

Annual report:

## Merseyside Textile Forum – Summary of outputs and outcomes 2015-2016.

Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority

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# 1. Introduction

## Context of report

Established in April 2012, the Merseyside Textile Forum (MTF) is a voluntary forum comprised of representatives from third sector/charitable organisations operating across Merseyside, the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) and the Merseyside District Authorities. The primary objective for the MTF is to divert the 22,000 tonnes of identified textile waste from the household waste stream through the development and implementation of innovative re-use and recycling programmes.

Since its inception the MTF has developed and delivered a number of projects designed to promote textile re-use and recycling across the districts. These projects have resulted in a series of outcomes including an increased diversion of waste from landfill, heightened awareness of textile recycling and re-use and a collective and joined up approach to project management/development.

This is the final report for the MTF in its current format, covering activities and outcomes between 2015-2016. The report is split into the following sections:

Section 2	Overview of the Merseyside Textile Forum including its function, roles and responsibilities and latest membership figures.
Section 3	Summary of MTF projects and wider engagement activities delivered by MTF members in 2015-2016.
Section 4	Wider activities.
Section 5	Next steps for MTF post 2016.
Section 6	Appendices

## 2. About MTF

### Function

The aim of the forum is to support the development of strategies that meet the objectives as set out in the Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy and support the increased diversion of textile waste from landfill across Merseyside.

### Role

The role of the MTF as set out in the forum's terms of reference is to:

1	Be responsible for the development of strategies and initiatives that increase textile recycling and re-use rates on Merseyside
2	Contribute to the development of a business case and implementation plan and support the continuous development of said business case and implementation plan
3	Work together and with MRWA to collectively support future incentivisation of textile recycling on Merseyside
4	Where appropriate and with agreement MTF members may be required to provide investment to launch or undertake initiatives or projects that may increase textile recycling on Merseyside.
5	Facilitate appropriate levels of communication and information exchange between members.
6	Provide a platform for textile recycling charities and organisations to engage with and influence the future of textile recycling on Merseyside
7	Help to raise the profile of textile recycling both on Merseyside and further afield

### Membership

The MTF forum is made up of representatives from the following organisations:

- Third sector (textile) organisations
- Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority
- Merseyside Local Authorities

As of March 2016 the MTF had 30 members including 27 third sector organisations. Membership has been steadily growing and has tripled in size since the forum's first meeting in April 2012. Appendix 1 provides a full breakdown of the current membership.

### 3. MTF projects & activities (2015-2016)

#### Overview

This section provides an overview of the projects delivered during the final year of the MTF in its current format. All projects have been funded via the MRWA as well as in kind contributions from MTF members. In addition to the Secretariat role, MTF members have delivered three other projects.

A summary of the key headline achievements\* from this final year of activity is provided below:

1	Textile diversion: 21.760 tonnes of textiles diverted from landfill.
2	Carbon savings: 130.3 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> has been saved through MTF projects
3	Social Value: A new measure for this year, MTF members estimate the total value of the clothes received through donations to be £37,302
4	Reach: Direct engagement from MTF projects reached 68,455 individuals.
5	Projects undertaken: Three projects have been started this financial year including continuation of the Secretariat role.

\*A full breakdown of the results and methodologies used to calculate achievements can be found in Appendix 2 & 3. Highlights provided above exclude data from the Really Useful Skills Hub due to an inaccuracy in data reporting.

A breakdown of the projects funded through the MTF for the final period April 2015-March 2016 is provided below.

Table 1: MTF projects (2015-2016)

### MTF activities 2015 & 2016

	Project title	Description	Owner	Timescales
Project #	MTF projects			
1	MTF Secretariat	Provision of technical and administrative support to MTF members (2015-2016)	MRWA	April 15 - March 16
3	University collections	Textile collections across Merseyside Universities	British Heart Foundation	April 15 - March 16
4	Really Useful skills hub	City-region wide textile re-use hub incorporating a skill-share programme	Faiths4Change	April 15 - March 16
5	On Demand	On Demand textile collection trial in St Helens	St Helens Council	July 15 - March 16

## Project 1: MTF Secretariat Project

Project Leader: Stuart Donaldson, (MRWA)

Project Timetable: April 15 – March 2016

As with previous years, MTF funding was allocated to fund the position of Secretariat. Spanning two 6-month contracts, Gyron retained this position for the year. During this final contract period Gyron was instructed to carry out an options appraisal to assess possible future operating models for the MTF. This work was completed and used by MTF members and MRWA to develop a strategy for the future of the MTF.

Next steps: April 2016

Gyron has been retained to support MTF members to help guide the transition of the MTF following the options appraisal. Further information can be found in section 5.

## Project 2: University Collections

Project Leader: British Heart Foundation

Project Timetable: April 2015 – September 2016

Led by the British Heart Foundation (BHF) in partnership with MTF members: Sat Col, Scope and Nugent Care, this project is now in its third year. What initially developed around the requirements of Liverpool University has grown to include LJMU and now from 2016 – Liverpool Hope University too.

A large focus for this year was to increase the coverage of the campaign across all the universities and (where possible) to improve/increase the location of donation banks on existing sites in time for the start of the next campaign/student move out in April 2016. BHF worked hard to bring Liverpool Hope University onto the scheme, helping to secure an additional 3 new campuses (1500 students in total). Another new concept for the 2016 campaign was the introduction of smaller, internal donation boxes that provided a constant reminder to students as to the opportunities for textile recycling and were placed in key locations within the campus buildings. The additional banks/boxes were divided equally amongst members.

The final results for this year are provided in the table below. This includes figures from April 2015 up to and including September 2016. Total donations reached 1783 bags or 17,000kg.

Results (April 2015- September 2016):

The outputs from the project were as follows:

	Measure	Actual
1	Donations received (bags):	1783
2	Donations received (kg):	17,000
3	CO <sub>2</sub> equivalent avoided (tonnes):	101.8
4	Waste management savings (£):	£1,700
5	Social value of donations received (£):	£29,143
6	In kind contributions (£):	£3,750

Next steps: April 2016 – March 2017

BHF will continue to manage the 2016/17 campaign with the three Universities. Closer monitoring is required to ensure that members are maintaining the required service levels as specified in the terms of reference (TOR). Tighter controls will be placed on members to ensure that they are complying with the TOR (failure to do so will result in that member being removed from the programme).

## Project 3: MTF Really Useful Skills Hub

Project Leader: Faiths4Change

Project Timetable: April 2015- March 2016

The aim of the Really Useful Skills Hub is to develop a city region wide approach to re-use, repair and up-cycling. The aim of the Hub was to complement and work with the MTF to enhance the re-use of unwanted textile resources and reduce the financial and environmental cost of textile waste sent to landfill on Merseyside.

In summary the Hub would be comprised of a collection of social enterprises with a track record in textile re-use, repair and up-cycling spanning across all five Merseyside districts. Through the Hub, these organisations would be provided with a skill sharing training and resource package. Organisations would then be encouraged and supported by the Hub to deliver a series of re-use workshops / training sessions to their clients thereby creating a cascade effect with multiple recipients benefiting from the Hub at a local level. A number of city region level partners

including those in education, health and economic development were invited to join the Hub in order to provide additional support and resources.

In Phase 1 of the project, Faiths4Change were responsible for initiating the creation of the Hub. This included running a combination of small focused workshop sessions and a main networking event. In total 18 social enterprises were engaged via this process– surpassing the initial target of 10. Although time and resources are cited as a key barrier to participants joining the Hub, the central event was well received by all participants as the most sensible way to communicate and engage with other members of the Hub. The event created a platform for delegates to pass on advice and share information on re-use and to discuss opportunities for the pooling of resources. Following the event, all 18 organisations delivered cascading skill share workshops directly engaging with a total 789 adults. These 18 organisations also shared their learning via social media, newsletters and websites, which was estimated to have reached a further 3,450 individuals.

In phase 2 of the project, Faiths4Change carried out a second networking event to further develop the Hub. The main ambitions behind phase 2 were to explore opportunities for re-use/recycling, expand the size and impact of the Hub and to develop a communications plan for the Hub. Due to the timing of the Hub event (Easter 2016) the number of delegates attending the event was not as high as anticipated. Delegates that did attend talked positively about the benefits of the Hub and have provided an empowering platform for its members to meet and discuss opportunities for joint working. The outputs from both phases of the project are detailed below.

*\*Please note: It has not been possible to provide accurate data on donations received. Organisations providing the skill-share training did not capture the required information, therefore the figures for the first three measures stated below are estimates only\*.*

	Measure	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
1	Donations received (kg):	6,312	30,456	36,768
2	CO <sub>2</sub> equivalent avoided (tonnes):	38	182	220
3	Waste management savings (£):	631.2	3045	£3,677
4	Number of organisations engaged :	18	16	34
5	Individuals engaged via skill share :	789	3,666	4,455
6	Individuals engaged via information share:	3,450	985	4,435
7	In kind contributions (£):	-	-	£5,040
8	Social Value (£)	10,821	52,210	63,031

Next steps: April 2016 – onwards

Whilst the project was initially supported using MTF monies and therefore focused on textile re-use, the long-term plan for the hub will be to support wider re-use activities for waste streams such as WEEE, furniture and bicycles etc. Final recommendations from the report include steps to continue to increase the presence and impact of the Hub with a regular schedule of events, greater discussion with Hub members where opportunities for re-use/recycling may exist and greater joint working with Hub members and MTF members.

## Project 4: On Demand

Project Leader: St Helens MBC

Project Timetable: July 2015 – March 2016

The On Demand project is led by St Helens MBC with the aim of offering householders in the St Helens area with a bespoke collection services for textiles. Similar to existing bulky items collections, householders are invited to call the council hotline to arrange collection of their donations.

The project officially started in July 2015 and involved the following MTF members: British Heart Foundation, Scope and Age UK Mid Merseyside. MTF funding was used to promote the service to its residents with 64,000 leaflets being delivered to householders alongside newspaper adverts and website campaigns.

Whilst initially operating as a stand-alone project, the On Demand campaign was later merged with a DCLG funded campaign focused on food and textile recycling. This campaign included the creation of a reward-based scheme allowing St Helens residents the opportunity to build up rewards in return for recycling more food and textiles. This was viewed as a positive opportunity for the MTF to increase donations.

Despite a slow start to donations from July to September, it was felt that the introduction of the reward-based scheme (October) helped to increase awareness of the campaign and had a positive impact on donations.

After the first 6 months a review meeting was held to gather feedback from members as to the success of the project. The majority of members felt that the level of donations was not as high as originally anticipated (100 tonnes) which, when combined with other operational issues ultimately led to a drop in the number of members willing to commit to the project long-term. Some of the reasons cited by members included:

- Level of donations not high enough to justify the required resources (i.e. man and van)
- Quality of donations not as expected i.e. items not accepted are often left out for collection, and dirty and low quality items out-number the high quality donations.
- Unable to meet the requirements of the schedule i.e. 4 days of the week – not always possible to fit it around existing requirements.
- Difficulty in using the Council’s weighbridge due to location in relation to other jobs (before and after weighing was a mandatory requirement for all project partners).
- On Demand was seen by some members as cannibalising existing door step campaigns and was responsible for poaching long term donators from charity members.

Feedback from the Council suggested that despite initial interest, it was very difficult to get members to commit to the collection schedule with the majority of the collections falling to British Heart Foundation. There were also a number of instances when members were unable to complete their collections, often dropping out at the last minute, leaving the Council to arrange for the collection by its own staff.

Following the feedback session, the Council made the decision to continue running the On Demand service. With no MTF members willing to participate in the collection of donations, the Council decided to take on this role with collections divided amongst team members. Collected material is then passed to MTF member Scope.

#### Results:

	Measure	Actual
1	Donations received (kg):	4,760
2	CO <sub>2</sub> equivalent avoided (tonnes):	100.0
3	Waste management savings (£):	£476
4	Social value of donations (£):	£8,160
5	Number of residents directly engaged (via leaflet distribution):	64,000
6	In kind contributions (£):	£25,000

\*NB: In kind donations relate to both contributions from St Helens Council (IT developments, flyer distribution, project management, call centre management and staff time) and contributions from MTF members (resources relating to the collection of donations i.e. vehicle and staff costs.)

Next steps: April 2016 – onwards

On Demand is set to continue until at least October 2017 to coincide with the planned duration of the reward-based scheme. This could however, be extended further depending on the success of the rewards scheme. At the time of writing it is envisaged that the Council will continue to collect all donations from residents before passing them onto Scope for re-use/recycling. Long term, the Council is happy to discuss additional charities joining the scheme if there is a sufficient level of interest.

## 4. Wider engagement activities

In addition to the range of projects undertaken by the MTF, the MRWA continues to promote textile re-use and recycling as part of on going promotional work across Merseyside. Examples include:

### MRWA and Veolia Community Fund:

The MRWA and Veolia Community Fund for 2016/17 supported a number of projects linked to textile re-use and recycling, which are detailed below:

#### [Honey Rose Foundation – Storage facility \(St Helens\):](#)

The project will provide improved storage facilities for the Honey Rose Foundation's charity shops allowing increased re-use and recycling of furniture and other donated household materials. The facility will also provide a workshop area to facilitate the repair and re-use of items.

#### [Halton Play Council – Scrapstore \(Halton\):](#)

Greater promotion of the Scrapstore through increased marketing but also support to provide more resources for collection of items as well as supporting repair activities.

#### [Granby Toxteth Development Trust Recycle L1578 \(Liverpool\):](#)

Continue to expand the work of L1578, which is responsible for delivering recycling and waste management activities that reach more communities. Special focus for this funding year will include Roma communities.

#### [Liverpool Guild of Students – Leave Liverpool Tidy \(Liverpool\):](#)

Leave Liverpool Tidy is a reduce, re-use and recycle project, which aims to reduce the amount of re-usable items going to landfill. This is achieved through the collection of unwanted items, which are then redistributed to those in the local community and students via a pop-up shop.

#### [Faiths4Change – Turning the Tables \(Merseyside and Halton\):](#)

Turning the Tables is a highly interactive project promoting skills, behaviour change and a strong waste prevention and re-use message via an interactive large-scale community artwork.

## Textile Recycling

During the last year, MRWA has commissioned new research to update waste composition analysis for Merseyside. Part of the MTF funding was used to support this research, which analysed household wastes both at the kerbside and at HWRC's. High-level analysis has shown a decline in the amount of textiles found in the waste stream since the same analysis was last completed in 2009. Initial figures indicate that the textile waste going to landfill (kerbside residual) is now 16,964 tonnes or 4.7% of the total.

Whilst overall tonnages may be less, percentages may have increased reflecting the increased capacity in residual bins as more recycling has been removed, to allow for items like duvets, curtains and pillows.

These figures highlight the positive benefits of the MTF and how its activities have positively contributed to a change in resident behaviour in relation to textiles.

## 5. MTF Proposed Activities (2016 onwards)

Towards the end of this final year MRWA requested an options appraisal to assess future operating models for the MTF. Funding to support the activities of the forum have always been provided by the MRWA, drawn from savings made from the authority's third party textile recycling credit scheme. The budget for the MTF, which originally started at £45k, was reduced to £35k in the last financial year. A recent decision by the MRWA to completely withdraw recycling credit payments for textiles to third parties was announced and made affective from March 2016.

With MTF's core funding now removed, it must now consider alternative sources of funding in order to continue operating. Identifying new sources of funding brings new opportunities for the MTF to not only extend operations into the district of Halton but also to widen the scope to include furniture re-use and recycling and opportunities to access commercial textiles for re-use and recycling,

Six options were assessed as follows:

**Option 1: Status Quo:** No change to budget.

**Option 2: Review and Retain:** Retain MTF, with reduced MRWA funding subject to a further review at the end of the 16/17 financial year.

**Option 3: Virtual platform:** Continue MTF as an on-line engagement Forum and end MRWA direct funding for projects.

**Option 4: Re-use forum:** MRWA and MTF to scope and develop the Forum into a strategic re-use hub by March 2017.

**Option 5: Closure of the MTF:** End MTF in its current format as of 31 March 2016.

All options were assessed against a set of objectives defined by MRWA and the project team leading to the following two options being short-listed for further consideration:

- **Option 3:** To continue the Merseyside Textile Forum as a virtual network/platform in 2016/17 covering the City Region, but end MRWA direct funding for MTF in its current format.
- **Option 4:** Development of the Merseyside Textile Forum into a re-use hub covering the City Region by March 2017.

Following the outcome of the options appraisal MRWA commissioned Gyron to carry out further work in support of a model that might incorporate Options 3 & 4. This will include the delivery of another MTF meeting and subsequent stakeholder engagement activities that will help members to transition to a new model, to incorporate their views and to ensure members are fully involved going forward.

## 6. Summary & Recommendations

The MTF has been successful in achieving its main objective, which was to reduce textiles going to landfill. This is evidenced by the latest high-level analysis undertaken by MWRA showing that textile waste going to landfill (kerbside residual) is now 16,964 tonnes or 4.7% of the total. This demonstrates a decline in the amount of textiles found in the waste stream since the same analysis was last completed in 2009.

Now in its 4<sup>th</sup> and final year in its current format, the MTF has continued to develop its impact and reach. Key successes from the year include:

- Membership of the forum continues to grow; with 27 existing members, the MTF has tripled in size since its inception in 2012.
- Members have continued to grow existing projects with the University project now covering all three Merseyside Universities.
- The On Demand project represents the largest trial undertaken to date involving charities and Merseyside Districts.
- Now established, these projects will continue into 2016-17 even if/when funding is removed.

Challenges identified from project delivery include:

- Resourcing still remains a key challenge for projects with members struggling to commit to collection schedules.
- Monitoring /Data capture is not always adhered to leading to inaccurate data reporting and a breakdown in service offering.
- Lack of leadership – linked to resource issues projects are lead or managed by a small number of charities and there is a general reluctance from other charities to take the lead on projects.

In 2016-2017 the MTF could be in a position to respond to the development of new schemes/projects in the City Region as part of the circular economy and promoting behavioural change for waste prevention as well as re-use and recycling. This could bring a number of benefits including:

- Wider coverage – to include Halton Borough Council
- Increased joint-working opportunities
- More access to funding – local, national and European

It is recommended that learning from both the successes and challenges of the MTF since its inception should be taken on board when developing options for the future. It is also recommended that MTF members continue to be engaged in developing the next stage of the MTF so that they can continue to support the objectives of MRWA and its stakeholders.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: MTF membership (2015/2016)

Merseyside Textile Forum 2015-2016 membership	
Charity / third sector organisations	
1	Age UK mid Merseyside
2	Asylum Link Merseyside
3	Barnados
4	British Heart Foundation
5	Cancer Research UK
6	Claire House
7	Emmaus Merseyside
8	Faiths for Change
9	MacMillan Cancer Care
10	Marie Curie Cancer
11	North West Air Ambulance
12	Nugent Care
13	Queenscourt Hospice
14	Roy Castle Lung Foundation
15	Salvation Army
16	Scope
17	Shaw Trust
18	St Johns Ambulance
19	St Johns Hospice Wirral
20	St Josephs Hospice Association
21	Sue Ryder Care
22	Village Housing Association
23	Willowbrook Hospice
24	Wirral Community Meals

	Local government
25	Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority
26	St Helens MBC
27	Wirral MBC
	Trade Associations / Business support organisations
28	WRAP
29	Charity Retail Association (CRA)

## Appendix 2: MTF results and outputs 2015/2016

Project #	Project title	Tonnes diverted (kg)	Social value (£)	CO2 - e avoided (tonnes)	Waste management savings (£/tonnes)	In kind contributions (£)	People engaged
1	MTF Secretariat	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	NA
3	Liverpool university collections	17000	£29,143	1018	£1,700	£3,750	N/A
4	Really Useful skills hub	36768	£63,031	220.1	£3,677	£5,040	4455
5	On Demand	4760	£8,160	28.5	£476	£25,000	64,000 (via leaflet distribution)
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21760</b>	<b>£37,303</b>	<b>130.3</b>	<b>2176</b>	<b>£33,790</b>	<b>68455</b>

Please note:

1. Figures related to the Really Useful Skills Hub are based on estimates only.
2. Totals provided exclude figures from the Really Useful Skills Hub project owing to their accuracy \*with the exception of # of people engaged and in kind donations\*.
3. Figures for University campaign include activity from April 2015 until September 2016.
4. Appendix 3 details the methodologies/calculations used.

## Appendix 3: Methodology

The following methodologies have been applied when calculating the economic, social and environmental benefits relating to MTF projects.

MTF output	Adopted methodology / calculation
Tonnes diverted (tonnes)	Total tonnes of textiles collected during MTF projects
Bags collected (number of)	Total number of bags of textile donations collected during MTF projects
Social value (£)	<p>MTF members use estimates provided by the Waste Resources Action Programme which state that each item donated (particularly t-shirts and jumpers) has a re-sale value of £1.</p> <p>MTF members have agreed to adopt the following social value calculation. That a) the average weight of a donation bag is 3.5kg and on average each bag contains 6 items of clothing fit for re-sale and therefore the social value is £6/bag donated/collected.</p>
CO <sub>2</sub> - equivalent avoided	<p>Calculations are based on guidance provided by MRWA who use Defra's Carbon Metric Report to calculate CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent tonnes saved.</p> <p>Co<sub>2</sub> equivalent tonnes saved = 5.987 (conversion factor for textiles) x total tonnage</p>
Waste management savings	Calculations provided by MRWA assuming £100/tonne waste management saving for every tonne of textiles re-used/diverted from landfill.
People engaged	Number of people engaged during the MTF project either directly or indirectly.
In kind contributions	Total value of in kind contributions made towards the project. Where staff time is contributed for free, the hours worked x day rate is used to calculate the value.