

re3 Communications plan

Version 2

11 May 2009

1. Introduction

re3 is a 25 year partnership between Bracknell Forest, Reading and Wokingham Borough Councils and Waste Recycling Group (WRG).

The purpose of re3 is to increase recycling and composting, whilst reducing the amount of waste in the three boroughs which goes to landfill. To do this re3 is redeveloping the Island Road Civic Amenity site in Reading into an integrated waste management park and the Longshot Lane site in Bracknell into a new household waste recycling centre and waste transfer station. The transfer stations are used to bulk different types of waste and deliver them for appropriate treatment. Re3 has facilities procured for the next 23 years to ensure composting, recycling and energy from waste and, in the final event, landfill where waste cannot be diverted.

This communications plan is designed to support the achievement of the objectives of the re3 Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy as well as the specific objectives of re3. It will also stress the importance of the re3 partnership and thus help ensure its sustainability.

It is also designed to contribute to maintaining and improving the reputation of the partners in the project. It will support:

- The three partner councils in maintaining and improving their reputation with residents and business through efficient delivery of services
- The re3 partnership in being seen as an example of good practice in delivering a successful Private Finance Initiative, particularly in the current harsh economic climate
- Waste Recycling Group in being seen as a waste management company which provides a range of cost and environmentally effective processing, recycling, disposal and energy recovery services for local authority and private commercial customers.

2. Communications objectives

- Demonstrate that re3 is a highly-successful partnership between the three councils and WRG
- Ensure that the contribution and role of the partners is clearly evident in all re3 communications
- Maximise understanding and recognition of the re3 partnership amongst all key stakeholders and opinion formers
- Achieve the highest possible profile and recognition for re3 as a pioneering partnership
- Make the most of the 2009 programme of events in generating positive coverage and increasing re3's profile and reputation
- Maximise awareness of re3 with leading waste management and recycling organisations
- Position re3 positively in the context of world, national and local waste management and recycling issues, including falling waste collection and recycling levels
- Share best practice and expertise with other councils
- Promote waste minimisation across the three boroughs and encourage recycling and composting, making use of the new re3 facilities
- Promote the three boroughs' current recycling messages and existing kerbside collection and recycling facilities
- Ensure partner employees understand the successes and benefits of the re3 project and act as ambassadors for it
- Ensure senior managers and elected members in the partner councils have the information and tools that they need to promote re3 to external audiences
- Support WRG in demonstrating its effectiveness as a partner for local authorities.

3. Target audiences

- Local residents
- Hard-to-reach groups identified by the three councils
- Schoolchildren
- Businesses
- Community and environmental groups
- Other local opinion formers and other key stakeholders
- Councillors in the three boroughs, including parish councillors
- Local MPs
- Local/regional media

- Joint Waste Strategy Board
- Staff in the partner organisations

- National media
- National local government press (primarily Local Government Chronicle and Municipal Journal)
- Specialist media in the following areas:
 - waste management
 - recycling
 - environment
 - public finance
- National waste management and recycling organisations and networks (e.g. WRAP, Recycle Now, Waste Watch, Lets Recycle.com)
- Government bodies and departments
- Best practice schemes and organisations (e.g. IDeA, LGA)
- Peers in other local authorities
- Wider waste management and recycling networks

4. Key messages

- The three councils are working together with WRG to provide local residents and business with first class facilities for recycling and waste disposal
- It's a 25 year project designed to minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill and increase the amount that is reused, recycled or composted across the three boroughs
- The three councils have made re3 happen, working with WRG
- re3 will help make sure the three councils meet or exceed their Government recycling targets
- re3 helps the councils manage waste more efficiently and provide residents with value for money
- You should continue to reduce, re-use as much waste as possible
- You should continue to use your council's existing kerbside collection and recycling facilities, as well as using the new re3 facilities to recycle and dispose of other sorts of household waste
- re3 is a very effective partnership between the three councils
- It's an excellent example of a successful Private Finance Initiative (PFI) project
- re3 is a great example of best practice in waste management and recycling

5. Communications plan

Future communications activities for re3 are set out in this section. It is assumed that the individual council partners would continue to communicate and promote their own waste collection and recycling services and key messages, with support from re3.

The main areas of activity are:

- a) Develop a generic set of re3 communications tools
- b) Review and develop the re3 brand to ensure that it reflects the partnership
- c) Develop the information on re3 provided to local people
- d) Develop positive communications with local opinion formers and stakeholders
- e) Maximise positive re3 coverage in local media
- f) Maximise positive re3 coverage in national, trade and specialist media
- g) Ensure maximum impact for re3 events during 2009
- h) Identify and use national networks and events to increase the profile of re3
- i) Increase understanding of re3 amongst partner employees

6. Communication activities

a) Develop a generic set of re3 communications tools

It would be useful to have an agreed set of communications tools for the project that could be used by both the partnership and individual partners in all re3 communications.

- Develop and agree a set of re3 key messages and an re3 narrative
- Review existing re3 communications for consistency with key messages and amend as required (*at next print run or update if there are cost implications*).
- Review current re3 website and re3 content on partner sites for consistency with key messages
- Develop an image bank that tells the story of re3

- Produce a re3 PowerPoint presentation which can be used by all partners when speaking about re3, for example at identified events and conferences

b) Review and develop re3 brand to ensure that it reflects the partnership

All council partners have expressed concerns about whether the re3 brand is sufficiently recognised by the public and whether the brand sufficiently reflects the roles of the partner councils in the re3 project. re3 communications must not dilute the councils' own brands and make it clear that the three councils and WRG are prominent partners in re3.

- Develop and agree any developments to the re3 brand ensuring that the partners' logos have greater prominence
- Review how brand is currently used on re3 communications materials and agree any changes (this may include changes to signage before official opening of Smallmead Waste Recycling Park on 7 July)
- Review how brand is used on re3 and partner websites and agree any changes required
- Produce press release templates to include all partners' logos for use in future communications work
- Review the existing draft brand guidelines and produce a final version

c) Develop the information on re3 provided to local people

- Circulate key messages and narratives for partners to use in their own communications
- Work with partner councils on marketing/PR for any initiatives involving re3
- Provide re3 branded content for regular partner publications and websites
- Consider re3 marketing campaigns to run across all three boroughs to coincide with openings at Smallmead and Longshot Lane – identify costs and opportunities to use existing council media,
- Produce re3 branded content to be used by partner councils in their 2010/11 council tax booklets or performance plan

The re3 Waste Minimisation Manager and Education Officers will also continue to promote re3 to local people through their regular programme of visits, activities and work with schools.

d) *Develop positive communications with local opinion formers and stakeholders*

Opinion formers and stakeholders include local councillors and MPs, businesses and community or voluntary groups. These could all act as powerful advocates and communicators for re3.

- Produce re3 key messages and Q and As for councillors in the three partner councils (including parish councillors) – updated quarterly
- Provide re3 content for council member bulletins
- Offer programme of tours or visitor centre events for councillors
- Repeat above communication activities for local MPs

- Provide partner councils with re information to include in own communications with businesses
- Provide re3 branded content for key business publications/Chamber of Commerce bulletins

- Provide partner councils with re information to include in own communications with community and voluntary sector
- Use existing stakeholder groups to disseminate re3 information
- Offer programme of tours or visitor centre events for community and voluntary groups

e) *Maximise positive re3 coverage in local media*

- Continue media releases and briefings for local media for all key re3 milestones and events
- Contact local media about running a series of features or interviews to coincide with re3 events (e.g. daily radio interviews about innovative ways of recycling or different local community recycling initiatives, in week of opening of Smallmead Waste Recycling Park)
- Approach local newspapers about running weekly re3-sponsored 'green page'
- Place opinion pieces by re3 project manager or elected members in local media

f) Maximise positive re3 coverage in national, trade and specialist media

- Target Local Government Chronicle and Municipal Journal for features and articles
- Target LGC and MJ regular columns and supplements (e.g. LGC Good Practice, MJ special sustainability issues)
- Identify forward features/speak to editors of relevant trade publications (print and online versions) e.g.
 - Recycling and Waste World
 - Waste Management World
 - Resource Management and Recovery
 - Materials Recycling Week
 - Energy and Environment Magazine
 - Project Finance
 - The Loop (LARAC publication)
 - Facilities Management Excellence
 - Local Authority Waste and Recycling
 - CIWM Journal
 - Environment Times
 - Your Environment
- Work with WRG to identify any relevant trade or specialist publications
- Target trade and specialist press with follow-up stories/photos following event
- Identify possible national media opportunities (e.g. BBC Breakfast, Newsround for children's stories)
- Work with Bracknell Forest Council to generate national interest through Councillor Bettison's links through the Local Government Association

g) Ensure maximum impact for re3 events during 2009

- Invite local and selected specialist media to re3 events
- Use events as opportunity to generate wider media coverage (e.g. weekly series of features)
- Ensure all events branded in accordance with agreed guidelines
- Produce branded interpretation boards for events
- Ensure speeches at events reflect key re3 messages (include in speaker notes)
- Film events and place footage on council/local media sites/YouTube

h) Identify and use national networks and events to increase profile of re3

- Contact and target key waste and recycling organisations with re3 features and case studies
 - WRAP
 - Lets Recycle.com
 - Waste Watch
 - Recycle Now
 - Defra
 - Waste Information Network
 - Improvement and Efficiency SouthEast
- Work with WRG to identify any further trade or specialist publications
- Identify opportunities to enter re3 for local government and environmental awards
- Identify and target opportunities for re3 project managers and partners to speak at events and conferences
 - Local government and environmental events
 - Commercial best practice conferences (LGC, Capita, Neil Stewart Associates)
- Target best practice websites (e.g. IDeA) with case studies
- Identify if re3 can be entered for first round of new Beacon scheme (launches early 2010)
- Hold Best Practice seminars at Smallmead Waste Recycling Park (September)
- Work with partner officers to identify appropriate professional or peer organisations and networks – deliver re3 presentation at their next meeting or hold it at re3

i) Increase understanding of re3 amongst partner employees

- Provide branded re3 content for partner employee magazines
- Provide re3 content for partner intranet sites
- Arrange re3 presentations at partner management team meetings and department conferences
- Offer programme of tours or visitor centre events for community and voluntary groups

7. Resource implications

The main resource required for most of the activities identified in this plan is staff time, either that of the re3 communications officer or colleagues within the re3 partners. Budget provision has already been made for the scheduled events. Activities which would require additional funding are as follows (costs will be identified):

- Any changes to re3 branded material
- Website development
- Possible re3 marketing campaigns
- Photography/filming of events
- Production of communications material for stakeholders

8. Measurement and evaluation

Evaluation of the effectiveness of re3 communications could be carried out in the following ways. It should look at both the level of positive coverage re3 is achieving and perceptions and understanding of the project amongst key audiences.

- Measuring the extent of coverage in local media, national and specialist media
- Measuring presence on waste and recycling networks and best practice websites
- Including an 're3 question' (awareness or understanding) in any resident surveys being carried out by the partner councils
- Small, in-house surveys of staff awareness and understanding of re3
- Short telephone survey with a number of stakeholders and opinion formers

9. Timetable

This table provides a summary of key communications activities for re3 over the next six months. Individual communications plans will be produced and activities identified for each event.

Month	Event/activity
MAY	EVENT – SCHOOLS VISIT TO HWRC (19th)
	Develop generic re3 messages and narrative
	Review existing re3 communications material and website for consistency with key messages
	Brand review and recommendations on brand updates
	Begin to develop re3 image bank
	Produce standard re3 PowerPoint
	Develop branded press release template
	Contact national and specialist media and identify opportunities for features or articles
Contact local media about developing features and regular pages	
JUNE	Implement any changes to brand in advance of Smallmead Waste Recycling Park event
	Update brand guidelines
	Produce interpretation boards for use at events
	Identify and contact waste management and recycling networks – begin to place case studies and information

	Develop and produce first set of councillor and stakeholder communications
	Develop staff communications materials
	Identify and plan for re3 speaking opportunities
	Begin to target businesses
JULY	EVENT – Formal opening of Smallmead Waste Recycling Park (7 th)
	EVENT – soft opening of Longshot Lane Household Waste Recycling Centre (tbc) – communication plan already produced
	Possible re3 cross-borough marketing campaign to coincide with Smallmead launch
	Produce awards database and begin to target local government and environmental awards
	Begin to target best practice databases
AUGUST	Continue targeting national and specialist media/waste management and recycling networks
SEPTEMBER	EVENT – Formal opening of Longshot Lane Household Waste Recycling Centre (tbc)
	EVENT – Open Days for public visits to Smallmead and Longshot Lane Household Waste Recycling Centres (TBC)
	Possible second re3 cross-borough marketing campaign to coincide with Longshot Lane launch
	Second set of councillor and community and voluntary sector communications
	Continue to implement staff communications
OCTOBER	EVENT – Series of best practice seminars for local authorities and contractors at Smallmead and Longshot Lane Household Waste Recycling Centres
	Develop communications toolkit for future re3 communications
