

# Going *Beyond* Recycling

The what,

why,

what next, and who

of

***waste prevention***

*Mike Read Associates*



# ***Mike Read Associates***

- International consultancy since 1987
- Biodiversity, FSC, climate change, water efficiency, etc.
- Community and voluntary sector
- Waste Minimisation programme for Wiltshire
- WEEE charitable company
- **Beyond Recycling**
- [www.mikeread.org](http://www.mikeread.org)



# What is Waste Prevention?

- *Beginning of pipe*
- Forgotten first two 'R's



# What is Waste Prevention?

- Avoidance
- Design
- Product re-use
- Reducing hazardousness



# Prevention Principles

- Selecting quality over quantity
- Designing and choosing durable, repairable, and upgradeable products
- Decoupling consumption of resources from fulfilment and status



# What is Waste Prevention?

- Not the same as zero waste
- Not the same as waste minimisation



# Why *Beyond* Recycling?

- Recycling is good
- And we're very good at it
- But is it sustainable waste management?



# Into the Lions' Den

- Expense
- Downcycling
- Energy and resources



# Into the Lions' Jaws

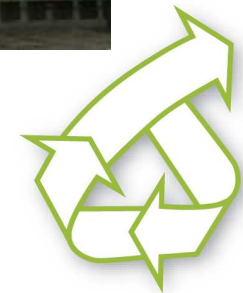
- Great Green Easy?

*“It doesn't matter how much I consume...  
because I recycle most of it.”*





*Mike Read Associates*



# Why has it come to this?

- No blame
- *Statutory* recycling targets
- Recycling is more tangible
- Lifestyle change



# What's to be done?

- Waste Strategies 2000 & 2007?
- Independent action
- Economics



# What Next: Prevention in Action

- So many opportunities
- Designing products that make less waste in production and use; choosing durable, reusable, repairable, upgradeable, less-packaged and rejecting disposable, single-use, unrepairable, over-packaged; choosing quality; choosing less; working with retailers; improving labelling; raising awareness; local waste exchanges; freecycle (and eBay?); improving collection methods and services for large and reusable items, home and community composting, etc., etc.



# Prevention – More Information

- Workshops
- Toolkits
- Guides



# Who

- Interdisciplinary approach
- Central government
- Local authorities
- Community sector
- Social marketing
- You and me



# Who

- Demographers, sociologists, economists, educators, campaigners, and communicators
- Designers, manufacturers, marketers, retailers, consumers
- Researchers



# A Waste Prevention 'Network'

- [www.beyondrecycling.net](http://www.beyondrecycling.net)
- Attention commensurate with potential.
- Expertise and skills
- Network, forum, think-tank?
- Scoping study



# Climate Change

- Only game in town
- Waste prevention offers huge opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Carbon credits

