

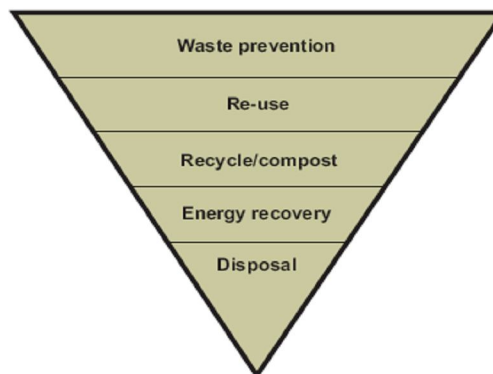
Waste Prevention and Environmental Behaviours in Essex

BACKGROUND

Essex County Council (ECC) commissioned M·E·L Research to assist in a strategically important new avenue of waste prevention research. The aim of the research was to gather information on residents' environmental behaviours with regards to undertaking waste prevention and other environmental related activities such as reducing residual waste through home composting and reuse.

The objectives were to:

- ◆ Identify what motivates Essex residents to participate in activities or adopt behaviour which impacts positively on the environment
- ◆ Identify what barriers prevent or deter residents from participating in activities or adopt behaviour which impacts positively on the environment
- ◆ Provide information and intelligence to inform future campaigns and initiatives.



METHODOLOGY

Overall 1,100 face-to-face questionnaires were completed, representative of the county by ACORN, number of people per household, kerbside collection schemes and distance from Recycling Centres for Household Waste (RCHW)/voluntary reuse centres. A team of M·E·L surveyors were briefed and deployed to carry out the research.



OUTCOMES

The majority of residents were keen to reduce residual waste but there were several factors such as the kerbside scheme in place, household size, age and house type that affected to what extent their waste is reduced.

Almost a fifth of residents were committed to reducing food waste. The results found that household size, age and kerbside food waste collections had a part to play in how committed residents are. For instance single occupancy households were more likely to be committed to reducing food waste.

There was a good market for unwanted reusable furniture or bulky household items with RCHWs and council collections often used. The results were used as a baseline to measure the success of future waste prevention initiatives.

TESTIMONIAL

"The work undertaken by M·E·L Research has provided an invaluable means to measure future waste prevention activity against and also provided valuable intelligence when targeting promotional activities to key audiences, in order to use our resources more effectively".

Emma Cocksedge, Recycling Officer, Essex County Council

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