

## Washington Village u3a “Our Environment” Group: Notes from 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023

### **1. Campground Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC) Visit, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023 at 2pm.**

We'll meet at 1.30pm at the car park at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate church, Washington Village.

We'll car share where possible. Lyn can take 3 people,

The group has seven members, we'll invite CAMEO members to sign up too (maximum of eight) via the CAMEO Whatsapp group.

We're meeting Laura Farrell-Pronesti at 2pm at the Education centre at the Campground.

Questions for Laura in no particular order of priority:

- can she do a short session at a monthly meeting (in addition to the scheduled speaker<sup>1</sup>)?
- Does she know of any suitable projects in the area that we could get involved with?
- Clarification on recycling issues:
  - can **all** magazine covers go in the paper recycling caddy?
  - What is the meaning of terms used on packaging such as: compostable, biodegradable? How should we interpret them?
  - Where can computers, IT technologies be recycled?

### **2. November “Groups Showcase” Meeting**

We need to produce an engaging and informative group board for the showcase meeting.

We agreed that we should focus on **recycling** and **reuse**.

**Recycling:** give answers to a “top ten” of items that cause confusion in recycling.

Suggestions included:

1. Paper is the most valuable material for the council to recycle (they get more money for this from the paper mills) – so DO put paper in the black caddy, DON'T put card (or cards) in, don't put in paper that's been attached to glass or tins as they retain adhesives which the paper mills can't cope with.
2. If you see the wagon operators mixing the paper in with the other recycling in the wagon inform the council with date/time and place and they can check this out as it SHOULD NOT happen.
3. If you are not sure if a product is paper for the black caddy put it in the blue bin.
4. Plastic bottles (milk, juice etc.) should be put in the “blue bin” squashed down with their bottle tops on.

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<sup>1</sup> This is to be raised first with the committee on 20<sup>th</sup> July to see if it is feasible.

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5. Don't put any recyclable material in the blue bin if they have food waste on them – e.g. pizza boxes with drips of sauce.
6. Don't put soft plastics (bags, film from the top of single use plastic, etc) in the blue recycling bin. Take it to supermarket flexible/soft plastics bins.
7. Supermarkets take a wide range of items in their flexible/soft plastics bins including crisp packets, cake and biscuit wrappers, bubble wrap, ...
8. TBC perhaps - nothing goes into landfill – household waste goes to an “Energy from Waste” plant at Stockton.
9. TBC
10. TBC.

**Reuse:** identify where to donate specific items in the Washington area to focus on “reuse” rather than recycling (and where possible with added benefit of helping others). Places that were identified to promote were:

1. GET Free Books, 4 St Cuthbert's Walk Shopping Centre, Chester-le-Street. Takes books, jigsaws, CDs. Lets people take for free (to encourage reading) or can give a donation.
2. Fiscus (and Love Ameila) in Hendon Sunderland
3. “Love, Amelia”, 3 Glaholm Road, Sunderland. “A baby bank supporting babies, children and those who look after them across Tyne & Wear”. They have a wishlist on their website and ask for only items on it to be donated as need for these has been identified. <https://loveamelia.org.uk/get-involved/wishlist/>
4. Second Chance Sunderland, 46 Vilette Road, Sunderland. Specialises in FREE preloved school uniforms. Over 100 schools represented. Plus a huge outdoor wear section, a PE department which also has Out of School Club kits, including football boots, gym and dance kits, a great swimwear selection, as well as fancy dress department.”

N.B. Some local schools also take/provide school uniform items, e.g. Blackfell primary.

Also, the council has a page providing information about support for school uniforms <https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/school-uniform-support>.

5. Mickey's Place (St Michael and All Angels), Manor Road, Sulgrave, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE37 3BD. A Food Hub – “ providing healthy meals ... service users can pay a small charge for a bag full of fresh food”.
6. Revive Shop, Pallion Household Waste and Recycling Centre. “a reuse shop. Open every day to shop or donate. Takes clothes, toys, electricals, homewares, furniture and more. This shop has saved huge numbers of items from going to waste. All

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proceeds go to St Vincent's, a charity helping the most most vulnerable people in our society.

At the next meeting (September) we will bring our ideas with pictures and text to see how we can map out the display for the board.

We would also like to have some time in the November meeting for an interactive quiz (with props) of “where does this go?” Again we need to plan this in September/October.

### **3. Providing Information to u3a Members via the Website**

We already know of lots of places to pass on items for reuse or recycling. We intend to summarise this to provide a list for u3a members on our environment page.

Helen will gradually get to grips with this and add the content! Can anyone finding out something useful please pass the info on to Helen for inclusion.

### **4. Issues to raise with the WV u3a Committee**

Query whether we can invite Laura Farrell-Pronesti to give us a short talk at a monthly meeting (in addition to the scheduled speaker).

Query whether we can have a slot for doing an activity/quiz at the November showcase meeting.

Follow up on suggestions from June:

- Asking members to bring their own mugs to use at monthly meetings (this would be environmentally beneficial as well as being a cost saving since fewer disposable cups would be needed).
- Asking that in tables where recyclable cups have been used one person is nominated each time to take away, rinse out and dispose of these in their blue bins (rather than putting into general waste as currently happens)
- Collecting the used biscuit wrappers and delegating someone to dispose of them at a supermarket's flexible plastic collection point.

**Next meeting:** please note there is no meeting in August so the next meeting is 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023.