

South London Waste Partnership

Destination: Recycling

Script

MAIN FILM

Intro

00:03 – 00:06 Have you ever wondered what happens to the stuff you recycle?

00:06 – 00:08 Where it's taken and what it's turned into?

00:09 – 00:11 You have? Great! Let's go and find out.

00:12 – 00:16 So, your local council works together with three other London boroughs.

00:16 – 00:28 With the help of specialist waste management companies - more on them later - they collect and recycle all your food waste, plastics, paper, glass, cans and cartons. They even do clever stuff with your rubbish.

00:29 – 00:30 They're called the South London Waste Partnership.

00:31 – 00:37 Together they send all this material on an amazing recycling and reprocessing journey – and it all starts with you!

Food waste

00:40 – 00:41 First up – food waste

00:42 – 00:47 By putting food waste in your kitchen caddy rather than the bin, you are the first part of an important chain.

00:48 – 00:59 The contents of the caddy go into your outdoor food bin - which is collected every week and taken to sites in either Kingston or Sutton before it's all transported to an anaerobic Digestion facility in Surrey.

01:00 – 01:11 This place treats 50,000 tonnes of food waste and other organic matter every year. Everything from fruit and veg peelings, to egg shells, meat and fish bones, teabags and the odd apple core too.

01:11 – 01:14 But what happens to it? We feed it to a cow obviously.

01:16 – 01:26 Not a real cow though, we call this the concrete cow – it's a highly sophisticated process that mimics a cow's digestive system, transforming all that food waste into organic bio fertilizer.

01:27 – 01:31 Farmers use this to help grow their crops – making some of the food that will end up back on your plate.

01:32 – 01:33 And here's the really clever bit.

01:34 – 01:42 Gasses given off from the digestion process are captured and used to generate electricity, which is fed into the National Grid – powering thousands of homes.

01:43 – 01:44 So, none of the waste is wasted.

Paper and card

01:47 – 01:49 Mmmm, nice jumper!

01:50 – 01:56 The cardboard delivery box you put in your wheelie bin along with newspapers, card, envelopes and paper stays nice and dry.

01:56 – 02:02 It's collected every 2-weeks, and stored at one of four locations, before heading off to UK paper mills like this one in North Wales.

02:04 – 02:09 Here, it's washed to remove inks, staples and glue, and then mixed with water to create a slurry.

02:11 – 02:15 By adding different materials to this slurry, a variety of paper-based products can be created.

02:17 – 02:26 So, all your used paper and cardboard is recycled into - yes, you've guessed it - new newspapers, cardboard boxes and other paper products too.

02:26 – 02:28 Nice shoes! They'll go well with the jumper.

Container mix

02:29 – 02:39 Right, we want all your plastic bottles, tubs and trays, glass bottles and jars, cans, tins and cartons, and we want them in your mixed recycling wheelie bin or box.

02:40 – 02:42 Unlike paper and card, this lot don't mind getting cosy or wet!

02:43 – 02:50 They're collected every two weeks and taken to the same places as your paper and card, where they're bulked up, ready for the next stage of the journey.

02:51 – 02:59 Which is a trip to a Materials Recovery Facility - like the one operated by Veolia in Rainham - one of several recycling sorting facilities we use in the south of England.

03:01 – 03:06 Here, the plastics, glass, cans and cartons are sorted by machine and

by hand.

03:06 – 03:10 Each of the separated materials are baled, then sold on to specialist re-processors.

03:10 – 03:16 Glass and metals are pretty easy materials to deal with - they can be melted down and turned into new products.

03:17 – 03:22 Plastics are trickier. There are over 50 different types – some better quality than others.

03:24 – 03:32 Lower quality plastics are sent to re-processors in the UK for recycling whenever possible – but sometimes we have to send them to recycling facilities in other parts of Europe.

03:33 – 03:41 Wherever they end up, our partner, Veolia works hard to make sure all the plastic is recycled and handled in the most environmentally friendly way possible.

03:42 – 03:50 Higher quality plastics, like milk bottles, are easier to deal with. Most of these are processed much closer to home; at Veolia's own specialist facility in Dagenham.

03:51 – 03:55 The plastic bottles are shredded, washed, then melted down into pellets.

03:56 – 04:02 These pellets are used to make anything from clothing, chairs and toys, to more plastic bottles.

04:02 – 04:04 Your recycling efforts are heroic.

General rubbish

04:05 – 04:10 But sadly, not all of the stuff we put in our bins can be recycled, however, it can still be useful.

04:11 – 04:16 Your general rubbish is collected every two weeks and taken to the Beddington Energy Recovery Facility in Sutton.

04:17 – 04:24 Here it's burnt at high temperatures in strictly controlled conditions that make sure it's efficient and safe.

04:24 – 04:28 The heat produces steam, which in turn drives a turbine and generates electricity.

04:29 – 04:30 And lots of it!

04:31 – 04:36 The facility produces enough energy to power itself, plus around 55000 homes.

04:36 – 04:40 Even the leftover ash gets reprocessed and reused – in road building and construction.

04:41 – 04:45 Clever stuff eh? And much better than burying it in landfill, which is what used to happen.

04:46 – 04:54 But it's important to remember that once this material is burnt, it's gone forever. So, anything that can be recycled, should be recycled.

04:56 – 05:02 Oh, and don't forget, some of the bins and boxes you use to store your recycling and rubbish may be different to the ones shown in this film.

05:04 – 05:06 If you're not sure what goes where, check your local council's website.

05:09 – 05:13 So you see, we do some pretty amazing stuff with your recycling and rubbish.

05:14 – 05:16 But without you, none of this could happen.

05:17 – 05:19 Thank you for helping us recycle more and waste less.