



## City of Melville

October 2021

### Background



Melville is a good example of a well-researched, successful education campaign in an urban, high socio-economic area which had a high diversion rate of food organics and garden organics (FOGO) from landfill before dedicated FOGO bins were officially rolled out. Before the rollout in July 2019, informative and engaging communications were tested on just under 7,000 households to gauge their efficacy. The trial showed that to engage the community successfully, the city needed a grassroots rather than a traditional corporate approach.

### Approach

The city used a ‘theory of planned behaviour’ model where communications targeted attitudes, subjective norms and self-efficacy to help behaviour change. Melville conducted extensive research to learn what worked and what didn’t work for other councils. The city started communications well in advance of the launch, catered for larger families and households with different needs, and continually assessed and adjusted its communications to improve them and ensure targeted messaging.

### Timeline

Research and planning 18 months	Pre-lead-in phase 4 months	Lead-in phase 6 weeks	Launch (trial area) Oct 2017	Settle-in phase 5 weeks	Ongoing support phase Continuing	Launch (city-wide) Jul to Sep 2019	Ongoing support phase Continuing
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## Research and planning

What	Why
Consultation with the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) and local government authorities (LGAs).	To help design the trial utilising best practice methods.
Study tour to Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia.	To observe existing FOGO services and learn what did and didn't work.
Analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.	To select the trial area, and ensure it represented the broader demographics of the region and data gathered could be extrapolated.

## Pre-lead in phase

What	Why
Training for staff, including collection drivers/operations, customer service staff, all other front-line staff (libraries etc.) and SMRC staff involved in communications.	To ensure that residents received consistent and correct information. All information channels like the website and customer service information pages were updated with consistent information.
A video for the initial announcement.	To provide an entertaining and professional way to gain awareness. To improve attitudes towards FOGO, increasing intentions and driving behaviour.
Promotion of the video through local media, including community newspapers, the SMRC's Recycle Right and Council websites, social media channels and Melville's magazine <i>Mosaic</i> .	To ensure maximum awareness through utilising a wide range of channels to reach different demographics.

## Lead-in phase

What	Why
A detailed letter and a 'Get to know FOGO' flyer, sent to all residents four weeks before the launch.	To educate residents about how to use the new bins correctly.
Interactive community info sessions.	To engage older adult residents, provide information about the new system, answer questions and build support.
Online FOGO sorting game and app.	To engage youth and improve knowledge of sorting in a fun way. To enable children to influence their family's behaviour through subjective norms.
A second video, to explain to residents how to use the new system.	To educate residents in an entertaining and professional way.
Free recycling bin upgrades (from 240 to 360 litres), to accommodate recycling changing from a weekly to a fortnightly collection.	To accommodate larger families and households with different needs.
Free general waste bin audits, for those struggling with capacity issues, to see if a larger bin was required.	To reduce negative attitudes and to gain community support.





## Settle-in phase

What	Why
Bin audits and tagging.	To collect data about participation and contamination rates.  To give residents personalised feedback, increasing their self-efficacy and helping to improve their sorting.
Adoption of the name 'Bin Tagging and Audit Education program'.	To reduce negative views from residents towards bin auditing (often perceived to be an invasion of privacy and a waste of money) by highlighting its educational purpose.
Use (in the initial stages) of a 'quizzical' face tag and the line 'We didn't see any food in your FOGO bin' on tagged FOGO bins.	To ensure residents were aware that they could put food in the FOGO bin. (Some residents thought the tag was too negative, and some complained because they did actually have food in their bins but it was hidden under the garden waste. Melville decided to stop using the quizzical tags and instead used happy tags with the 'all food waste' icon highlighted for FOGO bins that appeared to only use garden waste.)
Addition of extra staff hours to help answer resident enquiries in person, over the phone, by email and through Facebook.	To clarify information for residents, reduce any misconceptions, take requests for recycling bin upgrades and assist those struggling with general waste bin capacity issues. Melville Talks, the council's online community engagement platform, was also used to provide an opportunity for dialogue between residents.

## Ongoing support phase

What	Why
A survey of 1,952 residents in the trial area, conducted six months after the launch.	To measure the effectiveness of communications and evaluate community attitudes and perceptions.
Review of survey findings and subsequent revision of communications.  The survey revealed some gaps and key messages which were addressed in future education:  1. residents needed information about where to put non-rinsed bottles and containers, broken glass, plastic bags, e-waste and household batteries  2. the option for households to increase the size of their recycling bins for free needed to be better advertised (only 59% of those surveyed were aware of the option)  3. there was a need for communications encouraging people to reduce waste through reusable shopping bags, 'no junk mail' stickers, composting at home and buying in bulk.	1. To improve the sorting of problem waste and reduce contamination by improving self-efficacy through clear instructions.  2. To increase awareness of recycling bin upgrades.  3. To educate residents about waste avoidance.



## Ongoing support phase (Continued)

What	Why
<p>Use of data from bin audits to inform key messages for ongoing education, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. you can put earth in the FOGO bin</li><li>2. you can put non-recyclable paper and cardboard in the FOGO bin</li><li>3. you can put all food waste in the FOGO bin.</li></ol>	To improve the sorting of problem waste and reduce contamination by improving self-efficacy through clear instructions.
<p>Addition of a new section entitled 'Recycling myth busters' to Melville's website.</p>	To address common misconceptions such as the idea that our recycling just gets dumped in landfill, or that organics are fine to go in landfill because they rot down anyway.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Posting of contamination rates on Facebook with the words 'Well done Melville ... producing clean compost from your FOGO.'</li><li>2. Award of certificates and a mini FOGO bin (delivered by rubbish truck drivers) to children from households with low contamination rates; children also had their photos taken and posted on Melville's Facebook page.</li><li>3. Use of the slogan 'taking trash out the Melville way' in communications.</li><li>4. Ongoing education and communications with residents about their issues and perceptions while resolving them in a timely manner.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To provide evidence of how each resident's actions impact the success of the system. To build trust, congratulate and motivate. To remind residents what happens to their FOGO bins.</li><li>2. To reward positive behaviour and use testimonials to improve self-efficacy.</li><li>3. To reduce the value-action gap and influence subjective norms by targeting social norms and a sense of community.</li><li>4. To support, in particular, new residents who may struggle with the system, to ensure they have the information needed to use the system correctly and prevent contamination or perception issues.</li></ol>

## Statistics

- Recovery rate: overall diversion rate of 64.4 per cent during the trial in October.
- Contamination: 2.6 per cent in June/July 2018 (during the trial).
- Education and communication costs: \$23 per household for the trial and about \$21 per household for the full rollout.

