



West Coast Forum Webinar

# Waste Prevention: A UK consumer perspective

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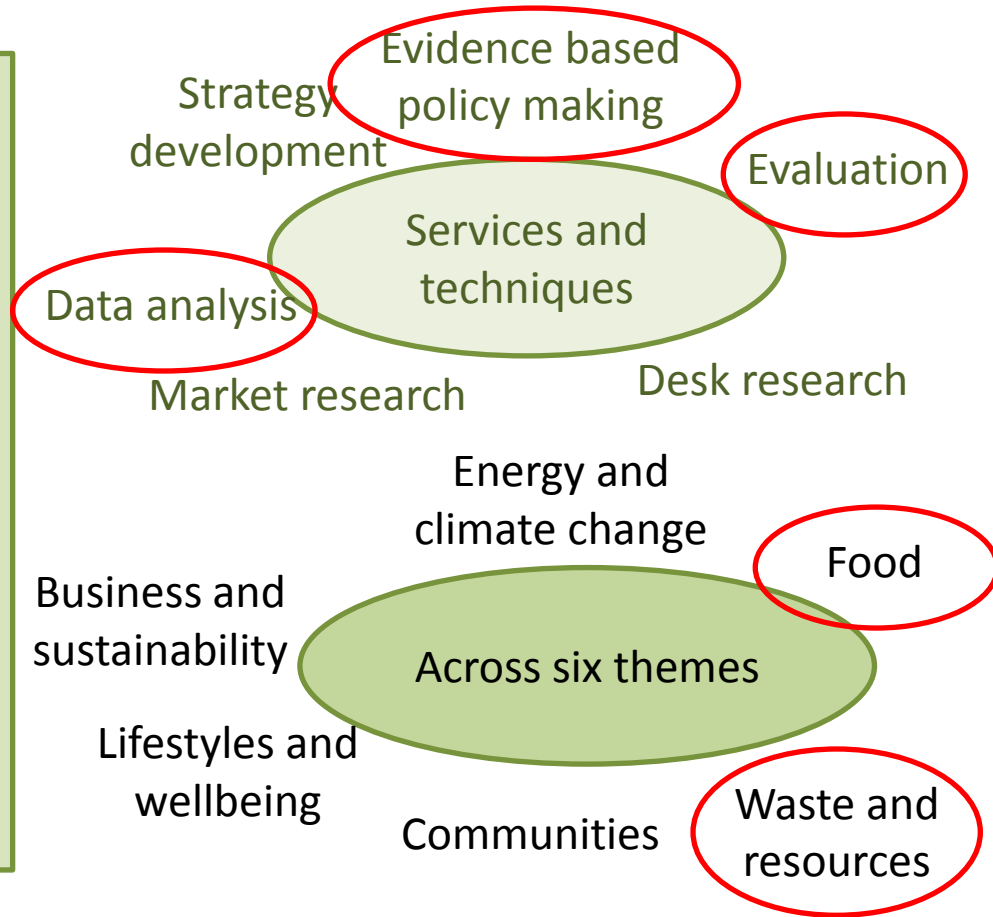
# Who is Brook Lyndhurst?



**BROOKLYNDHURST**

[www.brooklyndhurst.co.uk](http://www.brooklyndhurst.co.uk)

Niche research and strategy consultancy working on sustainability and behaviour change



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# Presentation structure

- EU and England context
- Findings from our household waste prevention synthesis
- Interim findings from our evaluation of the Reward and Recognition Fund
- Concluding remarks

# Context: Waste prevention in the EU



## Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)

→ Required EU Member States to establish waste prevention programmes by December 2013



### Individual programmes need to:

- Set out objectives which break the link between economic growth and the environmental impacts of waste
- Describe and evaluate existing waste prevention measures
- Determine appropriate specific qualitative and quantitative benchmarks for measures and it *may* determine specific targets and indicators

# Context: England's waste prevention programme

"Prevention is better than cure."

"Government's role must be to get out of people's hair; to set the conditions and guidelines that allow the market, businesses, local authorities and people to make the changes that will propel us towards a more circular and sustainable economy."

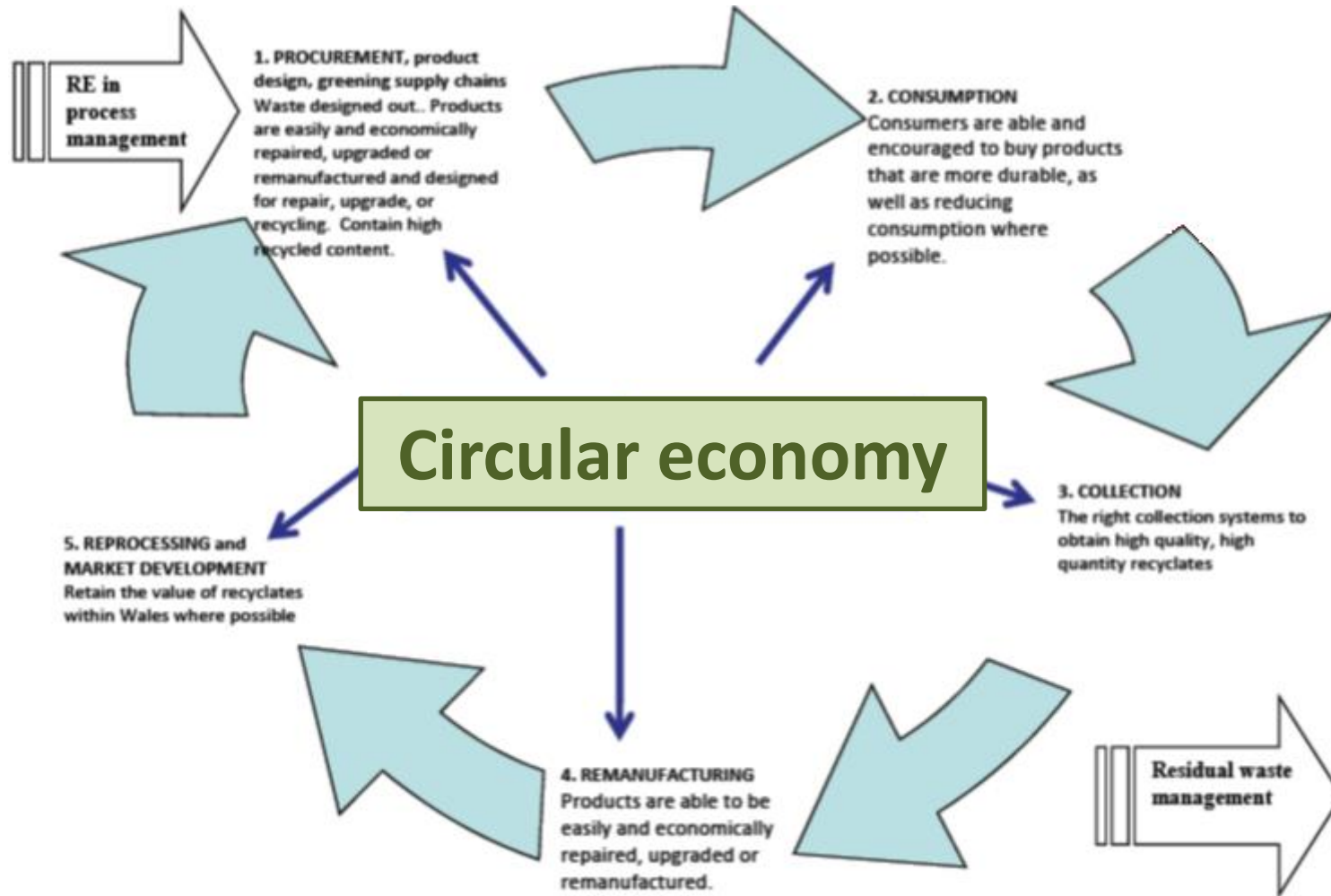
## Key actions planned:

- Sustainable Electricals Action Plan – design for longer and increased technical durability
- Technology Strategy Board's (TSB) investment of up to £5 (\$8.2) million in collaborative research and development and an innovative design challenge £1.5 (\$2.46) million
- Raising awareness of resource efficient business models and supply chain innovations through a £900,000 (\$1.48 million) programme of Action Based Research pilots of take back schemes and leasing/hiring schemes
- £800,000 (\$1.31 million) to support communities to take forward innovative waste prevention, reuse and repair actions
- Residential postcode locator for reuse/repair services
- Developing a standard for reuse – quality assured
- Continuing the £1.5 (\$2.46) million waste prevention loan fund to develop innovative, more resource efficient ways of doing business
- 5p charge on single use plastic carrier bags
- Exploring Individual Producer Responsibility

Source: HM Government (2013). Prevention is better than cure: The role of waste prevention in moving to a more resource efficient economy.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/265022/pb14091-waste-prevention-20131211.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/265022/pb14091-waste-prevention-20131211.pdf)

# Context: England's waste prevention programme



Source: <http://www.wrap.org.uk/>

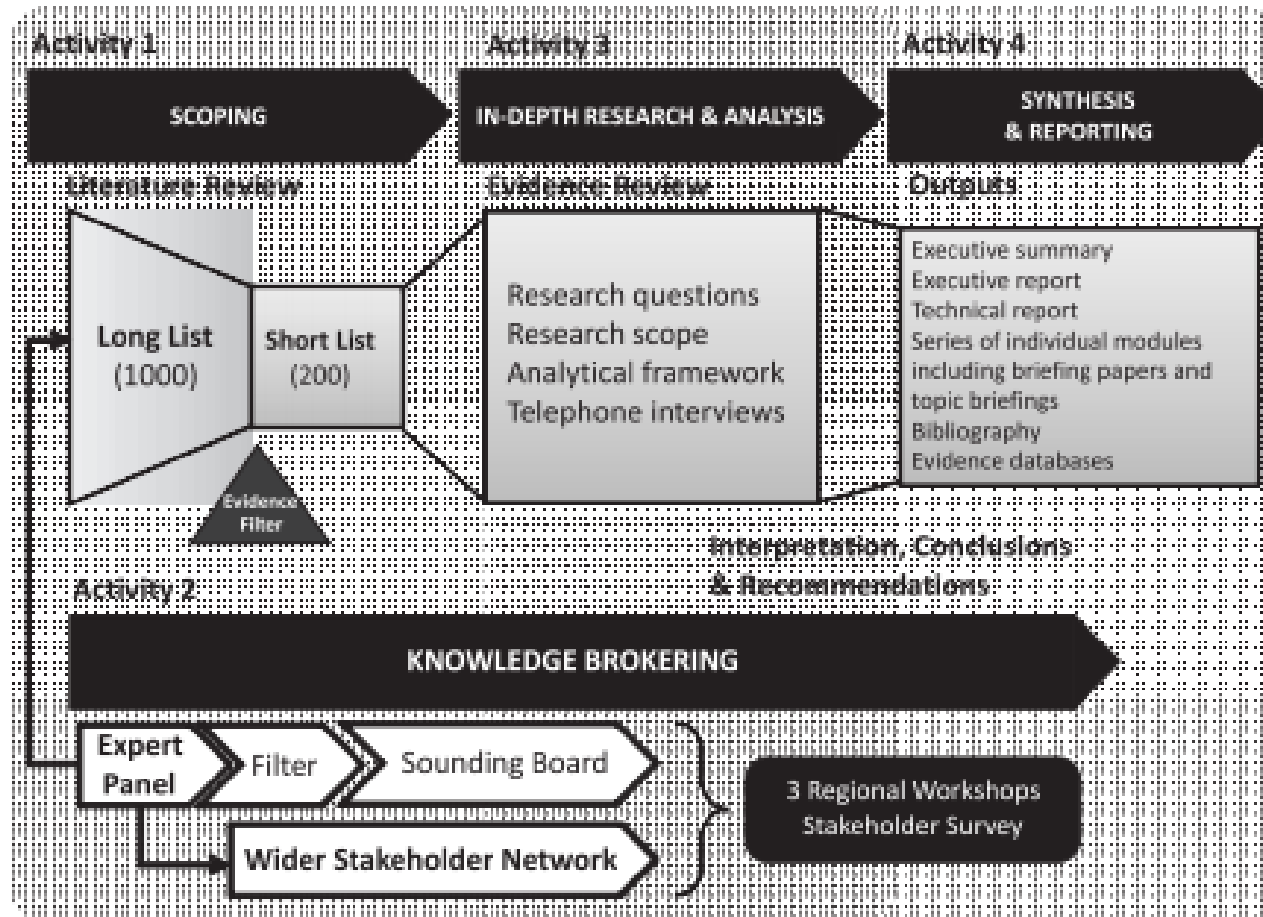
## Context: Consumers in England's waste prevention programme – some key facts

- **£700 (\$1,150)** = estimated amount an average family could save per year by taking a series of simple steps to avoid food waste, such as meal planning and using leftovers.
- **£320 (\$530)** = estimated value of unused electrical gadgets in UK homes
- **£4,000 (\$6,570)** = value of clothes in average UK household, 30% of which haven't been worn for at least a year
- **23** = percentage of electronic equipment taken to Household Waste Recycling Centres which still works

Source: HM Government (2013). Prevention is better than cure: The role of waste prevention in moving to a more resource efficient economy.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/265022/pb14091-waste-prevention-20131211.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/265022/pb14091-waste-prevention-20131211.pdf)

# Household waste prevention review: Methodology





# Household waste prevention review: Definition

Avoidance

Reduction

Reuse

Recycling

Waste Prevention

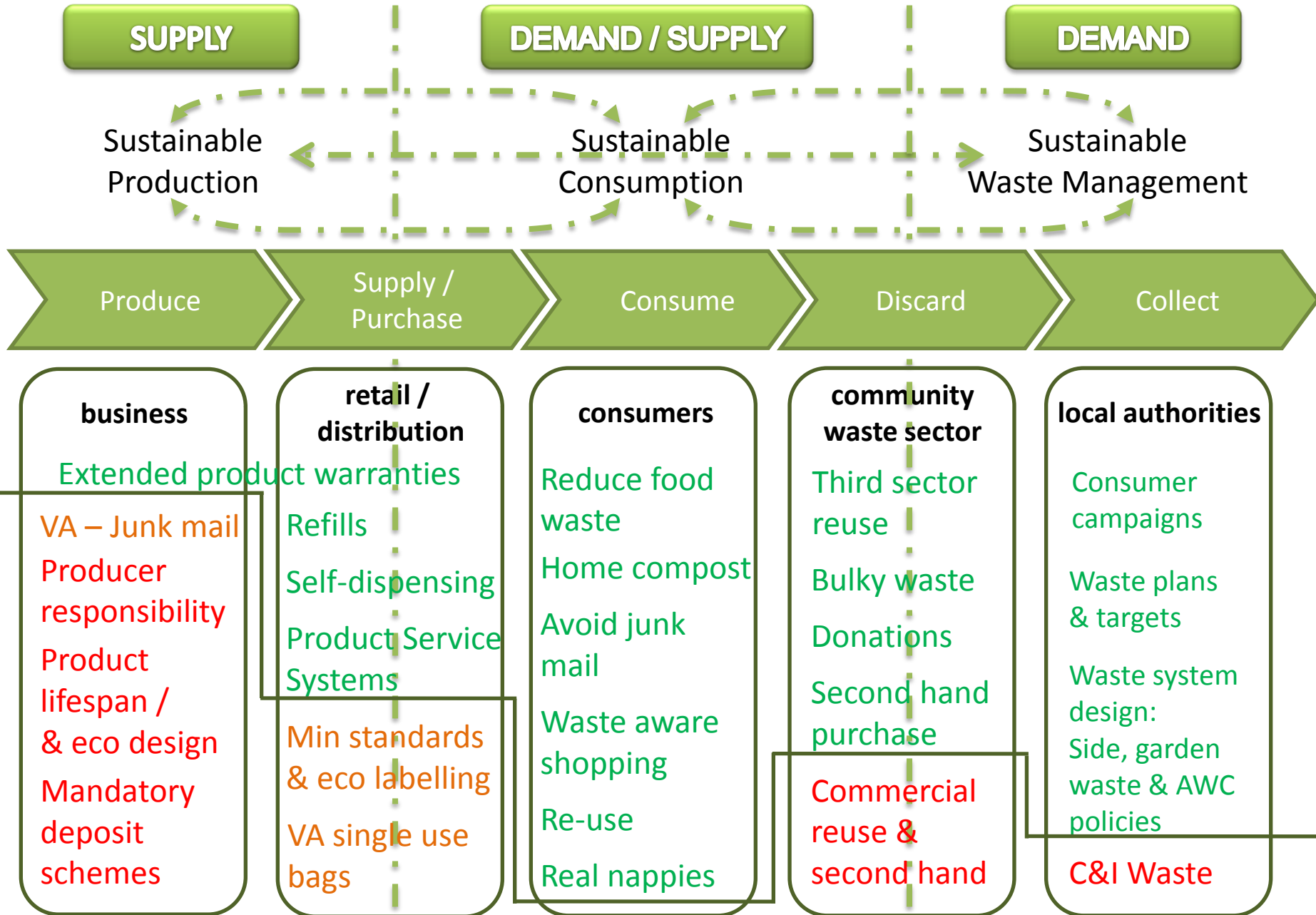
Incineration

Waste Minimisation

# Household waste prevention review: Research questions

1. What is the extent to which waste prevention behaviours are practised?
2. What are the barriers and opportunities to encourage participation?
3. What are the options available to householders?
4. What are the options for stakeholders?
5. What are the infrastructure considerations and technical solutions?
6. What is the impact of different policy options and measures on waste prevention?

# Household waste prevention review: Scope



# Household waste prevention review: Findings

Options available and incidence:

- No standard set of behaviours which is widely accepted as comprising 'household waste prevention'
- Not a singular act like recycling
- A private and invisible behaviour
- Behaviours are practised sometimes rather than always



*971,000 tonnes is the current reuse estimate for consumer items*

Waste prevention activity	Incidence
Home composting	14-35%
Avoiding packaging	10-40%
Committed to preventing food waste	14%
Use own shopping bag	10-55%
Avoiding junk mail	15%
Buying second hand	2-69%

# Household waste prevention review: Findings



# Household waste prevention review: Findings

- Motivations tend to be different from recycling (though donation may be similar)
  - Waste prevention behaviours are poorly correlated with recycling and are some times even negatively correlated
  - Dominance of the recycling norm is so strong that often people's understanding of recycling is equivalent to 'reducing waste'
- Behaviour cannot be predicted from environmental attitudes
- Wider values – e.g. 'universalism' – may be important
- But much is 'irrational' – high % of variance in models remains unexplained
- Cannot be assumed that prevention is the next 'natural step' from recycling

# Household waste prevention review: Findings

## Two main approaches

- Door-stepping and providing information packs and advice (incl. specific tips), targeted at all households in a defined area
- Volunteer household campaigns/projects where individuals sign up to be part of a group receiving a package of advice, challenge activities and hands-on support

## Practice of behaviours

- No such thing as a waste prevention behaviour
- Broad hierarchy of waste prevention behaviours
  - Donation for reuse (clothes)
  - Private reuse behaviours
  - Avoidance or substitution of purchase
- Lack of understanding compounded by lack of visibility
- 0.5 to 1 kg household per week reduction from campaigns that target a mix of behaviours



# Household waste prevention review:

## Conclusions

- Need to create an integrated reuse system
  - Between waste, social services and housing providers at the local level
  - Between local authorities and third sector
  - Between service infrastructure and consumers/householders
- Most effective and most frequently applied household waste prevention policy measures include:
  - Prevention targets
  - Producer responsibility
  - Householder charging
  - Public sector funding for pilot projects
  - Collaboration between public, private and third sector organisations



**Example: Flanders is an exemplar of strategic level, integrated policy package for reuse, including per capita targets and favourable treatment on product taxes and employment subsidies.**



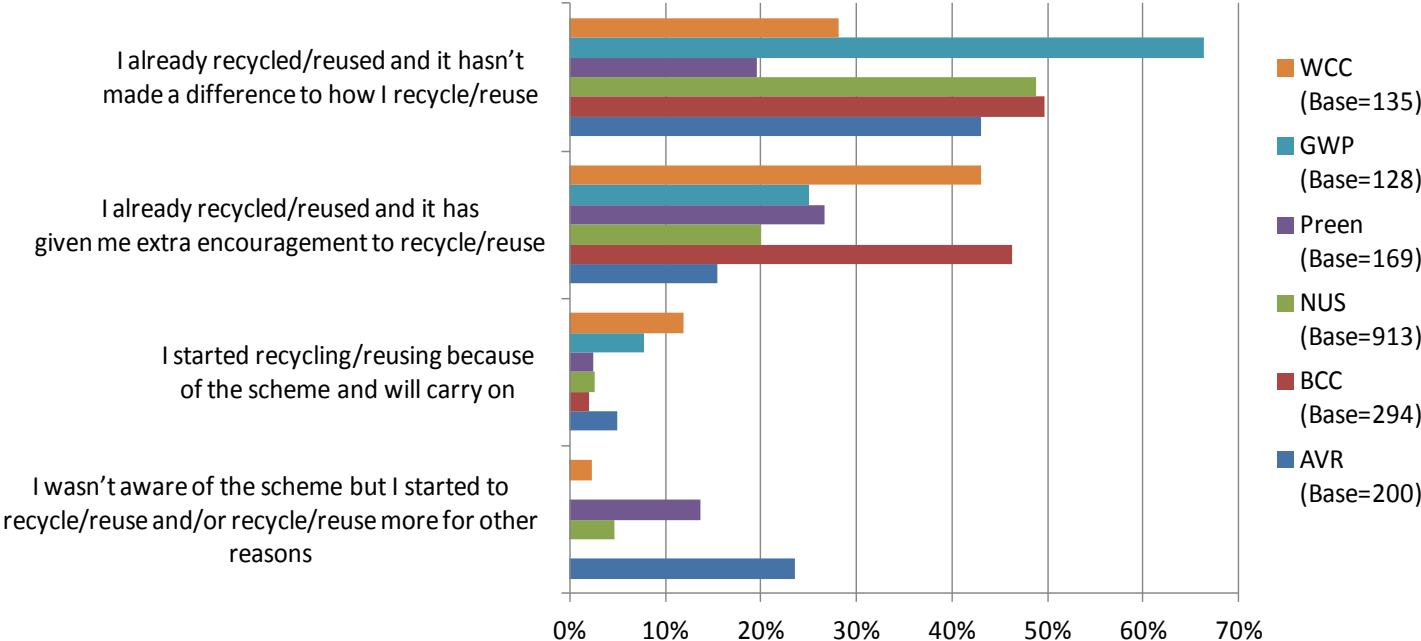
# Reward and recognition fund interim report: Scheme

- UK Government believes it is better to reward householders for doing the right thing with their waste than to penalise them for doing the wrong thing
- This scheme aims to investigate a range of approaches for rewarding and recognising people for adopting positive behaviours towards managing their waste
- Up to £2 (\$3.29) million was made available to local authorities and civil society organisations
- 28 schemes who all aim to engage and encourage people to recycle and reuse via individual prize draws, individual rewards, community rewards, recognition and feedback

# Reward and recognition fund interim report: Interim findings

- 15,000 households participated
- 11,300 individuals participated

**Top four answers: Which of the statements below best describes you and the Rewards and Recognition Scheme?**



# Reward and recognition fund interim report: Interim findings

- Net increase in recyclables and reuse items was 171.1 tonnes
  - 79.4 tonnes of recycling
  - 91.7 tonnes of reuse
- In five of the eight scheme areas an increase in recycling and reuse tonnages collected was observed – attribution to scheme and/or reward is not certain
- Control groups show similar trends in several cases



# Reward and recognition fund interim report: interim findings

- If certain preconditions are not place it is unlikely that an organisation or local authority would be able to implement a reward scheme that can demonstrate its success.
- The preconditions that ought to be considered are:
  - Stable, simple, easily accessible and effective service provision;
  - Clear information and strong communications tapping into different channels;
  - In-depth knowledge of target audience;
  - Tailored and regular recognition and feedback of service-use;
  - Ability to demonstrate impact and attribution of rewards; and
  - Tailored assessment and careful selection of reward delivery mechanism.

# Concluding remarks

- England Waste Prevention Programme goes some way in addressing some of the gaps highlighted in our Household Waste Prevention Review
- However, lack of data and poor quality data remain concerns
  - Lack of consistent estimates of extent of consumer behaviour for different activities
  - Tracking or longitudinal data
  - Size and character of waste prevention options in ‘real time’
  - Benchmarks – consumer, tonnage trends and carbon impacts

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**THANK YOU**

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