



Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

RECYCLING INCENTIVE SCHEME

Award Scheme

Themes

Sustainable Development Goals

Others

Waste Management

Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

Recycling incentive schemes provide rewards to users for actively participating in the program.

Background and Objective

Plastic recycling rates remain low and stagnant across the globe, with vast volumes of plastic being disposed of and leaking into nature. There is little economic incentive for individuals and businesses to separate and return plastic materials, relying heavily on social patterns and influence to increase recycling and separation.

Actions and Implementation

Financial incentives designed to persuade households and waste producers to reuse and recycle more, helps prevent the generation of waste and can help contribute to financing waste management activities. Incentives include both rewards and charges (pay-as-you-throw PAYT, and deposit refund schemes). Rewards are given to the users to encourage people to recycle more, typically with vouchers for individuals, vouchers for communities or payments to individuals. In addition to direct incentives in the form of vouchers, an effective recycling incentive is also the reduction of waste fees for residents willing to separate more waste at source, or when waste recycling targets at local level are achieved.

Outcomes and Impacts

CASE STUDY EXAMPLES Hong Kong To facilitate and encourage the public to use the community recycling facilities, the EPD introduced the GREEN\$ (Greeny Coins) smart card on 16 November 2020, for the public to earn GREEN\$ and exchange gift items. Members of the public bringing not less than 2 kg of recyclables to the new community recycling network can register to get a GREEN\$ smart card. By showing the GREEN\$ smart card or the QR code image printed on the back of the card in subsequent submission of recyclables, the public can earn GREEN\$ for redemption of gift items. Source: https://www.wastereduction.gov.hk/en/community/crn_intro.htm Southern England Bracknell Forest Council, in the south of England, manages the waste from a total population of 118,000 people. Given their low recycling rate and increasing price of landfill tax in the region (up to GBP 80 per tonne), the council decided to implement a pilot, self-funded incentive scheme. The implementation of the scheme followed these principles: The key objectives of the program were to increase the number of households participating in the curbside recycling service from 75% to 82% in two years and to reduce the rate of recyclable materials in residual fractions from 13% to at least 8%. Citizens can opt out and there is no mandate to be part of the reward system. Every citizen opting-in is given an "e+ card" where points are accumulated. Points are given per pick-up of these specified bins, which are emptied if eligible by the personnel of the waste truck. No weight system is necessary and no fee reduction is offered in the management of the residual waste bin. No cashable value is given to the users of the system, but a maximum total value of GBP 26 in credits (points) per year is given. The main rewards were offered as leisure rewards, e.g. as discounts or direct access to sports facilities, membership to local clubs, gyms, pools, etc. The implementation was considered successful by the council of Bracknell Forest, as at least 11,000 households joined the scheme (a quarter of the total number of households). The amount of residual waste was reduced by 1,000 tonnes, representing a savings of GBP 90,000 (from 1 April 2013 - July 2014). The system is now implemented at full scale. Visit <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/recycling-incentive-scheme/how-join-to-learn-more>.