

Waste & Recycling - and what you can do

Parents for Future, Southwest London



Introduction: Parents for Future Southwest London



Individual actions

Encouraging adults to act

Supporting young people

Lobbying for change

Waste is a global problem. Let's start with plastic

8 million+ tonnes of plastic
dumped in oceans every
year

We all swallow a credit card's
worth of plastic every week

Over 90% seabirds have plastic
in their stomachs

1 million plastic bags are used
every minute

- Designed to last forever; used for under a minute
- Remember: There is no such place as 'away'

Another big part of the problem is food waste

A third of all food produced is wasted – most of this in homes

If food waste were a country, it would be the third largest emitter of CO₂ in the world

Cost to UK government of ~£300MM every year

Cost per UK household: £840 every year

- West London Waste Authority recognise food waste as their number one way to cut emissions – can WRWA say the same?

Waste is also a Wandsworth problem

In 2019 WRWA produced 375,000 tonnes waste and recycled 22% of it

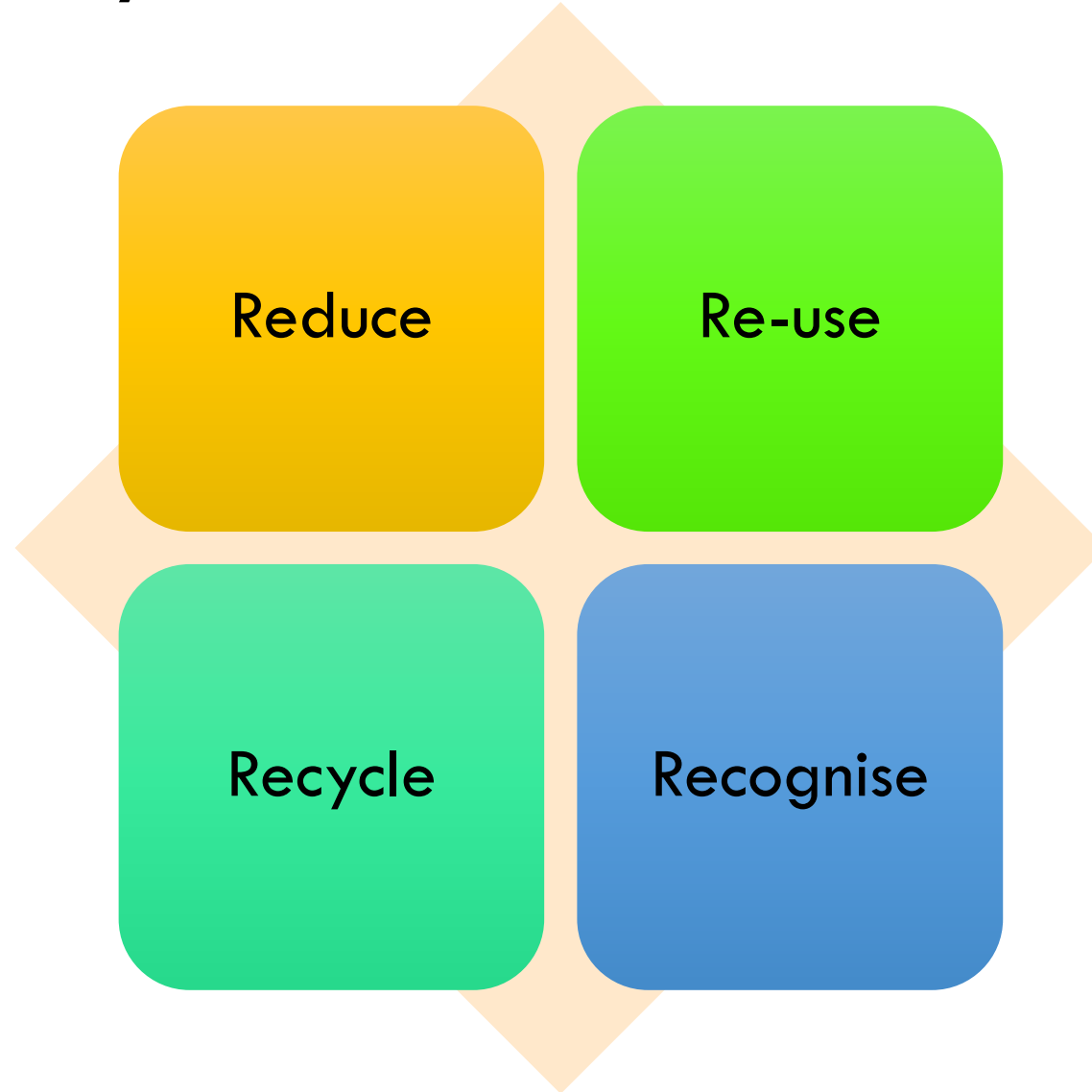
Food Waste is not recycled; it is shipped down river and incinerated

Wandsworth could save money by composting instead of incinerating

There is also a large CO2 saving if we switch from incineration to composting

- We can save money and CO2 as individuals by not wasting e.g. food
- And there are huge savings at a Council level if we change how we then manage the waste

So what can you do about it?



Why reducing comes before recycling

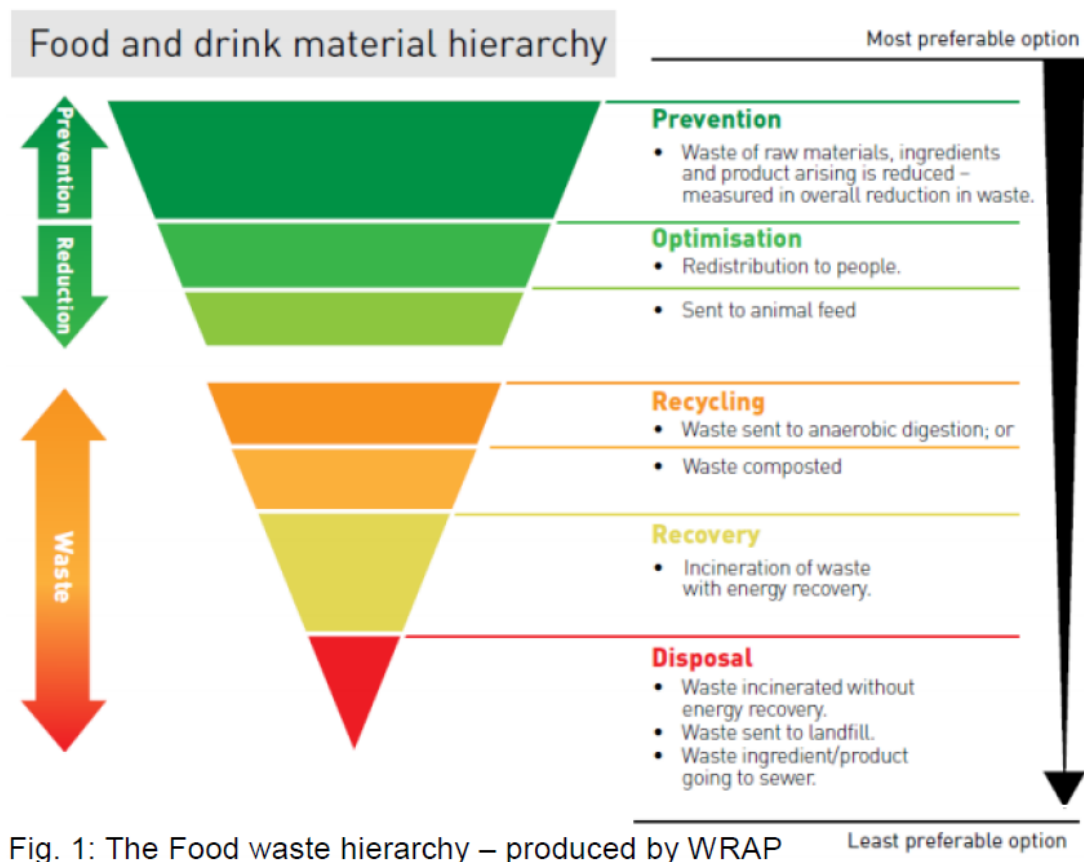


Fig. 1: The Food waste hierarchy – produced by WRAP

- **Plastic incineration has large carbon footprint**
- 1 tonne of CO₂ from every tonne of plastic produced
- ... And double that for every tonne we then incinerate
- **Food waste costs money twice - and CO₂**
- - 20% of greenhouse gas emissions
- - 70% of water usage
- - £19BN of waste per year
- **Reducing this should be our first priority**
- This may take some time (we don't have time)
- In the interim, we support optimal solutions for recycling, i.e. composting instead of incineration

1. Reduce

- How? Buy less, waste less
 - Only buy what you need
 - Use all that you buy
 - Particularly with food waste, apps like Kitche can help
- Shop differently
 - Choose products that have less/no packaging
 - Buy things to last forever; the opposite of 'fast fashion'
 - Shift your mindset: start with a 'bin audit'
 - Pick one change and make it a habit



THE BUYERARCHY
of NEEDS
(with apologies
to Maslow)

2. Re-use

- Some of our favourite re-usables:

- Shopping bags
- Coffee cups
- Water bottles
- Tupperware instead of cling film
- Many of the things we have been told are disposable are re-usable, like plastic spoons and plastic food bags
- Embrace the circular economy and share as communities
- E.g. see clothing and books as pre-loved rather than second hand
- Redistribute e.g. Olio, Too Good to Go, Freecycle, Library of Things, Streetbank

3. Recycle

• What can we recycle?

- Paper and card
- Aluminium (tin cans)
- Bottles
- Hard plastic
- Electronics (via the tip)

Remember: Recycling is a last resort! Better: don't throw it away in first place...

• What can't we recycle?

- Food (compost – but you can do your own)
- Crinkly plastic e.g. crisp bags
- Coffee cups
- 'Bioplastics' (beware greenwashing!)
- Black plastic trays

4. Recognise

That we all have a part to play

But that the problem is too big
for any individual to fix

It's all connected – you can't talk waste
without
talking climate change

A big problem needs
large-scale action

- Start today: Do your bin audit, make your plan
- Email manufacturers and retailers to design out packaging waste
- Join a local or national activist group for strength in numbers
- Write to your MP and councillor, lobby for change



Thank you

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