

## **Waste Education Report**

Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

***Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.***

**Recommendation: It is recommended that the committee:**

- (a) endorses the new Waste Education Strategy & Action Plan;**
- (b) notes the ongoing work of the Waste Education Programme.**

### **1. Summary**

This report presents Devon's Waste Education Strategy & Action Plan and a summary of the Waste Education Programme available to schools.

### **2. Introduction**

Since 2003 Devon County Council has been steadily developing its waste education programme to increase awareness among both pupils and their families about the importance of reducing, reusing, recycling and composting.

The County Council recognises that educating and influencing people's behaviour in relation to the waste they generate, is an essential part of managing demand for the Devon's waste management services and its associated costs and environmental impacts.

### **3. Waste Education Strategy & Action Plan 2017 – 2022**

Devon has had a Waste Education Strategy & Action Plan in place since 2004. The Strategy is reviewed regularly and the most recent Strategy & Action Plan is shown in Appendix I. It seeks to build on the work of the past strategies whilst recognising the challenging financial times that both schools and Local Authorities currently face.

Schools are under increasing pressure to teach more children with less staff and increasing budget constraints. This Strategy recognises that supporting schools to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum is key to encouraging schools to integrate our message into their school curriculum. To do this the Waste Education programme offers a wealth of resources that directly link to the curriculum, enabling schools to embed sustainability into their school without it being viewed as an 'add-on'. Curriculum links are made to key subjects including English, maths, science, geography and PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education).

Devon County Council, like all local authorities, is also dealing with challenging times, with reduced budgets and staff to deliver services. In the past 2 years the Waste Education programme has seen significant impacts from funding cuts, including a reduction in the size of the Waste Education Programme, loss of the DASWC schools 'Cutting Your Waste Line' grants and significant changes to the Composting in School project. However, despite this Devon has managed to retain the waste education programme and is seeking new ways of working more efficiently and effectively with the resources and partners that we have.

The strategy will be reviewed regularly and will be made available on the school 'Zone' website.

#### 4. Devon Waste Education Programme

A significant amount of the Waste Education Strategy & Action Plan is delivered via the waste education programme. Resource Futures has delivered Devon's Waste Education Programme since 2008 and recently won the contract, with a value of £60,000, to deliver the programme until 2020 with an option to extend until 2022.

The Waste Education Programme provides a wide range of excellent curriculum linked assemblies and workshops for both primary and secondary schools on the topic of sustainable waste and resource management.

In the 2016-17 academic year, Resource Futures delivered a total of 162 workshops across 44 schools. The majority of schools received more than one visit and some of these also visited the Exeter EfW plant and Household Waste Recycling Centre. 7,687 children in total have received input from Resource Futures this year. Some children may have participated in more than one activity. Below is a breakdown of the number of people involved in each activity category.

Input from RF		Total
Workshops	Pupils	4,076
	Adults	277
	Total	<b>4,353</b>
Waste Audits	Pupils	252
	Adults	20
	Total	<b>272</b>
Assemblies	Pupils	2,285
	Adults	104
	Total	<b>2,389</b>
Events	Pupils	701
	Adults	124
	Total	<b>567</b>
Trips to waste management facilities	Pupils	373
	Adults	59
	Total	<b>432</b>
Teacher training	Adults	8
	Total	<b>8</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8,021</b>

Across the districts of Devon, the waste education programme has reached, on average, 12% of schools in each district in 2016-17 and supported schools to conduct 12 waste audits, 5 of which were second audits. The impact of the waste education programme is

demonstrated in the estimated 46% overall reduction in waste per school, based on pupil waste audit data.

The Waste Education Programme has also worked closely with the Community Engagement Project (CAG Devon) and is supporting schools to actively engage with their local communities on waste reduction and resource efficiency. This work is an important part of the Waste Education Strategy & Action Plan and will continue to be developed through the Waste Education Programme.

## **5. Getting the Message Home**

An essential part of the Waste Education Programme is to spread the recycling message beyond the school gate to parents and carers. Pupils are provided with a 'take home' sheet linked to their workshop that contains an extension activity or game for the child to complete at home with their parents/carers. They are also given a district recycling sheet with details of their local recycling scheme. Approximately 4,200 take home sheets and 4,400 district recycling sheets have been distributed over the 2016-17 academic year.

During Spring 2015 Resource Futures conducted a survey to measure the impact of the Take Home and District Recycling sheets. 3,400 surveys were sent to parents/carers in 26 different primary schools across Devon. The response rate was 19% (645 people) which is above the typical return of 10% for a postal survey. Key findings included: -

- 82% of parents/carers that responded said their child had discussed waste workshops at home, the majority saying their child talked about the importance of recycling at home. Based on data from 2013/14 academic year, this equated to 11,318 conversations between children and their parents/carers.
- Parents were asked if their child's involvement in workshops had influenced their family's approach to waste and recycling. Most stated that 'yes' it had (58.8%) and of those who said that they had not been influenced (41.2%), the majority made further comments to explain that they were already recycling as much as possible at home anyway.
- Parents who had been influenced stated that they were 'recycling more' and 'trying harder to make less rubbish'. 44% said they were recycling 'a few items more each week', whilst 22% stated that they were filling their recycling container ½ more per collection as a result.
- 47% of parents said their child did bring home a worksheet following a workshop. 28.8% were 'not sure'. Of those who did receive a worksheet, 85.8% of parents/carers took the time to read it and 59.4% reported that their child did the worksheet activity at home.

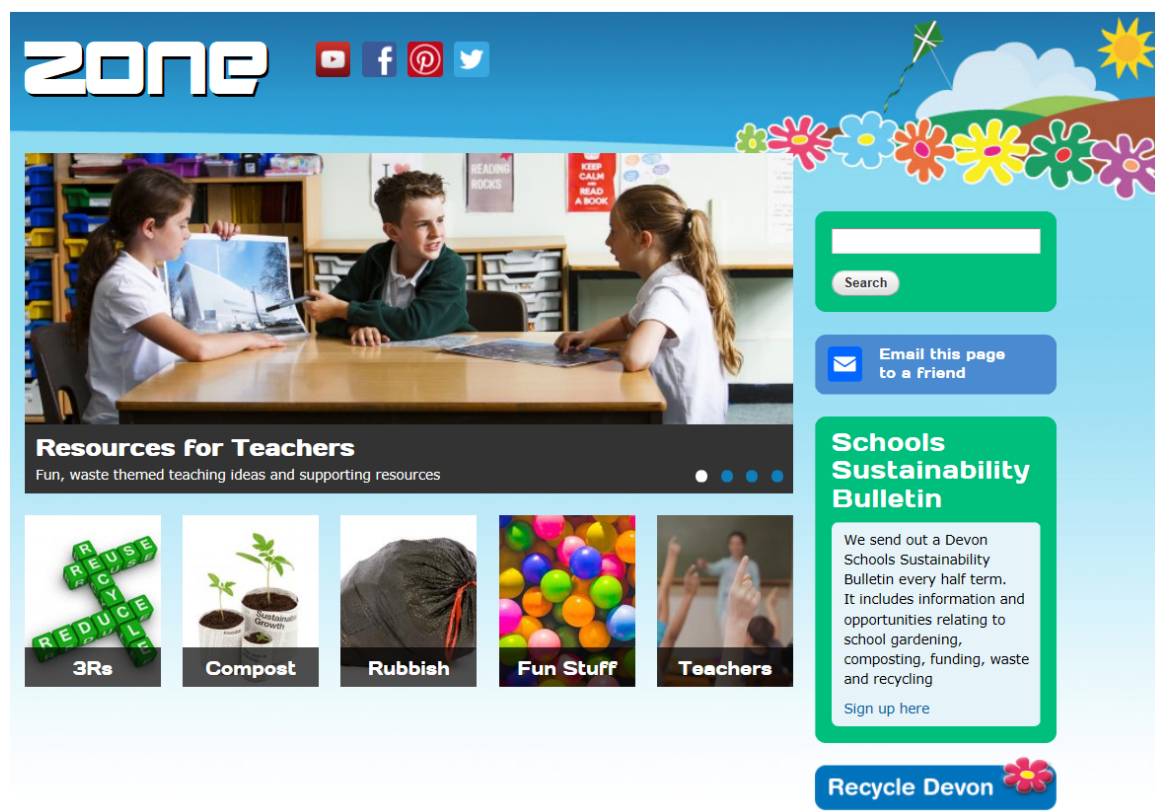
## **6. Visits to Waste Management Facilities**

Devon County Council works with contractors and Waste Collection Authorities to offer schools free tours around a number of Recycling Centres and both Plymouth and Exeter Energy from Waste facilities. The visits are always well received by both pupils and teachers and provide children the opportunity to experience the sights and sounds of waste management.

## 7. The Zone Website

The Zone website is playing an increasingly important role supporting the work of our waste educators in school, providing follow up activities that teachers can use to extend learning beyond the initial site visit or workshop.

The Zone website has recently been refreshed to improve navigation of the site, and increased video content, making it easier for both pupils and teachers to find resources and information. Please visit <http://zone.recycledevon.org>



## 8. Sustainability Bulletin

The Devon Schools Sustainability Bulletin is sent out every half term to over 900 people involved in teaching. It includes information and opportunities relating to reducing, reusing recycling and composting in schools.

## 9. Waste & Recycling collection provision for schools in Devon

The majority of Waste Collection Authorities in Devon provide free recycling services to schools. This is an essential service to support learning in the classroom, reinforcing the message of recycling in the children's daily lives.

## 10. Litter

The Waste Education Programme has offered a 'Litter in the Environment' workshop to schools in the past, although uptake by schools was not high. With the recent publication of the Governments new Litter Strategy for England, and the increased public interest in the issues of plastic in our environment, the Waste Education team will be developing and

promoting the litter resources to both schools and community groups such as Scouts and Guides.

#### **11. Financial Considerations**

Working with schools and their wider communities to actively reduce waste, increase reuse, recycling and composting is essential to reducing the demand for waste management services.

#### **12. Sustainability Considerations**

Managing waste and resources both today and in the future, is an essential part of sustainability. Devon's Waste Education work is an important element of managing the demand for waste services in Devon.

#### **13. Carbon Impact Considerations**

The Waste Education Programme is actively engaging with children and the wider school community to stimulate positive actions to reduce their carbon impact.

#### **14. Equality Considerations**

There are no equality considerations relating to the recommendation.

#### **15. Legal Considerations**

There are no legal considerations relating to the recommendations.

#### **16. Risk Management Considerations**

There are no risks identified with the recommendations.

#### **17. Public Health Impact**

The Waste Education Programme has a positive impact on public health through links between healthy eating and the Love Food Hate Waste workshops and community events.

Meg Booth  
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

#### **Electoral Divisions: All**

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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Nil

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## Waste Education Strategy & Action Plan for Devon Schools (2017-22)

The **Waste Education Strategy and Action Plan for Devon Schools** are supplementary documents produced in fulfilment of the **Waste and Resource Management Strategy for Devon** (2013). This Action Plan is a working document covering the period 2017-2022.

Partners for the Strategy include: Devon County Council, Torbay Council and the Devon Waste Collection Authorities.

The provision of the **Devon Waste Educators** is an important and significant element in the delivery of the Action Plan.

**Aim:** To promote and encourage learning and practical action to reduce waste and improve resource efficiency in Devon's schools and their surrounding communities.

### Objectives:

1. To help children to actively learn about waste reduction and resource efficiency.
2. To help schools engaged with the intensive programme reduce their residual waste by 10% by 2022
3. To enable and support at least 40 schools to reduce their food waste and compost on site by 2022
4. To enable 100% of schools to recycle at least four main material streams by 2022
5. To work with schools and support them to actively engage with their local communities on waste reduction and resource efficiency
6. To provide signposting, training, resources and regular service delivery updates for strategy partners and schools

### To support the aim and objectives of this strategy, DCC and partners will:-

Seek 15% supplementary funding to support the ongoing delivery of this strategy by 2022

Consult with relevant partners & schools to ensure 2017-2022 Strategy update remains relevant and effective

Review the strategy action plan annually

Update the strategy in 2022

## 1.0 - Strategy & Management

Action	Objective	Outcome
1.1 Monitor the effectiveness of the Waste Education Strategy through quantitative and qualitative evaluation and reliable data collation	1 - 6	Evidence shows that delivery of the Waste Education Strategy offers a cost effective behavioural change mechanism which reduces costs for schools and local authorities. The strategy also helps to improve recycling performance in schools and the wider community. Delivery of the strategy increases recycling rates and reduces contamination level at school and community level. The strategy improves understanding and awareness of waste reduction and resource efficiency.
1.2 Maintain the continuity of waste education in Devon's schools through 3+ years contract terms for at least 1.5 full time equivalent 'Waste Educators'	1 - 6	Schools benefit from on-going support to help children to learn how to reduce waste and improve resource efficiency within the wider sustainability agenda leading to fuller engagement with the programme and embedded sustainable change and improved awareness and management practices within schools.
1.3 Waste Educators will provide partners with regular service delivery updates. Partners will support Waste Educators to deliver waste education in their areas and update educators with local service changes as appropriate	6	Strategy partners are engaged with the programme and relevant information is disseminated to schools and partners
1.4 Support training and development needs of partners and school staff (e.g: heads & governors, teachers, support staff & parent helpers) to encourage the school community to embed good practice for sustainable waste management in Devon's schools	6	All partners and school staff are inspired to share and deliver good sustainability waste management practice in Devon's schools leading to engaged pupils throughout the partnership area
1.5 Review the existing centralised database for school activities, visits and other educational provision in Devon provided by partners	-	A reliable record of school and partnership activities and visits enables a full understanding of current service provision and levels of schools engagement. Partners are able to access relevant summary information by arrangement.
1.6 Ensure that proposals for new waste management facilities consider safe opportunities for community and school site visits	-	All suitable waste management facilities within the partnership area allow opportunities for site visits for schools and their communities. Facilities provide safe access routes, meeting / education rooms and parking to facilitate larger vehicles such as coaches

## 2.0 Curriculum

Action	Objective	Outcome
2.1 Develop and deliver a comprehensive range of interactive and inspiring workshops/activities and events about waste reduction and resource efficiency that support the school curriculum and the Waste and Resource Management Strategy for Devon.	1-6	All workshops and activities where appropriate are linked to aspects of the National Curriculum including Science, Geography & Citizenship. Pupils develop a broad understanding of issues regarding waste reduction and resource efficiency, leading to an engaged Devon population contributing to the ambitions contained in the Waste and Resource Management Strategy for Devon
2.2 Provide educational school visits to waste management facilities	1	Children gain first hand experience of the waste management industry, and understand what happens to waste in Devon, experiencing the sites, sounds and smells!
2.3 Develop supporting educational resources to promote waste reduction and resource efficiency through the school 'Zone' website	1-6	Online resources support physical delivery leading to greater autonomy for schools to deliver follow-on work and embed sustainable practices in their school

2.4	Review the schools 'Zone' website' to ensure it is meeting the needs of pupils and teaching staff.	1-6	The 'Zone' website is the principal source of waste information for Devon's schools and contains succinct topic summaries supporting the actions in this strategy. The website is accessible, interactive and written in plain English
2.5	Develop follow up work for teachers to use in class or as homework to extend learning beyond the initial partner input	1 & 5	Teachers are able to access follow up activities via the school 'Zone' website or Waste Educators to support further independent learning in the classroom or at home

### 3.0 Campus

	Action	Objective	Outcome
3.1	Maintain a wide range of relevant guides and information to promote waste reduction and efficient use of resources in schools and their wider communities	1 - 6	Schools are supported with a wide range of good practice guides linked to strategy actions such as information on how the school can reduce waste and save money.
3.2	Provide practical support for schools to help them reduce their waste and improve recycling and composting performance	2 - 4	Devon Schools have access to practical support from partners to assist effective delivery of 3Rs initiatives.
3.3	Work with schools to achieve a 10% reduction in waste sent for disposal (intensive schools programme only)	2	Schools engaged with the intensive programme are helped to reduce their waste sent for disposal using baseline waste audit data. Support is delivered through self help good practice guides, direct practical & educational support, following targeted action planning. Heads and Governors support efforts to reduce waste leading to a reduction in waste management costs and improved environmental performance and waste awareness in schools
3.4	Work with waste management providers and collection authorities to ensure that all schools have access to a recycling/composting collection service for at least four main material streams	4	All schools have access to adequate and appropriate recycling and / or composting collection services (or on-site composting) for at least four main waste streams such as food, paper, card, plastics or electronic and electrical equipment (WEEE)
3.5	Review and update MoUs between the WDA & WCA to ensure all Devon Schools have access to recycling collection services.	4	MOU's are renewed ensuring that every Devon school has the opportunity to draw on adequate local authority recycling collection services for specified materials. Schools are free to select LA or private sector providers
3.6	Formalise a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between collection authorities and schools to clarify service provision, materials to be collected and responsibilities.	4	SLAs are considered 'best practice' and have been agreed and signed by all schools in receipt of LA waste collection services. This leads to consistent, more flexible services, increased recycling and reduced contamination levels through partnership and LA support
3.7	To enable and support at least 40 schools to reduce their food waste and compost on site by 2022	3	Food waste is reduced and the schools are successfully utilising an appropriate size and type of composting system on-site resulting in behavioural change benefits and curriculum support (e.g. science)
3.8	Encourage Devon's schools to include relevant staff contract conditions which support sustainable waste practices in schools	2 - 4	All school staff with a responsibility for waste are supported to deliver effective recycling and composting schemes
3.9	Encourage greater reuse of Schools equipment by promoting WARPlt (online reuse portal)	2, 5 & 6	Increasing number of schools registered and actively using WARPlt
###	Signpost relevant resources, awards and funding opportunities for schools which support waste and sustainability issues	6	Devon's schools are aware and able to access a range of resources, awards and funding opportunities publicised on the 'Zone' web pages and via the Sustainability Bulletin.

### 4.0 Community

	Action	Objective	Outcome
4.1	Provide 'take home' sheets for pupils and parents containing targeted and practical approaches to reducing waste and resource efficiency in the home	1 & 5	Activity based take-home sheets are provided for all pupils following delivery of a Waste Educators workshops. Relevant and practical information is included for parents linked to authority specific schemes
4.2	Work with schools and support them to actively engage with their local communities on waste reduction and resource efficiency.	5	Schools host events for their wider community promoting sustainable waste & resource management e.g: uniform sale days, repair events, give & take events etc.
4.3	Support and encourage partnerships between schools and other organisations in their communities which contribute toward waste reduction and resource efficiency in both schools and their surrounding communities.	5	Schools are supported via a network of organisations linked by a common purpose to deliver waste reduction and resource efficiency in their communities