

Easy Read

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Litter and plastic waste

The Welsh Youth Parliament's report on reducing litter and plastic waste

This document was written by the Welsh Youth Parliament. It is an easy read version of the **'Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Report'**.

November 2020

How to use this document



This is an easy read version. The words and their meaning are easy to read and understand.



You may need support to read and understand this document. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. They have been explained in a box beneath the word.



If the hard word is used again it is in **normal blue writing**. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 23**.



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This document was made into easy read by **Easy Read Wales** using **Photosymbols**.

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Introduction



We are the **Welsh Youth Parliament's Litter and Plastic waste committee.**



The Welsh Youth Parliament is a group of 60 young people aged between 11 and 18 years old. We stand up for the views of children and young people across Wales.





At our first meeting, we chose **Litter and Plastic Waste** as 1 of the 3 important things we wanted to focus on.



We set up the **Litter and Plastic Waste Committee** to work on this.





We gave out surveys to find out what young people think about **reducing, reusing** and **recycling** waste.



Reducing waste means lowering the amount of rubbish we throw away. We can do this by:

- **Reducing** the things we buy that is wrapped in plastic.
- **Reusing** things again. For example glass milk bottles that can get refilled when you are finished.
- **Recycling** our rubbish. This means taking our rubbish and turning it into something else that we can use.



Around 2000 young people from across Wales answered the survey.



We would like to thank everyone who took part in the survey.

This report is about:



- what work we did
- what young people said about reducing litter and plastic waste
- and what we think needs to happen next



Why do we need to reduce litter and plastic waste



Litter and plastic waste is very bad for our **environment**.

The **environment** is where we live. It includes the land, the sea, the air, and everything that lives in and on it. For example: plants, animals and fish.



There is a lot of plastic in the oceans. This is dangerous for all things living in the sea.



Plastic waste also makes **climate change** worse.

Climate means long term weather trends. **Climate change** is about changes to the world's weather patterns like our air and water getting warmer.



We are working hard to reduce plastic waste in Wales.



But there is still a lot of plastic made in Wales every year. And a lot of plastic that could be recycled but isn't.



In 2019, the **Welsh Parliament's Climate Change, Environment and Rural affairs committee** asked the Government to make changes to reduce the use of plastic.

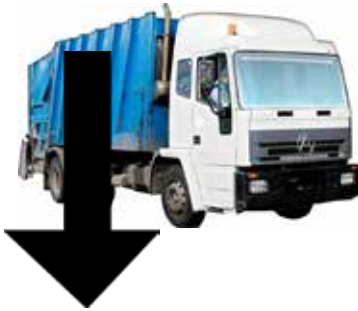


In 2020, Welsh Government put forward some ideas to cut out waste totally by 2050.

Coronavirus



Coronavirus has made things more difficult.



There have been fewer bin collections and litter picking activities during lockdown.



And as the rules relaxed over the summer, there was more litter. This includes **Personal Protective Equipment** that is only used once before it is thrown away.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) means things like gloves, face masks and aprons that are worn to help stop infections spreading.

Our work

Because of coronavirus, we had to change our plans and work over the computer:



- We wrote blogs and made vlogs to encourage young people to think about the **environment**. And share ideas for **recycling**, **reusing**, and **reducing** waste.



- We asked children and young people to take part in our online survey.



- We gave young people a chance to take part in online workshops and sessions.



- We talked about litter and plastic waste with Hannah Blythyn MS - Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government.



- We talked to the First Minister about our experiences during coronavirus.



- We heard from teachers and organisations that specialise in education and [environment](#) issues.



What young people said



Most young people who answered the survey said that reducing plastic waste is important to them.

A lot of young people said it was important to **reduce, reuse** and **recycle** waste:



- at home



- when out with family and friends



- and at school.



Most said they knew what they can recycle.



Over half said they knew ways to reduce waste, other than recycling.



Very few young people said that they would make a complaint or shop somewhere else, if the shop did not reduce or recycle waste.



Some young people also said that they want shops and businesses to do more, to reduce waste.



Many young people said they would like single use plastic to be banned. And over half said items using single use plastic should cost more.

Many young people said they wanted to **reduce**, **reuse** and **recycle** waste because they learnt it from:



- parents, carers and family members



- teachers



- people on the TV and media like David Attenborough and Greta Thunberg.



A lot of young people said reducing litter and plastic waste should be taught in school and colleges.

What we learnt



We need to do more to teach young people about other ways to reduce waste.



Schools and colleges should help young people to learn about reducing litter and plastic waste.



Young people feel that they cannot make change happen in their local area.



We need to do more to tell young people of the choices they can make.

What young people said about services to reduce litter and waste

In schools and colleges:



- A lot of young people said that they can recycle paper.



- More than half said that they can recycle drink cans and cartons.



- Very few young people said they could recycle food waste.



- A lot of young people said that they would like to recycle other things like felt pens, clothing, drink cans and food waste.



- More than half said that there should be a group to look at **environment** issues.



- Teachers said that they would need more time and **resources** to have groups to look at environment issues.



Resources are useful things we have or things we own. For example, buildings, vehicles, information, money and staff.



In local areas:



- Around 9 in 10 young people said that they can recycle plastic bottles at home or in local area.



- Less than half said that they recycle things like plastic trays, pots, cardboard, food waste, clothing, glass.



- Many young people told us that they need more services in the local area to reduce litter and plastic waste. Like litter bins, recycling bins and water refill fountains.

What we learnt



Schools and colleges should do more to help young people recycle more things.



Local authorities must look at ways to support schools in reducing waste.



We need to make young people aware of how clothing waste can be bad for **environment**.



We need more litter bins and recycling bins in public places around Wales.

What we think needs to happen next



1. We should focus on teaching young people about how litter and plastic waste can be bad for the **environment**. And what they can do to help.



2. Make sure parents and families get the right information about reducing and recycling waste.



3. Support schools and colleges to recycle more things. Reduce the use of plastic things that can only be used once.



4. We want more schools around Wales to have groups to look at **environment** issues.



5. Local authorities should look at ways to help schools and colleges run in a way that is better for the **environment**.



6. Local authorities should only buy services from suppliers that help them achieve their aims for the **environment** and well-being.



7. We want Welsh Government to make sure young people have a say about issues that affect them.



8. Welsh Government should make a law for **public bodies** to listen to children and young people when making decisions.

Public bodies are organisations that get money from Welsh Government to run services for people in Wales. For example the NHS and fire and rescue services.



9. There should be more litter bins, recycling bins and water refill stations in public places across Wales.



10. We want the Welsh Government to take action to quickly end the use of single use plastic.

Hard words

Climate change

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Environment

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Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) means things like gloves, face masks and aprons to help stop infections spreading.

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