

Evaluating the success of local *Love Food Hate Waste* Campaigns

1. Introduction

“A quarter of the food we buy in the UK gets thrown away at a cost of £480 for the average household”

Encouraging households to change their behaviour and cut down on food waste not only saves consumers money, but it also:



- ◆ saves local authorities money in avoided collection, treatment and disposal costs
- ◆ contributes to achieving the reductions in biodegradable waste going to landfill that local authorities are required to make under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS); and
- ◆ helps achieve the cross-governmental strategic priority of reducing the UK's carbon footprint.

To deliver these benefits WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) runs the Love Food Hate Waste (LFHW) campaign which provides simple tips and tools to help consumers waste less food. As part of this, WRAP funds local authorities and waste partnerships across the country to undertake local Love Food Hate Waste communications campaigns. To date 18 local campaigns have received funding and many more have received in-kind support. The specialist research and evaluation consultancy practice M-E-L Research has been commissioned to evaluate the success of the funded local LFHW campaigns. To date five of those evaluations have been completed. A further seven have had pre-campaign evaluations completed and are awaiting post-campaigns to be carried out.

2. Methods

Each local campaign evaluation focuses on measuring the extent of knowledge, attitudinal and self-reported behavioural change and consists of:

- ◆ 1,100 face to face interviews pre and post campaign
- ◆ representative sample of households by household size, ACORN and local authority
- ◆ fieldwork undertaken by M-E-L's field team which specialises in the measurement of public attitudes and behaviour on waste management and low carbon issues.

One of the key ways of measuring impact has been the development by WRAP of a metric which reflects several dimensions of food waste attitudes and behaviour. Known as the Committed Food Waste Reducer (CFWR) metric, consumers qualify if they state they are very bothered about food waste, they claim to generate hardly any or no food waste, and they make a great deal of effort to reduce the amounts generated. This metric is currently being reviewed by WRAP but still forms the basis of the evaluation of local campaigns.

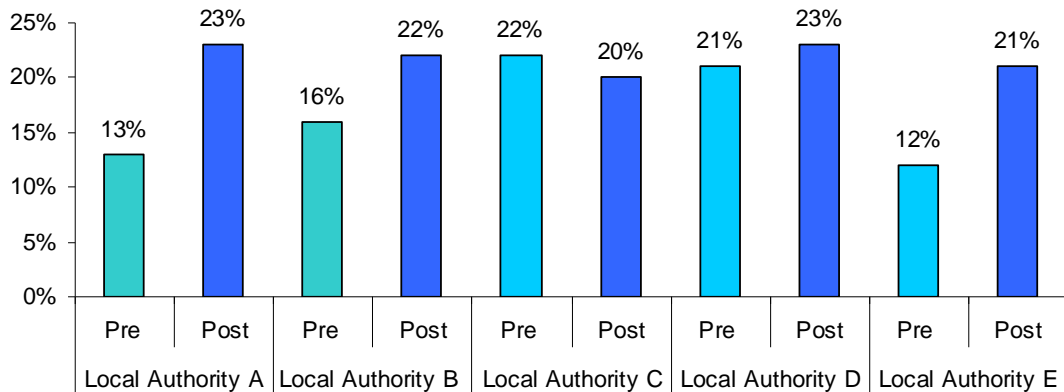
3. Results

The effectiveness of the LFHW campaign is evaluated in several ways. For example

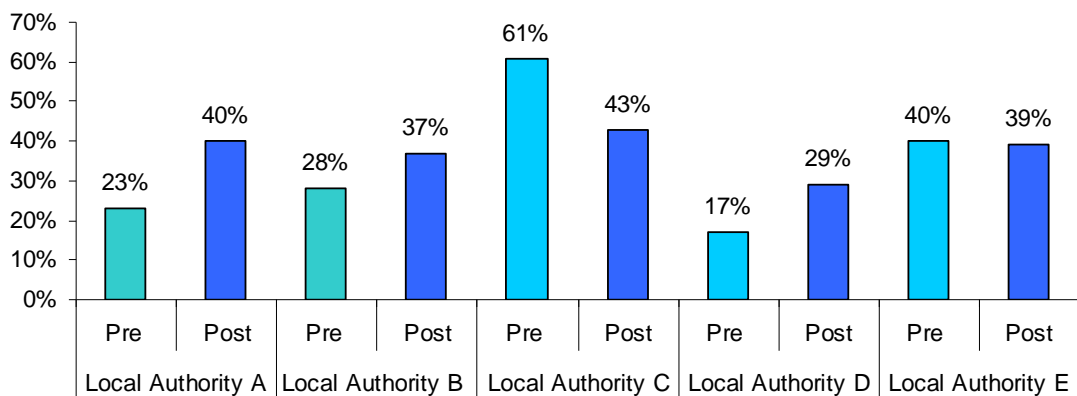
- 1) measuring the change in the prevalence of CFWRs pre and post campaign
- 2) testing respondent recall of campaigns, promotions and advertising about food waste pre and post campaign

- 3) evaluating attitudes, knowledge and food waste behaviours and how they have changed pre and post campaign.

Proportion of Committed Food Waste Reducers



Proportion of respondents who recall seeing a campaign about food waste in the last 12 months



4. Conclusion

The evaluation is still in progress but some interesting results have emerged from the LFHW evaluations so far. Whilst we are starting to see some positive results in terms of increases in the proportion of CFWRs and awareness of the LFHW campaign, it is clear that changing consumer food waste behaviour will be a substantial and much longer term project. In the case of Local Authority C, where there has been a decline in some of the headline results, it will be important to undertake some further exploratory work and to look at other factors which may have influenced these results.

There is also a case to be made for broadening out the target audience for the LFHW campaign to start to tackle those residents who are less committed to food waste reduction. In the work carried out so far, the less committed have tended to be younger people, people living in larger households and those classified as ACORN 5 ('hard-pressed') – although each local authority is different.

Finally, the results have shown that other factors such as the economic climate have also played a significant role in encouraging food waste reduction. This reinforces the need for WRAP to continue to promote the financial benefits, in addition to the environmental benefits, of reducing food waste to consumers across the UK.

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