

DESIGNING OUT WASTE

Waste is currently an intrinsic feature of our economy. We waste resources through the inefficient design and use of products, and also waste the energy, water and money that has gone into producing them. Yet waste policy has tended, until very recently, to address only the 'end of life stage', and the rest of a product's lifecycle has been largely obscure to the policy process. This lack of concerted attention and joined-up policy has hampered efforts to redesign products and processes.

Green Alliance is working with ten major companies and business organisations to change this situation, and accelerate efforts to design waste out of our economy. Our two-year programme of advocacy, debate, research and policy analysis aims to influence the UK's waste, resource and product policy. Our work is shaped by addressing shared strategic questions such as:

- What do we mean by a 'resource recovery' economy – and how do we get there?
- Understanding the 'secret life of stuff' to influence the current and future policy drivers bearing on products
- What challenges do innovations like compostable packaging throw up for our current organisation of supply chains and waste management systems?
- How can we best use pricing instruments to design out waste?

Year one summary

With the Designing Out Waste consortium (see first year partners below), we have explored important aspects of waste, resource and product policy through high level seminars, meetings and discussion papers. Events and outputs have included:

- In September, a discussion with Defra's products and materials unit on their recent progress report, looking in particular at the 'product roadmap' approach;
- In November, a high-level seminar with the Defra lead on the forthcoming packaging strategy, focussing on the extent to which carbon can be used as a proxy to address all environmental impacts of packaging;
- In January, a seminar featuring Michael Braungart, the author of *Cradle to cradle: remaking the way we make things*, exploring the extent to which the EU's ecodesign process will drive cradle to cradle principles, followed by a networking drinks reception at the Institute of Materials to launch the UK edition of the book;
- In March, a seminar on compostable packaging, to discuss developments in the supply chain, as well as the opportunity of using wastes as feedstocks to address sustainability concerns;
- In May, a seminar in Portcullis House hosted by Alan Whitehead MP, examining why the UK might want to boost its reprocessing capacity for recyclates and what levers could be applied to drive this.

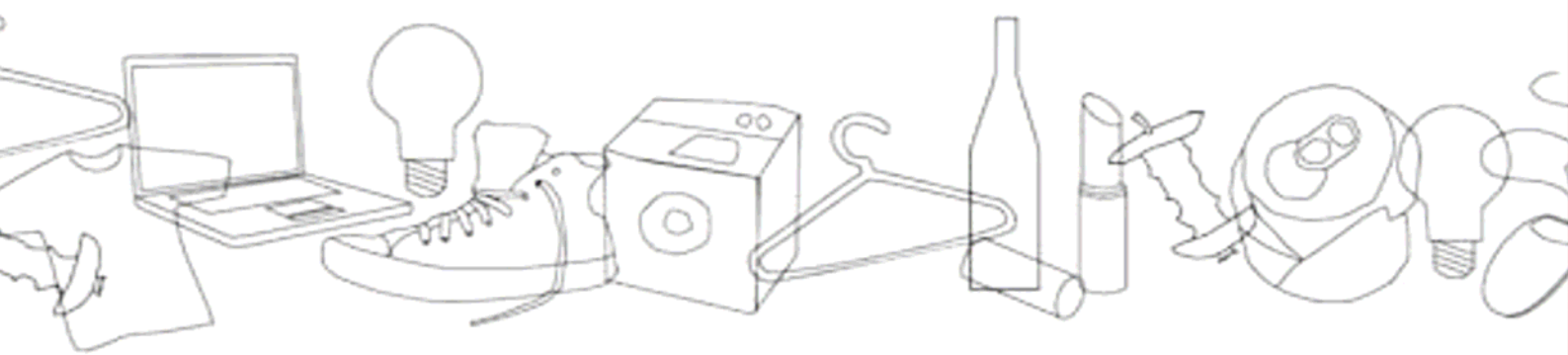


Johnson Matthey



Sainsbury's





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Year two plans

In year two we plan to take forward our learning for year one in a way that will have real impact on the decision-making processes in government and business. The table below sets out our plans, which are subject to change depending on the external context and decisions made by the consortium about where shared priorities lie. Other events might become part of the work programme and the year two partners (see below) will be alerted to new events and other activities as soon as possible.

QUARTER	DATE/LOCATION IF KNOWN	ACTIVITY/EVENT
Quarter one (May-July)	June	Web publication of discussion paper, <i>The Secret Life of Stuff</i> , which maps and critiques current and future policy drivers bearing on products and their processes of production.
	1 July, 3:00pm-5:30pm (Green Alliance)	Steering group meeting to discuss the year two provisional work programme. The meeting will also have an external focus: this may be the packaging strategy or the consultation on carbon emissions reporting, depending on the progress of both.
	1 July, 6pm- (Boisdales, Belgravia)	Consortium dinner with Nick Herbert MP , shadow secretary of state for environment, food and rural affairs. Nick will discuss emerging Conservative thinking on waste, resource and product policy.
Quarter two (August-October)	August-September	Consortium response to (aspects of) the packaging strategy submitted to Defra.
	September	Possible event on compostable packaging and nutrient recycling .
	August-October	Follow-up to dinner with Nick Herbert MP, including further engagement with Conservative policy development .
Quarter three (November-January)	November-January	Possible work on pricing instruments in run up to pre-budget report and budget, in the context of the debate about variable VAT and minimum standards for products.
Quarter four (February-April)	February	Possible event on the expansion of the Ecodesign Directive and the link to public procurement policy.
	April	Wrap-up event and report to consider lessons learnt from the two years and considerations for policymakers.

For more information about the work programme or any aspect of Designing Out Waste, please contact **Hannah Hislop** on 020 7630 4529 or hhislop@green-alliance.org.uk

