

Waste Community of Practice Virtual Meeting via ZOOM

Monday 9th Oct 2017

Tackling Contamination

Constant engagement and education required

Sustainability Champions 'audit'

Bins co-located

Make staff and students aware that contamination is an issue and what happens if the bins are contaminated – increasing awareness

People think they 'know' what goes into mixed recycling

Review of replacement bins, residual bins next to each DMR

Good branded signage- common items crop up in the waste stream so stickers designed with images but signs do get dirty and need reprinting

Different recycling at home and work, different local authorities have different recycling options

Waste options in Northern Ireland – separate not mixed recycling, coffee cups biggest current contamination issue

Feedback on performance – posters highlighting % recycled etc

Pop up banners / roadshows in areas with high footfall

Measuring contamination – annual waste compositional analysis and Green Impact students conduct audits of internal bins

Food Compostable Packaging

Looks like plastic but isn't so it confuses people

Some AD plants don't accept compostable material

Message confusing as people think its waste / contamination

Not using plastic to produce product but that is a different message

Food waste – AD – depackaging process – waste incineration – EFW

Very few in-vessel composting facilities in UK

Washing crockery requires a person to be employed, another cost for the University

Culture of single use items

Reuse of old uniforms/clothing items after rebranding

Most clothing items / uniforms with old logos are thrown away

Pick off labels but hard work, time and labour intensive

Charities reluctant to collect (uniforms are a tax benefit) and Universities would prefer their branded clothing to not be resold

Old uniforms kept as a spare

Uniforms back into the supply chain

Sports kits sent to projects in developing world

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Ethical implications of second hand textiles in developing world include potential eroding of local market and erosion of local identity and/or traditional dress

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016718515001529>

Necessary to focus on branding and design at the start of the process prompting the producer to think how the logos are attached and how to remove them later

HFE small scale in comparison to retail

How are the Procurement departments tackling this issue?

All waste to stay where it produced until it is in a form that turns it into a resource

Logos cut out and material sent to local craft places and scrapstores – only really feasible on a small scale

Staff and Student Behaviour Change

NTU working with waste contractor and cleaning staff to empower them to engage with building users

Reluctance of staff to change certain routines / procedures

Green Impact helps – ideally achieving Bronze Award by all schools / departments and therefore meaning all basic criteria would help given the importance by the University and staff

Key people can be problematic

Sandwich packaging – ‘recyclable’ words on packet and ‘on pack labelling’ are confusing as labels on product differ to the onsite signage

Recycled and recyclable confuse the public

Essentially comes down to what the contractor does and does not accept

Signage saying clean recyclables and non recyclable. If it cannot be washed out it goes in the other bin but this could lead to an increase in non recycling so the message needs to be clear and easy to follow

AOB

Food waste in student accommodation kitchens

If the system is to be introduced, do the whole building at the same time

Recycling clean stuff from labs – H&S concerns due to potential contamination. Often unnecessary to send all lab equipment to high temp incineration

Biological Safety Officers involved and there is pay for lab training available

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<https://www.stem.org.uk/cpd/ondemand/353719/introducing-lab-equipment-sustainability>

Format of group meetings

First Virtual Community of Practice overall successful

Comments included preparation in advance with questions may be useful and the group would be interested in presentations and sharing evidence during future meetings

Next virtual meeting to take place in January 2018, date to be confirmed

Potential agenda items include

Lab recycling project – Paul Monk

Waste experts from the industry to present on contamination, concerns and waste cycle

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