

# Furness Waste Consortium

## Position Statement 2004

Members of the Furness Waste Consortium (FWC) have been discussing the issues of waste management in South Cumbria for over 12 years.

This is a forum for Industry:

BAE Systems, GlaxoSmithKline, Hydrocarbon Resources Ltd, Kimberly Clark, Robert McBride, Roosecote Power Station

Local government: Barrow Borough Council, Cumbria County Council, South Lakeland District Council

Government agency: Environment Agency

NGOs: MAREL, Groundwork

In this time we have commissioned and supported many studies, projects and conferences to enable better understanding and further improvement of waste management within Furness.

The holistic picture provided by industry, local government and non governmental organisations (NGOs) has proven valuable in understanding the total environmental impact of waste in South Cumbria.

Whilst we appreciate that there are separate, specific requirements of industrial, commercial and municipal wastes, we strongly believe each aspect should cooperate to ensure an effective approach that will allow an integrated strategy to work.

Furness in particular is very much an island community with limited waste management resources and a congested infrastructure that needs to be used efficiently. We recognize that solutions to local concerns may have to be resolved by forging links at a regional level.

Working within the concepts of the *waste hierarchy*, *best practicable environmental option* and the *proximity principle* we have identified the need for the following:

- **Landfill**  
There will continue to be the need for local landfill of materials unsuitable for any other disposal route. The long term planning of such a facility in South Cumbria is vital to ensure continuity as existing void space is limited.
- **Waste to Energy**  
Members are in broad agreement with the concept of waste to energy. Due to the possible political and community concerns plus long project lead times any such project should be outlined as soon as possible. A pilot plant or small modular operation that is fully accessible to public scrutiny would be supported by FWC.

In the medium to long term we believe that this will be the best method of reducing the need for landfill.

- **Materials Recycling Facility**

Industry has seen the economic value of reuse and recycling for many years and is increasingly very good at it. Of the 819,000t industrial/commercial waste identified (in NW Regional Advisory Body Report 2001), 268,000t was recycled or reused.

The more difficult potential recyclate is that which is difficult to bulk up into practical quantities. Here a combination of industrial and municipal volumes would improve viability.

A concern of FWC is the likely market flooding with increasingly cheap recycled materials meaning suitable materials still being landfilled. The cooperation with local reprocessors again shows the value of working closely with industry.

- **Specialist Wastes Collection Facility**

With the increasing need for segregation and disposal of specialist and hazardous wastes, both domestic and industrial, there is a need for dedicated facilities. Problematic disposal of small quantities generated individually could be managed safely and effectively from a central location.

- **Awareness and Education**

This most valuable aspect of a waste minimisation strategy will require a cultural change from the whole of society and needs a coordinated approach through schools, the home and the workplace. Already within industry, work based training is used to highlight environmental issues and is ideal for promoting any strategy initiatives.

Each of the issues can be addressed in isolation by industry or local government however we see the need for cooperation to ensure a joined up, optimum approach.

**John Watson**  
**Chairman Furness Waste Consortium**

**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2004**

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