

TACKLING PUBLIC CONFUSION ABOUT RECYCLING

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BACKGROUND



letsrecycle.com

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Wood Waste Recycling

by Graham Sloan

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RECYCLING CHAOS Brits are confused about which bin to use for their recycling – as just 54 per cent of Londoners recycle all they can

The news comes as London is the worst performing city in terms of people recycling

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PREMIUM

Exclusive Homeowners risk 'wasting their time' recycling because of confusion over what can be recycled

people are confused

Recycling

23 SEPTEMBER 2017

Vindor research points to recycling 'confusion'

Research carried out on behalf of waste management company Vindor shows that the public are still confused when it comes to recycling, and many are in favour of a 'standardised' system.

Vindor today (23 September) launches the 2017 edition of its UK Recycling Index which the company said will shed new light on the UK's attitudes to recycling, against the backdrop of declining recycling rates.

According to Vindor, the Index highlights "public frustration in product labelling and recycling collection systems, as well as a lack of confidence in those perceived to be responsible for recycling."

"It also focuses growing concern about the negative consequences should recycling levels continue to fall," the company said.

Confusion: According to Vindor, the research shows that there is 'confusion' at a product level, with very few consumers finding recycling labelling on product packaging easy to understand. Of those surveyed, only half (49%) find it easy to tell whether black plastic food trays or disposable coffee cups are easy to recycle.

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the guardian

British consumers admit confusion over recycling

Plastic wrapping, mobile phones and disposable coffee cups top the list of items people are uncertain about, poll finds

Recycling sack

British consumers admit that they are confused about exactly what household waste they can recycle, a new poll reveals, with plastic wrapping, mobile phones and disposable coffee cups at the top of their list.

Frustrated by what they can and can't recycle, 63% of householders are puzzled that different councils collect waste in different ways - for example, using different colour bins - while 43% say they are not sure which days to put their bins out.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) said they would welcome more transparency about what happens to their waste, according to the survey of 1,500 adults, by waste management company Vindor. It found there was generally low public trust in local authorities which oversee collection facilities.

Dan Cooke, director of external affairs at Vindor, said: "People across the UK want to recycle more, and recognise the importance of doing so, but they need better guidance and support to ensure the rules are clear in the first place."

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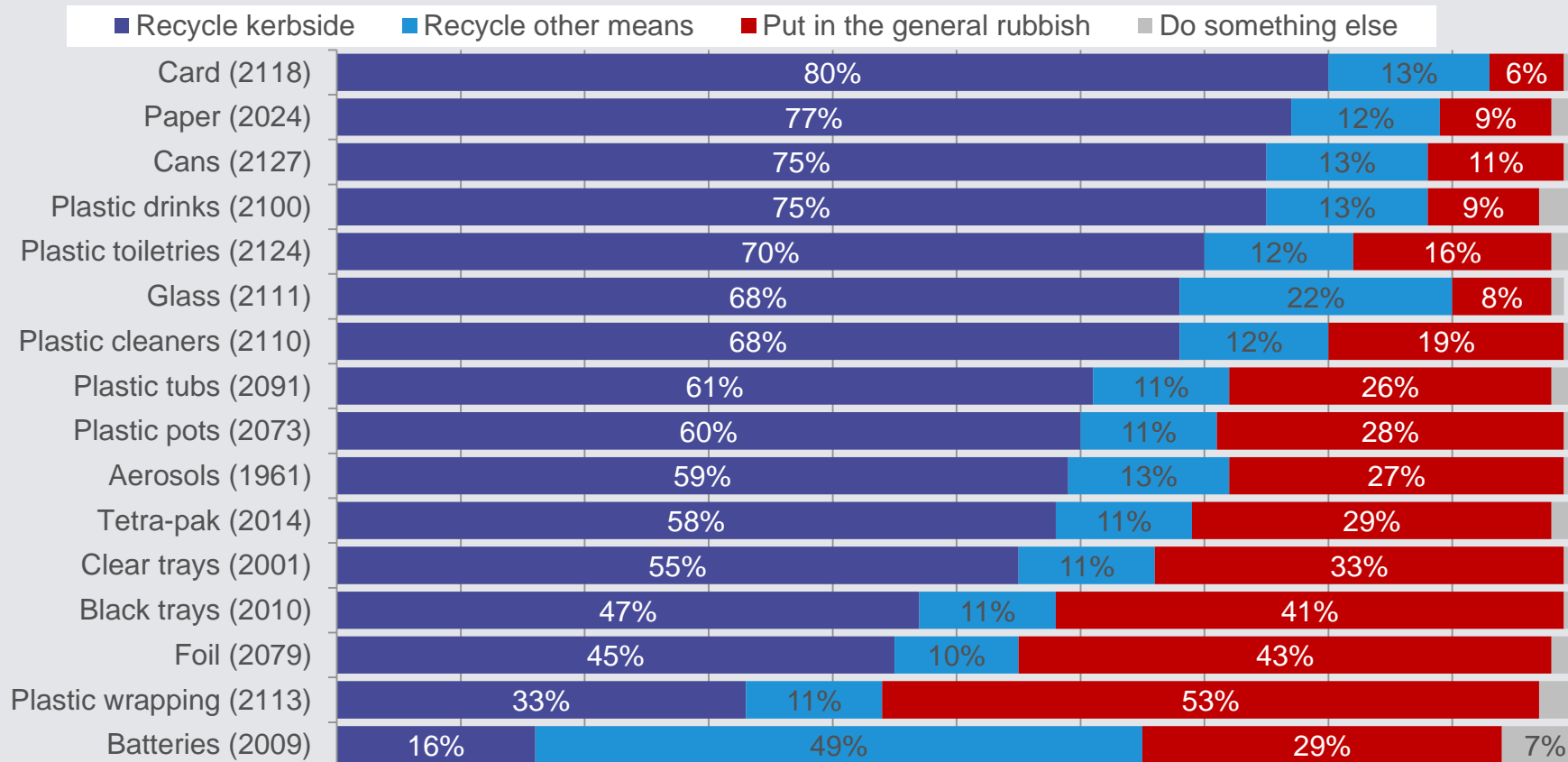
RECYCLING TRACKER



- Annual survey of UK households designed to gather evidence on consumer's current attitudes, knowledge and behaviour in relation to recycling
- Insights can inform delivery and progress of behavioural indicators can be tracked
- Survey is delivered to an online survey panel of 2 million people. In 2017 4000 responses were received providing a representative sample.
- Recipients answers are tracked against the LARSU database and are relevant to the collection schemes in their local areas (<http://larsu.wrap.org.uk>)



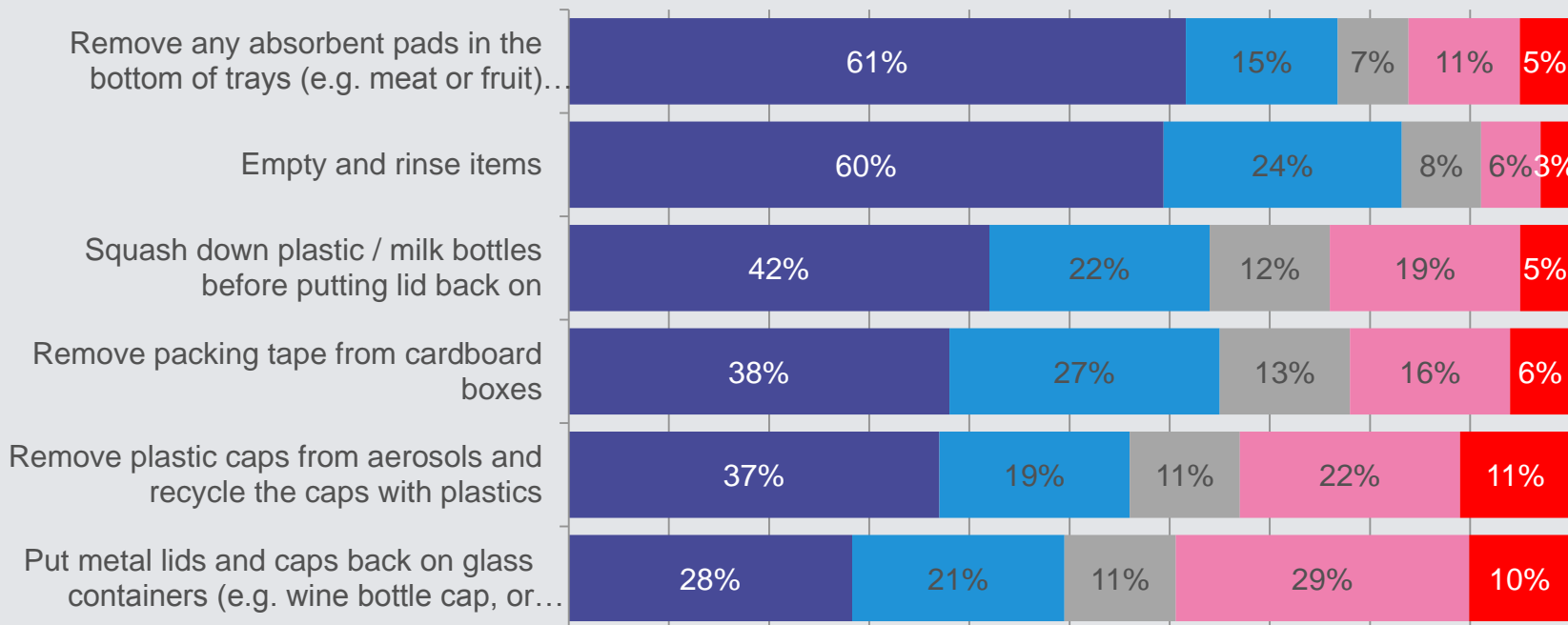
For each of the items on the list please indicate how your household last disposed of them?

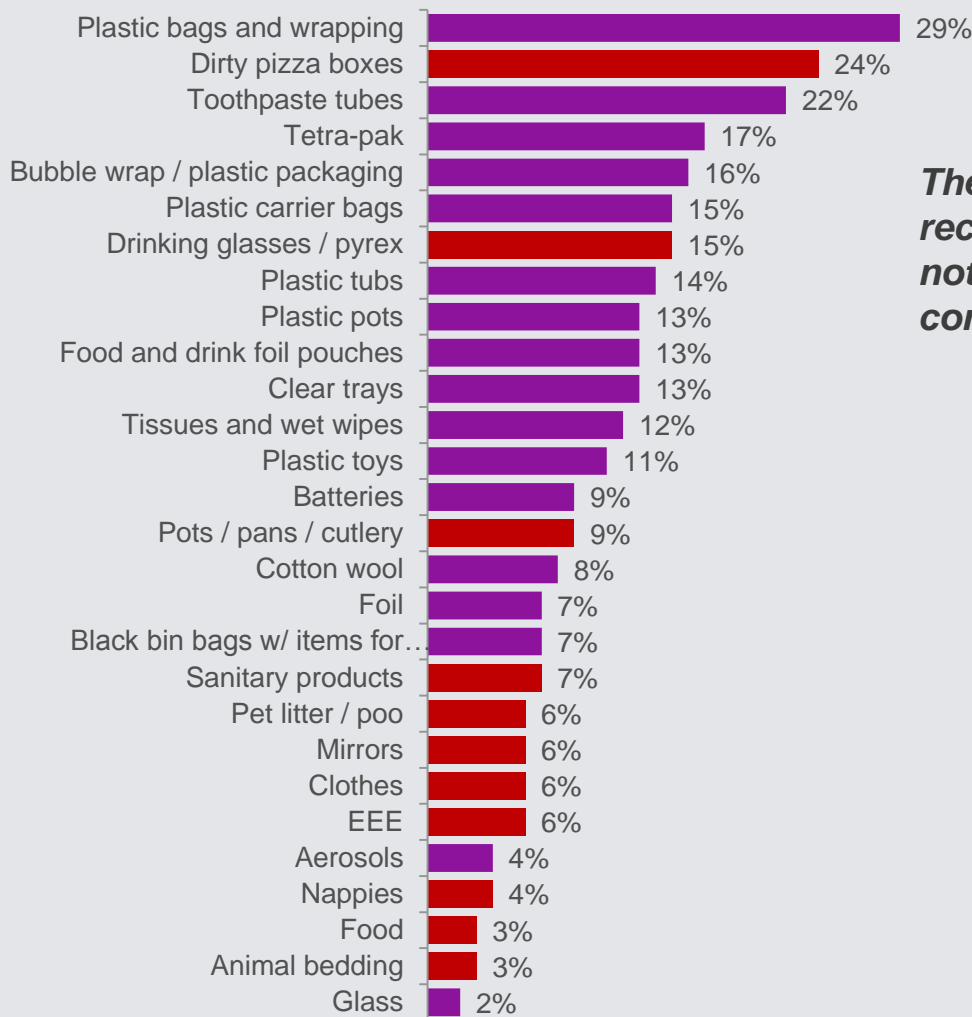


When setting out your recycling, how often do you do each of the following?



■ All the time
 ■ Some of the time
 ■ Rarely
 ■ Never
 ■ I don't think you need to do this in my council area

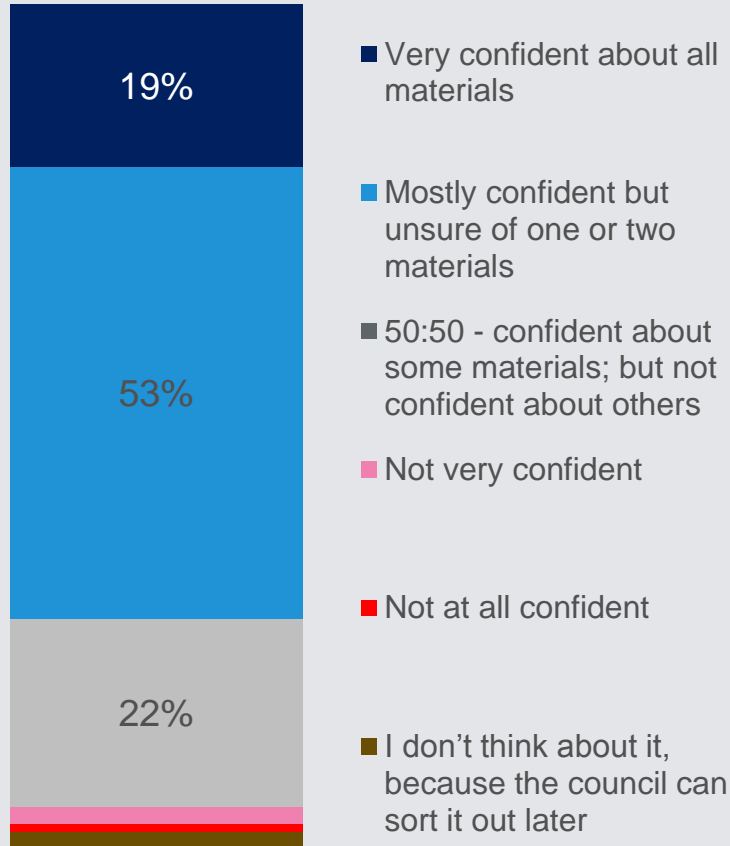




The graph shows the % of households who recycled items when their local service does not accept them. Red represents “serious” contaminants:

Only 23% did not contaminate at all

Q6 - Overall, how confident are you about which materials can be put in the recycling collection and which cannot?



THE FRAMEWORK FOR GREATER CONSISTENCY



- Collaboration with Government and industry to develop a framework for consistency
- A systems approach requiring collective action and responsibility across the whole supply chain

AIM	BENEFITS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tackle falling recycling rates• Deal with issues around quality• Engender behaviour change• Rationalise the number of collection systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build on current progress• Increase recycling capture and quality• Financial benefits• Build partnerships• Build a better recycling community

THE FRAMEWORK FOR GREATER CONSISTENCY



THE FRAMEWORK FOR GREATER CONSISTENCY



LOCAL AUTHORITY BUSINESS CASES

- 7 partnerships supported as pilots during 16/17

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/collections-and-reprocessing/collections-and-sorting/kerbside-collection/consistency/reports/consistency-pilots-summary>

- 50 LAs supported this year

AIM FOR 2025

- Clearly labelled packaging
- Packaging that is recyclable where practical and environmentally beneficial
- Every household to be able to recycle a common set of dry recyclables and food waste collected in one of three different ways
- Introduce a common container colour system

RECYCLING GUIDELINES



OBJECTIVE:

- Achieve greater consistency in household recycling
- Reduce confusion over what can and can't be recycled
- Reduce confusion over how items should be presented for collection

IMPACTS:

- Improve quality of material
- Increase recycling
- Reduce costs

The image shows the cover of a document titled 'Recycling Guidelines'. At the top right is the 'wrap' logo. Below it, the title 'Recycling Guidelines' is written in a bold, dark blue font. Underneath the title is a paragraph of text: 'National agreement from the recycling industry on what can and cannot be collected for recycling from householders and how those materials should be presented for collection to:'. This is followed by a list of four bullet points, each with a checkmark icon: 'Increase consistency in household recycling across the nation', 'Reduce confusion for householders', 'Improve material quality', and 'Save money'. Below the text is a photograph of various household cleaning and personal care products on a tiled shelf. The products include a red and blue bottle of 'Shampoo', a blue bottle of 'Hand Soap', a pink tube of 'Toothpaste', a blue box of 'Toothpaste', a blue spray bottle of 'Glass Cleaner', and an orange spray bottle of 'All Purpose Cleaner'. At the bottom left of the document cover, the text 'May 2017 - Version 1.6' is visible.

RECYCLING GUIDLINES



DEVELOPMENT

- Developed through consultation with reprocessors, waste management companies and local government.
- Consumer tested on 14 groups of participants all with joint or sole responsibility for recycling in the home.



OUTCOMES

- Findings incorporated into Recycle Now materials
- Work with OPRL to develop consistent messaging on labelling



COMMUNICATIONS



- Avoid information overload
- Focus on items where missed capture is common
- People need a cue to read the information
- Provide information on how residents can dispose of items not collected at the kerbside
- Think about the language and terminology used
- Explain why items can't be recycled

I like that “Why is that” section because I didn’t understand some of the stuff down the “No thanks” list.

F, 35-54, acknowledged uncertainty, Yate

That one [“paper is one of the useful things to recycle”], I would not learn anything from that, it’s just a general sort of comment which everyone knows.

F, 55+, high confidence, Norwich

COMMUNICATIONS



Be clear. Keep it simple.

Communicating recycling guidance is a tricky business. Providing too much information will overwhelm your residents. Using the words 'new' or 'updated' will help engage them.

Here are some of our research findings:

Don't vs. do

Most householders learned more about things that could **not** be recycled.

6%

of residents did not know that sanitary items such as **nappies** were **not** collected for recycling.

Up to 94%

of residents learned something new when reading the guidelines.

Satisfaction matters

The more highly residents rate their recycling service, the more likely they are to adopt the correct behaviour.

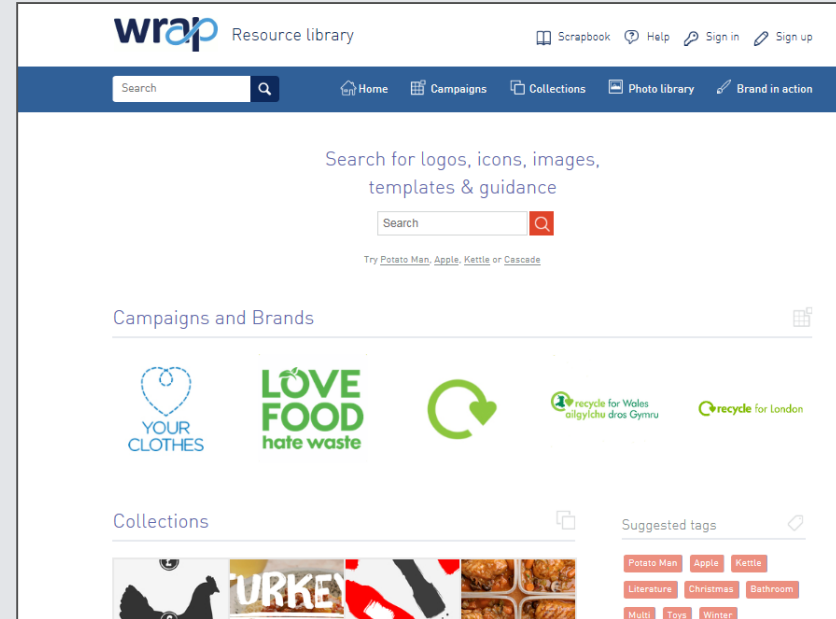
Proactive recycling

Younger residents (aged 18-34) were more likely to learn something that could be recycled.



RECYCLE NOW

- Recycle Now - used by 90% of English local authorities
- Based on robust customer insights and developed to motivate target population segments
- Free resources with the opportunity to localise
- Trialled and consumer tested communication templates
- New resources in development using normative messaging to promote recycling at key moments in consumer's lives
- www.partners.wrap.org.uk



BIN COLOUR CONSULTATION



- Consultation on a national colour scheme for waste and recycling containers
- Action point from The Framework for Greater Consistency Action Plan
- Advantages and disadvantages of adopting a national colour scheme
- Costs and timescales of roll out
- Response to industry feedback
- Results expected to be published later this month



SUMMARY



- Tracker results suggest there is a level of confusion which may be impacting upon recycling performance
- Confusion exists around what can be recycled and how it should be presented for collection
- The Framework for Greater Consistency is a collaborative approach across the whole supply chain to improve the capture and quality of recycling material
- Adopting the Recycling Guidelines can help to achieve greater consistency across household recycling and reduce confusion amongst residents
- Communications should be clear and simple and it is good to explain why items cannot be recycled
- WRAP's resource library provides free resources that can help to boost the performance of your communication with residents
- Everyone has their part to play to increase recycling

QUESTIONS



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www.wrap.org.uk/collections-and-reprocessing/consistency