

**P-05-773 Don't Fill Landfill – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee.**

**Re: Response to committee hearing petition: “Don't Fill Landfill.” Heard 3.10.17**

Thank you for considering my petition which was heard in the committee chamber on the above date. I very much appreciate the opportunity to respond to the decision by Lesley Griffiths AC/AM Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs.

I would like to note that whilst Lesley did not feel the “Landfill” sticker, which we designed for black wheelie bins, would be entirely appropriate at the moment, she did in fact agree (paragraph 1) that *there is a role for either stickers or printing on wheeled bins* but was concerned that the wording of any such sticker ought not risk containing too much information.

I have written to Lesley personally in light of her response and have asked her to consider engaging me to help on the Task and Finish Group of Welsh Government that is currently working on a separate initiative. My understanding is that this group is tasked with designing an initiative to affect positive behavioural change in relation to recyclable waste and to try to limit the amount of residual waste (including food waste) from being sent to landfill.

I have expressed concern that at present, information is printed on green and black bags but that it may be causing comprehension problems for speakers of other languages and non native speakers including all those who work and study in Cardiff who may be unaccustomed to the protocols of recycling in Wales. I have also pointed out that a significant proportion of Cardiff's 28,000 student population is made up of International students who may require additional help in understanding any written instructional material. This is important as it may be unwittingly contributing to the problem of poor recycling.

As a teacher of International students I can certainly attest to this. In fact, as a starting point, my class conducted a series of qualitative interviews with International students where we identified a duplicitous problem. Not only did many students arrive in Cardiff from countries where recycling was either different or non-existent, but the wording on the bags was unclear, ambiguous or too difficult to fully comprehend. (Please see addendum to illustrate)

The green plastic bags intended for recyclable goods (excluding food) currently reads in dual language with English first. Many of our second language learners were unaware that the Welsh wording was in fact a different language and many lower level students thought it was complicated vocabulary which they were unfamiliar with.

The second problem is that underneath text which reads **No textiles, broken glass or food waste** is a series of pictures with printed text underneath such as **plastics, paper, newspapers, mixed paper and card, mixed glass, food and drink cans, cardboard and aerosols.**

As a native speaker, it is more obvious that these are the items which should be placed into the bags. But since the items are listed following on from **No textiles**, the information is potentially ambiguous and could cause difficulty in comprehension. Thus, it could be resulting in poor recycling habits. I feel this is something that could be changed easily.

As an MA Forensic Linguistics student and as an active member of the Eco Linguistic Association as well as being a representative of Cardiff's student base, I feel I could assist the group with linguistic choices that are proven to be easier and non ambiguous as well as help re-write the wording on current and any potential new information to ensure that Wales is at the forefront of positive and inclusive instructional material which will go some way to ensuring that our targets for 2024–25 are met and perhaps even exceeded.

I would therefore like to ask the committee to consider using the printed sticker proposal in the future and to commit to the redesigning of it to ensure it is written unambiguously and is rolled out to both green and black bags as well. I would also like to ask the committee to support my offer of getting involved with the Task group initiative (on a voluntary basis) to help to not only serve my city in a positive and representative way, but to add value to the initiative by championing the engagement of the student voice and in demonstrating excellence in the language used to communicate change to residents.

I thank you all once again for your time and considerations.

Yours sincerely,

Claire L Perrin

Addendum (Claire Perrin)

