

ASSOCIATION OF CITIZENS GIVING DIRECT FEEDBACK TO MUNICIPALITIES



Background



Citizens are key actors for recycling and in particular for the collection process, since their participation is essential for the success of the system. Their satisfaction and commitment are therefore fundamental; however, there is rarely a way for them to influence and participate in the decision-making process or give their feedback to decision-makers. Thus, it is important to make the population part of paper and board collection.

Citizens associations provide a space to discuss issues about paper and board collection together. The municipality must be transparent with all the decisions and allow feedback, both from individual citizens and from civil associations with regards to local waste management.

ACTION

Get into touch with associations of citizens to enhance communication and involvement of the citizens to discuss issues about paper and board collection and to interact/give feedback to municipalities

Examples of good practice implemented

CAG – Citizens, association of Georgetown (Washington, DC) (REF: 1)



CAG is an association in Georgetown (Washington, DC) seeking to maintain a unique mix of missions for the community, while seeing that the views and interests of residents and homeowners are well represented in the neighborhood's continuing evolution.

The Membership in CAG provides a unique opportunity to meet neighbors, share concerns and ideas, and find new ways to enjoy and improve Georgetown. Paper recycling is one of those topics tackled where following issues are discussed:

“Containers for recycling material: Paper items can be placed in paper bags; please no plastic bags. For paper and other items, many Georgetown residents use open containers such as the green bins the city used to provide or just put material out in bags. In theory, DC requires use of a closed container with wheels, such as the blue recycling cans the city sells (and is considering distributing for free). But as of now, that requirement is not being enforced.

Paper: Newspapers and inserts, magazines, catalogues, paperback and telephone books, mail (including envelopes with windows), office paper, cardboard including cereal and shoe boxes, but not coated cardboard such as milk cartons, and NO PIZZA BOXES”.

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Residents' associations in York (UK) (REF: 2)



In the city of York, there are many residents' associations, each with a geographically defined area, focused on: housing concerns, community issues, local environment and local issues.

The York's city council recognizes these associations as playing an important role in building local communities. Their feedback is considered for decision-making contributing to establish their policies.

Keep in mind that...

- ⚠ The associations' feedback to improve the paper and board collection system should be taken into account.
- ⚠ Some association's claims may be difficult to achieve. Then, the municipality should evaluate if the claim can be carried out and in case it cannot, the reason should be fully justified and explained to the community.



How to start? (REF: 7)

- ✓ Create an open space discussion or open an online template for consultation.
- ✓ Contact with the associations of the municipality.
- ✓ Have regular meetings with the association.
- ✓ Evaluate the association's claims.
- ✓ Improve collection system taking into account the association claims.

Potential benefits (REF: 7)



Increase of the quantity and quality of paper and board collected	●	●	
Increase of the environmental awareness regarding separate collection	●	●	●
Improvement of the green image of the municipality	●	●	●
Increase of the recycling rates of the city	●	●	●
Improvement of the citizens' perception about their municipal entities	●	●	



References:

1. CAG (2016): Citizens association of Georgetown
2. RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS IN YORK (UK)