

# **Norfolk Waste Partnership**

## **Annual Report 2022/23**



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# Foreword



## Foreword - Cllr Helen Crane, Chair of the Norfolk Waste Partnership

Firstly, on behalf of the Norfolk Waste Partnership I would like to extend my appreciation to Nigel Lloyd for chairing the Partnership over the last year. Having joined the Partnership in 2022 at an exciting and important time for the sector, as Chair I now look forward to helping support the Partnership through the upcoming changes to the waste policy landscape and to influencing agendas nationally and locally on the things that matter.

The Norfolk Waste Partnership remains committed to its shared goal of reducing the environmental impact of delivering waste services. We have continued to review the materials we collect and how we collect them, and in areas across Norfolk we have seen the recent introduction of additional collections to further improve things, from expanding food waste services in one area to new kerbside collections for batteries and small electrical items in another.

The Partnership also continues to support residents across Norfolk to 'recycle right' and to reduce their general waste where they can. We have supported waste reduction initiatives, such as our partnership with Freegle, the continuing focus on Food Savvy to encourage residents to use their leftovers to reduce food waste, and more recently the Refill Norfolk campaign, all things to help residents of Norfolk choose to reuse and make savings on their waste and their shopping bills too.

As we witness the ever-present impact of climate change, waste and recycling has an important contribution to make to the journey to net zero. To reduce the impact of dealing with waste and recycling services your councils are also looking at alternative fuels for their vehicles, including introducing electric vehicles and using plant-based fuels as well as refining collection routes to make them more environmentally and cost effective.

It is clear that Norfolk councils are at the leading-edge of best practice, already collecting a very wide range of items for recycling in a way that makes it as easy as possible for residents and is consistent across the county. As national policy develops we are confident in our ability to quickly adapt and remain very grateful to everybody in Norfolk for playing their part to make a valuable difference and for using the broad range of services provided to their very best effect.

# The Norfolk Waste Partnership

The Norfolk Waste Partnership is a partnership of Norfolk's County, District, Borough and City councils. We work together to improve waste and recycling services across Norfolk.

## NWP is made up of:

- **Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk**
- **Breckland Council**
- **Broadland District Council**
- **Great Yarmouth Borough Council**
- **Norfolk County Council**
- **North Norfolk District Council**
- **Norwich City Council**
- **South Norfolk Council.**

Across Norfolk, we offer a comingled kerbside recycling collection, with all councils collecting the same materials as part of this service. Additional collections across Norfolk include three councils with food waste services, five offering a battery and small electrical collection and two also collecting textiles. The County Council operates 20 recycling centres across the county, 15 of which have reuse shops, diverting items from disposal to reuse.

If you have any questions or would like further information about the Norfolk Waste Partnership, please contact Heidi Beaumont-Preston Marketing and Communications Officer at [heidi.beaumont-preston@great-yarmouth.gov.uk](mailto:heidi.beaumont-preston@great-yarmouth.gov.uk) or Taymer Mason, Development Officer at [taymer.mason@great-yarmouth.gov.uk](mailto:taymer.mason@great-yarmouth.gov.uk).

## 2022/23 An overview

### Helping the residents of Norfolk Recycle Right

Across the UK we save 8 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year by recycling\*, so it's important our residents are recycling all they can.

Following last year's waste compositional analysis, we were able to identify the materials which are commonly not being recycled in homes across Norfolk. It's important we capture these materials as once placed in rubbish, that resource is lost forever. We found that plastics, such as tubs, pots and trays were often being disposed of as general waste instead of recycled. This type of packaging comes in lots of shapes, thicknesses and colours, making it confusing for residents to quickly know what can and can't be recycled.

The analysis highlighted that a large part of contamination was food waste, particularly packaged food. There is an opportunity to address both of these issues and support residents to understand what packaging can be recycled with a reminder that packaging needs to be clean and dry before being recycled.

We create a campaign called everything but the food, highlighting all the packaging which can be recycled but reminding residents it should be food free! This spanned Christmas and Easter, when levels of waste naturally increase, and a general campaign in spring. We also worked with food savvy highlighting how residents can 'love their leftovers'. If residents use all the food in the first instance, there will be less food waste to be put in the bin.

\* [www.recyclenow.com/about-us/our-mission](http://www.recyclenow.com/about-us/our-mission)





# Individual Council Projects



## Great Yarmouth tackles contamination with message from the MRF worker.

We know the environmental importance of recycling, but the quality of the materials we collect are also important to ensure as much as possible can be recycled into new materials. We identified areas of the borough where contamination levels were much higher and impacting the quality of the recycling. We joined Keep Britain Tidy to target these areas with a new approach of communication; messaging came direct from the MRF workers who have to sort and remove all the wrong items placed in recycling bins, often by hand. 10% of households in the target area stopped contaminating their recycling bins after receiving the communication from the MRF worker. Items no longer being incorrectly placed in recycling bins included nappies, textiles and Hazardous waste.



## Councils launch bin app

South Norfolk Council and Broadland District Council launched the ReCollect App. This app helps residents understand what goes in which bin with its waste search tool, along with a calendar with reminders so residents never miss a bin collection. There is also a waste sorting game helping residents to recycle right.

## Textiles

Textiles have a huge environmental impact with production of these materials having a large carbon footprint. This is why it's important we support residents to reuse and recycle textiles where possible.



Prom dresses are an item which are often single use, and rarely considered for reuse. This is why North Norfolk District Council supported North Walsham HAZ reuse prom dress pop up. Working with PACT charity, who had collected preloved prom dresses, teenagers from North Norfolk were able to shop hundreds of styles and colours to find their ideal dress, all from preloved stock. We saved prom dresses from going to waste and teens could find their dream dress at a fraction of the price of a new dress with all the funds going to charity.



Broadland District Council launched a kerbside collection of textiles in April 2022. In the year to March 2023 residents of Broadland have recycled 39 tonnes of textiles. To encourage textile reuse, we also held a clothes swap for our residents who could bring the clothes they no longer wore and swap them for items brought in by other residents. The event proved very popular and saved lots of preloved clothes from going to waste!



## Norwich City Council cracks down on waste crime.

Fly-tipping, flyposting and dog fouling pollutes the environment, so at Norwich City Council we have been increasing our enforcement work to address these issues. Since May 2022 our team has issued 10 FPNs – 4 for fly-tipping, 1 for dog fouling, 2 for flyposting and 3 for failure to produce waste documents. This work has also seen an increase in the number of Sections 34, 46, 47 and 92(A) EPA notices issued to business and individuals across the city.

To address further flyposting, 45 businesses have received initial warning letters to remove fly-posting within the city. The team will visit the businesses who fail to remove all their flyposting.

## Norfolk residents recycle their batteries and electricals.

Councils across Norfolk have been working to help residents recycle more from their home, as they extend kerbside collections to include batteries and WEEE. Recycle your electricals found the UK could save 2.8m tonnes of CO2 if we recycled all our small unwanted electricals instead of binning or holding on to them.



## Breckland Council, North Norfolk District Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk launch kerbside WEEE collection.

Breckland, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk and North Norfolk Councils in February 2023 launched their free weekly small electrical kerbside collection service to residents in partnership with Serco. Small electrical items collections were gradually introduced over a four-month period and positively received by residents.



Broadland District Council launched their battery and small electrical collection in April 2022. In the year to March 2023 residents have recycled 8t of batteries and 53t of small electricals.



South Norfolk Council held WEEE events for residents to bring their old and unwanted electricals for recycling. The Diss event had almost 500 items collected for recycling and over 700 items at the event in Wymondham.





## Great Yarmouth install smoking zones in a bid to limit litter.

Being situated on the coast, we understand the impact of litter and its effect on plants, animals and fish when it enters the waterways. This is why we partnered with Keep Britain Tidy on a project to reduce the amount of cigarette butts littered. Cigarette butts are the single most littered item in England, can take 14 years to break down and release toxic chemicals and micro plastics.

The project is to install designated smoking zones in high traffic areas, the zones included litter bins specifically for cigarette butts.

We are awaiting full results of the trial, but have received positive feedback from residents so far and seen a marked improvement through visual assessment of littered cigarette butts.



Broadland District Council in October 2022 rolled out food waste collection service to an additional 30,000 households. In the year to March 2023 we collected approx. 3200t, an increase of some 750t from the previous year.



## Mission Food Savvy

Mission Food Savvy is the latest in the well-established Food Savvy campaign, run jointly by Norfolk County Council and Suffolk Waste Partnership. The campaign helps households get the best out of salad and vegetables, some of the most thrown away foods. Using a fun, hero agent theme, the campaign reveals how everything from tomatoes to cucumbers, carrots to broccoli, can escape the waste bin through better planning, storing, and cooking.

The average household wastes over two months' worth of food each year (around £730).

As well as financial savings there are environmental savings too. If everyone in the UK stopped throwing away food for just one day it would be the same as taking 14,000 cars off the road for a whole year.



## Norfolk residents cut plastic pollution as they refill on the go.

Norfolk County Council have partnered with Refill to grow the refill community across the county. Refill allows residents to top up their reusable water bottles for free at 500+ locations across Norfolk. Many locations also refill reusable coffee cups, food containers, and groceries too, helping to cut take-away packaging and fight plastic pollution. Refill cuts plastic pollution, allowing residents to refill on the go instead of purchasing single use plastic is much kinder to the environment. The community of refill stations has grown to over 500 water refills, 200 coffee refill and 40 food to go or zero waste shopping refill points. We will continue our work to make refill the norm in Norfolk.



## Tackling plastic pollution across Norfolk beaches with our Sky Lantern and Balloon Release Charter

The Sky Lantern and Balloon Release Charter launched in 2019 with over 150 people, community groups and businesses signing up to the charter to pledge not to release sky lanterns and balloons from their premises. In 2022 research was carried out into whether balloon litter was still evident on Norfolk beaches. Over 130 balloons or balloon fragments were found on Norfolk beaches during beach cleans over an 8 month period! These findings generated a renewed interest and press coverage of the issues with releasing balloons and sky lanterns in Norfolk. As a result we got 140 new sign ups to the sky lantern and balloon release charter.

To help people to easily dispose of litter from small to medium scale litter collections such as local litter picks or beach cleans, Norfolk County Council introduced a new service at Recycling Centres in 2022 - up to 3 bags of litter, can now be accepted free of charge at recycling centres.



# The Journey to Net Zero

Norfolk County Council commissioned a carbon measurement tool to help understand and track the impact of delivering Recycling Centre operations and support decision-making. The tool tracks carbon used through transport and energy use; it also estimates the benefit (in carbon terms) of recycling, composting, and reusing the separated material streams.

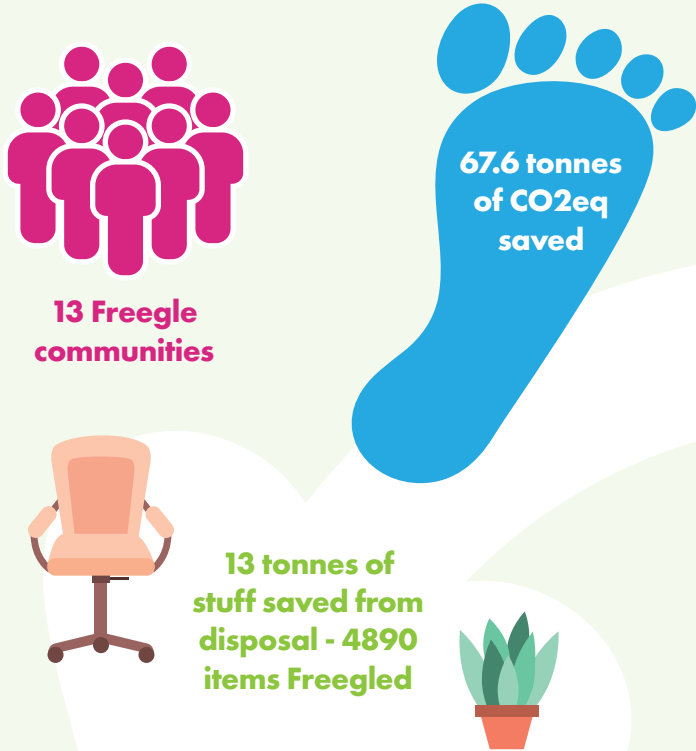
Recycling materials saves carbon which would otherwise occur in the process of extracting and processing raw materials. The process of recycling existing materials uses less energy and therefore fewer emissions. Our recycling centre service across Norfolk saved 20,921 tonnes of CO2-eq in 2022/23 when compared to the disposal of all waste and use of raw materials.

15 of our recycling centres have reuse shops, where items brought to the recycling centres, which are still of good usable quality, are saved from disposal and resold. Reuse is at the top of the waste hierarchy as there is no reprocessing and being sold directly from our reuse shop means there is no transport involved either. Last year our reuse shops saved 1,256 tonnes CO2-eq.

Recycling centres brought an estimated benefit of -22,077 tonnes CO2-eq through the recycling, composting and reuse of materials rather than using raw materials. These figures are calculated using the calculations in line with the Zero Waste Scotland and Greenhouse Gas protocol guidelines. Striving to recycle, reuse and compost as much of the waste received at sites as possible, has the best outcome.



**2022/23 – Freegle in Norfolk**  
This year we continued our partnership with Freegle. Freegle is a service where residents can give away or ask for items which would otherwise be thrown away.



# What happens to Norfolk's Waste

## % Household Waste Recycled, Composted and Reused

Local Authority	Norfolk
2018/19	43.40%
2019/20	44.40%
2020 /21	42.10%
2021/22	44.20%
2022/23	43.10%

All seven Waste Collection Authorities in Norfolk have kerbside collections for general waste, recycling and garden waste. Garden waste is available to all households but incurs an additional charge. The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Norwich City Council and Broadland District Council all offer weekly food waste collections.

In 2020/21 and 2021/22 the amount of waste collected for recycling, composting as well as residual waste increased sharply due to the rise in home working

during the pandemic. In 2022/23, as pre-pandemic routines return, waste levels reduced partway towards pre-2020 levels.

This past year, the overall recycling rate, which includes reuse, recycling and composting dropped a little in 2022/23. This is the result of a particularly dry summer meaning that less garden waste was collected for composting. The rate of 'dry' recycling however, stayed the same.

# Looking Forward

The Norfolk Waste Partnership has identified five areas of focus for the coming year. These are areas where we can all benefit from working collaboratively and respond together to upcoming challenges.

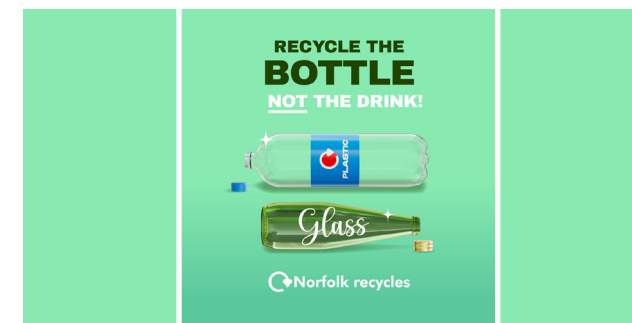
## Resource and Waste Strategy

We will continue to work together as we learn more about the changes to the waste landscape as national policy develops. Across Norfolk we all collect the same core materials in a co-mingled kerbside collection. This allows us to prepare and respond collectively to any upcoming challenges coming from the resource and waste strategy.



## Targeted Communications

We will continue to use the insight of the waste composition analysis to inform our communications. Targeting specific acorn groups to better support residents to recycle right. We will also use the insight of what residents are recycling well and what materials are still being placed in the wrong bin, to target specific materials, focusing on those items where we know there is still confusion.



## Shared Procurement

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## Carbon Performance

We know the environmental benefits of reuse, reducing waste and recycling. However, our traditional methods of measuring performance don't currently consider our carbon performance. Going forward our carbon performance will be a metric we all use to measure our progress. To do this successfully all councils have agreed to work with one method of measuring carbon benefits to easily compare performance, and work collaboratively towards a goal of becoming carbon neutral.



## Waste Crime

Waste crime is an issue faced by all Councils across the UK. Here in Norfolk, we work together to fight waste crime, sharing best practice, learnings, and joint support of cross council initiatives.



## Notes

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**[www.norfolkrecycles.com](http://www.norfolkrecycles.com)**

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