



Press Release

Town & Parish Council Social Media Valentine's Day Recycling Assets

Many parish and town councils have declared climate emergencies and taken inspiring action to mitigate its effects but one simple thing all councils can easily do is to educate residents about the importance of reducing carbon emissions through routine everyday actions like recycling.

Each year on Valentine's day, the UK sends around 25 million cards, uses approximately 13,500 miles of gift wrap and generates an additional 7,500 tonnes of plastic packaging and 17,000 tonnes of cardboard from online shopping and boxes of chocolates (Business Waste, 2024). Plus, we send a staggering 220 million roses (Floral Daily, 2024)

Purchasing at that scale means it's a time of year where it is helpful to remind our residents how to dispose of their additional waste and, importantly, how to recycle right.

Contaminating our recycling bins with the wrong or dirty items can mean the contents are rejected and sent to landfill or for energy recovery. Around one fifth of recycling is unrecyclable because of this issue (Dennis, 2022). It's easily done too, in 2022 84% of households were unintentionally contaminating their recycling bins and this underlines the importance of timely reminders about how to recycle right (WRAP, 2022).

Based on the top three most common gifts: cards, flowers, food and drink (Simons, 2024), the most likely potential contaminants around Valentine's Day are, glittery cards or wrapping paper, cellophane from bunches of flowers and food and drink packaging. Based on this we have created a simple set of assets and messages for you to use on your social media platforms to help your residents recycling right.

You can download the assets at: <https://pledge2recycle.co.uk/community/>

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NOTES TO EDITORS

RECOUP is the UK's leading independent authority and trusted voice on plastics resource efficiency and recycling. As a registered charity, our work is supported by members who share our commitments including a more sustainable use of plastics, increased plastics recycling, improved environmental performance and meeting legislative requirements. We achieve these by leading, advising, challenging, educating and connecting the whole value chain to keep plastics in a circular system that protects the environment, underpinned by evidence and knowledge.

Pledge2Recycle Plastics is the citizen communications and education arm of RECOUP. Pledge2Recycle Plastics aims to educate citizens on plastics recycling, 'cutting their confusion' on plastics packaging recycling kerbside. Pledge2Recycle Plastics aims to drive adoption of a simplified and concise language communications which can be easily understood to support sustained behaviour change.

References

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