



Household Recycling Scheme on the Ascot Vale Housing Estate

Wingate Avenue Community Centre

May 2011

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Executive Summary

Multi-Unit dwellings and public housing estates are often overlooked in kerbside recycling and waste recovery activities.

Wingate Avenue Community Centre (WACC) provides a range of services to over 1500 residents in approximately 860 households in the Ascot Vale Public Housing estate situated in the inner north west of Melbourne. The estate is predominantly owned and managed by the Office of Housing and is interspersed with privately owned homes. Kerbside recycling services are provided by Moonee Valley City Council for private residences in and around the estate but recycling services are not available to the public housing residents of the estate.

Residents of the Ascot Vale Housing Estate were instrumental in raising the lack of recycling as an issue on the estate. In response Wingate Avenue Community Centre developed the Household Recycling Scheme Trial in collaboration with Moonee Valley City Council, Melbourne Waste Management Group and the local Office of Housing managing office. The project was funded by Sustainability Victoria, through the Sustainability Fund.

A significant barrier to the success of previous recycling trials on the estate has been the lack of supporting education. A key initiative of the project is the significant focus on education, and in particular engaging residents from many cultural backgrounds with varying competency in English as a second language. Active education was key to engagement and improving the understanding of residents on the need to recycle and recycle effectively.

Community development is a core activity of the Wingate Avenue Community Centre and this approach informed the development and implementation of this project on the estate. It is an approach that ensured that the community were provided with multiple participation opportunities.

The projects goal was to educate housing estate residents about the environmental need for recycling, waste minimisation and informed consumer choices to support the establishment of a successful recycling scheme for households of the Ascot Vale Housing Estate. Ongoing evaluation of the project was important to ensure that education was relevant and was instrumental in reducing contamination rates in recycling bins. Visual audits were undertaken on a weekly basis and were supported by resident surveys, informal and formal community discussions and observations. The result was a multitude of activities providing learning to over 200 residents of the estate and also provided new experiences for many. Contamination rates on the estate are comparable to those of the broader Moonee Valley municipality.

Resource recovery has dramatically increased with estimated loss of recyclables to land fill dropping from 25% to 3.9%. The average estimated contamination rate for the recycling bins on the trial site is now 6.6%, the majority of contamination coming from bagged recyclables.

The survey provided an opportunity for residents to express their opinions and evaluate the service that had been implemented, these also produced positive results helping guide and change infrastructure and recycling practice. The conversations with the community and the observations, such as people outside the trial area initiating their own recycling by getting their own bins and making sure that they are picked up correctly also lend strength to the projects process.

The commitment of the community to recycling is evidenced in the findings of the trial. The installation of recycling bins does not guarantee success but supporting infrastructure change with education vastly improves the environmental outcomes. It is recommended that this project continues to support the roll out of recycling on the Ascot Vale Housing Estate.

Introduction

The Towards Zero Waste Strategy, released in 2005, by Sustainability Victoria aims to reduce the amount of solid waste and increase resource recovery to 65% by 2014. This aligns with MVCC 'Waste Management Strategy' goals (MVCC, nd).

Recycling has become common place for many Australians. Household recycling has been prevalent around the country including rurally since the 80s and early 90s. Multiunit dwellings and in particular housing estates are often overlooked when it comes to providing recycling services. It is widely accepted that there is no single model for recycling in multiunit dwellings (Kelly, 2002). The increase of multiunit developments in the inner city and its surrounds challenges the existing model of recycling services and provides local governments and state governments with the opportunity to increase recycling rates in multiunit dwellings and work towards achieving the targets set at both state and local government levels.

Background

Ascot Vale Housing Estate

The Ascot Vale Housing Estate is based in Ascot Vale, a northwest suburb of metropolitan Melbourne and in the municipality of MVCC. The estate includes Ascot Vale Road, Savage Street, Dunlop Avenue, Union Road, Epsom Road, Union Street, Epsom Street, Vasey Street, Morshead Street and Wingate Avenue.

There are over 1500 residents who live on the Estate in approximately 860 households across 85 blocks. The blocks are predominantly 3-level walk-ups with 12 units in each. The number of residents living in each unit varies from 1 to 5 including children, with many people living on their own (Department of Human Services, 2007).

The Estate is multicultural and diverse, with people born in Australia (27%), Ethiopia (15%), Vietnam (12%), and Somalia (9%), Eritrea (4%), Sudan (3%), China (2%), El Salvador (2%), Chile (2%) and small numbers from many other parts of the world. The population includes many newly arrived migrants and refugees. There are almost equal numbers of male and female residents, with the largest percentage of residents in the 24-54 age groups. (Department of Human Services, 2007).


Wingate Avenue Community Centre

WACC was established in 1985 and is a not for profit organization located on the Ascot Vale Housing Estate. The centre promotes an open and welcoming environment offering a wide variety of services, projects, programs and activities catering directly to the needs of the Ascot Vale Community.

Household recycling on the Ascot Vale Housing Estate

A recycling service was trialled on the Ascot Vale Housing Estate over 10 years ago but was removed by the council because of high levels of contamination. Waste collections are run on the estate every week and Moonee Valley City Council operates a fortnightly recycling service for private dwellings dispersed in between and around the estate grounds. There was no recycling service available for residents of the Ascot Vale Housing Estate with a pre-project audit estimating 25% of waste on the estate was in fact recyclable materials.

In 2009 WACC received a grant from MVCC to run an environmental project entitled 'Seed'. Seed focused on raising resident awareness and fostering behavioural change about environmental issues relating to water, energy and recycling. Through surveys and workshops, it became clear that sections of the estate population had not heard of climate change or global warming, and had limited knowledge about the importance of recycling and the positive impacts recycling can have on the environment. Residents were ready to participate in household recycling but were not provided with the infrastructure or collections to participate in an activity offered to the rest of the Moonee Valley City Council residents.



Following the success of the 'Seed' project the 'Household Recycling Scheme on the Ascot Vale Housing Estate' Project was developed by Wingate Avenue Community Centre, in partnership with Moonee Valley City Council (MVCC), Ascot Vale Office of Housing (OoH) and Metropolitan Waste Management Group (MWMG). The project received funding from Round 4 of the Sustainability Fund managed by Sustainability Victoria. The project begun in June 2010 and was funded for a 12 month period.

The aim of this project was to establish an education strategy, test education materials and identify successful engagement strategies to support the successful re-introduction of recycling to the estate. This project was supported by the local community, estate residents, Moonee Valley City Council, Melbourne Waste Management Group, Office of Housing and Sustainability Victoria.

Two blocks were selected for the Household Recycling trial, a third was later included in the trial because it was identified that they shared the same bins. The area was selected because one of the active members of the Seed Project lived in one of these blocks.

The trial blocks are located on Dunlop Avenue. There are approximately 42 residents (39 adults and 2 infants) living in 27 households, with the largest percentage living on their own. They are from 15 different countries and speak over 10 different languages. The adults range in age from 17 to 81 years.

Goals

The Household Recycling Scheme on the Ascot Vale Housing Estate was developed with two main Goals:

- Educate Ascot Vale housing estate residents about the environmental need for recycling, waste minimisation and informed consumer choices
- Establish a successful recycling model for households on the estate.

Objectives

- Develop education materials and activities to support the introduction of a recycling trial on the estate
- Identify engagement strategies that increase the understanding of householders about recycling
- Trial alternative recycling models on the estate to establish the most appropriate for the estate
- Incorporate community knowledge into the project at all stages
- Outline practical ways to reduce consumption, reuse materials and minimise waste
- Promote existing recycling services that operate to support other recycling activities, such as e-waste

Methodology

A methodology based in community development was chosen to enable community change from the community perspective, to work with community residents to identify the issues and actively participate in the process that affects change. This philosophy is the cornerstone of Wingate Avenue Community Centre engagement with estate residents and members of the wider community.

The community were particularly active in engaging with the Wingate Avenue Community Centre project officer to identify where changes to the project were required. The steering committee were also instrumental in ensuring that the project responded flexibly to issues as they arose. On the whole, minor adjustments to delivery and implementation enabled significant improvements to the project and its outcomes.

Governance

At the beginning of the project it was apparent that the existing partnerships established through 'Seed' were an important source of advice and support. The establishment of a project steering group was a priority for the project and incorporated representatives from existing project partners, Wingate Avenue Community Centre project staff and Sustainability Victoria.

The project steering committee met monthly through the life of the project and will continue to meet to ensure that the outcomes from the project are shared with others and maintain the momentum of the project for the expansion of recycling on the estate.

Steering Committee Membership

Moonee Valley City Council

MVCC is a local government of metropolitan Melbourne established in 1994 when city of Essendon and Keilor merged. They are responsible for providing a range of local government services including waste collection and recycling (MVCC, 2011). MVCC participated in several key areas including:

- Provision of household containers for residents to store and transport their recyclable waste to the bins.
- Provision of Recycling bins for curb side collection
- Provision of bilingual brochures and stickers in 7 different languages that were developed in consultation with the steering committee.

Office of Housing- Ascot Vale Branch

Office of Housing- Ascot Vale Branch is a division of the Department of Human Services and are responsible for the provision of public and social housing. One of their roles is to upgrade public and social housing 'to be environmentally sustainable and better integrated with the whole community' (DHS, 2010). OoH participated in several key areas including:

- Landscaping works to facilitate trial bin placements
- Unlocking recycling bins and placing them on curb side for collection then re locking bins
- Distribution of Welcome pack to new residents containing recycling information.

Metropolitan Waste management group (MWMG)

MWMG is a Victorian State Government Statutory Body established in 2006. MWMG is 'responsible for coordinating and facilitating the delivery of municipal solid waste management across metropolitan Melbourne' (MWMG, 2007). MWMG participated in several key areas including:

- Actively participating in monthly SCM
- The provision of guidance, information and advice.

Sustainability Victoria

Sustainability Victoria is a Victorian State Government Statutory Authority established in 2006. Sustainability Victoria was established to ensure the social, economic and environmental needs of our community are met and kept healthy for future generations. Sustainability Victoria managed the funding on behalf of the Sustainability Fund.

Implementation

The project development and implementation plan ensured that a community development approach was adopted and supported throughout. This recognised that a previous attempt to introduce recycling on the estate failed due to unacceptably high rates of contamination and the simple approach of placing recycling bins next to waste bins was unlikely to succeed. One of the project outcomes was to

achieve contamination rates that were comparable to the rest of Moonee Valley City Council. For this reason a multifaceted approach was undertaken and comprised of:

- Literature review
- Engagement strategy for residents
- Education and communications strategy and materials
- Trial of multiple approaches to bin placement - Infrastructure
- Celebrating the successes of the community and the project
- Continuous Improvement and Evaluation

Literature Review

A literature review was undertaken at the initial phase of the project to understand the experiences of others undertaking similar projects in similar circumstances. Although there were significant differences across the types of projects, their approaches and their outcomes the literature review informed the strategic direction of the project.

The literature revealed several key focus points for effectively delivering a recycling program. Recycling has to be convenient, using individual approaches for individual communities; which means that a deep understanding of the community is needed including CALD communities. The education, communication strategy and behaviour change must be tailored to this understanding reflecting the knowledge that communities already hold about sustainability. Evaluation and action must be built into the project.

Engagement Strategy

The activities and consultation methods selected for this project have been both general and project specific. Each activity has contributed to achieving the projects objectives. They include:

- community information sessions
- using internal and external educators
- doorknocking individual households (bilingual)
- resident leaders delivering information to residents from CALD communities
- Walkabouts- Informal outdoor exchanges in and around the estate
- visits to recycling facilities
- environmentally themed excursions
- artist in residence engaging youth on the housing estate around the theme of recycling.

The project and activities have reached beyond the trial site, engaging hundreds of residents.

Activities

Project Launch – August 2010

A project launch was held early on in the project to coincide with a visit to WACC from the Honourable Justin Madden MLC, former Minister for Planning and Respect Agenda, joined by the Honourable Judy Maddigan MP (past Member for Essendon) and MVCC Councillor Rose Iser.

A 'Recycle Relay' was held, with the VIPs leading teams of culturally diverse students in a race to sort tubs of waste material into the correct bins. This was followed by the turning of the first sod of soil at the front of WACC for the installation of the first recycling bin on the estate.

Over 100 people attended the launch, with representatives from the community, WACC Committee of Management, MVCC, OOH, MWMG and Sustainability Victoria.

Brimbank Park – September 2010

A partnership was formed between WACC, New Hope Foundation and Parks Victoria in order to run a day trip to Brimbank Park for local residents. The trip had 3 aims which were: provide an opportunity to visit and learn about a Parks Victoria park; provide a recreational and social opportunity to AMEP students on the Ascot Vale estate; and educate participants about the link between the environment and recycling, and the scheme coming to the estate.

Forty-four people attended from CALD backgrounds (majority women and children), along with 3 staff. Feedback from the participants was very positive, with many people feeling a strong link to the land, and also memories of their home countries.

Housing Week – September 2010

Housing Week is held in September each year and is a celebration of public housing in Victoria. In 2010 WACC organised 'Window on Wingate', a one-day festival incorporating dancing, singing, cooking, films, workshops, information stalls and performances. Several environmental activities and performances were organised as part of the festival. These were:

- Our Planet, an environmental theatre group, engaged and entertained children and young people
- Brotherhood of St Laurence were invited to set up a table offering free retrofits to low income earners
- A Sprouting Demonstration was held, demonstrating to participants how to grow their own edible sprouts using old jars and other recycled materials
- A short film, made by a volunteer, was screened as part of the film festival, introducing the 'Household Recycling Scheme' project and the crate

In addition:

- More than 200 people attended the festival, mainly local residents from CALD backgrounds across a range of ages.
- more than 30 people learnt how to grow their own sprouts at home; and
- over 40 people saw the short film introducing the Household Recycling Scheme.

SKM excursion – September 2010

SKM is a recycling depot located in Broadmeadows which processes recyclable material from many local councils in Melbourne, including the Moonee Valley municipality. Two project volunteers, the project worker and the Community Development worker visited SKM for a tour of the facility, in order to learn about what happens to the contents of our recycling bins.

CERES – October 2010

An excursion to CERES was organised and promoted at first to residents at the Dunlop Avenue trial blocks via flyer in each letterbox. The invitation was extended to people attending classes at Wingate who had not attended the Brimbank excursion, with priority given to residents of the Ascot Vale estate. Two Wingate staff, 5 volunteers and 15 community members attended from 5 different English classes, as well as a member of the WACC Men's Group. Languages spoken included: Thai, Russian, Tigrinya, Italian (dialect), Amharic, Mandarin, Somali, Swahili, and Vietnamese.

A facilitator from CERES took the group on a tour of the park and also ran a 'Waste' activity, demonstrating how long it takes waste items to biodegrade in the earth. Participants said they enjoyed the day, and were interested to return to the park to attend the markets and visit the nursery. All participants responded positively about their experience at CERES.

Science works – May 2011

An excursion to science works took place with 10 ESL students to further their knowledge on how we affect our environments, with a particular focus on the weather. The excursion involved a screening of 'Our living planet' viewed in the planetarium and a tour of the pump station to learn what happens to litter and our waste water. The excursion was well received and enjoyed by all.

Communications and Education

All components of the project involved some form of communications and education, be it formal or informal, direct or indirect. The major driving force of the project was education. Listed below are the activities that specifically related to this theme.

Street Party November 2010

A street party was held to engage residents in the trial blocks and introduce the trial. Residents were notified of the street party via individually delivered flyers under their doors (to reduce the possibility of residents throwing it out with their junk mail straight from the letterbox), and via posters put up in the stairwells at each of the blocks. Several residents who had expressed interest in the trial but did not live in the trial blocks were invited to attend. Approximately 20 residents and their children attended the launch. Not all were from the trial blocks – some lived in the adjacent blocks on Dunlop Avenue. A barbeque was held and a raffle drawn. Residents were invited to submit an 'Expression of Interest' for a recycling crate.

Walkabouts

The employment of an environmental project worker provided a presence on the estate and their role was used to communicate the recycling message. The project worker was available to discuss the trial and receive feedback about recycling themes. Walkabouts helped address the barriers encountered in the doorknocks where residents were not able to be reached.

Posters

Recycling education posters were put up around the estate and within WACC. The posters were used to raise awareness about the presence of the trial and the 'what to and how to recycle'. Posters and flyers were also used to advertise events relating to the project.

Recycling Wheelie Bin Sound System-continual

A recycling bin was transformed into a sound system to rock the estate, drawing attention and familiarizing the community with the yellow recycling bin, it also stimulated curiosity about the contents of the bin. When the bin lid was opened residents would find neatly presented flyers developed for the project identifying items that can be recycled in 7 different languages. The bin also opened up to a poster of part of the recycling process. The music played was from all over the world in many different languages, it also included music that some of the youth from Ascot Vale Housing Estate had recorded with the artist in residence.

Term brochure-term2 term3

Information about the recycling trial was included in the WACC term brochure that is distributed by a local community member throughout the estate as well as WACC networks.

Media

April 2011 the local Leader ran an article in print and online covering the project. The Article detailed information on the project and a photo.

May 2011 MWMG ran an article about the project and how it is engaging with CALD communities in its enews.

Awards

WACC entered the 2011 Sustainable Cities Awards, The Keep Australia Beautiful (KABV) judge visited in May 2011 and was announced the winner of the 2011 Towards Zero Waste category at a gala event in July 2011.

Forum and Meetings

April 2011- the project and methods employed were presented to over 100 people at 'Sustainability for Diverse Communities Forum' by WACC environmental project worker. The forum was initiated by Environment Victoria and provided an opportunity for people to share their experiences and learn from each other about communicating with CALD communities in the field of sustainability.

May 2011- the project and methods employed were presented to the Ascot Vale Network monthly meeting which is attended by many of the organizations and groups within the Moonee Valley municipality.

May - June 2011- presentations on recycling and the areas this encompasses such as the how to, the why, and what happens after you recycle were participated in by over 150 ESL students AT WACC, over half live on the estate. Classes on the environment were run prior to the presentations by the teachers. The presentations were valuable in educating many of the residents who surround the trial site on the value of recycling. They were also critical in creating correct recycling practice within the centre as the students attend classes 4-5 days of the week.

Workshops

To coincide with the Tuesday youth program which regularly attracts a least 15 youth and up to 40, two artist in residence were employed to run workshops engaging youth around the theme of their environment. The artist brought unique and interesting skills to the youth using music as the medium. An outcome from this activity were recordings completed over two Tuesdays which feature the youth of Ascot Vale singing about their environment and living on the estate.

A mural for the wall opposite the basketball court and skate bowl is planned and will be themed around the environment. Professional female and male street artists have been sought to participate in stencil and graphic art workshops. The artists are ready but final permission for the piece is yet to be provided by OoH. It is the intention of these workshops to give the local youth a sense of ownership of their environment whilst promoting the ideas of our connectedness to nature and the impacts we have. This will then be conveyed through their art.

Bilingual Information Brochures

MVCC, in consultation with the project Steering Committee, developed brochures to distribute to residents. The brochures contained information about what can and can't be recycled. They were printed in the 7 most read languages on the estate (English, Arabic, Somali, Amharic, Vietnamese, Spanish and Chinese) according to information gathered from Office of Housing, the New Hope Foundation Settlement Worker and the Ascot Vale Needs Assessment (2008) Brochures were delivered during the doorknocks.

Doorknocking round 1

November 2010- the doorknocking campaign began one week after the Street Party This targeted individual households in the trial blocks, delivering recycling crates and language-appropriate brochure and to reintroduce the recycling trial.

The bins were delivered and located at the new bin stands a few days before the doorknocking campaign began. Five rounds of doorknocking were conducted by two doorknockers at different times of the day. 23 out of 27 households were contacted. 21 of those took crates, another 2 said they would recycle but did not want to take a crate due to lack of space.

All of the different language brochures were utilised, with future suggestions for Tigrinya, Laos and Romanian.

Doorknocking round 2

April-May 2011 As part of improving the recycling collection system a survey was developed with advice from the steering committee and feedback from community and volunteers. The survey allowed the opportunity for evaluation, feedback and to provide further education. Training was developed and provided for two multi-lingual residents of the Estate and one volunteer to conduct the survey with the environmental project worker. Training in recycling the doorknocking/surveying process was given. The survey proved to be a crucial tool in adjusting the recycling service in direct correlation to community response. It also provided an opportunity for members of the community to provide their evaluation of the project.

Project party

Similar to the street party the project party provided an opportunity for members of the community on the trial site to come together and celebrate. This time it was to acknowledge the positive impact of their actions. The party was attended by 10 residents of the trial area, other interested community members as well as some of the steering committee and the project workers. Recognition and celebration was seen as a key to foster inclusiveness and provide further opportunity for members of the community to voice their opinion

Infrastructure

Household Recycling Crates

The provision of household containers for residents to store and transport their recyclable waste to the bins was identified in the literature as an important step to encourage recycling. MVCC worked with Corex Plastic to design and manufacture household 'crates' to deliver to residents in the trial blocks. The crates were printed on each side with visual information about what can and can't be recycled. The crates were delivered during the doorknocks.

Bins and bin stands

Bin stands were installed by contractors in November 2010 and positioning was based on information from the literature review and expertise and experience of the project partners. The recycling bins were placed in the same area as the waste bins but were located directly behind the waste bins to ensure that recycling was an active choice for residents.

Visual audits

Throughout the project visual audits were conducted intermittently to ascertain contamination levels as one of the tools to inform the delivery of the project. It proved a quick, simple and effective way to identify waste disposal practise.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the project was an ongoing process facilitated by the ongoing visual audits and engagement with the community. The steering committee and project team were cognisant of the importance of adapting approaches to address community needs and maintaining connection with the overall project goals and objectives.

Key findings

Findings for the project have been recorded in three main areas; visual audits, community survey and Informal Community Discussions and observations. The findings at each stage of the project were used to adjust the project plan and communications to ensure that the project met the community needs.

Visual audits

Visual audits were carried out by WACC and MVCC in both waste and recycling bins. Visual audits provided indicators for evaluation, and gathered information that could be returned to the residents in the form of education to alter incorrect recycling practices. The visual audit used for this report was conducted on the 2nd of June 2011. This day coincides with the fortnight when both the recycling and waste are collected. The visual Audit is the last one conducted before the final report was produced.

SEE ATTACHMENT

Before recycling bins were installed

MVCC estimated the content of recyclables in waste bins at the trial site at 25%.

The average rates of contamination in Recycling bins for the wider municipality stand at 23% in 2006 and 10.5% in 2009 (Waste Management Consultants, 2010).

Final audit on trial site after installation of recycling bins

The estimated average recyclable content in waste bins is 3.9%. This shows a significant reduction in recyclables going to land fill.

The average estimated contamination rate for the recycling bins on the trial site is 6.6% the majority of contamination coming from bagged recyclables. This is below the wider municipalities rates of contamination.

Community survey

The project survey began on the 15th of April 2011, it was conducted weekly on different days at different times for a total of 5 weeks and was participated in by 15 of the 27 households. A further 3 households agreed with the project but did not want to participate in the survey, one household refused. After 5 rounds of doorknocking 8 households were not reached.

The findings of the survey have been grouped into three themes; Quality of recycling service, Knowledge of recycling and Attitudes towards the Recycling and the environment. The survey's results are important findings for the project, they revealed people's attitudes towards the project and helped adjust and guide infrastructure. They told us that yes people do recycle and a majority think this is important for a variety of reasons.

Attitudes towards recycling

The survey revealed that all of the participants recycled and viewed recycling to be important. The attitudes towards recycling are positive, many people relating the practice to a better environment.

'It's New, Positive change, clean'

'For our future for our kid's future'

'So many reasons, for the environment, waste reduce, energy, for this place the social part being part of the community'

Quality of recycling service

A majority of the people surveyed believed that the quality of the recycling service was good to excellent, with people also believing it had improved their environment. The negative responses to the service were in relation to 2 pieces of infrastructure the bin retainers and bin areas. Both of these prevented people from recycling. Both were remedied and verified with community members to be solved.

'It's good, if you can get into them, when there locked to the stands you can't even open the lid'

'Amazing waiting a long time for this, very simple to use'

'The red bins (Waste bins) don't overflow any more, the smell is better'

Knowledge of Recycling

Since the initiation of the project knowledge of recycling has increased with a majority of the participants eager to recycle right. There is still some confusion about what can and can't be recycled, this is particularly noticeable with unlabelled plastic. Recycling Information was provided to members of the community who were confused about what to recycle or requested more information.

Informal Community Discussions and observations

Throughout the project cycle feedback around the environment and recycling was constant from the community inside and outside of the trial area. Findings often came through direct discussions with community and through observations around the estate.

Discussions have revealed that a large part of the Ascot Vale Housing Estate community would like access to recycling facilities; People are not just requesting it but asking how they would go about attaining it for themselves. Residents have shared how they often walk to use the recycling bins in the trial area. Members of the trial area have also shared how they help each other learn about recycling and some take down the recycling for their neighbours making sure that there is no contamination.

A major observation around the estate is community members from some blocks have sourced their own recycling bins and are actively attempting to recycle. This is not isolated with at least 7 recycle bins active outside the trial area. Although some have a greater amount of contamination it has been confirmed they are for recycling as residents hold them back for recycle pick up days and one block is placing the recycling bin across the road to make sure it is picked up by the recycling truck.


Obstacles

Identifying and overcoming obstacles where part of the project process however it is worth noting some of the infrastructure and outreach that needed addressing to successfully implement the project.

It took some time for foundations in the bin area to be set in place, this limited some residents from using the recycling bins installed as access to them required crossing the lawn and this was particularly relevant on wet days. This information was noted by residents when asked how they were finding the facilities.

The bin stands when locked prevented access to some bins. Where access was possible tipping recycling into bins from crates was limited. This had a major effect on recycling and convenience of that recycling. This was remedied by removing retainers from the top of the bin stands. For further rollout bin stands without retainers will be installed.

In hindsight a major audit would have been set in place from the beginning of the project. Two months to confirm a time and the 7 weeks of visual audits recommended have delayed the results.



Outreach in certain areas proved to take longer than expected. The survey is viewed as a crucial project tool in relation to community participation and education. During the survey five rounds of doorknocking took place, with only 19 of the 27 households reached. Having a project worker located at Ascot Vale Housing Estate helped address this obstacle.

Contacting residents from outside the trial area who were accessing the recycling bins also proved to be difficult. Access to recycling was encouraged but education to change incorrect practice was difficult to target as it was discovered some residents outside the trial are walking several hundred meters to access the recycling bins.

Project evaluation

To evaluate the project, the findings identified were reflected against the projects goals and objectives. The findings have been active throughout the project. Many of the methods employed have enabled change continually. This continual change is reflective of community development and the varied methods it can employ

It is clear that establishing a successful recycling scheme for households on the estate, with contamination rates comparable to those of the broader Moonee Valley municipality has been achieved. By comparing the percentages of the wider municipality's rate of recycling and contamination with the trial area it is clearly visible that the results of 6.6% fall well within the projects goals of 10.5%-23%. The visual audits show that by implementing recycling the rates of recyclables going to landfill compared with the initial estimate has been reduced by 21.1% .This result supports the approach of combining education and engagement to support significant infrastructure changes as an effective and important tool in reducing environmental impact.

Comparing the survey against both project goals provides a positive evaluation overall. Negative findings highlighted by the community were able to be affectively addressed in turn drawing a positive response from those affected. The survey highlighted the fact that participants had learned around the issues of the environment in particular recycling. This is seen particularly well in peoples responses to why recycling is important and also the assistance community members have provided to other residents around what can and can't be recycled.

Overall the community observations and conversations have reflected positively to achieving both project goals. Community members have not only learnt about the environmental need for recycling, waste minimisation and informed consumer choices. They have validated that learning by practising recycling successfully inside the trial area and actively seeking the service outside of the trial area. Although recycling practices are not as good outside of the trial area as they are inside, the understanding of the importance behind recycling is there which reflects community attitudes and learning's.

The project has met its goals and recycling is not only valid on the Ascot Vale housing Estate but it is actively sought and needed by both the community and the environment.

Recommendations and future directions

It is apparent that Recycling has been taken up effectively on the trial site. It has shown continual and affective rates of resource recovery that is a valuable asset to the community and the environment. The Project has increased communication amongst residents and in certain cases helps community members feel connected to the wider Ascot Vale Community. The unexpected benefits from the project such as members outside the trial area engaging in self-started recycling have also demonstrated the strength of the project. The project has been heavily based in education; the education has allowed the project in the trial area to sustain itself. The report recommends based on these findings that;

- Recycling continue on trial site: this is crucial for the community involved.
- Recycling be rolled out across the entire estate: There is an expectation from residents that recycling is a standard service, available to public housing residents. It is without question due to the current climate of thought around the environment, the recent rise in 2011 to the landfill levy, the availability to a majority of Australians of recycling facilities, the successful practice of recycling in the trial area and the fact that the community have identified the need for recycling, and are requesting it as part of their waste collection, that recycling be rolled out across the estate.
- Education remains a major component of future recycling. The success of the trial has been due to the heavy focus on education. Without this focus understanding of what to recycle and why would have been limited across the community. As people have learnt about recycling the want to participate in the process has visibly grown.

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Appendix

Visual Audit

1st recycling station

4 th recycling bin contents		1 st recycling bin contents		3 rd recycling bin contents		2 nd recycling bin contents	
							
2 nd of June, image IMG_1045		2 nd of June, image IMG_1042		2 nd of June, image IMG_1044		2 nd of June, image IMG_1043	
% of the bin filled	100%	% of the bin filled	100%	% of the bin filled	100%	% of the bin filled	50%
Est. contamination	1%	Est. contamination	0	Est. contamination	1%	Est. contamination	1%
Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	no
Observation:		Observation:		Observation:		Observation:	

1 st waste bin contents	2 nd waste bin contents	3 rd waste bin contents	
			Bin missing
2 nd of June, image IMG_1046	2 nd of June, image IMG_1047	2 nd of June, image IMG_1048	





1st Waste station

% of the bin filled	110%	% of the bin filled	70%	% of the bin filled	30%	% of the bin filled	NA
Est. Recyclables	5%	Est. Recyclables	14%	Est. Recyclables	0%	Est. Recyclables	NA
Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	No	Was the bin locked?	NA
Observation: Some paper recyclables		Observation: Recyclables are bagged		Observation:		Observation:	





2nd recycling station

1 st recycling bin contents		2 nd recycling bin contents		3 rd recycling bin contents		Bin is missing	
							
2 nd of June, image IMG_1049		2 nd of June, image IMG_1050		2 nd of June, image IMG_1051			
% of the bin filled	10%	% of the bin filled	10%	% of the bin filled	70	% of the bin filled	NA
Est. contamination	10%	Est. contamination	3%	Est. contamination	1%	Est. contamination	NA
Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	No
Observation: Trade waste (pieces of metal)		Observation: Trade waste (pieces of rubber)		Observation:		Observation: Bin is missing	




2nd waste station

1 st waste bin contents		2 nd waste bin contents		3 rd waste bin contents		4 th waste bin contents	
							
2 nd of June, image IMG_1052		2 nd of June, image IMG_1053		2 nd of June, image IMG_1054		2 nd of June, image IMG_1055	
% of the bin filled	40%	% of the bin filled	40%	% of the bin filled	5%	% of the bin filled	5%
Est. Recyclables	0%	Est. Recyclables	0%	Est. Recyclables	1%	Est. Recyclables	3%
Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO
Observation:		Observation:		Observation:		Observation:	

3rd recycling station

2 nd recycling bin contents		4 th recycling bin contents		3 rd recycling bin contents		1 st recycling bin contents	
							
2 nd of June, image IMG_1057		2 nd of June, image IMG_1059		2 nd of June, image IMG_1058		2 nd of June, image IMG_1056	
% of the bin filled	100%	% of the bin filled	20%	% of the bin filled	80%	% of the bin filled	70%
Est. contamination	0%	Est. contamination	0%	Est. contamination	0%	Est. contamination	7%
Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	Yes
Observation:		Observation:		Observation:		Observation: plastic bags full of recyclables and one beach ball	

3rd waste station

1 st waste bin contents		2 nd waste bin contents		3 rd waste bin contents		Bin Missing	
							
2 nd of June, image IMG_1060		2 nd of June, image IMG_1061		2 nd of June, image IMG_1062			
% of the bin filled	5%	% of the bin filled	90%	% of the bin filled	80%		
Est. Recyclables	4%	Est. Recyclables	10%	Est. Recyclables	0%	Est. Recyclables	
Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	
Observation:		Observation:		Observation:		Observation:	

4th recycling station

2 nd recycling bin contents		1 st recycling bin contents		3 rd recycling bin contents		4 th recycling bin contents	
							
2 nd of June, image IMG_1064		2 nd of June, image IMG_1063		2 nd of June, image IMG_1065		2 nd of June, image IMG_1066	
% of the bin filled	95%	% of the bin filled	95%	% of the bin filled	10%	% of the bin filled	20%
Est. contamination	0%	Est. contamination	70%	Est. contamination	0%	Est. contamination	5%
Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	Yes	Was the bin locked?	NO
Observation		Observation: : Contamination bagged recyclables		Observation:		Observation:	

4th waste station

1 st waste bin contents		2 nd waste bin contents		3 rd waste bin contents		4 th waste bin contents	
							
2 nd of June, image IMG_1067		2 nd of June, image IMG_1068		2 nd of June, image IMG_1069		2 nd of June, image IMG_1070	
% of the bin filled	10%	% of the bin filled	2%	% of the bin filled	100%	% of the bin filled	100%
Est. Recyclables	0%	Est. Recyclables	0%	Est. Recyclables	15%	Est. Recyclables	10%
Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO
Observation:		Observation:		Observation: some bagged recyclables		Observation: Some cardboard recyclables	
5 th waste bin contents		6 th waste bin contents					
							
2 nd of June, image IMG_1071		2 nd of June, image IMG_1072					
% of the bin filled	70%	% of the bin filled	50%				
Est. Recyclables	0%	Est. Recyclables	0%				
Was the bin locked?	NO	Was the bin locked?	NO				
Observation:		Observation:					

Survey



Residents of Dunlop Avenue – blocks 26, 28, & 30 household recycling project follow up survey

Survey to be conducted in person

1. Do you Recycle?

- YES
- NO – why
- SOMETIMES - why

Comment:

2. Do you use your recycling crate?

- YES – For Recycling Other purpose
- NO - Why
- SOMETIMES - why

Comment:

3. Do you use the Council recycling bins?

- YES
- NO – why
- SOMETIMES – why

Comment:

4. How do you find your new recycling service?

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excellent	Good	Average	Not very good	Bad	Unable to rate

Why / please explain rating



5. Do you find your new recycling service EASY to use?

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unable to rate

Why / please explain rating

6. Do you find your new recycling service CONVENIENT to use?

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unable to rate

Why / please explain rating

7. Do you think the new recycling service has improved the WASTE system i.e. smell, reduced litter, areas look?

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unable to rate

Why / please explain rating

8. Is there anything you have trouble deciding whether to recycle?

<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO	What
---	------

9. What do you think would encourage you/ your neighbours to recycle more?

Comment:



10. Do you think recycling is important?

<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO	Why:
---	------

11. Would you like to know more about recycling

<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO	What
---	------

12. What other services would you like to see in the area?

Comment:

- Thank you for your participation.
- If you would like any more information, please call this number (provide Wingate's number plus sheet of additional numbers for other services).

Notes



Literature Review

Introduction

In 2009 at Wingate Avenue Community Centre a project called SEED was run, which was an environmental project funded through a grant from Moonee Valley City Council. A part-time project worker worked for 4 months educating the community around energy use and climate change. A survey was also conducted which asked residents on the Ascot Vale estate if they would be interested in a recycling service. The majority of respondents said yes, and as such the project worker applied for funding through Sustainability Victoria.

Wingate Avenue Community Centre, the lead agency for this project, is based on the Ascot Vale Housing Estate. The estate is very diverse, with residents born in countries all over the world. There is also a high unemployment rate. Residents speak a number of languages and many are not literate in English. This presents various communication barriers when it comes to sustainability, as well as cultural barriers as residents adjust to Australian systems of recycling.

The literature reviewed came from various sources. Local, national and international examples of best practice. The term best practice is used to describe the most efficient and effective schemes known at the time, in particular what has worked on other public housing estates and multi-unit developments.

This literature review is for the purposes of establishing best practice methods for recycling schemes in multiunit developments (MUDs). It also looks into the most effective behavioural change methods, particularly in relation to working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. It will form the basis for a plan to implement recycling across the Ascot Vale public housing estate.


The literature reviewed came from a variety of sources, including documents gathered and provided by Moonee Valley City Council, Metropolitan Waste Management Group, and through research conducted by the project worker based at Wingate.

Despite the growing number of MUDs, there is a limited amount of literature about best practice methods for recycling schemes. The *Draft Best Practice Guide* (Sustainability Victoria) and *Better Practice Guide* (Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW (DECC)) provide recommendations to architects, designers and builders of various types of MUDs from villas to high-rises, but does not give much consideration to the role of education and community engagement, except to say that it should be ongoing to address the issue of transient residents, and should address any negative behaviour such as dumping and contamination. This is addressed more in the follow up document put out by DECC.

Convenience

“Low participation rates occur when the system is not convenient” - Sustainability Victoria, 2009

A recycling system that is convenient and operational is considered the most important factor in implementing a successful waste management strategy. Residents are easily discouraged by poor



services, and bins must be placed in an accessible location, ideally with containers provided to each household so that recycling can be stored and then carried to the main storage area. Recycling bins should not be stand-alone but should be collocated with garbage bins (Sustainability Victoria, 2009). Ideally bins should not be accessible to non-residents so as to reduce potential for dumping.

Signage is also considered important, both to alert the user that these are recycling bins, and to provide instructions about how to recycle, and this should be in conjunction with ongoing education (Sustainability Victoria, 2009).

Individual Approach for Individual Communities and People

Across the literature, it is repeatedly identified that each individual area and community is different and must be approached differently. There is no one single model that is suitable for all people (Kelly, 2002), and variations such as lifestyle, age, culture, children, time commitments and whether residents are living in public/private housing or owning/renting must each be looked at. WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Program, 2008) provide a template for getting an overview of an area's demographic and then working from there to plan a recycling program that is suitable.


Just as there is no definitive best practice waste management model to apply to all multi-unit developments, there is no single model for behaviour change. Knowledge of the community is paramount, and also of different theories of behaviour change.

Theory and Understanding of Community

Collier and Smith (2009) claim that understanding both the theory and the local community is paramount in planning any behaviour change programs – “Good planning of behaviour change programs enables graceful interventions, the magic of co-learning and the power of adaptation” (Collier and Smith, 2009). Their paper states that no single behavioural change approach will be effective in addressing the multiple determinants of behaviour, whether it is regulation, education, incentives, delivering messages through children, or changing public policy.

Two of the articles selected for review, *Theories and Models of Behaviour Change* by TravelSMART (n.d.) and *Beyond Lip Service* (Collier & Smith, 2009) outlined reputable behaviour change theories, encompassing some that focus on individual change and others that focus more on systemic change. The theories most relevant to this project included: Prochaska's Stages of Change model, Rosenstock's Health Belief Model, Gladwell's Tipping Point, the Ottawa Charter on Health Promotion, Jackson's Rational Choice Theory. The authors of both articles go on to distil their research into a set of criteria to be considered when developing behaviour change programs. These form an appendix to the literature review.

'Social determinants of health' refers to considerations beyond a person's individual psychology, such as poverty, status, gender, poor education, and stress, which impact upon a person's health. It also takes into account the broader structures and systems.



The DECC in NSW's report identified that commitment to environmental issues outweighs other factors in determining recycling behaviour, which suggests that fostering that commitment is pivotal to creating behaviour change in regards to sustainability.

CALD Communities and behaviour change

“The notion of environmental justice... [advocates for] human rights for all, through action, empowerment, and environmental knowledge.” Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), 2009, p7

The literature identifies that there are specific considerations that need to be taken into account when working with CALD communities around sustainability issues. A common myth is that CALD communities do not care about their environment; FECCA challenges this, drawing from the NSW Environmental Protection Authority study which found that CALD communities do rate the issues seriously, particularly in regards to preserving the environment for future generations. FECCA's stance is that environmental education needs to be inclusive of the knowledge that CALD communities have of the environment. Face-to-face and bilingual information provision arose as effective methods of engaging with CALD communities.

Communications


A communications strategy is very important and must address community and behaviour change. The target audience should be identified. There is no single message or strategy that will magically 'fix' a community to becoming more sustainable. Rather it is about knowing the community and working with them 'from where they are at' to address the issue. WRAP addresses this by outlining different stages of 'recycling competency', ranging from non-recycler to super-committed recycler, with the majority of people falling into the 'recycler but probably not committed' and the 'committed recycler' categories. in which areas?

A communications strategy must have a mixture of approaches for the different target audiences. The DECC Social Research Report identifies three areas for development:

- Recycling facilities need to be good – ties back to convenience
- Prominence of Recycling as an issue to be raised higher
- Need for information about why to recycle, how to recycle, what can and can't be recycled
 - Stickers, posters, signs etc
 - Overall promotional campaign suggested

Evaluation

Evaluation must be built in. The Yarra High-rise Recycling Program (HaRP) in Yarra and City of Melbourne trials conducted in Melbourne both utilised waste audits as an evaluation tool, and the



City of Melbourne document recommended the use of multiple evaluation methods, including surveys, visual audits and more comprehensive audits.

Conclusion

Overall the literature suggests that there is no one-size-fits all for implementing recycling schemes in multi-unit developments; rather that a continuous improvement approach is utilised. Thorough planning is important and should take into account the knowledge and diversity of the local community, as well as behavioural change methods appropriate to the barriers faced by people within that community. Communication is of vital importance and a communications plan should be drawn up that utilises various methods to address various barriers. It is recommended that CALD communities be given specific attention, and be given the opportunity not only to learn but to contribute their own knowledge to environmental movements.

Recommendations/Options

- That the focus of behaviour change methods be multifaceted, but particularly around raising awareness, as this is most directly linked to recycling behaviour
- Use the positive relationship Wingate Avenue Community Centre has with the Housing Estate community to promote events and activities and the scheme itself
- Utilise recommendations from consultations with community members
- Ensure service is able to cope with new demand – e.g. more bins provided, collection services, more phone calls and queries

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Appendix 1



“If You Use Nothing Else” – from *Beyond Lip Service* Report

According to the theory and to the community of the City of Sydney, programs motivating behaviour change should:

1. Target the interests and capacities of individuals and local communities – streets, neighbourhoods, facilities, events – or specific groups of people (CALD, Public housing residents) and, as far as possible, involve them in the development of the program.
2. Be appropriate to the stage of change that people are at in relation to the problem, and offer actions that help people make changes at the pace and level they can.
3. Be linked to the community’s view, concerns and understanding of the problem.
4. Be founded on a clear purpose and an agreed set of objectives, and promote the development of a local vision.
5. Be ongoing/ continuing and adapt to changing needs.
6. Use a range of approaches/messages that tap into head, heart, hip-pockets and practical action motivators for change.
7. Recognise achievement and provide the public with feedback on the results of their efforts.
8. Support and build on the work of early adopters, local volunteers, spokespeople, champions, networks and advocates.
9. Demonstrate the City’s leadership through good practice, public modelling, integrated policies and an articulated sustainability ethos.
10. Demonstrate an understanding of change theory and how behaviour change happens.
11. Focus on building competence and commitment beyond the life of the program.
12. Use evaluation as an integral part of the design and delivery of the program and the development of future programs.



Appendix 2

TravelSMART criteria for programs:

- Emphasise the positive personal consequences of adopting the new activity or changing the behaviour (rather than general consequences)
- Describe how to minimise any perceived negative personal consequences of the new activity (e.g. time debt, tiredness, lack of personal safety)
- Emphasise the negative effects of not changing the present (travel) behaviour
- Create social pressure to change ways to travel
- Increase people's belief that they have control over their travel-related behaviour
- Provide simple guidelines and information about how to bring about changes in their travel

These messages and key concepts will be reinforced through a variety of media and transmitted through a range of services.