



REPORT REFERENCE: **2.2**

LINCOLNSHIRE WASTE PARTNERSHIP

19th May 2010

SUBJECT :	Lincolnshire County Council Trading Standards Packaging Project
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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Lincolnshire Trading Standards has had a fully operational Packaging Team for approximately 2 years, which is currently funded by the County Councils Waste Department, to address the issue of excessive packaging. To date, it still remains the only Service in the Country with a dedicated team.

UPDATE January 2010 – May 2010

CONSUMERS

The team continue to raise consumer awareness of excessive packaging, with the latest road shows taking place in December 2009 and more planned for August 2010.

Feedback from consumers about the work of the team has been very positive. Some examples from the road-show held in December 2009 include:

- Ø Amazing – worthy cause will certainly contact Lincolnshire Trading Standards
- Ø Excellent initiative. Please continue to make known the details of your work to the general public
- Ø Thank you for making this campaign recognisable to me. Its nice to see that someone is trying to address the issue, I think this is a worthwhile scheme

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From April 2006 – March 2008, the department received three complaints about excessive packaging. Since the team became fully operational in September 2008 to May 2010, over 70 complaints have been received.

Surveys carried out at various events and road-shows have identified well over 600 local residents who are willing to take part in consumer panels. It is hoped by continued engagement with consumers and having their direct involvement with the campaign, the impact the team can have on the reduction of waste to landfill can be increased significantly.

As a result of publicity throughout Lincolnshire, the team have been involved with numerous events and have given talks and presentations to a whole host of community groups. The team have also given talks at local Women's Institute meetings and were an invited guest speaker at their annual conference at the Embassy Centre, Skegness to over 700 members in March 2010.

BUSINESSES

A considerable number of companies have been contacted requesting their technical documentation to establish how much consideration has been given to the packaging of the products in question.

The team continue to advise and guide businesses not only on their legal responsibilities but also to assist them to reduce costs and limit their impact on the environment in the process.

The majority of the challenges made to businesses about their packaging have resulted in changes being made and reductions. One success involved a company changing a large plastic outer carton to a much smaller recyclable cardboard box. The company commented 'My client was delighted to have the input of trading standards. Packaging costs have been reduced by around 20%. A win, win situation for all'

In February 2010, the annual Select Lincolnshire Conference at the Epic Centre took place. The event was attended by Lincolnshire food companies, buyers, retailers and many more, with the team hosting a 1 hour breakout session on packaging optimisation. Again feedback from the sessions was very positive.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The team continue to work very closely with a number of district councils and other government agencies and key partners, such as WRAP, DEFRA and BIS.

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The team have been heavily involved in the County Council's Sustainable Schools work and have been asked to attend many of the county's schools Environment Days and speak to Eco-Clubs.

In partnership with other departments of the county council, including sustainability and sustainable schools teams, the team have been involved in the creation and development of the 'Rethink' initiative.

This comprises:

- Rethink box/class toolkit – a resource box aimed at primary schools, designed to help teach staff and students of all ages the difference their actions can have on our world and hopefully make them rethink some aspects of their lives. Activities include a climate change role play, what's in the bag excessive packaging exercise, how to make recycled paper and other discussion points such as locally grown food and transport.
- Rethink DVD – In partnership with CfBT Education Trust, LWP, LCC and 4 schools in Lincolnshire. It is aimed at primary and secondary schools to highlight the activities in the above toolkit. The team featured in the DVD explaining the role of packaging and the impact on the environment of excess packaging. The DVD is to be distributed to schools throughout the county.
- Rethink Packaging Competition – This is the part of the initiative that the team have had most involvement in the actual creation. The competition is aimed at primary and secondary schools, for individual students or groups of no more than 4, to redesign the packaging of a memory stick. Specifications have been provided for the packaging in its current format and students must consider a host of factors such as environmental issues (reduce, re-use, recycle), appropriate recycling logos, consumer acceptance, retail display etc. The competition will be judged by a packaging expert and the winner/s announced at the Lincolnshire Show 24th-25th June 2010, which coincides with Recycle Week.

Lisa Foster has recently been appointed as the Trading Standards Institute Lead Officer for the Environment and represents the profession on all matters relating to its enforcement of environmental legislation.

In January 2010, Lisa was also appointed to the Government's Advisory Committee on Packaging.

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