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## Barriers to resource efficiency

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### Pathway To Zero Waste - dismantling the barriers to resource efficiency in the South East, by Chindarat Taylor

Pathway To Zero Waste (PTZW) is a partnership between a number of government agencies and industry groups all working on related aspects of stimulating economic growth, business and resource efficiency, and waste management.

Through PTZW, they work together in an integrated and systematic way, pooling resources, combining strengths and aligning activities to dismantle the barriers that are impeding the South East's progress to total resource efficiency.

The PTZW board is responsible for identifying the issues that need tackling, with individual partners, backed up by a full-time PTZW team, taking the lead role in developing and delivering solutions.

Two such issues, reducing the number of illegal waste operators and improving waste data are the responsibility of the Environment Agency.

Under their Waste Crime Innovation Programme, new techniques and approaches to tackling waste crime are being tested and refined in the South East before being extended to other parts of the country.

The overall objective of the waste crime innovation programme is to make it more difficult for unscrupulous companies to do business and to encourage legitimate businesses to register and operate compliantly.

In March, working with the Police and local authority enforcement teams, it launched 'Operation Intervention' across the region. Its aim is to identify, track, and intercept illegal waste movements.

A number of activities happen simultaneously on specific days to cause maximum disruption to illegal waste operations. There are fixed and roving road stops where vehicles are checked to see if they are registered to carry the waste they are transporting.

There are also site checks to examine whether waste is being described correctly or vehicles are carrying illegal loads. Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology is also used to collect vehicle information to help target known offenders and to map illegal waste transport routes.

After just three days of activity, 9 unregistered waste carriers, 19 incidences of mis-description of waste and 1 illegal site were identified, all of which are subject to further investigations and enforcement. More will follow as 'Operation Intervention' continues.

#### Trial

In June, the Environment Agency also launched a three month trial of electronic Duty of Care Waste Transfer Notes (WTNs).

WTNs play a vital role in tracking waste from collection right through to disposal. As part of this trial, six waste companies in the South East are using mobile computer handsets to create WTNs, and web-hosted software enables real-time tracking of the consignment.

If applied nationally, this would significantly improve the accuracy and availability of on the types, volumes, sources and disposal methods of waste, and highlight how much suitable material is available to re-processors and to operators of recycling and recovery facilities to help them identify growth opportunities.

This is absolutely critical if we are to succeed in our aim of stopping waste going to landfill by reusing, recycling and recovering the energy from it instead.

The work being carried out by the Environment Agency under its Waste Crime Innovation Programme is a terrific example of the practical activity and innovative approach that Pathway To Zero Waste, is delivering to create a fast-track to resource efficiency in the South East.

For more information on Pathway To Zero Waste, go to [www.ptzw.co.uk](http://www.ptzw.co.uk)



**Dr Chindarat Taylor is director of Pathway to Zero Waste which is aiming to reduce waste in the South East**

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