Communications tactics included signage in bin stores, direct mail to residents, bin tags, stickers and branded recycling bags with instructions for residents. During the post interventions period, the team engaged with an estimated 2,000 flats through door to door canvassing and delivered contamination cards where residents were not available.

ARE YOU RECYCLING RIGHT?

Yes please

Address: _____ Date: _____

Our residents are recycling more and more, which is great news, but there are some things you can't recycle.

If you've put the wrong items in your recycling bin, it might not be emptied. That's because the whole truckload could be rejected and everyone's recycling would be thrown away.

Turn over to find out which materials can't be recycled that we found in your recycling.

The headline result from the team's work was a reduction in heavily contaminated bins from 25% to 8%. This was mainly achieved by clear, direct and predominantly pictorial communications to residents and the introduction of lockable or reverse-opening, reduced aperture bins. These reduced the amount of plastic and black bags of waste thrown into recycling bins.

Placing bins for textiles and small electricals in indoor communal areas was also successful and led to regular usage and low contamination.




Food waste bins were introduced in some properties and liners were provided to residents to encourage use. Monitoring after the intervention showed the food waste capture had doubled.

These exceptional outcomes have led to significant industry recognition for the project:

- Winner of the 2018 LARAC Best Team of the Year Award.
- Finalist in the 2019 Awards for Excellence in Recycling.
- Shortlisted in two categories of the 2019 MRW National Recycling Awards.

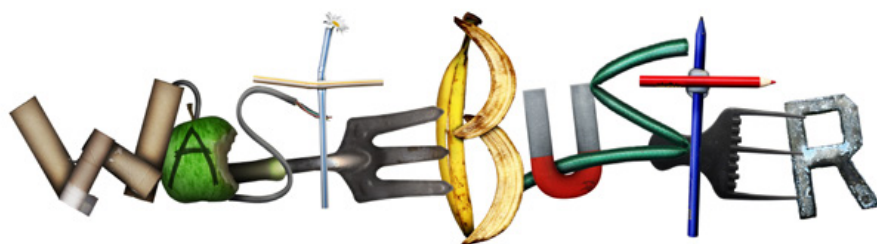
Due to this success it has been agreed that the project will continue and be rolled out across the county with the aim of reaching all blocks of flats and houses of multiple occupancy. This has the potential to increase the county's already high recycling rate by 2.4 percentage points.

Stats on flats

	
326 estates	6,759 properties
	
10,500 bin inspections	1,371 food caddies
	
3,000 bins labelled	6,000 recycling bags

Harnessing the power of pestering

Educating school children about waste reduction and recycling can achieve two key benefits – preparing them for the future when they are responsible for the waste generated in their homes and taking messages back home to their families and encouraging them to act now.



To help achieve this the partnership has commissioned an online schools' engagement programme, run by Wastebuster, to be provided to Surrey's state primary schools since 2014-15. The programme provides schools with a range of downloadable resources that can be used by teachers to educate and engage their pupils in waste reduction and recycling.

For the academic year that started in September 2018 it was agreed to fund additional resources to carry out greater engagement with schools to promote the service. The aim was to increase use of the service by primary schools and expand the service to independent schools.

An interim report prior to the end of the academic year indicates that engagement with schools has increased in 2018-19 and Wastebuster is on track to achieve a KPI of reaching 60% of Surrey's state primary schools. As independent schools were new to the programme a target of 30 schools was set at the beginning of the academic year, representing 35% of all schools. The target has already been achieved, with 39 schools engaging in the programme. Interim research with schools has also been carried out by Wastebuster and indicates that whether schools have already, or are yet to participate in

the programme, they see the value of the resources available to them.

In addition, Wastebuster has also developed a new Surrey Primary Schools Plastic Challenge this year, running from 3-30 June. This has been designed to be informative and engaging to both children and their families. Engagement with this project will be reported at the end of the academic year.



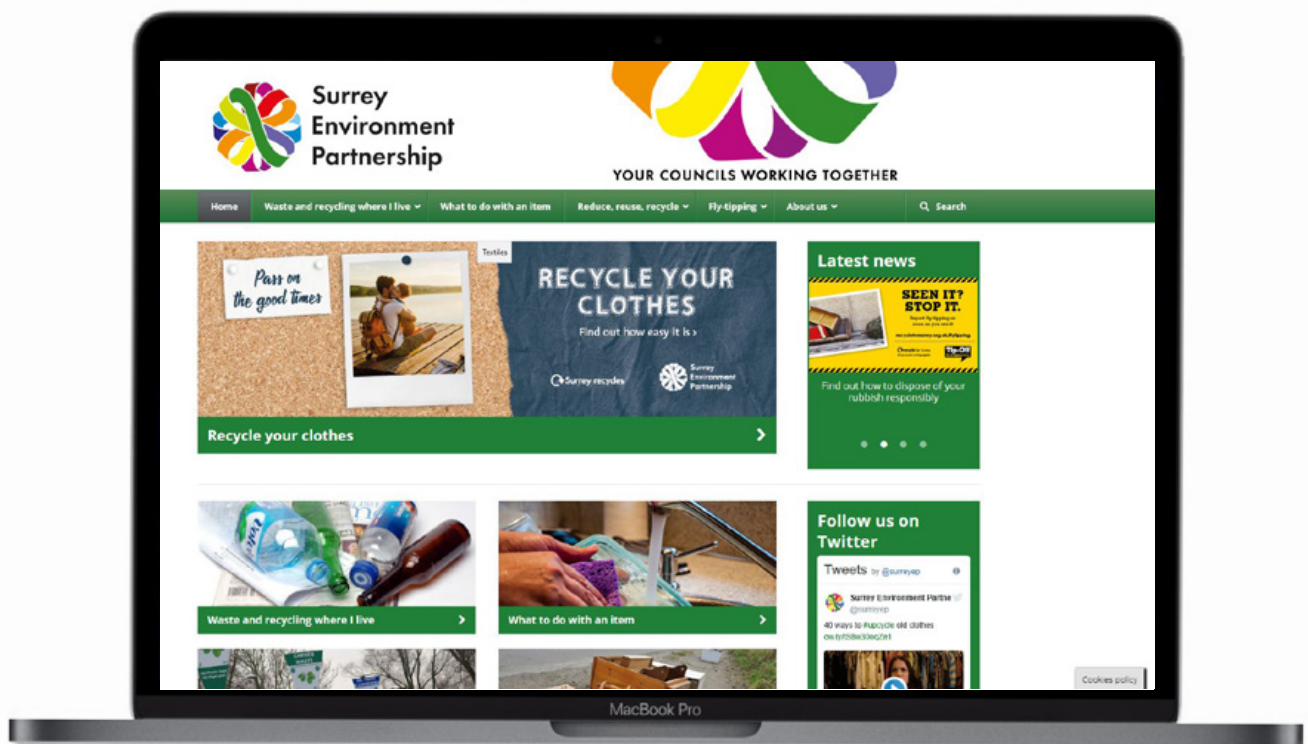
Digital channel development

All the projects outlined above involve communicating with Surrey residents and having our own digital channels is a critical part of that. Websites and social media channels are a cost-effective way to communicate our messages directly and engage in two-way conversations with the many residents who are online.

Two websites and number of social media channels had come into use as the partnership evolved. In January 2019 it was agreed to rationalise these and create a new website and a new set of social media channels ready for the change of partnership name in April 2019.

Creating the new SEP website included:

- Reviewing the existing content across the two sites to identify duplication and any other content no longer required.
- Creating a wireframe for the new site's content based on user testing and feedback.
- Mapping existing content to the wireframe and drafting new content where needed.
- Managing the build and development process.
- Testing of the new site before it went live on 1 April 2019.



New social media channels for SEP have also been created on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Facebook is particularly useful for targeting messages to specific audience as posts can be boosted to reach particular demographics and by geographic location. This also extends the reach beyond just the people who like or follow the page.

Investigating infrastructure investment

There are some items that can't currently be recycled in Surrey and it would help boost the county's recycling rate if that became possible. This includes nappies and other absorbent hygiene products (AHP) and a multi-national company that produces these has developed a commercial scale AHP recycling facility. The company approached the partnership with a view to working together and at the members' group meeting in April 2018 it was agreed to assess the feasibility of building a similar facility to recycle some of the 21,000 tonnes of AHP generated in Surrey each year.

A partnership task group was formed to undertake the work which included creating a financial model to assess the potential costs of building and

operating an AHP recycling facility in Surrey and introducing county-wide separate collections of AHP from households. A risk assessment then looked at the financial risk associated with key cost areas of the AHP recycling facility and the AHP collection system.

The conclusion was that there is currently insufficient evidence that an AHP recycling facility could sell its outputs within the price range projected by the company, meaning that the financial risk of developing a facility is prohibitively high. If this situation changes the risk will reduce and the feasibility of building a facility can be reassessed. This will include taking a fresh look at collection methodologies using any new data that has become available.

There are some items that can't currently be recycled in Surrey and it would help boost the county's recycling rate if that became possible.

Enabling data driven interventions

Engaging with residents and encouraging them to reduce waste and increase and improve their recycling can be done most effectively when we know which specific households or areas have the potential to improve. Engagement activity can then be focused here rather than more widely.

To enable targeted interventions, it was agreed that a scoping study was needed to understand:

- What techniques other authorities are using to deliver targeted interventions to improve waste and recycling performance and what impact they've had.
- What Surrey's authorities need to do in order to be able to successfully deliver targeted interventions themselves.

Following a procurement exercise, the contract to carry out the study was awarded to environmental consultancy Eunomia in December 2018. They carried out the work in the first quarter of 2019 and the final report is now available. The full findings are now being reviewed by officers with a view to developing and delivering a programme of targeted interventions in 2019-20.

Key recommendations include:

- Gather and integrate data from a range of sources on a regular basis so that performance trends and issues can be investigated, and the data used to formulate targeted interventions.
- Use a mix of operational improvements with communications.
- Use data to develop interventions to reduce excess residual waste capacity with clear policies and a programme to remove extra bins in areas where this is a problem.
- Use data to identify opportunities to develop interventions that encourage householders to divert their waste to services such as food or garden waste collections.
- Gather collection data (e.g. from in-cab or other systems) to identify instances of poor performance and the areas or socio-economic groups where they are prevalent. Use this information to develop targeted interventions.
- Use socio-economic and other research data to identify suitable communication channels for different audiences.

Gather and integrate data from a range of sources on a regular basis... to formulate targeted interventions.

Improving data capture

As highlighted above the availability of accurate and timely data is critical in helping to tackle the aims of Surrey's waste strategy. In Spring 2018, the partnership members' group approved the re-tendering of the contract for a Waste Data System. The existing system had been in place since autumn 2014, but the contract was due to expire. The partnership approved a provisional budget of £180,000 for the 4-year period from 2018/19 to 2021/22, to cover system development costs and annual operational costs. The primary benefit of this system would be to provide a single source of accurate and timely tonnage data for the partnership.

In preparation for re-tendering the contract, a review of the existing data system was undertaken looking at the user experience to date and the strategic needs for officers working across the partnership. This highlighted key improvements that could be made to the user interface and reports function.

This feedback was used as the basis for developing a specification for the new system which would deliver improvements to the system design and speed, and intuitiveness for users.

Processes for both uploading data and extracting reports were also to be simplified.

A new four-year contract was subsequently negotiated with the existing supplier, OpenSky Data Systems, and we have been working with them during the second half of 2018/19 to develop the new system, that will deliver the required improvements. A SEP user-group has been supporting the development work, and user-testing of the new system is being carried out in May and June 2019. The system is scheduled to go-live in July 2019.

At the same time as the new system has been developed, we have been working with SUEZ to get complete and accurate historical tonnage data from 2015 onwards uploaded to the system, and to establish a regular monthly process for improving the quality and timeliness of all SUEZ data uploads. This process is now in place, and it has enabled us to develop a new, and more timely, monthly summary report for the partnership.

Reducing fly-tipping

Fly-tipping is the illegal deposit of waste on land or in water. Local authorities and landowners are responsible for clearing it up and it is punishable by a fine of up to £50,000 or 12 months imprisonment if convicted in a Magistrates' Court. If convicted in a Crown Court, it can be punishable by an unlimited fine and up to five years imprisonment. Other penalties include; fixed penalty notices between £150-£400 and seizure of a vehicle and/or its contents.

The most common place for fly-tipping to occur is on or near to roads, or on council land. The fly-tipped material is generally household or construction waste, usually the size of a car boot load or larger.

Surrey's fly-tipping strategy, adopted by the partnership in June 2016, aims to deliver the vision of "a cleaner Surrey, where we work together to ensure our residents and businesses take responsibility for their waste, to build a safer future". It specifically focuses on the coordination and enhancement of prevention, investigation and enforcement activities of partner organisations.

The strategy includes three aims:

- Stimulate a change in behaviour amongst residents, businesses and landowners that helps reduce the amount of fly-tipping in Surrey.
- Jointly agree the most efficient process for reporting, collection and disposal of illegally dumped waste on public land.
- Work together to maximise investigation and enforcement resources to ensure we use these in the most cost-effective way.

Changing behaviours

To achieve the first aim of the strategy, Surrey-wide campaigns on fly-tipping have taken place for the past three years. As with recycling campaigns they are evaluated to assess their impact and inform planning for the next campaign.

Evaluation for the 2017-18 campaign showed that residents were beginning to better understand their role in fly-tipping and the need to check they are using a registered waste carrier. However, evidence also showed that, due to a lack of security checks when applying for waste licences, many licence-holders were still disposing of waste illegally.

So, the 2018-19 campaign provided strengthened messaging to not only check waste carriers have a licence, but also make sure their waste carriers dispose of waste correctly. This could include taking down as much detail about the waste carrier as possible, taking a receipt for services and asking how and where they plan to dispose of the waste. The campaign also continued to encourage residents to report fly-tipping.



The campaign evaluation showed:

- A further improvement in residents' understanding of their responsibilities when it comes to disposing of household and construction waste (51% in 2018, up from 48% in 2017 and 39% in 2016).
- The campaign was very effective at communicating that fly-tipping is expensive to clean up and uses taxpayers' money that could be better spent elsewhere with 85% resident awareness.
- The campaign was also fairly effective at communicating the strengthened messages – that householders should use registered waste carriers and obtain a receipt for their waste with 39% awareness of the new messaging.
- 60% of residents agreed that Surrey's councils encourage residents to report fly-tipping.
- There were 14,636 views of fly-tipping pages on the partnership website, an increase of 63% compared to the 2017-18 campaign.

Reporting and managing fly-tipping

Accurate, standardised data is vital to understand if prevention measures are working and identify the problem areas where improvements can be made. As data is currently recorded differently across the county (and nationally), work is underway to develop a common definition of fly-tipping in Surrey to achieve consistent and reliable data.

The latest statistics show:

- The total number of fly-tipping incidents has increased by 6% in 2017/18 (9,219) compared to 2016/17 (8,726). This is significantly lower than the previous increase of 22% between 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- The total amount of fly-tipped waste disposed of in Surrey decreased by 1% in 2017/18– 3,333 tonnes compared to 3,377 tonnes in 2016/17.



Investigation and enforcement

Meetings of the Enforcement Officers Group have taken place quarterly throughout 2018/19 with good attendance from the district and borough enforcement teams. Officers have had an opportunity to use this forum to exchange knowledge and best practice in relation to fly-tipping enforcement.

The number of enforcement actions taken by the Surrey Environment Partnership member authorities has	increased by 23% in 2017/18 with a total of 4,725 actions compared to 3,831 in 2016/17.
--	---

Highlights of enforcement include:

- In December 2018 Woking Borough Council successfully prosecuted a man found responsible for fly-tipped **(1)** waste that was found in Westfield in May 2018. He was fined a total of £1,337 for his actions.
- Also, in December 2018, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council prosecuted a man who was responsible for a fly-tipping **(2)** incident that occurred in February 2018. Not only did this perpetrator get a fine totalling £1,500 he was also ordered to do 120 hours of community service.
- During 2018/19 Runnymede Borough Council seized three Ford Transit type tipper trucks that were associated with fly-tipping activity in Surrey.
- In March 2019 Spelthorne Borough Council obtained a search warrant in relation to a large quantity of commercial fly-tipping within the borough. Working with Surrey Police a vehicle was recovered and seized. The associated case papers are currently being prepared for prosecution for multiple offences. Since the seizure fly-tipping in the affected areas has ceased.



Reducing single-use plastics

During 2018 concern around the impact of single-use plastics (SUP) and plastic as a material in the wider environment has grown, in particular in the UK after the release of the BBC's Blue Planet documentary series.

Although the benefits of plastic are undeniable, the global ability to cope with plastic waste is already overwhelmed. The programme revealed that only 9% of the nine billion tonnes of plastic the world has ever produced has been recycled.

SUP, often referred to as disposable plastics, are commonly used for packaging and are intended to be used only once before they are thrown away. They include, among other items, food packaging, bottles, straws, containers, cups, cutlery and grocery bags.



In line with national policy, reducing SUP has become a priority for many local authorities across the UK and elsewhere. The target of "removing SUP from government estate by 2020" highlighted in Defra's new Waste and Resources Strategy requires all local authorities to take action immediately in order to meet the given 2020 target.

Tackling the issue in Surrey

In response Surrey County Council, working closely with representatives from the partnership, led the development of a single-use plastics strategy for Surrey.

In January 2019 the partnership members group agreed:

1. That the SUP strategy and action plan would be formally adopted by each partner authority and published on each authorities' website.
2. All authorities would fully engage in the implementation of the strategy including eliminating SUP across their own estates and operations and taking an active part in joint work-streams to deliver county-wide objectives.
3. SEP would take ownership of the SUP strategy implementation by governing and monitoring the overall progress.

The strategy includes a five-year action plan to deliver the following set of objectives:

Theme	Objective
1. Getting our house in order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End the sale and provision of SUP products in order to phase out their use across our own estates and operations (where there is a clear case for it and alternatives exist).
2. Working with our suppliers and contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that our procurement policies and procedures require all of our suppliers to reduce and work towards zero avoidable SUP use (when applicable) in their service provision including at any events that take place. • Support greater awareness and action from our suppliers and contractors in finding sustainable SUP replacements wherever appropriate and encourage higher recycling rates across our estates.
3. Raising awareness across Surrey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share best practice, raise awareness and support our staff, members, partners, communities, schools, businesses, hospitals and beyond towards making their own locations avoidable plastic-free zones.
4. Supporting Surrey to take action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the support of our partner authorities, innovate and encourage people in Surrey to reduce their SUP use, with a particular focus on busy public locations, and other areas where local authorities have control or influence.

Progress to date

An audit of three partner offices provided a detailed picture of the SUP found at those premises and highlighted problem areas in an office environment. Items were grouped in terms of how easy they are to eliminate (easy, moderate, hard) so that we can tackle them in priority order starting with easy items.

We have made considerable progress on the first stage of work to eliminate SUPs listed under the easy category. The large majority of the 12 councils have stopped providing plastic cups for water fountains and introduced a range of reusable or compostable products to replace non-recyclable single-use catering items.

Other highlights of work carried out to date include:

- Woking Borough Council launched Refill Woking in Woking Town Centre at the end of September 2018. With the help of Woking Shopping, there are now over 20 participating cafes and restaurants where members of the public can refill their plastic bottles with free tap water.
- Waverley Borough Council held SUP awareness days in its offices.
- Guildford Borough Council sponsored the Business Improvement Districts for a SUP reduction campaign through community clear ups.
- Surrey County Council added an Environmental Standards section to its procurement policy with a specific reference to SUP reduction for new suppliers and contractors. The council's Social Value Procurement Charter has also been revised and now includes a financial proxy for the reduction in SUP which could have an influence over the outcome of the award of contract following a tender process.
- Surrey County Council has also provided reusable bottles, instead of daily bottled water, to Surrey's 600 firefighters saving approximately 29,515 plastic bottle per year.



What's next for the Surrey Environment Partnership?

*A great deal has been achieved
under the current parallel
governance arrangements.*

A step change in governance

To date the partnership has been governed by a memorandum of understanding which sets out the terms of reference. It has a members group, which is supported by a group of senior officers, both of whom meet quarterly, and a number of staff delivering joint initiatives. All partner authorities contribute to a budget for partnership work.

In 2017 four of the authorities started delivering their waste collection services jointly. This led to the formation of a single officer team which also included staff from the county council who deliver county-wide waste improvements. The joint work of these five authorities is governed by an Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) via a joint committee and 'Partnering Board' of officers. This governance structure sits in parallel to that of the wider partnership.

Whilst a great deal has been achieved under the current parallel governance arrangements, it was identified that there were a number of areas that could be improved to further strengthen the partnership and enable greater flexibility, efficiency and transparency.

To address this, work on a revised governance and delivery model has been undertaken. As a result, all staff were brought together in a newly structured team called Joint Waste Solutions from 1 April 2019. A new outline governance model and draft IAA has also been developed for review and comment by all partners and their legal advisers. Finalising this will be a key piece of work in 2019-20.

Responding to national change

In December 2018 the Government published its long-awaited Resources and Waste Strategy for England. The strategy sets out how the Government proposes to 'preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy in England'.

The proposals include some fundamental changes to the way waste is managed including:

- Making packaging producers responsible for paying for the full costs of managing their waste.
- Introducing a deposit return scheme for drinks containers to encourage recycling rates and reduce litter.
- Introducing a producer tax on plastic packaging, encouraging the use of 30% recycled content in packaging products.
- Implementing standardised household waste collections, including a consistent set of core materials for recycling.

SEP officers worked together to develop responses to consultations on these proposals which were agreed by members and submitted to the Government. Going forward it will be critical to stay up to date on further developments on these proposals and respond quickly to ensure that Surrey gains the maximum benefit from any changes that will be introduced.





Surrey Environment Partnership
YOUR COUNCILS WORKING TOGETHER