

AUTUMN 2012



waste Watch

 North West Region
Waste Management Group

Welcome

Welcome to the sixth edition of Waste Watch, brought to you by the North West Region Waste Management Group (NWRWMG).

This is an extremely important period for waste management in the North West region, and indeed across Northern Ireland, as we approach the completion of the Group's £500m public procurement exercise to deliver new waste management facilities for the region.

In the first edition of this magazine three years ago, the procurement process had just been launched and we are now close to the announcement of the final delivery details. Given the scale of the project – this is the largest procurement exercise the region has experienced - this seems the ideal time to remind you about what it entails.

The new technology will enable us to reduce our reliance upon landfill, significantly boost recycling levels and bring us into line with the best European practices in terms of managing the waste which cannot be recycled.

It is important for everyone to remember, however, that waste management starts at home! Although recent statistics certainly indicate that North West households are adhering to the Group's '3Rs' principle of 'reduce, reuse and recycle', it is absolutely vital that everyone continues to view waste as a potential resource rather than simply an unwanted by-product.

Initiatives being organised by the Group's councils are illustrated within the magazine, but we must remind you of simple steps you can follow that will make an important contribution to increasing recycling levels and reducing the region's reliance on landfill.

Thanks for taking the time to read Waste Watch. If you have any queries, or would like further information on any topic, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us via our website: www.northwestwaste.org.uk

Chairman,
Cllr Evelynne Robinson



waste watch

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Waste Management Group

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We highlight the range of activities which have been going on throughout the North West region in the lead-up to the European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR) which takes place in November

Management Plan

The NWRWMG was formed in 1999, when it was decided by the seven councils involved that a joint approach would be the most effective method of deciding how best to deal with waste in the area.

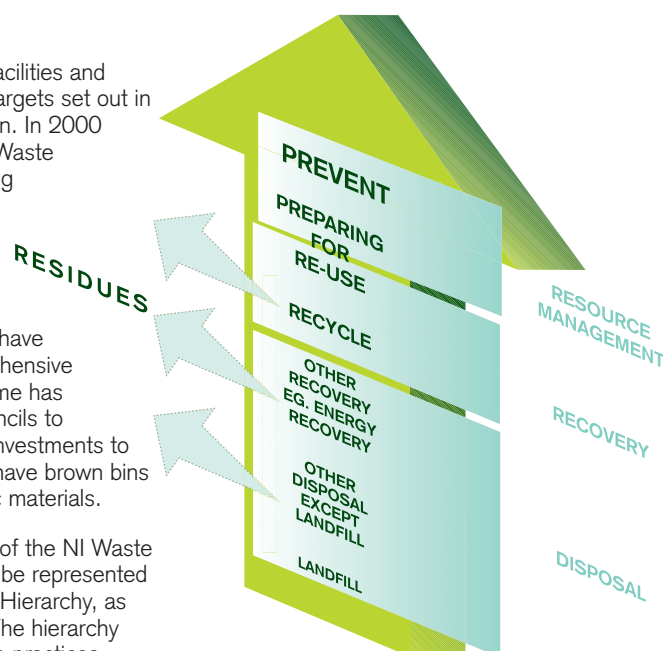
The group formed a Joint Committee of Councils under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 in order to carry out this work, with two elected members from each council sitting on the NWRWMG Joint Committee.

A Waste Management Plan was prepared which has evolved over time and offers the potential not only to reduce the environmental impact of current waste management practices, but also to contribute to sustainable economic development.

Since 2000 the NWRWMG has made

significant investments in facilities and operations to achieve the targets set out in its Waste Management Plan. In 2000 there were 37 Household Waste Recycling Centres and Bring Sites in the region and today the Group has 109 such centres. In addition 132,000 households have blue bins and more than 72,000 home composters have been distributed. A comprehensive Waste Education Programme has been organised by the councils to support the infrastructure investments to date. Four of the councils have brown bins for the collection of organic materials.

The objectives and targets of the NI Waste Management Strategy can be represented in the Waste Management Hierarchy, as illustrated in the diagram. The hierarchy highlights the need to move practices away from landfill disposal and to promote reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery.



NWRWMG Joint Committee 2012/13 Councillors

Ballymoney Borough Council

Alderman Cecil Cousley
Councillor Evelyn Robinson

Coleraine Borough Council

Councillor William King
Councillor George Duddy

Derry City Council

Councillor Michael Cooper
Councillor Shaun Gallagher

Limavady Borough Council

Alderman Jack Rankin
Alderman Michael Coyle

Magherafelt District Council

Councillor Sean McPeake
Councillor Kathleen Lagan

Moyle District Council

Councillor Catherine McCambridge
Councillor Robert McLroy

Strabane District Council

Councillor Kieran McGuire
Councillor Jay McCauley

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An aerial view of an MBT plant in Germany



Finding alternatives

Adhering to the '3Rs' of reducing, reusing and recycling as much day-to-day waste as possible is the most effective way households can contribute to the waste management effort in the North West.

The 3Rs are a key priority of the NWRWMG's Waste Management Plan. Great strides have been made in this area and we are on schedule to meet our target of recycling and composting at least 50% of our waste by 2020.

Unfortunately, however, not all of our waste is suitable for recycling. It is the responsibility of the NWRWMG to deliver the most environmentally-friendly and cost-effective solution for dealing with residual municipal waste - that waste which is left in your black bags and wheelie bins which cannot be recycled or composted.

Until recently, the most common method of dealing with unrecyclable waste has been to send it to landfill sites but, for a number of reasons, we must dramatically reduce our reliance on landfill.

It's an environmentally unsound practice which generates significant levels of methane gas, while the EU's Landfill Directive has set stringent targets to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill to just 35% of 1995 levels by 2020.

Failure to do so could incur infraction fines of up to £500,000 per day for Northern Ireland and ever-increasing landfill taxes. Simply put, failure to find a viable alternative

to landfill which improves our environment would see ratepayers facing hefty financial penalties.

As countries in Europe and the USA have done to great effect, the NWRWMG is tackling these waste management issues with a two-pronged solution of a focus on the 3Rs combined with the development of new infrastructure to recover energy from the remaining waste which is not suitable for recycling.

The NWRWMG is proposing to utilise advanced thermal technologies which can turn waste into a resource by converting non-recyclable waste into clean, green heat and electricity which is classified as renewable energy.

Following extensive research, we have decided that the most effective of these advanced thermal technologies for the North West region is a combination of Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) and Energy Recovery technologies.

The tender process

The NWRWMG has been co-ordinating a £500m public procurement exercise - one of the biggest the region has seen - to deliver these new waste management facilities for the area which will reduce the environmental impact of waste and ensure the region meets the EU waste targets.

Launched in February 2009, a number of companies put forward detailed proposals on their plans to develop a combination of Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) and Energy Recovery technologies to treat waste which can't be recycled. The procurement process is nearing completion, when the NWRWMG will announce its preferred bidder.

Councillor Evelyn Robinson, NWRWMG Chairman, said:

"This is one of the largest and most complex procurement projects ever undertaken in the North West and will radically modernise and improve the region's waste management effort.

"The technologies employed at the new waste facilities will bring the North West in to line with those European countries at the forefront in dealing with unrecyclable waste and ensure we avoid potentially severe EU fines for failing to reduce our reliance on landfill.

"The NWRWMG has carefully managed the procurement process since it was launched, closely scrutinising each bid at every stage of the process to ensure we can achieve the most economically advantageous waste management solution for the region.

"We are pleased with the calibre of the solutions and look forward to announcing the preferred bidder, with the new waste facilities set to be operational before the end of 2015."

For more information on the technologies involved in the new waste management facilities which are set to be introduced to the North West, visit www.northwestwaste.org.uk



We have the technology

As these waste technologies are new for the North West, it is natural that people will want to know how they work and why they are being introduced to the region.

Looking to Europe

It is important to remember that, while these facilities will be new to our region, they are very much commonplace in many European countries where they operate to great success - many in urban settings. In Holland, for example, 38% of waste is treated by advanced thermal technologies; in Germany it's 35%. This has helped Germany reduce the amount of waste it sends to landfill to 5%!

What is MBT and Energy Recovery?

Mechanical Biological Treatment is a term used to describe a group of technologies that deal with residual municipal waste. When waste goes to a MBT facility, recyclable or reusable material will be extracted from it by a mechanical process, with the waste then subjected to a further treatment to produce a more biologically stable material.

Energy Recovery is a waste management method which disposes of residual municipal waste in such a way that energy is produced in the form of heat and/or electricity. There are a number of Energy Recovery technologies available, including mass incineration, gasification, pyrolysis and the use of cement kilns - but the NWRWMG has decided mass incineration is not acceptable for the region.

How do the technologies work?

As the name suggests, there are two main stages to MBT - a mechanical stage and a biological stage. The mechanical stage has two main roles, breaking down the waste into smaller parts (e.g. by shredding) and removing some recyclable material. During the biological stage, the waste will either be composted or digested, usually in an enclosed system.

Gasification is used to recover energy from residual waste. Gasification uses

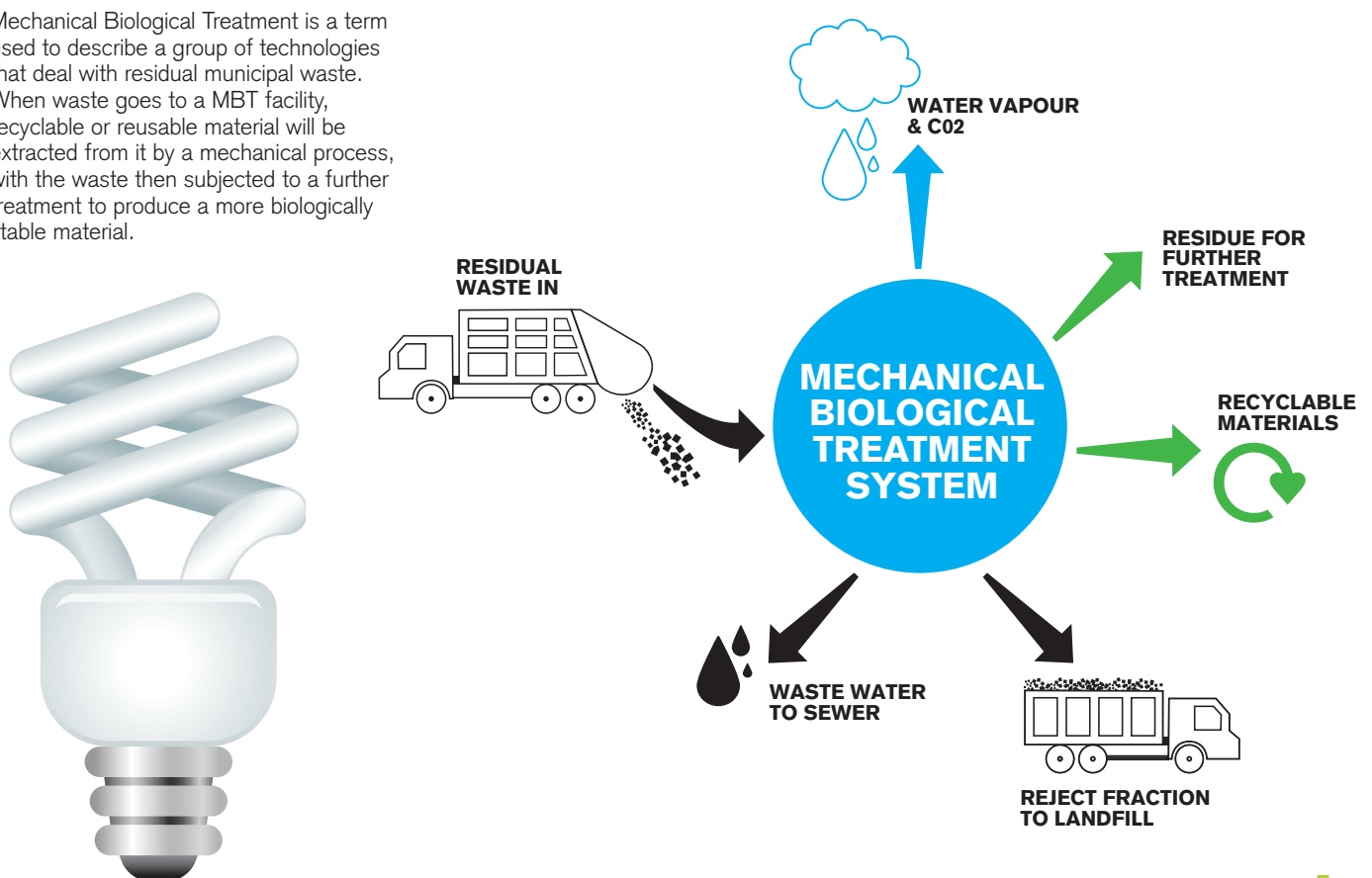
small amounts of oxygen to dispose of waste in such a way that useful energy is produced, in the form of electricity and heat. Gasification involves the partial oxidation of a substance. This means that oxygen is added but the amounts are not sufficient to allow complete oxidation or full combustion to occur. The temperature's main product is a syngas, which is used to drive turbines or gas engines to produce electricity. The other main product is a solid residue of non-combustible materials (ash) which contains relatively little carbon.

Pyrolysis is a similar process to gasification but uses no oxygen rather than restricted oxygen, as in gasification. In the cement kiln process, the use of fossil fuels is displaced and that energy saved.

Where else are they used?

There are currently more than 70 purpose-built MBT plants in Europe, located mainly in Austria, France, Germany and Italy. The number of MBT plants in the UK is increasing, with a number of local authorities considering employing the technology.

More than 100 advanced treatment plants have been built and are operating in Europe, North America and Japan, capable of treating over four million tonnes of waste per year.





Derry sails on with the Rethink Waste message

Derry City Council ensured that the Rethink Waste message was promoted at a major international event which attracted tens of thousands of people to the city during the summer.

The Clipper Homecoming Festival took place on the River Foyle from 29th June - 8th July when Derry hosted a 10-day festival welcoming a 10-strong fleet of 68-ft yachts to the city, as part of the final transatlantic leg of the world's longest ocean race.

An environmental marquee was on site at the event, with visitors of all ages getting their hands dirty and taking part in the popular archaeological dig to find out what has

been sent to landfill that could have been recycled and what local species could become extinct.

Visitors to the event were invited to discover the beautiful inland waterways of the Foyle and Faughan, which provide a valuable habitat for over 60 different types of fish, otters, seals, migratory birds and bats.

One of the main themes within the environmental marquee was 'Love Food Hate Waste', which aims to raise awareness of the need to reduce food waste and help us take action. It shows that by doing some easy, practical, everyday things in the home we can all waste less food, which will ultimately benefit our bank balances and the environment too.

Love Food Hate Waste Practical Hints and Tips

- Check what is in the cupboard, fridge and freezer before going shopping
- Know what you are going to buy before you go shopping
- Plan meals in advance
- Check the dates on food regularly and use foods with the shortest date first
- Freeze foods you will not get round to eating in time
- Measure portion sizes to help avoid cooking or serving too much food
- Be creative with using up leftovers (most leftovers will keep for two days in the fridge if they are well wrapped, apart from rice)
- Use the fridge to extend the shelf-life of fruit and vegetables
- Wrap fresh foods well or store in air-tight containers once opened



The environmental marquee at the Clipper Homecoming Festival



Drumlegagh gets the Green Flag



Strabane District Council hosted a special presentation recently at which a local primary school received a special award for its commitment to improving the environment.

The reception at the Council Offices, hosted in conjunction with Eco Schools, saw Drumlegagh Primary School presented with an Eco Schools Green Flag by the council's vice-chairman, Kieran McGuire.

Drumlegagh is the fifth school in the Strabane District Council area to have received such an award, following in the footsteps of St. Columba's Primary School in Clady, Artigarvan Primary School, St. Anne's Primary School in Strabane and Strabane Primary School.

Councillor McGuire commented:

"This is a great achievement for Drumlegagh Primary School and they should be very proud of themselves for all the hard work which they have done to receive this Green Flag. The Eco Schools programme is a very worthwhile learning resource that raises awareness of environmental issues through activities that are linked to curriculum subjects.

"It encourages children and teenagers to adopt an environmentally friendly attitude on a wide range of topics such as biodiversity, litter, waste, energy, water, transport, healthy living and school grounds. There are also various delivery partners who can help schools with these topics such as Travelwise Northern Ireland,

Action Renewables, BBC Breathing Places and the council, which, I am pleased to say, supports all of the schools in the district that are registered on the Eco Schools programme."

The Green Flag is a prestigious award to receive and this shows that the entire school has made a commitment to improve, not only its own school environment, but also the surrounding environment. Eco Schools in Northern Ireland is administered by TIDY Northern Ireland and it provides help and support to schools that have registered on the programme.

The Eco Schools rationale is that the programme is pupil-driven, with each school electing an Eco-Committee which helps to make the decisions about what they are going to do and how they are going to do it. The topics that the children deal with all link into the school curriculum, making it useful for schools and pupils to take part in the programme.



Drumlegagh Primary School Eco Committee and guests at the Eco School awards reception at Strabane Council Offices

New recycling centre nearing completion



Work is progressing well on the new Dungiven Household Recycling Centre and Limavady Borough Council residents will soon have access to a modern, well-designed facility at which a range of recycling materials can be deposited.

Replacing the temporary civic amenity site at the nearby Dungiven Sports Pavilion, the £570,000 centre is a significant investment in waste infrastructure for the council and will greatly assist in working towards legislative requirements to reduce land-filling of biodegradable waste to 50% of 1995 levels by 2013 and to achieve 40% household recycling by 2015.

John McCarron from Limavady Borough Council said:

"At design stage the council requested consultants submit designs which gave consideration to the long term sustainability of the development. With this principle in mind the facility incorporates a reed bed system which treats any leachate seepage which might arise from the green materials collection.

"Leachate is a liquid which can have a detrimental effect on fish and plant life in rivers and waterways. Requiring particular treatment which is often expensive, leachate must be contained and rendered safe prior to release into the environment. This can be achieved in one of two ways, either by collecting the liquid and sending it off for treatment elsewhere or by incorporating it into other liquid wastes on-site which then

have to be mechanically and chemically treated.

"Reed beds are a natural and efficient way of ensuring the liquid released from the site will not harm plant or animal life in nearby waterways. By providing this treatment onsite, the council is providing an 'in-house' solution which is cost-effective and environmentally sound. Taking responsibility for this in-house indicates the council's determination that as far as possible operations will be carried out with ecological protection and sustainability at the forefront of all we do."

The Dungiven Household Recycling Centre, due for completion in the very near future, will be able to accept a wide range of recycling materials, including wood, cardboard, plastics, electrical equipment and green garden materials.



Big Spring Clean in Moyle

Moyle District Council, in conjunction with Tidy NI, St Olcan's Primary School and Armoy Primary School carried out its own community 'Big Spring Clean Event' at the local Play Park and Riverside Park in Armoy. Primary five, six and seven-pupils from each school enjoyed their morning collecting litter and Moyle District Council disposed of all waste collected by the children



Waste's a big 'if' in Ballymoney

Ballymoney Borough Council is taking a novel approach to encouraging households to think more carefully about the environment and how they can turn waste materials into a resource.

The council has launched a 'What if' campaign which is aimed at highlighting the 3Rs principle of 'reduce, reuse and recycle' and focusing the minds of Ballymoney residents on how they can help ensure waste makes a positive contribution to the local community.

The initiative aims to highlight the untold reducing, reusing and recycling stories to see how local people apply imagination and innovation to waste. Over the coming months, the council is asking for people to send in their stories based on the theme of 'What if...?' with topics to include What if:

- we couldn't throw food waste in bins
- we had to reuse unwanted textiles or clothing
- we had to grow more food using items destined for landfill
- we all had smaller black bins
- we had to spend a day without shopping at all

- we had to buy more local or seasonal food
- we choose to use smaller, independent shops rather than big 'out of town' supermarkets

Declan Donnelly, from Ballymoney Borough Council, said:

"The Earth Summit 2012 Rio +20 asks us to consider what would happen if we had to act on the pressing environmental issues confronting society today. This is a challenge for us all, not just Councils.

"The challenge does not mean that everything we have done in the past is bad or wrong. It encourages us to create different realities where people feel more in control and where we can make things happen for us rather than waiting for things to happen to us. If we make something, grow something, buy locally, turn off the TV, walk or cycle somewhere rather than using a car we are rising to the challenge and creating a new future.

"We need a range of new skills, or indeed to rediscover the skills and philosophy which were common in Ballymoney 50 or 60 years ago. The 'make do or mend' approach which guided previous generations can serve us well today. Reskilling is learning the skills we need to build resilient communities which can cope with the challenges of a changing world. We

learn from each other, build community networks and have fun in the process.

"Reskilling activities may include foraging, growing, preserving and storing our food, repairing, building and making things, communication skills, games, playing music, design, community activities, crafts and lots more. Reskilling gives us the confidence to do things ourselves and creates links between generations while making our community resilient.

"Waste is an issue which has social, economic and environmental impacts and can be the basis of an attempt to 'reskill' Ballymoney by focusing on how we can make waste work for our community. We are giving attention to the untold reducing, reusing and recycling stories to see how local people apply imagination and innovation to waste.

"By moving beyond the typical approach of issuing press releases and telling people how to do things we hope to create an environment where the community will come forward with all those weird and wonderful ways of living sustainable and resilient lifestyles."

The council is planning to mount an exhibition and promote all the great ideas on its website - so look out for an update on how Ballymoney is becoming resilient and taking control of waste.

Dynamic duo cleaning up Coleraine



Coleraine Borough Council has paid tribute to two friends whose anti-litter and recycling campaigning in local beauty spots is inspiring their local community to follow in their footsteps.

Donna Rainey and Selina Archibald have a dream to see a litter-free Northern Ireland and they have worked tirelessly within the Coleraine Borough Council area for many years in a bid to make this happen. The dynamic duo target walking and cycling routes, roads and streams in and around Garvagh and the North Coast, then lift litter from these areas and separate it for recycling.

Their ongoing commitment to the North Coast, Agivey River and local environment, through consistent hard work in cleaning-up litter and lobbying for positive action, has inspired many others to follow their great example. They have organised hundreds of volunteers to scour miles of roads and streams in the Sperrins and along the coast, gathering bags of litter to help keep Northern Ireland clean.

Fiona Watters, from Coleraine Borough Council, said:

“Although many of us would become discouraged and disheartened when litter re-appears in the form of drinks containers,

bottles and takeaway wrappers, Donna and Selina remain firm in their actions and belief that we can all make a positive difference.

“Donna and Selina’s mantra is that if we all cleared a stretch of road, river or stream near us, we would soon be litter-free. They want to see a litter-free Northern Ireland and their enthusiasm and passion would make you believe it is possible.”

Last year, Donna won the Coca-Cola Coast Care ‘Most Committed Volunteer of the Year Award’, while Selina has been nominated for an award this year. Organised by Tidy Northern Ireland, in association with Coca-Cola, the awards are designed to acknowledge the excellent work of individuals and groups involved in the Coast Care Programme.

The awards recognise the vital role volunteers play in protecting our coastline and inland waterways. Along with Donna, SurfSUP NI won the ‘Best Business Involvement’ Award, Portstewart Young Vision & Bushmills Young People’s Group won ‘Best Newcomer’ and Portballintrae Residents Association were Highly Commended in the Group Award.



Coleraine Borough Council's dynamic duo, Donna Rainey and Selina Archibald



Calling contestants for the 'X Factor for Fashion'



Budding young fashion designers throughout the North West have once again been set the challenge of transforming trash and other already used materials into remarkable high-end couture fashion for men and women.

The Junk Kouture Recycled Fashion 2013 competition, dubbed the 'X Factor for Fashion', is now in its third year and is open to secondary school pupils from across Ireland and the UK, with Derry/Londonderry this year hosting the Northern Regional Final.

This year's initiative is once again organised in association with the European Recycling Platform (ERP), Ireland's only pan-European compliance scheme for electrical and electronic waste and battery waste. ERP is delighted to continue its involvement with the competition and educate students on the importance of sustainability, while giving them an outlet for their creativity.

The winning school will receive €2,500 in prize money, with the winning team receiving €500, IT equipment to the value of €1,000 and a place on a week-long fashion design course at the Grafton Academy, Dublin. The integration of electrical waste into the design forms part of the challenge once more, with a special prize to be awarded by ERP for its most inspired and creative use.

As well as these attractive prizes, Junk Kouture is delighted to announce a new prize for 2013 - an all-expenses-paid whistle-stop tour for three outfits and teachers to Cannes Film Festival, with fashion shoots and appearances at one of the world's most glamorous events.

Elizabeth O'Donnell, Junk Kouture co-ordinator, said:

"Moya Doherty of Riverdance has come on board and with her guidance we hope to improve all aspects of the competition. We have ambitions to create up to eight jobs over the next three years and run 30 shows across the UK and Ireland. We are looking to create 'The X factor for Fashion'.

"To have the support of ERP, who encourage responsible recycling, reaffirms the important message of the Junk Kouture competition. We would encourage as many schools as possible to get involved."

Yvonne Holmes, Head of Communications at ERP Ireland, added:

"We are very excited to be involved in this competition. We believe it challenges students' creativity and makes them think twice about their attitude to recycling while encouraging behavioural change. We were especially drawn by the creative element of the competition and, after seeing some of the incredible entries from last year, we cannot wait to see what the students create in 2013."

The recycled fashion competition will feature regional semi-finals across all four provinces at the following venues:

Northern Regional Final - Friday 8th March - Millennium Forum - Derry/Londonderry

Eastern Regional Final - Monday 11th March - The Helix - DCU - Dublin

Southern Regional Final - Thursday 14th March - UCH - University of Limerick - Limerick

Western Regional Final - Wednesday 20th March - The Royal Theatre - Castlebar

Up to 80 outfits will then progress to the grand final in Dublin on 19th April, 2012. Deadline for entry is 31st January, 2013. For more information, log on to the Junk Kouture website or Facebook page: www.facebook.com/junkkouture, email info@junkkouture.com or telephone: +353 7493 20220.



Plastic fantastic

Want to recycle plastic bottles? It's easy, just
'wash'em and squash'em'

We've been using them for nearly 70 years and get through a staggering 15 million of them every day in the UK alone. The humble plastic bottle - from water and soft drinks, shampoo and bleach to olive oil and garden fertiliser - has never been so much in demand.

And now, thanks to new technology, householders in the North West region can recycle plastic bottles of all shapes and sizes as well as numerous plastic containers.

And it couldn't be simpler. All you have to

do is wash'em and squash'em - so think twice before you throw these items in the rubbish bag.

The North West Region Waste Management Group (NWRWMG) offers collection facilities for plastic bottles and containers through its kerbside collection scheme.

UK households dispose of around 4.9 million tonnes of packaging every year, but recycling just one tonne of plastic bottles saves 1.5 tonnes of CO2 from being released into the atmosphere. To put this into perspective, if everyone in the UK recycled just one extra plastic bottle during the week it would save enough energy to power over 71,000 plasma screen TVs for a year. Recycling also benefits the environment by significantly reducing air and water pollutants.

So what happens to bottles during recycling? First, they are separated by colour, cleaned, melted down and then turned into plastic pellets. These are used to make fences, bags, flooring, window frames, fleeces, fibre fillings... or even more bottles!

The good news is that the technology that's helping us do this is also helping us increase recycling rates of a number of other plastic items, such as yoghurt pots, plastic trays, tubs and films.

Given that it is now so much easier to do so, the NWRWMG is calling on all households to make an extra effort to wash, squash and recycle all plastic bottles after use. To help, we have produced these tips and facts below:

Tips for recycling your plastics

- Before recycling, please rinse your bottles out, squash them and put the top back on
- Bottle tops can be recycled too (when put back on the bottle)
- You don't need to remove the labels as this is done as part of the recycling
- Plastic bottles were first used commercially in 1947
- 15 million plastic bottles are used in the UK alone every day
- 1 tonne of plastic bottles saves 1.5 tonnes of carbon being released into the atmosphere
- It only takes 25 two-litre plastic bottles to make an adult-sized fleece

What can I put into the blue bin?



yes please

- ✓ Aerosols
- ✓ Cartons
- ✓ Food tins and drink cans
- ✓ Large tins
- ✓ Mixed paper & card
- ✓ Plastic bottles & plastic food containers
- ✓ Textiles
- ✓ Small electrical appliances
- ✓ Mixed glass bottles and jars

Please ensure materials are empty, washed out and clean. For small appliances, nothing larger than a domestic toaster. For textiles, bring to your nearest charity collection point or put in your blue bin.

no thanks

- ✗ Plastic raw meat trays (trays that have raw chicken, raw beef, raw pork or raw fish)
- ✗ Nappies
- ✗ Tissues
- ✗ T.V.s, microwaves, computer monitors (nothing with glass)
- ✗ General rubbish, plastic bags or food waste
- ✗ Continental quilts

European Week for Waste Reduction - Rethink Waste

rethink
waste

The European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR) is once again almost upon us! This year the week will take place from 17th - 25th November.

The week focuses on highlighting waste reduction activities across Europe and raising awareness of ways to reduce our waste. In 2011, Northern Ireland joined in with over 20 other countries across Europe for the challenge, and achieved over 350 registered activities, which comprised over 50% of the UK's overall entries!

This year EWWR is once again calling on all of us to participate in reducing waste, no matter how big or small the action; or whether it be on your own or with your family at home, or with your local community, or with colleagues in work, or in school! The challenge is simple: to reduce your waste thereby reducing your contributions to landfill and also save money while doing so! Many of the most successful actions have been simple ones which are easily done on a daily basis all year round such as zero waste lunches, printing double-sided, etc.

Read on to find out about some wonderful waste reducing activities which took place in the North West area last year - maybe they will give you some ideas for reducing waste in your own life.

Furniture can often be a big contributor to landfill. Eight locations, mostly in the North West, played host to interesting and innovative furniture workshops held in University and Further and Higher Education Colleges. These included Coleraine, Limavady, Strabane and Derry/Londonderry. The workshops demonstrated easy and fun

ways of updating and restyling (known as "upcycling") your furniture, to make it more modern, more attractive and in keeping with your décor at home so that you can continue to use it rather than replace it. This will have the added bonus of saving you the money you would have spent on new furniture!

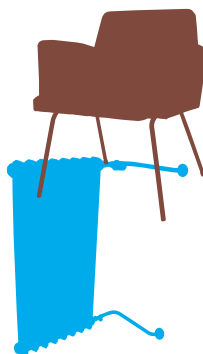
Schools in the Coleraine area were invited to take part in a competition to design and make a Christmas tree ornament from a piece of rubbish. This was run by Coleraine Borough Council, assisted by a grant from the Department of the Environment's Rethink Waste campaign to carry out the activity. As well as diverting rubbish from landfill and providing homes and schools with free, homemade decorations, the project engaged children to think more about rubbish, use their imagination and creativity, and learn that items which appear to be "unwanted" and "useless" may in fact serve a purpose after all. The winner of the project, together with his/her classmates, was invited to attend a Christmas tea party and put their decoration on the Mayor of Coleraine's own Christmas tree!

Magherafelt town centre also took part by playing host to the 'ReFound Pop Up Shop' which visited the town on the first day of EWWR week. The shop basically offered people the opportunity to buy a piece of unique, affordable and fully functional artwork and remade furniture completed by professional artists - this was certainly an opportunity to pick up a one-of-a-kind piece as well as doing your

part to divert contributions to landfill.

Six awards were presented to the Northern Ireland winners by the Environment Minister Alex Attwood. One of the worthy winners, Queen's Elms student village, went on to win one of only six overall European wide awards in the Business and Industry category, for their innovative and effective waste reducing initiatives, putting Northern Ireland well and truly on the map!

The central theme of EWWR this year in Northern Ireland is food waste. Did you know that wasting food costs the average household £480 a year, rising to £680 for a family with children, the equivalent of around £50 a month. With rising food prices, reducing the amount of food waste you throw away really can help you save money every week. Now that really is some food for thought!



EUROPEAN WEEK
FOR WASTE REDUCTION
17th - 25th NOVEMBER 2012



Food for thought...



Research has shown that 61% of UK shoppers are concerned about the environmental impact of our food and groceries.

As we look for ways to save money on our household bills, many of us are not aware that food waste not only hits us in the pocket - costing the average household around £50 a month - but has a serious impact on the environment too.

Producing, distributing, storing and cooking food uses energy, fuel and water. Each of these emits greenhouse gases contributing to climate change.

For example, consider a pack of cheese. The resources that go into raising the cows, processing the milk, transporting the cheese, refrigeration, the fuel we use to drive to the

shop to buy it - all this to put it in the bin at the end of the week! In fact, in the UK we throw away the equivalent of more than three million slices of cheese a day!

If we stopped throwing this good food away it would save the equivalent of at least 17 million tonnes of carbon dioxide - the same as taking one in every five cars off our roads.

What we must remember, however, is that it's easy for us all to make a difference. Love Food Hate Waste, a UK-wide campaign launched in 2007 to reduce the amount of food waste produced, has provided a number of great solutions to help us reduce the amount of food we throw away.

For more information on how to help care for the environment by wasting less food, visit www.ni.lovefoodhatewaste.com

Useful tips include:

- Planning is everything. Think ahead to what the week has in store - look in the fridge, freezer and cupboard, make a simple list so you only buy what you need and make the most of what you have.
- Make the most of your fruit and veg. Apples last even longer when you keep them in the fridge - up to two weeks longer if loosely wrapped. And if they've had a knock, try putting them in a crumble, a sauce or start the day with a smoothie.
- Did you know food can be frozen any time before the 'use by' date on the label? Then when you have an evening where you don't feel like cooking, take it out of the freezer, defrost and use within 24 hours.
- Ever thought of making the most of your potato peelings? Why not sprinkle with salt, pepper, chilli or whatever flavour takes your fancy and pop them in the oven. Free crisps the kids will love!

Food manufacturers can help Share the load

A project which helps to divert food from landfill and support disadvantaged communities is calling on food manufacturers and producers across the North West to show their support for the campaign.

FareShare has gone from strength to strength since it was established in 1994 and soon had 17 depots across England, Scotland and Wales. In 2010 the Council for the Homeless NI decided it was time to bring the model to Northern Ireland and it is proving to be a major success.

The organisation collects fit-for-purpose food from a range of food donors and re-distributes it to voluntary, community and faith organisations, working with people who are in food poverty to relieve financial hardship and thereby diverting food waste from landfill. In the last three months alone FareShare has diverted 15,860 kilos of food from landfill, which equates to 37,755 average meals.

Currently headquartered in Belfast, FareShare delivers to 58 Community Food Members (CFMs) and is seeking to expand its operations to benefit CFMs throughout Northern Ireland. The recent purchase of a

freezer van has helped the group deliver food to areas outside Belfast, including the North West. Deliveries to organisations providing meals to vulnerable people based in the North West started on 20th September 2012.

Meabh Austin, FareShare IOI Development Officer, said:

"It is great to be part of such a fantastic and worthwhile project as FareShare, which has countless benefits from an environmental, socially responsible and ethical point of view.

"We are growing from strength to strength in terms of our volunteer base and the range and number of organisations we are assisting is increasing throughout Northern Ireland. The continued success, however, of our operation largely depends on funding and the support of the food industry.

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank our current donors and invite other food manufacturers/producers to contact us and become involved. In short, no good food should be wasted. FareShare offers an entirely ethical way to make good use of fit-for-purpose food surpluses whilst simultaneously tackling food poverty."



Above and below: Food is collected at FareShare depots



For more information about FareShare, call 02890 246440 or email meabh.austin@fareshare-ioi.eu



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Thought #11

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